

regional caudillos, such as Estanislao López. He regrouped the federalist forces and paved the way for an onslaught against the unitarians entrenched in the city of Buenos Aires. As part of this master plan Rosas had questionable dealings with the French consul in Buenos Aires, the Viscount of Venancourt. Celestia marshals considerable evidence to show that Rosas secured the foreign diplomat's aid to overthrow Lavalle's unitarian regime.

The second volume traces Rosas' career from 1833 through his defeat by Urquiza at the Battle of Caseros in 1852, his subsequent exile and death in 1877. Before his demise Rosas had cleverly gathered around him the support of the most prominent landowners such Tomás de Anchorena, Tomás Guido, Manuel Vicente Maza, and Juan Nepomuceno Terrero. His frequent resignations were carefully rigged and culminated in his election as governor of the Province of Buenos Aires in 1835. It was at this point that the dictatorship began in earnest. The destruction of the powerful northern caudillo Juan Facundo Quiroga eliminated Rosas' greatest competition, after which he assumed absolute powers granted to him by the Sala de Representantes.

The most obvious failing of this valuable work is its essentially negative outlook. It concentrates totally on lining up evidence against Rosas, mentioning few positive aspects of the caudillo's rule. The author faithfully carries out his campaign to dethrone Rosas from the pedestal upon which some historians have placed him. The work should be read in this context; thus it becomes another valuable contribution to the engaging controversy surrounding that extraordinary Argentine figure. Both volumes contain extensive appendices. Many of the documents included are personal letters, some which can be found in the Argentine National Archives, but most of which are in private collections.

Hispanic Foundation,
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GEORGETTE MAGASSY DORN

Student Politics in Argentina: The University Reform and Its Effects, 1918-1964. By RICHARD J. WALTER. New York, 1968. Basic Books. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xviii, 236. \$7.50.

At a time when the role of the university is being re-examined in the United States, this study of the Latin American University Reform movement in the country of its origin fills a serious information gap. In eight tightly-written chapters, the emergence and development of the *Reforma* is traced from its founding in Córdoba in 1918

to its apparent exhaustion and eclipse in the mid-sixties. Most foreigners have tended to associate the University Reform with student participation in national politics (and with revolutionary movements of the extreme left), but Professor Walter shows that, in Argentina at any rate, the movement was initially an intra-university affair, addressing itself to defense of university autonomy, student participation in everyday administrative decisions (*co-gobierno*), improved courses and instructional staff, and a greater national and Latin American content in the curriculum. Significantly, virulent anti-clericalism and a missionary attitude towards the working class—more “radical” manifestations of early *Reformismo*—were among the first aspects of the movement to fall by the wayside in the early ’twenties.

In fact, although an unsuccessful attempt was made to found a National Reformist Party in 1927, students did not enter the political scene in any significant way until 1930, when their street demonstrations helped prepare the way for the overthrow of Radical President Hipólito Yrigoyen by neo-Fascist elements in the Argentine Army. After a rapid shift of gears, the *Reformistas* adopted anti-militarism and anti-fascism as major objectives, both of which, with the advent of Perón in 1943, ultimately placed students on opposite sides of the fence from the working class whose interests they professed to uphold. During the Perón era the university was doubtless a major center of resistance to the dictatorship, but in the end the Justicialist reign was closed as it had opened, with a right-wing military coup. Thus it appears that for all their devotion to left-liberal ideals, students in Argentina have often been reduced to acting as stalking horses for their country’s conservatives. Walter attributes the former’s inability to play an independent political role (if not to their ineptitude) to the country’s high literacy rate and large university enrollments, which deprive the student of an élite status. Thus the Argentine experience may be, in this as in so many other areas, atypical of Latin America as a whole.

If the political consequences of the *Reforma* have been marginal, what of its effects on the quality of higher education? Walter finds that many of the deficiencies which prompted the Reform in the first place—part-time professors, poor and repetitious lectures, courses unrelated to the national reality—continue to exist half a century later. Furthermore, “in many instances . . . professors have often been forced to cater to the whims of students to avoid being fired from the university by student representatives on administrative councils. . . . An academically qualified teacher may lose his position simply because

during the time of academic review he gave a low grade to a politically influential student." Both the negative political and educational effects of the *Reforma* lead Walter to cautiously advise its advocates to re-examine the consequence of their actions as the movement enters its sixth decade.

The value of this thoughtful, balanced, carefully-researched study is limited only by the author's serious misconceptions concerning Argentine nationalism. This extremely complex subject has assumed many expressions, only one of which is a sort of creole variant of Italian Fascism or Spanish Falangism. By gratuitously assigning all Argentine nationalists to the right of the political spectrum, Walter misses the whole point about the Perón period and many of its antecedents. Moreover, excessive credence to *Reformista* versions of Argentine history leads him into some unfortunate traps, such as arguing that students who favored Argentine intervention on the side of Great Britain and the United States during the Second World War were somehow true "anti-imperialists," while those who favored the maintenance of Argentine neutrality were not. At the same time, careful examination of published U. S. State Department documentation might have tempered some of the more spectacular assertions the author makes concerning the Revolution of 1943.

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El 45: Crónica de un año decisivo. By FÉLIX LUNA. Buenos Aires, 1969. Editorial Jorge Álvarez. Los Argentinos. Illustrations. Tables. Notes. Pp. 637. Paper.

Félix Luna offers two reasons for writing this book. "Whether we like it or not," Luna informs his compatriots, "we still live in the era of 1945." Luna hopes that all Argentines will accept Peronism as a part of their heritage, an acceptance he facilitates by portraying Perón as less the instigator than "the agent of a process which . . . had to arrive," and by confessing to his own initial misperception of the phenomenon. Luna's second motive is more personal:

Perhaps [the author] (like so many others of his age) with fewer prejudices and less conditioning might have been a Peronist in 1945, although it would have been difficult to continue being one later; perhaps this book is subconscious compensation for that instance of turning away from the revolutionary process I always wished to serve.

Luna appears in this book in two guises. Each chapter ends with