

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,

pp. 15–20). Chapter 2 provides a brief periodization of Argentine economic history, useful to those unfamiliar with the country. Chapter 3 describes the policies pursued during the period 1989–94, with emphasis on fiscal and monetary policy, privatization, deregulation, labor and social security reform, and trade liberalization. Chapter 4 discusses obstacles to the 6.5 percent annual growth rate deemed necessary for Argentina to become an advanced industrial society in 25 years. This chapter concludes with policy recommendations. The author calls for further extensions of market activity but also recommends more (and better) government activity in several areas (education, tax collection, the judiciary).

This final chapter contains the sole inconsistency in this well-constructed book. After noting that low wages and infrastructural deficiencies are serious obstacles to government improvement in the aforementioned areas, the author stresses the need for “reducing public employment and containing spending” (p. 162). The tension between these two recommendations is never adequately acknowledged or resolved. The author asserts that in the long run, fiscal discipline will produce growth sufficient to increase public spending in the priority areas (p. 162). But if improved government performance in those priority tasks is also central to attaining long-term economic growth, how should nations proceed?

Argentine specialists may find little new information here (although useful historical and contemporary economic tables are provided) and may be frustrated by the inattention to politics. They will be stimulated, however, by the effort to develop solutions to the “Argentine question” of unrealized economic potential via constant comparisons to other nations. Those unfamiliar with Argentina will encounter a brief but accurate description of economic policies and performance, both past and present. Readers looking for similarly brief treatments of the politics of Argentine reforms might turn to chapters in edited volumes such as William C. Smith, Carlos H. Acuña, and Eduardo A. Gamarra’s *Democracy, Markets, and Structural Reform in Latin America: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico* (1994) and Joan M. Nelson’s volume *A Precarious Balance: An Overview of Democracy and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (1994).

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*Argentine Workers: Peronism and Contemporary Class Consciousness*. By PETER RANIS. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xi, 313 pp. Cloth. \$49.95.

Peter Ranis makes significant contributions to the study of working-class behavior and the particulars of Peronist labor politics in this interview-based exercise in political sociology. One of the better writers in English on Peronism, Ranis adds to his credentials by offering one of the best examinations in any language of modern urban working-class perspectives in contemporary Argentina. His emphasis is on the social relations of production and their attendant consequences for the formation