

los argentinos más profundamente que en quizá ningún otro país del planeta (hasta tal punto que en 1995, cuando el jefe del Estado Mayor del ejército creyó necesario formular en nombre de la institución un tardo *mea culpa* por las atrocidades perpetradas durante la reciente dictadura militar, acudió para ello a un vocabulario ortodoxamente psicoanalítico); mientras, por otra, sus avances en el específico campo psicológico y psiquiátrico han sido mucho más lentos y parciales: si ya en 1927 un eminente médico forense estaba dispuesto a introducir algunos motivos freudianos en un informe dominado por el influjo de las ideas de Lombroso, quince años más tarde la mayor parte de los psiquiatras no había avanzado sobre esa solución ecléctica.

La penetración de las perspectivas psicoanalíticas en la sociedad argentina es presentada por Hugo Vezzetti —quien a partir de su *La locura en la Argentina*, publicado en 1983, ha contribuido más que nadie a organizar temática y problemáticamente este campo de estudios— a través de la trayectoria de un emblemático “difusor” de las doctrinas freudianas. En “From the Psychiatric Hospital to the Street: Enrique Pichon Rivière and the Diffusion of Psychoanalysis in Argentina”, Vezzetti nos muestra cómo Pichon, además de desempeñar un papel importante en la introducción del psicoanálisis en los servicios psiquiátricos de los hospitales públicos y gravitar sobre ámbitos más amplios mediante sus colaboraciones en un semanario destinado al sector de empresarios modernizados y modernizadores en avance durante el efímero auge industrializador de los años sesenta, utilizó la autoridad derivada de su saber psicoanalítico para incidir con éxito en el conflicto provocado por la incorporación a la red pública de aguas corrientes de un suburbio popular de Buenos Aires. Por su parte, en un exitoso *tour de force*, Plotkin nos presenta en las menos de treinta páginas de “Psychiatrists and the Reception of Psychoanalysis, 1910-1970” el que fue ya uno de los temas centrales de su *Freud in the Pampas*, en una densa síntesis que ha logrado no sacrificar nada importante de la riqueza de perspectivas alcanzada en el libro. Y a este ensayo final agrega un epílogo que, aunque toma por tema la incidencia del reciente derrumbe económico vivido por la Argentina sobre el lugar que el psicoanálisis ha conquistado en la vida nacional, se interesa, más que por los efectos de la erosión cada vez más avanzada de la sociedad en que floreció la terapia psicoanalítica en la Argentina, por el hecho de que en esta hora de universal desorientación los argentinos, que siguen esperando que el psicoanálisis les revele la clave de la calamidad que les ha sobrevenido, no hayan tenido que esperar en vano: “el problema —concluye Plotkin— es que ‘psicoanalizar a la sociedad’ es exactamente lo que los medios demandan hoy a los psicoanalistas, y sólo unos pocos de ellos parecen capaces de resistir a la tentación”. Aunque la dureza de la conclusión aparece plenamente justificada por las propuestas de algunos de los que no supieron resistirla, es

difícil no leer aquí a la vez un pronóstico que sugiere que difícilmente pueda el psicoanálisis retener el lugar que conquistó en la Argentina del siglo XX. Y al mismo pronóstico invita ya, quizá, el ver a la etapa de avance del psicoanálisis integrada aquí en una historia de la relación entre psiquiatría, estado y sociedad en la Argentina a partir de 1880, que la somete a toda ella a una mirada inequívocamente póstuma.

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JAVIER CORRALES: *Presidents Without Parties. The Politics of Economic Reform in Argentina and Venezuela in the 1990s*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002.

One of the problems that bedevils political scientists who try to tie their work to theory or to ongoing debates in the literature is that events keep moving. And, unfortunately, the pace of academic publishing in the United States can create problems for an author whose work attempts to explain some portion of the contemporary world. And then there can be another delay before that review is published and read by members of the scholarly community. Of course, if the theoretical argument is sufficiently robust, no amount of turbulence in the political system in that two or three year period between the final scholarly observation and publication would make a difference in the argument.

There have been very few countries in Latin America in which there has been more turbulence over the past few years than in Argentina and Venezuela. To his credit, if Javier Corrales had to come along today, when this review is published, and assess the value of his argument in the light of events since his book went to press, I think he would be quite pleased with himself. The core of Corrales' argument is that in order to put economic reforms into effect without causing political instability, the executive must accommodate the ruling party, even if he is a member of that party and even if the reforms themselves are first put into effect by presidential decree.

Professor Corrales is a penetrating student of parties. Unlike the institutionalists of the 1980s and 1990s who stressed party systems as the key to democratic consolidation, he is more concerned with how parties affect the policy process. Elsewhere, he has written about party factionalism and how party characteristics affect the viability of the congressional branch of government. In this book, he wants to demonstrate that in the two cases he has examined, the

success and failure of the efforts to introduce neo-liberal or market reforms was determined as much by the relationship between the executive and the dominant party as by any other factor or variable. He insists that the importance of this very specific relationship passes the three major tests of causality: timing, variations in executive-ruling party relations, and controlling for policy measures (pp. 294-5). His aim is to contribute to the debate in comparative politics concerning the viability of the state and its ability to conduct reforms. He believes that his argument or explanation goes beyond those offered by rational choice theorists, by corporatists, by institutionalists, or by the democratization group, because each of these approaches adopts a focus that is too narrow.

The reasons an alliance with a ruling party is crucial to the success and sustainability of market reforms are that the party can shield the executive from groups suffering the costs of the reforms and neutralize their political force; it can improve the communication between the government and the governed; it assures that the executive remains grounded in the political realities of the country; and, it can provide the executive with credibility before the electorate that is indispensable to sustaining the reform program. Of course, this alliance involves accommodation and necessarily some gaps in the reform process. The cooperation from the party frequently is secured through old fashioned populist measures, especially in the social sector and involving organized labor, which is allowed to retain corporatist privileges that run counter to the spirit of the neo-liberal reforms. The party itself is co-opted in ways that often are illiberal. Still, Corrales insists that these costs are much smaller than the absence of an alliance — what he calls state without party governance — which would produce political instability or the breakdown of the reform process itself.

This is an excellent book. On occasion it is a bit ostentatiously academic and that might put off undergraduates; but, graduate students and their mentors should find it a valuable contribution to our understanding of modern Latin America. And, there is that problem of the moving target. By the time this review appears in print, one or both of the following may have occurred to force Professor Corrales to revisit his argument: 1) that Nestor Kirchner may have succeeded in forging an alliance with the Peronist Party in a situation in which there is no viable opposition party or parties, which will convert the peronists into an hegemonic party with powerful anti-democratic tendencies; and 2) Chávez may tighten his hold on the Venezuelan state without an alliance with a dominant party, which will convert Venezuela into an authoritarian state. We shall see.

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