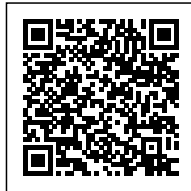


# A HISTORY OF ARGENTINE POLITICAL THOUGHT

*Posted on 14/01/2023 by Facundo Iturburu*



## GEORGE PENDLE

This well-known book by the Professor of History at the University of Buenos Aires was first published in Spanish in 1946; the present, and excellent English translation was made from the third, 1959, edition, to which the author has added an epilogue; by way of introduction the translator, who is Professor of History at the University of Texas, provides a brief summary of Argentine history.

The book is a stimulating account, arranged chronologically, of Argentine political ideas in action from colonial times to today: the ideas of the men of the Revolution of May, Rosas, the landowning oligarchs, the Radicals, etc. Up to page 241 the account, which is written from a mildly left-wing point of view, is dispassionate and convincing; at that point the author becomes personally involved in events; he was one of the intellectuals whom Perón expelled from their university positions in the mid- 1940', and he portrays Perón as nothing more than a fascist and a hoax.

For students, the book is slightly marred by the absence of detailed references to sources. Professor Romero confesses that 'as a result of the constant use of source materials, the author no longer knows what part of his work may be original' (p. 5). But he might at least have footnoted his many quotations, such as those concerning the advantages and disadvantages of the massive British investments made in the Argentine in the second half of the 19th century, quotations which come from contemporary speeches and newspaper articles and are of particular interest.

For example: General Roca, speaking in London after a banquet offered by Baring Brothers, 'the Argentine Republic... will never forget that its present state of progress and prosperity is due, in great part, to English capital'; Juan Bautista Justo, founder of the Argentine Socialist Party, writing in *La Nación*, 'English capital has done what their armies could not do. Today our country is tributary to England'; President Carlos Pellegrini, speaking, we are not told exactly when or where, after the financial crisis of 1890, 'In the midst of the financial anguish, when there was not even money to pay government salaries, I sent the last peso to Europe to pay the interest on our debt' (pp. 193-195).

The author supplies, however, a bibliography of Argentine works in Spanish connected with his subject, and the translator gives a list of books in English. There is a glossary of Spanish-Argentine terms.

