



Political Parties and Generations in Paraguay's Liberal Era, 1869-1940

Paul H. Lewis

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From a North American perspective, the turbulence that dominated Paraguayan politics during the Liberal Era appears so pervasive as to approach anarchy. But in this seemingly haphazard succession of administrations, political machines, and governmental systems, Paul Lewis sees a pattern of evolution. His astute examination of political institutionalization employs the concept of political generations to explain Paraguayan conflict and change while analyzing a significant but understudied period of Paraguayan history. Lewis chronicles the growth of the two major Paraguayan parties, the Liberals and the Colorados, from their early days as political clubs through periods of personalist *caudillo* politics, national machine politics, and finally institutionalized party politics. Arguing that coalitions formed along generational lines and then held power until a new--and often younger--group pushed them aside, he ties the rise and fall of party fortunes to generational change. Lewis constructs a multistage theory of political party development that makes sense not only of Paraguay's Liberal Era but also of political turmoil in many Latin American states.

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