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The Poor's Struggle for Political Incorporation

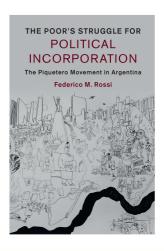
The Piquetero Movement in Argentina

Federico M. Rossi

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This book offers an innovative perspective on the ever-widening gap between the poor and the state in Latin American politics. It presents a comprehensive analysis of the main social movement that mobilized the poor and unemployed people of Argentina to end neoliberalism and to attain incorporation into a more inclusive and equal society. The piquetero (picketer) movement is the largest movement of unemployed people in the world. This movement has transformed Argentine politics to the extent of becoming part of the governing coalition for more than a decade. Rossi argues that the movement has been part of a long-term struggle by the poor for socio-political participation in the polity after having been excluded by authoritarian regimes and neoliberal reforms. He conceptualizes this process as a wave of incorporation, exploring the characteristics of this major redefinition of politics in Latin America.

Part I. Theoretical Framework: 1. Introduction: a theory for the popular sectors' quest for inclusion in Latin America; 2. Beyond repertoires of contention: conceptualizing strategy making in social movements; Part II. The Second Incorporation in Argentina: 3. From the origin of unemployed workers' protests to recognition of the 'piquetero question' (1996–9); 4. From recognition of the claim to the legitimation of the piquetero movement as a national actor (1999–2001); 5. From movement legitimation to failed state reincorporation in the socio-political arena (2002–3); 6. Party territorial reincorporation in the socio-political arena (2003–9); 7. The aftermath of second incorporation: between continuity and change (2009–15); Part III. Comparisons and Conclusions: 8. Social movements and the struggle to reshape the socio-political arena in Bolivia and Brazil; 9. Conclusions.



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'The wave of anti-austerity protest that spread globally in response to exclusionary neoliberal policies in the 2010s had, in Latin American social movements, a major source of inspiration which calls for more scientific reflection. Theoretically original and empirically rich, this volume provides a most valuable contribution in this direction, bridging social movement studies and historical institutionalism, through a critical conceptualization of contentious politics as a relational phenomenon.'

Donatella della Porta,

Dean of the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences and Director of the Centre of Social Movements Studies, Scuola normale superiore



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