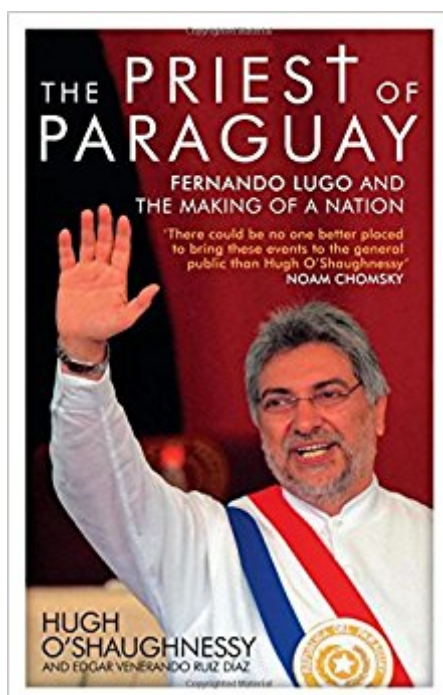


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The Priest Of Paraguay: Fernando Lugo And The Making Of A Nation



Synopsis

Paraguay had the oldest one-party regime on earth. Under the 60-year dictatorship of General Alfredo Stroessner's Colorado party, wealth and power became concentrated in the hands of a small few; until elections in 2008 broke the party's hold on the country and promised a newer, more egalitarian future, particularly for the country's indigenous people. In *The Priest of Paraguay* Hugh O'Shaughnessy tells the story of how Fernando Lugo, a bishop from a deprived diocese, swept to victory and what this means for his country, Latin America and the wider world. He traces Lugo's life alongside the turbulent history of Paraguay - from his early years in a family which fell victim to Stroessner to his release by the Vatican in order to follow a political calling to the outcry following revelations of illegitimate children. The book also examines what may lie in store for the newest addition to Latin America's 'pink tide' of socialist and social democratic countries. This is history of a fascinating but largely unknown country by one of the most respected commentators on Latin America.

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Customer Reviews

'Paraguay has been a disgrace even by the ugly standards of US domination of Latin America. The election of Fernando Lugo offers a promising opportunity for it to break the chains, and to join much of the rest of South America towards what may be a brighter future for the vast majority who have suffered repression and misery, and in particular for the indigenous population, now rising throughout the subcontinent, which has become in many ways the most exciting part of the world.

There could be no one better placed to bring these events to the general public than Hugh O'Shaughnessy. His work on Latin America has been outstanding in its historical depth, subtle insight and sympathetic understanding of the travails of the population, and the intricacies of the domestic structures and international environment.' - Noam Chomsky'

Hugh O'Shaughnessy's fine, pioneering study of the liberation priest who is now President of Paraguay, is also a story of persistent constataion against tyranny, corruption, poverty and conservative Catholicism.' - Richard Bourne'

Those who know little about South America and less about Paraguay will benefit greatly from this fascinating book. It records a history overshadowed by exploitation, cruelty and oppression at the hands of various wealthy oligarchies, often United States backed. Now Paraguay has a new President, Fernando Lugo, who was elected against the odds in 2008. An ex -Bishop and no saint he has already begun social justice programmes which can inspire us here too.' - Bruce Kent'

Few countries are as shrouded in as much mystery as Paraguay. The site of a turbulent colonial history in which its indigenous peoples were both exploited by Europeans and sheltered by them in Jesuit organized missions, it reeled through the nineteenth century with more constitutional changes than virtually any other country. In both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries it endured dictatorships, the most recent that of General Stroessner which lasted into the late twentieth century. With an economy based on vast agricultural holdings and a thriving contraband trade, today Paraguay is governed by a reformist former Catholic bishop. The increasing strength of a mobilized indigenous population and civil society more generally, resulted in the election of Fernando Lugo in June 2008, a most atypical Paraguayan politician. Hugh O'Shaughnessy recounts the coalition of factors that made his election possible, as well as the personal trajectory of the president from priest to bishop to president. The complexities of Paraguayan politics are skillfully explored, as well as the complexities of the new president's personality, in all its contradictions. One would have to hunt far and wide to find a more useful analysis of contemporary Paraguay and its new leadership. Where Lugo will lead Paraguay is unclear, but the likelihood of substantial change is clearly signaled by O'Shaughnessy's study.' - Professor Margaret E. Crahan'

This book is a very readable account of the emergence of the person who has made Paraguay a country to be taken seriously again, and especially of the context - both political and ecclesiastical - that shaped him. An excellent introduction to Paraguay and its politics.' - Peadar Kirby, Professor of International Politics and Public Policy, University of Limerick'

An excellent biography of Fernando Lugo and his conversion from priest to president during Paraguay's rocky road to democracy. Hugh O'Shaughnessy's expert knowledge of the deep divisions between traditional and progressive elements inside the Catholic Church also situates the 'Lugo' phenomenon within the wider struggle for social justice in Latin

America." - Andrew Nickson, International Development Department, University of Birmingham" This brisk narrative of Fernando Lugo's rise to the Paraguayan presidency is a captivating read for anyone who wants to understand the politics and society of Paraguay - "the island surrounded by land." O'Shaughnessy and Venerando Ruiz portray the priest's early formation and his championing of the poor and indigenous peoples, his conflicts with the Church hierarchy as a bishop, and his vision and program for the New Paraguay. Just as importantly the authors provide us with a rich historical foundation, from the Guarani Indian reductions of the Jesuits to the Chaco War and the Stroessner dictatorship." - Roger Burbach, author of 'The Pinochet Affair' and Director of the Center for the Study of the Americas (CENSA) Berkeley, CA "I have long been fascinated by Paraguay. Though not without a dark side, it has a magic unlike anywhere else in Latin America. Now it has President Fernando Lugo, the very down to earth man of God with a vocation to repair the evils of decades of dictatorship. Well told and deeply researched, this book captures the reality - and the fascination - of Paraguay." - John Dinges, Center for Investigation & Information (CIINFO)

Hugh O'Shaughnessy is a well known journalist and writer. He has worked for the Financial Times, the Economist, The New Statesman, the Observer and the BBC, among others. He has won two British Press Awards and has also been recognised by the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism in the United States. His books include Grenada: Revolution, Invasion and Aftermath and Pinochet: The Politics of Torture.

This book is full of minor mistakes. It's a good guide to start for a research, but it must be checked before using it on an essay

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