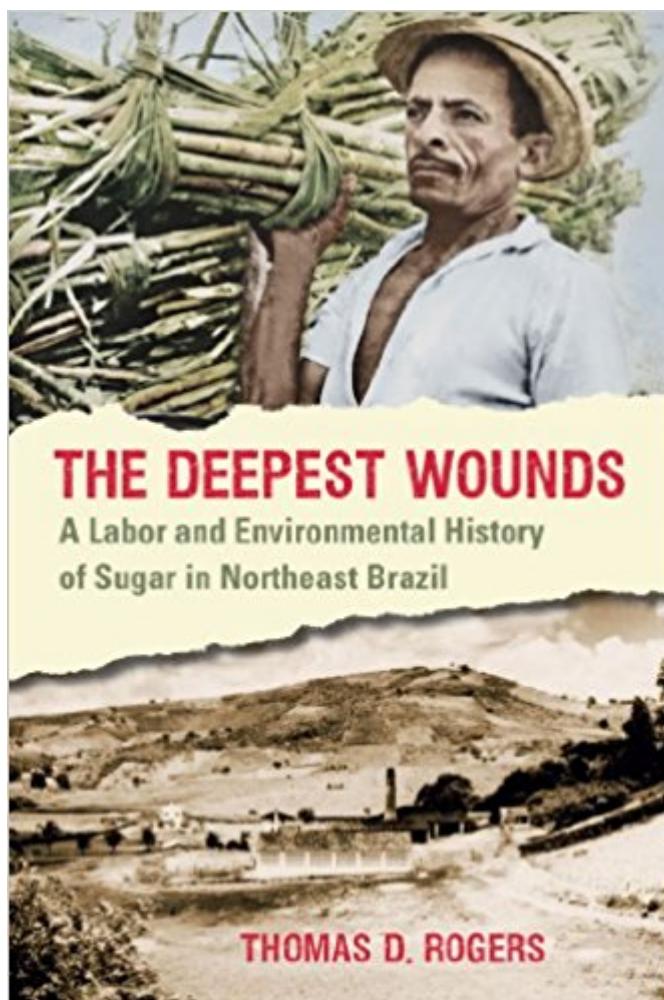


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# The Deepest Wounds: A Labor And Environmental History Of Sugar In Northeast Brazil



## Synopsis

In *The Deepest Wounds*, Thomas D. Rogers traces social and environmental changes over four centuries in Pernambuco, Brazil's key northeastern sugar-growing state. Focusing particularly on the period from the end of slavery in 1888 to the late twentieth century, when human impact on the environment reached critical new levels, Rogers confronts the day-to-day world of farming--the complex, fraught, and occasionally poetic business of making sugarcane grow. Renowned Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre, whose home state was Pernambuco, observed, "Monoculture, slavery, and latifundia--but principally monoculture--they opened here, in the life, the landscape, and the character of our people, the deepest wounds." Inspired by Freyre's insight, Rogers tells the story of Pernambuco's wounds, describing the connections among changing agricultural technologies, landscapes and human perceptions of them, labor practices, and agricultural and economic policy. This web of interrelated factors, Rogers argues, both shaped economic progress and left extensive environmental and human damage. Combining a study of workers with analysis of their landscape, Rogers offers new interpretations of crucial moments of labor struggle, casts new light on the role of the state in agricultural change, and illuminates a legacy that influences Brazil's development even today.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

An original, comprehensive, and well-researched study that will become a lasting contribution to both the literature on Brazilian sugar and to environmental history as a whole.--Agricultural History

Society Rogers elucidates the roles of the main actors: workers, elites, and the environment itself. This fruitful approach applies beyond Brazil's regional confines. Highly recommended. Academic and larger public libraries; undergraduates and above.--Choice This excellent and original book shows how agricultural change in Brazil's northeastern sugar industry affected social and political relationships, concepts of identity, and the environment over the course of several centuries.--H-LatAm Artfully written. . . . Teaches us that culture and work cannot be understood without paying attention to environmental change.--Luso-Brazilian Review An important book which will ultimately prove invaluable to environmental historians, labor historians, and all those interested in understanding the nature of Brazilian politics and society.-- Journal of NC Association of Historians The Deepest Wounds is invaluable for understanding the environmental destruction and poverty of the region and for a demonstration of the use of landscape for establishing a larger view of the social relations.--Environment and History

Rogers capably and vividly reconstructs the worldviews and perspectives of all the major stakeholders in the sugarcane fields of Pernambuco. This is an important, original, and thought-provoking book.--Stuart McCook, author of *States of Nature: Science, Agriculture, and Environment in the Spanish Caribbean, 1760-1940* Tom Rogers has written an original and provocative book that integrates the labor, environmental, and political history of Northeast Brazil. By telling a story about postemancipation sugarcane production in Pernambuco, he makes a major contribution to scholarship on both sugar production and environmental history. Weaving together a wide array of sources, Rogers recasts the cane regions of twentieth-century Pernambuco as dynamic landscapes shaped by labor strikes, fires, technological change, and regional contestations for power.--John Soluri, author of *Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States*

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