produce animated discussions on identity formation, different ways of defining, envisioning and experiencing freedom, and more. Whether or not "the maroon community of Prospect Bluff allows us to see how former slaves wanted to exist when free to live according to their own devices" (10)—if they indeed were left to their own devices—surely merits further discussion.

doi:10.1017/S0165115315000571 Ernesto Bassi, *Cornell University*

LATIN AMERICA

Mark Saad Saka. *For God and Revolution: Priest, Peasant, and Agrarian Socialism in the Mexican Huasteca*. Albuquerque, N.M.: University of New Mexico Press, 2013. ISBN: 9780826353382. $50.00.

In *For God and Revolution: Priest, Peasant, and Agrarian Socialism in the Mexican Huasteca*, Mark Saad Saka sets out to tell the story of how a radical priest came to lead a Mexican peasant revolt that began in 1879. However, Padre Mauricio Zavala and his unique amalgam of "the secular ideologies of socialism and anarchism with Christian humanism [that] synthesize[d] a new political consciousness among the pueblo citizenries" (104) are only the last part of the story. The first six of the book's eight chapters trace the experiences that led the region's indigenous and mixed-race peasants (called Huastecos) to revolt in 1879. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the Huastecos' position in relation to local landowners and domestic and international politics deteriorated significantly. In some ways, this is a familiar narrative in Latin American history: peasants are long oppressed by elite landowners, the situation worsens in the nineteenth century due to liberal economic policies that promote privatising landholdings and industrialising agriculture and the peasants rebel. But this traditional narrative is problematic due to its oversimplification of political and social dynamics and the underlying assumption that peasants are isolated and disconnected from broader trends. During the last few decades, scholars have begun to reconsider the effects of political, economic and social change on peasant communities through research in regional and national archives. In the process, they have started to develop more nuanced understandings of peasant agency and the effects of broader changes on peasant communities. This is important not just in Mexican or Latin American history, but also in world history—scholars have begun to uncover "the presence of rural subaltern nationalism" in such places as China, India, and Peru and to understand its critical role in the making of the modern world (xx).

Saka's book contributes to this growing body of scholarship with a focus on the Huasteca Potosina, a mountainous region in northeastern Mexico. Due to massive depopulation and then population shifts, ethnic identity was reconfigured during the colonial period. By the nineteenth century, nonetheless, the Huastecos developed a clear sense of their own identity and advocated for their interests by creating alliances with regional and national figures (20). Their participation in the war for independence, the federalist conflicts of the 1830s, the war with the United States (1846-1848), and the defence against the French invasion during the 1860s contributed to "a radical shift in peasant consciousness [that] evolved into an empowered sense of national identity and heightened awareness of class and political inclusiveness" (17). This sense of peasant consciousness led to a series of uprisings and revolts.

One might expect that the Catholic Church would be unified in the face of conflicts that might affect it, but a closer examination of the era's sermons, newspapers and correspondence demonstrates that the lower clergy often supported the peasants while the hierarchy had a different sense of institutional interests. By considering the roles of the lower clergy during regional, national and international conflicts, *For God and Revolution* contributes to a more dynamic understanding of the Catholic Church. During the war against the United States, for example, the hierarchy directed the lower clergy to resist the federal government's war efforts because they were to be funded by forced loans from the Church. Directly contradicting these orders, the local clergy issued nationalistic proclamations and used sermons to show their support for patriotism, which appealed to the Huastecos (27). Actions like this, according to Saka, were a factor in making the Huastecan peasants a receptive audience for Padre Mauricio Zavala's anarcho-agrarian ideology later in the century.

The final chapters of the book analyse the ideology of Padre Mauricio Zavala and the peasant revolt of 1879-1884. Zavala's prolific writings—including sermons, newspapers and books—gave Saka insight on the development of the priest's thinking on a wide range of topics. He was concerned not only with anarchism and rural life but also with the importance of indigenous languages, girls' access to resources and the benefits and pitfalls of both colonial government and post-independence Liberal and Conservative politics. While it might be easy to see him as an ideological outlier, Saka's skilful narrative analysis in previous chapters provides the reader with enough context to understand the origins of Zavala's anarcho-agrarian political philosophy and the peasants' acceptance of his leadership in the Mexican anarchist tradition and in peasant experiences of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, Zavala's ecclesiastical training and his relationship with other members of the lower clergy or with the hierarchy are less clear, whether because they distracted from the main narrative or because sources are unavailable. The book's other weakness is that the maps are difficult to interpret for readers unfamiliar with the details of Mexican geography. For example, Saka notes that the Huasteca region crosses state boundaries but there is no map showing that clearly. Some of the maps show small areas within the region without providing a sense of scale or the areas' relationship to other centres of peasant revolt.

Overall, however, this compact book makes important contributions to Latin American and world history, including the integration of peripheral areas into global economic processes, the development of socialism and peasant activism. It will be useful to students and scholars alike.

doi:10.1017/S0165115315000583 Lisa M. Edwards, *University of Massachusetts Lowell*

Shirley Cushing Flint, *No Mere Shadows: Faces of Widowhood in Early Colonial Mexico*. Albuquerque, N.M.: The University of New Mexico Press, 2013. 361 pp. ISBN 9780826353115. $55.00.

In *No Mere Shadows*, Shirley Cushing Flint dynamically reconstructs the lives of five elite Estrada widows who migrated from Spain to New Spain (Mexico) in the early 1500s. Descended from an elite Jewish family who converted to Christianity in the mid 1400s to avoid the purges in Spain, Dona Maria Gutierrez Flores de la Caballeria migrated with her husband to