question of social mobility as it was offered to subaltern groups, the book uncovers the different ways in which the army actually altered the social structure of Latin America. One striking revelation is that Afro-Latin American communities were more prone to supporting the Liberal cause, while Indians were much more ambivalent in their political stance. What becomes obvious is that race, gender, ethnicity, war and Liberal ascendancy all became profoundly intertwined, especially since the Liberals discovered they needed to engage the popular classes in order to control them.

The book is divided into two sections. The first contains chapters by James E. Sanders, Justin Wolfe, Aline Helg, Nicola Foote, Richard N. Adams and David Carey Jr. on soldiering and military participation and how ideas about citizenship evolved and revolved around and for different racial groups and ethnicities, with case studies from Colombia (1851–77), Nicaragua (1844–63), Cuba (1895–8), Ecuador (1895–1930) and Guatemala (both in 1914 and between 1925 and 1945). The second part compares international wars and internal wars of pacification or extermination and studies how they, in turn, contributed to the racialisation of national boundaries and imaginaries, uncovering what war meant, in political terms, for different subaltern groups. There are chapters by María de Fátima Costa, Peter M. Beattie, Carlos Martínez Sarasola, Julia O'Hara, Joanna Crow, Vincent C. Peloso, and René D. Harder Horst, with case studies on how different indigenous groups engaged with competing understandings of national identity and citizenship formation during the War of the Triple Alliance/Paraguayan War, the Conquest of the Desert in Argentina, the Apache wars in nineteenth-century Mexico, the War of the Pacific, the 1881 Cañete massacre in Peru, and the Chaco War, following a loose chronological order.

Unfortunately there is not the space here to do justice to all of the contributions by discussing each one individually. Suffice it to say that this volume offers a collection of thoughtful and original studies on the complex and subtle manner in which race and ethnicity informed and influenced the nation-building process in Latin America during the Liberal Period. It underlines the fact that comparing the responses of Afro-Latin American and indigenous communities to military struggle and identity formation is critical when interpreting the intersection between nation and society in Latin America. And it proves the importance of researching how subordinate groups understood the relation between race and nation at times of war. In brief, *Military Struggle and Identity Formation in Latin America* is a very welcome contribution to the historiography; one, moreover, that will inspire further research into the army by applying novel social and cultural perspectives.

University of St Andrews WILL FOWLER

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. **43** (2011). doi:10.1017/S0022216X11000915

Paul K. Eiss, *In the Name of El Pueblo: Place, Community and the Politics of History in Yucatán* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. xv + 337, £70.00, £17.99 pb.

In this book Paul K. Eiss presents a historical regional study of north-western Yucatán and an examination of the commonly used concept, *el pueblo*, in which he attempts to unmask both the complicated 'historical genealogy' of the term, which refers to place, people and political collectivity, and its significance as a framework for defining local social relations and identities in and around the town of Hunucmá.

In terms of the historiography of modern Mexico, *In the Name of El Pueblo* makes a number of notable contributions. The book details extensive agrarian conflict and state repression in Hunucmá, a major henequen-producing region in the state of Yucatán, before the outbreak of revolution in 1910. These conflicts were the result of export-led modernisation and state-building during the Porfiriato, which, although lauded by local elites as bringing progress and civilisation to the region, engendered poverty, violence and disorder. Export development was stimulated by rising demand in the United States and encouraged by national political consolidation. Nevertheless, Eiss argues, the path of modernisation in Hunucmá owed much to decades of effort by local *hacendados*. He thus charts the role of local political authorities in the enclosure of communal lands, and the way in which political power, land privatisation, military conscription and *corvée* labour contributed to the creation of a resident workforce subject to harsh and coercive debt peonage. He also highlights the continuing importance of the non-export economy and escalating armed struggle between peasants and hacendados over the use of woodlands and salt pools.

These political and agrarian conflicts were intensified by the expansion of henequen from the 1860s, yet they had deeper roots in the post-independence agrarian, administrative and fiscal reforms that contributed to the outbreak of caste war in the 1840s. Eiss elucidates the development of a communal political identity centred on access to land, which incorporated working-class mestizos and Indians, and was inspired by Enlightenment liberalism as well as Spanish and Mayan cultural, legal and political traditions. This communalist vision was suppressed and criminalised, and the landscape of communal tenure was effaced by private property. Yet, it re-emerged as part of a popular patriotic liberalism in the 1860s, as recurrent agrarian conflict during the Porfiriato, and as part of broader struggles over the path and meaning of modernity. In parallel, the book charts the changing ways in which the land and its history were conceptualised as tenure shifted from communal to private possession.

The Revolution also brought its own framework for understanding land tenure and granting rights of possession, in which documentation and historical narrative played a role. In part 2 Eiss reconstructs in detail political factionalism and violence in Hunucmá between 1910 and the 1940s, linking local conflicts both to earlier agrarian struggles and to different revolutionary actors at the regional and national levels. In so doing, he effectively illustrates how historical and political processes of change were 'both internally and externally directed', in the interplay between local conflicts and identities and wider political agendas and struggles.

However, at the same time, the book contains a number of tensions and inconsistencies which tend to detract from these achievements. The author's classification of *el pueblo* in the nineteenth century into two 'irreconcilable' visions, that of capitalist mestizo hacendados and largely Indian communalist peasants, is overdrawn and jars with the far more complex historical processes he presents. In a similar fashion, after much time has been spent examining the material roots of agrarian conflict in the region, the analysis of rebellion turns to stereotype and conjecture. Thus we are told that the words and symbols used by insurgents were more important to the authorities hunting them than their actions, and, rather than the product of conscious reflection or a reaction to political violence and social injustice, agrarian rebellion was a bloody and terrifying 'rite of passage'. Into what, and on what evidence? one must ask. At times the author also depoliticises the violence of the revolutionary years, which apparently by its extremity is pushed beyond the bounds of rational analysis and into the primordial realm of the collective unconscious where

ancient rivalries and bloodlust lurk. He thus tends to reproduce the very racialised trope of civilisation and barbarity that his empirical research works to deconstruct.

Eiss also identifies 'irreconcilable' differences between the visions of el pueblo held by agrarian insurgents and by Salvador Alvarado, the Constitutionalist governor in Yucatán (1915–17), derived from distinct understandings of history, which led to an inevitable breakdown of the alliance between them. He alleges that for Alvarado, el pueblo featured most significantly as an object of governance and a framework for top-down social and political control rather than an insurgent subject. It may be so; however, Alvarado's public discourse, which is cited as evidence, and from which one cannot easily glean his personal thoughts and intentions, suggests the opposite. Furthermore, although, as Eiss points out, there were many similarities between *porfirista* hacendados and the Constitutionalist regime in, for example, ideas of race and land, these groups were political rivals and the considerable differences between them remain largely unexplored, particularly their distinct understandings of the relationship between capitalist modernisation and free wage labour. Moreover, as Eiss's research shows, in practice communalist demands for rights to land were not denied wholesale but were, instead, effectively negotiated over time with different revolutionary factions and regimes. Finally, although the Constitutionalist government and those that followed constructed the image of a paternalist revolution from above that supplanted the role of agrarian struggle from below, as Eiss himself shows, this version of history was also embraced by insurgents as local factions and intermediaries sought to consolidate their own power by making alliances with the regime.

Similarly, President Lázaro Cárdenas' 1937 land reform act was intended, we are told, as a 'zero-point of history', which would 'make history irrelevant, supplanting it with an act of sovereign executive will'. If that was Cárdenas' intention, and it is not at all clear that it was, the rest of the chapter shows how little was, in fact, achieved. Instead agrarian reform foundered on poor planning and execution, conflicts of regional and federal jurisdiction, opposition from above, the resistance of the very peasants and workers it was supposed to benefit, recurrent political conflict and factional violence, and the colonisation of state agencies by all manner of opportunists, power brokers and bureaucrats. However, the fact that the resolution was never fulfilled is interpreted as 'a sign not of power's failure, but of the mode of its conflicted exercise, as government and el pueblo contended for mastery of all they could not or would not survey' (p. 175). What this means is not clear; but the events described in the chapter would appear to signal both the limits of the power of *cardenismo* and the ways in which the government and pueblo were far from two separate entities. In this case the way that the resolution became a new point of reference and source of historical legitimacy in popular discourse stems perhaps not from its power to erase history, but rather from its ability to embody or encapsulate it, tracing points of connection between el pueblo and the enduring corporatist state that emerged from the Cardenista reforms of the 1930s.

In this sense, the book's division of insurgents and revolutionary officials and pueblo and government into two diametrically opposed groups is not sustained by the far messier history of factionalism and power brokerage described in its pages. This contradiction exists because, despite having skilfully reconstructed political groupings and processes in the region during the Revolution, the author does not explicitly engage with the historiography or develop an argument based on historical analysis, but instead seeks to understand the past principally through text and ideology.

Part 3 takes a more contemporary, anthropological turn, examining the discourse of union struggles in Hunucmá in a context of 'neo-liberal policies and frameworks of governance' (p. 14), analysing pilgrimages, fiestas and other acts of devotion to the local Virgin of Tetiz, and looking at the idea of el pueblo through the texts and experiences of a local poet, historian, activist and teacher. The thread that tries to hold these chapters together is the search to understand the development of historical consciousness of el pueblo in Hunucmá and how collective memory is given narrative form as history more broadly. However, the chapters consist of personal experiences, recollections, observations and different discourses and interpretations, which do not easily integrate either with one another or with the previous more empirical historical chapters.

These contradictions stem from the methodological dilemma that is at the heart of the book. On the one hand Eiss conducts historical enquiry based upon empirical research, an 'etic' discipline. On the other hand he freely incorporates opinion, propaganda, stories, memories and myth into the narrative, in order to understand the different ways that contemporary actors thought about events and how they are remembered, an 'emic' approach. Yet these epistemologies do not integrate easily. Furthermore, ultimately by defining history as allegory and using text and symbol as historical evidence, the author tends to undermine much of his empirical research and to privilege speculation and novelesque prose over rational analysis and argument. Consequently, despite some very good research, the result of trying to know el pueblo both as something concrete and abstract simultaneously is a book that is inconclusive and lacks a clear argument.

St Antony's College, Oxford SARAH WASHBROOK

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. **43** (2011). doi:10.1017/S0022216X11000927

Paula Alonso, *Jardines secretos, legitimaciones públicas: el Partido Autonomista Nacional y la política argentina de fines del siglo XIX* (Buenos Aires: Edhasa, 2010), pp. 390, pb.

In spite of the paramount influence of the Partido Autonomista Nacional (National Autonomist Party, PAN) in Argentine politics between 1880 and 1916, few academic works have dealt with the building of the PAN political machine and its role in the control of presidential succession from the perspective of the relationships between provincial politics and the presidency. Paula Alonso's book fills that void. She has written a carefully researched and persuasive book on the nature and role of the PAN in national politics between 1880 and 1892.

Alonso's book is divided into eight chapters, plus an introduction and a conclusion, which combine a chronological and diachronic approach to the subject with more analytical sections. The author makes clear early in the book that she is not trying to recount the history of a national party. Rather, the book is an attempt to analyse what Alonso calls 'national politics' through the eyes of the PAN, using this loose national coalition of provincial elites as a 'panopticon' from which, it is argued, a series of features of the Argentine political system can acquire a more definitive shape: the relationship between provincial governments and the national government, the selection process of presidential candidates and the process of centralisation/decentralisation of the federal system. In tune with recent trends in the history of the 'Conservative Order', Alonso describes the party in power as a loosely structured