

commercial concerns often distorted the outwardly benevolent intentions of Pan Americanism. As an example, road construction proceeded most quickly when justified as anti-fascist, and later anti-Communist, and when its path did not threaten powerful interests such as those of the United Fruit Company. The book adheres to mainstream chronologies of US-Latin American relations, beginning with the advent of the New Diplomacy, and then into the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, the Good Neighbor policy, World War II, and, finally, the Cold War. Although there is little reevaluation of these periods in the book, the text engages the reader and asks the reader to consider how each affected the rail and road construction projects.

Readers seeking a history that gives equal weight to domestic politics and power relations within Latin American countries traversed by the Pan-American highway will have many questions. Each country or region warrants an in-depth dive into the archives to flesh out the tantalizing glimpses that Rutkow offers. For example, although he briefly mentions the Somoza regime's manipulation of US road-building funds in the context of the Cold War, there is little similar coverage of other Central American contexts, and most of South America, curiously, is absent from the second half of the book. This is a standard (and perhaps unfair) critique of such an ambitious transnational history, but it does not detract from Rutkow's important contributions to transnational and institutional history. In a few places, there are frustrating errors of fact, as when Rutkow has Francisco Villa invading Texas instead of New Mexico in 1916 (128). Overall, this is a well-crafted book that succeeds on many ambitious fronts.

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## GROWTH OF MEXICO CITY

*A City on a Lake: Urban Political Ecology and the Growth of Mexico City.* By Matthew Vitz.  
 Durham: Duke University Press, 2018. Pp. xi, 352. Illustrations. Maps. Notes.  
 Bibliography. Index. \$104.95 cloth; \$27.95 paper.  
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This book is a meticulously researched account of the production and reproduction of Mexico City's "metropolitan environment" during the long twentieth century, the bulk of which centers on the 1910s through the 1930s. It recasts the history of urbanization as a dynamic struggle among environmental engineers, urban planners, real estate developers, communal farmers, forest cooperatives, and squatters over the land, water, air, and vegetation of greater Mexico City. Working in the tradition of William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (1991) and incorporating insights from urban political ecology, Vitz skillfully bridges the fields of environmental and urban history.

This story begins at the end of the nineteenth century, when engineers working under the regime of Porfirio Díaz (1876–80, 1884–1911) attempted to sanitize the city by constructing an elaborate hydraulic infrastructure that included a massive drainage canal, a comprehensive sewer network, and a new potable water system. Like tentacles, this networked infrastructure extended into the outskirts of the city and beyond, linking the capital and its hinterland as never before. But these state-of-the-art sanitary services often failed to reach many of the city's denizens, particularly the poor and working classes.

Meanwhile, system builders placed new restrictions on the use of land in nearby farming and forest communities in an effort to end the cycle of floods and dust storms that had bedeviled the city for centuries. The Mexican Revolution (1910–20) challenged this top-down technocratic approach, as it unleashed and at times cultivated a new political culture in which popular classes clamored for modern sewer services, water for domestic use and irrigation, access to land for decent housing and crops, and control of mountainside woodlands.

The middle four chapters of the book delve into this revolutionary/postrevolutionary crucible and represent Vitz's principal historiographical contribution. He begins with case studies of a 1922 riot over clean water and a tenant strike that same year in which renters and urban residents demanded relief from unscrupulous slumlords. These two popular mobilizations ultimately failed to produce the more equitable distribution of sanitary services and housing that participants demanded; instead, they led to "a return to Porfirian technocracy, albeit under revolutionary auspices" (108).

In 1928, with many residents blaming incompetent municipal governments for their woes, the federal government created a unified Federal District that centralized urban administration. From here, Vitz turns to the woodlands surrounding the city, which environmental planners since the Porfirian era had been convinced needed protection from reckless forest communities. He traces the efforts of environmental planners to preserve mountainside forests, which they saw as vital to urban hygiene, even as local communities inspired by the Revolution fought to secure customary forest rights. Next, Vitz turns to the aquatic ecosystems of lakes Xochimilco and Texcoco, showing how the strategies planners used to supply the city with fresh water and eliminate wastewater tended to undermine agricultural production and worsen the dust storms that so often engulfed the city.

During a small window of time, from the mid 1930s to the mid 1940s, the state and lakeshore campesinos established a delicate working relationship whereby they turned the receding lands of Texcoco into arable land. Many of the same planners who developed environmental policies affecting Texcoco, Xochimilco, and nearby woodlands also pushed for hygienic housing for workers in the city proper. As informal, working-class settlements spread eastward, the residents found themselves subject to cycles of flooding and dust storms due to their proximity to Texcoco. Under the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas, "such settlements became hotbeds of political mobilization" (165) as they fought for improved housing and sanitation, at times

alongside a new generation of radical architects. Yet, ironically, the program of rural expropriation and nationalization pursued by Cárdenas had the effect of sending Mexican capital into cities, thus “reinforcing the structural limits of urban reform” (191).

The last chapter and the conclusion function together as an extended postscript that traces the rise of a techno-bureaucratic alliance of planners and state authorities that ultimately undermined more equitable forms of urban growth and eroded environmental rights. During the second half of the twentieth century, industrialization and real-estate speculation took center stage in the story of urbanization.

Matthew Vitz has written an original, archivally rich analysis that deserves to be read by all those interested in cities past and present.

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## TRANSNATIONAL WOMEN’S MOVEMENT

*Feminism for the Americas: The Making of an International Human Rights Movement.* By Katherine M. Marino. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019. Pp. 368. \$34.95 cloth.  
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Based on her award-winning dissertation, Katherine Marino’s book convincingly argues for the place of Latin American feminists, not only as crucially important thinkers and activists, but also in the development of foundational ideas of human rights. Countering the idea that Latin American feminists lagged behind their US and European counterparts, Marino demonstrates how these women took the lead in developing pivotal ideas surrounding social and economic rights and intersectionality in the early twentieth century. Mainstream white US and European feminists did not seriously consider these ideas until late in the century. Marino argues that an anti-imperialist, anti-fascist, pan-American *feminismo americano* led to the inclusion of human rights (and specific mention of women) in the 1945 charter of the United Nations, the equal eligibility of women to participate as delegates, and the establishment of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (221).

Marino’s often thrilling account centers on the lives, convictions, and political struggles of six activists: Paulina Luisi, a Uruguayan doctor often recognized as the mother of Latin American feminism; Bertha Lutz, a Brazilian biologist who helped draft both the Brazilian constitution of 1934 and the UN charter; Clara González, a Panamanian lawyer who championed an anti-imperialist feminism for women of all social classes; Ofelia Domínguez Navarro, a Cuban lawyer and communist who championed a