

Reviews

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Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux (eds.), *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2000), pp. xiii + 381, £14.95 pb.

Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux have produced an ambitious and thought-provoking anthology on gender and the state in Latin America. Based on a conference held at the University of London in 1996, the volume begins with two introductory essays by Dore and Molyneux followed by twelve case studies. The case studies are presented chronologically and give the reader a series of ‘core samples’ of gender/state relations looking at a variety of countries, with themes ranging from women in the construction of nationalism to family law, property and the gender projects of the Cuban and Mexican revolutions. The result is a complex and nuanced survey of gender and the state that, by juxtaposing historical and contemporary studies, provides a sense of how the questions have changed (as women move from being largely passive objects of property and custody legislation to political actors) and illustrates how the nexus between gender and the state can be a productive focus for comparative research.

Dore’s introductory essay argues against the assumption that the spread of liberal values in the nineteenth century improved women’s status. Far from enhancing women’s rights, privatisation undermined indigenous women’s rights to communal land, and the ‘modernisation’ of property laws meant that single women and widows lost their ability, traditional under Spanish law, to own property in their own name. As Church courts gave way to secular jurisprudence, canon law, which had ‘protected men’s and women’s freedom to select their spouse’, was abandoned. State courts ‘sustained the father’s power to overrule – and rule over – his children.’ (p. 13). Limits on suffrage ensured that the new republics would be ‘exclusionary’, and the instability of post-independence states made elite families ‘the glue that held society together’, (p. 15) and gave those nominally ‘republican’ regimes a stake in naturalising the patriarchal family.

Molyneux’s essay points out that until recently feminist theory was ‘more concerned with providing a gendered account of capitalist development than with ... state power’ (p. 34). Noting the influence of theories of citizenship and social power in contemporary discussions of the state, she suggests that different kinds of regimes (liberal-oligarchic, corporatist-populist, bureaucratic-authoritarian, socialist and neoliberal) rest on different assumptions about gender and have different implications for the gender order (p. 41).

The case studies are a testimony to the rich variety of ways in which the question of gender and the state can be addressed and they repeatedly disprove the liberal myth that the private is separate (and insulated) from the public.

Eugenia Rodríguez examines marital disputes in Costa Rica from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, showing how expectations of more companionable marriage modernised but did not eliminate patriarchy. As the civil state supplanted the Church, the liberal state ‘took a more active role’ in regulating and transforming the domestic life of the popular classes (p. 91). María Eugenia Chaves shows the connection between race and gender in the official and social association of illegitimacy and ‘sexual ardor’ with slave status, and she argues that slave women appropriated the language of citizenship to pursue their freedom. Rebecca Earle finds that women’s participation in the Colombian independence war was both celebrated and feared, and suggests that the tolerance of rape was one mechanism for maintaining male control. Laura Gotkowitz traces how the narrative of the death of Bolivian *mestiza-chola* market women at the hands of royalists during the independence war has been reinterpreted in class and ethnic terms during different phases of Bolivia’s history.

Dore’s examination of the privatisation of property regimes during the ‘coffee revolution’ in Nicaragua (1840–1900) provides evidence not only that women lost access to land, but also that the rape of Indian women ‘was one means of fortifying ladino authority in the pueblo’ (p. 155), and that increasingly powerful municipal institutions did not mean a wider distribution of power but the creation of effective local ‘instruments of class, ethnic and gender rule’ (p. 166). Taking as her starting point Nadia Youssef’s classic comparison of women in Latin America and the Middle East, Donna Guy asks why the Argentine state was relatively active in weakening patriarchal power from the late nineteenth century on. Although civil code reforms did not recognise the legal status of illegitimate children until 1948, Argentine law increasingly granted women more equality in marriage, which Guy attributes to the impact of socialist ideals brought to Argentina by southern European immigrants. Nonetheless, fathers continue to show interest in keeping control over the family, as she illustrates using testimonial evidence but also infers from Argentina’s failure to criminalise incest (p. 190).

Karin Alejandra Roseblatt traces a complex picture of gender and class under the Popular Front governments in Chile in the 1930s and 1940s, observing that both socialists and the right could agree on family agendas that civilised the poor. Post-revolutionary Mexico’s relatively enlightened efforts to reach women, including the rationalisation of household tasks, were limited by women’s rejection of the revolution’s anti-clerical stance, according to Mary Kay Vaughan, who notes as well that rural modernisation offered women new options but lowered women’s status by rejecting their traditional skills.

The last three cases are contemporary: Molyneux provides a balanced review of the Cuban Federation of Women, arguing that the FMC has had stronger and weaker moments, but that it has always been constrained by its primary goal of serving the revolutionary state. Jo Fisher’s and Fiona Macaulay’s chapters, taken together, make it possible to understand why women’s movements have played such different roles in Argentina and Brazil. Macaulay’s analysis of CFEMEA, an independent lobbying and monitoring group that arose out the failure of Brazil’s national Women’s Council, illustrates the continuing innovative characteristics of the Brazilian women’s movement. CFEMEA offers an alternative to the ‘bureaucratic’ strategy of women’s ‘machineries’ and may suggest ways to bridge the gap between those who defend autonomy and those who think progress can only be made by engaging the state.

Hidden Histories is a must-read for scholars and suitable for graduate students and advanced undergraduates. It is well-documented and well-written and fully supports Joyce Gelb's point that feminist advances depend on the national context. Stimulated by Dore and Molyneux's analyses, I would pose three further questions. First, is there a way to agree on a definition of the state? Does the state exist 'to enable the exploiting classes to appropriate labor and resources from the subordinate classes', as Dore argues on page 7? Or is it a 'set of coercive and administrative institutions [to] exercise various forms of power', as Molyneux writes on page 37? Or an 'arena of conflict' with 'limited transformative power' and 'reciprocal (if usually unequal)' relations between the state and society, as she suggests on page 38? In my view, most of the case chapters favour the third definition of an 'interactive' state, and with various groups, including feminists themselves, using the state's coercive and 'normalising' power to establish or shore up the gender order they prefer.

Second, how can Molyneux's insight that different regimes support different gender orders be further developed, and particularly how could it be used to help understand the roles of women in democracies that are not only 'neoliberal' but also neo-clientelist and neo-authoritarian?

My third question is taken directly from Molyneux: if Latin American women have learned not to 'challenge' the language of sex difference but to 'deploy' it 'in ways that destabilized the traditional binaries that [disqualified] them from full citizenship' (p. 45), do their experiences offer any generalisable lessons on the 'unresolved question' of how 'citizenship can be reformulated to encompass gender difference without at the same time signifying inequality' (p. 36)? *Hidden Histories* provides material for thinking about these issues, and raises the bar in the quality of its analysis.

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James Dunkerley, *Warriors and Scribes: Essays in the History and Politics of Latin America* (London and New York: Verso, 2000), pp. 211, £40, £15 pb; \$60.00, \$20 pb.

'Of course', James Dunkerley reminds us, 'one should never underestimate the power of even the most incomprehensible and leaden rhetoric when it is delivered with energy and conviction' (p. 4). Not a comment on the recent election campaign in the United States (but rather on the 'peripatetic' René Barrientos, air force general and Bolivian president in the 1960s), it reminds us of a great truth that transcends its immediate subject. The transcendent qualities of all seven essays in this volume, which Dunkerley dedicates to 'the Effendi' (referring to the sort of people who read this journal), make them great reading. No one writing today in English on Latin America can match Dunkerley's mix of deep conviction, keen eye for human and humanising detail, analytical rigour and exuberant wit.

All seven essays collected here appeared in the 1990s, three as occasional papers put out by the University of London's Institute of Latin American Studies, which Dunkerley now directs. They mirror in diverse and interesting ways the

transformation of Latin America's warriors and scribes in the years since democratic transitions and the end of Cold War. They also track Dunkerley's own evolution from the 'outrage' that produced his two volumes on Central America in the 1980s¹ (and a third on the 'pacification' of the region in the 1990s)² to the lively 642-page magisterial meditation on *Americana: The Americas in the World, around 1850* (or 'Seeing the Elephant' as the Theme for an Imaginary Western) that has just appeared.³

Dunkerley's convictions past and present ring through his essay on the state of the left in Latin America. He reviews Jorge Castañeda's *Utopia Disarmed*, but does much more. The title of the essay, 'Beyond Utopia', might suggest an even greater distance from the revolutionary goals of the heroic 1960s than Castañeda's title, but the suggestion is misleading. Dunkerley and Castañeda (appointed Mexico's foreign minister in December 2000 by new president Vicente Fox) both understand that in modern Latin America even a minimalist social democracy would represent an 'exceptionally radical' (p. 37) break with the past. As utopias lost the power to inspire, the savagery unleashed against them has also mostly faded, but, as Dunkerley points out, the misery the utopians sought to end forever prevails unabated.

Three of the essays treat Bolivia, a nation whose historic and historical travails have attracted fewer of the Effendi than most other countries in the Americas. Bolivia is where Dunkerley's work in Latin American history began, with books on the Trotskyist-led tin miners' union during and after the revolution of 1952 and on the history of the Bolivian military up to the Chaco War.⁴ The first of these three essays treats warrior Barrientos and scribe Régis Debray in a counterpoint that illuminates both men and their times. The second analyses the elections of 1997 in expert detail and ends with reflections on the exhumation of Che Guevara and how much the country has changed since the 50s and 60s. The third, which ends the book, rescues from obscurity one Francisco (né Francis) Burdett O'Connor, neither 'warrior felled in his prime' nor 'scribe left to ruminate', an Irish-born hero of Bolivia's independence war from a family prominent in the struggle for Irish rights.

Serious Effendi may find the most interesting of these essays to be Dunkerley's 'interpretive sketch' of work on Latin American history and politics in the United Kingdom since the 1960s. In what could be seen as an excess of cultural patriotism, Dunkerley celebrates the British 'history-as-narrative' school with its methodology (generous word) of 'empirical pragmatism'. There would be more to celebrate if the only alternatives on offer consisted of the more 'hyperventilated versions of hybridity' or the 'misconceived, clumsy and politically manipulative' cultural or civilisational determinisms whose odours have wafted across the Atlantic from time to time in recent years. Dunkerley's suspicion of metamodels and airy speculation on politics runs parallel: '... an approach that is not clouded by culturalist pre-determinism, institutional triumphalism or presumption of a

¹ *Power in the Isthmus: A Political History of Modern Central America* (London, 1988) and *The Long War: Dictatorship and Revolution in El Salvador* (London 1982).

² *The Pacification of Central America: Political Change in the Isthmus, 1987–1993* (London 1994).
³ (London, 2000).

⁴ *Rebellion in the Veins: Political Struggle in Bolivia, 1952–82* (London, 1984) and *Orígenes del poder militar y historia política e institucional del ejército boliviano hasta 1935*, trans. Rose Marie Vargas (La Paz, 1987).

quasi-conspiratorial ‘capitalist logic’ stands a fair chance of producing analysis of enduring value’ (pp. 109–10).

One of the best essays in the collection is a ‘broad and speculative’ but also penetrating synthesis of ‘The United States and Latin America in the Long Run (1800–1945)’. It begins with periodisation, then moves to survey topics such as Cuba (‘the temptation to pathologise is exceptionally strong,’ p. 122), Mr Monroe’s doctrine (‘best seen as a declaration of containment’, p. 123), its corollaries and critics, the economics of US dominance and the compulsion to intervention. A seventh essay reviews Hollywood’s treatment of Central America in the 1980s and 1990s, dominated by violent exploitation films with a ‘total absence of either humour or history as elements to temper threadbare plots’ (p. 76–7), though several attract insightful commentary.

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James Dunkerley, *Americana: The Americas in the World, around 1850 (or ‘Seeing the Elephant’ as the Theme for an Imaginary Western)* (London and New York: Verso, 2000), pp. xxvi + 642, £29.00 hb.

As United States volunteer soldiers trudged up from Veracruz en route to occupying the capital of Mexico, many of them carried William Hickling Prescott’s *The Conquest of Mexico* (1843) in their rucksacks. Presumably, reading of Cortés’s grand exploits would whet soldierly appetites for modern conquests. But if Prescott’s great tome appeared to give Anglo-Americans some historical preparation, if not predestination, Prescott himself was singularly disenchanted with the idea of a ‘second’ conquest of Mexico. Writing in May 1846, he confessed that ‘war spirit has been the bane of more democracies than one, and I fear we are reserved to point a moral, if we do nothing to adorn a tale.’ Henry Thoreau refused to pay his poll tax levied to finance the Mexican War. North and South Americans, even while they conjured new terms to depict the course of history, like ‘manifest destiny’, also contended with increasingly convergent histories. Whether they liked it or not.

In the 1850s the histories of the Americans overlapped in significant ways. This moment in the making of the New World is captured vividly and carefully in James Dunkerley’s series of essays, interspersed with three extended transcriptions of trial records. The first of these trials is an equity case in New Orleans, the second, a treason case in Ireland (treated here as an ‘American country in the wrong continent’), and the final case is of alleged murder in Bolivia. All occur in the late 1840s–early 1850s and help illustrate a moment in ‘American’ history in which the rule of law emerged as an ordering mechanism in social life and national boundaries began to frame the territorial reaches of New World nation-states. Indeed, Dunkerley’s wanderings through this conjuncture challenge some stubborn assumptions about Latin American ‘backwardness’ and difficulty dealing with modernity. In this book the 1850s come across as a moment of possibility and optimism, not just north of the Río Grande, but south too. Dunkerley questions some theses about ‘civilisations’ and the profound incommensurability of American – whether Anglo or Spanish – cultures. In this

sweeping book, Marx and Melville, Sarmiento and Douglass share a common world of reflection at the dawn of the modern age.

America was somehow different. Maybe it was the frontier. Maybe it was the political triumph of republicanism. Maybe, as Hannah Arendt once observed, Americans were the first to be confident that history could be made anew. Either way, Dunkerley wants to portray a hemisphere that possesses some common roots and trajectories that make it unique but united. In a very suggestive and typical passage, Dunkerley manages to braid the founding feminist writings in and on the Americas, by telling the stories of the more or less simultaneous exploration of the frontiers of sexual politics in the *cursus vitae* of Margaret Fuller and Flora Tristán. Sex, too, as it turns out, was also different in the Americas.

As the reactions of Prescott and Thoreau suggest, not all Americans liked the way this converging history was being handled. Of course, Mexicans and Nicaraguans were especially unnerved at the tampering by their northern neighbour in their domestic affairs. But at the same time, North American expansion could bring great things to neighbours, as Sarmiento happily observed. At other times, Anglo-Americans served the cause of Latin American sovereignty, as the wonderfully told story of Francisco Burdett O'Connor's service in Bolívar's campaign and the town of Tarija shows. Border-crossing in the Americas, culturally as well as physically, produced optimism as well as anxiety. This is where the extended subtitle comes in. Seeing the elephant operates as a simile for the viewer's ability to perceive one big thing – a hemisphere suspended in a shared conjuncture – despite the temptation to see this world as fragmented, unstable and fit only for a post-modern sensibility. From the ground up, Dunkerley wants to capture what was conflictual and common on a giant hemispheric scale.

While it is easy to get absorbed in the stories, vignettes and the many connections that Dunkerley masterfully weaves together, it is not always easy to keep one's eye on the elephant. Perhaps this is as it should be. The big thing about America is not a simple monochrome. Yet, the decision not to tell a conventional narrative of 'emergence', or 'transformation' or classic 'rise-and-fall' of such and such an arrangement means that the book is not organised around a plot-driven time line. It reads more like a series of *radiografías*, to borrow Martínez Estrada's image, of a hemisphere poised to enter, indeed create, the modern without always knowing it.

The images of the modern are very striking: but most especially, what seems to unite them are the protean forms of the struggle for freedom. Pulling this out of the prose takes a bit of work, as Dunkerley prefers to let the original texts, sometimes very extended, do the talking. He also prefers, not unreasonably, the style of mid-nineteenth century writing, in which the author and reader move from frame to frame to examine close-up the subjects of history. The book is at once very playful and beautiful. But it also requires reflection, since the author self-consciously does not tell readers what is going on, nor explicitly how the frames fit together. In our age, we are of course accustomed to a very different kind of authorial voice, more didactic, more 'explanatory', especially in the social sciences.

The struggle for freedom, to fight, to dress, to work, and the liberation from necessity is in fact a personal reading. What Dunkerley succeeds in retrieving is

a sense of pan-American possibilities without presuming the hegemony of any particular order. Perhaps this is the perspective we need to revive in the second era of American 'free trade'.

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Doris Sommer (ed.), *The Places of History: Regionalism Revisited in Latin America* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 1999), pp. vi + 310, £34.00, £11.95 pb.

After its publication as a special issue of the *Modern Language Quarterly* (June 1996) under the title *The Places of History: Regionalism Revisited in Latin America* this selection of short essays is now launched in book form. The title of the book is the same as that given to the special issue, but an additional essay, written by Vicente L. Rafael about the problems of languages and nationalism in the Philippines, has been included with the original group of works. In total, there are twenty-one essays with an average length of fifteen pages. The diversity and the brevity of these studies are two aspects emphasised in the book's introduction. 'The long list of short pieces was an intentional feature of this collection and was meant to represent a broad range of contemporary criticism within a limited space' (p. 1) writes Doris Sommer, its editor, in the opening essay, which also shares the title of the whole selection. The explanation offered by Sommer with regard to the aspects that give cohesion to the joint presentation of these essays is extremely brief. Sommer finds that the texts have an 'experimental' quality, she even calls them 'essays in reading' (p. 1). Although this idea is an interesting one, it is not explained in great depth in the pages that follow. Sommer states that all these essays demonstrate an interest in what she calls 'regionalism', a cultural phenomenon linked to a certain *criollismo* that seems to react against *globalisation*. 'But' she writes later 'it is history that occupies a privileged place here, probably because history focuses the same kinds of specificities that have, again, come to the fore in creative literary studies' (p. 3). These texts certainly show some of the academic tendencies successfully established in the area of Latin American Cultural Studies. The attention given by the scholars included in this selection to a Latin America divided in strategic regions is not new. The kind of regionalisation presented here has been a dominant criteria in the US academy in the last fifty years. The areas of study (testimonial genre, gender studies, mapping and borders) and themes (cruelty, politics as spectacle, terror, prostitution and the body) included in this book have been the predominant ones in the US academy for at least fifteen years. One should add to this that the majority of the researchers included in this book (of whom almost half are Latin Americans) have been formed, and gained recognition, within this influential trend.

As one *could* expect, the privileged geographical regions are: Mexico (Benítez-Rojo, Castillo, Gaylord, Limón, Vogeley), Argentina (Ludmer, Masiello, Taylor) and Cuba (Ramos, Molloy; both authors working on Martí). The unexpected inclusion of a couple of essays on Puerto Rico (Díaz-Quinonez, Flores) and one on the Philippines (the text by Rafael, previously mentioned) is healthy. The remaining texts are individual studies dedicated to Brazil (Schwarz), Chile (Pratt),

Guatemala (Beverly), Peru (Mazzotti), Venezuela (Rotker) and two more essays on more general topics: one on modernisation (Alonso) and another on the problems of cultural and ethnic superimposition (Mignolo).

It is perhaps unfortunate that the pages in which Sommer comments on the concepts and of 'regionalism', '*criollismo*' and 'globalisation, (pp. 2; 5) do not fully clarify their relevance for the collection or confirm the need to re-launch the diverse and disperse material that constitute this book. The idea that suffers most in the introductory essay and in the global conception of this edition is that of a generalised historical focus that gives cohesion to the selection. Each of the essays functions within specific historical and cultural contexts, as one can expect from this kind of cultural analysis, but they do not make the historical analysis the principal angle of their studies.

Time has taken its toll. What could have been a significant survey of the work in progress done in the area of Latin American Cultural Studies, under the influence of the US academy, in 1996, appears less relevant a few years later. Works such as those by Mignolo and Alonso have recently been published as parts of wider studies and can be better read within those than they could in Sommer's book. In conclusion, *The Places of History: Regionalism Revisited in Latin America* is an interesting book in so far as each of the essays selected is interesting. The editor's introduction is probably the weakest essay, the ideas discussed in it seem to anticipate conclusions of a project that has not yet been carried out. The publication of this book, as a possible part of that vaguely presented project, responds, perhaps, to the particular intellectual and academic demands or dynamics currently in fashion in the field of Latin American Cultural Studies in the United States.

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Nancy Mitchell, *The Danger of Dreams: German and American Imperialism in Latin America* (Chapel Hill, NC, and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), pp. xi + 312, £39.95, £15.95 pb.

Germany and the United States were late entries in the race for empire. Late to gain nationhood – though the USA had a century head start – both countries concentrated on contiguous areas. In both cases this sort of expansion was perceived as nation building. Empire building, the seizure of overseas lands, only began in the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

The similarities in timing and trajectory of the two budding imperial powers led many contemporary observers to predict a clash, one which many historians have emphasised. Because both countries were among the richest, fastest growing and militarily strongest emerging industrial giants, they have been viewed as enemies when they cast their eyes overseas. Nancy Mitchell focuses on this purported conflict in the arena of Latin America with a well-researched, gracefully written and subtle analysis of three principal theatres of contact: Venezuela, Brazil and Mexico in the first two decades of the twentieth century. She finds German aggression much exaggerated.

Professor Mitchell has chosen well-worked mines in which to search for nuggets. Diplomatic historians – and this is very decidedly a diplomatic

history – have paid a good deal of attention to the cases studied here. What is unusual about this work is that it looks more broadly at US–German relations rather than pouring over the details of each case in isolation. Mitchell has explored in great depth the archives of Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States, especially those of the foreign office and the navy for each.

She makes an important methodological point: ‘there was a glaring disjunction between the image of German policy and the policy itself.’ (p. 159). There has been a tendency to emphasise the rhetoric of key actors and downplay what was actually done.

Professor Mitchell acknowledges that the rhetoric was indeed sometimes bellicose. Germany and the USA did make war plans against each other. Emperor Wilhelm II after 1897 became enamoured with his ‘Weltpolitik’ which caused him to turn some attention away from European affairs to overseas events. He did dream and speak of expanding German influence and, to some extent, put his money where his mouth was by financing a vast expansion of his navy. But *The Danger of Dreams* convincingly demonstrates that diplomatic historians have been misled by the pithy quote of an ambassador or Emperor Wilhelm’s marginal scribbles on consular or naval reports. Actions spoke louder than words, and German actions were rather timid. It seems true that many Germans wanted to challenge the Monroe Doctrine. Certainly until the 1890s it was an international doctrine recognised mostly in the breach. The weakness of the US navy made the doctrine an idle threat.

However, by the turn of the twentieth century US actions in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Haiti, Panama, Hawaii, the Dominican Republic and Central America had put teeth in that doctrine. Germans did not care enough about the Americas to contest it in any serious way. In part this was because, as Mitchell shows, Teddy Roosevelt, often seen as the most imperialist of US presidents, was only concerned with European territorial acquisition. He felt that Europeans had the right to ‘spank’ ‘misbehaving’ Latin American countries that reneged on their debts. He allowed the Germans to respond aggressively to the Haitian and Venezuelan governments. But German reticence also stemmed from greater interest in internal European affairs and colonies in Africa. Germans simply did not care so much about the Americas.

Professor Mitchell points out that war planning, especially of the new navies, was separate from diplomacy. She also notes that government officials were often in disagreement on policy. My own research on international relations in Brazil and Mexico, also using German archives, confirms Mitchell’s conclusions. German aspirations far outstripped their possibilities to realise them. And Germans were not of a single mind. In fact, I wonder to what extent we can talk about German policy. In discussing Mexico Mitchell notes that ‘The bankers, the traders, and Wilhelmstrasse were often at cross purposes’ (p. 164). In Brazil the German government was reluctant to aid immigrants of German heritage or German companies. In Mexico, some German bankers wanted the USA to intervene to bring stability and protect German capital. German capitalists were often capitalists first and nationalists second.

I wish that Professor Mitchell had explored the private sector more instead of allowing us to pry into the correspondence of a few important diplomats. Although she differentiates between ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ imperialism, she says little about the contributions of the private sector, who were the leaders of

informal imperialism. The navies were important symbols. Seizing colonies was symbolically important. But in the era of high imperialism, as opposed to colonialism, the principal protagonists were capitalists, especially bankers, not diplomats. She quotes one observer saying that Mexico was a site for war between the interests of Pearson and Rockefeller. The dreams and actions of capitalists as well as admirals, diplomats and executives is central to understanding the dynamic of this period.

I applaud the use of multiple archives and the focus on several arenas of action. However, as is typical for many diplomatic histories, this is a study of a few great men, all of whom reside in the great powers. Mitchell has not consulted archives in any of the Latin American countries studied nor are any sources in Portuguese or Spanish cited. Hence Latin Americans are viewed as objects of imperial activity with little participation themselves. Although Mitchell certainly does recognise that President Castro in Venezuela, congressmen in Brazil, and President Huerta, as well as some revolutionaries in Mexico, were nationalists who did not necessarily bow to the will of the great powers, the question is framed in terms of German–US relations more than the agency of the Latin American states. Only in regard to Brazil is bilateral trade seen as being instigated by Latin Americans, not the European power. If one wants to understand Latin America's place in international relations, Latin Americans have to be considered as actors.

The Danger of Dreams provides a reasoned, well-researched and geographically broad analysis of German–United States relations in Latin America. In that it makes an important contribution to our understanding of one aspect of imperialism.

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Peter Hervik, *Mayan People Within and Beyond Boundaries: Social Categories and Lived Identity in Yucatán* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999), pp. xxxiii + 214, £30.00 hb; \$48.00 hb.

Yucatec ethnography, thanks to Redfield, was once a prominent field of study in US anthropology. When interest in the Maya shifted from Yucatán to the highlands of Guatemala and Mexico and interest in Redfieldian questions shifted to other paradigms, Yucatec Maya ethnography slipped into an obscurity that is only recently being lifted by a new generation of US-based dissertations that both pose new questions and address persistent themes with contemporary concepts. Hervik's book is an important addition to this region of Maya studies, for these reasons and for bringing a European perspective to what is otherwise dominated by Anglo-American understandings and debates.

This ethnography is a study of 'politics and practices of representing Maya' (pp. xxi) based in analyses of the categories of Maya identity used by non-local, primarily academic-outsider discourses and by 'insider'/local agents of a particular Yucatec Maya community, which is the anthropologically well-studied town of Oxkutzcab. The main thesis is that the category 'Maya' has been constructed by non-Maya agents and rather indiscriminately imposed on the heterogeneous communities in Yucatán without consideration of the terms and

experience of self-identification by those same individuals and collectivities. The resulting disjunction between internal and external categories of identity is explored by Hervik in terms of first, the politics of representation by different, insider versus outsider, actors; second, the value and validity of ethnicity as an ethnographically substantive notion by which to analyse the heterogeneity of Maya lived experience and expressions of collective self-identity; and third, the culturally constructed experience and meaning of continuity and discontinuity between the past and present of a sociocultural group or community.

Chapter one presents a general history of the community of Oxlutzcab as a way to pose the ethnographic questions of the study, 'Who are the people living in Oxlutzcab today?' (p. 14), what are the terms of imposed and self-ascribed identities, and 'how [do] ethnic groups transform into other kinds of social groups' (p. 20). Important here is Hervik's critique of the academic and popular stereotyping of Maya people in terms of traditional agricultural work, that is, as peasants. Chapter two continues this issue by defining the meanings or 'semantic density' of the social categories of 'mestizo', 'Maya', and 'catrin', in terms of the idealised forms of dress, language and occupation. Hervik's history of these categories, which demonstrates their changing values, is pivotal to his argument against the academic belief in facile cultural continuity, especially in terms of ethnic identity. Unfortunately, a heavy and uncritical reliance on Redfield (as well as Hansen) and a lack of engagement with the rich Mayanist literature, not only the classics (e.g., Roys, Edmonson, Bricker, Tozzer) and revisionist work (Fariss, Restall, Lincoln), but the published indigenous texts (the Chilam Balams; Matthew Restall's translations) weakens the argument in this and the following chapter. Chapter three analyses representations of contemporary and ancient Maya in *National Geographic Magazine* articles of the twentieth century and in Bishop de Landa's sixteenth century 'History of the Things of Yucatan' with the purpose of isolating the way in which non-Maya, academic and popular discourses 'archaeologise' the Maya. The critique, that these external representations 'position the Mayas in the past without allowing ordinary Mayas any active role as caretakers of their own destiny' (p. 89), is a disappointing foray into a 'cultural studies' approach. If there had been engagement with the postcolonial and subaltern critiques of representation as well as the growing literature in Maya studies on this topic¹ perhaps this chapter's conclusion would have gone beyond the obvious point that what A says about B is not, and cannot be, controlled by B and therefore will most likely not reflect B's interests.

In chapters four to six, Hervik presents his ethnographic data on local identifications and how ethnographers (outsiders) can best comprehend these insider/local definitions of cultural, class and ethnic belongings; he argues that academic understandings must be based on insider self identifications in situations of lived experience and practices. Unfortunately, the ethnographic presentation of situational action/activities and experience is truncated throughout chapters four to six and then left to a conceptual level in the concluding chapter seven. Chapter four continues the discussion of chapter two, but with respect to categories of class and ethnic distinction; and, chapter five summarises aspects of local cultural reappropriation of (primarily colonial) Maya cultural heritage, yet

¹ Quetzil E. Castañeda, *In the Museum of Maya Culture* (Minneapolis, 1996).

Diane Nelson, *Finger in the Wound* (Berkeley, 1999).

Kay B. Warren, *Indigenous Movements and their Critics* (Princeton, 1998).

without thick descriptions of events/activities, quoted voices/texts or dialogically presented native statements. Chapter six is the most ethnographically interesting for it maps how different agents (Hervik the ethnographer, a local culture broker and a US folklorist) negotiate the meanings of cultural categories and their own positions as authorities of Maya culture. With this example, Hervik proposes the concept of ‘shared social experience’ as the way to overcome the contradictory position vis-à-vis external/internal identifications in which he has placed himself. Hervik claims to avoid ‘postmodernist’ pitfalls with this concept. However, there is weak engagement with the last two decades of work from cultural criticism, dialogical anthropology and experimental ethnography on precisely this problem of representation except through citation of the Northern European reading of the writing culture school. Similarly, the analysis of ethnicity is weaker for missing a fuller discussion of major works from the literature on ethnicity. These comments lead to the irony of Hervik’s preface in which he notes that two anthropologists of Yucatán conducted ‘fieldwork roughly at the same time’ in villages ‘two kilometres apart’, without having found reason to cite, much less discuss, each others work (pp. xxiv).

Ethnographies that attempt to do other than empirically report facts, such as this study, are frail and prone to various inadequacies. Hervik’s book is an important contribution that helps move Yucatec Maya ethnography beyond the Redfieldian paradigm of continuity and tradition. Unfortunately, the impoverished editorial work may distract readers from this value.

University of Hawaii

QUETZIL E. CASTAÑEDA

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Elías José Palti (ed.), *La política del disenso: La ‘polémica en torno al monarquismo’ (México, 1848–1850)...y las aporías del liberalismo* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998), pp. 471. Mx\$194.00 pb.

This volume offers, for the first time, a commendable anthology of ‘conservative’ texts written between 1840 and 1850, and which were published either as individual pamphlets or articles that featured in the main Mexico City-based newspapers of the period, namely *El Tiempo*, *El Siglo XIX*, *El Monitor Republicano* and *El Universal*. Furthermore, the selection deliberately avoids a chronological approach, following, instead, a thematic one that provides the chosen texts with a particularly noteworthy intellectual coherence. In brief, after Palti offers examples of ‘conservative’-monarchist writing for the years 1840–1846, the main bulk of the anthology (1848–1850) is divided into thematic sections that cover the analysis ‘conservatives’ provided of the moderate government and Mexico’s context following the Mexican–American War (1846–1848): their views on electoral fraud and political divisions; popular sovereignty; the origins of republicanism; human or fundamental rights; law and order, the issue of legitimacy; freedom of thought; constitutional practices; and, last but not least, the problems that characterised party politics.

Palti provides, moreover, an excellent 51 page introduction in which he sets the political context and raises a number of key historiographical issues regarding the relevance of the included texts. At a time when a new school of revisionist

historians has only started to subvert long-held and simplistic views on who the ‘conservatives’ were and what they represented, Palti’s contribution to the discussion is welcome. Until now, and with the exception of Gastón García Cantú’s previous anthology, the many and varied publications the ‘conservative’ factions produced have remained forgotten in the archives. For the majority of students of Mexican history who have not had access to the archives, the difficulties they have encountered in actually reading what the ‘conservatives’ said, has meant that, almost inevitably, they have relied on partisan secondary sources that, overall, have tended to extol the intellectual abilities of the ‘liberals’, while denigrating the political proposals their opponents made. It is only recently that a number of scholars have started to dismantle the generation-long interpretations of the early national period in which, time and again, the more traditionalist liberals have been simplistically depicted as ‘reactionaries’, ‘cangrejos’, ‘vendepatrias’, ‘traitors’ and ‘turncoats’. Therefore, Palti succeeds in achieving two noteworthy objectives. First, in his introduction, he highlights the extent to which the sophisticated discourse of the ‘conservatives’ managed to illustrate with great lucidity the many contradictions and flaws that lay at the heart of the hegemonic republican movement. It was not a simple question of monarchism versus republicanism, a defence of colonial practices versus independent ones. The debate was far more complex, covering a whole range of issues relating to notions, at times as impossible to define as political legitimacy and sovereignty. ‘Liberals’ and ‘conservatives’ alike wanted what was best for their country. The quest for progress and modernity was not something that only the ‘liberals’ were after. Their antagonism lay elsewhere, in their antagonistic views on the pace of reform, the importance of tradition, the need for pragmatic solutions to an ongoing crisis that abstract concepts were failing to bring to an end. Second, by providing, at last, a coherent anthology of the ‘conservatives’ writings, Palti succeeds in providing Spanish-speaking students with the chance to see for themselves what the monarchist proposals entailed, and what the so-called reactionaries were hoping to achieve within a general liberal framework they belonged to in the same way that their opponents did. In brief, this book with Palti’s introduction and its extremely useful anthology will offer future students of Mexican history the important opportunity of analysing the political debate of the late 1840s for themselves.

University of St Andrews

WILL FOWLER

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Peter V. N. Henderson, *In the Absence of Don Porfirio: Francisco León de la Barra and the Mexican Revolution* (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 1999), pp. xiii + 338, \$55.00 hb.

Peter Henderson’s latest book is less a biography of a relatively obscure interim president of Mexico than an ambitious revisionist history of the Mexican Revolution during the critical years 1910–1911, covering the 1910 presidential elections, the Maderista revolt, the collapse of the Porfirian dictatorship and the interim regime of 1911. Using as a leitmotiv the life of the suave Porfirian lawyer and diplomat Francisco León de la Barra, who was temporarily and unwillingly

thrust into the presidency in 1911, Henderson explores in minute detail the political developments of this transitional phase in Mexican history.

Detecting broad continuities between the Porfirian and Maderista regimes, Henderson argues that by the spring of 1911 de la Barra, Francisco I. Madero, and many Porfirians and 'civilian Maderistas' shared a 'progressive consensus' in favor of democracy, law and order, developmentalist capitalism and modest social reform. As children of the *porfiriato*, both men defended the socio-economic status quo, private property rights and continued foreign investment. They sought to reestablish peace via the demobilisation of unruly popular forces and eschewed radical and violent change in favour of paternalistic reform and the moral education of the lower classes. Madero's 'revolution' had in reality been little more than a negotiated settlement to rid the country of Porfirio Díaz. De la Barra's reformism anticipated that of his successor. He espoused and protected the democratic ideals generally attributed to Madero (who himself failed to rein in the often blatantly undemocratic actions of his followers), created a National Agrarian Commission and the nation's first Labour Department, an accomplishment generally credited to Madero, and attempted to expand primary, especially rural, education. Continuity instead of change characterised the transition. Impatient popular forces remained unsatisfied with this elite progressivism and sought violent solutions to their grievances. However, by the 1920s it was the progressive consensus, not the popular agenda, which had prevailed.

In the Absence of Don Porfirio is copiously documented and written in a lively, accessible style. It presents clear arguments and addresses major debates on the nature and significance of the Mexican Revolution. Like many revisionists, Henderson occasionally overstates his case. For example, while the continuities between the Porfirian world and post-revolutionary Mexico are evident, it is easy to exaggerate these similarities. The elegant de la Barra, had he been able to return to Mexico, would have felt ill at ease among the rough revolutionary generals, caciques and politicians who came to rule Mexico by the 1920s. The country had changed, for better or for worse.

Henderson's study concentrates on the historiographically much-neglected elites, in itself a laudable approach. But the author has a tendency to attribute violence and disorder to the lower classes, while depicting elites as gentlemen engaged in rational discussion in search of pacific solutions. This is clear, for example, from his problematic distinction between 'civilian Maderistas' and 'popular Maderistas'. Henderson characterises popular leaders like Zapata as paranoid and unreliable. Surely, the *Caudillo del Sur* had ample reasons for distrusting the central government. The brutal devastation of Morelos at the hands of successive federal armies would prove Zapata right. Discussing Madero's assassination, the author absolves, probably correctly, Huerta's cabinet of all responsibility, but his reasoning is questionable: 'the cabinet members were outstanding men, some of the most honorable civil servants, attorneys, and writers ever to serve the country. To assume that such a body of men would stoop to murder defies all logic' (p. 204). The author has a hard time explaining how a gentleman and a scholar like de la Barra could have collaborated with military dictator Victoriano Huerta for so long and explains this action away as a terrible mistake. More likely, Huerta's 'iron hand' policies were attractive to de la Barra and many other Porfirians who longed for the reinstatement of law and order and the suppression at all costs of popular unrest.

However, Henderson's main argument that the Porfirian regime and *maderismo* had much in common is well documented and quite convincing. *In the Absence of Don Porfirio* is a welcome and accessible addition to the literature on the Mexican Revolution that invites us to 'think outside of the box' of tired traditional history. At a time when US experts of the Mexican Revolution have almost entirely abandoned political history for the more fashionable (and lucrative) study of *telenovelas* and *pulquerías*, this provocative and meticulously researched study offers a welcome and refreshing back-to-basics approach and invites us to reexamine the truisms of an earlier generation of historians. What better moment for such a reevaluation, now that the ancien regime has, once again, collapsed.

University of Wyoming

ADRIAN A. BANTJES

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Daniela Spenser, *The Impossible Triangle: Mexico, Soviet Russia, and the United States in the 1920s* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 1999), pp. xiv + 254, £34.00, £11.95 pb.

The fall of the Berlin Wall triggered an invasion of the once hermetically-sealed Soviet archives by a host of historians eager to rewrite the history of the twentieth century. Their tireless research has indeed deepened our understanding of crucial events in Latin American history such as the Cuban Missile Crisis. Now Mexican historian Daniela Spenser offers us the fruits of her archival labours, a history of the diplomatic relations between revolutionary Mexico, Soviet Russia and the United States during the 1920s. Her study is primarily based on Mexican, US and Soviet sources, including hitherto unused Comintern documents from the former Central Party archives.

The US side of this tale is already quite familiar. The importance of this study lies in the crisp way it weaves together the political and diplomatic histories of the three nations and especially in the light it sheds on Soviet influence in Mexico, a topic much neglected since the publication of Donald L. Herman's *The Comintern in Mexico* in 1974. The main focus of *The Impossible Triangle*, an English-language version of a study published in Mexico in 1998, is the history of Mexico's relations with Soviet Russia from President Alvaro Obregón's recognition of that country in 1924 to the breakdown of relations in 1930. Spenser's main contribution is to demonstrate that misinformation, prejudice and wishful thinking inspired the diplomacy of all three nations. Seduced by the economic, social and cultural advances of the Bolshevik Revolution, Mexican radicals initially identified with Soviet Russia and failed to recognise the human cost of the Bolshevik experiment. But Mexican leaders and diplomats became disturbed by the Soviets' arrogant and heavy-handed policy towards Mexico. Most Soviet analysts dismissed the Mexican Revolution as a petty bourgeois experiment in a neocolonial nation incapable of achieving true liberation due to the constraints of US imperialism. Their analysis was, of course, essentially accurate. The reader is powerfully reminded of the critical influence of a generally misguided and paranoid US foreign policy, which tended to equate Soviet and Mexican 'Bolshevism'. But while the Soviet inability to understand revolutionary

Mexico only increased after 1928, the US government was able to temper its hysterical fear of revolution and develop a more constructive policy with the help of shrewd players such as Ambassador Dwight Morrow, thus making possible a rapprochement with Mexico. Spenser argues that a combination of factors led to the final rupture of Mexican–Soviet relations: Soviet meddling in Mexico’s internal affairs, in particular its support of the railworkers’ strike in 1925–1926 and a Comintern-inspired conspiracy in 1929; the Mexican left’s growing disenchantment with Stalinism; and the realisation that a rapprochement with the United States was not only inevitable but also essential for Mexico’s future. Ultimately, Soviet diplomatic influence was negligible in comparison with that of the Colossus of the North.

Unfortunately, the archives have not divulged all their secrets. Spenser has to qualify her findings in several fascinating instances that deserve further scrutiny, such as the 1929 Comintern attempt to spark a popular uprising during the Escobar rebellion. Colourful vignettes of agent Mikhail Borodin losing the Russian crown jewels in Haiti and of Alexandra Kollontai, the feminist champion of ‘free sex’, serving tea to Mexican bureaucrats at the Soviet embassy make for amusing reading.

Spenser’s lucid and original study is a pioneering effort to incorporate the long hidden dimension of Soviet influence into a broader understanding of the diplomatic and political history of modern Mexico. While the reader might conclude that Bolshevik influence in revolutionary Mexico was insignificant, this is only true from a narrow diplomatic perspective. The author examines, to a degree, the more profound intellectual and cultural influence of the Russian revolution on Mexico, but one would like to learn more. Spenser’s conclusion that by 1930 Mexicans had become thoroughly disenchanted with Soviet Russia is somewhat overstated, and she admits that during the 1930s a new generation of politicians demonstrated renewed interest in Soviet utopianism. The breakdown of diplomatic relations did not mean the end of Russian influence. The Bolshevik dream continued to inspire Mexican politicians, teachers, labour leaders, economists and artists. One is left wondering how relations evolved during the crucial years of *cardenista* experimentation. We can only hope that Spenser will soon apply her skills to an examination of the history of *the Impossible Triangle* during the 1930s and beyond.

University of Wyoming

ADRIAN A. BANTJES

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Jonathan Heath, *Mexico and the Sexenio Curse: Presidential Successions and Economic Crises in Modern Mexico* (Washington, DC: CSIS Press, 1999), pp. xvii + 124, \$17.95 pb.

For students who have examined Mexico since the mid-1970s it has become an accepted norm of presidential politics that at the end of each six-year term, an economic crisis, accompanied by major political consequences, will occur. This pattern has been so consistent as to take on a life of its own, becoming identified as the *sexenio* (referring to the six-year presidential term) curse.

Jonathan Heath, a long-time independent economic consultant in Mexico,

provides an excellent analysis of the origins, the composition and the likelihood of the curse repeating itself into the next millennium. Heath, writing lucidly, begins with a very specific definition of what he considers an economic crisis in these circumstances, conceptualising it as a speculative attack on Mexico's currency. Using his precise definition, Heath creates a chart which clearly identifies four dates in recent presidential administrations, all of them in presidential election years or shortly thereafter (1976, 1982, 1988, 1995), where a severe crisis occurred.

In the following chapter he successfully identifies the commonalities in each of the major, historical currency crises, establishing important patterns which might explain the reemergence of similar conditions after 2000. In the next section, he explores in detail the 1994 crisis and government reactions to it. Heath again formulates another table in which he lists nearly thirty primarily, influential economic variables and the degree to which each played a role in the four most severe crises. Among the variables he considers, only five were important in all four notable cases: inflexible exchange regime, absence of *autonomous* monetary policy, large proportion of short-term debt, sudden increase in capital outflow, and policy priority on politics prior to elections. With the exception of the presence of political shocks, policy priorities on politics is the only 'political' one which appears on the list.

Using his prior analysis of these variables as a basis for understanding the Zedillo administration's macro-economic strategies, Heath evaluates administration policies during the first five years, raising significant observations and criticisms about the president and his advisers. In addition to the expected variables he considers, Heath plays close attention to the banking crisis which reared its head in the 1990s, and as he argues, makes the point that it is a major factor in his current analysis because of its political prominence.

In the final section of the book, Heath, writing well before the election campaign, speculates upon the potential for a repetition of previous crises in 2000. Among the weaknesses he identifies as relevant to a possible recurrence are: the government's credibility in terms of claims that it will avoid past financial errors and the general credibility of presidential elections. Heath's concerns in this section are, at the least, reasonable.

The author also considered that Mexico still has relatively weak political institutions. Given this situation, he believed that a close election or a major political assassination, as was the case in 1993, could lead to underlying conditions contributing to a currency crisis. For Heath, the outcome of the election is not the fundamental political issue, rather it is the closeness of the election results. Heath briefly explores some potential scenarios which consider alternatively a Cárdenas, Fox or Labastida victory and what each might mean to political stability. All of his interpretations were at that time eminently reasonable.

What did Heath offer as a prediction? He believed, given his exposition on previously influential variables, that in 2000 Mexico was likely to experience a moderate, not an acute or severe, currency crisis. Among the most important reasons why he expected this to occur is that the government had worked to minimise economic vulnerability, thus reducing the possibility of a severe financial crisis. He did not suggest, however, that by avoiding a crisis in 2000, that it necessarily means that will be repeated in 2006.

In a hundred pages, Heath presents a clear argument and supportive data which both explain past currency crises and offer insights into the future. He combines sophisticated economic analysis with political causes and consequences, making this work valuable to any social scientist interested in understanding the *sexenio* curse in Mexico.

Claremont McKenna College

RODERIC AI CAMP

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Peter M. Ward and Victoria E. Rodríguez with Enrique Cabrero Mendoza, *New Federalism and State Government in Mexico: Bringing the States Back In* (Austin, TX: The University of Texas, 1999), pp. xxiii + 182, \$20.00 pb.

In the new era of Mexican politics following the defeat of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI) in the July 2000 elections, it is refreshing to see systematic research being carried out on federalism in a country renowned for its centralised and quasi-authoritarian political system. Ward and Rodríguez demonstrate the importance of 'bringing the states back in' to political science analysis of Mexico by examining the degree to which the PRI's policy of 'new federalism' initiated during the Zedillo *sexenio* (1994–2000) was effective in promoting greater state autonomy in both political and fiscal terms. In comparing the 'most different' states of Oaxaca, Aguascalientes, Chihuahua, Guanajuato and Puebla, the book analyses five main indicators of political and fiscal decentralisation. These states share few similarities across a range of geographical, socio-economic, and political dimensions, while the impact of new federalism is expected to be the same across the five indicators. These five indicators of decentralisation include (1) increased revenue-sharing allocations to the states; (2) expanded opportunities to raise income locally; (3) increased state control of social development funds; (4) enhanced administrative capacity; and (5) clarified distribution of administrative functions across the federal, state, and municipal levels (pp. 2–4). By comparing these similar indicators of decentralisation across five different states, the authors seek to make larger inferences about the overall effectiveness of Zedillo's New Federalism.

Their analysis reveals mixed results. First, the policy only became fully articulated in 1997, halfway through Zedillo's term. Second, while the policy did lead to a certain decentralisation of political power, its transfer of fiscal responsibility and real resources to the states has been much more limited. The authors claim that 'the federation continues to hold the purse strings, and even while it deals out a greater slice of revenue and investment expenditure income to states and municipalities, it does so in ways that it continues to control' (p. 19). However governance itself in the states, has changed such that it is much more accountable and transparent, where a greater balance of power between the branches is increasingly subject to public scrutiny and electoral contestation. These conclusions are reached through a measured and a careful analysis in the book, which is presented in a straightforward and well-organised set of chapters. Chapter one summarises the main arguments and method of the book. Chapter two provides the political and economic context of the de la Madrid, Salinas and

Zedillo periods (1982–2000) in which increasing attention was being paid to the role of the states in the governance of Mexico. Chapter three outlines the theoretical debates and issues surrounding the notion of federalism; a discussion which draws heavily on the experience of federalism in the United States (but strangely not Brazil). Chapter four examines the ways in which the federal system works politically and institutionally in Mexico and how that system started to be transformed under New Federalism. Chapter five analyses the degree to which a similar set of transformations occurred in the fiscal arena. Chapter six takes a closer look at education policy, which is seen as the ‘cutting edge of decentralization efforts’ initiated under Salinas in 1992. By way of offering some preliminary conclusions, Chapter seven asks whether New Federalism and a real process of decentralisation has indeed taken root, or whether the concept itself is yet too ‘vague and illusory’ (p. 159) to have real meaning in the larger context of democratising Mexico.

It is difficult for the authors to offer substantive conclusions since New Federalism began in 1995, and only really took shape as late as 1997. However, the authors have amassed a great deal of convincing evidence that demonstrates how political authority and horizontal accountability at the state and municipal level have grown, while fiscal autonomy for states has not yet been achieved. The strategy of comparing the five different states across the similar indicators of decentralisation works well, yet a fuller analysis that includes all the states is warranted. The comparative inferences drawn from a full selection of states over a longer period of time would provide important lessons for the Latin America’s other important federation – Brazil. As it stands, this is an important and well executed study of decentralisation, which has important implications for a country whose executive is now controlled by one of the main opposition parties that has repeatedly called for greater political and fiscal autonomy for Mexican states.

University of Essex

TODD LANDMAN

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Ruby Gonsen, *Technological Capabilities in Developing Countries: Industrial Biotechnology in Mexico* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), pp. xix + 232, £45.00 hb.

The technological gap between developed and developing countries has been traditionally regarded as a central cause of continued dependency and underdevelopment. Yet, during the 1970s and 1980s some of the East Asian ‘tigers’, or newly industrialised countries (NICs), managed to reduce the gap, partly by selectively supporting technological development in some key sectors of their economies. Some enthusiastic observers of these NICs have suggested that, in the case of new technologies, developing countries might ‘leapfrog’ into development if concerted support is given to the relevant economic agents.

Ruby Gonsen’s book addresses this thesis head on by studying industrial biotechnology in Mexico. Her main focus is the assessment of Mexico’s potential to jump into the biotechnological revolution at the firm level. She asks whether firms in the bioprocessing sector, in particular, have the capacity to develop or

efficiently use new biotechnology (BT), such as that based on genetic engineering. Within an institutionalist perspective, Gonsen engages in a sophisticated strategy to address her question. On the one hand, she addresses the firm level, as well as other institutions that may enhance biotechnological capabilities, such as universities and government intervention. On the other hand, although her study is primarily within the field of development economics, she combines this expertise with her background as a chemical engineer, and uses anthropological field work in a sample of bioprocessing firms to generate most of her primary data. Gonsen then complements her Mexico case study with very useful comparative data from both developed and developing countries. The Mexican case study is thus nicely contextualised in the world economy. The result is a fairly complex picture of the interrelations between several key economic agents and institutions that account for the development of biotechnological capabilities.

Chapter two offers a good overview of the literature on technological capabilities (TC) and their determinants. Given the multiplicity of variables that affect TC development, few conclusions can be arrived at, other than making a series of qualifications. For instance, TC development will vary depending on differences in less-developed-country stages of industrialisation, differences in development goals, economic policies, different structures and sizes of their markets, resource endowments and socio-political conditions. Each of these factors shapes national TCs in one way or another. Education, or the formation of 'human capital', does come out as the only clear factor that must be enhanced. But there is also the need to balance between some protectionism and international competition; and between the goal of self-reliance and importing technology. A high skill level is also required of policy makers to seek and properly interpret information on technological trends to shape policy.

In her third chapter, also analytical, Gonsen reviews the literature on the parameters for specifically developing biotechnological capabilities (BTCs). She pursues a very reasonable assessment strategy consisting of two steps. First, she discusses the three main components involved in BTCs: core-scientific, bioprocessing and complementary capabilities. Next, she develops a classification of five categories of institutions involved in BTC development: universities, dedicated biotechnology firms, large established firms, governments and international organisations. The first three are seen as the most critical, especially when in the United States and other advanced capitalist countries they have established strong links among themselves. And yet, in all countries where some level of success with biotechnology development has been achieved, government intervention has also been critical.

Unfortunately the case of Mexico does not support the optimistic leapfrogging thesis. On the contrary, a series of variables militated against the consolidation of a reasonably capable bioprocessing industry in 1989. The industry displayed an oligopolist structure, with a few large firms and about 500 very small firms. Gonsen's study focuses on most of the large firms, which are divided about equally between those that are fully or mostly Mexican owned and those mostly or fully foreign owned. As it turns out, Mexican firms had greater technological capabilities in 1989 because the foreign-owned firms had a greater technological dependence on their mother companies or technology suppliers. But the extent of technological capabilities (TC) was limited. Gonsen defines TC as the ability to deal with a series of challenges, including 'the capacity to select, adapt and

improve existing or imported technology, and/or create new technology' (p. 7). It is on the latter aspect, innovation, where most firms in Mexico fell short. Innovation requires that firms move from appropriating the 'know-how' to the 'know-why' and develop their own new products or technologies.

Compounding the lack of innovative capabilities in Mexican firms was their bias against linking with Mexican academic institutions (p. 121). Although several research centres in Mexico have developed core-scientific capabilities that are considered world-class, Mexican industrialists viewed their technologies and products as unreliable or too risky. Ironically, it was some foreign, large and established transnational corporations (TNCs) that became the main beneficiaries of Mexican science and technology. Without the prejudices of Mexican firms, TNCs evaluated the technologies by their own merits and established some profitable agreements for technology transfer with Mexican public research centres.

Two other variables beyond the level of the firm also contributed to the failure of Mexico's bioprocessing industry by 1994. First, they had to face a new economic policy environment which moved from an inward-looking, protectionist model, to the opening of the economy to international competition. Most firms in Mexico were unable to face this competition and had to close down their bioprocessing plants. Second, even though the Mexican government declared biotechnology to be a priority area, it never established clear policy directives to encourage industrial development. Where core-scientific capabilities were developed in universities, this emerged primarily at the initiative of academics. Despite the fact that these academics also lobbied for the establishment of an industrial policy to promote biotechnology development, their pleas fell on deaf ears: the era of liberalisation made it incompatible for the Mexican government to pursue an industrial policy, even though all the developed and developing countries where biotechnology has flourished offered some form of state support (a variety of policies followed are discussed in this book).

Some limitations in this book include the following. First, given the complexity of the topic, the book will be hard to read for most people without some familiarity with the technical terms of the bioprocessing industry. A glossary might have helped mitigate this problem. Second, and more substantively, the author does not sufficiently highlight the major change in economic environment from protectionism to liberalisation. It is well recognised now that the Mexican government in the 1980s and 1990s followed an all-out liberalisation policy, outdoing other traditionally free-trading countries. The dogmatic policy approach toward free trade made it nearly impossible for the government to follow any biotechnology industrial policy. Third, even though the author produces some fairly solid evidence that support her arguments, she tends to make her conclusions rather tentative. She could have been much more forceful. Finally, Gonsen's concluding chapter is little more than a summary and reiteration of previous findings. There is hardly any attempt at expanding the theoretical underpinnings of development economics, or providing a sharper critique of the neoliberal policies that sacrificed, among others, Mexico's bioprocessing industry, which showed some considerable strength at the end of the 1980s.

Overall, though, Ruby Gonsen's book is admirable for the complexity and sophistication of her research design and execution. Its main strength is the level

of detail of the empirical study at the firm level, which few researchers would have had the appropriate skills to pursue, short of building a multi-disciplinary team. It will be of considerable interest to any student of the relationship between technological capabilities and economic development, and it should be required reading for policy makers in the area of science and technology development.

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GERARDO OTERO

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Laird W. Bergad, *Slavery and the Demographic and Economic History of Minas Gerais, Brazil, 1720–1888* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. xxix + 298, £35.00; \$54.95 hb.

A major highlight of this extensively researched quantitative examination of demography; the local, regional and export economies; and the dynamics of slavery in colonial and post-independence Minas Gerais is the innovative and creative methodology applied to reconstruct an often elusive past.

The book follows a chronological and thematic format to 1888, when chattel slavery was officially ended in Brazil, beginning with settlement after the discovery of gold reserves in the Ouro Preto/Mariana region in the 1690s. Basic needs for sustenance in areas where mineral deposits were discovered and high prices paid for nearly every commodity in the mining zone allowed thriving ancillary pastoral and agricultural activities to emerge in the late 1600s and early 1700s. Animal raising and production of animal byproducts (bacon and cheese) complemented production and trade of locally-produced and processed corn and manioc root, garden vegetables, sugar-cane and cane brandy (*pinga*) as dynamic economic activity, growing population and urban administrative centres emerged. For Bergad, ‘all sectors of the Mineiro economy were fairly commercialized from the onset of settlement in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, despite the inevitable subsistence sectors that exist in all preindustrial societies’ (p. 215).

The downturn of gold production that, on the basis of tax revenues and production figures, Bergad dates at ‘after 1760’, was, he claims, followed a decade later by a similar trend in diamond production. The transition from a mining-based, monocultural export economic structure to a diversified economy where production was largely oriented to the domestic economy. It also witnessed changes in domestic markets, as illustrated by the prevalence of subsistence agriculture on the heels of the decline in cattle raising in some mining areas after 1730.

Minas Gerais was a unique slave society. Slavery figured in all aspects of the transition as a mainstay of the mining and ancillary economies, of vital importance to society during transition to a diversified economy, and a steadfast labour resource during the take-off and expansion of the coffee economy. Yet, Bergad’s analyses of slaveholding patterns, taken from censuses and inventories, suggest that the slave population was not reliant for its growth on the transatlantic slave trade. Advancing on earlier findings about natural reproduction by Vidal Luna and Wilson Cano (1985), Bergad undertakes detailed analyses of slave sex ratios, age pyramids and time and price series to conclude

that natural reproduction was well underway in all sectors of the Minas Gerais population by the early nineteenth century. He suggests, in addition, that before the 1871 legislation that from its passage legally recognised children of slave mothers to be free at birth, the reproductive value may have been incorporated into the price structure for prime-age females at fairly steady rates over time (p. 174). Bergad's findings will astound students of slavery in Brazil and the Americas, since slave reproduction was until now held to be unique to the United States, South.

The author's time series on slave prices (by sex, origin and age) is the first of its kind in Brazil and covers the period from 1715 to 1888. Bergad divided the data into three distinct periods to evaluate average price trends in *milréis* for all healthy slaves aged 15–40. Economic and demographic interpretations in the text are weakened by the absence of semi-logarithmic calculations that would reveal relative changes in the data. From 1720, the data show a decline in slave prices, fluctuations during the late 1730s and 1740s, and a downward trend to 1789, reflecting the crisis in mining, relatively large numbers of slaves and declining demands for labour (p. 166). The second period, 1781 to 1817, is characterised by Bergad as a period of recovery in which national and international factors had little impact on the slow process of economic diversification. Despite a drastic reduction of the slave labour force, he finds that stable slave values prevailed after 1780. (p. 166). During the third period, 1818 to 1861, Bergad attributes close integration of the provincial slave market and cost of slaves with the rest of Brazil, influenced by the dynamic coastal export centres and the expanding coffee economy in Southeastern Brazil. The impact of coffee production on slave prices is highlighted by the regional trajectory of slaveholding from 1863 to 1884. In rank orders of slave prices in separate regions of Minas Gerais the highest prices appear in the southeastern coffee export zone; next highest in the diversified agriculture and ranching areas of São João and São José, followed by Ouro Preto/Mariana in the central administrative region. Diamantina, once an opulent mining centre, held the lowest slave values of any region.

Aggregated data from Mariana/Ouro Preto, São João/São José and Diamantina also suggest linkages of slaveholding patterns to the economic structure. Bergad states that slaveholding was more concentrated in plantation export societies focusing upon a few crops whereas in societies with more diversified economic structures, slaveholding tended to be more dispersed (p. 214).

Associations between economic structures and population distribution are also addressed in the author's evaluation of 'demographic rhythms' (chapter three). Free people of colour became the largest demographic group, replacing a population defined by slavery in the aftermath of the mining decline. The slave population continued to expand in absolute numbers through the nineteenth century, but, according to Bergad, in relative demographic terms slavery became ever less important. Findings on the distribution of the free non-white population are suggestive of post-boom trends that are relevant to plantation and mining areas. The Minas free non-white population was heavily concentrated in old eighteenth-century mining regions, traditionally important centres of slavery. Greater geographical mobility between 1833 and 1872 is suggested by migration of free non-whites into formerly peripheral northern districts and into the southern coffee-producing district of Paraybuna. For Bergad, this trend implies

‘the breakdown of barriers to settlement and geographical mobility among free people based upon race, obstacles that existed quite clearly during the eighteenth century’ (p. 117). Although slave and free non-whites were always the majority of Mineiros, Bergad has found that the white population by 1872 comprised 40 per cent of the provincial total (p. 120). White migration into frontier areas in the southern districts of Minas Gerais between 1822 and 1872 suggests greater social mobility among whites than among the free colored population. Migration into the southern areas also affected the spatial distribution of slaves where in 1872 31 per cent of all Minas slaves were concentrated in the coffee growing area of Paraybuna (p. 118).

Bergad has reconstructed nineteenth-century administrative *comarca* (district) boundaries (chapter three) by extrapolating back from an 1868 map to census reports of 1808, 1821, 1833, 1855 and 1872. He employs this method to maintain geographical units consistent over time and takes pains to remind readers that *comarca* definitions should be interpreted as geographical zones rather than as actual administrative zones. (p. 96; p. 100, note 42, and Appendix C). Maps one to five illustrate the geographical consistencies.

Bergad’s abundant quantitative data on tax revenues, mining and pastoral production, prices of exports, in addition to detailed material on slaves – age pyramids, sex ratios, age groups, values and price movements – that accompany the transition from mining to diversified agricultural production, provide compelling quantitative support for his arguments. Forty-one figures and forty-two tables illustrate serial data, compiled from isolated figures, inventories and from published, and unpublished sources. Gracious acknowledgement is also directed to Clotilde Paiva and the research staff of the Centro de Desenvolvimento e Planejamento Regional (CEDEPLAR) of the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais without whose exhaustive and detailed efforts census and precious historical demographic and economic data might never have become available for research. Despite the comprehensive array of Brazilian archival materials, Portuguese archives were not consulted for the century of colonial history that is covered in this study.

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Kim D. Butler, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won: Afro-Brazilians in Post-Abolition São Paulo and Salvador* (New Brunswick, NJ, and London: Rutgers University Press, 1998), pp. xi + 285, \$52.00, \$22.00 pb.

The cities of São Paulo and Salvador epitomise two contrasting models of the black experience in contemporary Brazil, and the cultural and political expressions it has generated. In the first, a clearly minority population has been mobilised primarily around the politics of race and colour discrimination, through civic organisations, newspapers and advocacy initiatives; in the second, where Afro-Brazilians represent over 80 per cent of the total, the language of politics is overwhelmingly cultural, the main forms of mobilisation are religious, musical

and carnival organisations, and identification, is ethnic in nature, strongly focused on notions of ‘Africanness’ or ‘Afro-Americanness’.

Kim Butler’s *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won* leaves no doubt as to the historical origins of those two contrasting (but not necessarily mutually exclusive) models and, although centred on the period 1880–1930, it is essential reading for an understanding of Brazilian race relations and the black movement today. A particular virtue of the book, besides the enlightening comparative perspective itself, and the author’s carefully and modestly argued analysis, is that the latter is firmly rooted in a combination of extensive first-hand interviews with survivors of the period examined, and consultation of contemporary public archives and the black press. I have one reservation about the somewhat uneven use of these sources, as the São Paulo case study draws rather more on the oral histories of former activists while the study of Salvador is more reliant on archive material. One wonders to what degree that imbalance might have coloured the contrasting account of the two cities and, indeed, whether assumptions about the cultural character of the Bahian movement as opposed to a putatively more ‘political’ São Paulo might have led to a degree of self-selection, reinforcing the same characterisation. I was still left feeling curious about black cultural life in São Paulo after the rather brief references to samba parties, football and the *botequim*.

Nevertheless, as they stand these are very rich, vivid accounts of the construction of black identity following Abolition, especially in their examination of the role played by new forms of organisation both in black resistance, and adaptation, to the demographic and social reconfiguration of these cities from the late nineteenth century on. Amongst such organisations we find *grêmios recreativos* of São Paulo created by a socially aspiring middle class as an alternative to the more threatening, ‘disruptive’ presence of blacks in sport, at the street-corner bar or in samba parties; the Centro Cívico Palmares and the shortlived Frente Negra Brasileira, with their combination of educational, social welfare and political consciousness-raising functions; and in Salvador, the succession of religious brotherhoods, mutual aid societies, carnival associations and candomblé temples. The latter, in particular, emerge in Butler’s fascinating account as the focus of a complex network of overlapping social and cultural structures of inclusion and self-defence.

At the same time, *Freedoms Given, Freedoms Won* provides some serious and, on the whole, convincing analytical explanations for the specific character of black history and organisation in São Paulo and Salvador. In the opening chapter, Butler draws attention to the importance of patronage (both black and white, individual and institutional) in supporting black efforts to adjust to their new condition as free, but discriminated against, in the absence of any government assistance. Then, in ‘The Politics of Identity’, she identifies the crucial demographic features determining the profile of the black population in each city. In particular, the relative stability, geographically and socially, of very large, African-derived ethnic communities, or *nações*, in the slowly evolving city of Salvador, which both guaranteed a high level of cultural continuity and probably also militated against the emergence of racially defined enclaves or ghettos. By contrast, the much smaller black population of São Paulo consisted of recent arrivals migrating from the interior of the state, lacking a distinct ethnic profile, identified instead in terms of their common skin colour and concentrated economically around the Barra Funda rail terminal.

Such different histories and the consequent lack of a single unifying ethnic identity may explain the failure thus far of any black political organisation to win mass support at the national level, as ‘a race-based identity of ‘blackness’ conflicted with their social realities and practical self-identities in their everyday lives.’ Black consciousness and parallel forms of self-identification and organisation, such as the class-based trade union, are not necessarily mutually exclusive, however. As Butler acknowledges, ‘the workers’ movements of the early twentieth century may well have been a primary form of organized activism for some African descendants, especially men in urban areas.’ The most challenging question for the activists and analysts of Brazil’s black movement remains the low level of racial self-identification amongst Afro-Brazilians. For the labour movement and the left, meanwhile, arguably the most urgent (and neglected) issue is the alienation of the demographic core of Brazil’s working class – the black population – from its ranks. The challenge for future students wishing to build on Butler’s fine study of Afro-Brazilians in the post-Abolition era will be that of exploring not only the antagonisms between racial and class identities in Brazil, but the interactions between them, too.

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Robin L. Anderson, *Colonization as Exploitation in the Amazon Rain Forest, 1758–1911* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1999), pp. x + 197, \$49.95 hb.

This study of colonial settlement of Brazilian Amazonia starts and ends with dates that were highly significant for the indigenous people. In 1758 the ruler of Portugal, (the future Marquis of) Pombal, developed a passionate hatred of the Jesuit order and determined to abolish it throughout the Portuguese colonial empire. Jesuits and, soon after, other missionary orders were removed from some seventy mission *aldeias* on the main Amazon-Solimões, Negro, Madeira and other major tributary rivers. To replace the missionary fathers Pombal devised a system called the Directorate, whereby lay directors were installed in the Indian villages. The decree that introduced the Directorate claimed that it was granting the indigenous tribes a measure of self-rule, but it was a cruel sham. The missionaries had been determined to convert the Indians from shamanism and animism to Christianity, but they were at least inspired by altruistic religious fervour and often protected their charges from oppression or slavery by the handful of white settlers who had devastated Amazonia during the previous century and a half. It rapidly became obvious that the new system was unworkable. The directors installed in native villages were to be paid from a commission on the earnings of their charges; it was impossible to find disinterested men to take up the nasty life amid the rainforests; and those who did go were intent only on getting as rich as possible during their short term of office. So the Directorate was a recipe for exploitation that caused misery to the dwindling number of Indians under it and that destroyed any good work done by the missionaries. It was abolished in 1798. But the following decades saw little alleviation in the oppression of Indians so that they joined blacks and mestizos

in the Cabanagem revolt of the 1830s, the important class struggle in Brazilian history – and about which Professor Anderson is an authority.

Robin Anderson shows that the Directorate was really intended to mobilise native labour, particularly in plunging into the forests to collect the *drogas do sertão*, but also in public works building forts and paddling river expeditions. She analyses the extractive exports, the most important of which was the emetic *salsaparrilha* and the most ruinous the profligate destruction of freshwater turtle eggs. She also shows the importance of disease: first smallpox (and, I suspect, measles which was often mistaken for pox) that had reduced the native population to fewer than ten thousand males in all the Directorate villages, and then malaria which developed into the scourge of Amazonia.

I do not accept that the forty years of the Directorate was a period of colonisation. It depends on how you define that word. There was no government policy to persuade large numbers of European settlers to colonise the Amazon. A few hundred families went to the towns of Belém and Macapá near the mouth of the river; but the directors in the villages up-river were fewer than the missionaries they replaced. The lethal effect of imported diseases obliterated all early attempts to turn Amazonia's indigenous peoples into hard-working citizens of the Portuguese empire. Demographic decline from disease made any colonisation policy look puny.

Another huge and unexpected force dominated the area during the last half-century covered by this book. The Amazon rubber boom gathered momentum in the 1860s and grew exponentially in both volume and value until it burst when Amazonia lost its monopoly to South-East-Asian plantation rubber after 1911. (This date was also significant for indigenous peoples, because it was the first year of Cândido Rondon's Indian Protection Service). It was rubber that attracted tens of thousands of *seringueiro* rubber-tappers, often from the drought-stricken North-east of Brazil; and immigrants from Europe and North America came to help build such white elephants as the Madeira-Mamoré railway. The lure of rubber wealth far outweighed official efforts to attract colonists. It was the rubber boom that turned the mission-directorate villages into modern towns.

Robin Anderson gives a good account of the Belém-Bragança railway, an attempt to attract settlers to the area east of Pará's state capital. Because the railway ran roughly parallel to the shore of the Pará river towards the Atlantic Ocean, it did not replace steamer transport and was the only railway in Brazil to lose money; but the Bragantina *was* successfully colonised, thanks to the efforts of the settlers themselves. Where there had been few organised colonisation campaigns in the early nineteenth century, there was a bewildering number in its final decades. Many of these initiatives came from the rich government of the state of Pará, which was encouraged by the autonomy granted in the federative constitution of the post-1899 Republic. One small failure was the Apeú colony in the 1880s, where the Azorean colonists took one look at the wretched conditions and refused to settle. Another attempt to bring defeated Confederate soldiers to settle near Santarém also failed, and the Brazilian press urged the expulsion of the drunken and lazy North Americans. Such experiments were dwarfed by the influx to the rubber boom, and I do not think that this book pays sufficient attention to it. Perhaps this is because the impact of rubber has been so well demonstrated in recent books by Barbara Weinstein and Warren Dean.

A thirteen-page epilogue in this short book deals with the present day. Robin

Anderson shows that in some ways indigenous people are worse off now than they were in the Directorate. Environmental destruction started by the colonists in this book continues today, even though the reasons why Amazonia cannot be farmed by European methods are now well understood. The only difference is that new technology and better communications make modern environmental vandalism infinitely worse than it was in the nineteenth century.

London

JOHN HEMMING

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Robert M. Levine, *Father of the Poor?: Vargas and his Era* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. x + 193, £35.00, \$54.95; £12.95, \$15.95 pb.

This tightly written, thoughtful book is offered as ‘an interpretative synthesis based on many years of studying Vargas and modern Brazil’, addressing ‘fundamental questions’. These include: how did Vargas influence the evolution of the Brazilian state, how did Brazil change from 1930 to 1954, what was Vargas’s political legacy, how did his reforms change day-to-day life and why did millions come to revere the ‘father of the poor’? All this is contained in a text of 138 pages, complemented by 15 of contemporary documentary sources and 17 of photographs from the Vargas period, which, the author argues, ‘convey historical information as much as any conventional written document’.

Levine starts by noting the *lacunae* in the study of Vargas and his years in office. There is no full-scale biography, no detailed analysis of the *Estado Novo*, the 1946 Constitution, Vargas’s relations with the military, his foreign policy or his final term. He is well poised to note such omissions, since he, himself, has done more than anyone, over the last three and a half decades, to fill the gaps in our understanding not only of the Vargas period, but of the overall shaping of modern Brazil.

One of the great strengths of this book is its rich bibliography and detailed referencing, offering guidance to fuller sources, exciting the reader to further enquiry, just as in Levine’s recent edition, with John Crocitti, of *The Brazil Reader* (Durham, NC, 1999). There are chapters on Vargas as an enigma, his career from 1883 to 1937, the *Estado Novo* and his ‘populism’ from 1945 to 1954. The last two chapters examine ‘Different Getúlios’ and ‘Vargas’s Incomplete Revolution’.

The author has a deeply informed sympathy for Vargas. Not only was Levine one of the first historians to have access to Vargas’s personal archive, but he also benefited from discussing the material with Alzira Vargas do Amaral Peixoto, always sensitive to the political legacy of her father, especially when, after 1964 as well as in 1954, his enemies united to vilify him. Levine learned early that politicians largely define themselves as for or against the Vargas inheritance, including, most recently, President Henrique Cardoso, whom he quotes as saying that his administration will bring about ‘the end of the Vargas era’.

What, then, does Levine make of Vargas? The opening words of chapter one are crystalline: ‘Getúlio Dornelles Vargas, the most influential Brazilian of the twentieth century ...’: but then comes swift qualification, summed up in the title of the chapter, ‘Vargas as Enigma’. ‘Vargas was difficult to decipher, even by his

friends ... he remained a mysterious figure, enigmatic and inscrutable, a man who represented different things to different people ...'. Unfortunately, this enigma is never resolved all through the book. Levine, as always, is scrupulously fair, providing a wealth of scholarship and valuable insights into Brazil up to and after Getúlio's death, but, still, the man and his political contribution, the main theme of the book, evade even the most careful reading and re-reading. Vargas comes into, then slips out of focus; he is defined, then redefined. The concern for balance elicits the uncomfortable Brazilian adage of being neither for nor against, but quite the contrary.

This is not to say that the individual judgments are unsound or unsubstantiated, but that they do not build up to a coherent, convincing whole. There is good treatment of Vargas and his career in Rio Grande do Sul before 1930, noting how his parents' marriage 'brought together the two warring clans in the region, one republican, the other federalist.' Vargas continued and refined this conciliatory political tradition, as seen, for example, after the 'constitutionalist' revolt in São Paulo in 1932 or in his dealings with *Café Filho* (p. 91). More could have been made of this commitment never to make an enemy who could not later be made a friend, a central, though not exclusive, theme of Brazilian politics, as exemplified in the political trajectory of Vargas's colleague and confidant, Tancredo Neves de Almeida.

Levine acknowledges what Vargas achieved, in extending citizenship to the 'humble', (p. 94) to those excluded from political participation under the 'Old Republic', noting the change in national political culture which that represented. He suggests that the Liberal Alliance, which Vargas headed in 1930, 'represented a profound shift in political power as well as a philosophy' and that 1930 saw the emergence of a 'new elite'. He says that Vargas 'personally shaped the modern Brazilian state'. (p. 95). He especially notes Vargas's belief that 'Brazil could be modernized rapidly through industrialization and social engineering' (p. 5), harnessing authoritarianism and corporatism for those ends. He also appreciates the limits to Getúlio's power to effect change, stressing 'the widening gap between what Vargas promised and what he was able to accomplish' (p. 83), especially in his final term, when his enemies gathered against him.

Levine has a cultivated understanding of what changed under Vargas – not all of it as a result of his policies and action – of what did not, and of what still has not changed almost half a century after his death. Another politician who increasingly realises the limits of presidential power, even to unravel the legacy of Vargas, is Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who, while he may not care to allow it, still works within, or against, what Vargas set in motion.

In this context, Levine examines 'Vargas's Incomplete Revolution'. He describes him, in Gramsci's terms, as 'a passive revolutionary from above' (p. 112). He then comes down firmly on one side of the fence, alleging that: 'As far as Brazil was concerned, Vargas's social legislative programs were essentially manipulative, carrot and stick techniques to channel the energy of emerging groups – mainly the salaried urban middle and working classes – into government-controlled entities' (pp. 9–10).

It is here that some people, however reluctantly, may part company with Levine and his interpretation of Vargas. He makes a series of judgments which, at face value, are difficult to reconcile. No one will disagree with his view that Vargas 'understood power' and that he was able to 'rationalize contradictions',

but, while he argues that most of Vargas's 'programs were social and economic' (p. 3), he also says that 'for Vargas governing was chiefly a question of administration' (p. 3) and that the Vargas era 'was about politics and economics, not the human condition'. (p. 4)

There is a persistent, unreconciled tension between presenting Vargas as, essentially, a politician seeking to produce much-needed changes and reforms, albeit in difficult circumstances and in the face of bitter opposition, as in his social legislation and introducing the minimum wage, or as a manipulative, power-hungry opportunist. He was, without doubt, deeply and necessarily pragmatic. ('... his pragmatism always prevailed. He was always willing to take risks.' (p. 112),) but it is altogether different to say, on the same page, that: 'He was more concerned with staying in power than in holding to any firm purpose', or that: '... he was able to play political poker by dealing from different hands.'

The grounds for this ambiguity and mistrust in judging Vargas are probably very simple; namely, the persistence in regarding him and his *vargusta* successors, such as Kubitschek, Goulart or Brizola, as 'populists'. Levine devotes three pages to explaining 'populism' (pp. 7–10), but to no great effect. At least he does not use it simply, as some other historians do, as a term of abuse for reformist politicians on the left, especially those who question the ambitions of the United States. He would do better to apply Ockham's razor and just abandon the concepts as confusing and mischievous.

Levine, himself, points the way out of his particular intellectual sack in discussing Vargas, his contribution and his influence. Reflecting on *trabalhismo* or *varguismo* (p. 81), he draws parallels with the thought and programmes of the British Labour party, while also noting the differences. Elsewhere he refers, all too briefly, to Alberto Pasqualini, the 'ideological and strategic pilot' of the P.T.B. (the Brazilian Labour Party), who died in 1956, and to another P.T.B. strategist, San Tiago Dantas. (p. 95). Vargas changed over the years and never stopped learning. He *was* a pragmatist and a clever politician and he could and did manipulate: but he was also an idealist. He tried to effect changes which the Brazilian ruling class, of which he was a member, rightly saw as threatening their entrenched interests, which explains the violence of their reaction. As authoritarian capitalism and neoliberalism each fail Brazil, the people may still reach for solutions conceived, if not achieved, by Getúlio Vargas.

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Luiz C. Barbosa, *The Brazilian Amazon Rainforest: Global Ecopolitics, Development, and Democracy* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000), pp. vii + 196, \$49.00; \$27.50 pb.

This compact book provides brief sketches of how recent changes in global ecopolitics based on sustainable development have interfaced with incipient democracy in Brazil to affect the politics and economics of Brazilian Amazonia. It views deforestation in the region within the context of 'an expanding frontier of global capitalism' and, consequently, analyses deforestation as political and economic processes.

The author traces how Brazilian politics began to change as the international 'green movement' emerged in response to an awareness of the greenhouse effect, the ozone hole, and loss of biodiversity. During the 1980s tropical rainforests stopped being 'green hells' and suddenly became 'cradles of life'. In parallel, Brazil emerged as a global villain because of its rampant destruction of Amazonia.

Between January 1978 and April 1988, 225,300 square kilometres of forest were cleared: an average of 21,300 square kilometres of forest per year. This situation naturally brought Brazil under attack from international environmental groups, while providing justification for rapidly growing non-governmental organisations to emerge throughout the country. Grassroots organisations had been prohibited under the decades of military rule, but the 'abertura' allowed a public thirst for citizens' organisations to develop around environmental concerns.

Local leaders, such as the rubber tapper Chico Mendes, and indigenous spokesmen, such as Kayapo chief Paiakan and Yanomami Davi Kopenawa, were soon seen before television, radio and live audiences around the world. With some help from Chief Raoni and rockstar Sting, the rainforest became a 'sexy issue' that captured global attention. The hype provided opportunities to discuss such ecological notions as 'sustainability', 'carrying capacity', 'outer limits' and 'maximum sustainable yield'.

In the late 1980s, President Sarney tried to appease international pressure through the development of the *Nossa Natureza* programme, which was little more than a thinly-veiled public relations campaign. Brazil had been selected to host the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 'The Earth Summit', in 1992. It was clear that the country had to do more than PR in order to receive global environmental leaders properly. The then president, Fernando Collor de Mello, added meaning to the environmental discourse by 'linking it to his own economic agenda of integrating Brazil into the developed nations of the world'.

Collor de Mello's administration created more indigenous reservations, national parks and extractive reserves than all previous administrations combined. By the time he was forced from office in 1992, roughly 396,000 square kilometres, or 8 per cent of Brazilian forests, were considered protected. Even so, the ever stronger environmental movement was dissatisfied with government efforts and pressed harder for participation of community and civil leaders in decision-making processes and greater local control over land and resources. This continued to be a threat to the military and leaders of the oligarchy. Indeed, it continues today, as land reform demands are heard by the Movimento Sem-Terra (MST).

The author traces how, despite advances in democracy and improvements in environmental conservation, Brazil continues with irrational practices that threaten Amazonia: cattle ranching, mercury poisoning from mining, unsustainable logging. Furthermore, the country resists criticisms of its models for development, using arguments of national sovereignty and security. But forces of capitalism and globalisation override these nationalistic concerns.

'Commodification is central to the ideology of progress in capitalism: things must have monetary value in order to be marketable' says the author. Amazonia is of value in as much as its land and resources are marketable; conservation is viewed as maintaining nature as 'idle' and is, therefore, against progress. The

forest is destroyed in the name of progress: standing, living forests are obstacles to economic advances.

Brazil is not alone with this view, as is shown in a chapter showing parallel situations in Indonesia and Malaysia. The problem of environmental destruction in Amazonia is not, therefore, a national problem, but one provoked by capitalistic expansion via the Brazilian economy. Can Brazil escape this 'environmental imperialism'? This, the book argues, is the biggest challenge facing Brazil in the twenty-first century.

This book is hardly the definitive work on global ecopolitics, development and democracy. It is too brief and superficial. But it will be useful to students and others who want a quick overview of Amazonia and the forces that mould current policy debates.

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DARRELL ADDISON POSEY

Dr Posey died in March 2001.

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André Corten, *Pentecostalism in Brazil: Emotion of the Poor and Theological Romanticism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999), pp. xix + 206, £45.00.

In this wide-ranging treatment of Pentecostalism in Brazil, political scientist André Corten develops several innovative, if primarily theoretical, theses about the nature of a still rapidly growing religious movement that has swept like wildfire through Latin America since the 1950s. Like many other analysts of the Pentecostal movement, Corten is concerned to understand its implications for the development of Brazilian civil and political society. Among other things, he makes the suggestion that Pentecostalism be viewed as a kind of authoritarian egalitarianism; he also suggests a certain 'continuity between liberation theology and Pentecostalism' (p. 25), in their common moralism – the one around liberation from oppression, the other around intensified relations with God (p. 26).

While such suggestions are useful, they have a distinctly external feel to them, in which the meanings ascribed to religious experience by Pentecostals are understood in relationship to political models of which the informants themselves are certainly unaware. While this method has the virtue of placing Pentecostalism into the larger framework of comparative politics, it carries with it the problem that the depiction of the religion itself remains out of focus. The result is a series of thought-provoking hunches about the essence of Pentecostalism, supported by incomplete, sometimes stereotyped, view of the religion.

Let me illustrate. Corten is interested, among other things, in explaining what he views as the inability of Pentecostalism to 'form a political language' (p. 84), by which he seems to mean a language of claims about matters of collective public concern to the community at large. At the heart of his argument is the claim that the defining 'utterance' of Pentecostalism is the expressive act of praising God. This act, he suggests, is different from other verbal performances because it has no intended objective other than the pure expression of an emotion. It is not intended to sway God nor to convey information to Him or anyone else. 'The praise of God is free', he writes. 'It is this free quality which provides the

emotion of the encounter with God' (p. 88). Having thus defined Pentecostalism's 'primary utterance', Corten concludes that this utterance 'is not compatible with the "primary utterance" of the Western political system, the contract' (p. 84). The contract, in contrast to 'praise', is an utterance designed both to affect the behaviour of the other, and to convey information to a variety of audiences. To the extent that Pentecostalism is not energised by the concerns of influence and communication, it remains alienated from the political process of Western society.

The argument is neat and provocative, and probably worth pursuing as a research topic. At the end of the day, however, as formulated in this book it is rather unconvincing, because it reduces Pentecostalism metonymically to only one of its practices – and a rather one-dimensional interpretation of that practice to boot. Whether one is referring to incomprehensible glossolalia or comprehensible utterances of praise, it requires a rather formalistic understanding of language to conclude that such verbal performances have nothing to do with exchanging with God and informing Him and others about inner spiritual states. One of the central experiences of the Pentecostal are the various exchanges or 'contracts' with God: have faith, and you will be saved; be righteous in your life, and increase your assurance of your election; pray fervently and subject yourself unto the Lord, and you will be blessed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit; uphold the law of God and the Devil will not be able to lay a hand on you. These are all profoundly 'contractual' relations, which have, I would suggest, effects on how Pentecostals conceptualise relations in the political realm. It is no accident that they expect their vote to be rewarded by righteousness; or that they expect iniquity to be punished. They live in a world of very real agreements and their attendant consequences – not one of simple emotional expression. This is doubly true when it comes to utterances that convey information. While Corten suggests that 'praise' communicates with no one, I would suggest that praise communicates in an intense way a great deal about the praiser's faith, fervour and destiny – to himself, to others, and to God. It is not unusual to hear a Pentecostal say that he prays to 'show' God the intensity of his faith. Such habits of interaction with the divine spill over all the time into the political realm, as when evangelicals such as those described long ago by Novaes (1985) rely upon the spoken word both to praise and denounce their elected officials. It is therefore hard to grasp how a tradition of praise is foreign to the 'Western' tradition of political language. If anything, it appears to be at least partly constitutive of it.

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Keith S. Rosenn and Richard Downes (eds.), *Corruption and Political Reform in Brazil: The Impact of Collor's Impeachment* (Boulder, CO, and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), pp. xi + 184, £33.50 hb.

The 1992 impeachment of Fernando Collor de Mello, Brazil's first popularly-elected president in 30 years, made international headlines. Some interpreted Collor's removal on corruption charges as a healthy sign of democratic consolidation. Others felt it confirmed the pessimistic view that poor countries,

burdened by debt and economic crisis, were unprepared for democracy. Still others attributed Collor's downfall to ineptitude and arrogance, not increased transparency and democratic accountability.

This edited volume offers various perspectives on what the Collor affair tells us about the relationship between corruption and political reform in Brazil and Latin America more generally. The chapters address four questions. What caused the high corruption of civilian governments taking power after military rule ended in 1985? Second, given the history of impunity at the highest levels, what accounts for Collor's impeachment and removal from office? Third, what effect has Collor's impeachment had on political reform and democratic accountability in Brazil? Finally, what light does the Brazilian experience shed on democratic consolidation in Latin America?

Several authors maintain that, contrary to expectations, transition to democracy did not reduce presidential reliance on traditional patronage politics, but actually increased it. Leonardo Avritzer sees corruption as a legacy of a traditional political order that has not yet come to terms with new actors, such as unions and middle-class associations, seeking a more modern form of politics. Rather than cultivating support among new social actors favoring modernisation, Collor sought to bolster his presidency with illicit forms of political exchange. Barbara Geddes and Artur Ribeiro Neto reject this modernisation approach focusing instead on the institutional sources that made corruption more pervasive after 1985. Their rational choice approach illustrates how changes in electoral rules and the constitution of 1988 weakened the president's capacity to build stable legislative coalitions without resorting to pork-barrel politics and corruption.

In his historical approach, Thomas Skidmore presents Collor as the product of the old Brazil of arrogant 'coronels' and charismatic political messiahs and the new Brazil of the mass media and popularity ratings. Faced with a fragmented party system and an uncooperative congress, Collor initially tried to prevail through the blunt instrument of the presidential decree (*medida provisória*). When this strategy failed, he resorted to the time-honoured practice of massive vote buying to get his way.

Skidmore attributes Collor's downfall to personal arrogance and an ineffective governing style that alienated the electorate and the congress. Avritzer presents impeachment as a victory of the modernizing forces in Brazil over patrimonialism. According to Geddes and Ribeiro Neto, specific circumstances, especially extensive press coverage and a supreme court decision disallowing a secret ballot, made it difficult for members of congress to vote against impeachment in return for payoffs from the executive.

Although agreeing that Collor's removal was not inevitable, Amaury de Souza argues that 'Collorgate' flowed from unsettled rivalries between the executive branch and the congress over the separation and balance of powers. With a national plebiscite on the system of government scheduled for 1993, congress had an incentive to turn impeachment into a quasi-parliamentary vote of no confidence in Collor's presidency.

The book's most instructive discussions concern the effects of impeachment on institutional reform and democratic consolidation in Brazil. Several authors point to the need for reform in electoral rules to reduce party fragmentation in the congress and reapportion seats in the chamber of deputies in a more equitable fashion. David Fleischer offers a detailed account of these proposals and outlines

several other reforms in the budgetary process and the civil service that would diminish the opportunities and incentives for illicit exchanges. Though a major administrative reform finally passed in 1998, most electoral reforms remain on the backburner. This lack of forward movement vindicates de Souza's worry that the effects of Collor will prove short-lived. Finally, in a comparative analysis of the USA and Brazil, Fábio Konder Comparato ponders what the Collor affair revealed about how the impeachment procedure could be simplified and improved to avoid abuse by either the executive or legislative branches.

In their conclusion, Downes and Rosenn move beyond the implications of Collor's impeachment for Brazil to compare his removal with the fates of other prominent neoliberal reformers Carlos Andrés Pérez, Carlos Menem, Carlos Salinas de Gortari and Alberto Fujimori, who faced charges of corruption. The authors conclude that the likelihood of impeachment is not contingent upon the actual level of corruption, but is function of the capacity of the president to control the congress and supreme court.

Two aspects of the Collor affair deserve more attention than they receive in this book. Authors underplay Collor's failure to provide an effective response to the economic crisis as a critical factor in his downfall. Facing similar institutional constraints, Fernando Henrique Cardoso has succeeded in liberalising and stabilising the economy. Second, unlike Mexican counterparts, Brazilian presidents have not personally plundered the state. None of the authors considers how the unprecedented extent of Collor's personal involvement helps explain the public's heightened sense of outrage.

This volume is a useful addition to the literature on democratic consolidation in post-authoritarian Brazil. Its greatest strength rests in the effort to go beyond the sordid details to consider what the Collor affair tells us about Brazil's uncertain path towards democracy. In this regard, the chapters focusing on institutional factors affecting the separation and balance of powers between the executive and the congress provide the reader with valuable insights on continuing impediments to democratic stability.

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Sandra McGee Deutsch, *Las Derechas: The Extreme Right in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile 1890–1939* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. xv + 491, \$60.00 hb: £37.50 hb.

Since the mid-1980s Sandra McGee Deutsch has established herself as one of the leading specialists on the history of the Argentine right. Her book on the Liga Patriótica Argentina was published in 1986, and she has edited, together with Ronald H. Dolkart in 1993, a collection of essays on the history and intellectual origins of the right since 1910. With this study of the radical right in Argentina, Brazil and Chile between the late nineteenth century and the outbreak of the Second World War, she further develops her earlier works and at the same time expands her field of inquiry. Despite the fact that the right has dominated the politics of the continent during the twentieth century, and notwithstanding the growing number of case studies on different groups of the radical right over

recent years, this is the first book on Latin America that provides, as Deutsch correctly points out in the introduction, a comparative analysis of 'rightist organizations, ideas, and actions that have emerged in different national settings' (p. 2).

The book is divided into four parts, each dealing with a relatively well-defined period of time. The first section looks at the emergence of the predecessors of the far right at the turn of century; part two deals with the consolidation of the extreme right-wing forces between the outbreak of the Great War and the mid-1920s; the third, which is by far the longest, covers the era of fascism and consequently discusses the radical right between the late 1920s and the start of World War II in 1939. In the last chapter Deutsch addresses the legacy of the radical right, not least its impact on the military regimes that assumed power in all three countries between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s. Within these sections Deutsch provides country studies, with the debate evolving around certain issues. As part of her undertaking she looks at the programmatic changes of the different groups of the radical right over time, identifies the composition of their followings – both in terms of class and gender – and outlines their relationships with other political protagonists, particularly the Catholic Church, the military, the moderate right and labour.

Decisive for the initial emergence of extreme right-wing sentiments in all three countries was, as Deutsch convincingly argues in the first part of her book, a general feeling of decline and fear about the dissolution of traditional cultural, social and political arrangements, caused by the domination by foreign economic powers and the rise of labour movements. Mainly nationalist writers and intellectuals, such as Francisco A. Encina in Chile, Leopoldo Lugones and Manuel Gálvez in Argentina, and Alberto Torres in Brazil, articulated this dissatisfaction with their nations' developments. However, even at the time crucial differences between the countries, which subsequently influenced the development and strength of the radical right, have to be noted. In Argentina the incipient far right consisted mostly of members of the upper class, while in Brazil and Chile it also took roots in the middle classes, which were more willing to denounce the existing economic model, based on the exportation of primary products. The relative weakness of the moderate right in both Argentina and Brazil left more space for extreme rightist activities than in Chile, where the Catholic Church and the traditional elite, politically represented in the Conservative and Liberal parties, were considerably stronger and better organised. In the case of Argentina, Deutsch also contends that the relative strength of the labour movement explains the greater degree of consolidation of the far right at the time; even there, however, the new current could not yet consolidate its forces. In all three countries the differences between the radical right and conservative groups were not clearly developed.

During the second period the perceived threat of the left – the labour mobilisation at home and the revolutionary changes in Europe – replaced the 'foreign presence as the main catalyst of rightist action' (p. 7). The crisis of the national economies, brought about by the declining demands for primary products in overseas markets, further fuelled the extreme right's criticism of economic and political liberalism. At the time one can see, Deutsch notes, the beginning consolidation of the forces of the radical right and the turn from rhetorical agitation and episodic acts to the formation of extra-parliamentary

factions. The relations with the Catholic Church, the military and the government became more intense, although they remained ambivalent, and women increased their activities within the various groups. At the same time, the differences between the countries sharpened, as the radical right in Argentina gained a greater degree of influence and ideological homogeneity than in both Brazil and Chile, where ‘the moderate right retained vigor’ (p. 59). The Liga Patriótica Argentina particularly benefited from the militancy of organised labour and the activities of political reformers, as the traditional elite, which lost power and influence, supported the organisation to counter these trends. In Argentina, just as in Chile, however, Deutsch states an overlap of forces between the various currents of the right, with the radical right acting as the armed wing of the conservative sectors. In Brazil, on the other hand, the extreme right, which pursued a more popular approach than its counterparts in the other countries, stood in opposition to the dominating oligarchies, both ideologically and organisationally.

The last period again witnessed a radicalisation of the extreme right and the proliferation of new groups. Deutsch devotes almost half of her book to this ‘era of fascism’. Influenced by the impact of the Great Depression, which caused economic instability, military involvement in politics and the mobilisation of the left, as well as the rise of integral Catholicism and European fascism, various factions appeared on the political scene. The Ação Integralista Brasileira (AIB) achieved prominence in Brazil; the Movimiento Nacional Socialista (MNS) emerged in Chile; and in Argentina the Nacionalista movement, which united various factions and intellectuals, was active. Deutsch generally identifies these groups as fascist. The Argentine Nacionalista movement was the most powerful and pervasive. Despite internal divisions, an essentially elitist orientation and a traditional right that consolidated its forces and regained some of its power after the ‘Revolution of 1930’, the *nacionalistas* ‘built upon their long-standing identification with the church, the military, and nationalism to increase their influence’ and finally ‘gained access to power at the national and provincial levels’ (p. 193). The AIB, in terms of members the single largest faction, initially benefited from the fact that it operated in a political system which lacked, apart from groups tied to the Catholic Church and the ephemeral Aliança Nacionalista Libertadora, nationally operating movements. The strength of conservative sectors, which enjoyed the crucial support of the military and the hierarchy, prevented the AIB from achieving power for they found the authoritarian rule of Vargas’s Estado Novo more reassuring than a revolutionary *integralista* regime. In comparison to both Argentina and Brazil, the preconditions for the development of the MNS were far less advantageous, as it had to operate in a well-established party system. The traditional right could preserve its strength, and the left had already embraced ideas of economic nationalism; both factors limited the political space of the faction. Chilean *nacismo* was, however, Deutsch claims, ‘more worker-oriented, violent, extreme, and opportunistic’ than other factions (p. 191); the AIB, on the other hand, showed more interest in women, who had gained the right to vote in elections in 1934, and it was more successful than other fascist organisation in enlisting their support.

In the final chapter Deutsch briefly addresses the legacy of the extreme right in all three countries. Unlike the other sections, which are based on an impressive amount of primary sources, and reveal a considerable number of hitherto

unknown facts, this part is largely based upon secondary literature. For those familiar with the relevant literature, it does not contain many new insights or surprises. Following the patterns established during the first half of the century Argentine *nacionalismo* was the strongest movement; it preserved its strength and 'remained a coherent and distinct movement' (p. 324). Its militants were also more prominent in the Argentine military regimes than those of Chile and Brazil. In the two decades following the end of the Second World War the Chilean radical right was weak and dispersed; only with the resurgence of the left in the mid-1960s did it regain some power and influence. In Brazil, too, the extreme right declined in the immediate post-war period; it then 'rose before the coup [of 1964], and declined again thereafter' (p. 323).

Deutsch's book is lucidly written, convincingly argued and based upon impressive broad and deep archival sources. Only two shortcomings have to be mentioned. Firstly, I feel that the work does not sufficiently take into consideration the international arena, especially for the 'era of fascism'. Deutsch could have paid more attention to the political developments in Europe and assessed their impact on Latin America. The discussions about the dangers of Nazi Germany for the Americas and the alleged threat of the 'Fifth Columns' for the integrity of the various countries, for instance, lastingly influenced the perception of the different fascist groups and affected their propaganda. Secondly, the book would also have benefited from a clearer conceptualisation of the term fascism. Deutsch falls back upon Stanley G. Payne in the case of the AIB and the MNS, but also uses Ernst Nolte's definition for the Argentine *nacionalistas*. Their concepts differ markedly, however, and the latter's approach, with its focus on anti-Marxism, has long been discarded as too narrow by the literature. Despite these reservations, the work fills an important lacuna. For those interested in the Latin American right, it contains new information as well as stimulating interpretations, and it provides a solid basis for comparisons with other Latin American and European case studies.

Cologne

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Andrés Allamand, *La travesía del desierto* (Santiago: Aguilar de Ediciones, 1999), pp. 553, \$10.00 pb.

This book is welcome on two counts. Firstly, the right in Latin America has received far less attention from academics than the left. Secondly, politicians in Latin America do not often write biographies that are both interesting and informative, and that consist of more than collected speeches and documents linked by a loose commentary. By contrast, Allamand provides a detailed and sharp analysis of the political right in Chile since the mid-1980s, and it conveys in vivid and racy prose quite what it was like to be a politician, and party leader, in those years of momentous political change.

Allamand is a likeable and attractive politician, well-respected for his attempts to steer the Chilean right towards a stronger commitment to democracy and political reform – except amongst the senators and other leading members of his own party, Renovación Nacional (RN), and amongst almost all members of the rival party on the Right, the Unión Demócrata Independiente (UDI). Allamand's political career began as a schoolboy opponent of the Popular Unity government

of Salvador Allende, and his bitter dislike of Marxism is evident in the early pages. But the book really takes off politically when he deals with the development of parties on the right during the mid-1980s, the creation of RN, the trials and tribulations of the right during the democratic governments of Presidents Aylwin and Frei, and it ends with his defeats by a UDI opponent in the election for one of the senatorial seats for Santiago in 1997. In some ways the book is a sad one, for Allamand, although dignified in public, took his personal defeat badly, and retreated from politics to the IDB – one assumes as an interlude before resuming his political career. His account of the multiple errors in his campaign for the Senate in 1997 must count as one of the most honest of attempts by a politician to explain quite why they made such a mess of a campaign. In other ways the message is more optimistic because if the defeat was personal, perhaps the attempt to change the right ideologically was not. In the 1999–2000 elections the right offered a political platform of reform and of distancing itself from the *pinochetista* past very similar to that preached by Allamand over the years. In this sense, if Allamand (to echo the title of his book) personally did not quite complete the crossing of the desert, then it could be argued that the right did and that his role was crucial in achieving that crossing. Except, however, in one major respect. If Allamand has one consistent theme in this book and in his political career it is that of the centrality of party and party organisation in a modern democracy. And most of the conflicts he confronted revolved around his efforts to create a coherent party organisation in a political culture of the right which, as he points out repeatedly, was hostile to accepting the discipline needed to achieve that end.

A strong modern party was seen by Allamand as necessary to counterbalance the strong influence of what he described in a famous phrase as ‘los poderes fácticos’ – in other words the military, the business sectors and the influential right-wing newspaper, *El Mercurio*. The book provides plenty of examples of the continuing influence of the military in politics. One chapter recounts the tribulations of one of his closest allies, Sebastián Piñera, whose candidacy for the presidency was destroyed by an intercepted telephone conversation, taped by military intelligence and leaked to a hostile TV programme. Allamand also provides evidence for the undue influence of business in political life in Chile, not least through the absence of any regulations covering the financing of parties and election which leaves the field clear for business to provide as much finance as a suitable candidate requires.

The author’s particular hostility is reserved for the UDI party and its leaders – with the notable exception of Joaquín Lavín, the almost successful candidate for the presidency in 1999 whose emphasis on modernisation and change was close to that of Allamand. Allamand sees the sinister hand of the UDI behind such dirty tricks as the attempt to accuse him and his allies of drug-taking in congress, and indeed the whole chapter devoted to that issue brings out very clearly the dilemma facing politicians when faced with unsubstantiated and false rumours which even to deny arouses suspicion. But his hostility to the UDI does create problems for a politician in his position, for it goes to the one question which is not really answered in this book – in what sense is Allamand a politician of the right, or even, as he would prefer, of the center-right?

The question can partly be answered in negative terms. Allamand was ferociously anti-Marxist and this gave him a clear position on the right. But as Marxism is a remote memory for the Chilean left, it hardly serves to define

political allegiances, either for or against. It is one of the features of Chilean politics that is perhaps not fully recognised that the relations between the Christian Democrats and the right remain hostile, even bitter. Historically, this came from the perception that the Christian Democrats would undermine property rights as they had started to do with their agrarian reform. Perhaps today it has also something to do with the perception that the Christian Democrats – or at least a section of them – are too attached to the notion of an interventionist state (partly for reasons of political clientelism) and insufficiently committed to the free market. But what positively does Allamand have to propose that the two democratic governments that have so far completed their term of office in Chile have not already offered?

Perhaps in contemporary Chile major policy differences do not matter a great deal to politicians concerned to achieve electoral success. After all, the campaign promises of Lavín in 1999 amounted to little more than variations on the theme of the need for a change, largely left undefined. What Lavín also did – which Allamand finds unacceptable – was to play down the role of parties and to seek to capitalise on the increasing hostility towards party politics and politicians in Chile. Allamand's attempts to drag the right into a post-Pinochet world played an important role in the consolidation of democracy in Chile. But the cost of that effort was to make him unacceptable to many powerful figures on the right, and to make him seem too conflictive a politician for the modern electorate. If Allamand has been a casualty of his political struggle, at least the reader has benefited from one of the most engaging and revealing, and readable, books to be written by a Chilean politician for a very long time.

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ALAN ANGELL

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Anil Hira, *Ideas and Economic Policy in Latin America: Regional, National, and Organizational Case Studies* (Westport, CT, and London: Praeger Publishers, 1999), pp. 185, £42.50 hb.

Anil Hira has written a thoughtful and thought-provoking book about the role of ideas in economic policy making. Focusing on the case of Chile in the second half of the last century, *Ideas and Economic Policy in Latin America* makes useful contributions to the theory of how and when ideas affect change in economic policy. Hira tackles two key questions. How can we trace the influence of ideas in the policy process? What factors explain why some ideas prevail over others?

Hira frames the central problem – the role of ideas in economic policy making – in the political economy literature that explores when and how international structure, domestic structure (state, social groups, and economic factors) and ideas affect shifts in prevailing economic models within countries. One common critique of the general literature on the role of ideas has been the inadequate treatment of how ideas are introduced and successfully championed in the policy process. Hira uses the epistemic communities approach to address this problem and makes two useful refinements to it.

The epistemic communities' framework argues that networks of like-minded professionals at middle-levels of the state bureaucracy have great opportunities to influence policy-making in highly technical issue areas. This is because the technical complexity of many public policy issues compels politicians to turn to

them for solutions. Hira combines this approach – originally developed for international environmental policy making – with the recent focus among Latin Americanists on the influence of technocrats in the economic policy making process. Thus, for Hira, the networks of Chicago boys, Harvard boys, Cieplan monks and so forth are the embodiment of the relevant epistemic communities. From this starting point, the book refines the epistemic communities' approach in several ways. The literature had never specified the means by which such networks form. Since Hira is examining the question at the domestic structure level, his identification of influential think tanks as the institutional vehicle for nurturing the careers of like-minded cadres of technocrats is a useful point of departure.

Tackling the sources of an epistemic community's power is another one of Hira's improvements on the framework. Why does a group of technocrats advocating a specific set of policy recommendations become the 'advisor to the prince'? Why does one group of technocrats win favour over others? Hira argues that the political power of ideas derives from their capability to legitimise ruling elites. When international or domestic crises erode the utility of prevailing ideas that underlie policy new ideas are necessary, Here enters a new group of technocrats with a different idea. One group of technocrats may beat out rivals if they possess superior organisational/institutional homes, if they are cohesive (not ideologically fractionalised around competing think tanks), and if their ideas are in tune with the *Zeitgeist* of their era.

Ideas and Economic Policy in Latin America tests this framework in an explanation of the rise and fall of competing technocratic groups in Chile from the 1950s to the end of the 1990s. If nothing else, Hira's careful research in recreating those networks and their relationship to political power make his book a valuable reference point for future work. He begins with the structuralist school organised around the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA). ECLA advocated a strong role for the state in the economy to break structural bottlenecks that impeded economic development and it recommended greater socio-economic equality. Between 1949 and 1969 ECLA was in tune with an international intellectual and policy-making climate that supported state intervention and planning in overcoming underdevelopment. ECLA's superior capacity to generate reliable economic and social data helped it to vanquish rivals. The political rise of reformist Christian Democrats who valued structural analysis solidified ECLA's position. Chile's political crisis, which culminated in the overthrow of Socialist Salvador Allende and his Unidad Popular government, led to the rise of a rival epistemic community – the monetarists known as the Chicago boys. During the military government they developed superior organisational capacity when the military made the state Planning Department an institutional home from which they irradiated to other departments. In addition to their cohesiveness, the presidency under General Pinochet gave them its full support. By the 1980s, the *Zeitgeist* had caught up with Chile as the world embraced free-market economic ideology. Hira then argues that the nationalist and organic corporatist (*gremialista*) cohorts of the military government were relegated to a subordinate position in the dictatorship because of their weaker organisational capacity, their lack of solid presidential support, and their increasingly anachronistic views.

The empirical portion of the book ends with an analysis of the sources of neoliberal hegemony over neostructuralism in Chile after military rule. Hira

argues that four factors were key. One was the ideological transformation of the left and former structuralists. The institutional weakness of neostructuralists (fractured over many think tanks with differing points of view) was a second variable. Third, centre-left governing elites in general took the neoliberal point of view, if nothing else because of the success free-market policies had in promoting sustained economic growth with low inflation. And, of course, the *Zeitgeist* looked to the market as a solution to everything. Hira also suggests that the next economic crisis will open possibilities for rival epistemic communities and their ideas. The book concludes with an application of this framework to other Latin American countries, Egypt and Indonesia.

Anil Hira has done us a great service. *Ideas, and Economic Policy in Latin America* provides us with a catalyst for a lively theoretical discussion about the role of ideas in economic policy making. Of special value are his efforts to specify the material conduit for ideas in policy making and the sources of power that elevate one 'epistemic community' above others. That he does not fully accomplish his goal is most evident in his attempt to explain why neoliberal thinking predominates in Chile today. His arguments do not fit neatly into his causal model. The specification of the neoliberal 'epistemic community' loses sharpness. Who are the real intellectual neoliberals as opposed to supporters of neoliberal policies because of political pragmatism (and, thus, perhaps more neostructuralists in their intellectual heart of hearts)? In fact, bona fide neoliberals are fractured in several think tanks just like neostructuralists. This suggests that other political considerations on the part of governing elites may be more relevant than ideas. Which are they and how do they affect Hira's model? Do we need to distinguish the role of ideas when there is crisis and uncertainty over what works as opposed to conditions of stability and greater certainty? In other words, to what extent do ideas become public policy depending on whether policy makers believe they work or are known to be failures?

These questions do not diminish the value of Hira's work; they highlight its theoretical significance because he forces us confront more directly the issue of causality. What, *ex ante*, might give us clues as to which ideas have the capacity to legitimize political elites? Are ideas truly independent variables? If the effect of ideas depends so much on international or domestic stability and crisis, as well as institutional and political support, are they mainly intervening variables or a highly indeterminate independent variable?

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Christine Hunefeldt, *Liberalism in the Bedroom: Quarreling Spouses in Nineteenth-Century Lima* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2000), pp. xix + 368, \$75.00, \$25.00 pb.

This book is a welcome addition to Latin American gender history. Based on exhaustive research in over a thousand ecclesiastic and civil court cases and over a thousand wills, it presents a nuanced picture of women struggling for their rights throughout nineteenth-century Lima. These rich sources reproduce the actual voices of litigants or their lawyers and give us a sense of changing perceptions in the course of the century. They reveal how liberal ideas found their

way into the terminology of domestic life and how women *manoeuvred* and used these new concepts to conquer new spaces in their defence.

The first part of the book describes changes in the institutional settings within which marital conflict was played out: neighbourhoods, the Church and the state. The main development was the decline of the Church as the arbiter of marital strife and the rise of state courts. The influence of neighbours and neighbourhood mores, however, did not decrease, and they continued to play an important part in shaping values and in containing marital violence. Hunefeldt does not concentrate only on gender differences but also includes race and class, demonstrating that they mattered even in relation to how the Church handled dispensations and dissent and consent issues. She argues convincingly that dispensations were used in such a way that they helped reproduce social stratification. Not everything changed during the century, however. The Church and the state reinforced patriarchal rules, and though women challenged them in the courts, the patriarchal domain remained. One of the changes that did take place relates to the required seclusion of divorced wives, usually in a *beaterio*. As society became more secularised, *beaterios* became state institutions. Because more women worked, the *beaterios* stopped being a refuge for them, and instead were a means for husbands to impose morality and counter their wives' defence of their economic rights.

The second part of the book focuses on the arguments women used in the civil courts and how liberal ideals of personal and civil rights emerged within that discourse. It starts out addressing the complex issue of premarital sex, and demonstrates that virginity had 'different prices depending on who owned it'. Hunefeldt artfully weaves her way through the strategies and counter-strategies of men and women of the same or different classes or races confronted with results of premarital sex and the requirements of 'honour'. Men perceived that 'not all women merited the same recognition or treatment under the same honor codes'. This is an excellent analysis of how class and race tended to determine the various outcomes subsequent to the loss of virginity.

Furthermore, Hunefeldt finds that the use and size of dowries had declined by the middle of the century. She observes an interesting change in the discourse in divorce cases, in which women who had received no dowry defended their right to alimony by equating their financial contributions through work to a dowry. She also documents many cases that show how the institution of dowry, especially as it was legally protected from creditors, flew against the grain of liberal free market rules. That married women were not legally allowed to contract, through a law originally set up to protect women, was also contrary to free market rules.

Hunefeldt found that women in divorce cases can be divided into those who *had* money and those who *made* money. The many examples of married women who *made* money, whether independently or in collaboration with their agrarian producer or merchant husbands, temper our view of married women as totally dependent on their husbands. And these women used their access to assets to expand their bargaining grounds in a divorce, while arguing for the husband's responsibility for the well-being of the family. At the same time, pressure on women was increasing throughout the century in regard to morality and motherhood.

I have a few quibbles. In the first place, Hunefeldt frequently uses the word 'women' when she obviously means 'married women', such as in 'women's

special status as legal minors' (p. 343). Furthermore, Lima wills are not an appropriate source for calculating the proportion of married couples who were childless. First, wills are written solely by persons who have some property, thereby excluding much of the population. Second, the author concedes that her statistics may underrepresent natural growth because parents with children did not *have* to write a will (pp. 22–3) and her own data shows that testators were skewed toward the never-married and the childless. Fifty-one percent of the wills were written by either never-married persons (27 per cent) or by childless married or widowed persons (24 per cent), both groups of people who had no necessary heirs.

These reservations aside, this is a fine book that deserves a wide readership. It reproduces the voices of women of all walks of life who battled against male prerogative and for moral and economic justice within marriage, continuously readapting their discourse to changing conditions. One of the book's greatest strengths lies in its skilful blending of race and class into the analysis of gender issues.

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MURIEL NAZZARI

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Olivia Harris, *To Make the Earth Bear Fruit: Ethnographic Essays on Fertility, Work and Gender in Highland Bolivia* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London, 2000), pp. xi + 251, £12.00; \$19.95 pb.

Olivia Harris, the 1987 Malinowski Lecturer at LSE, is an ethnographer entirely different in one way from Malinowski: her analytical argument runs strongly parallel with the self-understanding her hosts express through the idioms of rite and myth. Like the rural Ayacuchan who told the ethnographer Billie Jean Isbell that '*tukuy ima qbariwarmi*' (everything is male-and-female), Harris's Laymi contemporaries consider that the world is built by a unified biological-technological productivity unfolding seamlessly from human-telluric bonds through matrimonial alliance outward to very wide regional alignments and toward cosmological forces. Though sometimes wryly sceptical of their ideology, Harris takes very seriously their intuition that the central shaping force of life as they know it is sexual reciprocity and conflict. The results have made her an important contributor in feminist as well as Andeanist anthropology.

Laymi Ayllu is the name of a population of about 8,000 Bolivian Aymara-speakers who inhabit two separate and ecologically dissimilar patches of land: one in the high Andean steppe called *sumi*, and the other a week's llama-train trek away, in the subtropical valleys (*likina*) that open toward the eastern lowlands. Laymi and four adjacent large ayllus have fascinated Andean ethnographers since the early 1970s because they managed to hold onto parts of a macro-scale system of Andean political economy through the four centuries which generally ground Andean systems of organisation down to local level. The chance to observe a large 'ethnic economy' made Harris an important figure in the search for ethnographic analogues to the vertical archipelago formation, which Murra and his students were then clarifying ethnohistorically.

Whether Laymi peasants were holding a system of prehispanic origin, or whether they invented their endogamous, kin-structured vertical ethnic economy

solution in response to forced depoliticisation, is not a question ethnography can answer. (Harris leans to the opinion that ‘this is a recent development’ [p. 110].) But her case shows brilliantly on the plane of synchrony how several famous features of Andean organisation are functionally socketed in basic adaptive possibilities at domestic level. Why, for example, the famous Andean insistence on dualism? The higher a given settlement grouping dwells, the more distant and lower its *likina* counterpart tends to be, because the higher one dwells the more llamas one can pasture, and therefore the longer a journey one can profitably undertake. As the logistics and kinship patterning of production tend to pull in a bipolar pattern, the centre or midpoint ‘that divides and unites the two halves’ tends to become a ceremonial or merely notional centre, not a demographic core.

Harris sets herself the task of explaining how such formations, discovered through economic-centred modelling (J. V. Murra and C. Meillasoux, centrally), are realised through the vehicle of local metaphors, programmes and legalities. The exegesis of symbols partakes of an important and ongoing Anglo-French dialogue among Bolivianists, involving the late Thierry Saignes as well as Thérèse Bouysson-Cassagne, Tristan Platt and Nathan Wachtel. In analysing the basic constituent relationships and their symbols she attains a superb level of insight. Harris’s leitmotif is the perception that complementarity is not the opposite of antagonism but that they both emerge in the conflictive/productive nature of encounters at all levels. This perception enlightens her three essays on Laymi gender and marriage.

In looking back on her work, Harris reminds us that Andean ethnographers of the 1970s and 80s chose a severe particularism as the medicine to purge their field of distorting readymades. Harris took particular joy in walloping universalist nature/culture dichotomies (a part of the debate on Ortner’s early gender essays), but she wielded an equally adroit broadsword against Marxist clichés about peasantries and resistance to markets. (See chapter two, which also appears in Harris’s and Brooke Larson’s influential 1995 Duke University Press book *Ethnicity, Markets, and Migration in the Andes*.) She is very good though elliptical on intellectual history – notably in ‘The Mythological Figure of the Earth Mother’, which chips many layers of sugar off an underlyingly ambivalent image of maternity – and one wonders if she might not turn out to be the right researcher for a sustained intellectual history of Andean field research.

None of these nine essays (in their original-language versions) postdates 1987. Harris refrains from hindsight improvements. While prefacing them with a perspective on their time – the time of Ché Guevara’s death in Bolivia, of the dictator Banzer and of Argentina’s war with ‘Inkiltira’ (England) – she is concerned to see that time by its own ethnographic light. The proof of her abilities is that, although some of the theoretical debates have moved on, the ethnographic substance feels entirely fresh and rewarding. Comparing the 1970s and the present certain contrasts do however stand out. For one, neither ‘agency’ nor ‘voice’ were then on the (British?) agenda, and as a result one does not learn anything about Laymi persons or the import of their actions. Nor in the superb passages on Laymi lexicon will one find even a sentence-sized sample of Laymi discourse. The peculiarly lax usage of the term ‘ethnic’ current in Andean ethnography of that period has also turned out to entail continuing problems. Yet Harris’s ethnographic self-confidence paid off in cogent micro-macro insights and in clarity about the wellsprings of violence, as well as solidarity, in nonmonetary reciprocity systems. Her exposition is swift, agile and convincing. *To Make the*

Earth Bear Fruit affords the pleasure of getting close – for the second or the first time, depending on one’s scholarly generation – to some pathbreaking and durably important fieldwork.

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FRANK SALOMON

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Nick Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA’s Classified Account of its Operations in Guatemala, 1952–1954* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. xv + 142 + xl, £25.00, £8.95 pb; \$39.50, \$14.95 pb.

It has long been known that in 1954 the United States promoted, planned and executed the overthrow of democratically-elected Guatemalan president Jacobo Arbenz. Nick Cullather, in his mesmerising book based on classified CIA material, *Secret History: The CIA’s Classified Account of its Operations in Guatemala, 1952–1954*, provides us with the first detailed account of how the operation was carried out.

Less a monograph than a primary source, *Secret History* is the facsimile reproduction of an internal agency study. In response to increasing public pressure to transform its shadowy Cold War culture of secrecy, the CIA in the early 1990s hired a number of historians to write accounts of the agency’s more infamous covert actions. Cullather, out of graduate school and in search of work, signed on to write on Guatemala. For one year, the author had open access to the CIA’s files, limited only by the haphazard classification of documents and the overwhelming amount of material he had to sift through. Declassified in 1997 and published by Stanford University Press in 1999, *Secret History* tells the on-the-ground story of the CIA’s most ambitious operation in Latin America. Apart from providing details of an operation that has been sketched out by others, the book is an invaluable account of the attitude and arrogance of the first generation of agency men who let neither logistical obstacles nor thoughts about the consequences of their actions get in the way of their objectives.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of Guatemala’s ‘ten years of spring’ (1944–1954). Following World War Two, Guatemala was one of the first Latin American states to attempt to make good on the democratic promise offered by the Allies’ victory. A movement spearheaded by students, teachers, military reformers, intellectuals and an emerging middle class overthrew a thirteen-year dictatorship, and social liberals, under two freely-elected governments, enacted a series of political and economic reforms, including an ambitious land reform, intended to transform Guatemala into a modern, democratic and more inclusive nation.

The defeat of Guatemala’s revolution had hemispheric repercussions. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, US advisors in Guatemala tried out many of the counter insurgency tactics – including the ‘disappearing’ of political reformers – that would be used throughout Latin America in the years to follow. Likewise, both the promise and mistakes of the revolution left a deep imprint on a young Argentine doctor named Ernesto Guevara who lived through the final year of the revolution, including the US-brokered ‘liberation’. The link between events in Guatemala in 1954 and US policy toward Cuba is made even more clear in Cullather’s book. The author argues that the relatively quick victory of CIA

operatives in Guatemala led them to believe that they could easily replicate the operation's success in Cuba. The result was the Bay of Pigs fiasco and the deterioration of relations between the two countries.

Secret History, based almost exclusively on CIA documents, adds little to the question as to whether it was the culture and politics of anticommunism or the economic interests of the United States Fruit Company that led the Eisenhower administration to act against Arbenz. Cullather writes that agency operatives actually used the UFCo, for its own ends and the repeal of the land reform did not greatly benefit the company. Nevertheless, Cullather's work suggests that posing these questions in either-or-terms is not very useful for the culture of anticommunism cannot be separated from the political economy of the cold war. The CIA wanted much more than just the removal of Arbenz. They desired a 'radical revolutionary change in Guatemalan politics. They sought the reversal of the Revolution of 1944, the termination of land reform, and the replacement of Arbenz with a liberal, authoritarian leader. Afterwards, they foresaw a prolonged period of dictatorial rule during which the regime would depend on United States aid and arms (60).'

The book's real strength is as a teaching tool. Stanford has published the study as a facsimile of the CIA's declassified document. The censored passages will not only catch students' attention, but provide a graphic example of what we still do not know about US actions during the Cold War. Cullather's new introduction provides nice insights into the agency's perverse relationship to its own history. For example, he reports that in an internal seminar, agents were assigned to read a study describing a covert operation based on false information planted by the CIA. This book gives concise summary of Guatemalan history leading up to the overthrow, and an afterword, 'A Culture of Fear', by Piero Gleijeses provides a useful commentary on the ongoing consequences of the overthrow. One possible teaching method would be to assign *Secret History* along with a number of declassified documents (available on the web from the National Security Archive at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/>) detailing US policy and actions in Guatemala subsequent to Arbenz's ouster.

Secret History is an extremely important scholarly and pedagogical work. It moves the discussion from *if* and *how* the United States did what it did, to *why* it did it.

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GREGORY GRANDING

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Paul Brodwin, *Medicine and Morality in Haiti: the Contest for Healing Power* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. xvi + 240, £50.00, £17.95 pb.

This is a sophisticated book that draws the reader in as the pages turn. Its thesis is that we need to rethink medical pluralism, which used to be considered as the analysis of individuals rationally seeking choices and the aetiologies, symbols and systems that emerge from those choices, and move toward a more practice, agency and process oriented approach. Brodwin writes that medical pluralism is a 'social process and an embodied practice' (p. 16), which helps us to unveil the composite nature of the body politics of religious and medical formations and the embodiment of people's experiences. This is a sophisticated account of how the

study of healing processes in Haiti is as much about clinical effectiveness as it is about moral authority of healers and healed, and the political discourses between colonial power, slave economy and local forces.

Brodwin takes the reader through an interesting account of Spanish, French and US colonial and post-colonial powers in the region drawing out the genealogies of the present Haitian medical system. A metropolitan (dominant) medicine was first geared to the interest of the French military and ruling classes. Only later was it directed toward the wellbeing of Creole plant owners and the slave population. French colonial medicine had to adjust to the contractions of slavery: slaves who were seen both as commodities and as persons. 'Pathogenic homesickness' (p. 36), such as the *maladie de mâchoire*, were sentimental tropes that constructed slaves as part of an emotionally underdeveloped and subjugated class. Nonetheless, the presence of African medicine – often more effective than European medicine – among the slave population was perceived in the colonial imagination as potentially poisoning and threatening.

During the US occupation between 1915 and 1934 the medical model was geared toward efficiency and technocracy, especially through the creation of new rural clinics. Subsequent international aid spurred a reorganisation of the national health structure via the creation of a Rural Health Delivery System (RHDS) in the 1980s. However, when the state withdrew and left the running of the RHDS to long-standing local interests, corruption and mismanagement spread at middle and local levels.

Brodwin gives very informative and diverse case studies of illness, healing and death in the Jeanty region in the south-west of the country. He explains that to understand the interplay of the world of spirits (the *lwa*) and the mediation of *houngan* and *mambo* (male and female healers) we need to understand the complex socio-cultural and religious context and figure out these interactions not as symbolic models but as situated, embodied experiences. Hence a phenomenology of illness that, as in the case of *eklampsi*, relates it to anger and blood accumulation, which weave together social conflicts, emotions, altered states of consciousness and physical sickness as well as experiences of loss and oppression. Rather than choosing a secular/sacred dichotomy, Brodwin explains the plurality of healing processes via a focus on morality. The Catholic practices of healing tend to ascribe the presence of malicious disease to an immoral Satan spirit. In their language this evil spirit possesses the person and has to be physically expelled from the body of the sick person. By contrast, the *houngan* deals with such force in amoral terms and sees the *lwa* coexisting with the spirit of the sick person in his/her body. While the Catholic discourse associates the *houngan* to the devil and to trickster figures, the *houngan* understand *lwa* as a mystery as well as masters to be carefully followed.

However, there is a growing criticism of these types of healing from the Protestant community. This group condemns the presence of Satan in both Catholic and *houngan* practice, and negotiation over the legitimacy and the efficacy of the healing process between these different Catholic, Protestant and *houngan* groups now constitutes the backbone medical pluralism in the area. The production and sedimentation of different types of healing is not only a response to social and economic contradictions; it also produces them. These contradictions are often embodied in the illnesses of young upwardly mobile members of society – often women – who have chosen to opt into the urban wage-labour economy. Illnesses and healing are the production of multiple negotiations of

conflicts and themselves provide the grounds for new conflicts and negotiations between religious and kin groups.

The book is very insightful and brings together different levels of analysis. However, there is an area that has not been addressed. In the discussion of healing and religious pluralism I was left wondering how recent international aid programmes have shaped the transformation of the medical pluralism that Browdin describes. The book would have benefited from a discussion of how international health projects are 'localised' through local conflicts or maybe local solutions in this ever-changing medical pluralism process. However, this volume could become a classic in the medical anthropology field, and it is recommended to students and researchers in anthropology, history of medicine, public health and religion.

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VALENTINA NAPOLITANO

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Philip A. Howard, *Changing History: Afro-Cuban Cabildos and Societies of Color in the Nineteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), pp. xxii + 227, £27.95 hb.

A common feature of urban African Diaspora communities of Latin America was the formation of voluntary mutual aid societies. Historian Philip A. Howard presents the first book-length study in English of the Cuban *cabildos de nación* that based their membership on African ethnicity and language, and the more universal *sociedades de socorros mutuos* who extended participation to all Afro-Cubans. For their members these organisations provided such services as loans, artisanal apprenticeship, burial, education, housing, dances, fêtes, and even purchased the freedom of slaves. Building upon the work of Cuban scholars Fernando Ortiz, Lydia Cabrera, José Luciano Franco and Pedro Deschamps-Chapeaux, combined with new but limited archival research in Cuba and Spain, Howard examines how these associations functioned to improve the social, political and economic status of Afro-Cubans in the nineteenth century.

The thesis that unifies the eight chapters of *Changing History* is the development and articulation of what Howard labels a 'consciousness of kind' by the *cabildos* and the societies of colour through their common struggle against the oppression of a colonial slave society. Howard describes how the mutual aid societies preserved African cultural identities and protected members from the oppressive structures of Cuban society that mitigated, to a certain degree, differences of language, ethnicity and customs to discern the common problems all people of colour confronted on a daily basis. The narrative of the book is the transition from distinct identities rooted in Africa to the formation of what Howard labels a Pan-Afro-Cuban identity that shared similarities, yet important differences, with the Cuban population as a whole in their struggles to end Spanish colonialism throughout the nineteenth century.

Howard traces the development of a 'consciousness of kind' through political action by analysing the revolutionary activities of the *cabildos* and the societies of color. In chapter four 'Inventing a Political Culture', Howard documents convincingly through court records the central role of the *cabildos* in the Aponte Conspiracy of 1812 and the *La Escalera* conspiracy of 1843–44. On both

occasions, *cabildos* served to unite slaves and free people of colour to end slavery and Spanish colonialism by providing organisational centers for planning the rebellion, confirming Robert Paquette's suggestion in *Sugar is Made with Blood* (1988) that *cabildos* were often converted into 'political hothouses'. The second half of the book continues to focus on political activities of the societies of colour by examining their role in the Ten Years' War (1868–78), the *Guerra Chiquita* (1879–80) and the War for Independence (1895–98). As with earlier events, the Afro-Cuban societies participated in the struggle for Cuban liberation, but the author does not define clearly their specific roles. Howard provides the example of *El Liceo Artístico* based in Sancti-Spiritu to suggest that other mutual aid societies 'probably were ... centers of insurrectionist conspiracy' during the Ten Years War, but offers no evidence to substantiate the claim (p. 109). Instead, he sketches biographies of well-known rebel leaders such as Antonio Maceo, Flor Crombet and Guillermo Moncada to narrate the participation of Afro-Cubans in the struggle for independence, but their direct relationship to the mutual aid societies remains unclear.

Changing History provides a broad examination of the mutual aid societies, outlining their form and function over the course of the nineteenth century. Differences between individual *cabildos* and societies of colour are not examined in detail, minimising the ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of the Afro-Cuban experience in favour of general conclusions. For example, Howard relies heavily on studies of the *Sociedad Secreta Abakuá* to arrive at conclusions for the practices of all *cabildos*. The *Abakuá*, however, were far from representative as they allowed white members to join their society; thus raising the question how important was African ethnicity and race for the membership of mutual aid societies? Future research will determine if the general conclusions apply to all mutual aid societies, and how ethnic and cultural differences among Africans funnelled into the Atlantic slave trade as emphasised by Africanists John Thornton and Paul Lovejoy, influenced *cabildo* activities.

Apart from these shortcomings, only to be expected of a pioneering work that spans the entire nineteenth century, Howard's study of the Afro-Cuban mutual aid societies is a welcome contribution to the recent publication of several innovative books in English that examine slavery, racism and colonialism. *Changing History* will be required reading for historians interested in Cuba, and should find a wider audience among scholars of the African diaspora, comparative slavery and the emerging field of Atlantic History.

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MATT D. CHILDS

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Oscar Zanetti and Alejandro Garcia, *Sugar and Railroads: A Cuban History, 1837–1959* (Chapel Hill, NC, and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), pp. xxviii + 496, £45.50, £22.95 pb.

In 1825, the world's first railway line was opened in England between Stockton and Darlington. By providing fast, cheap transportation the coming of trains brought a rapid intensification and spread of industrialisation. Possibly more than any other single advance, steam locomotion stands as a symbol for the economic development that propelled a few select countries into international dominance in the course of the nineteenth century.

There has always been a tendency to equate technological advances with development itself. Just twelve years after the first train service appeared in England, railways began to be built in Cuba, making the island just the seventh country in the world to introduce this form of transportation. Yet, clearly, Cuba cannot be included in that exclusive club of industrial powers. Although much has been written concerning the Cuban plantation economy, its growing dependence upon sugar and continued exploitation of slaves; until now, no serious study had been made of the role played by railways within this history.

Sugar and Railroads seeks to fill this historiographical gap. Zanetti and Garcia pursue the development of Cuban railways from the building of the first line between Havana and Güines in the 1830s, to the role played by the railways in the revolutionary struggle of the 1950s. In the process, they explore the development of capitalism in Cuba – a story in which the buoyant indigenous bourgeoisie of the first half of the nineteenth century could do little to resist the aggressive entry of foreign capital. The railways are shown to be symbolic of this process, and by the early twentieth century the Cuban rail system was divided between the British in the West and the North Americans in the East. This study impressively documents the machinations of foreign entrepreneurs and the complicity of the domestic elite that led to that surrendering of control.

However, by far the most important contribution that *Sugar and Railroads* makes is its analysis of the special relationship that existed between the railways and Cuba's principal export crop – sugar. Drawing principally on the records of the railroad companies, Zanetti and Garcia eloquently argue that this was far from being just a casual connection. There was a symbiotic link between the two, in which they mutually determined each other's development. Railways enabled sugar production to expand both in scale, and in geographical spread; while the demands of sugar exportation shaped a railway system whose prime motivation was to transport sugar to the ports. With railroad expansion and crisis closely mirroring the state of the sugar industry and market, the authors detail the complex dance of interwoven interests, in a continual flux of jealous conflict and economic dependency that would, in the end, only be resolved by revolution.

If this were their only objective, then there would be little to fault them on. However, in their preface they set out for themselves a rather more ambitious task: to analyse the history of the Cuban railroad not just economically and politically, but also socially. Most importantly, this would require placing the dynamic of class relations at the heart of the analysis, examining the central role played by the working class in the conflicts that shape the story. Though Zanetti and Garcia do devote a number of sections to the workers, they fail to go much beyond description. Largely marginalised from the analysis of the development of the railways, when they do get a chance to appear on the stage, it is only through the mediation of their union organisers, who are frequently portrayed as being little more than puppets of the bosses: clowns in the grand drama of the powerful.

Against the detailed study of share prices, and the problems and sins of the railroad owners, little energy is devoted to examining the conditions of life and work, or the concerns of the workers themselves beyond throwing in abstract references to proletarian class interest. The idea that union organisation was hampered by the existence of a labour aristocracy is uncritically assumed; the presence of many foreign workers in the sector is spoken of, but not really analysed; and the relationship between nominally free workers and slaves is just

presumed to be conflictual. Even the chance is missed to look in detail at the connection between workers on the railways and sugar plantations, despite the greater depth that this could potentially give to the central thesis of symbiosis between these two sectors.

It is this that makes Franklin Knight's claim, in his introduction, that *Sugar and Railroads* is of epochal significance – on a par with *Black Jacobins*, *Capitalism and Slavery* and *El Ingenio* – somewhat exaggerated. However, that should not be seen as detracting from what is a very important study, opening our eyes to the complexity of Cuban economic history.

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JONATHAN CURRY-MACHADO

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Laura Randall and Joan B. Anderson (eds.), *Schooling for Success: Preventing Repetition and Dropout in Latin American Primary Schools* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1999), pp. xiii + 338, \$66.95, \$25.95 pb.

The past 50 years have witnessed enrolments in Latin American primary schools climb, albeit unevenly, from an average of 50 per cent of the cohort in 1950 to over 90 per cent today. This rapid increase is testament in large part to the widespread investment in school infrastructure in the 1960s. But now, with expansion targets met, and with near-universal primary coverage, Latin American governments have realised (not long after their European and North American counterparts) that the extent of provision available does not nor cannot alone ensure effective learning. In some cases, expansion has in fact led to a decline in quality standards. The focus of government attention has therefore recently shifted, particularly in those countries with high primary enrolments, from macro- to micro-educational planning and to the search for more effective pedagogical tools and greater internal efficiency. Qualitative education targets have been added to quantitative.

Some of the ways in which the governments of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico have tried to improve the quality of primary education are set out in *Schooling for Success*. In 26 short essays, 30 contributors describe the basic structure of education in each country and then survey, country by country, measures to reduce repetition and drop out, and the effects of administrative decentralisation, the curriculum and teacher's pay and conditions.

The essays provide useful primary material on recent initiatives. On Chile, for example, Jaime Vargas writes clearly on the policy of decentralisation, and Francisco Alvarez provides a good summary of how different teaching styles and educational materials can make learning more effective. Ernesto and Paulina Schiefelbein's essay on Chilean primary education particularly stands out. In just over ten concise pages, they explain the problems of repetition and poor quality in schools, explore the consequences of these problems and suggest solutions. There is a most helpful summary of the issues addressed by contributors throughout the book.

But other essays lack a similar perspective, often failing to provide a comparative analysis to put the initiatives described in context. The Fe y Alegría schools, for example, may well have developed worthwhile techniques to reduce drop-out, but an examination of the obstacles overcome and of their statistical effect on

student achievement would have made the evaluation of these schools' success more thorough. In other cases, contributors describe interesting data and new programmes – such as the changing terms and conditions of Brazilian teachers, the pattern of participation of 6- to 15-year-olds in Mexico, or the curricular innovations in Argentina – but fail adequately to locate their description of recent policies in a sufficiently analytical context. And at times it is also hard to see the links with the book's overarching quality theme. An essay by Paolo Renato Souza, Brazil's education minister, which could have delivered much, is disappointing for another reason. Falling uncomfortably between a political vision statement and an academic assessment of the state of primary education in Brazil, his essay contains interesting information, but is at heart an official list of the actions of Cardoso's government to improve primary education.

One is left with the impression that a stronger editorial hand would have given the useful material in the book much greater coherence, guiding the reader through the range of data presented, and providing some of the comment and analysis which individual contributors, each with their narrow scope, are unable to give. The introduction and conclusion summarise the 26 essays rather than unite them, and do not explore some of fundamental questions raised by the book. A policy of 'automatic promotion', for example, of course reduces repetition, but how does this policy impact on quality and should it be applied across the continent? How will we know whether procedural changes (such as decentralisation or a new curriculum) do indeed improve educational quality? And how clear is the correlation between repetition, drop-out and the success of primary schooling? These and other questions are by no means easy to answer and are exercising the minds of politicians and academics in Latin America and elsewhere. *Schooling for Success* provides useful data on primary education in four countries and describes some of the ways their governments are hoping to address these important quality questions. But there is no comparative analysis of what has worked (how and why) to improve the quality of education in Latin American primary schools.

Department for Education and Employment,
London

MARCIAL BÓO

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Alfred H. Siemens, *A Favored Place: San Juan River Wetlands, Central Veracruz, A.D. 500 to the Present* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998), pp. xviii + 301, \$35.00 hb.

Tomás Martínez Saldaña and Jacinta Palerm Viqueira (eds.), *Antología sobre pequeño riego* (Mexico: Colegio de Postgraduados, Instituto de Socioeconomía Estadística e Informática, 1998), pp. xiii + 427, pb.

Blanca Estela Suárez Cortez and Diana Birrichaga Gardida, *Dos estudios sobre usos del agua en México (siglos XIX y XX)* (Mexico: IMTA and CIESAS, 1997), pp. 170, \$74.00 pb.

The three works reviewed here cover different aspects of 'water' as an increasingly central subject of historical and social research, in this case taking Mexico as an example.

Siemens' book is a rich monograph that captures the long-term development

of wetland agriculture in Central Veracruz from pre-Hispanic times to the present. The author addresses the topic from a multidisciplinary perspective, where his geographical approach has been nurtured by inputs from archaeology, history, paleoecology and social science, giving him a wide repertoire of techniques from traditional ethnography to air reconnaissance. The superimposition of information sources and landscapes, both in space and time, led Siemens to characterise his work as a kind of post-modern palimpsest, where the connections between signifier and signified remain fluid, changing, and – regarding long-standing notions of wetland landscapes – susceptible of deconstruction. Not only is Michel Foucault introduced metaphorically into the picture (the colonial *mirador* is re-signified as a sort of predecessor of Jeremy Bentham's panopticon), but the author also claims that he has tested some ideas of the French philosopher in Central Veracruz. Perhaps one of the most interesting Foucauldian elements to be found in Siemens concerns his critique of the 'writing and rewriting' made of the wetlands, first by the European colonisers and later by the modern hydraulic engineers. Where as the first expressed aversion for the wetlands, – if not complete negation by leaving them blank in the maps – the twentieth-century engineers saw a diseased lowland landscape in need of technological therapy, that is drainage and irrigation. Although the author acknowledges that the evidence remains puzzling, he argues for a positive re-evaluation of wetland agriculture as a long-standing sustainable and productive practice that may still provide answers to present agricultural problems. Despite the post-modern tones that colour Siemens' narrative, his analytical approach seems to be rooted in quite modern foundations. In fact, one of his claims is that this research may 'challenge policy-makers to reflection and encourage resistance to the prevalent trends in food production', a somewhat uncommon approach among post-modern authors. Consistently, he concludes that 'traditional' agricultural systems, like those he found still alive in the Central Veracruz wetlands, have demonstrated to be resilient and they may also survive the threat of being 'overridden by globalisation' embedded in current policy prescriptions.

Martínez Saldaña and Palerm Viqueira's collection of thirteen essays, most of them originally published between the 1950s and late 1980s, focuses on small-scale irrigation agriculture. It is dedicated to the memory of Karl Wittfogel, and represents a long-standing tradition of Mexican scholarship – mainly anthropological – on irrigation agriculture. Within this framework, the main focus is the case of autonomous small-scale irrigation systems (i.e. not under state management). Irrigation agriculture in Mexico has undergone radical changes since the 1980s with the transfer of the irrigation networks to users' associations, and there is a need for better understanding of this process. In particular, the authors focus on both the role of the user-irrigators and the government institutions involved in the process. This approach is informed by the classic debate on 'hydraulic societies' generalised by Wittfogel in the 1950s, to the organising principle of the work is the debate about what forms of 'social organisation' are required for the functioning of irrigation systems. In this connection, the examples analysed showed that in Mexico there is a wide variation in the degree of self-management or dependency from the state exhibited by the irrigation units, although the state is always present in a variety of forms. It is argued that this variation cannot be explained away solely by variables like the size of the system, but rather by other factors like

transformations in the forms of social organisation prompted by changes in land tenure, like the *reparto agrario* brought about by the revolution. These factors were found to affect both well-established irrigation systems, some dating back between five hundred and one thousand years, as well as relatively new units created since the nineteenth century. The whole work revolves about the issue of variation, the fact that geo-hydrogeological constraints have been tackled with widely different responses, and that irrigation agriculture has had both integrative and disruptive consequences for the communities involved. The fact that irrigation has not always brought about the centralisation of authority is also given further exemplification. The anthology is not limited to the reproduction of well-known debates on the subject, but it also includes several relatively recent essays profiling a brief history of small-scale irrigation initiatives in Mexico. An interesting conclusion arising from these contributions is that overall there would have been an increasing control of water management activities by the state and, consequently, a reduction of the autonomy enjoyed by the irrigators in the past, a process that would have accelerated since the early 1970s. This has important consequences for the study of current processes of decentralisation and transference in the field of irrigated agriculture, and suggests that these processes are not incompatible with the strengthening of state control. The collection would have benefited from a more elaborated discussion of the findings, but unfortunately the volume ends abruptly without a conclusion.

The short book by Suárez Cortés and Birrichaga Gardida contains, as the title suggests, two historical monographs, each based on examples of urban water management. The work reflects a recent trend of historical research about 'water' in Mexico, which has developed since the late 1980s. The first monograph surveys the interlinks between the early nineteenth century industrial modernisation in Central Mexico and water policy. The author offers a brief account of the industrial policies that underpinned the development of water-powered economic activities in that historical period, especially in the textile and paper industries, including the multiplication of social conflicts arising from the increasing competition for water sources. It is also worth highlighting the analysis of the customary and legal forms of use and appropriation of water, and of the social groups that controlled the access to water resources. Despite its brevity, the monograph provides valuable inputs for a history of the intertwining between hydraulic technology and industrial development in that period. This includes some insights into the socio-political and legal complexities of the process, especially with regard to water rights and to the demarcation of the public-private interface in relation to water. The second monograph addresses the history of urban water management in Mexico in the post-revolutionary period, focusing on the cases of León (Guanajuato) and San Luis Potosí (1935–1947). The author describes the political changes starting with the 1917 revolutionary chart that provided the framework for the regulation of water use in the twentieth century. It pays particular attention to the federal policies that sought the improvement of the provision of water to urban centres as a way of tackling the high mortality rates affecting the country in those years. The monograph illustrates how the federal policy led to numerous conflicts at the local and regional levels, which included the expropriation of privately-owned water companies by the state. The conclusions of the study should be somewhat qualified, however, by the fact that overall public investment in urban water infrastructure in Mexico was quite modest until the 1970s. Nevertheless, this work shows the increasingly important

political character that water acquired in post-revolutionary Mexico, and the process of centralisation of water control in the hands of the federal state.

These three works illustrate different ways of approaching the multifaceted problem facing the social management of water in Latin America. They will provide useful material for students and scholars working in the fields of geography, regional and urban studies, water history and related topics.

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Don M. Coerver and Linda B. Hall, *Tangled Destinies: Latin America and the United States* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), pp. xii + 289, \$39.95, \$19.95 pb.

This is essentially a history of relations between the United States and Latin America for undergraduate course adoption. The authors teach Latin American history at Texas Christian University and the University of New Mexico, respectively. The first two chapters of their book deal respectively with the period before 1848 and 1848–98; the remaining seven chapters with the period down to 1999. The last two are topically organised, on the Latino diaspora in the USA and the drug problem. An original feature is that each chapter begins with a ‘vignette’ dealing with a single episode in some way typical of the period under study. Again, ‘Point Counter-point’ gives a number of telling quotations in each chapter. Together these devices undoubtedly enhance the book’s interest to students, though the choice of the Water Witch incident as illustrative of the period 1848–98 could be questioned. There is a succinct chronology as well as 23 illustrations and five maps.

Given this structure, about half of the book deals with very recent (‘contemporary’) history, that of the past thirty years or so. The authors have obviously tried hard to present a balanced view and on the whole have been successful, but there is no getting away from the fact that this is a view from the USA heavily reliant on US sources. Presumably not to frighten the reader surprisingly few sources are actually cited, which seems a pity, especially since the bibliographical note is quite selective, the Falklands Crisis being represented only by the account of the war by Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, which may or may not justify the curious comment that its outcome was ‘predictable’ (p. 172). It is also a very conventional political history in that it shows few influences from the social sciences – even the discussion of the debt crisis of the 1980s is couched in very general terms and lacks hard data. But with these reservations it is, an interesting introduction to Latin America seen as a problem for US policymakers.

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Julia Buxton and Nicola Phillips (eds.), *Developments in Latin American Political Economy: States, Markets and Actors* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. xiv + 241, £45.00, £14.99 pb.

Edited books on the political economy of contemporary Latin America seem to be popular with publishers and academics alike at the turn of the century. This

volume edited by two political scientists, Julia Buxton and Nicola Phillips, is twinned with another edited book about Latin American political economy that both authors have edited. The other book adopts a country-by-country approach. The present book attempts a more continental perspective.

One reason, perhaps, why publishers like books on political economy is that the concept can cover a wide range of disciplines – politics, cultural studies, economics, sociology, geography and environmental studies, urban studies and so on. In the context of disciplinary range, this edited book is quite limited, with virtually all contributors in the area of political science and international studies. Hence the focus on the economic, social and cultural impacts of the contemporary political economy of Latin America is quite restricted. Indeed the bulk of the book (six out of ten chapters) focuses on political actors. As a group, they are introduced as both traditional and emerging, although no formal definition or classification is developed.

Craig Arceneaux attempts a wide Latin American vision in order to identify the ways in which the role of the military is being redefined. He concludes that ‘civil-military relations have reached a critical juncture’ as ‘civilian control and democracy have emerged as the new norm’ (pp. 107). Guerrilla movements are presented as another traditional actor of Latin American politics, and Peter Calvert focuses on their contemporary relevance. However, he follows a country-by-country approach rather than attempting to provide a continent-wide vision of their changing role. Laura Tedesco reverts to the continental brief and examines the emergence of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the context of the redefinition of the state and the changes in political economy. She concludes with an interesting family metaphor, in that ‘the NGOs are out there filling the gap left by the retreat of the state, as an older brother tidies up his little brother’s bedroom in order to avoid their mother’s anger’ (p. 143).

A wide-ranging review of human rights movements in Latin America is provided by Alexandra Barahona de Brito. She examines the evolution of the human rights movement, its changing relations with the state and the internationalisation of the movement before focusing on ways in which the human rights agenda has expanded in recent years to cover non-traditional areas such as the rights of women, indigenous peoples, gays and lesbians. She concludes convincingly that ‘Latin America’s political and state authorities or institutions cannot do without the pressures for change and incorporation emanating from the movement as a whole, however uncomfortable the demands posed may be’ (p. 164). Fiona Macaulay’s chapter develops further the issue of women’s groups in the region and Jonathan Barton looks at the development of the environmental agenda in the region.

These reviews provide chapters of varying quality about traditional and emerging actors in the region. It should be pointed out that there is no review of the changing role of the state or the emergence of technocracies in Latin American countries. One significant problem with this edited book is that these chapters on traditional and emerging actors are not placed in any coherent wider context. There is no introductory chapter that reviews shifts in political economy in Latin America over recent time and introduces the different theoretical approaches that have justified such changes in political economy.

Instead there are four introductory chapters by four different authors with four very different approaches. First, Duncan Green tries to cram a lot of his observations on the experience of neoliberalism in Latin America into one

chapter. George Philip reviews contemporary political institutions and democratic consolidation in a rather short chapter. Daniel Hellinger reviews political parties – a chapter that may have been better included with the chapters in the second part on political actors. Finally, Nicola Phillips reviews regional integration in Latin America – a theme already referred to by Duncan Green.

Edited books on contemporary political economy in Latin America may appear popular with publishers, but they need to be committed to integrating a wide range of themes and disciplines. Furthermore, a careful overview of the theories and history of political economy in Latin America, though difficult, should be attempted by the editors (or authors) so that the non-specialist is able to read an attempt at integrating the many disparate themes by writers interested in the subject. It is useful to focus on new issues and new players, but it is also valuable to put them into a wider historical context.

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Luigi Manzetti, *Privatization South American Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. xii + 373, £45.00 hb.

It is not uncommon to find an author introducing a book by arguing that the theme, although neglected, is of great importance. In this case, though, it is undeniably true. The study of privatisation has not been exactly neglected but there are few comparative studies and even fewer that concentrate on the politics of the process rather than on the economics. Luigi Manzetti admirably fills this gap by studying the politics of privatisation in three South American countries, Argentina, Brazil and Peru. These three were chosen rather than say the pioneer of the process, Chile, or one of the other earlier privatising countries, Mexico, because they were all formal democracies and hence more comparable in terms of the political process of privatisation.

The book starts with an overall account of the political economy of privatisation, and of the Latin American countries in the 1980s when, by and large, privatisation failed to take off. The heart of the book lies in the three chapters on Argentina, Brazil and Peru in the 1990s, and the author brings out very clearly not only the differences between the three countries but also the differences within those countries over time. The argument is presented with a mass of detailed evidence and careful analysis in each case of the major privatisations undertaken. It is admirably presented and represents a model of careful political analysis. Each case study ends with a judicious assessment of the costs and benefits of the way that privatisation was undertaken in the country concerned.

The author offers a clear model of the optimal way of privatising. Companies to be privatised should be restructured first to maximise their attractiveness to potential purchasers and to avoid handing over monopolies intact and thereby creating private monopolies to replace public ones. The process of selling off the state asset should be as transparent and competitive as possible to avoid covert deals with political supporters. Perhaps most important of all is that a powerful regulatory agency must be in place before the process is completed otherwise the

consumer interest will be difficult to defend. The author in effect advocates as democratic a process of privatisation as possible and amongst these cases, the one that comes closest to his approved model is that of President Cardoso in Brazil.

Cardoso's preference for an open and transparent process of privatisation was partly forced upon him by a competitive political system in which the strength of the opponents of privatisation meant that the president had to work hard to build up a consensus in favour of the process. And part of that consensus was based upon guarantees that the sale would be used to maximise returns to the state, not to reward supporters, and that the newly privatised companies would be adequately regulated to defend the public interest. By contrast in the early stages of the process in Menem's Argentina, the sales were badly prepared, under-priced, were used to favour political supporters and lacked adequate regulatory agencies. In his second term of office, increasing political opposition forced Menem to privatise more openly and with more safeguards. In Peru, Fujimori had even fewer restraints than Menem as the Peruvian president had few debts to the entrepreneurial sector, and few supporters – apart from the army – to reward. But the absence of opposition and the authoritarian nature of the Fujimori regime meant that the policies of privatisation were often ill thought-out, and used primarily to further the president's own political agenda.

The lasting affects of poorly executed privatisations can be very harmful both to the economy and to the political system. A privatisation that creates monopoly profits for the private owners has as few incentives to be efficient as any publicly owned company (and Manzetti makes the interesting point that the record of some of the state companies was in many ways quite creditable). A privatisation that is seen to be tarred by corruption hardly helps to reinforce democracy in countries where an alarming proportion of the population expresses only a weak commitment to democracy as a political system. The author notes that the argument used by advocates of privatisation that the sale of shares to employees would create a kind of popular capitalism, in practice was on such a small scale, and the shares held for such a brief period, that there was no real democratisation of share ownership. In short, this is a most impressive book on a topic that is central not only to the political economy of the countries concerned, but also to the character of their political systems.

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Guillermo O'Donnell, *Counterpoints: Selected Essays on Authoritarianism and Democratization* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), pp. xxi + 235, \$40.00 hb.

This collection of essays by Guillermo O'Donnell provides a retrospective look at the ways that his thinking has developed over the past thirty years or so. It deserves a warm welcome. It is notoriously difficult to say anything new about the nature of politics. Economists make conceptual break-throughs and win Nobel prizes. Political scientists – *polítólogos* in the vernacular – do not. But O'Donnell is different. He has always been ready to think the unthinkable. Today he can claim to be one of the very few original political thinkers of his generation.

This selection of his work adds up to more than the sum of its parts. The separate essays compose an intellectual journey and reflect a growing sense of *oeuvre*. O'Donnell characterises the central theme as 'democracy, its vicissitudes and its possibilities in Latin America' (p. ix). It was his thesis on 'bureaucratic authoritarianism' that first brought him to international attention. But even when working on authoritarianism his passion has been for democracy, and how to make it.

All these essays have been published elsewhere at some time. But one or two have been rather inaccessible, or only available in Spanish, or both, so may be new to the English reader. Among these is the excellent 'Democracy in Argentina: Macro and Micro' (first published in an Argentine collection edited by Oscar Oszlak). This is one of three essays that delve into the 'lived conditions' of authoritarianism in Latin American politics and society, and connect the personal to the political. Together they comprise a brave indictment of the more unsavoury aspects of Latin American political culture.

Little of O'Donnell's work on democratic transitions appears here, since most of this work was done in collaboration with others – to whom he always pays generous tribute. But he is keen to defend his 'process-oriented' approach to democratic transitions, and denies that he did not give proper emphasis to 'the role of the popular sectors' in these transitions. On this point I have yet to be convinced.

The latter part of the collection focuses on O'Donnell's recurrent attempts to understand and theorise the kind of 'truncated democracy' that has emerged in Latin America in recent years. This is stimulating, occasionally swashbuckling, stuff. He is most concerned with two political pathologies. On the one hand, the lack or ineffectiveness of 'social citizenship', which is really legal citizenship, or the civil protections afforded by an effective rule of law. On the other, the detrimental impact on patterns of political authority of 'particularism', which was characterised in his essay on 'Illusions of Consolidation' as the 'rule of informal rules'.

In O'Donnell's view the available democratic theory is of little help in thinking through these issues. His main concerns have remained outside the scope of the Dahlian theory of 'polyarchy', or political democracy since this reflects the historical experience of the advanced capitalist democracies. Latin American governments may satisfy the formal criteria of polyarchy, but they lack the institutional predictability and accountability of the established democracies. More seriously, the Latin American democracies do not appear any closer to acquiring these characteristics. No surprise therefore that O'Donnell remains deeply sceptical of the large literature on democratic consolidation.

O'Donnell's inquiry into the state of Latin American democracy and its characteristic condition of 'low-intensity citizenship' is imaginative and important work. If there is a criticism to make of this inquiry it is that it remains rather static. It is true that civil, political and minority rights must be guaranteed by the state, and that their presence requires an effective rule of law. But historically these rights have nearly always had to be won by social and political struggles against the state, or against powerful actors in civil society. Once again, a sense of popular political agency seems to be missing from the analysis.

The collection closes with an essay that seeks to connect O'Donnell's current concerns to the problem of 'Poverty and Inequality in Latin America', reflecting

his recent work with Víctor Tokman and Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, among others. It is characteristic of O'Donnell that he should seek to answer the big question about the (causal) connections between the (poor) quality of democracy in Latin America and the social ravages of poverty and economic inequality. Seeking to resolve such an intractable question may seem like a 'futile exercise in wishful-thinking' (p. 208). But O'Donnell takes the long view. After all, when he first imagined a new democratic politics during the dark days of the 'dirty war', it seemed just as 'ridiculously unrealistic' (p. xv).

This collection begins with the classic essay on 'State and Alliances in Argentina'. It concludes with the inquiry into poverty and inequality in Latin America. It is a collection that may yet surprise some by its intellectual range and ambition. O'Donnell says without apology that he is 'a generalist' (p. 196). He is also an audacious thinker – theorist, polemicist and *provocateur*. His themes are always serious. His effects are never less than engaging.

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