

Book Reviews

Barbara A. Ganson, ed., *Native Peoples, Politics, and Society in Contemporary Paraguay: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2021. Maps, tables, chronology, bibliography, index, 175 pp.; hardcover \$75, ebook \$75.

When General Alfredo Stroessner was overthrown in a coup on February 2 and 3, 1989, one of the longest dictatorships in the modern world ended, and Paraguay joined its Latin American neighbors in the transition to a modern democracy. Paraguay's fragile democratic transition has been marked by a weak institutional structure, the persistent legacy of clientelism and corruption, and an increasingly assertive civil society pressing to shape Paraguay's future. Barbara Ganson's edited volume is a welcome addition to the small, albeit growing, English-language literature on contemporary Paraguay and its democratic transition. The essays in this volume address some key aspects of Paraguay's political and economic system and include a particularly strong focus on Indigenous people in contemporary Paraguay.

Ganson's introduction provides a brief overview of the historical, cultural, and environmental context to the post-Stroessner period. It includes a discussion of Guaraní-Spanish relations during the colonial period and the ways the Guaraní sought to take more effective control over their lives and obtain some benefits from colonial relationships. This is a particularly apt context for the first three chapters of the volume, which focus on the experiences of Paraguay's Indigenous peoples and ways they have sought self-determination and a role in shaping the nation's future.

The first chapter, by René Harder Horst, shows how Indigenous people in Paraguay forged national and international alliances during the Stroessner regime and used these connections to draw attention to the regime's human rights abuses and destructive development policies. Pope John Paul II's visit to the Paraguayan Chaco town of Mariscal Estigarribia in May 1988, when Enenhit leader René Ramírez addressed the Pope and crowd with powerful testimony of the Indigenous situation and their aspirations, is the most widely recognized event in this struggle. But as Harder Horst shows, this was just one of the multiple ways that Paraguay's Indigenous people actively participated in the opposition to the dictatorship and have continued to press for political recognition and rights since its fall. They pushed for and won inclusion in the new Constitution of 1992 and have

continued to actively advocate for their interests and rights both nationally and internationally.

Chapters 3 and 4 turn the lens to the migration of Indigenous people to Paraguay's urban centers and look at the ways individual communities have sought to shape their circumstances. In chapter 3, Richard Reed focuses on the situation of Guaraní who have migrated to the capital city of Asunción. Reed weaves his analysis around the story of Lali, a Guaraní woman he first met as a child some 30 years earlier while doing field research in eastern Paraguay's remote Atlantic forest. The expansion of large-scale mechanized agriculture into Paraguay's eastern frontier and the rapid deforestation that accompanied it destroyed rural Guaraní self-sufficient livelihoods, impelling many to migrate to cities. In Asunción, Guaraní are highly visible, seen begging at traffic lights, at night often camped along roads or sleeping on sidewalks. Their major sources of income are foraging in the city dump and begging. Guaraní children and youth have been drawn into addiction to cheap drugs and prostitution. Yet even in these extremely adverse conditions, new migrants have drawn on networks from their rural communities and organized in an effort to "reterritorialize" their new urban environment. Reed found Lali living in one such community of urban Guaraní at the edge of Asunción's city dump with her husband and three daughters. Though their situation was dire, Lali's community had successfully solicited government recognition and had won assistance to make some improvements in their community.

In chapter 4, Paola Canova challenges the description of the Ayoreo of Paraguay's central Chaco as "hypermarginalized." Long denigrated as "savage" and "wild" and subject to highly exploitative labor relations, Canova argues that settlement in Filadelfia, the main urban center of the Fernheim Mennonite colony in the Paraguayan Chaco, has opened up opportunities for the Ayoreo to press land claims in both urban and rural spaces. Canova shows how the Ayoreo strategically deployed dominant narratives that labeled them as "unprepared for urban life" first to avoid eviction from the squatter settlement where they had congregated and then to win designation of an official neighborhood in Filadelfia. Although the urban land they have won is very small and the provision of services has lagged, the Ayoreo have forged a political space for themselves within the urban community and have also been able to use their urban presence to press their rural land claims.

These chapters make clear the extremely challenging circumstances faced by Indigenous people in Paraguay during the Stroessner regime and today. But taken together, they also paint a powerful portrait of Indigenous agency in pressing their claims, creating spaces for political recognition, and shaping their social conditions. Paraguay's Indigenous people have not succeeded in winning all their claims. But as these essays show, they have effectively organized to defend their rights at the local, national, and international level.

The remaining three chapters of the volume address different aspects of what might loosely be termed the effectiveness of formal political and governance institutions. Sarah Patricia Cerna Villagra, Sara Mabel Villalba Portillo, Eduardo

Tamayo Belda, and Roque Moreles Pintos describe the evolution of Paraguay's political system from the advent of Stroessner's regime in 1954 through the first year of Mario Abdo Benítez's presidency in 2019. They trace the institutional bases through which Stroessner maintained power for 35 years and the evolution of the political party system since his regime fell. It is noteworthy that with the brief exception of Fernando Lugo's presidency, the *Asociación Nacional Republicana* (ANR, Colorado Party), the political party that became the hegemonic state party under Stroessner, has governed at the national level since 1989, though the opposition has occasionally won in departmental or municipal elections. The chapter also includes a useful summary of the modifications to the political system introduced in the 1992 Constitution.

In 1996 Paraguay became the second country in the region to adopt a gender quota for its national legislature. The law requires the "promotion" of women to at least 20 percent of elected legislative bodies and requires that in internal party elections there should be one woman candidate for every five spots on the party's list of candidates. Though women have won some seats in Paraguay's legislative bodies, the gains have been modest and have seldom attained the goal of 20 percent as set by the quota. Brian Turner's chapter provides a valuable analysis of the factors that explain this relatively poor performance.

Drawing on an analysis of the number of women on candidate lists, their positions on those lists, and the number elected, he shows how the nature of the quota itself and institutional limits on its application have kept gains modest. Turner also looks at the degree to which women in office have influenced policy through gender-sensitive legislation. Though women legislators were increasingly active in filing bills over the decade from 2008 to 2018, fewer than 3 percent of the bills they proposed were gender-sensitive. Nevertheless, they have had several notable successes in passing gender-sensitive legislation, demonstrating women legislators' success in mobilizing public support and legislative coalitions to press these bills forward.

The final chapter, by Melissa Birch, examines the impact that Mercosur has had on Paraguay, the poorest of the Mercosur members and the most open of its economies. Birch analyzes Paraguay's patterns of trade and foreign investment since joining Mercosur and the impacts on Paraguay's economy, as well as the broader political and international benefits of the alliance. As she notes, it is difficult to separate the impact of Mercosur from the other profound regional and global changes that have occurred in the now more than 25 years since Mercosur was formed. But she concludes that Mercosur has led Paraguay to increase its commercial connections with its alliance partners, and Paraguay's small industrial sector appears to be growing, especially through *maquilas* primarily financed by Brazilian investors. Nevertheless, the impact on Paraguay's economic activity might have been stronger had its weak institutions not hampered the ability of its economic actors to take advantage of the opportunities Mercosur offered.

This relatively brief book does not provide a comprehensive analysis of institutional change in Paraguay since Stroessner's fall. Nor does it consider the

broad range of social movements, including labor, campesino, and women's movements, that have played a role in shaping Paraguay's contemporary society and politics. But the authors of these chapters provide rich material both for comparative purposes and for Paraguay specialists. Readers will find this book a useful source on some of key issues of institutional change and sociopolitical inclusion in Paraguay today.

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Kathryn Hochstetler, *Political Economies of Energy Transition: Wind and Solar Power in Brazil and South Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Figures, tables, abbreviations, bibliography, index, 277 pp.; hardcover \$99, ebook \$80.

As the climate science literature stresses, the world will need to return to preindustrial levels of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) by 2050 if we want to avoid the worst effects of climate change. And no other sector will need to change as much as the energy industry, since it contributes to over 70 percent of manmade emissions and is mostly (over 80 percent) based on fossil fuel generation from coal, oil, and natural gas. Changing the global energy system is an enormous task full of economic and political challenges. In fact, with the recent drastic cost reductions in wind and solar and the technological advances in storage and electric vehicles, it can be said that the energy transition will face more political hurdles than technical ones.

Given the centrality of environmental concerns and contestation in the distributive impact of policies that promote decarbonization, the politics of energy transition has received growing attention in the political science literature. However, most studies focus on developed nations or China, while the bulk of the growth of energy consumption will come from today's emerging markets. Kathryn Hochstetler's book is a welcome exception and is well timed. This book not only shifts the focus to two large developing economies but also provides a useful framework for further studies in this field by unpacking the dynamics that facilitate or hinder the necessary transition.

Hochstetler identifies four types of political economies of energy transition: climate change, industrial policy, energy distribution and consumption, and siting policy. Each political economy receives a full chapter treatment that largely proceeds through a broader theoretical framework, followed by a process tracing of the policy evolution in Brazil and South Africa. The empirics identify the actors

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