

It is indeed the contribution of *Cívico*'s argument about the state–paramilitary relationship to the existing work on this complicity that could have been specified further. To be sure, in a novel way, the fifth chapter starts with an intriguing analogy that promises to shed light on the entanglement of the paramilitaries and the state: between the Sicilian Mafia and the paramilitaries. However, the chapter falls short of specifying the particular elements of this analogy, and of recognising the limitations of it. On the one hand, *Cívico* argues that both the paramilitaries and the Sicilian Mafia would have emerged from the need to establish order and provide protection in a context in which the state was not capable of assuming these governance functions. On the other hand, he argues that the paramilitaries and the Mafia operate both within and outside the state. The argument somewhat conflates *origins* and *modus operandi* and leaves one wondering how the paramilitaries' ideological motivation comes in. The goal of counter-insurgency is essential to the circumstances under which the Colombian government encouraged the establishment of self-defence groups *and* to the relationship between the state and the paramilitaries in subsequent decades. Against this, the Mafia's *modus operandi* focuses on protection, yet does not explicitly engage in such ideologically motivated activities. Furthermore, in Colombia, paramilitaries have not been the only non-state actors to provide protection: guerrillas and drug cartels have replaced the state in certain regions to provide such governance functions. Later in the chapter, *Cívico* himself introduces the history of Pablo Escobar and refers to the drug cartels' 'Mafia-like power centers' (p. 166). He also defines the Mafia as the 'social phenomenon in which a criminal organization has a strategic alliance with legal institutions, as is the case in Colombia' (p. 219). It thus is unclear how the paramilitary–Mafia analogy is singled out. In this regard, lenses such as Federico Varese's conceptualisation of the Mafia and states on a continuum, with hybrid actors such as paramilitaries and insurgents in between, can be useful for enhancing analytical clarity (Varese, 'What is Organized Crime?', in Varese (ed.), *Organized Crime*, Routledge, 2010, pp. 1–35).

Overall, the book and the additional questions it raises are welcome contributions to a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of the Colombian conflict. In the current context of the implementation of the peace deal between the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, FARC) and the Colombian government, yet continued insecurity in the country, the book is an urgent reminder that ending violence through more violence can easily backfire. It also emphasises that public discourses do not always reflect activities and experiences on the ground. Finally, it highlights that solutions to conflict are not necessarily found in the central state by default, but also require including voices at the margins of the state.

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Miriam Seemann, *Water Security, Justice and the Politics of Water Rights in Peru and Bolivia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. xviii + 226, £13.60, hb

The formalisation of water rights is widely regarded as the panacea to the looming water crisis brought about by climate change and other socio-environmental calamities. However, fewer questions have been asked about the effects of such formalisation initiatives. Why are policy-makers so keen to formalise water rights? What does it

actually mean to do that? And what are the implications for local communities? Ultimately, does the formalisation of water rights actually lead to enhanced water security?

Miriam Seemann has written a book that is likely to attract the interest of those researching water security and politics. Based on empirical work in Peru and Bolivia, Seemann is at pains to provide the nitty-gritty details of water rights allocation in the Andean region, and she provides her readers with a novel and thorough examination of water rights in a region which is not only likely to be harshly affected by climate change, but whose political and economic climates may also affect small-holder water-users in predominantly adverse ways. The contrast between the two case countries effectively demonstrates how the drive towards the formalisation of water rights, even while it is being couched in very different terms and elaborated under different political conjunctures, may have quite similar effects on Andean communities and individual water-users.

The book has two parts: the first provides a useful discussion of water justice and water rights as empirical and analytical concepts. Here Seemann shows the quality of rigid and patient scholarship, and she provides the reader with a thorough examination of the usefulness of these concepts. Hers is an important project: to question the assumptions held by policy-makers and some water experts and scholars that the formalisation of water rights automatically reduces water conflict and increases water security and equality. She sets out to examine the often much messier picture of the legal pluralism of water rights through an elaborate and (perhaps too) complex theoretical framework, which combines legal anthropology and political ecology approaches. Seemann is ambitious in the way that she tackles the intersections between water rights, water security and water justice. A bit of editorial work might have been warranted in this fairly long (48 pages) introductory part of the book, which consists of too many sections reviewing the different bodies of literature with which she engages. Nevertheless, Seemann effectively creates a framework for analysing the social embeddedness of water rights and I am sympathetic to her project of uncovering the complexities, the legal diversity and the power dynamics that shape uncertain ecological and environmental processes. Her point that water security and its solutions must be politicised may not be entirely new, but it is well put and provides an important reminder to us that water rights and water security are deeply political issues.

The second part of the book consists of case studies of two communities in each of the countries. The country sections follow roughly the same structure. The chapters on the historical backgrounds (4 and 7) consist of periodisations (Peru: 1900–68; 1969–89; 1990–2013; Bolivia: 1825–1952; 1953–81; 1982–2005; 2006–13) which outline dominant political trends in water policies and the attendant rights and recognitions shaping these. The chapters on the formal recognition of local water rights (5 and 8) begin by documenting key institutional arrangements that have recently been implemented in each of the countries to ensure the formalisation of water rights. In Peru, the focus is primarily on the Programa Extraordinario de Formalización de Derechos de Uso de Agua con Fines Agrarios (Extraordinary Programme for the Formalisation of Right to Water-Use for Agricultural Purposes, PROFODUA), which was established with the explicit aim of formalising water rights in a country where most water users in 2004 operated without a license, and its relationship to the 2009 Water Resources Law. In Bolivia, the focus is on the 2004 Irrigation Law, whose participatory process was shaped by the turmoil following the 2000 ‘water war’ in Cochabamba. The second parts of these chapters analyse the dominant discourses

surrounding the establishment and implementation of these regulatory frameworks and institutions. Whereas Peru adheres to a modernist and rationalistic focus on universal truths expressed through efficiency and legal security, Bolivia has been shaped by claims to basic livelihoods rights expressed through a discourse of *usos y costumbres* (indigenous customary law). Consequently, the Peru chapter focuses more on the production of knowledge and power, where the Bolivia chapter emphasises social participation. The case-based chapters (6 and 9) look at local water rights and how they have been affected by the implementation of water licenses in Peru and a water registry in Bolivia. Given the differences detailed in the previous chapters, the formalisation of water rights has quite different expressions in the two sites. However, Seemann shows how in both instances the formalisation threatens to erase local, informal practices of allocating water and increase the risk of local water conflicts. This may have severe consequences in terms of water security, especially for those already in vulnerable positions who are unable to meet the requirements of this new formalisation. The conclusion of the book brings together the two cases which have so far been treated independently of each other. Seemann concludes that ‘whatever type of property rights are considered within formalisation policies, the process fundamentally maintains or even increases authority and power within the formalizing agency’ (p. 173). This is important, and I share her hope, detailed in the last part of the conclusion, that this insight can inspire a different way of thinking about water rights that maintains a focus on water security and water justice.

The book is strongest in its attention to detail when it comes to the legal–historical background. Seemann provides a very useful overview of the different legislative frameworks and the contexts within which they have emerged. Through her analysis the reader gains a good understanding of the micro-politics of water rights, their historical trajectories, and how these translate into (in)justices on the ground. While I would recommend the book to anyone interested in understanding the contexts shaping water allocation and its attendant rights and injustices, it may not quite meet the expectations of more ethnographically oriented readers. It is based on relatively short fieldtrips and a total of 47 interviews of which only a handful in each site are with water users. While the introduction does mention everyday struggles, we learn little about this in the empirical chapters. The book can therefore fruitfully be used in teaching along with other more ethnographic work.

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Christen A. Smith, *Afro-Paradise: Blackness, Violence, and Performance in Brazil* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2016), pp. xiv + 261. \$95.00, \$26.00 pb

Afro-Paradise: Blackness, Violence, and Performance in Brazil by Christen A. Smith documents the epidemic levels of anti-black violence in Brazil and breaks new ground in scholarship on this important, yet long-neglected, topic. This book is also a welcome addition to the growing academic literature on race and racism in Brazil. In recent years, there has been an upsurge in research on Brazilian racial dynamics, particularly among anthropologists. Smith is part of a new cadre of scholars whose work probes the complexities of anti-black racism in Brazil by giving careful regard to institutional and structural forms of racial discrimination. Similarly to Keisha-Khan