

authors emphasize these leaders' anti-system and anti-U.S. rhetoric, and summarize key events in each presidency regarding elections, constitutional conventions, and referenda.

Chapter 4 looks at the plebiscitarian tactics employed by these leaders to consolidate power. It suggests that these tactics are a product of 1) the traditional deadlock of presidential systems in Latin America; 2) the legitimacy that these tactics confer; and 3) the connection between participatory democracy and the twenty-first-century socialism project. The chapter presents a brief overview of the congressional deadlock in the three countries and of the claims that plebiscites are the main reason why Chávez, Correa, and Morales each won his confrontation with congress (p. 112).

The final part of the book moves the discussion toward regional economic and foreign policy issues. Chapter 5 focuses on the importance of natural resource wealth to advance these leaders' goals. Concentrating mostly on Venezuela and with a brief discussion of Bolivia, the authors describe how these leaders intervened in the hydrocarbons industries to redistribute wealth, in contrast to their predecessors' attempts to privilege efficiency and autonomy.

Chapter 6 focuses on regional diplomacy and the competing interests advanced by Brazil and Venezuela. It discusses the factors behind the region's inability to accomplish hemispheric trade integration. The discussion is framed in the context of declining US influence in Latin America, the emergence of a multipolar order, and the competition between Venezuela and Brazil for regional hegemony (p. 150). This is done through an overview of three main regional mechanisms aimed at establishing independence from the United States, and in which the two countries jockey to project influence: the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), and the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA).

In the conclusion, the authors seek to clarify the book's emphasis on the "return of politics" and point to the three leftist presidents' creation of an alternative vision in the region—one based on the rejection of the principles of representative democracy and free markets (p. 174). They argue that no consensus has emerged to replace the "Miami Consensus;" instead, the region has become more heterogeneous. Pointing to Latin America's long tradition of charismatic leaders, they suggest that this type of "radical populism" will likely continue in the future.

The Triumph of Politics is a good primer for those interested in learning about contemporary politics in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. It is written in accessible prose and discusses a number of political, economic, and social dimensions in general terms. It provides extensive background, which should prove helpful for those looking for

a broad historical perspective, while focusing on a handful of salient recent events.

Those looking for a nuanced scrutiny of leftist governments' policies in these countries, however, are unlikely to be fully satisfied. The book is not meant to engage the literature on the rise of the Left or leftist governments' policies, nor does it present a systematic evaluation of the leadership-based claims advanced by the authors. Instead, it suffers from a common shortcoming of leadership-based approaches, namely, the difficulty in transcending highly contingent factors identified as driving political outcomes. This difficulty is reflected in the ambivalence of the book regarding the extent to which its claims are generalizable: Although for the most part it emphasizes country-specific factors and goes out of its way to distinguish Chávez, Correa, and Morales from leaders in the rest of the region, at the same time it characterizes them as "representative cases of radical left populism in contemporary Latin America" (p. 75).

These considerations notwithstanding, this is a good introductory text for the general public, journalists, and students of Andean and Latin American politics.

Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power. Edited by Edward Schatz. Chicago:

University of Chicago Press, 2009. 376p. \$94.00 cloth, \$29.00 paper. doi:10.1017/S153759271200357X

— Gregory J. Kasza, *Indiana University, Bloomington*

This volume is an outstanding and much-needed addition to the literature on qualitative methods in political science. Despite a steady increase in research based on participant observation, until now political scientists have had to turn to texts by anthropologists to master the method. No more. *Political Ethnography*, written by political scientists for political scientists, should become required reading for graduate students of qualitative methods in the discipline.

The work integrates a treatment of the philosophical underpinnings of ethnography with concrete examples of its use in empirical research. It is surprising how few books to emerge amid the revival of qualitative methods have addressed the ontological, epistemological, and normative foundations of their subject matter. This volume does so in sophisticated fashion by introducing the reader to a range of philosophical positions embraced by ethnographers, extending from "neopositivist" to radical interpretivist points of view. These are effectively presented in the early chapters by Jan Kubik, Jessica Allina-Pisano, and Lisa Wedeen.

The case studies of ethnographic research that occupy most of the volume are well chosen to illustrate a variety of types of work. Many of them directly or indirectly address the eminently political theme of power, but they do so in different ways and in different contexts. The cases

include research on the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Africa, thus serving well the diverse student constituency that usually enrolls in methods classes. The only empirical subfield that is excluded is international relations, which presents formidable (though perhaps not insurmountable) challenges of siting for participant observation.

The specific topics of study include Basque nationalism (Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh); civil war in El Salvador (Elisabeth Jean Wood); class relations in an American slaughterhouse (Timothy Pachirat); survey research in American politics (Katherine Cramer Walsh); political culture in the Congo (Michael G. Schatzberg); authoritarian regimes and political Islam in Mauritania and Senegal (Cédric Jourde); American casino waitresses and Nicaraguan mothers of war victims (Lorraine Bayard de Volo); a survey of ethnographic research in Latin America (Enrique Desmond Arias); and policies toward home ownership in low-income neighborhoods in Philadelphia (Corey Shdaimah, Roland Stahl, and Sanford F. Schram). Even readers who are familiar with the research of these authors will benefit from their self-conscious focus on the costs and benefits of ethnography. Each chapter provides a useful springboard for debating important issues related to the use of this method.

Dvora Yanow adds a helpful chapter that gives advice to would-be ethnographers regarding research design and instructs editors and reviewers as to how they should evaluate ethnographic manuscripts. Journal editors who have had difficulty passing judgment on ethnographic research will be especially grateful for her insights.

The term *immersion* is included in the subtitle of this volume, and the editor, Edward Schatz, stresses the need to differentiate ethnography from other qualitative methods. His introduction and conclusion provide excellent overviews of the field, but the particular task of separating ethnography from other qualitative methods was not accomplished as effectively as it might have been.

Several chapters do not make use of the standard ethnographic method of prolonged immersion in one or a few social milieus; instead, they involve only brief periods of participant observation complemented by interviews, archival research, or other methods. These research designs are referred to as having an “ethnographic sensibility,” even though they do not involve immersion. Purists who identify ethnography with prolonged participant observation may question the inclusion of those chapters. On the other hand, the decision to include them is not without advantage. Given the tremendous investment of time required by traditional immersion, many political scientists may wonder if it is not possible to gain some of the benefits of ethnography in mixed-method projects. These chapters show them several ways to do that. Nonetheless, the differences in philosophical underpinnings and research practice between standard ethnography and interviews,

focus groups, and other methods deserve a more extended and nuanced treatment than they receive here.

This is one of the finest volumes on qualitative methods published in the last decade. It will not ease all the concerns of scholars who balk at the noncomparative and unhistorical character of much ethnographic research or question the ethnographer’s ability to contribute to general theory. But *Political Ethnography* provides a perfect instrument for debating these and other key issues surrounding the use of this important method.

Politics, Culture, and Sociability in the Basque

Nationalist Party. By Roland Vazquez. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2010. 296p. \$39.95.
doi:10.1017/S1537592712003581

— Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh, *University of Connecticut*

Roland Vazquez’s study of contemporary Basque politics is part ethnography, part party-systems analysis, and part journalism. The book occasionally leaps between types of analysis, which might frustrate readers who prefer linear argumentation or a single methodological outlook. At the same time, the book’s multiple analytic frameworks will probably appeal to scholars who enjoy approaching a single topic from different points of view.

Vazquez states at the outset that his goal is *not* to provide another case study of ethnonationalism (pp. x–xi). He thinks that the almost exclusive attention to nationalist ideologies has made Basque politics appear exotic and has prevented scholars from discovering lessons that are applicable elsewhere. He recommends that we think about Basque politics afresh: In terms of the ways in which everyday citizens make sense of their political experiences, the forms of sociability among party followers, and parties’ adaptation to ongoing changes in electoral and legislative situations.

Most of the author’s findings are based on fieldwork. Vazquez resided for 16 months in Tolosa, a midsized rust-belt town in Spain’s Basque Country. The book focuses on formal gatherings and informal encounters in a four-story building that housed the municipal headquarters of the Basque Nationalist Party (Partido Nacionalista Vasco, or PNV). The headquarters also served as a community center with reading rooms, a modest bar and eatery, an indoor handball court, and meeting space for diverse social groupings.

The book records and analyzes the sayings and symbols that were typically used in the building and that reveal how visitors perceived and experienced politics. There are occasional vignettes in which Vazquez relates individuals’ personal histories to their distinctive political outlooks. Some of the more amusing passages are his accounts of a trip organized by local party leaders to an annual jamboree celebrating the PNV’s longevity, and his observations of