After dark, villagers with pack animals arrived. We hiked eight kilometres and were greeted by the five-person directorate of the villages – and the wild cheers of kids, once they spotted the piñatas. At dinner by the church, we were joined, perhaps as Christmas Eve guests, by two FMLN commanders, obviously not from peasant backgrounds. We didn't see them again. Later the military lobbed a mortar shell that exploded about 100 metres beyond the village.

An eventful week ensued. One peasant narrated for two hours the story of his group's flight to Honduras, and how the FMLN had assisted them. There was a visit by an Irish priest, then a small Jesuit delegation. An infant died of diarrhoea; a funeral was held. Small groups of FMLN fighters, mostly men, passed through occasionally. Some could be seen entering villagers' homes. The directorate emphasised that the town government was independent of the FMLN, and of the national government. Midweek we walked to a small hut a few hundred yards from the town centre and were met by a weathered FMLN fighter dressed in black. He offered greetings from the FMLN. On New Year's Eve there was a modest party with a battery-driven music player. In the dark, young men with assault rifles could be seen shyly dancing with young women from the town.

Did this town support the FMLN? Extreme poverty would make much material support difficult. Might any of those medicines have found their way into FMLN knapsacks? I think the answer would have to be yes. Although living under very different conditions and walking different paths, these villagers were rather similar to the peasant 'insurgents' in Wood's account. This does not undermine Todd's central argument about agency, but it does invite comparison of these two social histories of the Salvadorean war zones.

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Irina Carlota Silber, *Everyday Revolutionaries: Gender, Violence, and Disillusionment in Postwar El Salvador* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011), pp. xvi + 238, $27.95, pb.

The central characters in Professor Silber's searching and compelling post-war account reside in a hamlet she calls El Rancho in the rural municipality of Las Vueltas in northern El Salvador, a municipality that was 'repopulated' during the 1980–92 war. In the early 1980s government troops drove civilians from their villages, killing many. Silber begins her book with a 1981 AP report of ten Las Vueltas men being pulled from their homes, tortured and murdered. Survivors, in organised flight, made their way to refugee camps in Honduras, suffering more losses en route. They asserted their interests in the camps, eventually including the right to return home, even with the war raging. Other figures in Silber's account had been fighters with the FMLN (FPL branch), or party cadres. Some characters work for urban-centred, pro-FMLN NGOs.

The book traverses three main periods: the immediate post-war years, the end of the decade, and this century, when some of the characters of different generations migrated to the United States. Although elements of chapters move back and forth in time and space, the book roughly follows this chronology. As the author notes, at the outset of her field research just after the end of the war, post-war ethnographies were new. She uses this uncharted analytic space to create a rich narrative form. In between its chapters of ethnographic accounts and social theory are shorter 'interstitials' that

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introduce themes, images and emotions. Two of the interstitials are poems. Silber is self-reflective, recording research frustrations and fatigue, subjective reactions to various characters and moments, and perhaps her own disillusionment as post-war dreams fade and solidarity frays among the villagers.

Silber's analysis runs counter to the perception in international peace process circles that El Salvador's peace and democratisation have been a success. The positive case? Unlike other countries there was no return to war, or even to the war-related political violence and chaos that plagued neighbouring Nicaragua. The FMLN became a successful electoral party. Foreign aid poured into the country, financing hundreds of development projects, and a land transfer process provided loans to enable former FMLN fighters and peasants who had occupied war zone lands abandoned by titleholders to purchase those lands. GDP grew rapidly, also in sharp contrast to Nicaragua.

Early on, the villagers had a sense that at great risk and sacrifice they had contributed to these national successes. Their heroic repopulation was a key step in the peace process. Ten years and more of organising had earned them high levels of social capital. With peace at hand, their collective strength and imagination could continue to shape their destiny. Women had played and continued to play key roles in this process. Their history itself became a post-war resource.

Why, then, the disillusionment, which Silber tells us had become palpable by 1997? A member of the town council and former guerrilla refers to the 'rebuilding' process as 'spectral'. By 1997, post-war international 'development' money had moved on to the next case – Guatemala. National growth rates dropped from an annual average of 7.5 per cent in 1992–3 to 1.7 per cent in 1996, and 3.3 per cent over the next three years. Many local development projects did not sustain themselves, or if they survived, they provided, in instances illustrated by Silber, minuscule income. Infrastructure projects (electricity, road-building) helped, but this corner of El Salvador contains marginal farmlands. The daily grind of rural poverty remained, another kind of 'everyday violence'. By 1997, rosier dreams about the post-war future had not materialised, and perhaps were not even spectral in the context of national neoliberal policies only occasionally blunted by the FMLN's substantial minority in the National Assembly. Participatory democracy, as opposed to voting every few years, increasingly fell short of an imagined ideal.

In an interview a few months after the Peace Accords, a cynical US embassy officer made a prediction to me that the FMLN's post-war problem would be that its organised base during the war had not intended to sacrifice itself merely for the right to elect an FMLN *comandante* to the National Assembly. The Peace Accords successfully implanted electoral democracy and important constitutional changes. They reformed the military and displaced it as a political player. But they did not touch the economic riches of the few families that had controlled agricultural exports for a century. El Salvador, for example, retained a regressive tax code and, compared to other Latin American countries, collected very few taxes, so public education and health were vastly underfunded.

With few resources at the local level (and much of the municipal budget controlled by the national government), local participatory democracy could deal only with issues that had low material stakes. Feeding into the disillusionment Silber portrays was the perception among villagers that some of those working for the FMLN-aligned NGOs had done relatively well in material terms. Calls coming from NGO representatives, some historic figures in the FMLN during the war, for greater community

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participation in keeping with the heroic war years, eventually began to sound more like hectoring than rallying cries. Another long meeting to attend, and with what result? So, in participatory and social senses El Rancho, ten years after the war, was less 'everyday' revolutionary and generally less robust: lower participation, fewer projects, some corruption and much disillusionment.

People began to leave for the United States, some of whom Silber locates, visits and interviews. These undocumented migrants are 'on their own' in urban settings, in contact with El Rancho by phone and sending money, the opposite of the community solidarity which perhaps delayed for a decade migration from El Rancho. Nationally the outflow of Salvadoreans and the inflow of remittances grew rapidly from 1988 (the year after the first repopulations from refugee camps in Honduras) through 1998. National remittances went from US$ 250 million to US$ 1.4 billion. Departures from El Rancho early this century were part of an increasing flow of Salvadoreans. In 2008 (before the Great Recession), remittances had reached US$ 3.7 billion.

Despite emigration and disillusionment, the FMLN has retained the electoral loyalty of Las Vueltas and other nearby repopulated communities. In the 2012 elections, not a big electoral year for the FMLN nationally, the FMLN took 694 votes (86 per cent) of 807 votes in Las Vueltas; the second-place finisher got but 64 votes. However, the FMLN's electoral success, unlike its wartime necessities, does not rest on this loyal, if disillusioned, rural base in former war zones that were considered FMLN 'liberated territory'. Rather, its electoral success depends upon popularity in larger urban, working-class municipalities. Las Vueltas and El Rancho retain a historic heritage, but have lost importance, another possible contributing factor to disillusionment and migration.

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Rachel Corr, *Ritual and Remembrance in the Ecuadorian Andes* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2010), pp. xi + 184, $45.00, hb.

Ritual and Remembrance is a wide-ranging examination of the religious practices of indigenous Salasacans in highland Ecuador. This historically informed ethnographic discussion expounds on the interplay of indigenous highland, Catholic and Amazonian cosmologies, and demonstrates the ways in which Salasacan actors draw upon, negotiate, transform and localise these multiple symbols and paradigms in their own religious and ritual practices. In particular, Corr draws attention to the role that the landscape plays in both collective and individual rituals. In chapter 2, for example, she introduces the interplay between sacred space and sacred time and illustrates, with stories of the quishuar tree, how the dominant Catholic religion became localised within Salasacan sacred space. Similarly, chapter 4's account of the *muy* and ritual pathways elucidate how cultural memory is enacted through the reorientation of 'Catholic' fiestas, practices and symbols. This theme continues in part II, which is focused primarily on individual rather than collective experience, with Corr showing how cosmological power is understood to emanate from the earth, and how purgatory is located in an alternative geographical reality.

Corr presents archive documents, oral narratives and observations to substantiate her arguments, and pays close attention to the poetics and meaning of language.

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