and the state's fascination with dead heroes were all signs, Lomnitz believes, of the hold of a macabre popular culture over the diverse shapers of national identity, from ministers to market vendors; a death grip only tightened by the Revolution.

Any treatment of culture over a very long period of time is invariably open to charges of impressionism. Ariès was accused of reconstructing man's changing vision of the Last Judgement from a seventh-century tomb, some twelfth- and thirteenth-century tympani, and a fifteenth-century fresco; he himself cheerfully admitted to applying an 'intuitive and subjective' approach to a 'chaotic mass of documents'. Lomnitz's complex arguments are likewise based on wide-ranging and eclectic research. The first two – broadly 'death underpins the colonial state' and 'death creates popular and religious culture' – will be influential both for their persuasive analyses and their compendia of evidence. Yet, just as Mexico disintegrates in revolution so too does Lomnitz's third and final argument. The closing chapters weave between the adoption of death as a political idiom by governments, opposition and artists; the traditional weakness of the state; the Revolution as a 'war of national liberation'; the rise of Halloween at the expense of the Days of the Dead; the rejection of death by the *generación de la onda*; and the deconstruction of death in Mexico by post-revolutionary intellectuals. As the line of argument becomes obscure so too does the language, resorting to 'lifeworlds', 'ethnoscapes', 'ideascapes', and that catch-all abstraction, 'modernity'. Lomnitz is too scrupulous a scholar not to admit serious counter-arguments; and in so doing he does not convincingly demonstrate his original postulate, that death endures as a master-symbol of *lo mexicano*. What will endure is an excellent interpretation of the emergence of popular culture in Mexico; wrapped in a book which shares some of the intellectual fireworks of Paz and – despite introductory distancing – more than a little of what Lomnitz calls 'that wonderful rambling quality' of his *annaliste* predecessors.

University of North Carolina, Wilmington PAUL GILLINGHAM

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Jocelyn Olcott, Mary Kay Vaughan, and Gabriela Cano (eds.), *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics, and Power in Modern Mexico* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2006), pp. x + 321, £60.00, £14.95, pb.

This long awaited volume exceeds all expectations, advancing simultaneously the field of gender history, our understanding of modern Mexico, and its place in twentieth century global history. The book's most significant contributions fall into three broad categories. First and most importantly, it places gender, particularly Mexicans' inability to resolve contradictions about gender, at the centre of the historical narrative. In the process, it illustrates convincingly how it is not possible truly to understand events without doing so. Second, the volume broadens the scope of our understanding of the post-revolutionary period beyond urban, middle-class supporters of the regime in power to include rural, lower-class and indigenous individuals, as well as opponents of the government. It begins to address the integration of race/ethnicity, gender and class into a workable theoretical model. Third, the authors tie the particular to the general, incorporating the value of microhistory without ignoring the need for constructing meaningful national and global historical narratives.

Temma Kaplan states that 'Patriarchy serves as a model for all hierarchical systems.' Thus, as Mary Kay Vaughan points out, recent scholarship has revealed

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'gendered states, economies, and marketplaces'. Order, reason, autonomy and authority are associated with the masculine; nature, dependence, vulnerability and emotion are linked with the feminine. This volume shows how, in Mexico, explicitly gendered, hierarchical thinking was central to processes of post-revolutionary state-building, as new leaders sought to assert authority, order and control after the institutions that had previously filled this role were violently swept aside. Several of the chapters demonstrate how central unresolved contradictions about gender were to the post-revolutionary way of thinking. For example, Gabriela Cano uses the case of the transgendered ex-Zapatista Amelio Robles to illustrate how the categories male and female permitted some fluidity, so long as the dominance of masculinity was not threatened. Thus Amelio was able to live a long and relatively unencumbered life as a man, admired and accepted by his male peers, and even receive the legal status of *veterano*. Men who desired to become women, however, faced condemnation 'from a society in which the values of an allegedly invincible masculinity prevailed'. In a case that highlighted tensions between competing values of modernity, nationalism and patriarchy, Anne Rubenstein examines a series of attacks on young women with short hair. She illustrates how both those who attacked and defended the women, progressive and conservative alike, 'can best be understood as trying to fit *las pelonas* back into a subordinate position within a new reality'. This central theme of the volume shows how those who challenged the subordination of the feminine faced the strongest opposition, whether they were teachers accused of promoting contraception in Mexico City's Gabriela Mistral School (Patience Schell), women workers challenging unfair working conditions (María Teresa Fernández Aceves, Heather Fowler Salamini, and Susan Gauss), or Yucatecan wives seeking divorce from abusive husbands (Stephanie Smith).

James Scott has argued that historians' exaggerated emphasis on subaltern uprisings can be attributed to a combination of ideological sympathy and a bias in archival materials towards events that grabbed the attention of elites. Similar explanations may serve to explain feminist historians' tendency to focus on progressive, organised feminist movements. *Sex in Revolution* takes pains to include a wider range of voices. Kristina Boylan's chapter on Catholic women's activism is especially helpful, revealing the complexities and inconsistencies within the most successful form of women's mobilisation of the period. Boylan shows how conservative, anti-revolutionary, Catholic women manoeuvred skilfully between competing and contradictory mandates, as they defended women's primary role as mother and home-maker through public, political, even bellicose action. Stephanie Smith subverts a long-held feminist assumption that Yucatan's landmark divorce legislation under radical governor Salvador Alvarado implied progressive change for women. Instead, Smith shows how local patriarchal assumptions and prejudices combined to create a situation where the law was in fact used more often and more successfully by men to abandon their wives in favour of their mistresses than by women fleeing abuse. Jocelyn Olcott's chapter, which does focus on the progressive, pro-government women involved in the *Frente Único Pro Derechos de la Mujer*, is careful not to overstate the feminist leanings of its members. It also delineates between the agendas of educated, urban leaders, who prioritised suffrage, and provincial chapters more interested in questions of local concern.

If, as Monsiváis notes in his preface, 'patriarchy is nothing if not an endless strategy of concealment', and as Julia Tuñón's chapter asserts, 'Indian women are doubly women', then it is little wonder that Mexicanists have struggled to reveal the

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connections between gender, class and ethnicity. Nevertheless, several authors in this volume have addressed the omission. Tuñón shows how Emilio 'El Indio' Fernández intended to pursue an *indigenista* agenda through his films, yet paradoxically ended up reaffirming the gendered hierarchical paradigm that conferred masculine traits on European conquerors (and their cultural inheritors) while feminising (by naturalising and essentialising) the indigenous conquered. Lynn Stephens' epilogue shows how rural women since 1980 have moved from the position of passive clients of state-led initiatives towards 'a more active position, openly questioning the inequalities women suffered in relation to their ethnic and class positions', in response to a government shift towards neoliberal globalism. Ann Blum's chapter on adoption deftly reveals subtle contradictions connecting class and gender as the new state focused its attentions on the feminine spheres of maternity and home. She shows how reformist-minded bureaucrats imbued with middle class values favoured adoptive mothers who had the means to hire other women to provide domestic labour over women who required a wage to support their families.

Finally, *Sex in Revolution* manages to make use of the many advantages of microhistory without losing sight of the need to reconnect local visions with national and global ones. Thus, for example, María Teresa Fernández-Aceves's meticulous research places the emerging Guadalajara tortilla industry in the larger context of the tension between Catholic and secular popular mobilisations. Women tortilla workers navigated between these political spaces to combat their increasing relegation to underpaid, insecure positions. Heather Fowler-Salamini shows how profoundly local divisions between supporters of the emerging centralised state and those of the *tejedista* faction in provincial Veracruz were connected to regional and national politics. Women coffee bean sorters were forced to take sides, as they adopted masculine tactics in defence of their labour rights. Temma Kaplan's and Mary Kay Vaughan's brilliant introductory and concluding essays place events in hemispheric and global context, drawing connections between Latin America, China, the Soviet Union and the United States.

Monsiváis argues that until recently, historians removed real women actors from the 'deity [of] History, an exclusively masculine territory', replacing them with archetypal substitutes. Thus, the Mexican 'collective imaginary' re-imagined revolutionary history, fitting women's participation into categories that did not threaten patriarchal norms: adelitas, valentines, marietas. *Sex in Revolution* does better than 'add gender and stir', however, advancing not only our understanding of the real women, but the process by which gendered thinking affected the reconstruction of the Mexican nation in the wake of one of the most complex and complete revolutions in human history.

Carthage College STEPHANIE MITCHELL

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Mary Kay Vaughan and Stephen E. Lewis (eds.), *The Eagle and The Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in Mexico, 1920–1940* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2006), pp. viii + 363, $84.95, $23.95, pb; £64.00, £15.95, pb.

This is an excellent overview of nation-building in Mexico during the crucial period between 1920 and 1940. It considers the arts (crafts, painting, music and architecture), emerging mass communications (roads, radio and cinema), key social policies

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