

contract is that the government is trusted to provide services impartially (p. 21). Yet it is simultaneously argued that impartial governance is the definitional “opposite of corruption” and is itself the end goal of anticorruption reforms (pp. 6–7). Universal public education is at times described as the first step to a social contract, a key feature of a social contract, and the result of a social contract, as well as a factor that both reduces corruption and partly results from low corruption (p. 89). Gender equality both helps reduce corruption and results from impartial governance, which, again, is the definition of not being corrupt (pp. 97–101). We are told that auditing is a good tool for building social trust, but then its success is described as depending on the existence of social trust (p. 125). The causal problems in this book are most frustrating in the discussion of democracy, which Rothstein argues is not essential to controlling corruption and does not predict low corruption (pp. 7–8). Fair enough, except that we later learn that democracy is “a central part of a social contract” (p. 112). Teasing out the causality among these factors is admittedly difficult, but proposals for what should be done to control corruption would be strengthened by a clearer idea of what leads to what and how.

The second weakness is that the book does not adequately address the question of what motivates corruption control efforts. Rothstein criticizes the principal–agent theory for assuming that principals are selflessly opposed to corruption, but arguably in both the principal–agent theory and in his social contract theory, the key question is the same: What motivates a government’s leaders to curb corruption when corruption could benefit them personally? This book gives a partial answer by citing cases—nineteenth-century Sweden and Denmark—in which a substantial military defeat threatened a country so fundamentally that it incentivized drastic reforms. However, as Rothstein acknowledges, this finding is neither generalizable nor actionable for countries seeking to reduce wrongdoing. A fuller answer would likely have to accept that there are multiple reasons to curb corruption. Democracies like Taiwan and South Korea have reduced corruption under pressure from citizens empowered by elections, independent judicial systems, and other democratic institutions. In other cases, unaccountable autocrats have curbed corruption to advance state-building reforms that could strengthen their regime, such as Xi Jinping in China and Paul Kagame in Rwanda.

Despite these criticisms, I wholeheartedly recommend *Controlling Corruption* for both experts and newcomers to the topic. The theoretical framework it proposes is the product of decades of insightful thinking and research about what remains one of the most important yet stubborn and poorly understood governance problems. This large contribution by Rothstein will doubtless move the debate forward in fruitful directions.

For Land and Liberty: Black Struggles in Rural Brazil. By Merle L. Bowen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. 249p. \$99.99 cloth.
doi:10.1017/S1537592722000469

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The study of Afro-descendant populations in Brazil—their histories, struggles, identities, and politics—occupies an ever-growing space in the social scientific literature on “race” in the Americas and for good reason. Brazil is the giant of South America, of Latin America, and, in terms of Afro-descendant populations, of all the Americas. The country is also the site of a dramatic shift in contemporary racial politics: the Brazilian state, historically dismissive of racial grievances, has in the last two decades adopted progressive, wide-ranging, race-targeted public policy. Affirmative action in university admissions beginning around 2003 is the crown jewel of these policies. The state’s turnabout, however, caught academics flat-footed. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, social scientists often focused on the citizenry’s supposed ideological backwardness and discounted any possible shift. Since then, scholarship has dedicated serious attention to what precipitated the state’s turnabout and points heavily to urban Black movement actors’ voiced grievances and demands. Nonetheless, questions remain about precipitating factors, such as Brazil’s rural Black actors’ role in pressuring the state toward acting. Perhaps more important, though, is the question of how progressive legislation plays out in the lives of its beneficiaries. Enter here the fantastic contribution of Merle Bowen in *For Land and Liberty: Black Struggles in Rural Brazil*. The author masterfully engages the struggle and victory of rural Afro-descendants in Brazil in an earlier demand for state concessions and how these concessions are playing out in rural Black communities.

Bowen’s window into the Brazilian context is the *quilombo*. The term refers to rural, Black populations originating from fugitive slaves. Bowen articulates the history of *quilombo* communities, the enshrinement of the *quilombo* and its land rights in Brazil’s 1988 constitution, and the impact of that legislation on the everyday lives of *quilombo* inhabitants. Her research into these questions spans some 15 years, though the book’s core engagement involves 12 *quilombo* communities in the Brazilian states of São Paulo and Bahia in 2017 and 2018. She uses various methods for her analysis, including participant observation, key informant and semistructured interviews, focus groups, household surveys (n = 451), historical research, and oral histories. Altogether, the rich data these methods produced provide the foundation for five robust and well-written empirical chapters that lead the privileged reader into the depths of rural, Afro-descendant Brazil in a historic struggle for land and liberty.

There is a keystone event around which the entire book revolves: the enshrinement of land rights for rural Afro-descendants through a *quilombo* clause in the 1988 Brazilian constitution: Article 68 requires that the state grant inalienable land rights to *quilombo*-descended communities. The author lays out how this previously unimaginable victory was born of protracted Black struggles in which these rural communities partnered with Black activists from across Brazil since the 1970s to demand state action. In addition to its immediate beneficiaries, this contest undoubtedly reverberated in Black communities and among activists all over Brazil. In this way, it laid some solid groundwork for the Black movement demands and victories of the early 2000s.

How did the concession of land rights to *quilombo*-descended communities affect the lives of rural Afro-descendants? The answer to this question constitutes Bowen's most important contribution. *Quilombo* communities' struggles did not cease with the proclamation of Article 68; instead, they seemed only to begin. Moreover, Bowen reports that many of these communities view themselves as more structurally disadvantaged than perhaps even before the enactment of Article 68. What happened? According to the author, a serious error arose in the formulation of the *quilombo* clause: it required the establishment of cultural distinctiveness as the defining criterion for *quilombo* beneficiary status. In essence, generations of shared racial discrimination were not enough for beneficiary status. Instead, a certain caricature of ethnicity or culture trumped race as definitional to *quilombo* legitimacy.

Bowen's work details the cascading impact of this culture-based approach. Although the constitutional clause was seemingly progressive, Bowen argues that it was "shaped to be exclusionary" (p. 13). Of the countless impoverished and discriminated against Black communities of rural Brazil, very few would be able to legitimize a beneficiary status for the state's culture filter. And those that did were forced to give up other rights and ways of eking out survival to gain land titles. In conjunction with the wealthy landed elite, the state even coerced concessions from these communities on the road to becoming land rights-bearing *quilombos*.

Although the author lays out several other unsavory consequences of this seemingly loaded state concession, she focuses an entire chapter on a resulting conversion of these communities into sites for ethnic tourism. This questionable shift resulted from the state's neglect of the type of structural change that would create wage jobs for these communities to complement more traditional economies based on agriculture and fishing. Land titles were not enough for these historically and continually discriminated against communities to survive and flourish. As in an ever-growing number of communities in Latin America, and indeed in some entire countries, the tourist trade is

a modern, exploitive capitalist design. Brazil's *quilombo* communities had to litigate their beneficiary status by detailing their cultural distinctiveness; now, they must continually construct or accentuate certain cultural expressions to meet tourists' expectations.

In sum, Bowen set out to detail the political economy of race, land, and Black rural livelihoods by referencing several *quilombo* communities of Brazil. She revealed how some of the groundwork for forcing the state's turnabout in favor of progressive racial politics in the early twenty-first century was laid by this previous historic struggle in rural Brazil. And she has made it clear that the battle continues. Though they are not necessarily token, constrained land concessions are not nearly enough if not accompanied by the right to forge a livelihood in today's increasingly unequal economy. One formulation of the moral of the story narrated by Bowen is that isolated state concessions can be double-edged swords absent the active construction of a broader context of liberty and justice for discriminated communities. Her intellectually mammoth work is a must-read for scholars and movement actors of the African diaspora.

The Political Life of an Epidemic: Cholera, Crisis and Citizenship in Zimbabwe.

By Simukai Chigudu. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. 346p. \$99.99 cloth, \$34.99 paper. doi:10.1017/S153759272200038X

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In 2008–9, a devastating cholera epidemic spread quickly and aggressively across Zimbabwe. Faced with reports of illness and death, Robert Mugabe's ZANU(PF) government equivocated as it tried to deny the reality of the disease, thereby deepening and extending the epidemic. In *The Political Life of an Epidemic*, Simukai Chigudu provides an illuminating and compelling account of the origins, patterns, social impact, and official and communal responses to this epidemic.

The book is organized around three broad questions. What historical and political-economic factors explain the emergence and scale of the 2008 cholera outbreak? How did different organizations, communities, and individuals act in response? And how is the cholera outbreak remembered, and what political subjectivities did it generate? To address each of these questions, Chigudu eschews the all-too-common impulse to blame the cholera epidemic on the "weak capacity" of the Zimbabwean state or the equally slippery idea of "state failure." The book is persuasive in its insistence that a focus on the state alone is inadequate for fully appreciating the origin, progression, and aftermath of the cholera epidemic. Beyond a focus on the state, Chigudu draws insights from the sociology of