

Angelika Rettberg; and the long-term overview of women in business in Chapter 12 by Bernardita Escobar-Andrae. There is an element of complementarity between chapters around themes at the cornerstone of business in Latin America, namely multinationals, business groups and family businesses. Developments in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico illustrate these themes. More explicit use of cross-references between chapters would have helped readers of individual chapters to identify these complementarities.

There is perhaps scope for a second volume to further explore the evolution of business systems in the region. This second volume could address some of what is missing in the first section. These are locations around which, admittedly, we know little (such as Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador and the Guyanas) and others that have received some attention (such as Uruguay, Central America, Cuba and the Caribbean). Regarding potential additions to a second section of a second volume, there is a sizeable extant literature that could be drawn upon. For instance, works on financial institutions and financial markets and particularly the impact of foreign debt. But there is also an opportunity to address other topics that require attention. These could potentially include the contributions of enslaved work and Indigenous workers in capital formation; why the business sector consistently fails to act as a counter-measure against political crisis; homophily in corporate governance; social networks and elite formation; the role of the state in the financing of innovations and formation of markets; the institutions that enable capitalism to work in the region and make it similar or different to others; as well as discipline-specific studies such as accounting and financial management and the development of degrees in business and economics, which have received attention but for which there has been no attempt to provide a systematic review across the region nor cross-border comparisons.

All in all, however, this is a fascinating and enjoyable collection, worth reading cover to cover. I am sure we will see it actively used in the classroom and in essential references.

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Eveline Dürr and Juliane Müller (eds.), *The Popular Economy in Latin America: Informality, Materiality, and Gender in Commerce*

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This volume edited by Eveline Dürr and Juliane Müller addresses the pressing topic of popular economies against the backdrop of the policies implemented by

governments inscribed in the 'Pink Tide' since the mid-2000s that sought to promote social and solidarity economies, but also of long-term debates on development and modernisation in the region. Through seven chapters and an afterword, the book focuses specifically on popular commerce and urban marketplaces, covering case studies from Brazil, Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru. All of them present compelling analyses and rich ethnographic case studies that excel in portraying the internal diversity of popular economies and the interplay of different actors, thus moving beyond more common state-centric analyses.

The contributions are organised in three sections which respond to the main analytical questions: to interrogate informality, materiality and gender. The opening section, including chapters from Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld, Peter Mörtenböck and Helge Mooshammer, and Natalie Gölthemböth, portray informality as a social category in dispute rather than a clear domain of economic practices defined by what it is not vis-à-vis state regulation. These chapters allow the exploration of effects when the term is used by different stakeholders and the linkages or even blurred boundaries between the formal and the informal, showing that 'formalisation' is a contested process that involves not only the state but also other powerful actors. The second section addresses the socio-material *agencements* and urban assemblages of popular commerce. The two chapters by André Vereta-Nahoum and Müller draw on post-humanist approaches to materiality and actor-network theory to analyse market devices, showing their unexpected consequences and profoundly political nature. The final section and the afterword, with contributions by Florence E. Babb, Cristina Vega and Magalí Marega, and Carlos Alba Vega, explore gender through the analysis of the experiences of women traders. These chapters address questions about care, kinship and the intersections of gender, class, ethnicity and race in the production of what Babb in this volume defined as 'braided' inequalities.

The book makes two substantial contributions I wish to highlight. Firstly, it shows the potential of the ethnographic perspective to elicit the complex and heterogeneous universe of popular economies beyond romantic or idealised views of these economic practices as based on essential values such as solidarity and disconnected from – or opposed to – capital accumulation. As Müller and Dürr clearly state in the introduction: 'ethnographic studies offer a critical and potentially counterintuitive contribution to approaches that – while opening the discursive and imaginative space of the possible – tend to re-instantiate conceptual boundaries between capitalist and community economies' (p. 4). Throughout the volume this perspective is expressed in the consideration of the relationships between popular economies and big corporate actors; the increasing flow of cheap mass-produced goods – especially imports from China – into popular markets; the commodification of cultural heritage or political traditions; and the deployment of capitalist strategies and market competition to promote socially driven initiatives. In this regard, the chapter on Cuban artists' group Muraleando by Gölthemböth stands out for the analysis of how the group resorts to entrepreneurial strategies within the tourist economy to produce the capital needed to generate a social economy based on socialist ideals. In turn, Müller's contribution demonstrates that corporate actors increasingly engage with popular economy sellers to increase their revenue and argues that 'formalisation' can operate through corporate marketisation devices (p. 126). Relatedly, the chapter by Colloredo-Mansfeld shows the paradoxical

consequences of public policies which depart from romantic definitions of popular economies as based on solidarity and the common good, rather than interest and gain. He argues that in Ecuador policies implemented by the government of Rafael Correa condemned competition as 'antisocial' and therefore undermined important strategies previously built by the traders themselves in order to secure a better income (p. 38).

Secondly, most of the chapters in the book allow reflections on the politics of place and space. As the title states, the urban dimension is key to understanding these popular economy experiences and this is weighed into the analysis presented. On the one hand, some contributions emphasise that creating markets is a contested process of place-making through regulatory and material dynamics that has a broader impact on cities beyond the boundaries of individual markets. On the other hand, different chapters carefully frame their analysis within growing disputes over the right uses of urban space and disciplinary policies addressed to 'clean' cities by displacing undesired actors. For example, the chapter by Vega and Marega shows how, amidst hostile policies, women traders draw on family networks to struggle for the appropriation of space for retail and the right to remain to sustain family reproduction strategies (pp. 161–70).

An important conclusion can be drawn from the book's approach and findings: even if common assumptions tend to describe these economies as 'marginal' and state policies in many Latin American countries continue to criminalise and illegalise their protagonists, popular economies are today at the centre of capitalist dynamics and accumulation. These economies are both popular ways of securing a good life, but also an important arena for the dispute for profit. Moreover, their dynamism is reshaping cities in ways that challenge previous assumptions about urban design and circulation such as centre/peripheries. Finally, there are two aspects suggested in this volume that could potentially inspire further inquiries in the growing research field on popular economies: the possibilities and challenges for collective politics and the multiplicity of popular economy actors beyond commerce. Regarding the former, the afterword by Alba Vega is an important contribution since it addresses political organisation through the story of a family of women leaders that succeeded in mobilising fellow vendors in a street market in Mexico City. Other chapters also provide important hints on these traders' struggles for the right to a livelihood, but more could be explored of how collective organisation challenges state criminalisation, claims rights and can potentially transform economic dynamics. The volume portrays the heterogeneous nature of contemporary popular economies with a clear focus on markets and exchange. The questions raised and the analytical contributions of the book as a whole will surely inspire future dialogues with research on initiatives centred on the production of goods and services.

In sum, this book is a significant contribution to the study of popular economies in Latin America. All the chapters present empirically grounded and theoretically robust analyses which will undoubtedly be of great interest for a wide range of disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, economics and urban studies. Hopefully, it will also attract the attention of policy-makers, for it bears relevant insights on how to strengthen popular economies to deliver wellbeing for the disadvantaged.