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Part III begins with a chapter describing beauty pageants and contests and the industry surrounding them, then goes on to look at the career of perhaps Venezuela's most iconic Miss Universe, Irene Sáez. Part IV, examining the period 2000–15, looks at beauty manuals, the media, plastic surgery and the career of supermodel Patricia Velásquez to highlight the paradoxes of beauty as a measure of status, wealth and moral value in twenty-first-century 'socialist' Venezuela. There is some interesting information and relevant ideas, but clearer historical and social analysis is needed to explain the prevalence and significance of beauty pageants in Venezuela. It would seem that their popularity, propagation of Euro-centred beauty norms and reflection of meritocratic values – the importance of hard work as opposed to lineage or genes – are related to the growth of the oil economy – particularly the boom of the 1970s – the development of consumerism in a rentier economy, high rates of European migration in the 1950s and 1960s, and the populist 'Punto Fijo' democracy established in 1958. The relationships between these factors and/or the allegedly ongoing importance of the colonial values of honour, lineage and elite status need greater analysis, though, for a clear argument to emerge.

University College London SARAH WASHBROOK

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Pascha Bueno-Hansen, *Feminist and Human Rights Struggles in Peru: Decolonizing Transitional Justice* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015), pp. xi + 222, £19.99 pb.

In the course of the past decade, the need to include local priorities and practices in programmes in post-conflict contexts has gained ever more prominence in the field of transitional justice, both as an analytic and as a political and ethical starting point for numerous projects and studies. The recurring preconceived assumption, that international law is universally applicable and will bring political liberalisation and deterrence of future violence, is not supported by research on the outcomes of transitional justice. This has instigated considerable debate about whether such norms resonate with ways in which affected populations address human rights violations. Researchers from different kinds of disciplinary backgrounds have embraced localised approaches to transitional justice to explore its possibilities and limitations at particular places and regions. *Feminist and Human Right Struggles in Peru* builds upon these studies, but Pascha Bueno-Hansen's contextualised analysis goes beyond the identification of domestic priorities and practices, and carefully identifies the specific social, legal and political strategies of domestic experts that embody the transition.

Bueno-Hansen aims to demonstrate that despite international legislation on human rights being the most successful political discourse to verbalise what had happened to women and to prosecute violations, the institutional and legal strategies that are based on it result in too narrow a legalistic focus on sexual violence. This inability to fully address the range of experiences women faced during and after the conflict Bueno-Hansen terms 'conceptual myopia'. Drawing from extensive archival material and interviews with NGO employees, human rights and feminist activists, and truth commission volunteers and staff, Bueno-Hansen paints a rich portrait of how these social actors try to encourage creatively alternative social relations while using the international human rights framework. New social relations are necessary to break with Peru's longstanding social patterns based on inequality of gender, language, skin-

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colour and geographic origin. However, throughout the chapters, it becomes painfully clear that the reality of the well-meaning professionals who are involved in the transitional justice industry in the country is still not always compatible with the world of the survivors of the internal armed conflict.

A chapter on the history of the human rights and feminist movements, for instance, highlights that feminist activists mainly focused on violence against women that was not related to the internal armed conflict, while human rights activists were concerned with general human rights violations, not with gender-based violence. As such, both movements marginalised *campesinas*' voices, despite the strong presence of grassroots victim organisations. In a superb chapter on the design and functioning of the truth commission, the author exposes, among many important lessons for future truth commissions, how social distance and power asymmetries between Lima, the capital, and regional branch offices make it difficult for the staff and volunteers from the capital to bridge and change the socially constructed divisions in Peruvian society. Here, she convincingly argues that the people who produce knowledge and where they do that, and the people and places who provide data that is used later for knowledge production, are congruent with colonial racialised mappings of Peru. Furthermore, in her chapter based on fieldwork with the Peruvian feminist NGO DEMUS (Institute for the Defence of Women's Rights) – that tries to address the consequences of sexual violence against women during the conflict with the intention to narrow conceptual gaps between official legal justice norms on the one hand and the sociocultural community norms on the other – Bueno-Hansen underscores how challenging it is to bridge these divisions. Despite the efforts of this NGO to decentralise knowledge production in cooperation with a local community, Bueno-Hansen effectively demonstrates that the legitimacy of state justice for community members to address past human rights violations is still limited, because of specific inabilities to transform the culture of law – a culture based on colonial mappings of difference resulting in unfulfilled promises for people with limited access to law.

Throughout the book, Bueno-Hansen constructively builds the argument that an intersectional analytic sensibility toward gender-based violence is necessary to transform the narrow formalistic and legalistic focus on sexual violence. Such a sensibility will make it possible to understand how institutional and legal strategies that are based on historical social power relations are reflected in the continuum of violence. It will also enable us to recognise possible alternative interpretations of the meanings of and solutions for different events as expressed by the survivors, most of whom are from a Quechua-speaking rural Andean background.

The book successfully demonstrates the importance of reflection on the social position of and the decisions made by the researcher for knowledge production, because it shows how this combination influences the types of (field) research a researcher conducts and the conclusions she or he can and cannot draw. This of course is a sort of truism of which many social scientists are aware, but do not always dare to share. In Bueno-Hansen's case, language barriers and her decision to access the local community through the NGO in her study made archival material and NGO employees, human rights and feminist activists, and truth commission volunteers and staff into the units of study of her research. Accordingly, the community associated Bueno-Hansen with the NGO (due to 'the fact that I came and went with the fieldwork team … it looked like I worked for DEMUS', p. 131). A lesser focus on these experts and a disassociation from the NGO could perhaps have shed light on how community members and

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survivors articulate and negotiate transitional justice priorities across different spatial levels to locate agency in local actors.

Yet in spite of this, the book is a wonderful contribution to a more complex understanding of the important yet contradictory role that international human rights play in transitional justice practices. The book is surely important reading not only for practitioners and scholars working on Peru and South America, but also for readers who are keen to learn how debates on human rights and transitional justice can be removed from Western-centred and – I would also say – urban-centred models of knowledge, because Bueno-Hansen invites us to reflect on the consequences of our own ways of knowledge production.

International Victimology Institute Tilburg (INTERVICT), Tilburg University MIJKE DE WAARDT

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Lesley Gill, *A Century of Violence in a Red City: Popular Struggle, Counterinsurgency, and Human Rights in Colombia* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2016), pp. xiv + 287, £18.99 pb.

A Century of Violence in a Red City is a monumental achievement from one of the most important anthropologists currently working on Latin America. The book cuts against the grain of much recent ethnographic work on Latin America, which has tended to eschew Marxian categories of inquiry over the last few decades, seeing them as antiquated at best. It offers a historical and processual reconceptualisation of a set of still-unfashionable concepts – class, capitalism and the state – as well as their concrete elucidation through fine-grained, multiple determinations and mediations in a specific case study. Lesley Gill has produced one of those rare books whose value is likely to endure for decades and whose universal import extends far beyond the territorial boundaries of Colombia.

The product of over a decade of painstaking ethnographic fieldwork and digging through historical archives, this book's remit covers a century of the violent making and unmaking of the working class in the Middle Magdalena region of Colombia, and particularly in the oil town of Barrancabermeja. Gill seeks to explain 'the composition and decomposition of working-class power, organisation, and culture' (pp. 6–7), with the 'working class' understood expansively, to include 'uprooted peasants, wage laborers, and unwaged and wage-insecure urban immigrants' (p. 7). Together with class formation, this book is about contested capital accumulation and state formation, as well as the ways in which these processes have engendered fierce geographic battles over territorial space. Tracing a century of capitalist development and popular mobilisation, Gill shows how class relations have been continually remade through 'the periodic dispossession, displacement, and disorganisation of working people and their institutions' (p. 13), as well as their political resistance 'over spaces of labor exploitation, capital accumulation, and power' (p. 13).

The book is organised chronologically around three regimes of capital accumulation. The first begins in the 1920s and spans to the 1960s. This era involved the formation of Barrancabermeja as an oil enclave, in which the Tropical Oil Company (TROCO), a subsidiary of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, was allotted subsoil rights in what was then a far-reaching tropical forest, and began to cut the roads and build the infrastructure necessary to start drilling oil. Chapter 1 documents

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