

Reviews

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03217041

Alan Knight, *Mexico* (Vol. 1): *From the Beginning to the Spanish Conquest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. xix + 254, £45.00, £16.95 pb; \$60.00, \$20.00 pb.

A three-volume history of Mexico through the ages by a leader in the field of Latin American history will inevitably attract much interest. Here we have the first volume of the set, dealing mainly with developments before the Spanish conquest but also covering that conquest and discussing in principle some basic aspects of the Spanish presence in America. Although the author is known above all for his work on early twentieth-century Mexico, the plan of the set is by no means skewed in that direction; the second volume covers the so-called colonial period and the independence period of the early nineteenth century, with everything thereafter crammed into the third. I am delighted to see this distribution, which corresponds well to the trajectory of humankind in the area now called Mexico.

At first sight, the work might seem to be a textbook, but Knight insists that such is not the case, that he found he cannot write a textbook. The work indeed deviates from normal textbooks. Not only does it lack textbook apparatus, but it is full of references, in their most useful form, as footnotes at the bottom of the page. The notes are an integral part of the discourse, which does not simply relate and explain facts and events as givens but proceeds in terms of the opinions of different scholars and schools about the material and its interpretation. The notes serve the double purpose of anchoring the discussion of debates and leading the reader through the literature in a way that virtually no textbook does.

I grant, then, (on the basis of the first volume) that we have here no ordinary textbook. The long haul of human activity in the area is usually split into at least three distinct segments studied by as many distinct sets of scholars; the primary purpose of the present work is to examine the whole from a single point of view somewhat outside the specialists' normal purview. Such unification is badly needed, and the move in that direction here must be greatly appreciated. At the same time the author has entered into the relevant literatures more deeply than most writers of textbooks, and his discussions can go quite far toward instructing scholars in the broader field about parts of it with which they are less familiar.

But for all this, I have little doubt that the set will often be used as a textbook in classes where the students are relatively mature. In my own experience I have found that a historiographical approach, letting the readers inside, challenging them to think critically and accept uncertainties, leading them into the literature, is a close second in appeal to the normal textbook style, and to many minds is actually more appealing. That is especially the case when the material, as here, is cast in a flowing, literate style not lacking in grace and even frequently humour, much as in a popular lecture.

This first volume treats what historians think of as the early prehistory, the area before the rise of the 'Aztecs' or Mexica, in a detail amazing for a book of its kind.

No recent publication purporting to be history can remotely compete with Knight's treatment of this topic in extent or sophistication. He not only summarises the literature in terms of issues and debates, coming to his own cogent and balanced conclusions, he puts the material in the context of worldwide comparative scholarship and also finds parallels, often more enlightening to me than any others, in the world of ancient Greece and Rome.

The contribution and the quality of the work are indisputable; but I must carp a bit. It is inevitable and proper that Knight should reflect the terms of debate within the fields he covers. Often it seems that he serves as a fair, rigorous umpire within the rules of the game as the specialists have set it up. But in a set like the present one it would be well to take lessons from other chronological segments and subfields when they are relevant, changing the framework. Thus anthropologists studying the precontact situation have been much concerned with what holds groups together, because from pure archaeology that is often not at all obvious, and they have treated elites as a separate and often nearly omnipotent element, again because they are so prominent in the archaeological record. Postconquest history, with evidence showing a broader range of activity more closely observed, though at a later time, would suggest that elements left out of consideration by the anthropologists – language, microethnicity, cellular organisation – account for both fusing and fissure of indigenous groups far back into precontact times. It would also suggest that elites, as important as they were, were often ultimately an expression of ethnic units and necessary to the functioning of entities based on rotation and nesting, so that groups would reconstitute them if something brought about their demise. In saying this I comment more on the anthropological literature than on Knight; at the same time I suggest that in a future edition of this splendid work the findings of the consecutive subfields be more often confronted with one another when relevant. It would be a difficult task, but through his integration of other literatures Knight shows that he is equal to it.

Subsequent sections, with the same basic attributes, deal with the postclassic world of precontact times and then with the Spanish conquest of Mexico, but let me indicate a few differences. The author points out a critical juncture in the book when he says on page 134 that from that point (in late precontact history), narrative historical accounts are available. I find that the power of the narrative material is such that it has induced the author to be more credulous and less analytical than in the earlier part of the book. Greatly posterior accounts of Aztec policies of the mid-fifteenth century are taken straight; the 'vizier' Tlacaellel, largely a product of legend and later propaganda, is treated as though he were as well documented as Bismarck. Much of the discourse of this part remains at the level of what is discussed in postconquest chronicles and annals. Though all of Nahua central Mexico in the time of the 'Aztecs' was organised into inherently independent, quite idiosyncratic entities called *altepetl*, well studied for the postconquest scene, the word to my knowledge does not appear in the text and surely is not in the index. Even so, the postclassic section makes all the same kinds of contributions as the section preceding it, if not perhaps in the same degree.

When it comes to the Spanish conquest, the surface facts are well enough established that following the best-known Spanish chronicles and modern studies based on them does not have as many negative consequences as the same procedure with Mexica history. But the whole spirit of those selective and often propagandistic writings is taken along with them. The result is a decidedly old-fashioned cast to

what is said about the Spaniards. Work in the past generation showing, among other things, the depth of entrepreneurialism among the whole Spanish population in the Americas from the earliest stages forward has not been considered. In general I agree wholeheartedly with Knight that the Mexican region from the beginning makes an excellent microcosm; in fact it transcends that concept. It is a marvellous unit for study, even ignoring entirely the concept of the nation state. But, with the conquest, perhaps Mexico is not sufficient. The Spaniards of the time and their practices circulated and evolved on a hemispheric stage, so that common patterns are not seen as such within a purely Mexican framework. Also it happens that the majority of the most progressive studies of the last thirty or forty years on the conquest generation among the immigrants deal with areas other than Mexico. Given Knight's basis in chronicles, official reports and scholarship on them, one can understand how he would think that the term 'feudal' can still be stretched to include the general Spanish presence, because in those materials it can so appear, but materials closer to the action bring to mind rather parallels with migratory movements to the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including all the practices ancillary to them.

Only lack of space could and does put an end to my dialogue with this significant and first-rate product of a first-rate scholar.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03227048

Alan Knight, *Mexico* (Vol. 2): *The Colonial Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. xix + 353, £47.50, £17.95 pb; \$65.00, \$22.00 pb.

This is the second volume of Alan Knight's comprehensive trilogy on Mexican history. Although, as will be seen, the book has its unconventional aspects, its basic structural divisions are standard enough: roughly two-thirds of the text on the two Habsburg centuries, and the rest on the Bourbon period.

The first 70 pages offer a brisk resumé of Spanish expansion in Mexico post 1521. (For the fall of the Aztecs, and a broader view of what it was that the Spanish under Cortés conquered between 1519 and 1521, readers must look to Knight's first volume, or some other account.) The substantial fighting that still awaited the invaders, the efforts of conversion and inclusion made by friars, the invention of government – all are nicely summarised. Particularly welcome is the unusual amount of attention paid to the north here. Indeed, the book throughout gives greater weight to the northern and southern peripheries than do most general accounts of the colony.

Then follow some 130 pages that offer a cross-sectional view of Mexico under the Habsburgs (with, indeed, various continuities into the eighteenth century being noted). Links (administrative, fiscal and commercial) with Spain are briefly discussed; as is the working of the maturing colonial economy. But greatest attention goes to interactions between colonisers and native peoples, with much emphasis on land, labour and Indian reactions to the Spanish intrusion. Again, the fringes receive welcome and unusual notice, with surprisingly detailed accounts provided of native revolts in the far north and south. Indians in the centre are shown as more varied in their responses to the colonial order. Knight gives a fair depiction of their adaptations and assimilations, with natives' gains, losses and agency under Spanish rule judiciously assessed. Another central topic, closely linked to the Indians' condition,

is also examined in this part of the book: the incipient shift in criteria of social ranking, from ethnicity and *casta* to class.

The impression conveyed by the book of this long central period of the colonial era is perhaps too static. Although Knight discusses long-term changes in such matters as population, trade and production, the dominant feeling given is of a tranquil mid-day and early afternoon of colonial history.

The calm, if such it was, was certainly disrupted by Bourbon reforms, the efficacy of which Knight broadly accepts. Again he offers a taut telling of a familiar story, weaving together above all the histories of policy, economics and society.

The description of this book given so far suggests, perhaps, that it is in the main an admirably succinct, but largely conventional, account of New Spain. But the book has an ideological slant that is less common than it once was, at least in works written in English. The introduction declares the work to be a 'mainly materialist history' that concentrates on forms of economic production and exchange together with the political structures underlying those forms. Within this topical frame we are told (p. 74) that the hacienda 'was in fact the chief single determinant of New Spain's pattern of development'. These, and other related issues, are vigorously discussed in a fifteen page 'Theoretical Reprise' that closes the portion of the work devoted to Habsburg times. There Knight argues against earlier findings (by Gunder Frank et al.) of capitalism in colonial Mexico, preferring a characterisation of rural New Spain (for him, the socio-economic essence of the colony) as a blend of the Asiatic mode of production with a locally-specific variation of feudalism (p. 199). The 'Reprise' goes on to find in Mexican social and economic structures already prevalent by 1700 the source of an underdevelopment that was to last well into the nineteenth century.

A great deal might be said about all this, as it has been over the years, beginning perhaps with a discussion of whether the colonial Mexican hacienda was truly as uniform in its nature and its socio-economic outcomes, across place and time, as Knight generally presents it as being. One wonders if perhaps the Porfirian hacienda is not being read back into the colonial centuries. But the central question that inevitably presents itself here is the old one of whether a historical materialist framework, however intelligently applied, is comprehensive enough to provide good answers to the questions being raised.

Other possible sorts of explanation are barely hinted at in the book. Spanish antecedents are notably absent. No work by Richard Morse, for example, is in the bibliography, and the only one of Anthony Pagden's there is his translation of Cortés's letters. The medieval concepts of society that arrived in Mexico with the conquistadores – estates, stratified hierarchy, natural inequalities – are granted no exegetical weight. Is it not likely that a fuller explanation of the phenomena and problems of Mexican development that Knight analyses would result from examining the interplay of important notions and local conditions, rather than from arguing only from the latter?

It must also be said that for the general reader (perhaps not the intended audience) the book's materialist emphasis makes for a limited view of New Spain. This is less *The Colonial Era* than *The Sources and Nature of Colonial Underdevelopment*. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz is more than an embodiment of the established colony's cultural flowering (p. 184); 'demotic frippery' (p. 268) is not the most instructive description that can be applied to the high baroque churches of the eighteenth century. To be sure, Knight says in his introduction, in tones of some scorn, that his book will not contain the isolated dollops of culture that some writers of general accounts have

tended to drop here and there into their texts. But surely it is possible, indeed desirable, to weave in the non-material in the interests of a fuller view and greater understanding? Containing so little of it, this book conveys an oddly monochrome impression of New Spain.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03237044

Max Harris, *Aztecs, Moors and Christians: Festivals of Reconquest in Mexico and Spain* (Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press, 2000), pp. x + 309, \$55.00, \$24.95 pb.

Eight years ago Max Harris published a book in the UK on dramatisations of the Conquest of Mexico, and he has since published a series of articles in journals such as *Comparative Drama*. But although his new book builds upon that earlier work and is the culmination of those articles, Harris makes an effort here to appeal beyond drama studies to a wider audience. That effort is a great success. Historians, anthropologists and scholars from various disciplines interested in Spanish and Mexican culture will find this study worthwhile, if not fascinating. I have already used it in a seminar of graduate students, where it stimulated extensive interest and discussion.

In the course of the twenty-five chapters of *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, Harris ambitiously seeks to describe and analyse well over two dozen festivals of conquest and reconquest from twelfth-century Aragon to Mexico in the late-1990s. While the sources seem thin and the analysis consequently tantalisingly tentative for some of these festivals, the evidence for others is rich, often allowing Harris to provide vivid and engaging reconstructions of complex celebrations. His speculations and, in the case of the ethnographic material, his personal involvement, remain laudably transparent, while he also displays an impressive command of a broad array of secondary material.

Specialists of one kind or another may take issue with details of Harris' analyses and emphases. For example, some will find Harris misleadingly privileges Inga Clendinnen's interpretation of the Aztec *xochiyaoyotl* (war of flowers) over Ross Hassig's; others will notice the absence of references to recent work on ritual celebrations and native-language texts that display attitudes toward the Conquest similar to those uncovered by Harris. But these are quibbles that reflect the book's ambitious scope; wide ranging and multidisciplinary works such as this inevitably cannot cover every aspect under study to the satisfaction of every specialist.

Furthermore, most readers should find the two core theses of the book convincingly argued. The first thesis is that 'there is more evidence of danced dramatizations of warfare in precontact Mexico than there is in medieval Spain' (pp. 111–12), suggesting that festivals of reconquest in colonial and modern Mexico are rooted more in the indigenous past than in the Iberian *reconquista*.

The second thesis is that the dances contain 'hidden transcripts' (a phrase borrowed effectively from James Scott) that express resistance rather than recognition of defeat. Furthermore, the disguised meanings of a festival are not always conscious acts of defiance, but can also be unconscious expressions of cultural continuity and an anticipation of a native American reconquest. 'To understand the conflict being represented' in a given dance, argues Harris, we must 'be alert to the possibility of both conscious and unconscious hidden transcripts being "masked" within the public transcript' (p. 27).

This is not the first time these ideas have been aired, but to my knowledge they have never been articulated together and in the context of a study of festivals of conquest and reconquest on both sides of the Atlantic. Harris is to be congratulated for producing an original and engagingly written study that will appeal to a broad spectrum of scholars and students.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03247040

Deena J. González, *Refusing the Favor: The Spanish-Mexican Women of Santa Fe, 1820–1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. xx + 186, £15.99, pb.

Scholars who attempt to address what Richard White has called the ‘history of absence’ are confronted with a number of unique methodological and narrative dilemmas. They must first locate documentary evidence of those who purportedly did not leave behind written records. They must tease from sometimes sparse documentation a richness of detail and context than can facilitate interpretation of what they have found. Perhaps as daunting, they must design a narrative strategy that maintains the new knowledge, perspectives and voices of and about their subjects at the centre of their analysis while simultaneously elucidating the significance of this knowledge for the master narrative itself.

Deena J. González’s book, *Refusing the Favor: The Spanish-Mexican Women of Santa Fe: 1820–1880*, shows that such methodological and narrative challenges can be surmounted. González’s study of the impact of the US conquest and colonisation of New Mexico on the lives of Spanish-Mexican women refutes the myth that women’s history cannot be written because the sources are not extant. González locates and mines previously untapped historical sources – including census materials, wills and testaments, ecclesiastical archives, probate records, laws, testimonials, contemporary newspapers, journals and illustrations, novels and travel accounts – to weave a rich textural narrative of life in nineteenth-century New Mexico.

Her approach to these sources relies on an array of interdisciplinary lenses that she uses to great effect. González harnesses the interpretive powers of the folklorist, the historian’s sensibility to shifting contexts, and the evocative skills of the writer to portray women’s lives within and against backdrops of economic dislocation wrought with the advance of merchant capitalism, changing communications systems, and a cultural fabric that included the church, the family and the neighbourhood.

González’s narrative focus on three Spanish-Mexican women linked through time to Santa Fe grounds her narrative solidly in women’s experiences. She does not limit herself to merely telling the story of these women, although she does that well, but explores the nature of their representations and its linkages to economic and political changes over time. Traders, soldiers, merchants, clerics and politicians populate the backdrop without dominating the story, and their presence links the lives of these women to related trends in ethnic relations, church politics, intra- and inter-Mexican migration and economic developments.

González’s findings challenge the master narratives of Santa Fe in the Mexican and early US periods on a variety of fronts. *Refusing the Favor* contests earlier historiography that depicted the Euro-American conquest of New Mexico as relatively

painless, supported by the Spanish-Mexican upper class, and beneficial for all. González finds that the appropriation of female images contributed to the myth of beneficence, and her book demonstrates the ways that gender (and ethnic) stereotypes have often provided justifications for domination by one population over another. She finds that the costs of US colonisation were high for all economic levels of Spanish-Mexican society, ninety per cent of whom lost their lands in the decade following the US takeover. She concludes furthermore that under US rule Spanish-Mexican women lost certain inheritance and property rights to which they had been entitled under Spanish law.

Despite what appeared to be a thriving frontier economy boasting new buildings, hospitals and schools, however, economic prosperity in the aftermath of the Mexican-American war did not extend to the Spanish-Mexican population of Santa Fe, which grew increasingly dependent on Euro-American wages. González's quantitative analysis of wage differentials elucidate the enduring patterns and hierarchies of domination imposed during colonisation.

González makes a unique contribution to the literature on accommodation and resistance with her examination of the ways that Spanish-Mexican women resisted the new American order. Her careful reading of wills reveals that by 1870, women's wills had shifted in tone, organisation and substance, in a way that shows resistance to Euro-American domination in their strategic efforts to protect the integrity of inheritance and property rights.

González debunks earlier historiographic representations of New Mexico as a placid, isolated frontier with her documentation not only of a vibrant (if inequitable) economy, but one also characterised by tremendous racial mixing and regional migration. Her readings of court testimonies suggest that inter-ethnic marriages were more likely to be sites of 'social disharmony' and 'raging turmoil' than the positive symbols of cultural harmony depicted in earlier studies.

Refusing the Favor will take its place as a classic among the invaluable new revisionist and feminist scholarship on the American West. González's resolution of the methodological and narrative dilemmas of this genre is exemplary and her conclusions offer convincing evidence that a gendered perspective is essential for understanding the broader history of any region and its people, particularly in situations of conquest and colonisation.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03257047

Katherine Elaine Bliss, *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health, and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001), pp. xv + 243, \$45.00, \$19.95 pb; Robert M. Buffington, *Criminal and Citizen in Modern Mexico* (Lincoln, NE, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), pp. 229, \$60.00, \$25.00 pb; £30.00, £13.50 pb; Pablo Piccato, *City of Suspects: Crime in Mexico City, 1900–1931* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. x + 365, \$64.95, \$24.95 pb; £16.95, pb.

The historiography of crime and punishment in Latin American, while still relatively young, has benefited from increasing scholarly attention. Recent research demonstrates the wide range of activities and behaviour that have come under the category

of ‘criminality’ – from begging, to drinking, to abortion – and thus how understanding crime and its conceptualisation is fundamental to understanding a given society and culture.¹ The panels on crime at the Latin American Studies Association Congress in Dallas and the Society for Latin American Studies Conference in Manchester (both in spring 2003) further show that crime and criminology, in all its variations, is a growth area. Although Foucault still casts a long shadow over the field, new work examines the dissemination of ideologies, difficulties in implementing reforms, activities that crossed the line between legal and illegal in different historical moments and the lives of the ‘criminals’. These discussions of crime and criminality necessarily cross borders of historical field and analytical framework, as the topics relate to other historical questions such as social policy, nation formation and popular culture. While histories of crime in Mexico have been in short supply until recently, there is every indication that the field is healthy and expanding. The three monographs discussed here point towards the diversity of approaches, sources and focus in recent work.

Of the three texts under review, Buffington’s *Criminal and Citizen in Modern Mexico* most clearly owes a debt to Michel Foucault. The book, a study of overlapping discourses of criminology, penology and anthropology from the late colonial to the postrevolutionary era, is organised in seven thematic essays that overlap and reiterate the text’s themes. While the redundancies are perhaps too many for reading in one sitting, they do allow the reader to sample at will. Buffington’s long perspective is one of the book’s greatest strengths; using this wide-angle lens, he finds that although explanations of criminal behaviour and official responses differed from the pre-independence to post-revolutionary periods, elite mistrust of the poor and disdain for their lifestyle remained constant. Buffington’s history of elite discourses focuses especially on the development of criminology as a discipline, a discipline that emerged as one of the Positivist sciences under the ‘order and progress’ dictator Porfirio Díaz. Yet this new science was based upon the theoretical inconsistencies and eclectic approaches of Porfirian criminologists, who treated theory and research methodology almost as a pick-and-mix section. Porfirian criminologists used folklore, ‘common sense’ and cranial measurements, among other methodologies, to prove that the mestizo lower class as a whole was potentially criminal in nature. These concerns about ‘criminals’ were as much about culture as they were about crime. Porfirian criminologists continued to condemn *pulquerías*, gambling and consensual marriages as their Enlightenment and Independence era predecessors had. When it came to making law, elite anxieties about the poor and their lifestyles trumped new liberal discourses of individual rights. Science thus served to vindicate and justify the criminal justice system, racism and social inequalities.

To the elite, women were among the most disturbing of these lower-class criminals. Women, depicted as supportive spouses bringing up patriots in moral homes, were central to the modernising project in Mexico. Women’s criminal behaviour

¹ Excellent edited collections on Latin America showing the diversity of the field include Ricardo D. Salvatore and Carlos Aguirre (eds.), *The Birth of the Penitentiary in Latin America: Essays on Criminology, Prison Reform, and Social Control, 1830–1940* (Austin, 1996) and Carlos A. Aguirre and Robert Buffington (eds.), *Reconstructing Criminality in Latin America* (Wilmington, DE, 2000). On Mexico see William Taylor’s classic, *Drinking, Homicide and Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages* (Stanford, 1979) and Juan Pedro Viqueira Albán, *Relajados o reprimidos? Diversiones públicas y vida social en la Ciudad de México durante el siglo de las luces* (Mexico City, 1987).

challenged these idealisations of feminine nature. Because women were to support the modern family and civilise the working-class domestic sphere, their deviance could undermine ‘national progress’. Moreover, women’s law breaking destroyed this vision of domestic harmony, as ‘delinquent women by definition shirked their duties to family and nation’ (p. 66). Buffington bases his study of women criminals on a close reading of *Los criminales en México*, by the popular criminologist Carlos Roumagnac. Like other works Buffington discusses, *Los criminales en México* served to titillate through descriptions of murder scenes and accounts of lesbian loves inside prison, while moralising against the consequences of criminal behaviour. The importance of gender and sexuality resurfaces when Buffington discusses how ‘sexual deviance’ was intertwined with criminality. Male homosexuality, in particular, threatened the ‘moral health’ of the nation (p. 137) both because homosexuality did not beget citizens but also because of the sexual act itself. Porfirian and revolutionary-era criminologists agreed that this threatening sexual deviance, in a prison context especially, could infect the entire population. Here Buffington shifts his perspective, enriching the analysis, as he compares the elite view of homosexuality to how male prisoners themselves understood their sexual behaviour. Drawing in part from Octavio Paz’s analysis in *El laberinto de la soledad*, Buffington describes how ‘active partners’ still considered themselves macho men, whereas they considered ‘effeminate men’, or passive partners, to be deviant.² Yet criminologists did not agree with this distinction, categorising all men engaging in homosexual sex as deviants. While criminologists and prisoners did not agree on what homosexuality meant, they did agree that ‘sex was politics – male politics’. For revolutionary criminologists, homosexuality represented a contagious deviance and potential danger to the nation, while for the macho prisoner, active sex with another man allowed him to ‘act out the male rituals of domination’ (p. 140).

These discourses of crime and deviance strongly emerged in the debates around prison reform. Buffington shows that the prison reform movements, coming out of Enlightenment ideologies and liberal modernisation projects, were remarkably consistent. For the proponents of prison reform, like Ricardo Flores Magón, first-hand experience of prisons was often a catalyst to demand calls for reform. These calls for reform notwithstanding, even after the overthrow of Díaz, reformers never questioned the ‘fundamental tenants of Porfirian prison reform: rehabilitation, social defence, and top-down reform’ (p. 103). Tracing the development of penal ideologies and law, the author finds that strong liberal resistance to judicial discretion was gradually overcome because of the hope that judges, given more independence, could erode the power bases of regional caudillos. The 1931 penal code, which enshrined this judicial discretion, incorporated a variety of approaches to crime and punishment creating a system of flexible paternalism that Buffington identifies as a key factor contributing to the durability of the Mexican political system.

Katherine Bliss and Pablo Piccato, who both base their work on Porfirian and revolutionary Mexico City, examine how these elite discourses played out in practice. In *Compromised Positions*, Bliss uses prostitution as a window onto gender and sexual relations, popular experiences of the revolution, state-building and revolutionary reform projects. Like Buffington, Bliss uses an unconventional chronology to show that while Porfirians and revolutionaries disagreed about the necessity of

² Buffington cites Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude: Life and Thought in Mexico*, trans. Lysander Kemp (New York, 1961), pp. 65–88.

prostitution, they both viewed women and girls who engaged in prostitution as sexually deviant. Porfirians believed that women chose ‘the life’ because of ‘morally wayward’ dispositions (p. 30), even though in Porfirian Mexico, prostitution was not actually a crime but a necessary evil regulated by the state, almost a public service. Justifications for prostitution partially responded to Catholic understandings of sexuality, based on a sexual double standard. Without the availability of prostitutes, men, who as a group could not control their sexual desires, would resort to seduction and rape. Yet prostitution in Porfirian Mexico was more than just an exchange of money for sex. Bliss depicts prostitution as fully integrated into society and culture, even if it was not entirely respectable. Prostitutes were categorised by class, and the brothels of the first-class prostitutes were an important part of Mexico City’s social life. An evening with a first-class prostitute might include a visit to the theatre, a dinner out or listening to the brothel’s piano player in the elegant parlour. Moreover, working as a prostitute did not necessarily preclude love interests, either favourite clients or other prostitutes.

During and after the revolution, the new permissive sexual mores of the time coupled with the insecurity of life increased the number of women turning to prostitution, sometimes only as a supplement to other income. Military men were particularly frequent customers, and prostitutes were not the only targets of military lust; one observer noted that any attractive woman on the arm of her beau was fair game for the armed revolutionaries. Although the revolution ushered in sexual liberty, it also ushered in a new puritanism. Social reformers, who saw prostitution as leftover from the degeneracy and hypocrisy of the *Porfiriato*, sought to regulate and limit the sex trade. Unlike the Porfirians, these social reformers believed that women turned to prostitution because of environmental factors, such as a childhood trauma. Using sources such as social workers’ reports, interviews, and Roumagnac’s *Los criminales en México*, Bliss concludes that both before and after the revolution many women did start work in the sex trade as a result of an early sexual experience, often against their will. Stories of these traumas, accounts of the hopes and betrayals of individual prostitutes, bring the next to life.

Precisely because of these environmental factors, reformers were convinced that young prostitutes could be saved through involuntary confinement in a government correctional facility complete with parks, a swimming pool and gardens. Like the criminologists Buffington discussed, these social workers, in their handling of underage prostitutes, reflected their own prejudices, backgrounds and moral judgements. For instance, they were reluctant to return children to their families (whom they believed to be responsible for the girls’ corruption in the first place) and social workers themselves had the final say over decisions regarding marriage and pregnancy. Unwilling to submit to confinement submissively, these young women in turn staged dramatic escapes or provocative strip shows.

The voices of prostitutes are not the only ones we hear in *Compromised Positions*. Working-class men who lived in the Colonia Obrera protested vigorously against the creation of a so-called tolerance zone near their homes, using the dominant discourse of the day to cast themselves as respectable citizens and productive workers, rejecting the implicit association with the clients of ‘low-rent’ prostitutes (p. 154). Prostitutes, too, used revolutionary rhetoric to counter feminists and eugenicists who campaigned for an end to legal prostitution using rhetoric about motherhood. Prostitutes defended themselves as mothers – working mothers whose wage supported a family.

Yet the work of these mothers was increasingly depicted as a national public health hazard. When the Department of Health tried to educate men about the dangers of visiting prostitutes (because of the possibility of spreading syphilis to wives and children), the men protested that the government was intruding on their private affairs. Even though prostitution in the postrevolutionary era was no longer tolerated with a nod and a wink, reformers did nothing to rebut the widespread belief in men's naturally promiscuity, but rather depicted good men as those who learned to sublimate their sex drive through work. The difficulty in policing customers and the confusing rhetoric about why it was wrong to visit prostitutes soon shifted the focus of the campaign against men's involvement in prostitution from clients to pimps, who officially became criminals in 1929. Bliss concludes that the abolition of legal prostitution, on Valentine's Day 1940, did not 'redeem Mexico City's prostitutes or their clients': women continued to work as prostitutes (p. 207). Ultimately, attempts to end prostitution foundered because the state-in-formation was not prepared to challenge norms of masculine sexual behaviour.

Pablo Piccato, like Bliss, writes about the urban poor in Mexico City, concentrating on the first thirty years of the twentieth century, 'reconstruct[ing] the texture of crime as experienced in everyday life by those who formed the majority of offenders and victims' (p. 3). Piccato shows that criminal discourses lumped together a wide variety of behaviour and people so that entire neighbourhoods of Mexico City became suspect. To the witnesses, perpetrators and victims of crime, however, these crimes were singular acts involving people like themselves. From the point of view of the capital's poor, crime occurred for logical reasons, such as threats to honour or economic need, within a community that was home to both the victim and the perpetrator.

In his thoughtful examination of early twentieth-century Mexico City, Piccato also provides us with an exceptional vision of the capital. Although class or race could never effectively segregate the city, elites nonetheless imagined and designed an ideal city, hoping to push out the poor and working class. Surrounding the central city, the ideal city, was the 'marginal city' (p. 14), in which the lives and habits of the poor came under constant, and disapproving, scrutiny for their crowded living conditions and working habits, such as peddling vegetables in the street. Elite fears of the marginal city notwithstanding, city authorities ignored the public health, infrastructure and security needs of these neighbourhoods. Thus, communities policed and judged themselves: the need to prevent crime and resolve disputes was one of the ties binding communities together.

Public violence, which 'occurred most commonly where vecindad, social life, and work converged', tended to follow a standard script (p. 97). A challenge to honour would prompt people of the same gender to fight, using knives, away from the police but in front of peers. Since drunkenness was a standard explanatory factor for criminology, it is not surprising that Piccato finds that alcohol was an important component of this violence. Turning crime logic on its head, however, he concludes that because intoxication could be a mitigation factor in sentencing, perpetrators of violence often claimed drunkenness had impaired their judgment. Although men and women both defended their honour through these types of fights, in cases where the honour fight attracted press attention, women's violent defence of reputation was cause for ridicule. After the revolution, increased accessibility of firearms undermined these codes of honour fighting. With the ready availability

of guns, violence became an event between strangers that was less predictable and more frequently lethal.

While public violence between equals was clearly illegal, private violence was, if not condoned, not actively condemned. Crimes of passion, such as murdering a cheating wife, were not considered real crimes. Nonetheless, the press depiction of these cases showed a double standard: elite domestic violence was the subject of thrilling scandal, while domestic violence among the poor proved the machismo and irrationality of poor men. In considering violence against women, Piccato also examines rape, which was not considered a crime in its own right. Even though rape, statutory rape and abductions were technically felonies, the loose definition of the crimes, the further humiliation that bringing a charge caused the victim and the judiciary's reluctance to admit that forced sexual intercourse alone was a violent act all made convictions difficult. Sexual deceit, such as seduction with the promise of marriage, rather than rape, was considered a serious crime. In cases of seduction or rape, marriage between the perpetrator and the victim satisfied demands from families for restoration of honour.

The third type of crime Piccato discusses is theft. Just as Bliss has shown that in the lean years of the revolution, informal prostitution helped women and their dependants avoid starvation, Piccato indicates that, in difficult economic times, small-scale theft was part of the repertoire of survival for the capital's poor. Moreover, theft was among those crimes least likely to come to the attention of authorities, because it was often solved in the neighbourhoods in which it was committed. Crammed living quarters meant multiple witnesses to comings and goings and neighbours often detained suspects. Piccato concludes by demonstrating how the discourse about theft rhetorically invented of a class of *rateros*, housed together in penal institutions, thus creating a group of modern, professional thieves that had not previously existed.

At the end of his monograph, Piccato uses a more standard periodisation to examine the criminal codes of 1871, 1929 and 1931, showing that the revolution brought about changes in state policies towards punishment, as well as in the attitude of prisoners themselves. He analyses prisons as an institution within which prisoners built their own communities, through founding unions, revolutionary brigades and jazz bands, that undermined ideologies of punishment through isolation. Piccato concludes that in early twentieth-century Mexico as much as in contemporary Mexico, 'crime and punishment constitute the focus of tensions between state policies and civil society' (p. 218).

In their own way, each of these three texts recognises the importance of changing criminology discourses, as well as how historical actors responded to and were formed by these discourses. These texts show how criminology and other discourses of deviance offered a justification for excluding large segments of the Mexican population from full participation in projects of modernity and citizenship. The label of sexual deviance was a particularly effective means to deny Mexicans membership in the nation, through pathologising working-class sexuality, determining that women's promiscuity was a disease, or by labelling homosexual behaviour a threat to the nation. The grassroots level responses to these discourses, the focus of Bliss and Piccato's work, show that those living in the marginal city demanded dignity, respect and membership in the national community. People tarred as criminals and deviants contested elite understanding of their behaviour, while often defending themselves by inverting the same discourse that condemned them. Inmates refused to accept

criminologists' explanations of the meaning of homosexual acts, prostitutes framed defences of their work within the context of revolutionary motherhood and perpetrators of violence pleaded intoxication because they knew alcohol was a factor mitigating sentencing.

Studies of crime are also studies of social anxieties, and the unusual periodisation of each of these texts offers a broad view from which to assess how these anxieties changed or did not over time. Buffington, using the longest historical trajectory, finds that even as successive reformers tried to deal with the nation's marginalised poor majority through rational, scientific, enlightened theories and methods, their view of the poor was always filtered through prejudices that related poverty to criminality. Modernity and modernisation are other themes underlying these texts, as elites and social reformers sought to respond to crime, even as they were perversely proud of their 'modern' problems. Bliss shows that new centres of vice, like cabarets, and the presence of foreign pimps were understood as the natural result of Mexico's progress towards full modernity.

These works demonstrate both the continued importance of studies of discourse and, at the same time, how discourse alone is only part of the story. Through careful examination of the interplay between discourse and individuals within communities, works on crime and criminology not only shed light on the state and workings of power, but also show how average folk understood criminal behaviour, how crime fit into the day-to-day lives of Mexicans and how people contested or used these discourses. Piccato's and Bliss's research on Mexico City can provide a model for studies of other places and times, and Buffington's history of discourse offers an important starting point for studies of crime from the late colonial period to the revolution in power throughout Mexico. These three works demonstrate that, while the historiography of crime and criminality in Mexico may still be in its infancy, the pioneering works provide a carefully-constructed foundation on which new studies can build.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03267043

Catherine E. Jayne, *Oil, War, and Anglo-American Relations: American and British Reactions to Mexico's Expropriation of Foreign Oil Properties, 1937–1941* (Westport, CT, and London: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. xv + 210, \$69.95; £52.50, hb.

This volume treats an important period in the history of oil politics, as the United States and Great Britain were moving forward into World War II and had to be concerned with Mexico, both strategically and in terms of her oil resources. Of course, the Mexican question arose largely out of the expropriation of US and British oil company holdings by President Lázaro Cárdenas in 1938, just as war clouds were gathering in Europe. The book is an interesting discussion of the ways in which US and British policy intertwined and conflicted, showing the connections between them and the limitations on the options of the British that were a result of US action or lack of it. The author makes use of extensive primary materials and US and British archives, successfully weaving her way through the intricacies of US policy and policymakers, though the British case is less well analysed.

The major flaw in the book is the lack of an examination about what things looked like from Mexico. No Mexican archives have been consulted, nor has the

most recent and very examination of Mexican politics in a global context during the period under examination, Friedrich Shuler's *Mexico between Hitler and Roosevelt: Mexican Foreign Relations in the Age of Lázaro Cárdenas*, published in 2000. This failure to include the Mexican perspective mirrors the attitudes of US and British policy-makers, who, with the exception of US Ambassador Josephus Daniels, knew much less about Mexico than they should have to function effectively. Indeed, the book mirrors their own relative ignorance about Mexico and makes it difficult to assess or even describe their mistakes and blunders. It only obliquely acknowledges that the Mexican president, Lázaro Cárdenas, basically got what he wanted from the United States – that is, a settlement on the oil expropriation that avoided any sort of embarrassment to his government or to himself, anything that might have been seen domestically as backing down to US or British pressure. As regards the British, the book does not provide a secure context of national level politics and priorities within which to place the Mexican case. Great Britain, the author tells us briefly, resumed diplomatic relations with Mexico in 1941, largely to appease the USA (who had pretty convincingly caved into the Mexicans), although, as she repeatedly asserts, Mexican oil was not particularly important to the British war effort.

The great question, it seems to me, is why Mexico was able to expropriate US and British oil company holdings and suffer relatively few adverse consequences. By confining her study of the Mexican question exclusively to relations between the USA and Great Britain, rather than making it a three-sided problem, the author falls back on a rather simplistic explanation, though it is accurate as far as it goes: the British were disengaged, having broken diplomatic relations, and thus were required to depend on the United States for representation in their efforts on behalf of the oil companies. Therefore, they were relatively powerless to affect the outcome. President Franklin Roosevelt, despite a split among his own major advisers, ultimately avoided punitive action against Mexico so that he could keep the southern borders of his own country free from conflict and spend his concern and attention on the European situation. Unfortunately, most of the chapters in this work focus principally on the petty and personal politics within, and sometimes between, US and British policymaking establishments. Nowhere does the author discuss the resolute and skillful operations of politicians on the Mexican side, who were able to make the oil expropriation stick.

In the conclusion, the author asserts that 'Although both the United States and Britain initially wanted Mexico to revert to the status quo ante, only the United States had the power to force its southern neighbor to do so ...' (p. 181). Yet, one has to question whether or not the United States actually *did* have the 'power to force' Mexico to comply, given other priorities. At no time did US policymakers seriously consider going to war against Mexico, and it is difficult when one understands the Mexican side of the story to imagine that anything less than the use of force would have changed the outcome very much. In these circumstances, then, one must ask just what 'power' here really means. Perhaps, given the outcome, it is more appropriate to discuss the 'power' held by the Mexicans; they had the resources, and, in relationship to the Americans *and therefore to the British*, the strategic position to win through in the oil expropriation. Paradoxically perhaps, but realistically, they were able to use their own focus and determination to protect their own interests – as well as to prevail over two of the world's wealthiest national 'powers', distracted and limited by other priorities.

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X0327704X

Carol Wise (ed.), *The Post-NAFTA Political Economy: Mexico and the Western Hemisphere* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1998), pp. ix + 382, \$18.95, pb.

The North American Free Trade Agreement was the most controversial trade accord concluded by the United States in the postwar period, largely because it encompassed free trade and investment stimulation with a developing, low-wage country. NAFTA had been preceded by only two previous US free trade agreements (FTAs), one with Israel, the motivation for which was political, and then with Canada, the most important US trade partner. The initiative for NAFTA was taken by the then Mexican president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, and this marked a new departure for Mexico in that it embraced closer economic and political relations with the United States, rather keeping its distance. In the years since NAFTA went into effect in 1994, Mexico has become the second largest US trade partner and, together, Canada and Mexico now account for more than one-third of US exports of goods and services.

A cottage industry of publications about NAFTA came into existence when the agreement was being negotiated and this output has continued largely unabated ever since. A new spate of publications is now emerging as NAFTA approaches its tenth birthday. The books cover the gamut, from opposition to the agreement over fear it would spawn runaway investment and a flood of low-wage imports into the United States, a rush to the bottom regarding environmental degradation and humane labour standards, to the complete opposite, that it would stimulate Mexican economic and political development and make an important contribution in reducing Mexican poverty and undocumented migration to the United States.

Both extremes overstate. Trade and investment did boom, but migration to the United States increased and poverty in Mexico remained virtually unchanged. Regional divisions in Mexico grew deeper as the states near the United States benefited while those further away, in the southern part of the country, barely participated in the growing trade and investment.

The virtue of this book is that it is high on analysis and low on preconceived judgements and the authors of the chapters are competent observers. The concentration is on Mexico internally and in its relations with the United States; little is said about Canada. It is a post-NAFTA book and provides some assessment of how well the agreement has worked but gives more emphasis to what it has spawned. Thus there is much on other economic integration agreements in the hemisphere, such as MERCOSUR (the common market of the south encompassing Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay), the network of Latin American bilateral FTAs that has developed, and the hemisphere-wide initiative launched by the United States to reach a Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) covering just about all the countries of the Western Hemisphere. The final two chapters, by Carol Wise and Stephan Haggard, are worthwhile reads on the politics and economics of the various forms of regionalism generated by NAFTA.

The chapter by Manuel Pastor and Wise, on 'Mexican-Style Neoliberalism', is mostly critical in that it argues that post-NAFTA policy in Mexico delivered open markets and macroeconomic stability, but failed to provide consistent economic growth or reduce income inequality. This is true enough, but does not give enough attention to the fallout from the disastrous financial and economic collapse of 1995

and, once Mexico recovered from this catastrophe, the effects on Mexico of the slowdown in the US economy during the last three years.

Sylvia Maxfield and Adam Shapiro play a game of winners and losers, which country 'won' and which 'lost' in NAFTA's sectoral negotiations – automotive, textiles and apparel, energy, agriculture, services, and the like. It is a well-informed discussion by serious analysts but, in my view, quite tricky in that a trade negotiation as comprehensive as this one necessarily involves implicit tradeoffs across sectors. It is precarious to sort out short-term negotiating victories from long-term benefits. Mexico, in their analysis, won in the energy sector by making few commitments, but the country is now facing a crisis based on inadequate natural gas production for electricity generation. Mexico, they conclude, won in the agriculture sector, but is now trying to nullify many NAFTA provisions in agriculture as being unfair to Mexico.

Manuel Pastor's chapter on the financial crisis that erupted at the end of 1994 is a thoughtful primer on the political limitations of policy making during that last year of the Salinas administration, but those interested in knowing more about what went into financial decisions that were ultimately disastrous to the country must go more deeply into what actually took place, and why, in that year. Denise Dresser, in her chapter, is quite critical of President Ernesto Zedillo's lack of persistent leadership, arguing that this exacerbated conflicts within the Mexican political class. Her language is colourful, but it was Zedillo who, by sticking to his economic guns brought the country back to high economic growth after the 1995 crisis and, by insisting on political openness, permitted the system to bring about an alternation in the presidency away from the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in 2000, after 71 years of PRI domination. It is not surprising that *priistas* disagreed with Zedillo.

For newcomers to the Mexican scene, this book presents a valuable and well-informed introduction to many issues. This is its best audience, I believe – college students and others who want to delve into Mexico's political and economic scene.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03287046

Héctor Carrillo, *The Night is Young: Sexuality in Mexico in the Time of AIDS* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. xiii + 371, \$58.00, \$20.00 pb; £37.00, £13.00 pb.

This wonderful new study by a leading researcher in the field of AIDS prevention in Mexico and among Latinos in the United States explains how individuals' sexual lives are affected by local sexual cultures, in this case in middle-class Guadalajara. By examining changing sexual mores and practices in Mexico's second largest city, and in this realm one renowned for both conservatism and, provocatively, for men who have sex with other men, Carrillo documents the substance and sources of such sexual transformations.

Like Richard Parker's work in Brazil and that of Carlos Cáceres in Peru, the study reported in *The Night Is Young* is scholarship with a public health agenda. Carrillo's underlying purpose is to explore the particularities of sexual life in Guadalajara in the 1990s, to analyse how well these are understood in sex education and AIDS prevention campaigns, and to make recommendations as to how to bridge the gap

of 'discrepancies' between public health theory and cultural realities in middle-class Guadalajara. The study is based on two years' research, including semistructured interviews with some 64 men and women between the ages of 18 and 53, in the lower-middle and upper-middle strata, and much of the content of the book consists of quotes from the people Carrillo befriended during his sojourn in Guadalajara.

Unlike some other recent studies that focus on AIDS and sexuality 'in the time of AIDS' in Latin America, this book intentionally considers not only men who have sex with other men, but also self-identified bisexual and heterosexual women and men. What this allows Carrillo to accomplish, among other things, is to get beyond tired dichotomies that posit essentialised passive and active sexual partners in Latin American cultural contexts. Similarly, when the author raises notions of 'tradition' and 'modernity' it is not to reify once again unimaginative typologies but rather to report how the terms and concepts are employed by the women and men whom he interviewed in Guadalajara. Thus 'normal' here is treated not as an ideal type but rather as an expression utilized by the subjects as part of describing their own sexual identity and that of others, or as a point of comparison with the same. 'I am part of a different world', Carrillo quotes twenty-one-year-old Osvaldo telling him. 'I have my world in which I relate to normal people (well, not "normal", because we are all normal), with people who are not of *el medio* [the gay milieu], and then I have my world with people in *el medio*' (p. 67).

Real people populate the pages of *The Night Is Young*: one young man was convinced 'that many women in Guadalajara were conservative, which severely limited the opportunities for a young man like him to have sex' (p. 46) while another bragged, 'With women I have plenty of opportunities ...' (p. 69) – all the while Carrillo happily refrains from unwarranted and glib generalisations about 'sexuality and sexual practices in Guadalajara'. Individuals' confusion and contradictions regarding sexuality are made abundantly apparent (and normal!).

The heart of this study concerns the discrepancy between what Carrillo calls 'sexual silence' and AIDS prevention and other sexual health efforts. By sexual silence, he refers to the notion that 'Mexican culture, and Latin culture in general, have been characterised as lacking open and formal verbal communication about things sexual' (p. 139). It is precisely the nonverbal form of sexual communication that, Carrillo argues, has been misunderstood and overlooked in reproductive health matters. Instead of recognising and adapting to what he considers fundamental cultural traits of sexuality within the population he studied in Guadalajara, too often the aim of AIDS work, for instance, is simply to 'educate' people about risky behaviour. But for Carrillo, regardless how important education may be, in itself it is insufficient to tackle AIDS that afflicts growing numbers of people in Guadalajara and other parts of Mexico. (The book has a good if brief history of AIDS work in Mexico.) If nearly all HIV transmission in Mexico is today sexual (both through same-sex and heterosexual sexual relations), understanding the culturally specific nonverbal elements of sexual encounters in Guadalajara is key to developing more effective prevention and treatment programmes there.

Passion and spontaneity were characteristic of sexual life for many of the single men and women in the middle class in Guadalajara in the 1990s, Carrillo reports, as were power differentials that often made negotiating over condom use and similar safe-sex practices problematic. Yet instead of condemning such passion and impetuosity, he insists, such cultural lifeways should be better understood in order to utilise them in health campaigns. 'My assessment', Carrillo writes, 'is

that Mexican cultural expression such as *albures* [sexual joking], sexual silence, and the local emphasis on seduction and nonverbal communication, as well as local scripts about abandonment, loss of control, surrender, sexual passion, and spontaneity, could be used as tools in HIV prevention work. Currently, most of these aspects of Mexican sexual culture are deemed to be barriers rather than resources, even when they do not inherently contradict the goal of sexual health' (p. 284).

A good read and a vital contribution to the emerging field of sexuality studies in Latin America.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03297042

Joseph S. Tulchin and Andrew D. Selee (eds.), *Mexico's Politics and Society in Transition* (Boulder, CO, and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), pp. vii + 373, £16.95, pb.

The essays in this edited volume examine the multiple forces that transformed Mexico and reshaped its relationship with the United States during the 1980s and 1990s. Different sections assess major developments in Mexican politics (the 2000 election results, longer-term trends in state-society relations, and the role of the military and the organised labour, feminist and Zapatista movements) and economics (the accomplishments and limitations of neoliberal economic reforms, the dilemmas facing rural Mexico, and the impact of trade liberalisation and regional economic integration on Mexican legal and administrative practices), as well as the sociocultural changes and policy challenges associated with large-scale Mexican migration to the United States. The broad range of topics covered and the generally high quality of the individual contributions make this book an important addition to the literature on contemporary Mexico.

The different chapters together constitute a very informative collage, but the editors do not appear to have commissioned the essays along overarching thematic lines. The section on politics includes important contributions on the political and institutional conditions underpinning President Vicente Fox's historic electoral victory and the policy challenges facing his administration (by Carlos Elizondo), the Mexican military and national security issues (by Raúl Benítez Manaut), key developments in state-labour relations since the 1980s (by Katrina Burgess), the Zapatista Army of National Liberation and the unresolved debate over indigenous rights (by Rodolfo Stavenhagen), the changing status of women and the feminist movement's contributions to expanding the boundaries of citizenship (by Marta Lamas), and shifts in state-society relations and their implications for political democratisation (by Ilán Bizberg). The essays by Burgess and Lamas are especially strong, and Bizberg performs a significant service in reminding readers that some of the institutional arrangements that sustained postrevolutionary authoritarian rule remain in place and might well facilitate the restoration of political control by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

Yet despite their many strengths, neither these essays nor the editors' contributions address in depth a number of central questions concerning Mexico's recent political experience. These include the relationship between economic change (both neoliberal restructuring and financial crises) and democratisation during the

1980s and 1990s, obstacles to the consolidation of democratic governance and the construction of a democratic political culture, the political implications of profound socioeconomic inequality, or (except for passing comments in Stavenhagen's chapter and in the editors' conclusion) the impact of drug trafficking on domestic politics.

The section on economic development issues is especially truncated in terms of the specific issues it addresses. The chapter by Manuel Pastor and Carol Wise offers a carefully balanced review of Mexico's economic strategy since the 1980s, and it highlights the country's most pressing economic problems (slow overall growth, continued low wages, stagnating employment in the non-*maquiladora* manufacturing sector, growing market segmentation, a persistent shortage of credit, and greater income inequality). Similarly, Kirsten Appendini provides a comprehensive overview of the economic and social difficulties facing rural Mexico in the context of neoliberal economic restructuring and North American economic integration, particularly the challenge of how to promote 'an agriculture with peasants'.

Yet the other two chapters in this section – Stephen Clarkson's analysis of the impact that Mexico's membership in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the World Trade Organization has had on legal and administrative practices, and Gustav Ranis's short essay summarising the general lessons learned in the field of economic development in recent decades – address topics that are, although certainly of interest, less central to a critical assessment of Mexico's development experience. What is missing in this section is detailed consideration of such issues as the crisis of the Mexican financial system and its longer-term development consequences, educational policy challenges, industrial policy and regional development initiatives, and possible ways of promoting more rapid, socially equitable economic growth.

The editors' well-warranted decision to include a separate section titled 'Mexicans Abroad' is one reflection of the growing importance that international influences have on Mexico. Steven Pitti contributes an excellent chapter on the long-term character of Mexican emigrants' cross-border ties and major trends affecting migration to the United States, with an especially interesting discussion of the diverse cultural ramifications of this phenomenon. Robert L. Bach's chapter on immigration policy initiatives during the 1990s provides an insightful critique of the NAFTA integration model and outlines a series of proposals that would address the immigration issue in a broader North American development context. The editors' concluding essay on Mexico–US relations sketches out the most important changes that occurred in the character of bilateral ties during the 1990s and the impact of post-September 11 2001 developments on efforts to promote a broader North American partnership.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03307047

Joy Elizabeth Hayes, *Radio Nation: Communication, Popular Culture, and Nationalism in Mexico, 1920–1950* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 2000), pp. xx + 154, \$35.00, hb.

Radio Nation addresses the virtually ignored history of radio broadcasting in Mexico, while also incorporating wide-ranging theoretical arguments on state formation,

nationalism, cultural politics and broadcasting. Hayes argues that the relationship between state and radio has shaped Mexican culture and politics since the early days of broadcasting. In the introduction, first and second chapters, Hayes situates *Radio Nation* in the historiography, while suggesting how understandings of radio contribute to theories of nationalism. In the third chapter Hayes turns to the early history of radio in Mexico, within a context of US expansionism and broadcasting. Two other important historical themes contribute to Mexican radio: the rise of an advertising-based consumer culture and an active state sector. Through the regulation of commercial broadcasting, successive Mexican governments mediated popular culture, reached out to a largely illiterate population, promoted policies and positioned government discourse 'above politics' (p. 38).

Hayes uses the Ministry of Public Education station, XFX, as a case study of how government broadcasting developed, particularly regarding the active role XFX played in disseminating and moulding popular culture. XFX sought to forge a national community through its programming, especially music. The popularity of music was partially because it was inexpensive to produce and partially because of its pre-existing centrality to popular culture. While radio as a medium created a national popular culture, XFX programmers remained ambivalent about the 'popular' aspect of that very culture, always trying to balance 'authenticity' with their desire to include Mexico in Europe's family (p. 48). In part because of associations between popular music and social centres such as *cantinas*, XFX recorded its own versions of regional popular music, such as *jarabes* or *danzas*, trying to wrench the music away from its cultural origins. XFX hired full orchestras to interpret 'popular' music, thus shaping it to bourgeois tastes, while also adapting symphonic music so that it might have broader appeal. Through an analysis of XFX's evening musical programming, Hayes concludes that the broadcasts had a 'single ideological project: the celebration of an idyllic premodern world through the presentation of a selective tradition of regional popular music' (p. 53).

Yet listeners preferred commercial stations, mostly based in Mexico City and, in chapter five, Hayes examines the interaction between commercial stations and the state. Government regulations required state voices to be heard on commercial radio, moreover, commercial stations were required to play twenty five per cent 'música típica' in their programming. In 1937 the government introduced the *Hora nacional* programme, and commercial stations had to broadcast the show combining music, poetry, drama, and news items on government activities. With station XFX as its model, the national hour promoted an official version of Mexican culture and history, presenting the government as its neutral, natural representative. Like the cinema of the same period, radio broadcasting promoted an 'antimodern nostalgia for paternalist utopia' (p. 75). While the government did not regulate the content of all commercial broadcasting, commercial broadcasters themselves recognised a government preference for programmes that played Mexican music and content that ignored questions of politics and religion. Politics did appear on the radio, however, through presidential speeches. Hayes classifies them as either 'electronic sedatives', such as the speech Pascual Ortiz Rubio made shortly after a failed assassination attempt against him, or 'electronic rallying calls' (p. 82), including Lázaro Cárdenas' oil nationalisation speech.

Throughout *Radio Nation*, Hayes shows how the development of radio limited competition to concentrate the industry in a few hands. One of the most important businessmen in Mexican broadcasting was Emilio Azcárraga, who by 1942 managed

almost half of the radio stations in Mexico and had close dealings with US broadcasters. Government barriers to direct foreign participation radio meant that US broadcasters needed local allies like Azcárraga. For his part, Azcárraga traded access to Mexican airtime, on his terms, for equipment and expertise from the USA. Thus, using a radio empire that promoted Mexican music and nationalism, as well as using his links with US broadcasters such as NBC and CBS, Azcárraga positioned himself to negotiate the Mexican market for US radio interests. Overall, Hayes shows how the US attempted to influence Mexican public opinion through broadcasting, while US radio networks often misunderstood basic realities of Mexican radio, such as the lack of receivers for shortwave signals.

While the development of radio is important enough on its own to merit consideration, Hayes concludes by demonstrating how radio has influenced the development of the Mexican television industry. Radio has followed the same models of programming (with less music), exhibits the same concentration of ownership and has the same pattern of government involvement in programming. Moreover, the media giant Televisa is a direct descendent of Azcárraga's *Radio Programas de México*. Hayes speculates that Azcárraga's lasting cultural influence includes the high popularity of domestically-produced television shows. Showing how radio has influenced Mexican popular culture and state formation, *Radio Nation* is not only an enjoyable read, but also offers a theoretical model that lends itself to comparative use in other 'radio nations'.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03517043

Stanley Brandes, *Staying Sober in Mexico City* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002), pp. xviii + 239, \$45.00, \$19.95 pb.

It is exciting that so much excellent ethnographic research is being done in the world's largest city, and that it is not only readable and informative but also substantially and imaginatively linked with major issues that are of interest far beyond anthropology and Latin American studies. This concise volume combines a fairly detailed participant observational account of a small meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) in a working-class neighborhood of Mexico City, with salient summary notes on a number of broader topics including masculinity, religion, AA as an international movement, poverty, illness and treatment, among others.

As in all of Brandes's work, the writing is clear and well organised, with a nice interweaving of the ideologies of the subjects (in their own words), and rich revelation of social relationships and group dynamics. We get a feel for several key individuals, and for what they do in their brief meetings (1½ hours, 3 times weekly), why they consider it worthwhile, and even how it relates to patterns in other settings. AA is an interesting organisation in itself: a US outgrowth of a Protestant Christian group, it spread rapidly around the world, often adjusting to local cultures. With no enrolment or dues, the sole aim of helping attendees to stay sober, utter frankness within and supposed anonymity without, fully one-third of AA's members now appear to be in Latin America.

Many local groups, like this one, ignore anonymity in the hope of attracting people from the neighbourhood who are seeking relief from problems they associate with drinking. Brandes carefully compares and contrasts many local details with

those that have been reported elsewhere. He also provides fascinating and detailed information about themes that appear to be crucial in the re-ordered lives of AA members: masculinity and self-image, marginal economic status and autonomy, difficult interpersonal relationships and decision-making, punctuality and responsibility. Brief asides give revealing glimpses of larger issues in Latin American studies such as ritual and religion, humour and social control, equality and hierarchy, sponsorship and co-parenthood. Numerous tangential issues are clarified in both local and cross-cultural context: Catholicism and vows, Protestantism and abstinence, alcoholism as a disease, how such a group can break up and reunite within a year, alternative forms of therapy for addiction, and even how a relatively affluent gringo who has an unpronounceable name and declines to abstain from occasionally drinking can fit in with such an earnest crew.

The many and diverse roles of alcohol in Mexican (and Latin) cultures have been described and analysed in some detail, often with mention that drinking together is an important sign of trust among men, who often view drunkenness as liberation. It is an interesting counterpoint to hear about one group among whom fellowship is based on the daily struggle of staying sober. This excellent book (with an ample bibliography and index) will be relevant to anyone who is interested in small-group dynamics, alcohol, reflexive ethnographic methods, or (in Matt Gutmann's terms) the meanings of macho.

Brown University

DWIGHT B. HEATH

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X032704X

Edward F. Fischer, *Cultural Logics and Global Economies: Maya Identity in Thought and Practice* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2001), pp. xii + 287, \$50.00, \$22.95 pb.

In *Cultural Logics and Global Economies*, Edward Fischer presents Guatemala's Maya movement, drawing on more than a decade of research with Kaqchiquel speakers, the communities of Tecpan and Patzún, and national Maya leaders. *JLAS* readers will be interested in his position that the postdependent 'decentralization of global patterns of capital accumulation has ideologically stimulated and materially underwritten' Guatemala's Maya revitalisation movement (p. 67). In other words, he proposes that Maya activists exploit political openings caused by a global contraction in Western hegemony, and a redefinition of Guatemala's military and civil sector. The 'cultural logics' of his title (a cognitive basis for 'culture') constitute the other mission in this book about cultural change, although there is little about Guatemala's violent changes.

Fischer clearly has the material for a much-needed multi-sited ethnography of the Maya movement. He organises the book in four parts, first introducing the book's project and the two towns, then moving to the national Maya movement and Guatemala's political economy (Part II). Part III returns to Tecpan and Patzún, and standard ethnography on Kaqchiquel personhood, the concept of *k'ux*, subsistence, household, kin and community structure. He discusses local identity practices of beauty queen contests, language use and education. Part IV (chapter ten) recapitulates the introductory arguments.

Fischer grapples with the issue critical to Guatemala Maya political organising: cultural continuity versus change and construction. He promotes his 'cultural logics'

as the answer, a ‘cognitively deep’ layer of structuring structures, with a biological substrate, realised through practice or the ‘dynamic interactions of cultural norms individual intention, and material contingencies’, for which Bourdieu and Giddens are cited but which are more associated with Levi-Strauss (pp. 15–16).

The discussion dedicated to ‘cultural logics’ adds little to the promised ethnography of the local and pan-Maya movement. Latinate words and passive construction proliferate, things structure things, and actual people ‘disappear’ except in introductory anecdote. The chapters on national and local movement practices include interesting insights, such as his reading of 1994’s military-sponsored indigenous beauty queen contest float featuring human sacrifice. Missing is material that links the discussion of the Maya movement with the ‘cultural logics’ concept, or with the chapters on the communities and the more traditional – but potentially valuable – ethnography. Life histories of Maya activists would contribute to either connection. So would inclusion of ladinos and other non-Maya, whose cognition is inexplicably erased from Guatemala’s ‘cultural logics’.

Furthermore, ‘cultural logics’ erases ‘culture’. Despite his ‘anti-anti-essentialist’ championing of ‘the essence of culture ... its sharedness’, Fischer’s ‘cultural logics’ enterprise remains at the level of individual cognition. ‘Culture does not exist independent of the mind’ he writes, and consists of ‘overlapping distributions of cognitive and behavioral patterns’ (p. 21). Fischer’s individual, complete with ‘biogenetic predispositions’ (p. 20) and ongoing interactions with ‘available cultural resources’, veers towards *homo economicus* recycled. Maya activists are entrepreneurs par excellence, who ‘have tactically engaged emergent structures of global political and economic relation to advance their ends and those of their people’.

Indeed, a key topic is Maya affinity for Western neoliberal market reform, ‘[which] others may disparage ... as an insidious tool of neo-colonialism’. Despite his contrarian tone, Fischer’s economic research follows the valuable anthropological strand concerning Maya agency in a penny capitalist globe. But he must situate individual ‘successful’ Maya within the reality for most indigenous farmers. The UNDP reports that Guatemala’s abysmal land concentration remains unchanged since 1979 (2002). Fischer provides little data to prove that non-traditional exports benefit significant numbers of Guatemala’s indigenous farmers or to demonstrate how capital accumulation has underwritten the Maya movement.

Nor is his history of the Maya movement supported by his ‘cultural logics’. ‘[Cultural] change’, he writes ‘must be reconciled with pre-existing cognitive schemas in a manner that allows for an intersubjective sense of cultural continuity, even – perhaps especially – in the face of dramatic externally induced modification’ (p. 15): in other words, violence. There are other alternatives, however, to ‘an intersubjective sense of cultural continuity’. One is trauma. Another is the personal splitting felt by many Maya leaders and professionals. Fischer himself briefly addresses army indoctrination of recruits. Another alternative is renewed violence. Guatemala’s ‘fledgling democracy’ (I would avoid organic metaphors of progress) is undermined by its military’s successful de-de-mobilisation and re-activated death squads. Although he opens his book with the story of one Maya family’s 1980s exile, Fischer includes little on insurgent-allied or insurgent indigenous groups, and writes that the Maya (and most of the world’s native peoples) were ‘unwillingly pulled into an ideological battle between two competing Western political philosophies’ (p. 77). He laudably writes about foreign mission – Catholic and Protestant – contributions to the movement.

Fischer's ongoing work with contemporary Kaqchiquel Maya leadership will benefit from a richer integration of his research and from models of change addressing conflict, murderous counterinsurgency, or better, the Maya notion of shape-shifting, of any one person negotiating different intentions and presentations of self.

Central Connecticut State University

ABIGAIL E. ADAMS

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03337046

Timothy J. Steigenga, *The Politics of the Spirit: The Political Implications of Pentecostalized Religion in Costa Rica and Guatemala* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2001), pp. xviii + 201, \$56.00, hb.

Scholarship on Protestantism in Latin America has come a long way. Increasingly subtle studies of the complex and contradictory ways in which religion interacts with politics at the national and local levels have replaced sweeping generalisations about evangelical Christianity's latent capacity to usher in a democratic political culture in Latin America (David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford, 1990)) or about the presumed role of Pentecostalism in reaffirming patriarchal and corporatist arrangements destabilised by late modernity (Jean-Pierre Bastian, 'The Metamorphosis of Latin American Protestant Groups: A Sociohistorical Perspective.' *Latin American Research Review*, vol. 28, no. 2 (1993), pp. 33–62).

In *The Politics of the Spirit*, Timothy Steigenga, a political scientist at Florida Atlantic University, uses a judicious mixture of qualitative and quantitative techniques to test specific hypotheses about the relation between what he calls 'Pentecostalized' religion – a pneumatic Christianity which stresses doctrinal orthodoxy, millennialism and judgmental images of God – and politics in Costa Rica and Guatemala. Drawing from personal interviews with Protestant and Catholic leaders and lay people as well as from extant ethnographic studies of local religion, Steigenga elaborates a survey instrument to answer three sets of questions. First, he asks, how does religious affiliation correlate with political orientation and action? The dominant hypothesis has been that membership in Pentecostal churches is closely related to political conservatism. Second, are there other religious variables beyond affiliation, such as theologies, and religious experiences and intensity, which affect political dispositions? Here Steigenga hypothesises that adherence to orthodox and charismatic Christianity may correlate with strong political partisanship. Finally, Steigenga asks about the impact that different political and social contexts have on the relation between religious and political variables: how do the level and direction of political engagement among evangelicals in Costa Rica, with a relatively high degree of democratic openness, compare with the situation in Guatemala, a 'political context that discourages overt political participation' (p. 6)? Presumably, one would expect a greater probability of political conservatism and quiescence among Pentecostals Christians in Guatemala. Steigenga also analyses the differential impact of rural and urban settings as well as the role of religious conflict and polarisation on political activity.

In answering these questions, Steigenga adds considerable subtlety to the field of religion and politics, rendering problematic the claim that there is a direct causal link

between evangelicalism and democracy/development, either positive or negative. For instance, while he found that ‘evangelicals are more likely than Catholics or the non-affiliated to find certain political activities (such as working for a political party, criticizing public officials, and running for office) morally incorrect’. His data show that ‘in terms of voting ... differences between Protestants and Catholics were not significant, with Pentecostals actually voting slightly more frequently in Costa Rica. Protestant attitude about the morality of voting were also slightly more positive than those of Catholics’ (p. 141). Moreover, ‘Pentecostals and Mainstream Protestants in Costa Rica and Guatemala held political views about women and the poor that were not significantly different from Catholics. Differences in party affiliation, ideological position, and approval of political figures and organization were minimal as well’ (p. 142). Thus, Steigenga argues that people do not derive political orientations directly from religious affiliations. Rather, ‘Pentecostalized religious beliefs and practices such as millennialism and the charismatic act of speaking in tongue [which is now widespread among Christian churches] [are] better predictors of political quiescence across religious affiliations’ (*ibid.*). In other words, to the extent that we can establish a correlation, it is between ‘charismaticism’ and doctrinal orthodoxy, on the one hand, and political quiescence and conservatism (from example, the unwillingness to challenge political authority), on the other. Yet, even charismaticism does not automatically translate into retreat from politics, as in Costa Rica, where the more a open, democratic opportunity structure allows political participation for all sectors of society, including evangelicals.

In showing how the link between religion and politics is mediated by multiple factors, *The Politics of Spirit* makes a valuable contribution. The impact of evangelical Christianity is limited but still significant. Evangelicals in Central America tend to focus narrowly on the act of voting, associating more intense political involvement with a ‘fanaticism’ that stands in the way of true faith (p. 148). Nevertheless, behind this electoral emphasis, evangelical Christianity is contributing to democracy at the micro level, strengthening civil society by ‘encouraging volunteerism, self-help, and strong ethic before the law’ (p. 149). The extent of this grassroots contribution, however, will again depend on religious context and the type of polity. In other words, there is no ‘single political trajectory among evangelicals and charismatic Catholics’ in Central America.

The call for social scientists to move beyond a focus on overt religious behavior, such as church affiliation and attendance, and to take the determinative power of religious ideas and practices seriously is not new. Steigenga, nonetheless, offers groundbreaking techniques for measuring this power. The strategy of generating ‘indexes’ of theological conservatism and religious experience and intensity and of correlating them with patterns of political thought and action is very promising. However, as Steigenga himself acknowledges, these indexical clusters will have to be disaggregated and refined, while keeping in mind that they are necessarily fallible and heuristic devices to measure salient aspects of religious life. For one thing, many Pentecostals place a premium on religious experience and intensity while drastically downplaying doctrinal orthodoxy. Thus, it only makes sense to talk about ‘Pentecostalized religion’ as an ideal typical construct, which highlights some socio-religious dynamics in order to test specific hypotheses. In striving to identify comparative patterns of politico-religious practice, we need to keep in mind that evangelical Christianity in Latin America shows high variation and fluidity at level of religious thought, action and organisation.

In sum, beyond providing good accounts of the history and current state of Protestantism in Guatemala and Costa Rica, *The Politics of the Spirit* enriches our theoretical and methodological conversations about the changing face of religion in the Americas.

University of Florida

MANUEL A. VASQUEZ

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03347042

Colin M. Lewis, *Argentina: A Short History* (Oxford: One World Publications, 2002), pp. x + 260, £12.99; \$18.95, pb.

The scope of this book is ambitious insofar as it aims to provide the reader with an understanding of what lies behind the so-called Argentine riddle. In that sense, Colin Lewis coincides with an extended view among Argentine and non-Argentine researchers alike, namely the idea of the Argentine past as contradicting standard ideas of modernisation. Central to such an approach is the idea of a normative model of economic and institutional development (USA, Australia or Canada are the usual templates) as well as the existence of an Argentine special path that differs from it.

Within this analytical framework, economic history serves as a window for analysing Argentine history as a whole. To be sure Lewis provides an account of the institutional history of the country and inquires about how despite rapid institutional change at the end of the nineteenth century Argentina failed to become a developed polity in the twentieth century, but often his focus on institutional trends tends to be subsumed under economically reductionist perceptions of reality. Lewis aims to provide an answer to the timely question of why Argentina became something like a 'serial defaulter'. This interesting, but limited, working question ultimately distracts Lewis from asking other questions of equal importance. The absence of those questions points to a general downplaying of the experiences of actual historical actors which cannot be encompassed by economic formulae or statistics. For example, Lewis does not address the nature of Argentina's longstanding tension between authoritarianism and democracy and the particularities of the country's widening of its political base. Perón and the original party formation that he created are not given the central analysis that they deserve. The same situation applies to his regime and to the original role played by Eva Perón within it. In addition, the role played by Argentina's last military dictatorship (1976–1983) in solidifying economic, social and political processes that were later continued by the Menem and De la Rúa administrations is not emphasised strongly enough in the book. The genocidal policies of the military junta are merely mentioned in passing. Their ideological connection with the integralism of the Catholic Church and the fascist tradition of the 1930's and 1940's is never addressed.

The near absence of these topics, which are central to a serious understanding of Argentine history is symptomatic of a larger tendency in the book: the proclivity to explain history at large by resorting to specific explanations of economic, constitutional analysis and other structural phenomena. Lewis approaches complex political historical questions with typical stereotypes. For example, he presents modern Argentine history as being structured by the 'dichotomy' between 'la república europea' and 'la república morena'. Politically marginalised groups appear in this book as 'illiterate campesinos' and 'gauchos'. Rosas, Perón and Menem are

offered as examples of a putatively diachronic Argentine authoritarian tradition of personalism.

In the best and more informed section of the book, Lewis stresses the trajectory of Argentina's relations with the world and with central economic powers in particular. In his view, there were four different stages in the history of Argentina's external affairs. The first of these phases (from Independence to the 1860s) was marked by the country's need to secure international recognition. The second phase, 'independent internationalism' (1870's to 1920's), was characterised by the important place Argentina occupied in the global economic system. The third phase '1920's to 1970's' according to Lewis, was characterised by 'combative isolationism'. Although particularly focused on the economic side of the equation, the book provides an interesting account of the complex relationships with the USA and Great Britain during this period. Lewis argues that the last phase 'realism' signals the return of 'economic internationalism', a return, that in his view, was taken to a new level in the 1990s. As many Argentines recall, this was a process that a Menemist foreign minister defined as that of having 'carnal relations' with the USA. To be sure, the 'Menemist project' presented 'a reconnection of Argentina with the global system' (p. 21). However, the unbalanced terms of this 'reconnection' are undermined by Lewis's sympathetic understanding of 'globalization', which he reduces to a prescriptive process of economic and political transparency. Symptomatically, he explains Argentina's recent crisis of 2001–2002 as caused by the failure to abide by these 'rules' of globalisation. In short, for Lewis Argentina's failure to implement a programme of fiscal austerity and its corruption are the direct causes of the recent crisis and to a larger extent of the entire 'Argentine growth dilemma'.

Cornell University

FEDERICO FINCHELSTEIN

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03357049

Mariana Llanos, *Privatization and Democracy in Argentina: An Analysis of President-Congress Relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, St Antony's Series, 2002), pp. xiii + 232, £45.00, hb.

Llanos's book is probably the most comprehensive study of executive-legislative relations in Argentina with regard to privatisation to date. Although the author never formally puts forward a thesis, her argument challenges most of the literature on the subject. Following Guillermo O'Donnell's (1994) 'delegative democracy thesis', much of the literature that followed portrayed the judicial and congressional branches of government as dominated by neo-populist leaders. In O'Donnell's view, the executive emasculated institutional checks and balances, implemented market reforms more or less unilaterally, and in the process made a mockery of the principles of democratic governance. Llanos contends that this view is rather simplistic, and that a close examination of the privatisation policy shows that the Argentine congress's responses to presidential initiatives were far more independent and diverse in nature than previously understood.

The book focuses on the administrations of Raúl Alfonsín (1983–89) and Carlos Sañ Menem (1989–99). In guiding her analysis, Llanos follows Blondel's classification of legislative roles (initiation, prevention, and reaction). She finds that the Argentine congress' behaviour usually fell under the preventive and reactive heads.

Moreover, Llanos analyses congressional behaviour based upon two major variables: a) type of majority in congress (large, strict and simple or no majority) and; b) type of leadership (chief legislator, moderate leadership, and soft leadership). Accordingly, she finds that the executive's privatisation plans were most successful when the president had a large majority in congress and behaved as a chief legislator (i.e., he displayed a strong commitment to privatisation and his administration showed a strong policy cohesion). This coincides with the 1989–91 period of the Menem administration. Conversely, the congressional role was very strong and presidential leadership soft (Alfonsín between 1987–89).

Therefore, Llanos's analysis finds O'Donnell's thesis confirmed in the early stages of the Menem administration but not subsequently. Indeed, she concludes that conditions for centralised decision-making process, which are most successful for the design and implementation of privatisation, are likely to take place only in the early stages of an administration. However, state divestiture takes a long time to accomplish and the more time goes by the more difficult is for a president to keep together the initial pro-privatisation coalition in and outside of congress. To support her claim Llanos contends that after 1991, and more so after Menem was re-elected in 1995, his leadership weakened and, conversely congressional opposition coming often from the ranks of his own Justicialist (Peronist) Party stiffened forcing his administration to make major concessions on key bills.

In general, Llanos's analysis is quite insightful but it suffers of some major shortcomings. The most important is that during the 1989–91 period Menem did not have a large majority in congress, as her model would postulate. Rather, he had to count on the *ad hoc* alliance with provincial parties in the chamber of deputies. Between 1993 and 1997, by contrast, the Peronist enjoyed a steady majority in both houses of the legislature. Given this situation one would expect executive authority to be strengthened, following Llanos's model, but instead Menem found himself progressively on the defensive. The author attempts to explain these discrepancies by claiming that once re-elected Menem was a lame-duck president and could no longer exercise control as he once did. However, it was not until late in 1997 that Menem gave up on his attempt to pursue a third consecutive term in office, which was based on a very controversial interpretation of the 1994 amended constitution. As such discrepancies emerge through the text, Llanos is forced to come up with an increasing number of case specific explanations, which water down the general argument. For instance, she claims that the use of decrees of necessity and urgency is a clear sign of a weak president. However, according to Ferreira Rubio and Goretti the largest number of such decrees took place in the early stage of Menem's first term when following Llanos the president was enjoying a large majority in congress which in theory should not have required such extreme measures.

At more general level, a reader may be confused by some of the terminology that Llanos uses in the introduction to the book. For instance, on pages 5 and 7 she refers to the Argentine regime but does not describe its nature. I suspect that she actually means the Argentine political system or democratic regime, but a word of clarification would have helped. A further element of confusion arises from the definition of privatisation described as the 'selling and conceding' of public assets. Most scholars working on privatisation would find 'conceding' a rather awkward term. Transferring 'concession rights' would better describe what Llanos has in mind when it comes to public utilities. As for the book's organisation, the theoretical argument is actually clarified in the last chapter (pp. 179–87). This is unfortunate

since it forces the reader to second guess for much of the book what the author's original contribution in terms of theory is.

These problems notwithstanding, Llanos should be praised for tackling an important subject and showing us that intra-institutional relations are much more complicated than originally assumed. Presidential leadership, internal party politics, coalition building, and timing do matter a lot in privatization processes. Although the book focuses solely on Argentina it teases out a lot of issues that can be useful for scholars working in a more comparative perspective.

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LUIGI MANZETTI

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03367045

Michael McCaughan, *True Crimes: Rodolfo Walsh, the Life and Times of a Radical Intellectual* (London: Latin America Bureau, 2002), pp. viii + 323, £10.99, pb.

The life of Rodolfo Walsh spanned just five decades but left behind a vivid though scattered literary output illuminating several phases of Argentine political history. A descendant of Irish immigrants, Walsh starting his adult life as a crime writer who augmented his meagre income by translating for publishers and as 'an obsessive proofreader who could spend three weeks contemplating an adjective'. He went on to achieve major investigative coups by exposing violent political crimes involving state cover-ups. Finally, at the end of a process of personal radicalisation, he ended his days as a committed activist, ready to subordinate his individual literary ambitions to collective political endeavours. His activism took place initially in left-wing labour circles and later in the Peronist guerrilla formations (the Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas followed by the Montoneros). The continuities in his life included an enduring passion for the investigation of the structures of state repression – a mission that enabled him to indulge his enjoyment of disguise and subterfuge and in which he demonstrated considerable valour as he risked exposing the powerful and dangerous, from the Aramburú dictatorship to the agents of the Dirty War. The death squads eventually claimed his own life in March 1977.

Since Argentina's return to civilian rule in 1983, there has been a surge in the publication of works both by and about Walsh, whose name has been given to streets, plazas and educational institutions. Michael McCaughan's book fills a gap in the literature by making Walsh's life and work accessible to an English language readership. Besides providing an anthology of Walsh's literary, political and autobiographical writings, *True Crimes* comprises an extended biographical essay full of insights into the personality and growing political activism of this austere intellectual. McCaughan's search for Walsh took him to Argentina, Mexico and Cuba where his interview subjects shared some revealing reminiscences, particularly about the years he spent in Cuba along with fellow Argentine Jorge Ricardo Masetti building up the *Prensa Latina* news agency in the early years of the revolution, before the bureaucrats took over, and about Walsh's gradual evolution towards political commitment and armed activism.

True Crimes is a valuable addition to a number of different literatures. At one level, it offers a perceptive account of insurgency and counter-insurgency in Argentina, departing from the experience of arguably the only national writer who risked exposing successive military regimes. A lot of detail is added to our knowledge of the personalities involved, their motives and the political ambience of the period. As

a participant in political struggles, it is clear that Walsh's talents were put to best use by the radical CGT de los Argentinos, whose newspaper he edited (anonymously). He was never altogether trusted by the Montonero *comandantes*, who conceded him a relatively lowly rank in their organisation despite his important role as head of its intelligence network: Walsh's proposals on strategy, which proved to be much more realistic than their own, were either taken up tardily, ignored or even suppressed; his daughter Vicki was to rise higher in the organisation, primarily because she had joined earlier. Walsh was undoubtedly the intelligence key to several acts of mass slaughter committed by the Montoneros, but rather than subscribe to his leadership's 'abstract mystique surrounding the armed struggle', he did come to see finally that guerrilla efforts to escalate the level of violence were causing the Montoneros to lose their popular roots, presaging defeat.

McCaughan's work will be of interest also to anyone interested in the theme of 'the writer and politics', in the dilemmas faced by those seeking to combine artistic creativity with committed activism. A growing realisation that acts of repression, such as the illegal executions of Peronist rebels in 1956, were not merely isolated incidents that could be cleared up by men of good will, but rather formed part of a 'system' of repression serving minority elite interests, led Walsh to undertake his gradual transition 'from liberal conscience to implacable revolutionary'. Yet unlike intellectual fellow-travellers, he always rejected 'writing to slogans' and this is what makes his accounts of the early post-revolutionary years in Cuba, rank and file Peronist activism and guerrilla involvement so fascinating. The account becomes highly poignant towards the end as Walsh is faced with the loss of friends and loved ones. He never really recovered from the death of his guerrilla daughter in a gun-battle at the age of 26. Yet he was not cowed by the threatening death squads and remained active in efforts to organise resistance and denounce the military junta right up to the moment of his own death in an ambush in which Admiral Massera had planned for him to be taken alive.

True Crimes is the work of a journalist whose treatment of Walsh is sympathetic, although never to the point of covering up his shortcomings as a family man and social being. McCaughan's extremely readable account may be forgiven for the few passages where he recycles myths that have long since been debunked by academic research (simplistic allusions to the role of Eva Perón in the rise of Peronism and to the centrality of Castro's rebel army in the Cuban revolutionary process). The author does not set himself up as a historian but rather focuses on uncovering one life, of an investigative writer himself described by Osvaldo Bayer as 'a committed historian of Argentina's present'. McCaughan not only makes sense of Walsh within the Argentine context but also hints at a broader international significance. As a highly effective creator of information networks, Walsh bears some comparison with Marcos, despite belonging to a different technological era; and the parallels with Michael Collins, who undertook an equally ruthless war strategy before falling victim to betrayal and ambush, are also brought out, without being overplayed. The author's sensitivity to Walsh's Irish roots is indeed a major strength of the book.

University of Liverpool

RICHARD GILLESPIE

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03377041

Margaret Power, *Right-Wing Women in Chile: Feminine Power and the Struggle Against Allende, 1964–1973* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), pp. xxii + 311, \$65.00, \$25.00 pb.

Well organised and well funded right-wing women, benefiting from the power that accrued to them through their class, played an active and visible role in the demise of Salvador Allende's government. This book tells their story and in so doing helps debunk myths and misconceptions about women's political participation and unified working-class support for the Popular Unity government. Power focuses on Poder Femenino (PF), the most prominent middle and upper-class women's organisation that came into existence after the first large protest against the Popular Unity government in December of 1971, and which disbanded one year after the military coup. In its massiveness, the protest by thousands of women wielding pots and pans, known as the *Marcha de las Cacerolas Vacías*, surprised both government and opposition. It heralded 'the public appearance of a women's opposition movement, one that grew and played an increasingly important role during the next two years of the Allende government. This movement mobilized previously unorganised women against the UP and helped create a climate that would eventually encourage the military coup that overthrew the UP government on 11 September 1973' (p. 163). Pots and pans became the symbol of demonstrations by women against the government. Indeed, wealthy women had gold pins in the shape of pots and pans designed for them by Cartier, while poorer women sported pins made of copper.

PF was set up in early 1972 with representation from women of the opposition parties and the right wing 'gremio' movement, along with independents. The organisation capitalised on generalised feelings of frustration and anger among women across class lines to reach out to poor and working-class women. As mothers and homemakers, women, especially those with limited incomes, were at the receiving end of mounting social unrest and massive disruptions in the availability and distribution of basic consumer goods. From early 1972 until September 1973 PF coordinated, lent support, and channelled resources to myriad protest initiatives of the opposition. In 1973, opposition women 'presented the public face of support for the military option' while opposition men 'participated in behind-the-scenes schemes and discussions with the military'. PF women were driven by the conviction that their 'political activity stemmed from men's passivity and women's domestic responsibility'. Thus, they saw their task as encouraging men to take up their duties. This is not to say that they saw their role as secondary, far from it. To this day, PF leaders remain convinced that they, not men, were at the vanguard of the opposition movement.

Right-Wing Women in Chile helps to dispel the view about women's innate political passivity that has dominated interpretations of the UP period. Without questioning the voting results which consistently showed women's support for candidates of the left to be lower than men's, Power highlights women's agency in their political proclivities, and the investment made by the parties of the right in shaping their conservatism. The US funded and orchestrated campaigns of fear and disinformation in 1964 and 1970 to prevent Allende's victory worked on women because the right had prepared the ground. Their campaigns had consistently appealed to women's needs as mothers and homemakers. The left neglected women and failed to counter with campaigns of their own. It would pay dearly for it.

The story of PF powerfully reminds feminists of the ease with which women, invoking the values of motherhood, did not hesitate to call for military intervention and the elimination of others. In one of their campaigns taunting military men to act like real men, they directly linked manliness to killing through a mailing campaign that consisted of envelopes with pieces of paper bearing the word 'Djakarta' on them, encouraging the military to 'liquidate Communists' by emulating the example of its Indonesian counterpart which, following the 1965 coup, murdered between hundreds of thousands of members of the Indonesian Communist Party. Class hatred clearly knew no gender.

This book makes a valuable contribution by highlighting the deliberate use by the CIA of ideas about gender to mobilise women for political destabilizing campaigns. The CIA, in turns out, had learned about the value of middle and upper-class women for their covert actions early on. The US Senate Select Committee, in its Covert Action Report (1975), explicitly linked the CIA-orchestrated scare ad campaigns of 1964 and 1970 to women. Power establishes a link between the CIA's earlier covert actions in Brazil and Chilean ones. In Brazil, demonstrations by middle and upper-class women wielding pots and pans had been the visible face of a campaign mounted by Brazil's right-wing opposition, with the support of the CIA, to oust reformist Joao Goulart in 1964. Not only did the agency channel funds to right-wing women, it also helped them to build transnational links. Power is careful in her analysis to preserve the agency of the women she writes about. Having said this, questions do linger unanswered about the real degree of autonomy of these women's actions and of their organisations.

The extent of Poder Femenino's success among poor and working-class women is difficult to gauge from this account. In fact, the discussion about the impact of PF's reach into poor and working-class women is the weakest part of the book. The book relies on the involvement of PF in the strikes of La Papelera and El Teniente to make its case about inter-class alliances of the right. However, the rich empirical materials are not there to show how substantial working-class women's presence was in these strikes. It also identifies local Mothers Centres as conduits to poor women. As Power rightly suggests, the activities in these centres remained focused on women as mothers and homemakers. We are to assume by implication that members were receptive to PF's appeals. However, many of the organisations did embrace the Popular Unity project and the new direction it gave to the Centres. Also, from the beginning, many leaders of Mothers Centres had maintained a double militancy, typically as members of the Communist Party, or of MAPU, the left-wing splinter from the Christian Democrats. Many of them went on to become active leaders of the opposition against Pinochet. Thus, these women, like their middle- and upper-class counterparts, were also active political agents and militants and sympathisers of a range of political parties. One has the sense that while Power is very careful to recognise the agency of leaders of the right wing movement, she presents a very one-dimensional view of poor and working-class women.

If, then, I have one reservation about the book, it lies in its treatment of the Chilean left. It betrays a lack of awareness about the history of the left in twentieth-century Chile, in particular of the Communist Party. We are asked, for example, to share in Power's surprise at the Communists' and Socialists' willingness to engage in the political game at a time when, supposedly, the left in other parts of the world took up armed struggle to achieve socialism. Choosing the ballot over the bullet, as Power puts it, tells us more about what seems essentially to be a US-based categorial

bias in the study of politics, than anything else. Having said that, the shortcoming does not detract from an otherwise carefully researched and insightful account of right-wing women's activism. The book deserves to be widely read for its account of women's political organising and the nature of social movements. It is an eloquent reminder that politics is not only about events as such, but also about everyday activities in which women have always been present and which make events possible at all.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03387048

Carlos Huneeus, *El régimen de Pinochet* (Santiago: Editorial Sudamericana Chilena, 2001), pp. 670, pb.

Carlos Huneeus' book stands out among the many works written on the Pinochet regime given its academic rigour, attention to detail, factual base, comparative references and its engaged but dispassionate style. It reminds me of Alberto Aquarone's magnificent study of the Mussolini regime, *L'Organizzazione dello stato totalitario*, in that it seeks to analyse the inner workings of the regime, the paradoxical complexity of its simple institutionalisation of power in hands of the head of state, and the variety of disparate actors that emerge within and benefit from it. This book is bound to become a standard reference on the Pinochet regime for years to come.

In the introduction – written in 1983 – to *Military Rule in Chile* (Johns Hopkins, 1986) Arturo Valenzuela and I characterised the Pinochet regime as the 'dictatorship of the commander-in-chief of the armed forces' given Pinochet's great personal power derived from a preexisting bureaucratic base. We added that the regime was 'of the military, but not by the military' because it had a large number of officers holding positions in the government but no amount of deliberations of policy within the military institutions. We also noted, against prevailing opinion at the time, that the regime had a very low degree of institutionalisation, and we singled out the importance of an ideology within it, one that was based on a melding of neoliberalism and conservative Catholic social doctrine. Huneeus does not refer to our text, but his book buttresses these characterisations in painstaking detail, drawing apt comparisons (as we also briefly did) with the Franco regime in Spain, the Nazi experience, and military authoritarian regimes mainly in Argentina and Brazil.

Pinochet's authoritarian regime was indeed a strange specimen. It had a high dose of personalism, but this feature was enabled largely by the continued functioning of state institutions that operated on rational-legal principles which Pinochet inherited from the country's democratic past. The Chilean armed forces were highly vertical and subordinate to civilian rule. This meant that the armed forces had no tradition of shared decision making by councils of generals or admirals, and did not discuss policies of any kind (except briefly under the Allende government). These institutional characteristics continued to Pinochet's benefit during the dictatorship. Huneeus gives us all the necessary data to show how much military officers occupied government positions. But he also emphasises that Pinochet's was not a military government because the armed forces did not govern as such. Although most officers remained in active duty while in their government positions, the military chain of command was kept separate from the government's organisational charts to the point that on occasion junior officers held higher posts in government offices

than their military superiors. This radical separation of institutional spheres between the armed forces command and governmental authority, united only at the top by Pinochet, has facilitated a return to the barracks by the military with redemocratization, although Huneeus does not go into that topic.

Huneeus notes that the Pinochet regime included two groups of civilian collaborators. The first was composed of right-wing figures who were initially happy to make themselves available for whatever position Pinochet decided to give them, but who did not seek to organise a deliberate faction with a clear unity of purpose and goals within the regime. Some in this group had considerable misgivings about the directions taken by the regime, and were worried that it was taking too much time in making a transition to democracy. Galvanised into action by the profound economic crisis of 1982–83, this group plus or minus eventually became the current National Renewal party. Huneeus claims that the second and more important civilian group virtually turned into the regime's single party despite the fact that Pinochet showed no interest in forming any parties. The group was led by Jaime Guzmán, and was composed largely of young professionals from the Catholic University who forged their original identity fighting the centre and left in university student politics in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This group melded quite seamlessly during the dictatorship with the 'Chicago boy' economists, and from this mix came the present day Unión Demócrata Independiente, the rightist party that combines conservative Catholicism with orthodox neoliberalism. Huneeus has a superb discussion of the origins of this group and its development within the dictatorship by taking advantage of the many appointments Pinochet gave them, including most importantly in municipal and regional governments and in the state planning agency. Huneeus also notes which political positions its members acquired after redemocratisation, and how some of them took advantage of their offices to secure ownership of privatized state assets.

The author shows the intricacies of this mixture of constituent elements in what was nonetheless, like Mussolini's, at its commanding heights a very simple regime. Pinochet made himself the 'President of the Republic' after belatedly joining the coup plotters by taking advantage of his being the head of the most important service. Although Huneeus indicates that Pinochet's power was limited by the fact that he had to legislate with his fellow commanders in chief in the military junta, there is scant evidence that this limitation ever amounted to much. The judiciary and the controller general's office were also unable and mostly unwilling to challenge Pinochet's authority. The judiciary fired summarily a large number of judges after the coup, and by the 1980s the higher courts were full of Pinochet approved appointees. The comptroller general did challenge Pinochet in 1978, but this only resulted in his forced and unconstitutional destitution. There was no effective countervailing power to Pinochet's.

Huneeus also makes it very clear that the regime was buttressed by high-handed repression directed by a security service under Pinochet's direct control. It kept tabs not only on real or presumed opponents. It also spied on everyone who occupied an important position in the government or the state, such as ministers, under secretaries, judges, officers, and so on. Other military services, even the police, also organised their own internal security agencies. Huneeus notes that unlike most authoritarian regimes, in which the repressive organs of the state are highly active only in their initial period, these agencies remained an integral part of the Pinochet regime until the very end. One of the main contributions of this book is the

importance it assigns to the irrational and extreme violence by the armed forces against an unarmed left immediately after the coup. Huneus argues that this violence helped to justify the primacy of the security apparatuses within the regime, and fixed the mind-set of officers who came to believe that they were engaged in a 'war' against an intractable enemy supported by international communism.

Despite these elements of naked power, Pinochet was obsessed, as other authors have also noted, with securing his legitimacy. He based his appeals for legitimacy on three notions: that his regime had emerged from a deep national crisis after a secular process of decline, that he would set things right and develop the country, and that he would create a new and 'protected' democracy. Huneus discusses these appeals and their results extensively. The changes that resulted from the second one lead the author to call the Pinochet regime a 'developmental dictatorship'. I am not sure about this. Huneus is aware of the fact that there was hardly any per capita income growth during Pinochet's years in power, but he uses this label anyway because the regime restructured the economy, which was certainly the case. However, the result by 1989 was only to greatly expand primary goods exports and to retrench fiscal and social spending. Is that development? And the positive socio-economic results of the 1990s can be credited much more to policy makers after the return to democracy.

Huneus' book does focus primarily on the regime, and therefore the activities of the opposition and of the church are raised as needed in connection with the authorities' actions. I missed seeing more attention paid to the labour movement. Nonetheless, this is a great book that should be obligatory reading for comparativists interested in authoritarian regimes and transitions to democracy.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03397044

Brian S. Bauer and Charles Stanish, *Ritual and Pilgrimage in the Ancient Andes: The Island of the Sun and the Moon* (Austin, TX: University of Texas, 2001), pp. xiii + 314, \$60.00, \$29.05 pb.

Ritual and Pilgrimage in the Ancient Andes: The Islands of the Sun and the Moon is a study of the 'nature and history' of the Islands of the Sun and the Moon in Lake Titicaca, Bolivia. It is a skilfully organised, well written and lucidly argued book that is certain to appeal not only to Andeanists but also to anyone else interested in the cultures and history of the Andean region. The importance of the two islands as Inca ritual/religious spaces has been well known for quite a long time, since many the chroniclers of the early colonial period describe their shrines and discuss the pilgrimages and rituals related to them at length. However, despite clear indications that the islands had an important religious significance for the people who inhabited the region before the Inca conquest, which took place only about a hundred years prior to the European invasion, little has actually been known until now about the exact pre-Inca use and meaning.

Drawing on the chroniclers, on many earlier studies (historical, ethnographic, archaeological) and on the findings of a wide-ranging archaeological research programme that they directed from 1994 to 1996, which included a systematic surface survey of the islands and test excavations at numerous key archaeological sites, Bauer and Stanish set out to explore the history of the islands from pre-Inca times to

the beginning of the colonial period. In theoretical terms, the aim is to understand the antiquity of this crucial pilgrimage centre and, more generally, ‘the role of sacred sites in the development, legitimization, and organization of complex societies in the Andes’.

Because of the kind of the project that the authors set out to accomplish, a lot of space is understandably taken up by very detailed descriptions of the findings of the archaeological survey and test excavations carried out by the team that they directed. By combining the data yielded by their work with the other available historical and archaeological information about the islands, Bauer and Stanish are able to convincingly reconstruct the activities that took place there during Inca times and also to provide evidence which forcefully supports the suggestion that veneration of some of the shrines on the islands predated the Inca occupation by almost a millennium. While people were living on the Island of the Sun as early as 2000 BC and ranked societies developed in the Lake Titicaca region during 1300–500 BC, it is during the so-called Late Titinhuayani Period [500 BC–AD 400] that significant political centres are first established on the Island of the Sun, and both islands see the development of important ritual shrines. However, it is by the late AD 600, when they have been incorporated into the Tiwanaku state, that local shrines first acquire regional significance and also become the focus of elaborate state pilgrimages. The period after the fall of the Tiwanaku state [AD 1100–1400] shows a major decline in regional significance before the islands’ political and religious/ideological importance reaches its climax during the period of Inca rule, when a massive pilgrimage complex is built on the islands.

The continued use and importance of the sacred sites on the Islands of the Sun and the Moon provides the starting point for the book’s theoretical discussion, which, though rather short, is well argued. Taking for the most part a modified ‘Durkheimian’ perspective to understand the religious meaning of the Lake Titicaca shrines and pilgrimages, the authors show that, at the time of the Spanish conquest, the shrine complex and the pilgrimage, while having local roots, were basically Inca state institutions designed to project certain meanings related to Inca culture and thereby legitimate their power and consolidate their rule over a conquered territory. This approach underscores the crucial role that ritual/religious practices play in establishing and maintaining state control, and also shows that the meaning of sacred sites, far from being fixed, is subject to constant change. In fact, the basic processes involved in conquest imply a radical reinterpretation of and fundamental changes in the meaning of sacred places produced by the encroachment of the conquerors’ ideology and their asserted efforts to obliterate that of the conquered: although this does not always succeed. Sacred sites and symbols are a vital part of the battleground between dominating and dominated cultures and it is because of the culture-specific meanings inscribed and preserved in them that they become such pivotal spaces to be conquered and transformed so that subordination can be complete. One of the key accomplishments of Bauer and Stanish’s study is that it shows this very clearly.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03407049

Nicholas A. Robins, *Genocide and Millennialism in Upper Peru: The Great Rebellion of 1780–1782* (Westport, CT, and London: Praeger Publishers, 2002), pp. xvi + 260, £53.95, hb.

One of the most charged moments in Andean history, the vast popular insurrection that burst forth in the early 1780s – known variously as the rebellion of Túpac Amaru, the late-colonial Andean civil war, or simply as the Great Rebellion – has received a voluminous amount of historiographic attention. This book is part of a recent spate of work by scholars which should refocus attention on this epochal experience. Nicholas Robins' book examines the southern Andean provinces where much of the insurgent energies were concentrated, a vast territory today forming the highland and valley region of Bolivia. Robins uses secondary literature, published primary sources and archival materials, mainly from the Bolivian National Archive, to generalise about the Great Rebellion in this broad territory known as Upper Peru. As in other recent research, there is an emphasis on what might loosely be described as Andean 'political culture', but Robins' inclination is more towards cultural than political explanation.

The first of Robins' two main arguments is that this was a 'millenarian' and 'messianic' movement. In this sense, he builds upon and provides fuller archival bases for the pathbreaking interpretations of Jorge Hidalgo and especially Jan Szeminski. This is consistent with a broader literature in Andean ethnohistory on millenarian notions of the return of the Inka (*Inkarri*) and of a cataclysmic transformation of time and space (*pachakuti*). Robins takes these concepts to be in circulation at the time, though a more careful discussion of their significance would be in order given the absence of evidence that Túpac Amaru was seen as an 'Andean creator god' rather than a political leader of legitimate Inka ancestry, or of any usage of the Quechua term *pachakuti*. He also relies heavily on the classic historiography and sociology of millenarianism, such as the work of Norman Cohn, to prove that the case fits the model, though in my view this tends to drain the historical case of its richness and specificity. The Andean insurgents also appear as 'primitive rebels', following Hobsbawm, though Robins makes contrary assertions as to whether they are or are not 'prepolitical' (pp. 173, 181). They do express themselves, according to Robins' semiotic reading, through their actions, but it is difficult to say whether he thinks this is because they lack a more apt political language and analysis for engaging with the political and economic nature of their oppression.

Political and economic objectives, in fact, figure only secondarily here, since Robins' second main argument – the most novel and provocative in the book – is that: 'genocide and cultural extirpation formed the core of the rebel goals' (p. 161). As with millenarianism, Robins draws upon the sociological literature on genocide to argue for the pertinence of the category for the Andean case. This will strike many as inappropriate, since genocide is commonly considered to be a form of state-coordinated violence. Robins, however, purposely challenges the conventional definitions, to assert that subordinate groups too can be perpetrators of genocide. It is not entirely clear from the text what the implications or stakes of this position are meant to be, other than to refine existing academic definitions and typologies. Robins states that a 'web of collective denial' has led scholars to focus only on Spanish violence against Indians, and not on Indians' own genocidal practices historically (p. 11). He also refers in passing to present-day

threats that particular individuals or groups, rather than states, may recklessly employ weapons of mass destruction to commit acts of genocide (p. 158). In the forward to the book, Israel Charney, a specialist in genocide studies, explicitly draws on Robins' analysis to describe the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict (pp. xii–xiii).

In another sense, however, Robins' unconventional use of the genocide category fits with a more traditional understanding of the Great Rebellion as a 'race war'. Indian peasant masses, in this view, pursued an extreme solution of destroying all 'whites', unlike their more moderate leader Túpac Amaru, who sought an alliance with American-born or creole Spaniards. Robins shares this perspective, although it is quite contestable. To give only one example, insurgent violence against mestizos and creoles was quite consistent with Túpac Amaru's own directives to kill off all those who rebelled against his authority. This was not a messianic, genocidal or racial policy, but a political one issued in circumstances of war against an adversary employing the very same policy.

There are other points where Robins' main theses are undermined by contrary evidence and contradictory claims. His emphasis on the nativist character of the movement, for example, is countered by the extensive evidence, which he cites, of insurgent appropriation and assimilation of Hispanic material and cultural elements. Robins also adds a final chapter about the heterogeneous nature of the insurrection that is welcome, yet that also works against his basic arguments. If he had pursued this idea further, he would have rendered more faithfully the actual complexity of the history. It would, however, have required moving away from the more generalising sociological models that prevail in this book. There is no denying the presence of some of the radical features of the insurrection that interest Robins. But a fuller awareness of the range of different agendas existing among insurgent forces and of the conjunctural political and military circumstances that led one agenda or another to prevail at a given moment would have further weakened the assertion that: 'the rebellion was fundamentally millennial, messianic, nativist, and genocidal' (205).

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03417045

María Eugenia Chaves, *Honor y libertad: discursos y recursos en la estrategia de libertad de una mujer esclava (Guayaquila fines del período colonial)* (Gothenburg, Sweden: Departamento de Historia e Instituto Iberoamericano de la Universidad de Gotemburgo, 2001), pp. 311, pb.

Honor y libertad belongs to that genre of book dedicated to the study of a single colonial court case.¹ This work examines the documentation generated when an enslaved woman (María Chiquinquirá Díaz) petitioned the government, first in late eighteenth-century Guayaquil and subsequently in Quito, for her liberty. The essence of Díaz's claim to freedom was that she should never have been considered a slave in the first place, as Díaz's enslaved mother María Antonia had already been abandoned by her owners before Díaz's birth. (The logic of this position is summarised

¹ For another example, see Alexandra Parma Cook and Noble David Cook, *Good Faith and Truthful Ignorance: A Case of Transatlantic Bigamy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991).

by Chaves in the form of a magnificent legal syllogism: ‘Los esclavos que viven en estado de abandono adquieren un estado de manumisión forzosa. La esclava María Antonia vivió en estado de abandono por inservible. La esclava María Antonia adquirió manumisión’ (p. 184.) Díaz also complained that her supposed owner had mistreated her and her daughter by calling the latter dishonourable names such as ‘perra puerca hedionda a chivato’ (p. 117). Díaz enjoyed considerable success with this novel line of argument; the court case dragged on for years, during some of which she and her daughter were able ‘to live like free persons without recognising servitude’ (p. 285). Unfortunately the Ecuadorian archives do not contain the court’s final decision, so we have no idea whether Díaz was ultimately victorious in her petition for freedom.

Díaz’s legal odyssey raises many intriguing issues. Precisely how did Díaz attempt to construct herself as a person of honour? Was there a larger discussion within Guayaquil’s various populations of how honour might combine with enslavement? Which specific rifts within the *guayaquileño* elite allowed Díaz’s case to proceed so far up the legal ladder? What impact did the late eighteenth-century slave codes have on the authority of slave-owners? All these questions are raised, either explicitly or implicitly, by Chaves, but they remain largely unanswered, making *Honor y libertad* simultaneously interesting and, in places, unsatisfying. The book’s less satisfactory features derive in part from the author’s focus.

The book, which is Chaves’ doctoral dissertation, comes clad in a thick armature of theoretical concepts (*objetos de disposición, micro-poderes, eventos productivos*, etc.), which, in my opinion, contribute very little to elucidating the case of María Chiquinquirá Díaz. A substantial proportion of the entire text is devoted to explaining these terms, but the payoff is slight. We learn, for example, that the court records describing the life of Díaz’s mother constitute ‘un *evento discursivo dialógico*’ (p. 137) aimed at establishing Díaz’s own identity, but the nature of the identity created by this discursive event is not really explored. The author would have done better examining in a more nuanced way the forms of identity articulated in the court record, rather than telling us how the event occurred within a context shaped by the tensions between knowledge and power. The book thus leaves partially unfulfilled its promise of defining ‘las condiciones que a fines del siglo XVIII permitieron que ciertos criterios tales como honor, raza, y posesión actuaron para establecer los límites dentro de los cuales la identidad social y legal de esclavos/as y libres podía ser definida y nombrada’ (p. 15).

There is also very little link-up with other works examining comparable attempts at winning freedom in the courts in other parts of Spanish America. For example, Christine Hünefeldt’s *Paying the Price of Freedom. Family and Labor among Lima’s Slaves, 1800–1854* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994) is cited in the (excellent) footnotes and mentioned occasionally in the text, but there is no comparative discussion of how slaves used the colonial legal system to further their bids for freedom. In her study Hünefeldt stressed the importance of slave marriage in undermining the authority of slave-owners, which would seem to offer a fruitful basis for comparison. Yet although Díaz was married, Chaves devotes little space to marriage as a significant feature of Díaz’s legal case. This is by no means a fatal flaw, but it is a missed opportunity.

These weaknesses are a pity, as the book possesses many worthwhile features. In addition to discussing the fascinating case of María Chiquinquirá Díaz, it contains a helpful discussion of the functioning of the colonial legal system, and clarifies the

varieties of slavery current in late eighteenth-century Guayaquil. Moreover, it raises, even if it does not fully answer, the fascinating question of how an enslaved woman came to employ a rhetoric of honour. The book ends with an ‘extensive English summary’, consisting of both a shortened version of the books’ first chapters and two articles based on the Díaz case.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03427041

Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *Caetana Says No: Women's Stories from a Brazilian Slave Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. xxii + 183, £40.00, £14.95 pb; \$50.00, \$18.00 pb.

The vast Paraíba Valley, a mountainous river-fed coffee-producing supplier to Brazil's export market in the nineteenth century, houses in its several towns and their surrounding areas public and private archival collections that have enabled scholars in their dozens to unravel the complexities of Brazilian slave society. Graham's social narratives of a slave and a free woman who she states ‘both seek to have their own way’ and in so doing challenge the authority ‘of the males who hold power over them’, piece together close-up histories ‘to bring into focus surprising truths about the workings of a society and a culture obscured in more encompassing and distanced views’ (p. xxii). The first story, set in the 1830s, involves Caetana, a slave in her teens who was born and raised in domestic service as a personal maid. Although it was not uncommon for slaves to marry, Caetana refused her widowed master's demands to seek a husband. Her change of heart was documented in the October 1835 registry of her marriage to a fellow household slave that, despite pressures and threats from family members, she refused to consummate. In a matter of days she had taken flight from the marital nest, sought out her master, a locally prominent land-owner holding 134 slaves, and won his assent to petition church authorities on her behalf to annul her marriage. Graham carefully assesses and advances explanations for undisclosed questions that emerge at each stage of the two-hundred page ecclesiastical procedures. Readers will be left, like Graham, wondering why the appeal involving the petitioner, Caetana's master, and the church was denied and, more relevant to her story, what the fate was that befell Caetana after the case was closed. Caetana said ‘No!’ to her master and her master's eventual mediation on her behalf provide the peculiar twist that, for Graham, challenges traditional perceptions of master-slave relationships.

Caetana's unfinished story is inter-related with the second story of unknown outcome and involves Inácia, an 86-year old spinster member of the coffee-producing and landholding Werneck family of planter elites. Inácia lived on one of the family's estates and her slaves executed daily domestic and agricultural duties on the land she held in usufruct. She died in 1858 and her 11-page will and testament stipulated unconditional freedom to her favourite slave, Bernardina, and to Bernardina's slave children. Rather uncommonly, she made Bernardina her heir and bequeathed several slaves to her. At her death, Inácia's story moves to another protagonist, her nephew – the prominent planter and Baron of Paty do Alferes, Francisco Peixoto de Lacerda Werneck, the principal executor who fails to honour Inácia's bequests as she had willed them. Gender gives way in planter Inácia versus planter Werneck as the probate procedures uncover strategies of property, finance

and labour management. Graham examines Werneck's socio-economic profile and confirms that financial reasons such as the crisis in the international coffee markets in the mid to late 1850s were related to Werneck's increasing concern over maintenance costs to his six estates, and soaring transportation and foodstuffs expenses.¹ The Swiss Consul, Johann Jakob von Tschudi (not consulted by Graham), a studious observer of the times, faulted large landowners like the Wernecks for the rapid expansion of coffee production that displaced small-scale foodstuffs producers and resulted in the high prices for local foodstuffs and the demand for imports of produce from lowland areas as distant as the imperial court in Rio de Janeiro.² Planter Werneck's precarious financial situation at the end of his life surely weighed on his decisions regarding his aunt's bequests towards her slaves.

Yet, another explanation can be drawn from the social milieu of the times. Historians accept a certain flexibility in master–slave relations based on masters' recognition of customary rights of slaves to land, housing, tools, animals and sometimes to the labour of other slaves. Nor was it unusual for slaveowners during life or after death to bequeath gifts, small monetary sums, and conditional or unconditional freedom to favoured slaves, and in so doing, confirm complex hierarchical power relationships.³ Planter Werneck's considerable (and reprinted) writings portray him to be a fair slaveowner and administrator but faced an unsettling dilemma. Under Brazilian law, heirs who accepted inheritance were benefitted by the fortunes as well as accountable for outstanding debts. In this case, it is arguable whether executor Werneck, one of the financial managers of Inácia's income from coffee and produce during her lifetime, would write off the debts to his aunt's estate that by rights were the responsibility of her freed heirs. For Graham, an isolated and aged Inácia, bereft of her own immediate family, illiterate, seemingly unaware of her precarious financial situation, and reliant on her slaves to operate the estate, sought to insure their welfare to carry on after her death but instead left them in legal and financial limbo. Faced with his own diminishing resources, Werneck sold Inácia's other slaves and agreed a rental contract with Bernardina and her family. The twist for Graham resides in Inácia's 'best laid plans' that unravelled through the mediation of a powerful male relative.

The two contrasting pairs of stories are meticulously researched and brimming with details that bring alive the multi-faceted networks, conflicts, and intrigues of micro-history. For readers who are unfamiliar with the history of Brazil and the specificities of the Paraíba Valley region, the weblike unravelling of the characters and their relationships to the two women will, at times, prove challenging. Caetana's story is evocative of women who in different times and places understood and sought to shape their own lives, whereas Inácia's intentions were to shape the lives of her slaves after her death. Graham's findings on slave godparenthood, slave

¹ The most recent reprint of Werneck's manual of instructions on the running of a rural estate, with an introduction by Eduardo Silva is Eduardo Silva, *Barões e escravidão. Três gerações de Francisco Peixoto de Lacerda Vernek fazendeiros e a crise da estrutura escravista* (Rio de Janeiro, 1984).

² Johann Jakob von Tschudi, *Viagem às províncias do Rio de Janeiro e São Paulo* (São Paulo [1866], 1976).

³ Robert W. Slenes, for example, has documented cases of masters leaving slaves to favoured slaves in the Sorocaba region of São Paulo. See chapter two of Carlos Vogt and Peter Fry, with the collaboration of Robert W. Slenes, *Cafundó: a África no Brasil – linguagem e sociedade* (Campinas).

agency, and the many ways in which slaves manipulated their own circumstances within the broader context of a patriarchal society confirm revisionist views of slavery by historians who have rescued stories from the oblivion of the archives and given them form of their own. Whilst the social narratives offer insights into the way that society's hierarchies were made, manipulated, and unmade by these female social actors and the males who mediated on their behalf, Graham has missed the opportunity of relating the stories to the privileged site that gender holds for examining a larger ideological project. The two women's stories will interest and captivate readers who, in the ultimate analysis, will evaluate to what degree they advance on theoretical directions in Latin American gender history, women's history and Brazilian slavery.

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NANCY PRISCILLA NARO

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03437048

Marcus J. M. de Carvalho, *Liberdade: rotinas e rupturas do escravismo, Recife, 1822–1850* (Recife: Editora Universitária, Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, 2001), pp. xiii + 353, pb.

Historical reconstructions of slavery and its legacy in Brazil's Northeast have largely focussed on the sugar-producing area of the Recôncavo and the port city of Salvador, Bahia. In his study of slavery and freedom during the first half of the nineteenth century, Marcus Carvalho shifts the parameters of slavery north to the province of Pernambuco during the three decades between Independence and mid-century. For Carvalho, the topographical profile of the provincial capital and the rivers that intersected its component districts – the island port of Recife, the commercial sector of the island of Santo Antonio, and the residential area of Boa Vista-shaped urban slavery and the gradual process of the transition to freedom. Carvalho highlights Recife's unique river system for the vital role it played in the transportation of agricultural and other products to and from the coast as well as providing an important alternative to the illegal coastal deposits of slaves after Brazil agreed to (but did not comply with) British pressures to suspend the transatlantic slave trade in 1830.

In contrast to other provincial capitals that developed in the wake of the 1808 transfer of the Portuguese Court to Brazil, Recife was dominated by a sizeable free and freed population that accounted for nearly 70 per cent of the total population in 1828 and 81 per cent in 1856. For Carvalho, this was due to rural migration from the interior of the province and not to increased slave imports or natural population increase. In fact, Carvalho's carefully constructed comparisons of the 1828 and 1856 Recife censuses confirm the predominance of the free population during the city's expansion and the subdivision of the district of Santo Antonio to create the fourth district, São José. Although the physical expansion of greater Recife encompassed vast expanses of agricultural land by 1856, Carvalho finds that, in absolute terms, the largest free and slave populations were concentrated in the district of Santo Antonio in both of the censuses. In relative terms, however, the concentration of the slave population was in the port and wholesale commercial areas of the island of Recife. Of particular note is Carvalho's treatment of the singularity of the district of São José where he locates the heaviest concentrations of free and freed people, of poor people, artisans, carnivalesque clubs, and Afro-Brazilian religious centres (plus the

city jail). He claims that that downtrodden area of manual labour supply was overlooked by the ongoing modernising urban reforms to the city, especially during the 1836 to 1844 period (p. 87). And it was from this district that the popular mass protests emerged to wrack the city during both the turbulent 1820s, the early 1830s and the anti-Portuguese protests of the Praieira Revolt in the late 1840s. Considering the diversity of the data used in this study, one questions why criminal and civil court records were not examined for their relevance to the social profile of the free and freed urban population and the issues that were raised during social protests.

Carvalho addresses urban slavery in Parts II and III. He draws on a variety of descriptions and illustrations of the workings of the institution of slavery, slave agency, negotiation, and forms of resistance and accommodation, pointing out similarities with other areas of Brazil, as well as specific cases from local archives and newspapers. Trial records concerning slaves who changed their names and declared themselves to be free both whilst in captivity and in flight from masters compare favourably with similar findings in other parts of Brazil. Carvalho convincingly argues for slave agency, suggests psychosocial identities with free lifestyles, and documents other forms of individual and collective resistance. Still, the relevance of the fluvial networks and Recife's urban distinctiveness, highlighted in Part I, need to be related to the pre-1820 political and social conflicts among the Portuguese, the free and freed population, and the unfolding transition of the relatively small male and female slave population to the free labour market.

Carvalho examines the transition to free labour through the impact of the British blockades that curtailed the transatlantic slave trade in the 1840s. He draws attention to the intensifying pressure on, and the vigilance over, the extant provincial slave labour force. For Carvalho, slaves drew certain advantages from this seemingly pressurised environment. Slaves found themselves 'in a population where there was a very sizeable contingent of non-white free and freed people and took advantage of the fierce competition for their labour to press for greater social and economic rights' (p. 318). The degree to which slaves met individual or collective aims is left unclear as are the pro and anti-slave sentiments of the free and freed competitors in the labour market. For Carvalho, the emancipation process rested largely on British interference, slaves' struggles, and slaves' psychosocial identities and passage into society as free people (p. 322). Whilst the study broadens some of Carvalho's previous findings in his considerable repertoire of Pernambucan historical research, the five year delay in the publication of this book has somewhat dated his findings. Carvalho apologises for his folksy style, peppered with colloquialisms and personal philosophical quips, but is singularly unapologetic for his diverse theoretical samplings that include leaps into the present with commentaries that carry over from Ho Chi Minh to E. P. Thompson (pp. 322). Important references to historic personalities such as Malunguinho, the leader of an important slave *quilombo* in the sugar-producing *zona da mata* of Pernambuco, who Carvalho brought to historians' attention in 1996 take time to locate due to the absence of an index. Yet, owing to Carvalho's location and examination of heretofore unidentified archives and documentary sources in Recife and in Pernambuco, his study will provide useful comparative considerations to students of free and slave societies in the Americas.

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NANCY PRISCILLA NARO

Silvia Cristina Martins de Souza, *As noites do Ginásio: teatro e tensões culturais na corte (1832–1868)* (Campinas: Editora da UNICAMP, 2002), pp. 329, pb.

This is the fourteenth volume in the collection *Várias histórias*, published by the University of Campinas over the last four years; many have their origins in doctoral theses. They mostly concern the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and many cross boundaries between disciplines, notably between history, social science and culture. They are varied in topic – a biography of Luiz Gama, the most important black abolitionist, another of the Regent Feijó, *capoeira* and the tradition of rebellion in Rio, the politics of the Brazilian Academy of Letters in its early years, medicine in Imperial Rio. A consistent effort has been made to publish accessible books, well written and genuinely interesting, and to get beneath the surface of traditional history. It is making a radical change in our views of the period.

The present book centres on the Ginásio Theatre, which for a few years after 1855 was the standard-bearer of ‘realist’ drama in Brazil. The established view of the movement, represented by Décio de Almeida Prado and by João Roberto Faria in his definitive *O teatro realista no Brasil (1855–1865)*, is that this was a laudable attempt to bring serious drama to Brazil, which failed because the audience preferred mere entertainment. Machado de Assis declared in a famous article in 1873 that Brazilian theatre was dead, and there was nothing to say about it.

From the beginning, Martins de Souza tries to subvert this view, by taking a wider perspective than Almeida Prado and Faria, whose views are more exclusively literary. She questions the prejudices behind the urge to ‘civilise’, which rest on the ‘bourgeois’ nature of the realist theatre imported from France, and taken up by Brazilians like José de Alencar. Behind her account, one senses larger issues very much alive in present-day Brazil and elsewhere: the elitist nature of culture, an unwillingness to understand ‘inferior’ forms of entertainment. These are crucial questions, of course, but it is pleasant to note that there is little direct polemic here between the ‘literary’ and the ‘popular’, between Faria and Martins de Souza – rather a respectful comparison of two perspectives.

The first of three chapters takes us through the meteoric rise and fall, between 1855 and 1860, of the Ginásio. Conceived, as its name implies, as an ‘education’ for its audiences, the latter’s enthusiasm came and went as the realist genre showed its possibilities and limitations. Alencar is the central figure here – the five plays he wrote in this period show his desire to please, to instruct, but also to reflect local realities, including slavery. It was not slavery but prostitution which proved too much for the police, who shut *As asas de um anjo* down when it has been passed by the censorship. Much useful information is given about the theatres themselves, the length of the runs – nine performances was considered a success – the rivalries between actors and companies, and their political support.

The second chapter covers a longer period, going back into the past to look at the main organ of censorship, the Conservatório Dramático Brasileiro, and its vicissitudes, and concluding in the 1870s. Dominated by intellectuals, it had to contend with the Imperial government, the police (as seen in the case of *As asas de um anjo*) with whom it jostled for authority, actors who used obscene gestures to liven up proceedings, and authors who resubmitted plays already rejected, relying on short memories. In the end, the Conservatório never reached beyond the stage of trying to establish its own authority in a recalcitrant artistic (and political, and social) world.

In the last chapter, we return to the theatre itself. Martins de Souza argues that the traditional view – that after the failure of the realist movement to achieve any lasting success on the stage, theatre simply fell into a decadence filled by superficial French imports and their imitators – too readily accepts the views of the intellectuals who dominated the Conservatório. In fact, some of these local adaptations were very successful: one such is *Orfeu na roça*, by the author/actor Francisco Correia Vasques, ‘O Chico’, a parody of Offenbach’s *Orphée aux enfers*, itself a parody. There is, the author argues, a local, eclectic tradition linking Martins Pena in the 1830s to Artur Azevedo at the end of the century.

This is a very useful book, thoroughly researched, a valuable contribution to the history of Brazilian theatre. In many ways, it is a model of cultural history, admirably placing the drama in its social context. To my mind, some of the spotlight could be turned back onto the stage. It is a pity some of the works discussed are not described in more detail, especially those dealt with in the final chapter, some of which miraculously still exist in libraries. I make no apology for a regular complaint: why do these useful books lack indexes?

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JOHN GLEDSON

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03457040

Sue Branford and Jan Rocha, *Cutting the Wire: The Story of the Landless Movement in Brazil* (London: Latin America Bureau, 2002), pp. 305, £14.99, pb.

This story has been long overdue. Sue Branford and Jan Rocha, two seasoned British journalists with commanding knowledge of Brazil, have authored the most comprehensive book to date on Latin America’s premier social movement: the Movement of Landless Rural Workers, best known by its acronym MST (in Portuguese, *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra*). Since its first emergence in Brazil’s southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul, in 1981, the landless movement has developed a formidable grassroots organization, with a nationwide presence, an estimated million members, close to 1,200 agricultural settlements, a network of 12,000 primary and secondary schools, 86 rural cooperatives and 96 food processing plants. In the last two decades the MST has prodded the Brazilian government to distribute five million hectares – a territory the size of Costa Rica. After the mid 1990s, the MST earned fame as a leading critic of the government’s neoliberal policies and a forceful voice on behalf of Brazil’s underprivileged majority.

Branford and Rocha provide a far-reaching, lively, empathetic and thoughtful account of the MST. Their narrative builds strongly on scores of interviews they conducted across Brazil with MST participants and leaders, social activists, government officials, religious authorities and scholars who have studied the movement. Their vivid illustrations and shrewd observations reflect a close familiarity with the MST.

The book contains fourteen well laid out chapters, grouped in four parts. The first section deals with the historical formation and expansion of the movement. In three chapters, the authors briefly recount the land struggles in southern Brazil that eventually led to the establishment of the MST in 1984; discuss how the movement was organised; and depict the MST’s move northwards after its first national congress in 1985.

The subsequent section reviews three moments of the MST struggle: land occupations, agricultural settlements and the movement’s activities in the field of

education. Organising land occupations and landless camps are a crucial MST tactic aimed at pressuring state authorities for agrarian reform. These and other forms of non-violent action help galvanise the landless struggle and provide a powerful training experience for movement activists. The authors portray this in a vivid, first-hand account of a land occupation in the northeastern state of Pernambuco. Agricultural settlements are formed once the government allocates land to the farmers. Though less dramatic, this phase presents numerous trials as the movement strives to find ways of ensuring the survival of these rural communities amidst adverse conditions. Education has been a longstanding cornerstone of the MST and is reflected in its Paulo Freire-inspired pedagogy for consciousness-raising in the landless camps, schools for children, adult literacy projects and training programmes for activists.

The next section discusses the main challenges confronting the MST in recent years: violent repression, the hegemonic pretensions of the global food industry, and the onslaught, after 1997, of the Brazilian government under Fernando Henrique Cardoso. Two chapters offer detailed case studies of police violence against the MST in the Amazonian frontier state of Pará and in the southern, substantially modern state of Paraná. The Pará story provides a gripping account of the April 1996 police massacre of 19 MST peasants at Eldorado dos Carajás. Another chapter examines the globalisation of Brazilian agriculture, and argues that the MST's attempts to further family farming, small cooperatives and agro-ecology are threatened by the increasing presence of large-scale, high-tech, agri-business firms. The ensuing two chapters discuss the Cardoso administration's worried reaction to the MST's highly successful march to Brasília in April 1997, and consequent efforts to undermine this movement – namely, by fostering a decentralised, market-based approach to land reform (detrimental to the movement's capacity for collective action); criminalising a number of MST's protest activities; curtailing state resources for agrarian reform; and promoting a media campaign to discredit the MST's positive public image.

The last section of the book looks at future trends and tests. One chapter examines the MST's gradual, uneven yet growing embrace of agro-ecology. The other probes cultural dispositions within the movement concerning internal decision-making processes, issues of gender and sexuality, and the movement's symbolic repertoire and mystique. The final chapter views the MST from a broader historical perspective, and compares it to utopian peasant mobilisations and Britain, the United States and Brazil. The conclusion, though open-ended, is optimistic. It believes the MST's capacity to adapt creatively to new situations will allow it to remain a forceful voice for social change in the years ahead.

Branford and Rocha's book offers a comprehensive coverage of one of the world's most remarkable peasant organisations. While clearly sympathetic to the MST, its portrait of the movement is honest and balanced. It openly examines a number of internal MST debates, and presents the views of some of its leading critics. The book's main strength stems from a superb use of interviews and artful display of testimonies from MST participants. By allowing the protagonists of the story to speak for themselves, the text enhances awareness and nurtures empathy for the people engaged in this popular movement. *Cutting the Wire* offers a rich, lively and clear narrative, which makes it an excellent asset for college students.

The authors' great reliance on testimonial evidence, however, makes the book vulnerable to factual slips, romanticised depictions and unfortunate omissions. This is particularly so in their reconstruction of the MST's early history, the weakest

section of the book. For instance, contrary to what the authors assert: the priest was never arrested and beaten by the police (p. 19); the MST leader (noted in p. 10 and p. 35) was not involved in organising the first land mobilisations; and the MST candidate was actually re-elected as local mayor (p. 219). These problems notwithstanding, Banford and Rocha have produced a remarkable account of the MST. In effect, *Cutting the Wire* has vigorously opened frontiers to a fascinating research topic for students of Latin America.

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MIGUEL CARTER

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03467047

Stuart F. Voss, *Latin America in the Middle Period, 1750–1929* (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 2001), pp. xxii + 296, \$65.00, \$22.95 pb.

Over the last five years there has been a marked increase in the publication of concise histories of Latin America, and of specific Latin American countries. The act of synthesising has become trendy. The rise in students in Latin American studies has clearly created a demand for user-friendly, jargon-free and easily accessible introductory textbooks. The entire history of Latin America has thus been taken care of by historians such as John Charles Chasteen, and Benjamin Keen and Keith Haynes. The early and middle periods have been interpreted and made accessible by Peter Bakewell among others. The modern period has likewise been conveniently simplified by Lawrence A. Clayton and Michael L. Conniff, with the added bonus, in their case, of having fictionalised dramatic moments ‘to give definition to a particular age’. This is evidently a profitable market since a number of publishers have embarked upon the ambitious project of publishing whole series of concise histories aimed at ‘first-year undergraduates’ and ‘non-specialists’. Cambridge University Press, for instance, has a series of concise histories dedicated to specific countries, which has produced new volumes on Brazil (Boris Fausto) and Mexico (Brian Hamnett). In tandem the University of New Mexico Press’s series *Diálogos* has popularised specific periods and/or concrete themes such as Independence in Spanish America (Jay Kinsbruner) or US Capitalism in Latin America (Thomas F. O’Brien), adopting an equally student-led approach. Stuart Voss’s contribution is a new addition to this recent boom in introductory textbooks. Like the rest, it aims to offer useful tips, highlight the key points of an issue, and encourage the keener student to move on beyond the synthetic introduction.

However, Voss’s synthesis merits some praise for its original approach. It is a social history, not a political one. That is refreshing. It focuses on regions rather than capital cities and nation-states. That is also new. And it adopts the periodisation favoured by the most recent (and revisionist) school of historians who view independence as part of an age of ‘democratic revolutions’ or ‘destabilisation, fragmentation and reconstruction’ rather than the end of the colonial period and the beginning of the postcolonial one. Continuities matter. Change is a slow and complicated phenomenon. Independent Latin America was not so different from Colonial Latin America, at least in terms of the 1790s and 1830s, and especially in terms of the way regional societies lived. It is Voss’s understanding of the dynamics of regional economies, customs, traditions, cultures and geopolitics that ultimately makes this text ‘with classroom use in mind’ (p. ix), a particularly insightful and helpful aide to have at hand. Divided into three parts (The Emergence of a New

Society, 1750–1820; The Uneasy Equilibrium, 1820–1880; Passage to the Modern World, 1880–1929), Voss's *Middle Period* traces the development of the regional societies that made up Latin America. It highlights how these were formed during the Bourbon reforms in the late colonial period, how they became all-important and almost all-powerful during the early national period and how they were eventually subordinated by the nation-states that emerged following the mid-nineteenth century watershed and during the neocolonial period. The endorsements it receives in its back-cover by eminent Latin Americanist historians such as William B. Taylor, Eric Van Young, Mark D. Szuchman and John E. Kicza, make any reviewer weary of being too critical. All four distinguished scholars coincide in viewing Voss's text as 'a masterful synthesis'. They praise it for 'concentrating on common people who are often left out of large-scale works that focus on Latin America's [...] high politics', for its 'provocative interpretation of Latin America in transition after 1750', and for its periodisation. Overall, this reviewer would tend to agree ... except that: (1) The style is very dry; (2) There are few concrete examples/anecdotes/quotes. In this sense, the narrative/analysis is too generalised. Where are the real people in all this?; (3) Some of Voss's categories are problematic and arguably misleading. For instance, can you really simplify a regional society into only four classes: *gente baja*, *gente de profesiones*, *gente decente* and *gente alta*? Yet the virtues definitely outweigh the sins of this book. For those teachers who are social scientists rather than political scientists, who dislike discussing the liberal-conservative divide, *caudillismo* and oligarchic rule in Latin America's 'long nineteenth century', and who prefer to focus on local regional societies and the way these were affected by Imperial reforms, subsistence and market production, the forces of progress, modernisation and industrial capitalism, this is the perfect textbook for their students.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03477043

Carlos Aguirre and Robert Buffington (eds.), *Reconstructing Criminality in Latin America* (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 2000), pp. xix + 254, £40.95, hb.

This fine collection of essays is an important contribution to an ever expanding field of research: the history of crime, criminals and criminality in Latin America. As such, it is also a very good example of the type of work that has produced a deep transformation in the study of the law and judicial institutions in the region, from the traditional *historia del derecho* to a wide variety of theoretical and methodological approaches: social history, cultural history, and the history of ideas seem to be the most important actors, but cultural anthropology and literary studies usually make their mark as well. No doubt, one of the most beneficial effects of the transformation has been the fruitful intersection of these approaches.

In this particular volume, the authors address from different perspectives, and ranging from colonial times to the 1990s, 'the way in which different Latin American societies at different times in their respective histories viewed, described, defined, and reacted to *criminal* behavior', as Robert Buffington puts it in his introduction. From the role of the colonial criminal justice system in Mexico in diffusing social conflict, to drug related violence in 1990s Medellín, the scope of the essays is wide in terms of time and space, although Mexico and Argentina concentrate the majority of the papers.

Some of the themes covered touch upon recurring problems in Latin American history: the interaction between the legal world and the wider political, economic, social, and cultural processes through which the transition from colonial status to independent nationhood took place in nineteenth-century Latin America; the clash between the cultural and institutional legacy of the colonial world and the modernising principles of liberal nation-building; the contrast between liberal ideals and authoritarian practices; the rationalisation of the law and the political manipulation of judicial processes; the ways in which political instability and lack of material resources characterised the administration of criminal justice; the interaction between police forces, the judicial systems and the everyday life of the common people; the elites' dreams of modernisation and institutional innovation and the realities of traditional societies. All these polarities indicate that ultimately the dynamic interplay between continuity and change that characterises Latin American societies was particularly salient not only in the evolution of its judicial institutions, but in the definition and treatment of criminality as well.

When we focus more specifically on criminality, it is remarkable the way in which many of the papers successfully reveal the link between the social construction and definition of 'criminal' behaviour and the battle for control of urban and rural public space. Thus, Richard Warren's paper on vagrancy laws in early republican Mexico shows the dire consequences that an accusation of vagrancy, 'more a crime of *being* than *doing*' could have on itinerant workers, at a time when the rejection of conventional forms of work was perceived as a threat to public order and the state. Similarly, Ricardo Salvatore in his fascinating study of the Buenos Aires countryside during the Rosas era (1829–1852), also demonstrates how vagrancy, the most prevalent crime against public order, was used selectively to underscore the negative valuation made by residents of suspicious newcomers (in a context where few of the peons or itinerant workers had written contracts, the indictment of vagrancy could apply to almost anybody). Finally, Pablo Piccato also illustrates the disputes about the use of the city in late Porfirian and early post-revolution Mexico City. To the Porfirian *científicos*, lower class uses of urban space (alcohol consumption, street commerce, beggary) threatened public order, and many everyday practices became 'criminal' in the eyes of elites and public officials. Modernisation in Mexico City was thus characterised by a permanent negotiation between the ideal city and the everyday city.

And this is probably the major conceptual undercurrent holding together this excellent collection: the effects of modernisation on the region; or, as Robert Buffington suggests, Enlightenment and its unfulfilled promises. Not only criminology, but social sciences in general, and the foundations of social policies can be seen as different attempts made by the new nations to find 'modern' solutions to 'modern' problems. The complex process of accommodation, resistance and adaptation of these trends in Latin American societies is well registered in these brilliant contributions to a field that is helping to redefine the social history of these countries.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X0348704X

Tobias Hecht (ed.), *Minor Omissions: Children in Latin American History and Society* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), pp. viii + 277, \$45.00, \$21.95 pb.

Through the viewpoints of thirteen disparate contributors – of whom five are historians, three study art or art history, one is a writer, two study religion, one is a sociologist, and one is a person from the street – this volume illuminates important aspects of Latin American childhood over the past five hundred years. The editor Tobias Hecht sets his sights on exploring ‘how the “minor omission” of children from Latin American history may in fact be no small matter’ (p. 12).

To investigate children’s lives, one has to be resourceful. ‘First-hand historical records of children’s lives in Latin America ... are exceedingly rare’ (p. 3). The contributors, therefore, are extremely clever in digging out materials to illuminate the topic. Carolyn Dean, for example, uses a series of canvases by anonymous artists to explore how Andean notions of children differed from those of Europeans at the time of the encounter in the sixteenth century. The editor also includes the memoirs of a street child and a short history. The historians rely heavily on colonial judicial and criminal records.

We learn that notions of what comprises childhood differed between the conquerors and the indigenous peoples, but that the latter’s notion endured. The victorious Europeans considered children naturally inclined to misbehave. The Europeans believed children were capable of reason at age seven, but required considerable encouragement from adults to use it. The Andean sense of their children was different. Adults assigned Inka children tasks by the time they were five or six. Duties increased, as they grew older. Carolyn Dean concludes that it is unlikely that the European view prevailed during the colonial era. Sonya Lipsett-Rivera points out that the Aztecs paid careful attention to the upbringing of children, spending much effort socializing them to be productive members of society. Many of their practices continued well into the colonial period.

The reader also discovers that illegitimacy was widespread, especially among castas, indigenous, and slaves. Although quite common, illegitimacy placed the child at a severe disadvantage under both custom and law. Illegitimate children could not be priests or hold office in the royal bureaucracy or municipal government. This discrimination persisted even after independence.

Children out of wedlock were most likely raised in single family households or abandoned to the ghastly fate of orphanages or the street. Nara Milanich points out that many children grew up in matrifocal families where women were the breadwinners and authority figures. Society did not recognise female authority, however. Abandonment was so common that in Havana, the local foundling home had a small revolving door for anyone abandoning a child to place the baby in. All the reluctant parent had to do was ring the bell and a nurse would take the child! Unfortunately, orphanages were deadly refuges. More than half of the infants left at the Havana establishment’s door died within a month.

As they are today in the great metropolises of the region, street children were regarded as a problem in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The state attempted to intervene, but quite unsuccessfully. Donna Guy finds that Argentine orphans, like those of Havana, had slim odds for survival. It was no better in Chile and Mexico. Being sent to an orphanage in Latin America was, quite simply, a death sentence.

Guy discovered that by the 1880s the number of abandoned children overwhelmed the Argentine government's capacity to care for them. Huge numbers of older children found themselves jailed for vagrancy as a result. The best outcome for females was to get work as a domestic. A small group of males received vocational training or enlisted in the armed forces.

At the same time, according to Irene Rizzini, the fate of poor children became an issue of concern in Brazil, where its leaders professed that 'to save children was to save the country (165).' Defending impoverished children was a part of nation building. The upper classes feared that to allow children to grow up on the streets amid the vices of urban life would lead to disorder. The government ignored the most straightforward solution to the problem, education.

As if the reader already had not grown thoroughly horrified, the volume turns to the devastating effect on children of the vicious civil conflicts in Central America during the 1970s and 1980s. Anna Peterson and Kay Almere Read conclude that the experiences of Central American children 'challenge mainstream modern Western conceptions of childhood as a time of innocence, ignorance, and isolation from the moral and political conflicts of the adult world (228).' They further claim that Central American children as residents of war-torn lands, 'did indeed have political and moral convictions and agendas ...' (229), and their options and reasoning do not differ much from the adults in their communities.

The selections in *Minor Omissions* are obviously illuminating, resourcefully researched, provocative and dismaying. The editor did them a disservice with a wandering introduction, which sets out no themes or hypotheses, leaving the reader abandoned like children under study in the volume, though enriched by the substance of the scholarship and art.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03497046

Carolyn L. Deere and Daniel C. Esty, *Greening the Americas: NAFTA's Lessons for Hemispheric Trade* (Cambridge, MA, and London: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2002), pp. xiv + 382, £46.50, £18.50 pb.

Greening the Americas is a substantial volume composed of 18 chapters divided into four parts. Its objective is to find ways of making 'trade arrangements and environmental protection more mutually reinforcing' (p. 2). Part I, 'Lessons from the NAFTA Environmental Negotiations', follows the editors' introduction. The key point to be derived from chapters two through six is that Mexico's vehement opposition to the inclusion of an environmental package within a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreement was due more to the dynamics of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) negotiations than to the details of policy.

Miller's chapter (Five) shows that there is no clear evidence that Mexico suffered economically from NAFTA's environmental provisions, while Mayer's piece on the negotiating process (chapter six) demonstrates how domestic politics in the USA led the US to adopt a very strident negotiating style, which paid little heed to Mexico's need to consider its own domestic reality. Alanis and González (chapter three) point directly to the 'bitter final stages of the NAFTA negotiations' as the key influence on Mexico's stance; its opposition to trade-environment linkages does not represent a 'coherent policy position' (p. 41). Mancera (chapter two) would contest

such an analysis and suggests 'the significance of trade policy for environmental outcomes is overstated' (p. 31). However, he also claims that the debate is dominated by developed country concerns, and demands 'special-interest environmental groups cannot be allowed to dictate the terms of the dialogue' (p. 38).

In chapter four Araya points out that Mexico is a key player behind Latin American resistance to the inclusion of the environment in FTAA negotiations and sheds light on the Mexican ministry of economy's perspective on environmental issues within trade agreements, citing the ministry's claim that 'environmentalists have fallen prey to rent-seeking economic interests' (p. 62). From Mexico's perspective, the inclusion of environmental issues within the NAFTA was little more than 'protectionism by the back door', especially when trade sanctions were accepted as the ultimate weapon in the fight against environmental non-compliance.

In Part II of the book three chapters investigate the environmental performance of the NAFTA. Kevin Gallagher's analysis disaggregates the 'scale', 'composition' and 'technique' effects of trade liberalisation on air pollution in Mexico. He demonstrates that without appropriate government intervention 'unbridled economic integration can have disastrous environmental results' (p. 136).

Nadal's chapter (eight) deals with the impact of liberalisation on maize production in Mexico, showing that despite the rapid pace of transition and the government's hope that *campesinos* would shift out of maize production into more profitable enterprises, this has not been the case. Instead severe social and environmental problems have arisen. Institutions of social security have been lost, productivity has dropped and been compensated for by expansion into marginal lands, and the country's vast reserve of maize genetic resources has been imperilled.

The final chapter of Part II looks at the impact of the NAFTA on foreign direct investment (FDI) in Mexico. Through a review of case law stemming from NAFTA's investment provisions, Mann and Araya demonstrate that it 'consistently places the rights of investors ahead of the ability of governments to protect the environment' (p. 172), such that rather than the 'polluter pays', a principle of 'pay the polluter' appears to be in operation.

Part III looks in more detail at the environmental provisions of the NAFTA. The conclusions reached by Fisher's in his chapter (ten) are in marked contrast to those of Mann and Araya. While Fisher employs the generalised rhetoric of the NAFTA to support his claim that the 'U.S., Canadian and Mexican environments are better off with the NAFTA', Mann and Araya, suggest that it is the lack of clarity in the agreement's language which hampers governments' ability to curb the negative environmental impacts of increased FDI.

Chapters 11 and 12 deal specifically with the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) and the institutions it created. In chapter 11 Blanca Torres shows how emphasis on the litigious, rather than collaborative, functions of the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (NACEC) has made Mexico unwilling to tighten its own national environmental legislation for fear of falling foul of trade sanctions. This analysis is reinforced by Carlsen and Salazar's contribution (chapter 12), which links the disappointing performance of the NACEC to its subordination to NAFTA trade priorities, lack of procedural clarity for citizen participation and a general lack of political will to ensure its proper functioning.

Part IV looks forward to a FTAA agreement and makes recommendations for the incorporation of environmental issues. Schaper initiates the discussion by analysing

the impacts of other free trade agreements. She demonstrates that the revealed comparative advantage (RCA) of environmentally sensitive exports is decreasing but still competitive, while the RCA of clean industries is increasing but not yet competitive. This leads her to claim that the resource allocation and export growth patterns of 'most Mercosur and Andean Community countries are environmentally vulnerable and unsustainable' (p. 255).

Chapter 14 by Matus and Rossi provides an overview of Chile's position on trade and the environment. Particular emphasis is placed on the Canada–Chile Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (CCAEC), which, while informed by the NAAEC, employs fines rather than trade sanctions to deal with environmental non-compliance. Fines up to US\$ 10 million never leave the country on which they are imposed, but must be used to address the original issue of non-compliance. In chapter 15 Gitli and Murillo support Matus and Rossi's position and argue that the FTAA negotiations should aim for a CCAEC style side agreement, especially as developing countries believe that they are 'more likely to be defendants than plaintiffs in trade and environment disputes' (p. 273).

Caldwell's agenda for sustainable trade and investment in the Americas (chapter 16) reflects his position as Coordinator of the US National Wildlife Federation's (NWF) Program on Trade and the Environment. The NWF believes that multilateral environmental agreements (MEA), such as the Convention on Biodiversity, should take precedence over any contradictory provisions of trade agreements and Caldwell calls for the environment to be central to any FTAA agreement, with openness, accountability and public participation as *sine qua non* for a successful outcome. Similar points are made in Cordonier and Borregaard's chapter (17), following a useful digest of the environmental credentials of existing Latin American free trade agreements.

The book is drawn together by the editors in chapter 18. In conclusion, Deere and Esty suggest that a FTAA agreement 'which expressly addresses the link between trade and the environment would be more economically sound and politically durable than one that does not' (p. 329). This assessment is tempered by the reality of a situation in which current FTAA negotiating structures provide no focus for environmental issues. If Mexico and other Latin American countries are to give environmental ground, negotiations must be based on trust, good will and public participation, rather than bullying tactics aimed at satisfying the USA's domestic political imperatives.

Overall the book provides a very useful assessment of NAFTA's implication for further liberalisation of hemispheric trade relations. Like a lot of books that have been derived from a tightly focused conference topic, there is substantial repetition of basic information, which makes reading the volume less interesting and more laborious than it might have been. On the other hand, as a reference work, it is important for every chapter to be self-contained. The volume is well written and cogent, although it does contain a number of annoying typographical errors that the copy editors should have picked up. Taken as a whole, it represents an important contribution to the trade and environment debate. It certainly contains valuable analyses and insights. However, I doubt that it makes a sufficiently coherent or persuasive case to achieve the authors' goal of ensuring 'that economic integration in the western hemisphere proceeds in an environmentally sustainable and politically sensible manner' (p. xiii).

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 35 (2003). DOI: 10.1017/S0022216X03507040

Susan C. Stokes, *Mandates and Democracy: Neoliberalism by Surprise in Latin America* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. xiii + 220, £14.95, pb.

Political scientists have taken note that many Latin American presidents who campaigned in favour of popular policies of state interventionism in the economy in the 1990s ended up introducing unpopular neoliberal formulas. Guillermo O'Donnell viewed this 'bait-and-switch' strategy as detracting from regime legitimacy and as evidence that the Latin American political system had lost credibility and barely merited being called democratic. He concluded that the broken promises were inherent in the emerging Latin American system he labelled 'delegative democracy', the most salient feature of which was lack of accountability. In this book, Susan Stokes questions O'Donnell's harsh thesis by claiming that these cases of reversals are complex and even justifiable under certain circumstances. Stokes considers O'Donnell's conclusion simplistic in that a diversity of factors determined the likelihood of whether a given president embarked on a 'bait-and-switch' approach and whether it ended up being politically successful. Thus, for example, presidential candidates tended to disguise their neoliberal intentions in a tight race out of fear of losing preciously needed votes. Furthermore, presidents belonging to unconsolidated or institutionally weak political parties were free enough of pressure to be able to renege on electoral pledges regarding state promotion of the general welfare. The political successes of Carlos Menem and Alberto Fujimori, both of whom violated their mandates in favour of state interventionism, are worthy of special analysis. Stokes attributes Menem's second electoral triumph in 1995 to the success of his economic policies, particularly in combating runaway inflation. In contrast, Fujimori's reelection in 1995 was due to his adroitness in diverting national attention to the struggle against the Shining Path guerrillas and his well-funded social programs, which went counter to his overall neoliberal strategy.

In her chapter 'Mandates and Democratic Theory', Stokes questions the bait-and-switch strategy's novelty, which lay behind O'Donnell's claim of having identified a new type of democracy. She examines various classical writers in order to demonstrate that the principle of democracy does not negate the possibility that politicians reconsider their electoral planks once in office. Stokes recalls the writings of Edmund Burke and James Madison which posited the superior judgement of the political elite but also the capability of the mass of voters in selecting those candidates who would best represent them, and determining whether elected officials should be given a second chance. While certainly not defending the applicability of this thesis to twentieth-century politics, Stokes argues that those in power need not necessarily follow through on popular mandates. This is particularly the case when most voters support policies they do not feel strongly about, or 'are uncertain about the effect of alternative policies on their welfare' (p. 123). Equally important, Stokes points out that 'bait-and-switch' politicians have to 'provide candid explanations after the fact for why they had switched' (p. 183). The widespread failure to do so explains why most of the 16 presidents (elected between 1982 and 1995) who reversed themselves by embracing neoliberalism were politically unsuccessful. Stokes ends by hypothesising that had these politicians been forthcoming by educating the public and offering 'more honest explanations ... voters would have been more forgiving' (p. 184).

Stokes does a commendable job in relating a pattern of economic policy making over the recent past in Latin America to theoretical discussion on 'representative' (as opposed to Rousseauvean) democracy. In the process, she responds to critics of Latin American democracy who point out that neoliberal formulas were frequently imposed against the will of the majority of voters.

Nevertheless, in explaining mandate violation, Stokes fails to distinguish between specific policies and an all-encompassing strategy such as neoliberalism. Thus, for instance, cases of elected officials who are unable to deliver on promises to reduce taxes are legendary and do not imply violation of democratic norms. But the stakes are higher and the loss of credibility greater in the case of the 'bait-and-switch strategy' of neoliberalism. Furthermore, the 'shock treatment' of neoliberal reforms may be considered inherently anti-democratic because its rapid implementation in the face of rampant inflation and other pressing economic difficulties precludes ample national debate. Stokes fails to explain why 'bait-and-switch' presidents refrain from justifying their turnaround by undertaking a campaign to win the voting population over to neoliberalism. One explanation for this shortcoming may be that neoliberalism is unattractive to the majority of the population, and thus few leaders of governing parties are willing to put forth a comprehensive defence of the doctrine. In short, while Stokes skilfully explores the 'bait-and-switch' phenomenon in its empirical and theoretical dimensions, further discussion needs to focus on the particular characteristics of the politics of neoliberalism and its impact on the credibility of the democratic system.

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