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# Reviews

João José Reis and Flávio dos Santos Gomes (eds.), *Liberdade por um fio: História dos Quilombos no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996), pp. 509, pb.

This exceptional book brings together the recent scholarship of 17 authors on *quilombos* (runaway slave communities) in Brazil. The editors and authors convincingly illustrate that it will take a combination of approaches using history, archaeology, and oral history to tell the story of quilombos, which were an integral part of the fabric of slavery in Brazil.

Not surprisingly, the book begins with Palmares, the largest *quilombo* in Brazil. Richard Price cautions against an over reliance on written documents, and indeed a tantalizing new view of Palmares, which indicates the influence of Indians, is sketchily drawn by Pedro Paulo de Abreu Funari, based on data from preliminary archaeological excavations. Ronaldo Vainfas and Luiz Mott draw out the complex ways in which Christianity was used both for and against Palmares. In a carefully detailed essay, Silvia Hunold Lara considers why Palmares was not repeated elsewhere in Brazil and finds the reason in the creation of the *Capitães de Mato*, the bush captains, who hunted down runaway slaves.

*Quilombos* were not isolated states where escaped slaves recreated 'Africa', but rather communities that interacted with the larger society and which not infrequently included free blacks, Indians, and poor whites. Nowhere is this more evident than in the mining regions of Minas Gerais, Mato Grosso, and Goiás. Carlos Magno Guimarães examines the political choices created for slaves and free blacks by the 160 *quilombos* in Minas; Donald Ramos argues that the *quilombos* served as an important escape value, without which more rebellions would surely have erupted. Laura de Mello e Souza analyses the expeditions sent into the wilderness to exterminate *quilombos* and finds that music and poetry were part of the daily fare of such campaigns. In Goiás, Mary Karasch's meticulous research reveals that *quilombolas* (runaway slaves) searched for gold to buy their freedom, a practice which sometimes led to important discoveries. In Mato Grosso, Luiza Rios Ricci Volpato illustrates that *quilombos* appeared as part of the overall process of the settling of the far western frontier.

The survival of *quilombos* in Brazil required a symbiosis between the runaways and those still in the slave society. Flávio dos Santos Gomes examines the underground world which linked slaves, free blacks, small storekeepers and runaway slaves in the region of Rio de Janeiro, while Mário Maestri studies the *quilombos* that ringed the towns and cities of Rio Grande do Sul. In Bahia, João José Reis reconstructs the fascinating story of Oitzeiro, a manioc producing community, where relations between runaways and those who employed them as labourers were particularly complex. Stuart Schwartz untangles the networks of *quilombolas*, Indians, and urban slaves in Salvador de Bahia which were instrumental in a planned, but never executed, rebellion.

The political instability of the early nineteenth century sometimes encouraged rebellions and in many cases allowed *quilombos* a reprieve from expeditions sent to destroy them. In Pernambuco, Marcus Joaquim de Carvalho describes how *quilombos* peacefully co-existed with the towns and plantations of Pernambuco during times when the elite, divided among itself, could not organise punitive expeditions. When the civil war between liberals and conservatives erupted in 1838 in Maranhão, the rural poor of colour, slaves and *quilombolas* joined in and vented their frustrations against the elite, as illustrated by Matthias Röhrig Assunção. Eurípedes Funes completes the volume by interviewing twentieth-century residents of communities in Amazonia, whose ancestors, according to oral tradition, fled slavery.

Although the volume does not include any chapters on São Paulo, this is a major contribution to the study of slave resistance in the Americas. The editors are to be commended not only for the high quality of the presentations, but also for the detailed maps that locate the major *quilombos* in the regions discussed.

*Trinity University* ALIDA C. METCALF

Arij Ouweneel, *Shadows over Anáhuac: An Ecological Interpretation of Crisis and Development in Central Mexico, 1730–1800* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), pp. xiii + 429, $60.00.

In the initial, confident flush of regionally based rural history on colonial Mexico, beginning conspicuously with the work of Francois Chevalier (1952), scholars often drew explicit if allusive comparisons between the agrarian formations of early modern Europe and those of New Spain. As we hammered away at the models of feudalism and seigneurialism, however, these comparisons, suggestive as they had been, tended to become less fashionable and were largely abandoned. The Dutch scholar Arij Ouweneel has brought back the European analytical and comparative framework to very good effect in proposing a large-scale historical interpretation of the colonial rural economy in the Bourbon century, focusing particularly on indigenous villages in relation to demographic developments, environmental change, and non-Indian elements in the countryside. Ouweneel has given us a bold and original study that goes back to some basics and will raise many questions (along with a few hackles) while it helps to lay the foundations of a new environmental history of Latin America: in this it is at once antique and innovative. That he ultimately treats 'ecology' in a somewhat diffuse, systemic fashion rather than throwing much light specifically on environmental changes and their cultural sources and implications as such is slightly frustrating, but not fatal to his ambitious enterprise.

The main actors in Ouweneel's study are the densely populated central valleys of New Spain – Puebla, Mexico, and Toluca, which he refers to collectively as Anahuac, following the usage of Baron von Humboldt. His interest is primarily in tracing through the course of the eighteenth century the effects of 'relative overpopulation' in the countryside, which he distinguishes explicitly from the 'Malthusian' situation suggested by other scholars (myself included). He sees the indigenous population in particular as having expanded vigorously after 1770 or so, and peasant access to land resources as having remained basically stable. Following the European models he frequently evokes tellingly, Ouweneel

proposes that this movement produced sequentially 'low-pressure' and then 'high-pressure' solutions to the problem of growing impoverishment in the Indian countryside. Among the 'low-pressure' solutions were out-migration to the *faldas*, the under-populated hilly and mountainous areas of the central Mexican uplands, and wage labour on non-Indian properties; and among the 'high-pressure' solutions proto-industrialisation – in textile production, in crafts, and in other labour-intensive activities. In developing this latter idea he has made a particularly valuable contribution to ongoing debates about the late Bourbon economy and the transition to independent national life.

Although in passing he chides scholars of other Mexican regions for missing some basic truths about the eighteenth-century economy, Ouweneel sticks very close to his central Mexican venue; the comparisons he evokes are more consistently trans-Atlantic than intra-Mesoamerican. Nor are Ouweneel's pages heavily populated with individuals or the telling anecdotes so fashionable these days; this is less social history than what one might call eco-sociological history. On the other hand, there is throughout his treatment of indigenous rural economy a sustained and subtle sense of space and place, as with his meticulous analysis of maps of village holdings and land-use patterns. The research and argument in the book are impressive, and while certain evidentiary links are a bit attenuated, the quantitative base is generally convincing. Less so are some applications from the European literature, as when Ouweneel insistently characterizes the role of indigenous *caciques* in native pueblos as a type of *Herrschaft*, essentiually replicating manorial relations. Readers will also need to make allowances for the less-than-fluent translation from Ouweneel's original Dutch. Still, on the whole this is an important and thoughtful work, theoretically sophisticated and comparatively acute, that should attract a wide audience beyond the borders of Anahuac.

*University of California, San Diego* ERIC VAN YOUNG

Javier Mendoza Pizarro, *La Mesa Coja: Historia de la Proclama de la Junta Tuitiva del 16 de Julio de 1809* (La Paz: Programa de Investigación Estratégica en Bolivia (PIEB) and Dutch Foreign Ministry, 1997).

Bolivia, the only South American country to belong to both MERCOSUR and the Andean Pact, is the cardiac hinge of the continent. Successively dependent as Audiencia of Charcas on both the old viceregal capitals of Lima and Buenos Aires, she is slung between the Guaporé, the Paraguay and the Pilcomayo basins and the Pacific Ocean. The ambiguity of her external articulations are reflected in internal rifts, none more intense – till today's Colla-Camba divide – than the Andean rivalry between Sucre (Chuquisaca, La Plata, Charcas) and La Paz (Chuquiabo). In 1825 national leadership was already linked to priority in 'declaring the war' against Spain – the so-called 'primogeniture' question. Though the La Paz movement of 16 July 1809 occurred after Chuquisaca's 25 May, La Paz considered the actions of its Junta Tuitiva more incendiary than the tactical position of loyalty to the deposed King Fernando VII recommended by the 'Doctors of Charcas'. During the nineteenth century a revolutionary Proclamation was regularly attributed to the Junta Tuitiva, 'legitimizing' the transfer of government to more populous La Paz in 1899.

But the authenticity of the La Paz Proclamation has been doubted. In other documents the Junta Tuitiva regularly protested loyalty to the King, just as the Charcas doctors advised. It is not mentioned in the proceedings of the rebels' trial, though Goyeneche was determined to 'make an example' of them. Recent research has shown that one purported signatory, Victorio García Lanza, was not even in La Paz at the time.[1] Javier Mendoza Pizarro's investigation starts from a set of filing cards prepared by his father Gunnar Mendoza, late Director of the Bolivian National Archive (Sucre). It remained for a psychologist to lance the wound left by the Civil War, thereby contributing to what the Catalán historian Josep Barnadas calls in his Prologue the 'mental hygiene' of the country.

The text of the La Paz Proclamation was first published as a photo-engraving of a mysterious 'original' in 1896. Copied many times, it is now inscribed on an open book of granite set up in 1975 in Government Square (Plaza Murillo), La Paz. Here, a generation of schoolchildren have heard their teachers declaim the heroic words attributed to Pedro Domingo Murillo and other leaders of the uprising of 16 July 1809 ('Compatriots: till now we have tolerated a sort of exile in the very bosom of our Fatherland…'). Following Bartolomé Mitre, the Santa Cruz historiographer Gabriel René-Moreno consagrated it as the first revolutionary statement to emerge from the Spanish colonies (in spite of Caracas, Cusco etc.), a judgement reaffirmed by Charles Arnade, historian of Bolivia's birth (1972). Its authenticity was re-confirmed officially by several La Paz historians in 1975. Eduardo Galeano used some lines from it as epigraph to his *Open Veins*…. Nevertheless, Mendoza Pizarro has now proved that the revolutionary 'Proclamation of the Junta Tuitiva' was imaginatively conjured up between 1840 and 1896 as part of La Paz' protracted struggle with Sucre for the 'primogeniture'.

The first reference to Proclamations circulating in La Paz during 1809 occurs in the pamphlet *Memorias Históricas* (La paz 1840) which purports to represent an eyewitness account of events, although Mendoza detects significant editorial tampering. Mitre probably acquired the pamphlet in 1847 during his exile in La Paz, attributing an anonymous Proclamation mentioned in it to the Junta Tuitiva in his 1858 *Historia de Belgrano*…. But already, during the 1854 instauration of the Julian civic fiestas promoted by La Paz literary figure Felix Reyes Ortiz, a newspaper had linked this anonymous Proclamation with the Junta Tuitiva, giving the attribution currency in La Paz. Mendoza underlines this germinal moment in the creation of a historical myth, following sleuthlike the trails that lead to the heart of a complex process of fabrication. The result is a fresh perspective on 19th century civic thought and practice in La Paz, which included the creation, not only of regional and patriotic values, but even of the historical documents thought necessary to sustain them. Similar to the inventions of Iolo Morgannwg or 'Oisin', the imagined 'founding text' of American freedom is here situated, not at the twilight origins of Altiplanic or Celtic culture, but admidst the heroic gestures of American independence.

The book was born of a childhood spent in the vaults of the Bolivian National Archive, where the author watched his father classify sources for Bolivian history in the making. Asked why the Proclamation mattered, Gunnar Mendoza replied:

[1] Estanislao Just Lleó, *Comienzo de la Independencia en el Alto Perú. Los sucesos de Chuquisaca*. (Sucre, 1994).

'It's like expecting a carpenter to be content with a table he's just made with one leg shorter than the rest'. This artesanal conception of the historian's craft implies 'setting the record straight'. Mendoza Pizarro does this, threading his way like a cat among false facsimiles, 'lost' or doctored 'originals', multiple versions, suppressed headers and forged signatures.... It is worth noting that the 'table' metaphor comes from the same source, the creole archival imagination, as the Proclamation myth itself.

It would be inappropriate to reveal all the intricacies of the plot which is an eyeopener in creole ingenuity. But the text of the incendiary Proclamation, whose 'original' was attributed in 1896 to the Junta Tuitiva of La Paz, turns out to be based on that of an undated Proclamation directed from La Plata [sic!] to the inhabitants of La Paz between May and July 1809, in a version corrected and popularised in Sica Sica by the radical Tucumán-born priest José Antonio Medina, a key figure in the events of 16 July 1809, and the person responsible for suppressing all loyalist language in the Chuquisaca statement. The Junta Tuitiva of La Paz never issued any Proclamation and were as *apparently* loyalist as their Charcas comrades. Finely written, compassionate and ironical, *The Wobbly Table* is essential for understanding the invention of conflicting civic values and emotions in the ambivalent heartland of South American independence.

*University of St Andrews* TRISTAN PLATT

Tom Chaffin, *Fatal Glory: Narciso López and the First Clandestine U.S. War against Cuba* (Charlottesville, Va,: University Press of Virginia, 1996), pp. xii + 282, $34.95.

Chaffin's book tells the story of the Venezuelan adventurer Narciso López, who between 1849 and 1851 led a series of campaigns, or filibusters, to free Cuba from Spanish dominion and have it annexed by the United States. Famous in his day, López has now been forgotten, or dismissed by historians as a servant of southern planters in the incipient conflict between North and South in the United States. Chaffin argues, however, that López actually represented a cross-section of US society, and that he spoke for what Chaffin describes as a republican and expansionist nationalism then competing in the United States with another form of nationalism, opposed to slavery. Both López' story and his representation by historians, Chaffin argues, reveal much about the shaping of US nationalism in this period.

The book also describes co-eval visions of Cuba's future relationship with the United States, both within and between those countries, extending our still uneven knowledge of the historical roots of the complex US–Cuban relationship. In detailing the Cuba creole interest in annexation to the United States as a means of escaping Spanish authority, Chaffin provides further evidence of an historic tension between Cubans in viewing the United States as either a threat or a saviour. This tension is closely connected to the long history of Cuban dissidents seeking refuge in the United States and launching actions against the Cuban authorities from there, with or without the assistance of US citizens, as well as the ambivalent and inconsistent response within the US to such actions.

Chaffin's main focus is the story of López' campaigns, which he describes in detail, making the book an important addition to the history of filibustering. This

is history as adventure story, made accessible and enjoyable by a lively writing style and good use of contemporary sources. However, the book could usefully incorporate a chapter drawing together and discussing the themes of nationalism, US expansionism, slavery and abolition, and the Cuban desire for independence, to which Chaffin refers throughout, expanding on the points made in the introduction. These themes are clearly important, and merit extended analysis; in addition, they provide the context for López' story and the framework for assessing his significance. For example, a concluding assessment of the tensions within US nationalisms, and between US expansionism and Cuban nationalist ambitions, as well as of the importance of these events within the larger context of the US–Cuban relationship and US foreign policy, would have been most welcome. It is left to the reader to ponder these issues, but the book is useful in drawing attention to them, and in providing the detail from this period to substantiate analysis.

*University College London* LAURIE JOHNSTON

Michael Johns, *The City of Mexico in the Age of Díaz* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1997), pp. 142, $25.00, $14.95 pb.

During the regime of President Porfirio Díaz (1876–1911), Mexico City doubled its population, expanded its local and national communications, and expanded the construction of magnificent buildings, monuments, and other material improvements. Thousands of poor immigrants and wealthy investors arrived to the city, seeking to profit from the assumed 'peace and progress'. The expansion of the capital coincided with this era of relative institutional stability and economic growth, thus permanently associating Díaz's name with the idea of progress. Michael Johns' portrayal of the capital stresses the economic inequalities that underlied such progress. The 'civilised' life of the upper and middle classes, in which European tastes and products signified the optimism of the age, was underwritten by the cheap labour of peasants displaced by capitalists who, in Johns' euphemism, 'modernized the communal lands' (p. 2). The book's detailed descriptions of life on both sides of the east-west geographical and social divide succeed in conveying, despite the author's dualistic emphasis on that divide, the complexity of a city and a period that are becoming the subject of increasing historical investigation.

Johns, however, uses these keen observations to discuss broader issues. Acknowledging the influence of Mexican thinkers such as Justo Sierra, Samuel Ramos, Octavio Paz, and Enrique Krauze, the author claims to find in Porfirian Mexico City 'the critical time in the making of the Mexican character' (p. 3). Johns' position in this poorly conceptualised debate, that had its high time during the Porfiriato and the optimism of the post-WWII 'Mexican miracle', focuses on the duplicity of 'the Mexican': the 'gaps between the spoken word and its actual meaning' (p. 6) and, in general, the pretense to adopt modernity while failing to match it with a proper 'sense of public responsibility' (p. 74). Who exactly is Johns talking about? Vague generalisations soon give place to racial categorisations: the backwardness of Mexican culture is anchored by 'the Indian', who during the colony became 'a slave' and 'a pawn in a spiritual world

of incense, candles, and saints', and who survived culturally by imbuing 'solitude, sluggishness, and suspicion' into the *mestizo* (p. 63). 'Anarchic individualism' is the key feature of the Mexican character, thus preventing the hygiene and civilization of the poor peasants living in the city as, Johns explains, 'the adoption of conventional manners was beyond the means of these folk' (p. 76). As for the upper classes, this flawed character translated into the abject adoption of everything European and North-American. This 'cultural schizophrenia' (p. 100) was expressed in architecture, where their 'copies betrayed insecurity, anxiety, and inexperience' (p. 22).

Johns founds these broad generalisations on a literal reading of his sources. He relies heavily on guides and travel books written for English-speaking readers, official documents similarly concerned about the country's image abroad, and the rich literature on urban society produced since the last decade of the nineteenth century. Besides token acknowledgements of the possible biases of these texts, Johns has no qualms in transcribing entire paragraphs where the urban poor are described as 'motley, disgusting, and shameless people… the women are messy and loose' and 'the men are filthy' (p. 32). The book contains too many of these descriptions to dismiss them as mere narrative devices. Johns takes at face value the elite perceptions of society heavily influenced by positivist criminology and its biological explanations of deviance and social difference. He reproduces, for example, Julio Guerrero's comparison of undernourished 'tobacco-colored children' in Mexico City with 'Polynesian savages' (p. 47). (One can only hope that the populations of the South Seas never find such offensive discoverers of their 'national character'.) Johns' uncritical use of these sources might explain his insistence on the duplicitous nature of Mexicans, and the gap between their laws and behaviour often mentioned by passing observers. His research, however, fails to account for the agency and cultural productions of Mexico City's lower-class communities. Mexico City and its population emerge from this volume as mere pretexts for its author to moralise about 'the typical Mexican' (p. 103).

Adequately illustrated and brief, this volume seems to be targeted for undergraduate courses and general readers, where its conceptual deficiencies may be most damaging. It is strange and discouraging that the University of Texas Press would lend its prestige to such a misguided interpretation of Mexico's past and present.

*Columbia University* PABLO PICCATO

Elizabeth Dore, (ed.), *Gender Politics in Latin America: Debates in Theory and Practice* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1997), pp. 251, $38.00, $18.00 pb.

This is a book that should inspire enthusiasm in even the most weary or impatient student of gender. No facile assumption goes unexamined nor partial truth left to stand. The 15 contributors, whose work ranges across disciplines from the humanities to the social sciences, explore virtually all the standard questions and debates, but manage to offer some genuinely novel insights and conclusions. Organised by Elizabeth Dore out of papers presented at a conference held by the

Gender and Development Research Group at the University of Portsmouth, the co-authors provide a series of articles that are, for the most part, clear, coherent and succinct.

Perhaps the first person to receive congratulations on the happy result of this collaborative effort should be Susan Lowes, former director of Monthly Review Press who, according to Dore, insisted on accessible language and relevance. Dore, herself, provides an introduction in which she offers not only the usual summary of the chapters to follow, but a remarkably lucid explanation of the differences between Marxist and postmodern approaches to women and gender, all written in a manner which seems fair to both and very helpful to the reader. For their part, the contributors critically examine various aspects of the common wisdom on women and gender and they offer a variety of challenges to some of the more simplistic (and often wishful) thinking that has gained currency in recent years.

For example, based on her own fieldwork among female industrial workers in the Dominican Republic, Sharon McClenaghan takes on the 'romanticism' of the assertion that women's entry into the wage labour force necessarily reinforces their sense of self, increases their status and leverage within the family, or provides 'the means to change oppressive relationships of power and challenge existing values of the gender system'. (p. 20) Anna Fernández Poncela considers the role of women in the Sandinista revolution and challenges the comfortable assumption that women's presence in popular associations, trade unions and mass organisations was as high as official statistics indicated or that their participation was as transformative to themselves or to state policy as has often been claimed. Instead, she finds that the Sandinistas 'promoted only nominal and formal equality between men and women', and that 'changes in gender relations in the public sphere were peripheral and insignificant, limited in depth and extent, and often reversible'. (p. 48).

Tessa Cubitt and Helen Greenslade draw upon their research on urban popular movements in Mexico to challenge the reliance on a dichotomised framework that 'essentializes' women and 'reinforces the simplistic equation "public man/private woman"'. (p. 53) Elizabeth Jelin draws on her great reservoir of knowledge on human rights to call for an expansion of the concept to include women's reproductive rights and freedom from domestic violence.

A particularly important contribution is that of Ann Matear who uses the case of the women's movement in Chile to highlight the continued need to include class as well as gender in our analysis of Latin American women's condition. Noting that upper and middle-class Chilean women managed to use the process of transition to democracy to reinsert themselves into positions of influence and authority in political parties and the state while working class female activists remained marginalised, Matear shows that sometimes social class is a more useful category than gender in predicting or explaining outcomes. This conclusion regarding the importance of class is reinforced in the historiographical section that follows by Murial Nazzari's analysis of slaves and slave holders in Cuba and marriage practices in Brazil.

In other essays focused on the history of the family in Latin America, Elizabeth Dore debunks the myth of the traditional patriarchal family and challenges the notion that the female-headed household is a contemporary aberration while Ricardo Cicerchia underscores the limitations of a debate framed by the Catholic

doctrine that gives rise to social policies that are irrelevant to current realities and social needs. The remainder of the collection is devoted to the politics of culture and features a contribution in which Deborah Shaw objects to the 'essentialism' inherent in the very notion of 'Latin American women's writing', William Rowe and Claudine Potvin examine the 'subversive' writings of Carmen Olle and Luisa Valenzuela and Jean Franco shows how transvestism and homosexuality became a form of public defiance and critique not only of Pinochet's oppressive regime but of capitalism itself.

Overall, this excellent collection is exceptional in the range of issues it tackles and the degree of success it achieves in challenging the ideas that have become received wisdom in women's and gender studies.

*York University, Toronto* JUDITH ADLER HELLMAN

José Miguel Guzmán, Susheela Singh, Germán Rodríguez, Edith A. Pantelides (eds.), *The Fertility Transition in Latin America* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. xxxi + 449, £50.00.

The completed fertility of Latin American women in the 1950s ranged from 7.4 births per woman in the Dominican Republic to 2.7 in Uruguay. Evidence from the most recent round of surveys and census data to 1990 shows remarkable declines, from a high in Bolivia (6.1) to the below replacement level fertility of Cuba (1.8). Although the range of reproductive levels remains large, three-fifths of the countries now fall between three to five births per woman, rather than six to 7.5. Guzmán and his associates have produced a workmanlike volume which charts major demographic dimensions of this process, including changes in marriage patterns, family formation, the diffusion of contraception, the role of induced abortion, adolescent childbearing, and implications for women's life histories and labour force participation. There are case studies for Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba and Peru.

The volume reflects broadly the ambivalence which has come to characterise demographic interpretation of fertility change in recent years. On the one hand, the contributors do not expect to find monolithic causes in the form of shifts in macro-economic variables; the emphasis is, rather, on the diversity of patterns which distinguish, for example, types of transition found in Caribbean countries from those of the mainland, of which suggest that there are different phases of fertility decline reflecting differing social and cultural groups. On the other, fertility transition continues to be viewed entirely within the framework of modernisation theory, despite the inability of preferred variables like education to explain levels of decline, or evidence that contraception, lowered fertility, and increased labour force participation do not necessarily improve the situation of women. The rapidity of declines points strongly to the influential role of cultural networks and media of communication, but as diffusion is a basic tenet of modernisation theory its inclusion amongst the explanatory variables ends in circularity. In this respect the aims of the volume appear to be sensibly modest: to outline the scale of fundamental demographic changes taking place and the tentative state of the explanations on offer. As the book is likely to become a standard reference work, it is regrettable that there is very little discussion of the quality and evenness of data sources, and only occasional details as to technical

limitations of measures and models employed. Non-demographic Latin American specialists may well be concerned about this, as the bibliographies provide only selective guidance.

*Somerville College, Oxford* PHILIP KREAGER

Jorge I. Domínguez (ed.), *Technopols: Freeing Politics and Markets in Latin America in the 1990s* (University Park, PA: Penn. State University Press, 1997), pp. xiv + 287, £49.50, £16.95 pb.

This book is an attempt to examine the importance of a group of individuals that tried in the early 1990s to use political forces to fashion economic change. It consists of an introduction by Domínguez, professor of government at Harvard University, and five chapters by separate authors each covering a politician: Domingo Cavallo, economy minister of Argentina; Pedro Aspe, finance minister of Mexico; Fernando Henrique Cardoso, finance minister, then president of Brazil; Evelyn Matthei, a leader of Chile's 'new right'; and Alejandro Foxley, finance minister of Chile.

It attempts to draw a distinction between 'technopols', political leaders with strong academic backgrounds who try to harness political forces to achieve economic objectives, and 'technocrats', academics who achieve political power but who tend to ignore the political process or are disdainful of it.

The study provides a good overview of the challenges facing the four governments in the late 1980s and early 1990s. It also provides strong personal profiles of the individuals, making interesting attempts to discern from their backgrounds why they chose to tackle their jobs in the way they did.

However, it has several flaws. In the first place, it is usually describing a work in progress, making overall judgements premature. This is most obvious in the case of Cardoso, but also applies to others: the Cavallo profile was clearly written while he was in office and updated hurriedly after his resignation in July 1996.

Secondly, the tone of most of the profiles is too deferential. This is particularly so in the profile of Aspe. It identifies some of the errors that resulted in the Mexican economic crisis of 1994–5, such as the overconfidence of the economic team and the fundamental weakness of the presidential system that spawned it, but leaves other aspects uncovered.

Perhaps the most glaring absence is an adequate critique of Aspe's approach to privatisation, including his insistence that revenues from state sales be maximised. This approach put the banks that were privatised into weak, and in some cases criminal, hands and worsened immeasurably the scope of the 1994–5 crisis.

Last, the choice of profiles could have been improved. Of course, opposition politicians can influence policy but Matthei's inclusion is something of a mystery, in the absence of potentially more interesting subjects. More valuable would have been a study in obvious failure: for example, that of the economic team of President Carlos Andres Pérez in Venezuela. Perhaps this group would be better defined as 'technocrats' rather than 'technopols', and so outside the scope of the book. But since a lack of political acumen sems to have contributed to their failure, a profile of their case could have illuminated the other chapters.

*Financial Times* STEPHEN FIDLER

Scott B. MacDonald and Georges A. Fauriol, *Fast Forward: Latin America on the Edge of the 21st Century* (New Brunswick, NJ, and London: Transaction Publishers, 1997), pp. viii + 318, $44.95.

Has Latin America at last found the 'fast forward' button? At first sight the authors of this assessment of current Latin American economic development seem to think so. 'In these countries there is an exciting, rapid pace of change, a societal consensus that the correct direction is being taken, and a major breakthrough in economic development appears within grasp', they claim in their chapters.

The 'trendsetters', they claim, are Chile and Argentina. General Pinochet they see as the original motor for the transformation of Chile into a free-market, though to be fair they do note a little of the dark side of the dictatorship and see monetarism as a definite failure. Chile is their lead candidate for 'tiger' status – it is even on the Pacific Rim. On Argentina's economic transformation under Menem (more accurately under Cavallo), they have more reservations. A number of caution points are on balance dismissed, but Argentina's present pace cannot be guaranteed beyond the end of the century.

Turning next to Colombia and Mexico, the first optimism of the book seems to have evaporated already. Colombia remains a puzzle. Economically it is doing well and better equipped than most for future 'tiger' status owing to a long tradition of fiscal conservatism. However, drugs and corruption together threaten its economic progress and its future status remains uncertain. Mexico has plunged into technological modernisation and is integrating its economy with the USA. At the time of writing, however, its political opening was only hesitant and a political crisis that would nullify any economic gains was seen as still a possibility. Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru and Cuba follow. Brazil shows 'significant developments' but it is still too early to say whether Cardoso marks a truly new chapter. Venezuela has potential, but lacks clear leadership. Peru has made 'dramatic gains' but is still a long way from economic equilibrium. Cuba has successfully resisted globalisation, but has lost touch with reality.

So what is the overall picture? Certainly not as optimistic as first appears. The book is based on government or respectable right-wing sources and is well illustrated with statistical references. The views match. Dependency is discredited. The debt crisis has been solved by the efforts both of the international community and individual governments, and is relegated to an appendix. Democratisation is essential – though it is not always clear why, given the ominous suggestion in the introduction that 'soft-shell authoritarianism' facilitated industrial development in Asia. But the message is so qualified that almost any conceivable outcome could fit.

*University of Southampton* PETER CALVERT

Scott Mainwaring and Matthew Soberg Shugart (eds.), *Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. ix + 493, £55.00, £18.95 pb.

Mainwaring and Shugart open this volume with a justified claim to represent a second, more nuanced and sophisticated generation of writing about a debate – presidentialism versus parliamentarianism – that has sometimes lapsed into

polemic as a result of being so close to the conduct of practical politics in the last dozen years or so. The authors of this collection are generally young, and in focusing on the period up to 1995 with attention on the role of parties within the main political systems of Latin America, they have effectively provided an update and some revision of Mainwaring's earlier edited collection: *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (Stanford 1995). This combination of theme is what gives the book its strength, there being acceptance of diverse experiences, a recognition that 'presidentialism' on its own is a rather clumsy term, and the suggestion that it has been too starkly depicted by earlier writers, such as Juan Linz, Jean Blondel and, to some degree, Mainwaring himself. All the chapters display a firm command of constitutional detail and contain much useful tabular as well as narrative information on powers and election results. (Although the appendix on constitutional powers has already been rendered out of date by amendment in a number of countries, it registers the major changes in Chile, Colombia, Peru and Brazil). The presence of a chapter on Peru would certainly have strengthened the editors' views on diversity and the importance of party organisation as a factor, but it might also have fortified the case against presidentialism rather more than they allow. By contrast, the omission of Uruguay, while it denies us treatment of a singular (and singularly complex) system, would seem to balance the picture.

The introductory chapter is a model discussion of the wider scenario and debate in which the two broad strands of governmental system are discussed in more than narrowly institutional terms, themselves quite insufficient for determining a clear correlation with the stable operation of liberal democracy. Mainwaring's own chapter on Brazil underscores the problems resulting from a combination of a presidentialist system – recently ratified by referendum – and a diffuse multiparty system, wherein no popularly elected president has enjoyed a majority in Congress since 1950 and where the very substantial powers vested in the presidency are to modest avail in the face of minority legislative support and a fixed electoral timetable. Similarly, extensive powers are available to the presidency in Colombia (even after the 1991 constitution, itself introduced via the emergency powers of the executive), but, as Ronald Archer and Mathew Shugart argue, these have been constrained by a party-patronage nexus still able to block national policy initiatives that could prejudice local networks. The experience of the Samper administration in the period after this chapter was completed strongly suggests that the president's dominance was more formal than real even as he defied extraordinary pressure to quit office. By contrast, Brian Crisp notes that in Venezuela much more limited powers can permit great implementation of policy because of generally high levels of legislative support, themselves assisted by party discipline. The experience of the second Caldera administration (1994–8) is not unambiguously part of the post-1961 pattern, but it does suggest that so long as the constitution of that year prevails one ought not to assume that national political behaviour is precisely determined by the specific traditions of *Acción Democrática* and COPEI. Costa Rica has witnessed still greater consistency in its balance of powers – if not from 1948, then certainly since 1953 – and John Carey provides a clear, succinct account of how this might be explained in terms of a combination of genuine party competition, strict limits on terms, and the corresponding incentives for party discipline. This case, of course, is thoroughly anomalous in Central American terms. Moreover, until the congressional

elections of August 1997 it contrasted absolutely with the case of Mexico, which Jeffrey Weldon shows to be systematically constructed on party dominance and lack of competition, rather than on formally enshrined presidential powers. Weldon retreats further in history than most of the contributors to remind us of the relative weakness of the presidential office prior to the mid-1930s, providing the plausible suggestion that a waning PRI might throw up circumstances similar to those prevailing in the 15 years prior to Lázaro Cárdenas.

Argentina seemed to have been charting an opposite course since the first election of President Menem, whose legislative majority allowed him to obtain a compliant Supreme Court and the constitutional reform necessary to serve a second successive term. Yet, here again, the capacity of the voters to stall or qualify the process was underlined in the mid-term elections of November 1997. Mark Jones' account ends before this juncture, but, like the other chapters, it is neither so event-driven nor so careless of agency as to be undermined by it. Jones rightly emphasises party discipline, which surely assisted the UCR-FREPASO victories and may yet provide a strong Peronist answer. The authors' decision to include two chapters on Chile is justified both by the much greater constitutional differentiation brought about by dictatorship in the 1970s and by the salience of the presidentialist debate to explanations of the 1973 coup. First Julio Faúndez presents a strong case against institutional primacy for the state of polarisation and breakdown in 1970–3, and then Peter Siavelis reviews the experience of transition under Pinochet's authoritarian constitution of 1980. Here the sense that no new pattern can yet be established and that the adequate functioning of liberal democratic institutions depends heavily upon continued reform does not detract from the skills of the Aylwin administration in negotiating the first, uncertain steps. Indeed, one sometimes feels rather more attention could have been devoted in this book to such skills of statecraft, even if they are seldom reducible to tabular or numerate measurement. This is certainly an important factor in the re-emergence of General Hugo Banzer, who, as Eduardo Gamarra's chapter helps to explain, finally acquired the presidency of Bolivia by constitutional means precisely by acting less the dictator that he had been and more the arbitrator that the country's semi-presidentialist system has increasingly come to rely upon. Here, as in the earlier chapters, it is most useful to have an intelligent survey of a national political experience that owes its concise nature to a clear interpretative approach. If one naturally finds some passages more forced or tenuous than others, Mainwaring has hit on a felicitous way of fusing debate with narrative appraisal that will serve student and expert alike.

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JAMES DUNKERLEY

Barbara Geddes, *Politician's Dilemma: Building State Capacity in Latin America* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), pp. xiii + 246, £13.95 pb.

*Politician's Dilemma* is a sophisticated and well documented study of the intractable problem of building competent government bureaucracies in Latin America. The book scrutinises administrative reform through the eyes of self-

interested politicians. Their interests, which Geddes carefully filters through a diverse array of institutional contexts, only very rarely coincide with those of bureaucratic reformers. Bureaucratic competence has consequently been scarce in Latin America throughout this century.

The book arrives deductively at the hypothesis that legislators vote for administrative reform only when it hurts their opponents as much as it hurts them by reducing everyone's access to patronage. This happens, Geddes argues, only when two large parties are relatively evenly matched and tend to alternate in power. This is game theory at its best; a deductive exercise generates unconventional hypotheses that Geddes then tests against the historical record, from the 1930s on, of the democratic regimes in Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, Colombia and Venezuela. Over many decades Geddes finds only three brief instances in which the optimal balance occurred, and consistent with her hypotheses, these were the only legislatures that voted for administrative reform. Even in these cases, administrative competence later suffered when imbalances between parties reemerged. Lasting reform requires decades of relative parity among the major parties. In other cases, even when parties are evenly matched, several other institutional factors sapped incentives for reform. For example, open-list electoral systems promote competition within parties making it hard to build majorities within major parties in favour of patronage-reducing reform. The political prospects for lasting reform, according to these arguments, give almost no cause for optimism.

Even an impressive book like this one is not without problems. On the count of omission, Politician's Dilemma often bypasses debates in the literature on bureaucracy in Latin America. The empirical coverage of bureaucracy in Latin America is very broad, but the book rarely pauses to engage theories and arguments derived from that empirical literature. This neglect is especially pronounced in the chapter on appointments and also weakens an otherwise conventional argument that competent bureaucracies, insulated from self-serving politicians, make positive contributions to development. The main evidence marshalled to support this argument is a correlation between the insulation of implementing agencies and sectoral fulfillment of targets in Juscelino Kubitschek's Plano de Metas. The correlation is suggestive but would have been more convincing had it further engaged the empirical studies of policy-making during Kubitschek's government and considered their alternative explanations for varying sectoral performance in the 1950s.

The operationalisation of 'equality of access to patronage', the first crucial step in the empirical testing, is also problematic. Geddes acknowledges that it cannot be directly measured, but rather hastily adopts an imminently measurable proxy: 'if parties control roughly equal numbers of seats in the legislature and alternate in the presidency over a period of years, each party will have access to about the same amount of patronage' (p. 105). This formulation requires several risky assumptions that seem stretched for many countries of Latin America. True, most legislators have some access to patronage, but, as later chapters of the book show, Presidents sometimes distribute almost everything to their own parties leaving very little for the opposition. Further Geddes argues that when parties alternate in the presidency each exiting party leaves some loyalists in the bureaucracy who then sustain that party's access to patronage. This may be the case in some countries or with some low level appointees, but in cases where presidents have

the power to dismiss and appoint tens of thousands of top officials (the ones who control all significant jobs and resources), they have no incentives to allow politicians from the losing party to stay on. Given the importance of Geddes' hypotheses, the measurement of the distribution of patronage deserves further scrutiny and empirical research.

Although much of the book is devoted to historical analysis, the conclusions are more relevant now than ever. Most countries of Latin America, and the developing world more widely, are trying to reform their bureaucracies in order to implement pressing programmes in areas such as social welfare and economic regulation. The World Bank devoted much of its 1997 World Development Report to the importance of bureaucratic competence, though tellingly had little to say about the politics of creating it. *Politician's Dilemma* fills this crucial gap, and would-be-reformers would be well advised to read it, even if doing so would oblige most rational reformers to give up the fight.

*Northwestern University, Illinois* BEN ROSS SCHNEIDER

Paul van Lindert and Otto Verkoren (eds.), *Small Towns and Beyond: Rural Transformation and Small Urban Centres in Latin America* (Amsterdam: Thela Publishers, 1997), pp. 145, £12.95 pb.

Small and intermediate urban centres have long been given a central role in various models of regional development planning. These, in turn, have been criticised for ignoring the exploitative role of small towns in draining rural resources for the benefit of large cities and their wealthy elites. However, much of this debate has been theoretical, and where empirical studies were undertaken, they have generally focused on national core regions. The aim of this collection is to address this gap by examining the potential of small and intermediate centres in more peripheral areas of Latin America. The key questions set in the introductory chapter cover three main issues: do small and intermediate towns generate regional growth, or are they the 'vanguard of exploitation'? Do they absorb sizeable numbers of rural migrants from their regions? Do they function as service centres or are they bypassed by rural producers, consumers and traders? These themes are examined by eight articles divided into three main sections. The first three articles address urbanisation and rural transformation processes in three pioneer colonization regions: the Amazon Region of Brazil, the Brazilian Mid-West and Northern Costa Rica. Perhaps not surprisingly, pioneer towns show specific characteristics, the most important one being the fast pace at which the frontier itself tends to move away from the areas of colonisation. As one of the authors notes, 'pioneer towns may to a large extent be typified as "disposable towns" and their populations as "disposable migrants".'

All three studies emphasise the deeply unequal access to resources in these frontier regions, where *latifundia* and cattle ranching tend to dominate agricultural production and are usually linked to international credits and markets. This supports a familiar critique of regional planning, which argues that spatial policies are not and cannot be a solution to wider problems of social inequality at the local, national and international levels. The second section includes two papers, on Costa Rica and Ecuador, focusing on the impact of national

deconcentration policies on regional development. Here again, the main problems identified are familiar, ranging from the limited decision-making and financial resources of regional governments to the role of patronage relations and social networks in ensuring that any benefit derived from deconcentration accrues to the local elites rather than to both rural and urban lower-income groups. The three papers in the last section examine respectively migrant workers' access to urban labour markets in three small towns in Mexico, Costa Rica and Bolivia; gender-selective migration in Peru; and periodic markets in the State of Mexico. Their main findings can be summarised as follows: native workers generally have better access to the higher echelons of the urban labour market; migrant women tend to keep stronger links with households in home areas than male migrants; and the distribution of markets in rural areas is essentially a function of rural consumers' purchasing power. Most of the arguments presented in the various sections have been made before, and from this viewpoint the book falls somewhat short of providing innovative answers to the questions set in the introduction. Overall, however, the collection is a useful contribution to the empirical literature on the relations between small urban centres and their regions in the Latin American context.

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CECILIA TACOLI

Bruce Nord, *Mexico City's Alternative Futures* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996), pp. xvii + 200, $29.50.

The author claims on page xvi that: 'The goals of this volume are at least three in number. First, to summarise materials on Mexico City which might be relevant to its future. Next by focusing on substantial groups within the population and their institutions, not finally, but with hopefulness, we will contrast our best prognostications with those of the major students of Mexico City.' I have to admit that I do not fully understand that statement, nor indeed most of what he writes later, so it does successfully summarise the content!

Nord presumably intended to discuss the different paths that one of the world's largest cities could follow in the future and to identify the key elements that will determine which of those routes are actually chosen. He approached this task through a literature review and the book embraces a range of issues such as the city's demography, its urban economy and polity, its public services and housing, its environment, its culture, its geography and planning, and its cartography. It also contains a commentary on the theoretical problems involved in predicting the future.

He has clearly read quite widely and many of the obvious sources on Mexico City's development are cited. We know he has read the bibliography because he puts in so many quotes and because he puts the citations in the middle of the text. I would complain about the inclusion of quite so many quotes and tedious summaries of what he has read except for the fact that it protects us from his own ideas. Alas, these are often banal, frequently illogical, and are expressed appallingly badly. If you doubt me, consider his comments on the value of 'comparative archaeology ... of the cultural-ecological kind' (p. 157). Although

he seemingly values this approach as a method for predicting the future, 'we are afraid of the academic jibberish, and tautological thinking such structural functional analysis has promulgated elsewhere, and, thus, consign it to our appendices'!

The proof reading is about as good as the logic. There are errors on every page and it matters not whether his chosen language is English, French, German, Spanish or Latin, he garbles them all! A sample of his errors provides: the poet Shelly (p. xi), the urbanist Henri Pirene (p. 11), stadtluft nacht frei (p. 11), ignomineous (p. 150), okehs (p. 67), cultural cauchillo (p. 63), Televisia (p. 94), cividades perdidas (p. 58), and A-priori (p. 50). Not an accent adorns a Spanish word throughout the book.

A few examples of Nord-style also merit repetition. The subsection labelled 'Heavy thoughts from economists: HIGH CLASS WAFFLING' (p. 45) includes: 'Mexico's expansion on the slippery wings of oil has made them vulnerable at the same time. They could open the taps for domestic production but like Iraq in the post war period, would not be given a license to relieve themselves internationally.' When discussing planning for the metropolitan area he asserts that 'Global and even catastrophic consequences can be obtained or avoided through the dedicated plan. People can avoid their own self-contamination, mother nature can be foiled!' (p. 152).

I have been racking my mind to recall whether I have ever read a worse book. Possibly I have, but its title does not spring to mind. Certainly, I have never read a supposedly serious book from a university press containing quite so much perversion of logic, such blatant disregard for the basic rules of English language and so many errors in spelling, punctuation and referencing. Most of my second year students produce better course papers than this. I suppose you might use this book to show first-year undergraduates how not to write. I cannot think of any other reason why you should let them read it.

*University College, London* ALAN GILBERT

Victor Bulmer-Thomas (ed.), *Thirty Years of Latin American Studies in the United Kingdom 1965–1995* (London: University of London, Institute of Latin American Studies, 1996), pp. 152, $15.00, £10.00 pb.

Anyone concerned with Latin American studies will find this slim but rewarding collection of essays of great interest. Following an informative overview by the editor, Victor Bulmer-Thomas, the collection consists of six essays analysing the development of Latin American studies in the UK from disciplinary or thematic perspectives. James Dunkerley reviews history and politics, John Dickenson covers geography, Peter Wade examines social anthropology, E. V. K. Fitzgerald considers economics, Tim Allmark and Michael Redclift deal with the environment, and John King writes on literature and culture.

To the non-British Latin Americanist some of the conclusions reached by these authors are rather striking, while others seem more predictable, if not less consequential. Certainly warranting attention is the speed and scope of development of the study of Latin America in the UK in the years following the 1965 Parry Report. The Parry centres established at Oxford, Cambridge,

Glasgow, London and Liverpool grew rapidly in terms of academic staff. Even more impressive was the spread of Latin American studies to other institutions. By the end of the period, academic staff devoted to Latin American studies at non-Parry institutions outnumbered those at Parry centres by more than two to one. Despite losses to the US academic market, nearly 400 Latin Americanists are employed at British institutions, constituting an intellectual community second only to that of the USA, outside of Latin America. That there should exist a few areas of weakness, such as coverage of Brazil, is less surprising than that this cohort should be so vigorous and productive in a context that before the Parry report was comparatively inhospitable.

The healthy development of Latin American Studies in the UK has not resulted in the establishment of what might be termed a British 'school', autonomous of and different from trends elsewhere, which is perhaps fortunate. These essays demonstrate that work on Latin America in the UK takes place within at least two contexts. One is a disciplinary context that requires interaction with the considerable scholarship produced in the USA and Latin America. The second context is historical, defined by the evolution of events in Latin America itself.

The anthropology, geography, history and politics of Latin America in the UK have evolved with major reference to disciplinary developments, while the work on economics, literature, and ecology seems shaped more by the course of Latin American affairs and less by mainstream disciplinary trends. A third context that is implied rather than explicit, except in Dickenson's discussion of the marginal status of geographic research on Latin America in British geography, is the British intellectual scene. Literature seems to have been the field most effective in cracking that scene to win acceptance of Latin America as a significant rather than marginal part of the modern world.

The essays are well-written and accessible to the student and non-specialist. The tone is objective rather than partisan, as the authors tread lightly around the ideological disputes and polemical tempests of the past. Several of the essays review the condition of Latin America and of Latin American studies at the time of the Parry report in order to contrast the present state of affairs. That exercise that reinforces the conclusion that the rise of this interdisciplinary area studies enterprise in the UK is, whether appreciated or not by the current authorities, an extraordinary accomplishment.

*The University of New Mexico* GILBERT W. MERKX

Marshall Eakin, *Brazil: The Once and Future Country* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1997), pp. xiii + 301, £30.00.

Written for non-Brazilians, *Brazil The Once and Future Country* aims to 'translate the world and worldview of Brazilians into terms comprehensible to others'. Dedicated to the late historian E. Bradford Burns, whose *A History of Brazil* figured among the standard works in English for scholars of Brazil for more than two decades, Eakin has departed from Burns's historical narrative and selected wide-ranging topics, updating and refocusing regional and cultural approaches pursued in 1963 in the *Introduction to Brazil* by the late anthropologist, Charles Wagley. An historian of Brazil, Eakin recasts the past in the institutions that

inform the Brazil of today, drawing on a legacy of unequal land distribution, involuntary labour, regional elite politics, a powerful state apparatus, an influential Catholic church, and the role of the military.

Diversity and complexity are central to a discussion in Chapter Two of the Brazilian 'archipelago' from regional perspectives that highlight population origins and composition, natural resources, modernisation, and the development of principal products for the export markets, initially sugarcane, hides, and tobacco, cotton and minerals in the eighteenth century, and coffee from the nineteenth century to the present. Underplayed are the roles of the internal market network and the impact of small-scale production of basic foodstuffs such as manioc, maize, and beans, the basic elements of Brazil's diet since colonial times, lesser, albeit vital players in the regional and transatlantic export markets. Eakin's selection of the state of Minas Gerais provides an illustrative case of economic diversification, initiated in the late colonial period when mining of gold and semi-precious stones accompanied the formation of urban centres and provided for proto-industrialisation of the regional economy. The transition from mining to a firm agricultural economy based on foodstuffs, coffee production, and cattle raising in the nineteenth century is linked to the emergence of Minas Gerais as a key political actor during the First Republic when the shift to urbanisation and industrialisation enhance the state's strategic importance to the national economy.

The indigenous, African, and European contributions to Brazil's complex contemporary ethical and racial culture are reviewed in Eakin's chapter entitled 'Lusotropical Civilization'. Here, the origins and development of race relations, ethnicity, and class are clearly delineated and recast in the present cultural milieu although there is a tendency to de-emphasize the impact of gender on the institution of the family, on patriarchalism, on labour, and on basic rights of women that are now officially recognised in the Constitution of 1988.

Eakin's evaluation of Brazil's political scenario, the topic addressed in Chapter Four, draws on patronage and power as major features of Brazil's colonial political legacy, carried over into the post-independence monarchy and the First Republic as backdrops for clientelism today. Here the presence of the past is again recast although the emphasis on patronage outweighs the achievements of the electoral system and of partisan negotiations, particularly in regard to redemocratisation and the restoration of civil and political society in the aftermath of the military period.

A chapter entitled 'A Flawed Industrial Revolution' harks back to the colonial legacy with an informative portrayal of Brazil's uneasy path to industrialisation under an interventionist and protectionist state, and an evaluation of the country's post-war to current economic scenario. Under the presidency of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the reduction of inflation levels, strong economic growth, a reduction in state control over national resources, and the shift to a more open economy are seen as optimistic portents for Brazil's growing hemispheric and global projection despite the needs for efficient reform of the tax structure, cuts to government spending, and correction of glaring income disparities. The book concludes on an optimistic note, paying tribute to ethnic and racial blends, single language, national identity and promising potential that, despite major obstacles, contribute to Brazil's unique culture and poise Brazil on the brink of future greatness.

Designed for beginners, the writing is terse and the arguments concisely presented, sporadically supported by citations from Brazilian and foreign journals, academic works, and literary sources. Students of Brazil will be aided by a selective bibliography for each chapter, a map of Brazil, and tables on Brazil's regions, population, and income distribution.

*King's College London* NANCY NARO

Ken Conca, *Manufacturing Insecurity: The Rise and Fall of Brazil's Military-Industrial Complex* (Boulder, CO, and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997), pp. xi + 283, $55.00.

The so-called threat of arms production by developing counrtries was a recurrent theme in the arms trade and arms control literature in the 1970s and 1980s. Among the developing countries was Brazil, sometimes praised as a successful newcomer to arms production, other times vilified as a potential competitor to the established group of traditional arms suppliers. In any case, by the early 1990s, Brazil's arms industry had collapsed as quickly as it had risen.

Ken Conca has written an important and useful study on Brazil's defence industry. He shows a thorough understanding of Brazil's recent industrial and military developments as well as an up-to-date knowledge of the relevant literature. Furthermore, he aims at drawing lessons from Brazil's case in order to put forward some hypotheses about 'Third World' defence industrialisation.

The study opens with a brief description of Brazil's arms industry before the 1970s. It is followed by two chapters on the conditions that allowed the emergence of an arms industry in the country: the changing global arms trade and the domestic regime established after the military coup of 1964.

The study itself is a detailed analysis of four major firms and projects that constituted the core of Brazil's defence industry: the aeronautics company Embraer and its ambitious project to develop, jointly with Italy, a tactical fighter – the AM-X; the aerospace programme and its satellite-launch vehicle – the VLS; the Osorio Battle Tank developed by Engesa, the most successful private arms company; and finally the navy-led project for a nuclear submarine.

According to the author, Brazil's arms industry was set up with the following main characteristics, which by and large explain its rise and fall: it was state-led, with a very selective involvement of the civilian industry; it lacked coordination between the three services of the armed forces; and it followed technological and commercial pragmatism. Therefore, Conca argues that even if the military rulers in Brazil had a strategic vision of the country's economic and security needs, and established a pattern of military industrialisation which successfully exploited a niche in the changing global market, they were incapable of building up stable and flexible institutions. In Conca's view, this is the ultimate explanation and the main requirement for a successful arms industry: the creation of institutions that could both establish long-term goals and adapt to evolving domestic and global circumstances.

In the concluding chapter, the author introduces two other reasonably successful cases of recent military industrialisation, India and South Korea. His intention is to show that, similar to the Brazilian case, these countries also lack

the ability to establish stable and flexible institutions. It seems to me that regarding 'Third World' military industrialisation, the author perhaps raises more questions than he is capable of answering. Despite this, the book is a solid piece of work, and it certainly adds to the understanding of Brazil's frustrated attempt to build up a defence industry.

*The Royal Institute of International Affairs* PAULO WROBEL

Maria J. F. Willumsen and Eduardo Giannetti da Fonseca (eds.), *The Brazilian Economy: Structure and Performance in Recent Decades* (Miami: University of Miami, North–South Center Press, 1997), pp. vii + 288, $21.95 pb.

Despite growing interest in the subject – not least among the business community – the number of English language publications on the contemporary Brazilian economy remains surprisingly small. The addition of a book that seeks to provide a comprehensive and accessible guide to recent developments in Latin America's largest economy should therefore be particularly welcome. Willumsen and Fonseca's edited volume is an ambitious undertaking in that, in addition to offering the customary macroeconomic overview, it aims to provide the reader with a survey of economic performance on a sectoral basis. To an extent the volume is successful in its objectives though there are some shortcomings.

Chapters 1 (by R. Macedo & F. Barbosa) and 2 (by C. Longo) provide a useful general summary of the course of Brazilian economic policies over the twenty or so years up until 1993. The content and record of Brazil's numerous stabilisation plans are reviewed in Chapter 1 while Chapter 2 focuses on the Collor plans and Brazil's dramatic liberalisation drive of the early 1990s. The discussion of the Collor plans, although well executed, is perhaps not comprehensive enough and implicitly assumes a considerable knowledge on the reader's behalf. Chapter 3 (by H. Nogueira da Cruz and M. da Silva) sets out to assess Brazil's recent industrial and technological performance. Although well constructed, the chapter is rather too brief to address meaningfully the distinctly heterogeneous nature of the Brazilian industrial sector's recent experiences.

Chapters 4–7, covering respectively the agricultural sector, the energy sector, the external sector and the exchange rate regime, are the strongest in the volume. The chapter on energy (Chapter 5 by E. Pelin) is particularly effective and provides the reader with a cogent survey of a sector now at the very heart of the privatisation programme. The concise review of trade policy from the 1950s through to the 1980s provided by Chapter 6 (by S. Silber) is also very useful. Chapters 8–10 covering the issues of the labour force, human capital formation, income distribution and regional disparities are also reasonably effective though perhaps a little brief given the scale of their subject matter. The discussion of human capital formation in Chapter 9 (by E. da Fonseca) is particularly concise and well argued. However, given the increased importance of these issues on the policy agenda, a lengthier discussion with greater deployment of evidence would have been especially welcome.

Although the book possesses many pockets of strength, it suffers from two main shortcomings. First, although an edited volume, too little effort has been made to meld its constituent components into a more coherent whole in which

individual chapters are seen to relate to one another. Secondly, from the perspective of those concerned with Brazil's current economic performance, the book suffers from the fact that its coverage of the issues terminates in 1993. In a more slowly evolving economy, less prone to structural breaks, this may not have mattered. In the case of Brazil, however, this feature is more serious, particularly in the light of the post 1994 Real Plan. The successful taming of inflation, the acceleration of the privatisation programme and more concerted attempts at fiscal reform in the post 1994 period have given rise to a qualitatively different economic environment. In turn, this new economic environment poses a number of different and extremely urgent questions that now need to be addressed by economists, policy-makers and business. Unfortunately, the nature of this book is such that these questions are only partially examined. This is a pity given the likely interests and research objectives of many of this volume's potential readers. However, for those writing to expand their knowledge of the Brazilian economy in the 1970s and 1980s, this book will represent a useful addition to the literature.

*Centre for Brazilian Studies*, DR EDMUND AMANN
*University of Oxford*

Roberta Rabellotti, *External Economies and Co-operation in Industrial Districts: A Comparison of Italy and Mexico* (Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 1997), pp. xiii + 213, £45.00.

In recent years there has been a substantial literature based around the notion of 'flexible specialisation'. Put crudely, the argument is that international capitalism as a system of production is shifting away from the mass production of standardised goods towards a more flexible and innovative system, where smaller enterprises engage in flexible production techniques requiring close collaboration between a firm, its suppliers and its customers. The spatial concentration of successful small firms in particular regions or districts has revived interest in the potential of external economies, as an explanation for industrial success, so that the 'collective efficiency' of a group of geographically concentrated small firms is greater than their individual efficiency as isolated producers. This focus has created an interest in the experience industrial districts in Europe as a model for small firms in lower income countries.

The present book addresses this issue directly by comparing small firms in the footwear industry in Italy with similar firms in Guadalajara and León in Mexico. The first part of the book surveys the debate on industrial districts both in Europe and outside, whilst the second presents the empirical results from surveys and interviews of firms in Italy and Mexico. Various forms of linkages are identified and statistical analysis is used to draw conclusions about the variety of experiences within the districts.

The book is clearly written and is useful in that most empirical work from this perspective is still on developed economies. Insofar as it has limitations these stem from the paradigm in which it is located. In particular much is made of the gains from external effects and cooperative behaviour arising from the location of small firms within particular geographical areas. This is an important argument

particularly since much conventional thinking has tended to downplay the role of industrial externalities. However to sharpen it sufficiently to convince sceptics; ideally one needs some quantitative measure of the positive impact of these effects to establish whether they are indeed necessary conditions for the growth of small firms in some sectors. This is difficult and rarely done. The performance measures used here – trends in production in Italy and profits in Mexico – are very simple and quantitatively the extent to which they are influenced by collective efficiency is not established.

The conclusions of the empirical work are not surprising. Performance within the districts is found to be heterogeneous. Size of firm matters and so does the external economic environment. A brief scan of the industrial development literature confirms that few studies have failed to arrive at these conclusions. The real issue is whether we can go beyond such general propositions to say something about the type of external environment conducive to efficient growth. Here interesting issues are touched on for Mexico. Within the footwear sector there is a greater tendency for vertical integration than in Italy; in other words firms prefer to produce more inputs themselves rather than rely on external suppliers within a district. This is put down to the protection of the domestic market from foreign competition used in Mexico until the late 1980s, which it is suggested weakened the competitive pressure to look for lowest cost suppliers. This is an important issue worth further attention. It is not obvious that in a more liberalised international trading more efficient domestic linkages will be generated; in some sectors, possibly including footwear, the expectation must be the linkages will go abroad through the demand for imported inputs. How the pattern of collective efficiency differs under alternative trading regimes is an important conceptual and policy question and could perhaps have been expanded on in his work.

In summary careful empirical studies like this are of interest to those who work on industrial development. The challenge is to build on this survey approach to identify the significance of externalities and the merits of alternative means of ensuring that they are captured by individual firms.

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*University of Bradford*

Roderic Ai Camp (ed.), *Polling for Democracy: Public Opinion and Political Liberalization in Mexico* (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 1996), pp. viii + 186, $45.00.

Like many books that grew out of conferences, *Polling for Democracy* is a collection of essays connected more by the practice of polling than by any dependent variable. Nevitte's well-designed study of attitudes toward trade table has little in common, except the method of polling, with Stevenson and Seligson's discussion of stability, or McCann's discussion of political culture. While they may be individually valuable, these chapters do not build toward a common conclusion about polls, democracy, or the sources of public opinion. For instance, Stevenson and Seligson suggest that Mexico is increasingly vulnerable to revolution, while McCann argues that prospects for democracy have improved, and Nevitte has no opinion on the subject. Stevenson and Seligson's argument seems weaker, as it

extrapolates from 1970s polls in northern cities to suggest that the 1994 Chiapas rebellion is a 'sign of the impact of fading memories' of the Revolution. However, this link is entirely speculative, and their data cannot even show that memories *have* faded in rural states like Chiapas.

Perhaps the most intriguing discussion in the book concerns the relationship between polling and political liberalisation. Does increased electoral competition and the resulting need for timely information explain the explosion of polling in Mexico since 1988? Has liberalisation improved the accuracy of Mexican polls, traditionally discounted due in part to the distorting influence of authoritarianism? And how has the increased publication of polls affected the formation of public opinion and political liberalisation?

Camp encouraged leading journalists and practitioners of polling to address these issues. All agreed that the reporting of polls is incomplete and often downright misleading. Many reports offer only partial results, fail to identify sponsors, and do not list specific questions or procedures. These problems should affect how readers perceive polls – but do they? Even with full reporting, will most Mexicans understand how sample design or question wording may affect the validity of results?

Here the authors diverge. Trejo Delarbe and Gamboa want to improve reporting and let readers draw their own conclusions. Basañez argues that polling organisations should present the implications of their results, but comes under fire for his use of untested assumptions about the voter preferences of abstainers in order to 'predict' outcomes under different abstention scenarios, and for using 'adjusted' figures to reallocate 'undecided' voters, again, to 'predict' electoral outcomes.

The authors also disagree about whether polls improve or undermine democratic communication. These are familiar debates about the potential of polls to provide information to politicians and the public, versus their potential as a weapon – as Moreno argues – to build support for the preferred policies or the electoral prospects of the sponsor. However, real disagreements remain about the credibility of polls and how many see them. Do polls influence public opinion, or do most Mexicans ignore them? Can polls predict electoral results? Does their publication influence outcomes? These questions are extremely important, and clearly merit further empirical research.

*University of California,*
*Santa Barbara*

KATHLEEN BRUHN

Howard Handelman, *Mexican Politics: The Dynamics of Change*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997, pp. vii + 200, £13.99 pb.

The rapid pace of political change in Mexico has fueled a constant search for up-to-date textbooks accessible to undergraduates. *Mexican Politics* targets this demand with a fair degree of success. Completed in early 1996, it remains current, with the important exception of the 1997 elections. Handelman writes clearly, with a minimum of jargon, though sometimes an excess of irrelevant (but often interesting) detail. He is careful to explain terms (like neoliberalism) that confuse American students. He covers all major economic and political changes, including a chapter on US–Mexican relations.

The book's main strength lies in its discussion of political institutions. Handelman does an especially good job on presidentialism and the electoral system. He manages to keep the discussion accessible while still conveying a sophisticated understanding of the Mexican system. The chapter on economic change would not satisfy an economist, but contrasts import substitution industrialisation (ISI) with neoliberalism at a level that most undergraduates should understand.

Less satisfying, to my mind, is its rather haphazard theoretical framework. Despite subtitling his book 'the dynamics of change', Handelman offers no sustained argument about what causes political change in Mexico. He mentions individual factors in the context of specific changes, with little discussion of how these factors tie together in theories of political change. Political economy is particularly neglected; there is little effective analysis of the impact of neoliberalism on political variables such as union alliances, PRI support, stability, etc.

Instead of a unifying argument, Handelman offers two unifying questions: whether Mexico can make a smooth transition to democracy, and whether the economy can resume steady growth while moving toward more equitable income distribution. The book jacket promises to 'help undergraduates answer these questions for themselves'. However, Handelman does little to help students by linking features of the Mexican system to the probability (or lack thereof) of either outcome. Empirical material is presented chronologically and thematically rather than in the context of these questions. The questions themselves do not take centre stage; they are buried in the preface, and not repeated consistently in the text.

Still, Handelman's book manages to cover an impressive amount of empirical ground without losing accessibility. Appropriately supplemented with more challenging theoretical readings, it would be a useful primary text for a variety of courses.

*University of California*,
*Santa Barbara*

KATHLEEN BRUHN

Jonathan Fox and Josefina Aranda, *Decentralization and Rural Development in Mexico: Community Participation in Oaxaca's Municipal Funds Program*, (San Diego, CA: Center for US–Mexican Studies, University of California, Monograph Series 42, 1996), pp. xx + 74, $11.95 pb.

Oaxaca is one of Mexico's most impoverished states. With 40 per cent of its three million population speaking an 'Indian' language, and most of its 570 *municipios* deeply influenced by peasant out-migration to Mexican cities, rural plantations or the USA, it is an obvious candidate for funds targeted at poverty. Fox and Aranda also indicate that Oaxaca is ideal for a programme of decentralised lending (and its evaluation); its 'system of local government is unique in Mexico, since the juridictions are much smaller, more numerous, and relatively more autonomous than in other Mexican states'. (p. 3).

The Municipal Funds Program, supported by the World Bank at the instigation of the Mexican Social Development Ministry (SEDESOL), aimed to

carry out small public works. It would thus improve living conditions at the level of the *municipio* and enhance the incomes of peasants in areas of low productivity, especially indigenous people, and residents of marginal urban neighbourhoods. Guidelines indicated that local committees should be set up to manage the funds and fix priorities year by year; the balance in the allocation of funds (US$ 17,000 per *municipio*) between municipal head-townships or -villages and smaller settlements was also specified.

In Oaxaca, however, the majority of *municipios* operate, politically, not with balloted elections but with open assemblies (*usos y costumbres*), where men meet to discuss community affairs and arrive at a publicly declared consensus. It was through assemblies at the municipal and sub-municipal levels that funds were deployed in the early 1990s in two-thirds of the cases investigated. The lion's share (76.8 per cent) was split between expenditure on paving roads, and such like, in the village centre, education and drinking water, and 18.0 per cent was divided between rural roads and crops storage and marketing. Only 5.2 per cent was committed to productive infrastructure.

Just over half the projects in indigenous communities were assessed to have had a significant impact, compared to a 62 per cent success rate in *mestizo* areas. This difference was partly due to the competitive party systems in the more populous, *mestizo municipios*; they were associated with significant projects, even where the government in power was opposed to the national (and state) ruling party, the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*.

Fox and Arranda argue that the Oaxaca programme was successful, but that it depended on municipal democracy as well as intra-municipal decentralisation to the smallest population clusters. In short, 'the impact of decentralization on government responsiveness depends more on the structures of governance than on funding flows'. They conclude, extrapolating to the rest of Mexico, where these pre-conditions are less common, that 'increased funding without institutional change is likely to reinforce the existing institutional structure' (p. 50) – in other words, true decentralisation will not occur.

*Oxford University* COLIN CLARKE

Kevin Gosner and Arij Ouweneel (eds.), *Indigenous Revolts in Chiapas and the Andean Highlands* (Amsterdam: CEDLA – Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation, 1996), pp. vii + 282, $25.00 pb.

This volume arose out of a one-day multi-disciplinary conference held in 1994 at the Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation in Amsterdam. The conference was inspired by the recent Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, and the ongoing civil war in Peru. Its implicit aim was to situate these two events within a comparative historical context. The resultant volume is also shaped by these concerns. Six chapters focus on Chiapas. The remaining five examine rebellion in the Andes. Each chapter examines a specific uprising. The chapters on Chiapas consider the so-called Battle of Sumidero in the early sixteenth century, the comparatively well-studied Tzeltal Revolt of 1712, the Caste War, and the Zapatista revolt of 1994. The Andean section explores aspects of the Túpac Amaru revolt, Mapuche insurrection in nineteenth century Chile, The War of the Pacific, an indigenous revolt in 1920s Ecuador, and Sendero Luminoso.

Certain themes run through the entire volume. Most authors consider the degree to which these different revolts may be classified as 'indigenous', and many chapters include a lengthy critique of previous attempts at interpretation. The chapters on the Andes, in particular, give sustained attention to the existing historiography. Nonetheless, the volume is only partially successful as a unified piece. The section on Chiapas is not linked very tightly to the section on the Andes, despite the theoretical concerns that ostensibly unite the various chapters. Overall, the volume fails in its promise to relate the Zapatistas and Sendero to earlier revolts. A number of chapters refer to the Zapatista uprising of 1994, but few manage to sketch explicit links between past and present uprisings. Indeed, several authors specifically point out the perils of such attempts. The links between, say, Mapuche resistance and Sendero Luminso are even less clear. Although the chapters on the Andes all explore the relationship between emergent nationalism and indigenous revolt, the connections between Peru's current crisis and previous collapses of the state are not much discussed. A final interpretative chapter that drew together these different strands would have been beneficial. Nonetheless, individual chapters provide compact analyses of some well-known, and less well-known revolts.

*University of Warwick* REBECCA EARLE

Alain de Janvry, Gustavo Gordillo and Elisabeth Sadoulet, *Mexico's Second Agrarian Reform: Household and Community Responses* (La Jolla, CA: Center for US–Mexican Studies, 1997), pp. xv + 222, pb.

Reporting on a pair of surveys of the ejidal sector in Mexico in 1990 and 1994, this book offers 'to identify early successes and failures in the implementation of the 'bold programme of agrarian reform initiated in 1991 by Carlos Salinas de Gortari'. (pp. xiii–xiv). As is characteristic of this team, the statistical analysis offers an enthusiastic and optimistic view of the opportunities that neo-liberal policy reform is creating for the ejidal sector.

Surprisingly, however, the flaws in the sample on which the quantitative analysis is based are serious. The small size of the 1994 sample (275 ejidos and 1,548 ejidatarios) does not allow for an accurate description of the specific socio-economic and regional groups characteristic of a highly variegated social and productive ejidal sector.

The reported findings will not surprise scholars. Rather than reviewing the conclusions that poverty is determined by 'region, farm size, ethnicity, human capital assets, and migration assets', (p. 183) a broader description of the team's agenda is warranted. A succinct statement is offered: 'The emergence of a peasant economy is the product of the liberalisation of ejidatarios from state control'. (p. 137). Although there are 'many means of differentiation', four were particularly important in assuring economic success: (1) planting monocropped corn in the fall-winter cycle required 'differential technological behaviour'; (2) producing fruits and vegetables; (3) cattle raising; and (4) migration.

To confront the backwardness of the peasant economy de Janvry and his team offer 'a set of guidelines for improvement'. (p. xiv). '[T]argeting education programs and migration assistance for households in indigenous communities'

(p. 187) tops their list. But more important. '[a]s ejidatarios become more exposed to the rigors of competitive markets and less sheltered by government' [their organisations will] 'assume an increasingly important role if ejidatarios are to successfully modernise and diversify'. (p. 121). The second agrarian reform 'offers major opportunities to improve efficiency and welfare'; (p. 213) the 'old model of political control', with its control over local political practices and markets, can be overcome by the 'higher incentives for direct political intervention' and by 'using the comparative advantages that the ejido offers' (pp. 211–2).

We are warned that 'successful modernisation and diversification hinge upon the existence of a favourable macroeconomic context'. (p. 212). While a top official of the Agriculture Ministry declared its intent to remove one-half of Mexico's population from the *campo*, the authors do not examine how or why maize was transferred from traditional dry land peasants to the farmers in irrigation districts of northern Mexico. The huge grain imports occasioned by the dramatic growth in the demand for water, as international maize prices rose and cattlemen held back their exports of live animals, do not seem worthy of mention to these authors; but the substantial economic, social and environmental costs of this policy might have been avoided had peasants been encouraged to increase production.

This detailed examination of a flawed information base is part of a broader set of well-financed research products designed to confirm that most peasants cannot hope to survive in the new global economy. There is no evidence in the surveys to suggest that it would be possible for the peasants to switch to other crops or improve the productivity of their traditional products without the assistance historically offered to more favoured segments of rural producers. Different approaches are needed, but we will not find any consideration of them here.

*Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana*, *Mexico City* DAVID BARKIN

Adolfo Figueroa, Teofilo Altamirano and Denis Sulmont, *Social Exclusion and Inequality in Peru* (Geneva: International Labour Organisation, 1996), pp. x+96, Swiss Fr. 17.50 pb.

This slim monograph is a contribution to the Social Exclusion and Development Policy Series published by the International Institute for Labour Studies in Geneva. According to the Series Editors in the Preface:

> The concept of social exclusion is now extensively used in policy debates in Western Europe to describe emerging patterns of social disadvantage, particularly associated with long-term unemployment. It is a complex notion which can be used to denote, on the one hand, a situation or process experienced by individuals, namely their marginalization from society through economic deprivation and social isolation; and on the other hand, a situation or process which occurs in societies, namely the fragmentation of social relations, the emergence of new dualisms, and the breakdown of social cohesion. (p. v).

The book opens with three short chapters that develop a theoretical framework, define economic, political and cultural exclusion and relate these

concepts to Peruvian society. The next three chapters each consider one of the three dimensions of exclusion defined above and the final chapter draws conclusions and policy implications.

Economic exclusion is seen in the trends in income distribution towards increasing inequality, trends in absolute poverty, a growing informal sector that reflects exclusion from the formal labour market and exclusion from credit markets. Political exclusion is analysed through the gap between formal and actual rights, which is large in relation to basic social services, education, social security and access to property rights. It is argued that in a 'culture of inequality' social exclusion is linked to political violence, such as the activities of the Shining Path.

In Peru, significant cultural factors in the processes of exclusion are: ethno-cultural origin, language and illiteracy.' (p. 71). While migration from the country to the town and the spread of the communications media have contributed to cultural integration, racial factors have a negative influence on inter-cultural relations.

Having used the concept of social exclusion to analyse Peru, the authors reach some stark conclusions:

> The theory of distributive equilibrium states that, in all societies, there is a limited range of inequalities which are compatable with social order. A logical consequence of this theory is that not every distribution of income will be socially acceptable. In every society, there are thresholds of tolerance to absolute and relative poverty, and when impoverishment exceeds these thresholds, society enters into a situation of distributive crisis. The hypothesis here is that, with such a degree of mass impoverishment, Peru has crossed the threshold of social tolerance for poverty and inequality. It has, in this way, entered into a situation of distributive crisis. (p. 86).

Policies to reduce exclusion include access to credit and insurance markets, education and new forms of industrial organisation in the economic sphere, but also longer-run policies to close the gap between formal and actual rights and to bridge the gulf between ethnic groups.

Despite its brevity, the book contains a great deal of historical, sociological and statistical information about Peru, which the authors marshall to provide a sombre picture of the scale of Peru's current and continuing problems.

*London School of Economics and Political Science* JIM THOMAS

Jorge I. Domínguez and Marc Lindenberg (eds.), *Democratic Transitions in Central America* (Gainesville, Fl: University of Florida Press, 1997), pp. xx + 210, $49.95; £45.00.

The deluge of *transitología* for Latin America as a whole stands in contrast to the relative paucity of literature on democratic transition in Central America. This collection, covering Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Panama, focuses firmly on the role of elites in the transition by means of soliciting contributions from prominent political actors in the region. However, while this yields some interesting observations and juxtapositions of views, it largely fails to provide any systematic answers to the four broad questions the editors attempt to address: how do the powerful yield their power? How do key figures bring about political

liberalisation and democratisation against 'seemingly impossible odds'? What rules of arrangements do they design to achieve these outcomes? What is the behaviour of economic elites in political and economic liberalisation?

In his introductory chapter Jorge Domínguez attempts to provide some overall coherence to the volume. He identifies four common factors which 'help to explain the beginning of democratization' in the region: the use of military force at a key juncture; rational choices by elites in response to a state of war or hardship; international pressure; and severe economic crisis. Domínguez' overview is both stimulating and polemical. For example, while he is right to signal the importance of the strength of the electoral right as a factor in democratisation, his claim that part of the reason for the civil wars in El Salvador and Guatemala was that the right were 'misinformed about electoral sociology' (p. 22) seems a curious one. Arguably the right has only achieved the level of electoral strength it now enjoys in the region precisely because of the defeat – at a very high human cost – of more radical or revolutionary options. Domínguez' claim that Central American elites rationally opted for more competitive regimes when the costs of suppression exceeded the costs of repression – choosing 'Dahl to answer Hobbes' (p. 11) – overlooks the fact that, at least in the case of Guatemala, they had first effectively annhilated the opposition (a similar point is made by Ruben Zamora in his chapter on El Salvador). Similarly, Domínguez' conclusion that only direct US military intervention was able to jump-start democratisation in Panama implies a rather more benign view of US involvement in that country than many would adopt.

The principal value of this collection lies in the analyses provided by the ten Central American contributors. Here there are some sharply opposing views (for example, from the pro and anti-Sandinista camps, Jaime Wheelock, and Silvio de Franco and José Luis Velazquez, respectively); differences of interpretation of the Guatemalan transition from the military (ex-Minister of Defence Héctor Gramajo) and civilian (ex-Finance Minister Rodolfo Paíz-Andrade) sectors; and two single chapters on El Salvador (by Ruben Zamora) and Panama (by ex-President Ardito-Barletta). There are a few gems here, but also infuriating – albeit predictable – gaps. For example, in his historical overview of Panamanian politics between 1978 and 1991, Ardito-Barletta claims he accepted the military's offer to lead the official party in the 1984 presidential elections in the hope of opening the way towards democratisation and a negotiated military withdrawal, but that he ultimately failed to prevail over the armed forces: 'The PDF and Noriega were too powerful for the domestic opposition to confront and too intransigent to negotiate with to achieve a peaceful political transition to democracy. Thus an armed foreign intervention, though unfortunate, was necessary to prevent the country from sinking into political and institutional darkness' (p. 60). Unfortunately, however, (albeit predictably) Ardito-Barletta fails to reflect on the consequences for democracy in Panama of this kind of forcibly-imposed transition.

The two chapters on Nicaragua illustrate one of the central problems for democratic consolidation in Nicaragua: the degree of polarisation existing between political elites. While Jaime Wheelock stresses the democratising thrust of Sandinismo in terms of the structural transformations it achieved, Silvio de Franco and José Luis Velázquez take an altogether different view of the Sandinista legacy, which they characterise as another variant of the authoritarianism and oligarchic, dictatorial rule which has historically charac-

terised Nicaraguan political culture. On Guatemala, General Gramajo offers his own very particular insider's perspective on the army-led political transition in the 1982–90 period, while Rodolfo Paíz-Andrade signals the delay in addressing social development issues as a main weakness of Guatemala's transition, and notes the organised resistance of powerful private sector interests to fiscal reform. Curiously, the Guatemalan contributors barely mention the negotiated peace process, surely central to any evaluation of democratisation in Guatemala.

Any collection which presents the differing viewpoints of key actors themselves will always be of interest. However, weighing in at a hefty £45 (compared to $49.95 in the USA), this collection fails to provide a comprehensive analysis of transition in the region. Much of the historical rendition by the various contributors is well-worn and repetitive and some of it plainly dubious. In conclusion, some interesting snippets but, sadly, far from essential.

*Institute of Latin American Studies*, RACHEL SIEDER
*London University*

Laura Macdonald, *Supporting Civil Society: The Political Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Central America* (Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 1997), pp. xv + 195, £35.00.

Although many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) see themselves as contributing substantially to development in the South, this book suggests that their impact is limited, materially and politically. Yet on the margins of this tendency, the author uncovers the possibility that some NGOs could live up to their vocations by aligning themselves with people who have historically been excluded from development processes. Macdonald explains both this possibility of change and the dominant tendency from a 'post-Marxist' perspective.

In the process of constructing this argument the author contributes modestly to several literatures. Macdonald's six detailed case studies of NGO projects in Costa Rica and Nicaragua add to the growing body of independent assessments of NGO development initiatives. Her distinctions between the NGOs' different approaches to strategic matters (such as whether and how to promote popular participation in the development process), rooted in the cases studies, are quite interesting. Still, while the studies are based on interviews with a range of sources, these are biased in favour of foreign or national NGO managers, thus leaving little space for the voices of poor people. This methodological tilt seems inconsistent with the author's recommendation to NGOs that they should listen more carefully to historically marginalised people.

Macdonald's analyses of the evolving roles of NGOs in Costa Rica and Nicaragua also contribute to the literatures on the political economy of development in each country: although studies of the state and state–civil society relations in both countries abound, none examine the role of NGOs in these contexts as systematically as Macdonald does in this book. Students of Costa Rican development will be fascinated by the author's comparison between NGOs which contested market-oriented reforms initiated by the state in the 1980s and those which, with funding from the US Agency for International Development, tried to assist producers to adapt to the new economic environment. Analysts of

recent Nicaraguan history will be intrigued by Macdonald's portrait of how different NGOs positioned themselves *vis-à-vis* the growing tensions between the Sandinista state and popular sectors in the late 1980s.

This book also contributes to the field of international political economy (IPE). By drawing on Robert Cox's Gramscian critical theory and other post-Marxist approaches, Macdonald casts a bridge between IPE and the study of NGOs. As such she provides a different approach from those of Clayton, Edwards, Fowler, Hulme, Smillie and others who have published equally critical assessments of NGO performance in recent years. In doing so Macdonald also challenges post-Marxist IPE to confront the messy reality of workers, in NGOs, trying to contribute to transformative projects. One wishes the author had gone a step further by submitting the notion that NGOs should ally themselves with peoples organisations and social movements, which has become the new orthodoxy among so-called progressive NGOs, to critical analysis. Indeed, this would be an interesting topic for future research.

*London School of Economics and Political Science* STEPHEN BARANYI

Jan P. de Groot and Ruerd Ruben (eds.), *Sustainable Agriculture in Central America* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1997), pp. viii + 234, £47.50.

Agriculture is a sector in which the aim of sustainability has special significance for the Central American economies. Its attainment is essential to enhance agricultural production and food security as well as to contribute to poverty reduction and income growth. The book under review assesses the capability of public policies and local initiatives for improving sustainability in regional agriculture.

The book is a collection of thirteen papers presented at the workshop on 'Sustainable Agriculture in Central America' that took place at the 1995 annual conference of the Association for European Research on Central America and the Caribbean. The papers, excluding the introduction, are arranged in four parts. The first one discusses the macroeconomic conditions for sustainable agriculture. The next part analyses the viability of more sustainable production practices compatible with the technical and socioeconomic conditions of farmers in different regional ecosystems (hillsides, humid tropics, frontier areas). The third part is concerned with the sustainable management of the natural resource reserves and protected areas. The fourth and final part examines agrarian policies for sustainable land use, specifically those dealing with property rights, rules for resource management in agrarian production cooperatives and non-conventional financial mechanisms. Most of the papers included in the book are devoted to case studies in Honduras and Nicaragua.

The natural resource base frequently represents a source of socioeconomic conflict in Central America because of unequal access to land and the importance of this factor for meeting subsistence needs and generating income in rural areas. For this reason, a strategy for sustainable agriculture must seek a balance among environmental, economic and social considerations. This is not an easy task for the policy-maker since it involves important trade-offs between policy objectives and requires a close coordination between public policies and local action.

Some of the papers contribute to identify the trade-offs between macro-economic and environmental objectives (see especially Andy Thorpe's paper and the last section of Peter Utting's paper). To minimise these trade-offs it is not advocated – unless the environmental impact is too adverse – reversing macro-economic policies, but supplementing them with complementary initiatives which correct the negative environmental consequences associated with some micro-responses. Experiences of local initiatives in natural resource management and in institution-building for rural development are reported by a large number of papers. Most of these succeed in providing insights into the potentialities and limitations of a more participatory approach to sustainable agriculture. The main conclusions emerging from these papers suggest that there is a long way before effective coordination between the public and local initiatives may permit the process of resource depletion in Central America to be controlled.

The value of the book, however, would have been enhanced if it had addressed two additional themes: the Costa Rican experience in 'ecocapitalism' and the potential for regional cooperation in the sustainability field. The 'ecocapitalism' in Costa Rica, with sectors of the business community becoming actively involved in the production and trade of environmental goods and services, is having important effects on both the local resource users and the national economy. On the other hand, the regional cooperation to protect and recover the environment is particularly relevant to Central America as this is a region consisting of small countries with similar ecological characteristics and borders with shared natural resources.

The book is useful reading for all those interested in public policies and local initiatives which may support a strategy of sustainable agriculture and rural development in Honduras and Nicaragua. The coverage of these issues in the rest of the Central American countries is much more limited.

*University of Burgos* FERNANDO RUEDA-JUNQUERA

Mario Lungo Uclés, *El Salvador in the Eighties: Counterinsurgency and Revolution* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1996), pp. vi + 240, $54.95, $19.95 pb.

This is a translation of Mario Lungo's useful addition to the rather meagre literature on El Salvador, originally published in 1990 by the Catholic Central American University, (UCA) as *El Salvador en los 80: contrainsurgencia y revolución*. One of the few Salvadorean academics actually writing in country, Lungo provides us here with a well-argued analysis of the political shifts and changes during the 1980s, a decade dominated by civil war. His refreshingly unpartisan and accessible style is only slightly spoilt by the overly literal translation. The book consists of an introduction by Arthur Schmidt and seven chapters. The first five chapters were written towards the end of 1989, when an end to the civil war still seemed far off. The final chapter and epilogue were added in 1992, shortly after the Chapultepec Peace Accords finally produced an end to the civil war.

The major thesis of this work is that the period 1979–89 encapsulated a distinct political period which would culminate in a clear victory for either the

revolutionaries or the ruling oligarchy. The defining processes of the period were, according to Lungo, the political recomposition of the ruling classes, a result of 'the persistent hegemonic crisis of the bloc in power', and the emergence of a 'lively popular revolutionary alternative' able to counter the military weight of the US-backed Salvadorean armed forces.

This recomposition came about with the eclipse of the US-supported Christian Democrat option and its replacement by a new right wing under the ARENA party, consolidated in several elections during the 1980s and accompanied by new economic think-tanks and substantial US financial support.

The chapter on politico-military strategy is useful, charting the building of the FMLN rearguard, their discussions around the role of insurrection and explaining how the FMLN, despite obvious geographical constraints, was able to withstand superior firepower and sophisticated counterinsurgency strategies, both military and economic.

Another informative section deals with the evolution of FMLN thinking from the early 1970s onwards. Hindsight affords a clear explanation of the relationship and strategies of the different groups as they moved towards unity and then the adoption of a 'popular and revolutionary alternative'.

The conclusion then drawn is that the permanent political recomposition of the political power of the elite in El Salvador implies a solution of the crisis of hegemony in the dominant bloc, which in turn requires the strategic defeat of the revolutionary forces. In his epilogue the author admits the error of this original thesis in that the war ended without clear victory for either side. Perhaps another area open to dispute is when he concludes that there will not be future splits in the FMLN or ARENA, both of which have occurred since. In his defence it may certainly be stated, nevertheless, that his analysis of the reorientation of the economy, society and state have been borne out by the events of recent years.

This book will be particularly important for Salvadorean specialists, but deserves a place on the shelf of any scholar researching war, transition, or Central America. The lamentably over-extended introductory essay by Arthur Schmidt, it is hoped, will not put readers off before they reach the commencement of this valuable contribution to the literature on a little-researched country.

*Bradford University* ANNA MARY KEENE

Manuel de Paz-Sánchez, *Zona Rebelde: La Diplomacia Española ante la Revolución Cubana (1957–1960)* (Tenerife: Gobierno de Canarias, Cabildo Insular de Fuerteventura, Ayuntamiento de la Laguna, Ayuntamiento de Icod de los Vinos, Centro de la Cultura Popular Canaria, 1997), pp. 401, pb.

The link between Spain and Cuba is not an uneventful relationship between two ordinary states. In the colonial past Cuba was known as 'the ever faithful isle'. Apparently, faithfulness works both ways, since upon becoming independent, Cuba received one of the largest number of immigrants in Latin America. While becoming more closely linked to the United States in terms of the economy, Cuba became more Spanish than before its independence.

This may explain why when Spain was ruled by General Francisco Franco, an authoritarian, anticommunist dictator, linked by a military treaty to the United States, he maintained close political and economic relations with Cuban Marxist

dictator Fidel Castro. The most serious episode for potential disagreement between the two strong men took place on January 20, 1960, when a confrontation between Castro and Spanish ambassador Juan Pablo Lojendio led to the expulsion of the diplomat after calling the Cuban leader a liar on live television.

This curious event is the historical backbone of the superb book by Manuel de Paz-Sánchez, a history professor at the University of La Laguna in the Canary island of Tenerife. The book is not only an example of academic rigour in documentation, but it is written in a friendly style with a great sense of narrative. Using primary archival sources of Spain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, quoting directly from confidential, unpublished, for-your-eyes-only reports drafted by Spanish diplomats, and supplemented by research undertaken in several libraries in Havana, Manuel de Paz has opened a window previously closed.

In one of his most interesting chapters, the author confirms that Franco was not only uncomfortable with the bravado performance of his diplomat, but he reprimanded him and for months he ostracised him. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs made considerable efforts to minimize the incident and Franco later reinforced his policy of not accepting the US embargo against Cuba. When Spanish democracy was reborn, Spain became the market economy with the largest trade with Cuba, which in turn has been the Latin American state that has received one of the largest amounts of development aid in the last decades.

What makes this basically historical book also very timely is the string of recent events that have turned the Spain–Cuba relationship into a family quarrel with frequent name calling, mostly from Castro himself. Annoyed by the new Spanish government's active role in the European Union, Castro withdrew his *placet* for the ambassadorial nominee in retaliation for Spain's hardening of policy toward Cuba. However, the exceptional Cuba–Spain relationship has again come to the surface when the Helms–Burton law was passed and the new conservative government of José María Aznar sided with the rest of the world in its opposition.

A reflection of Spanish perception on Cuba, the text ends with a chronology of events until the rebirth of the Spanish democracy, several documents issued by the Spanish-Cuban Church, a collection of photographs, and a selected bibliography, making this volume a necessary source for future studies.

*University of Miami* JOAQUÍN ROY

Harry Villegas (Pombo), *Pombo: A Man of Che's Guerrilla: With Che Guevara in Bolivia, 1966–68* (London: Pathfinder Press, 1997), pp. 365, £39.00, £14.45 pb.

There are two quite different books between the covers of *Pombo: a man of Che's Guerrilla*. The first is an honest and undemonstrative account of Che's Bolivian campaign by his closest and most loyal colleague, for whom Che's death was a real and personal tragedy. It embraces a diary written in Bolivia up to May 1967 and later lectures based on a reconstruction from notes and memory. The second book is contained in the introduction, footnotes and the chronology that frame Pombo's account. It belongs to the realm of fantasy and selective concealment,

claiming for Che's Bolivian campaign an impact and an influence it simply did not have. Mary Alice Waters' foreword links it to the 'massive revolutionary upsurges in the Southern Cone years later', though later struggles in Argentina (1969 and 1971) and Chile (1970–3) owed nothing to Guevara's political method. The chronology employs the same sleight of hand, placing unrelated events side by side and implying a relationship between them.

It is right in these times to celebrate the commitment and courage that have made Guevara an icon for the rebellious youth of the nineties. But this is no reason to conceal the truth of the Bolivian campaign, as the book's editors have done. Pombo's accounts leave little doubt that Bolivia was an ill-conceived and badly organised military adventure. The guerrillas knew little of the terrain – an infertile and remote region chosen because of its proximity to Argentina rather than its strategic significance for the Bolivian struggle. In his *Bolivian Diary*, Che noted the absence of contact with the miners (the photographs of the miners in this volume are at best disingenuous) despite their history of revolutionary struggle. The local peasantry, too, were hostile and suspicious; the guerrillas were frequently misled or betrayed by fearful local guides.

Given these unpromising conditions, this volume provokes but does not answer the question – why Bolivia? Che's vision was as grand as his preparation was inadequate. He had just escaped the disastrous experience of the Congo, whose details are given in John Lee Anderson's recent exhaustive biography (*Che: a Revolutionary Life*). It is perplexing that Che should embark immediately on an equally ill-considered project. The guerrilla warfare strategy, of course, saw the revolutionaries themselves rather than the working class as the subject of revolution; Che's 1967 Message to the Tricontinental (reproduced here) spoke of the 'invincibility of the guerrillas'. The struggle is won or lost, in such a view, by the military skill and bravery of the fighters rather than the level of consciousness and organisation of the masses. The failures of this policy of 'substitution' (of the guerrillas for the revolutionary class) were littered across Latin America by 1967. Yet Che still spoke of a 'continental revolution' built upon the same perspective.

Bolivia was the graveyard for such misguided notions. Fidel Castro clearly no longer shared Guevara's notion of international revolution, and by 1967 was seeking rapprochement with Latin America's Communist Parties. The decision to build a *foco* in Bolivia was due, in part at least, to the refusal of any other Latin American Communist Parties to countenance guerrilla war on its terrain. Only the opportunism of one Communist leader gave Che access to Bolivia – and he proved unable to deliver on his promises. In Venezuela Douglas Bravo was complaining that by 1967 Castro had effectively withdrawn support from the Guevarist currents. While he mourned Che's death in Havana, Castro was developing new relationships with Torrijos in Panama and Velasco in Peru.

*A Man of Che's Guerrilla* is part of a major publishing campaign surrounding the 30th anniversary of Che's death; for the Cuban government the rediscovery of Che's message of sacrifice is part of an effort to persuade the Cuban population to accept scarcity and internal inequality. What Harry Villegas' book confirms is that Che Guevara is an inspiring symbol of revolution, but that Bolivia has only negative lessons to offer on how that transformation can be achieved.

*Glasgow University* MIKE GONZALEZ

Alberto Ciria, *Más allá de la pantalla: Cine argentino, historia y política* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Flor, 1995), pp. xiii + 287.

As the first chapter of this book reveals through an interesting personal memoir, Alberto Ciria has always been a film buff. He describes with relish and nostalgia the old movie houses in Buenos Aires in the thirties and forties and the first films that remain as productive memory, from Hollywood, Europe and Latin America. The following seven chapters expand this early movie fascination into a wide ranging analysis of different aspects of Argentine film history. Chapter 2 explores the scope of Aries Cinematográfica, the production company set up by film-makers Fernando Ayala and Héctor Olivera in 1956, which kept up a continuity and diversity of work into the nineties.

This approach of viewing 35 years of film history through a specific cultural institution is particularly useful since it allows for detail – the problems of developing commercial and socially responsible film projects, the production, distribution and exhibition of movies, the financing, the directors, the analysis of the films themselves – within the broader context of Argentina, in democracy and under military rule. The focus on commercial cinema also offers a useful corrective to the dominant critical approach in Latin American studies that favours discussion of key political or art houses, internationally recognised, films. Aries made movies that people went to see: more work needs to be done on what constitutes commercial, popular cinema in Argentina and elsewhere in Latin America. Ciria points us here in an interesting direction.

The remaining chapters, on the work of Torre Nilsson (film and literature), the themes of sex, class and power in the films of María Luisa Bemberg, the development of the Argentine film industry between 1983 and 1989 and, finally, brief discussions of three popular movies from the thirties and forties, are both engaging and illuminating. This final section, which examines the studios in Argentina in the thirties, in particular the Lumition studio, the tango-led commercial cinema and the populism of Argentina's most prolific and successful film maker of the early talkies period, Manuel Romero, could usefully be expanded into a further book length study. The period of the thirties and forties, until now, has suffered from particular neglect in the critical literature. Overall the book shows how the insights of an historian and a sociologist can take us 'beyond the screen', where cinema reflects and responds to the movements of politics and society.

*University of Warwick* JOHN KING

Randal Johnson and Robert Stam (eds.), *Brazilian Cinema*, expanded edition, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 491, $19.50, pb.

Since the date of its first publication in 1982, *Brazilian Cinema* has become the standard and most cited reference work in English on the development of one of the most sophisticated and wide ranging of national cinemas in Latin America. The first edition focused in particular on Cinema Novo and beyond, through statements by key directors, detailed analysis of significant films and broader thematic essays by leading Brazilian and North American critics. The question

asked by this review might be: do libraries or individuals who have the early edition need to go out and buy this expanded version? The answer is most emphatically yes. The new edition has 130 additional pages of text, 36 more photographic illustrations and a range of recent bibliographical material, all of which bring the book to date and engage with critical debates – for example about globalisation and postmodernity – that have emerged over the past 15 years.

The additional material is in the form of two chapters. The first, by one of the editors, Randal Johnson, charts 'The rise and fall of Brazilian cinema, 1960–1990', in particular through the influence and eventual demise of the state film body Embrafilme. It gives the book the important dimension of an analysis of the uneasy but essential financial alliance between the state and film-makers and the problems of the market place, of production, distribution and exhibition within Brazil. The second additional chapter, by the other editor Robert Stam and two of Brazil's leading film critics, João Luiz Viera and Ismail Xavier, is entitled 'The shape of Brazilian cinema in the postmodern age', and covers the period from the early eighties to the mid-nineties, from optimism to a more sober realism. The authors take a thematic approach, looking in 20 separate sections at such issues as the question of the national, reflexivity, the cinema of pleasure, the emblem of carnival and the rediscovery of the *chanchada*, film and social movements and indigenous media. The chapter is wide-ranging, theoretically sophisticated and illustrated by analysis of key films and movements. It is a considerable achievement to make sense of 15 complex years of film production in 80 pages, without reverting to a taxonomy of titles and dates. The authors end with a note of cautious optimism: that Brazilian cinema is emerging from the crash of the early nineties and asserting a minimal autonomous existence in the making of national features and coproductions, while also blending in to the wider universe of the audiovisual: into television, video, cable, short films, music video and video computer technologies.

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