Much of the source base for his foreign cases comes from company records, trade publications and US government documents. Some may take exception with the author for drawing such grand conclusions from such a circumscribed set of case studies. Others might have wished for some discussion of Mexico's 'typicality' during Latin America's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century export boom. In what ways, for instance, was foreign, especially North American, investment distinctive in Mexico? Was the Mexican state's role as facilitator and balancer all that unusual? No matter, by taking such unequivocal stands on these hot button issues, Mark Wasserman invites us to rethink assumptions about the role of foreign and domestic entrepreneurs and their relationship to the state before, during and after the Mexican Revolution.

Bowdoin College ALLEN WELLS

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Ageeth Sluis, *Deco Body, Deco City: Female Spectacle and Modernity in Mexico City, 1900–1939* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), pp. x + 381, £24.99, pb.

Sluis' highly original cultural history takes on an impressively broad range of subjects in Mexico City during the era of Plutarco Elías Calles (1925–35) ranging from the familiar (urban planning, the perpetually tony west-side neighbourhood of Condesa, the Palacio de Bellas Artes) to several untouched by scholars of Mexico's capital (stage spectacles of bataclán, nudism and pornography, the downtown public market/social centre 'Abelardo Rodríguez'). The common thread running through them all was the influence of Art Deco, with its streamlined, hypermodern, cosmopolitan and consumeristic sensibilities. Artists, politicians and young women used Deco to negotiate the uneasy transition from Porfirian values and aesthetics to the post-revolutionary era that was nationalistic yet globally-aware, and at once socially progressive and capitalist.

Among the book's many strengths is its transnational vision. Sluis places Mexico City's history in a larger geographical perspective: *chilango* urban planners, designers and intellectuals adopted Deco as part of a hemispheric intellectual transformation, although Le Corbusier's impact on Brazilian and Argentine cities was even greater. During Mexico's 'reconstruction' of the 1920s and 1930s, Deco architecture proved especially attractive because it could please the strident advocates of functionalism, indigenistas demanding the inclusion of pre-Columbian motifs, and traditionalists defending neo-colonial art.

Sluis is most compelling when she shows the interrelationship between cultural and architectural change, on one hand, and political, economic and social forces on the other. For instance, to explain the Abelardo Rodríguez market's impact on downtown neighbourhoods, Sluis analyses Maximato-era *políticos*, demographic trends like growing migration of rural women, and the socio-economic fallout of the Great Depression. The market's Art Deco style allowed for the preservation of a colonial convent within the market's complex, and its neo-colonial exterior to harmonise with baroque architecture in Mexico City's Centro. At the same time its interior was hypermodern and functionalist, including a theatre and day-care centre to serve female vendors and their children. It also featured numerous murals – the Mexican Revolution's distinctive art form – celebrating an idealised countryside tamed and

uplifted by the post-revolutionary state. Sluis coins the term *camposcape* to refer to these artistic spectacles featuring pastoral themes that often orientalised indigenous women. Revolutionary politicians favoured arts glorifying Mexico's camposcape to claim success in subduing and 'civilising' rural areas whose indigeneity, pro-Cristero sentiment, and recalcitrance often frustrated state projects.

If the Abelardo Rodríguez market is one of the triumphs of Art Deco, then Mexico City's iconic Palacio de Bellas Artes represents a very qualified success. Treasury Secretary Alberto Pani had to deal with the unfinished hulk of the Porfirian national theatre that was literally sinking. His gifted team of architects (including nephew Mario) retained the eclectic, pre-Revolutionary Beaux Arts façade, but transformed the interior into a cutting-edge Art Deco gem containing numerous pre-Columbian elements. Deco's primitivism became revolutionary indigenism. Yet Bellas Artes failed to reach out to the urban poor around the nearby La Merced market. Worse still, corruption discredited the Palacio's administration, and the combination of the Cardenistas' prudishness and the demands of the tourist market meant the Palacio's artistic fare was rather insipid. Racy satirical reviews were effectively banned, and instead Bellas Artes featured folkloric indigenista dance and Mexican singing charros, the latter a male-dominated, politically conservative form.

While the author makes a convincing case that Deco architecture helped modernise Mexico City, the influence of the Deco female body – streamlined, barely clothed, vaguely androgynous, and erotically charged-seemed to me more ambiguous. Undoubtedly, the youthful, healthy, athletic and secular Deco woman served the revolutionary state as a symbolic foil to the aged female fanatic or *beata*. Indeed, Edward Wright-Rios' brilliant work on la Madre Matiana has shown how religious women provoked profound anxiety in male revolutionaries. Sluis' pioneering work on pornography and nudism reveals how and why the display of the Deco Body shocked and often provoked conservative, Catholic elements to resist, at times violently. I would add that the Catholics' moral panic over federal teachers allegedly spreading nudism among students became a trope frequently used to mobilise conservative opposition to the post-revolutionary state in the second Cristero War.

Undoubtedly, the celebration of the female Deco Body in bataclán was something of an attempted cultural revolution, one that shook up gender roles and drew the attention not just of vanguard intellectuals but also políticos and generals, frequent patrons of Mexico City's demi-monde where the line between entertainment and sex work were often blurred. Changes in gender roles and social mores during the Deco age empowered diva-entrepreneurs Esperanza Iris and María Conesa as well as previously overlooked writers Cube Bonifant and Carmina. Sluis shies away, however, from the larger question as to whether the display of young, semi-clothed female bodies advanced social equality for most women or reinforced privileged or wealthy males' libidinal prerogatives. The focus on the symbolic meant human protagonists and events went unexplored at few points: Sluis adeptly explores the aesthetics of the Fuente de los Cántaros statue in the Condesa's signature Parque México, but what of Luz Jiménez, the statue's model? Jiménez's memoirs of her Milpa Alta childhood and work as anthropologists' informant means today scholars consider her an important Nahua intellectual.

Perhaps it is unfair to critique what the author could have written rather than what she did. Sluis makes a strong case for the centrality of Deco in the cultural production of the 1920s and 1930s. More importantly for scholars of post-revolutionary state formation, Sluis shows how Deco's versatility and hybridity helped reconcile

contradictions in the ideology of Callista politicians and intellectuals. The state in the burgeoning, restless capital city was increasingly authoritarian and centralised, but also seriously grappling with resolving urban poverty (and for that matter far from hopelessly corrupt). Seen through the lens of Deco, the Maximato in Mexico's capital was a period of social and intellectual ferment marked by a surprising degree of experimentation and innovation. Her vision is, in the final analysis, quite perceptive.

Colby College BEN FALLAW

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Robert Buffington, *A Sentimental Education for the Working Man: The Mexico City Penny Press, 1900–1910* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2015), pp. ix + 294, £66.00, £17.99 pb.

Behind the ostensible calm of the *Pax Porfiriana*, the first decade of the twentieth century was challenging for Mexico. Governing elites worried about their increasingly powerful northern neighbour, which had assumed for itself the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of Latin American nations. At the same time, a portion of the upper classes had managed to monopolise the most lucrative opportunities, leading to resentment among less well-connected sectors of the upper and middle classes. Major strikes were taking place in the country's largest textile mills, mines and railroads, and when presidential mediation failed workers were duly repressed. Anxious with these pressures from outside and from within, little did ruling elites know that they also needed to worry about the coalescence of Mexico City's artisans, factory workers and peddlers. Robert Buffington's fascinating study proposes a close reading of a satirical penny press describing itself as 'por el pueblo y para el pueblo', as it contributed to the construction of a popular oppositional identity in the ten years leading up to the so-called Mexican Revolution.

A Sentimental Education for the Working Man begins by warning the reader that the fluidity of urban life in the early twentieth-century Mexico forged bonds that cut across traditionally-defined 'classes', leading to the creation of identities that were not class-based in any Marxist sense. On this basis, Buffington uses the term 'working class' to refer to the labouring classes, the popular classes and the urban poor. The book continues in two distinct parts. The first unpacks the 'structure of feelings' behind popular Liberalism. Chapter 1 analyses how the editors of the satirical penny press deployed graphic images and cartoons in the construction of a popular alternative to the official historical narrative disseminated by Porfirian elites. It demonstrates that they used a resonant religious imagery to resignify Liberal heroes like Father Hidalgo and Benito Juárez as working-class heroes. Readers supported this operation, contributing poems that expressed the affective bond that tied them to their newly imagined nation. Buffington finds that popular Liberalism combined with civic Catholicism to denounce the betrayal of the founding fathers' project of an egalitarian, democratic society by the corruption and authoritarianism of the Porfirian regime.

The cult of Juárez is the focus of chapter 2. Following a scathing biography by *científico* intellectual and politician Francisco Bulnes, the penny press joined other opposition publications in using the controversy to undermine the government's legitimacy. What distinguished the penny press was the linguistic inclusion of its 'street-talk' columns, which featured conversations between two male acquaintances during their daily quests for sustenance, entertainment and women. Written in a