

the student to draw up his or her own bibliography. Thanks to Annino and Rojas's extremely useful volume, the student will already know what has been published on the War of Independence, when it was written, and, in broad terms, the angle it adopted.

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A History of the Cuban Revolution. By Aviva Chomsky. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. Pp. xi, 224. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index.

It is difficult to understand why so few historians, as opposed to other social scientists and students of cultural manifestations, have systematically studied and written on the subject of the Cuban Revolution. Reflective of this reality is the dearth of single-volume histories from professional historians. Following the seminal 1977 work *History of the Cuban Revolution* by British historian Hugh Thomas, and *Cuba in Revolution* (2007) by Antoni Kapcia, Aviva Chomsky's *A History of the Cuban Revolution* is only the third history of the revolution written by a historian. This fact alone makes Chomsky's volume a welcome addition to the historiography of Cuba, and more broadly, Latin America. In the interest of full disclosure, I must say that for several years I have been working on my own history of the revolution, which is scheduled for publication in 2012.

Chomsky's book is concise (less than 200 pages of text) and highly readable, two characteristics favorable for course adoption. It is divided into eight chapters plus an introduction and a conclusion. While the book covers a variety of topics, it does not appear to have been meant to be a comprehensive history of the revolution, but rather an introduction to the topic for U.S. college students. The book structure follows the topical organization that characterizes most previous volumes on the subject. Following a historical background in Chapter 1, five chapters cover diverse topics such as U.S.-Cuba relations, art and culture, and emigration and internationalism over the three decades between 1959 and 1989. The next two chapters comprise the "Special Period" (1990–2000) and Cuba in the twenty-first century. While there are some advantages to a mostly topical approach, the drawbacks are a tendency toward repetition and generalizations applied over extensive periods of time.

Chomsky's history has several strengths. These include an evident mastery of the extensive body of work on the Cuban Revolution produced by U.S. scholars and island-based academics. Little space is made, however, for the works and perspectives of Cuban exiles. Another of the book's strengths is the approachable tone of its pedagogy: Chomsky explains a variety of concepts such as dependency and engages the reader in a discussion of various definitions of democracy. Readers with little or no background on Cuba and its revolution will easily navigate this volume.

The book, nonetheless, exhibits some serious problems. Most salient are its biased approach and overemphasis on U.S. responses to the revolution, including unnecessary

comparisons between the Cuban and U.S. social, economic, and political systems. The shortcomings of U.S. democracy and the injustices of its social system, real as they are, should not be used to justify the oppressive, dictatorial, and failed Cuban regime. The book exhibits a strong bias in favor of the Cuban revolutionary experiment and offers very little criticism of its excesses, including its horrid human rights record and the failure of the Cuban economy, at least since 1993, to provide for the most basic material needs of the population.

One of Chomsky's most evident manifestations of bias is her treatment of the Cuban diaspora. Early in the book she claims that Cubans fleeing the island in the early years of the revolution did so because their privileges (private schools, maids, fancy restaurants) had evaporated. When speaking of Cuban exile groups of the 1960s and 1970s, she focuses on extremist, violent organizations and fails to mention moderate, progressive groups such as the umbrella organization Concilio Revolucionario Cubano led by progressive former Prime Minister José Miró Cardona and Manuel Ray's Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo. At a later point, she refers to José Basulto, leader of Brothers to the Rescue, simply as a "wanted criminal." This representation of the Cuban exile community is outright offensive and I consider it my duty to denounce it in this review.

In closing, while Chomsky's book is an important contribution to the field of recent Cuban history, its readers should approach it with caution due to its pro-Castro bias and its silence on the shortcomings of the revolution. If used as a course textbook, it should be complemented with other readings to offer a more balanced perspective.

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José Martí and the Future of Cuban Nationalisms. By Alfred J. López. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006. Pp. xiv, 159. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index.

In a book that analyzes competing interpretations of the writings and historical footprint of José Martí, Alfred López offers his own postmodern reading, which adds quotation marks around the revolutionary figure "Martí." López emphasizes "ambivalence" and "instability" in the legacy to argue "that there is no central 'Martí' or Martíán image that we can privilege above all others" (p. 32). In other words, we scholars do not have access to an original or definitive "Martí" and thus we are left with only a fleeting glimpse of what Martí might have been. The point here is to challenge authoritative interpretations, particularly those that invoke Martí to develop nationalist, governmental, and academic projects that may be at odds with the threads and contradictions revealed in Martí's own body of writing.

Chapter 1 reviews how Martí has been appropriated for various versions of Cuban nationalism, on the island and in Miami. López contrasts Marxist interpretations with