

broader picture. In fact, Darnton does the same, but he consulted only those US sources published by the *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS) series, which is insufficient, as FRUS represent a minority of US documents available. Similarly, the author supports several claims grounded solely on policy-makers' memoirs (see, for instance, the figure on 'Chilean subversive threat' based on Augusto Pinochet's accounts, p. 157). Given that autobiographies and memoirs tend to be highly selective and partial in the presentation of facts, they should never be used in isolation to support claims.

To sum up, Darnton's audacity in trying to deal with many different and complex cases of state rivalry and *rapprochement* in Cold War Latin America constitutes the book's source of both strength and weakness. His book does provide interesting insights, but they should be taken more carefully than Darnton suggests.

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Steve Ellner (ed.), *Latin America's Radical Left: Challenges and Complexities of Political Power in the Twenty-First Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), pp. xiv + 291, £18.95, pb.

The chapters of *Latin America's Radical Left* celebrate the governments led by Presidents Rafael Correa of Ecuador (2007–present), Evo Morales of Bolivia (2005–present) and begun by President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela (1998–present). These governments, Ellner and his collaborators suggest, deepen democracy as they pursue, to cite Orlando Núñez (a Nicaraguan Marxist), 'a "post-neoliberal or post-capitalist struggle" against women's inequality and patriarchy, racial and ethnic discrimination, and the degradation of the environment (p. 29).' The most important strength of these chapters is that they help identify the central characteristics of radical left regimes. Yet, this celebration of radical left governments should have been accompanied by answering questions about why citizens have voted for these regimes, about whether these governments can use the commodities boom to promote development, and about the political status of one-party systems.

Key chapters analyse issues of concern to political activists of the Latin American left. Steve Ellner contributes an introduction that rejects Jorge Castañeda's ('Latin America's Left Turn', *Foreign Affairs*, 85: 3 (May/June 2006), pp. 28–43) distinction between the responsible left of Brazil, Chile and Uruguay and the populist left of Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela. Like most of his fellow authors, he decries this dichotomy for being simplistic. Supporters, critics, or (mere) analysts of these regimes can profitably read Ellner's introduction, along with the chapters by Roger Burbach, Diana Raby and George Ciccariello-Maher because they pinpoint the radical left's distinguishing traits. Two of these strike me as central. First, unlike Cuba in 1959 or Nicaragua in 1979, insurgent parties of the left won control of the state through the ballot box. Furthermore, unlike Allende's electoral coalition in Chile in 1970, radical left parties won undeniable mandates for change; in most cases, they have attracted the support of more than half of all voters in presidential and legislative elections.

Second, these authors also emphasise the strategic implications of the absence of a single revolutionary actor behind these movements; radical left regimes do not

represent the interests of, for example, the organised working class. Instead, these regimes succeed because they promote the interests of lower-income voters in all of their diversity. They assemble electoral coalitions that include the demands of indigenous groups (in Bolivia and Ecuador), workers, and the diverse individuals who make up the informal urban sector. This is no small achievement; aggregating diverse movements into a larger organisation is the understudied elixir of the radical left's success.

The rest of the chapters explore individual countries. Federico Fuentes defends Morales's government from both Castañeda's charges and especially from critics on the far left. He argues that Morales 'has begun to move away from neoliberalism and extractivism (p. 121)', even if he offers little evidence in support of this claim. Ellner, in his chapter on Venezuela, argues that 'the prolonged path to socialism' within a democracy defies easy solution. The hostility of the opposition pushed Chávez to nationalise parts of the economy, which burdened the state with additional responsibilities as it intensified conflicts between organised workers and other pro-Chavista sectors. Marc Becker argues that President Correa of Ecuador is the least radical of the three because he does not govern with indigenous and radical social movements. There is even a chapter on leftist governments in El Salvador and Nicaragua by Héctor Perla and Héctor Cruz-Feliciano, which upholds the validity of a core counterfactual claim: without the revenues generated by a commodities boom, even an electoral majority, as Daniel Ortega obtained in November 2011 in Nicaragua, limits their radicalism. And the absence of an electoral mandate, as in El Salvador, creates even more restrictions on left governments.

This collection would have been stronger if it had more systematically addressed three topics. First, contributors might have analysed electoral behaviour, especially since the blossoming of the left occurs when polling and academic surveys have proliferated in the region. Despite celebrating the inclusiveness of these regimes, none of these authors uses surveys (or even ethnographies) to identify the preferences of voters, the effectiveness of radical left campaigns, and why these regimes keep winning elections.

Second, analysis of the economic constraints facing these regimes would have allowed this collection to explain whether these regimes are fulfilling their promise to use the rents from commodity exports to industrialise natural resources, expand social spending and promote productive sectors. Most of the contributors mention that development requires breaking the boom and bust cycles of petroleum or mineral exports. But none explores whether the dramatic positive shift in the terms of trade fuels, for example, the political success of the radical left. While it is important not to expect these governments to accomplish goals no predecessor has achieved, a balance sheet of these efforts would have been useful.

Finally, these contributors might have dedicated more time to defend Burbach's audacious claim that radical left regimes hold 'deep commitments to democratic procedures (p. 34)'. None examines the accusations that these regimes centralise power, stifle their critics, and otherwise ensconce themselves in power, though several contributors blame their opponents' hostility for these trends. Because they have won large electoral majorities, these parties have been able to rewrite electoral laws to permit unlimited campaign spending (e.g. Venezuela), reform media laws to restrict press freedoms (e.g. Ecuador), and produce constitutions that, as Ellner notes, 'strengthen the power of the national executive (p. 3)' and weaken institutions of horizontal accountability. Most promulgated new political charters unconstitutionally; in Bolivia, moreover, the MAS used street protests to overthrow two presidents

before Evo Morales won the presidency in 2005. To be fair, these authors have been no more partial than many critics on the right, who conveniently ignore, for example, the popularity of these regimes. Assessing the political nature of the radical left, however, requires contrasting the theory and promise of these regimes with their (multifaceted) reality.

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Juan Pablo Luna and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser (eds.), *The Resilience of the Latin American Right* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), pp. xi + 377, \$69.95, \$34.95 pb and e-book.

*The Resilience of the Latin American Right* is a superb contribution to the study of comparative politics in Latin America. In a very strong analytical introduction, editors Juan Pablo Luna and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser note that although the resurgence of the left has attracted considerable attention, it would be premature to conclude that the right is a spent political force. In many ways the right remains an influential political actor. In addition to building parties, the right can organise electoral movements or seek influence outside the electoral arena (p. 2).

What is the right? According to Luna and Rovira Kaltwasser, the right is constituted by a specific ideological position on inequality: 'we define the right as a political position distinguished by the belief that the main inequalities between people are natural and outside the purview of the state'. The left believes 'that the main inequalities between people are artificial and should therefore be counteracted by active state involvement' (p. 4). Definitions are neither correct nor incorrect, of course, but only more or less useful. In this case, the utility of the definition is that it situates the subject within a larger debate on inequality in Latin America.

According to Luna and Rovira Kaltwasser (p. 10), predictions based on the median voter theorem suggest that redistribution from rich to poor should occur in countries with a highly unequal distribution of income, and that those with greater assets tend to be more hostile to democracy. In Latin America, where high inequality and democratic politics have long coexisted, these models generate misleading expectations. The ability of the right to protect the economic interests of those who benefit from inequality provides part of the explanation. Even with left-wing governments in office throughout the region, the right can still influence the degree to which redistributive policies are used to reduce inequality.

Following the introduction, two chapters provide an overview of the contemporary context. Kenneth M. Roberts argues that political competition in the region 'revolves around programmatic distinctions between leftist and rightist alternatives that are ultimately grounded in redistributive conflicts. As the defender of minority elite interests opposed to redistributive policies, the right is at an inherent disadvantage ...' (p. 43). Nevertheless, the right has substantial de facto powers to block reform, as well as political resources to mobilise constituencies that cut across distributive conflicts. Security, for example, and specifically the need for *mano dura* or hardline security policies, is one of the issues the right seeks to own, and crime is an issue of concern to most voters. In their profile of the Latin American electorate, Nina Wiesehomeier and David Doyle note that 'those on the right are far more authoritarian in their attitudes toward the exercise of powers, particularly with respect to the valence of issues such as