

constructions of identity.’ She goes further; ‘[U]nless we struggle directly against those racist structures that distort and silence all Cubans and Cuban-Americans, we are a community washed in sinfulness, denying our full humanity’ (p. 140).

Overall, this is a vibrant and passionate book that nicely weaves together its strands of description and normative interpretation. I have two minor reservations. First, I would have liked to see Gonzalez engage with Protestantism, which is certainly a growing presence among Cubans and Cuban-Americans. Though she devotes much attention to the various groups she feels have been silenced by other academics, I wonder whether the same criticism might be leveled at her for avoiding the Protestants? Surely they have some contribution to Cuban theology? In other societies in the hemisphere, Protestants are forging new openings for the recognition and denunciation of racism – are they doing nothing of the kind in Cuba? Second, I would also have liked to see Gonzalez try her own hand at fieldwork. She seems a bit too dependent on other scholars’ accounts of the material she is theologising about. Despite these caveats, *Afro-Cuban Theology* is a significant and challenging work that shows the value of synthesising social science and theology.

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Tony Payan, *The Three US-Mexico Border Wars: Drugs, Immigration and Homeland Security* (Westport, CT, and London: Praeger Security International, 2006), pp. xv + 164, \$44.95; £25.99, hb.

Why has an open and secure Mexico-US border not been achieved? Tony Payan provides us with many different reasons why this has not been accomplished, arguing that the US approach to the complex problems at the border has been fundamentally wrong. First of all, the US approach has tended to put into the same box three different issues: drugs, illegal immigration and terrorism. No doubt, these may be linked to some extent, but not necessarily. Secondly, the US government’s response has been to wage war against them; a war that has not been won. Drug trafficking, illegal immigration and terrorism are not the kind of enemies that can be confronted by military and police power. To start with, each issue does not represent one enemy, but several. And we are not dealing only with a physical enemy, but with intangible ones. Lastly, Payan emphasises that the US strategy has not only been unilateral, but has not taken into account the views of the people living on the border.

The Three US-Mexico Borders is an academic analysis complemented by an account of the lives of people who either live at the border or do business – legal and illegal – across it. As one finishes the book, however, two key questions remain unanswered: can the Mexico-US border be secure? Can it be controlled? Payan suggests a ‘North American community’ approach to deal with the border. This approach is not new, and it suggests that greater economic, social and political integration might result in a safer region, with the same rules and levels of compliance by each country. To do this, however, trust between Mexico, the United States and Canada is essential, and Payan’s analysis does not suggest that there is, or there will be in the short term, any trust between Mexico and the United States as far as the border is concerned. In this sense, it is worth stressing one major problem on the Mexican side identified by Payan: widespread corruption in Mexico – and, to a

lesser extent, in the United States. After reading Payan's accounts of drugs and human smuggling, it is perhaps not hard to see why the US government does not trust Mexico's government. Thus, the first ingredient for a North American community is lacking.

Payan does not look consistently at Mexico's approach to the border, not only because it is not the purpose of his book, but perhaps also because there is no Mexican approach, or there has not been one for many years. Regarding illegal immigration, Mexico's policy has been a 'non-policy': the government refuses to stop illegal migrants at the border since the Mexican constitution guarantees free movement. On the other hand, it is well known that illegal immigration has been an easy way of reducing social and economic pressures, and it is now a very important source of national income. With respect to drug trafficking, the Mexican government opted for an active policy only towards the end of the 1980s and yet such policy has not been successful in stopping narcotrafficking, as Payan's book clearly demonstrates. Thirdly, the Mexican government has cooperated with the United States concerning antiterrorism since September 11 although terrorism is not really a Mexican concern. Mexico's standing on these three issues, as well as serious deficiencies in law enforcement in the country, make a North American community approach very unlikely in the short term. The factors Payan puts forward as reasons why a North American approach should be taken may be precisely the main obstacles to its implementation. This of course does not reduce the importance of his analysis; on the contrary, it makes it even more relevant and timely. For many years, Mexicans and Americans thought that NAFTA was only wishful thinking; the same may occur with the North American community. The only way to know if it is feasible is to keep looking very carefully at the situation analysed by Payan, a situation that unfortunately benefits many on both sides of the border. Denying that it is a war situation, however, is a good starting point to try and change it.

El Colegio de México

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Jordi Díez, *Political Change and Environmental Policymaking in Mexico* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), pp. xix + 282, £45.00, hb.

In Mexico, as population growth rapidly expanded during the last half of the twentieth century, pollution-intensive industrialisation and the expansion of agricultural land increasingly strained the country's rich natural resources. Several critical environmental problems affect today's Mexico: dense urban smog, atrocious water conditions, improper handling of toxic and domestic waste, extensive soil erosion and illicit logging count among the most conspicuous examples. Government policies have long favoured agricultural production and colonisation into so-called 'marginal' areas for decades, triggering extensive biodiversity and watershed value losses. Yet surprisingly few authors have examined the historical context and changes of Mexican environmental policy, making Jordi Díez's book *Political Change and Environmental Policymaking in Mexico* a welcome addition.

Díez has put extensive effort into reformatting his doctoral dissertation into a well-organised and insightful book on environmental politics in Mexico. The novelty of Díez's work lies in its analysis of Mexican environmental policymaking through the overlapping lenses of political science, political ecology, environmental