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Reviews/Recensions

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REVIEWS / RECENSIONS

Federico Finchelstein

Transatlantic Fascisms: Ideology, Violence, and the Sacred in Argentina and Italy, 1919–1945

Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010, xiii + 330 pp.

Jeremy Adelman, Princeton University

It has become a commonplace to understand the Atlantic world as a space interlinking “hot spots” of both movements of people and the circulation of commodities across national borders. Histories of diasporas have accented the former; histories of trade have highlighted the latter. An older tradition, dating back to studies of the Enlightenment and R.R. Palmer’s classic work on the age of revolutions, once explored the diffusion of radical ideologies that brought down anciens regimes in the late eighteenth century. Studies of early republicanism, inspired by Pocock and Skinner, reframed this exchange and pushed the chronology to earlier periods. But once Atlantic empires imploded in the early nineteenth century, the rise of nation states tended to pull historians into treating nations as silos filled with their own autochthonous ideas of nationhood.

The idea of the integrated “Atlantic” space gave way to a notion of dis-integrated nation states—at least as far as the flow of ideas was concerned. This shift of perspective has been especially true of the more hyper-nationalist of movements, whose logic claimed to spring naturally from nationalist wellsprings. So it was that German, Italian, French, and Spanish fascisms (just to take a few) argued for the uniqueness of their own historicity. But this way of thinking was only a more extreme variant on the isolation of cultural and intellectual transmissions that prevailed even among liberal systems.

Of late, historians have been paying closer attention to the circulation of ideas, even in the age of hyper-nationalism. Daniel T. Rodgers’ *Atlantic Crossings*, for example—a study of ideas of welfare before the welfare state—has been a pioneer tome. And in the field of Latin American history, both Julia Rodríguez’s *Civilizing Argentina* and Alejandra Bronfman’s *Measures of Equality* open similar terrain. Within this literature, Finchel-

stein's *Transatlantic Fascisms* is an indisputably important addition to our understandings of extra-national sources of thinking about national formations.

Several features make Finchelstein's work unique. First is the fact that this Argentine historian tackles perhaps the most bounded of all political formations, namely, fascism. Even Stalin's particularizing of Russian communism could not deny its internationalist sources and, to some extent, dependency. But fascists conceded no such ground. Indeed, while fascists accepted a common struggle to defend Christendom from apostasy and radicalism, their models self proclaimed historic uniqueness. Finchelstein confronts this ideological problem head-on. He shows how, bathed in ideas of messianic power, redemptive violence, and personalist leadership, the fascist synthesis aimed to re-found the nation after the crisis of 1919 on an aesthetic of "the sacred purity of the nation." Counter-revolutionary narcissism of the type, however, yearned for external means to establish its value and validity. While Finchelstein acknowledges that ideologists in Argentina and Italy exalted their exceptionalisms, he also reveals just how important the intervisibility was between each country's fascists.

It is this reciprocal mirroring that occupies the bulk of *Transatlantic Fascisms*. For Mussolini, Argentina stood out as an example of the grandeur of Italian inspiration abroad. The country was a buttress for his own imperialist imagination. Indeed, as Finchelstein charts, Mussolini's government curried close ties with cousins in Buenos Aires, sending propagandists and diplomats to bring the two countries together (the subject of a fascinating Chapter 3). Argentine fascists were only too happy to spread the news of *Il Duce's* greatness.

While much ideology was shared, fascisms were not the same, however. Finchelstein reminds us that while Mussolini looked to a "Latinity" to create a "holy alliance of reaction," and proclaimed that Rome was its "mother" (41), he could not help but look down his nose at the "hybrid" mixtures of Argentina; at once heavily Italian and the result of immigrant mixings, Argentina was unsettling, uncouth, or both, for an ideology that elevated homogeneity as a great virtue. Argentine fascists, for their part, saw right through the sneering. It was, as Finchelstein shows, pretty hard to miss. Hardly the passive recipients of ideas from the motherland of reaction, Argentine fascists insisted on the autonomy and righteousness of their own cause, and, in the process, dismissed both subordination and mimicry. Indeed these Argentine ideologues called themselves *nacionalistas*, not *fascistas*.

Leopoldo Lugones, the erstwhile progressive Argentine poet turned reactionary ideologue, adamantly defended the autonomy of Argentine fas-

cism, tracing it as much to Catholic Hispanism and a memory of Spain's empire as to any other source. Indeed, in Lugones' view Argentina's was an altogether more Christianized fascism, which, if anything, gave it a religious edge that was dulled in Italy. Like siblings born of the same social upheavals and disenchantments with liberalism, there was as much feuding as there was comity between fascist kinfolk. Finchelstein reminds us that, though the Atlantic world may circulate ideas from shore to shore, this transmission need not mean that these ideas are received the same way or that they signify the same thing.

There is an additional reason for this diversity within unity: the political experience of ideology could not help but put Argentine and Italian fascisms on separate tracks. The fact was that Mussolini ruled for two decades until he was brought down by allied armies and their local resistance allies. In Argentina, there was only a fleeting trial of political power. General José Félix Uriburu toppled the Radical Party government in 1930, and subsequently installed the only truly fascist regime Argentina endured. Though the rule of this political minority effectively displaced a century of secularism (a fact that suggests its roots were not as deep as believed by its champions and subsequent historians), it was short-lived. The military never had the stomach for this kind of regime, and it was soon overturned in favor of the fraudulent, but less hardcore, exclusive regime of Agustín P. Justo who swung Argentina back into an Anglocentric orbit.

Finchelstein illustrates how Buenos Aires thus mediated between Rome and London. With his early death, Uriburu became a strange icon—half myth, half malarkey—but enough to leave behind a taste for what might have been. Indeed, Argentina became home to the most extremist—and eventually exterminationist—Catholic movement in the Americas. So, unlike fascism in Italy, fascism in Argentina was never “defeated”—a situation that left a residual memory of possibility that was potent enough to be adopted by Peronists and anti-Peronists alike (in a different conjuncture) to justify savagery in the name of their sacred cause.

Transatlantic Fascisms is thus an important contribution to our understanding of the circulation of right-wing ideas, the appeal of regenerative violence, and its totalitarian aspirations. True, this is a book about ideas. It is less about how these ideas gained social traction or how they institutionalized themselves in public policies. For this reason, some readers will find this volume only one step—albeit an important step—in reconstructing the history of reaction. At the same time, however, what Finchelstein presents us with in this remarkable study is also an exemplary comparative political history of ideas.

Mark Goodale

Dilemmas of Modernity: Bolivian Encounters with Law and Liberalism

Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009, ix + 245 pp.

Tanya Hernandez, Fordham University School of Law

In *Dilemmas of Modernity: Bolivian Encounters with Law and Liberalism*, anthropologist Mark Goodale's objective is to provide a critical assessment of the literature on Bolivian legal studies. This is a body of knowledge that, according to Goodale, has been mistaken in its representation of law as having a fixed meaning centrally located in urban sites and experiences. In contrast, Goodale's ethnographic study of law in Bolivia attempts to give an account of what law does in actual practice and how it is received beyond the locus of the urban. Indeed, it is Goodale's premise that everyday encounters with law and liberalism in the country reveal the subtle shifts in the social, economic, and political influences that have shaped the conception of the modern Bolivian nation. For Goodale, law is the pre-eminent shaping force.

The discussion of the 1999 Bolivian law that permits the Indigenous Customary Law to apply to the prosecution of a crime when an indigenous community member is involved provides the author with an opportunity to develop a compelling example of law's influence in shaping the everyday reality of indigenous Bolivian people. The only condition for the applicability of this law is that the customary law cannot undermine the rights enshrined in the Bolivian constitution. Goodale notes that the ability of the indigenous population in Bolivia to adopt a rights framework through law both perversely and paradoxically re-exposes them to exploitation. Specifically, the national law qualifies the legitimacy of the Indigenous Customary Law by subjugating it to the individual human rights provisions of the Bolivian constitution, thereby rendering the Indigenous Customary Law ineffective (18). Yet, despite their recognition of this dilemma, Goodale observes that (based on his interviews) most Bolivian indigenous community members have tended to view the law—and the project of modernity embedded in it—with optimism.

Goodale accounts for this surprising optimism with a description of the ascendancy of human rights discourse over the last 15 years, a discourse that is in fact traceable to an earlier period, dating back to origins in the 1825 Bolivian constitution. However, as both a tool and an expression of modernity, human rights discourse in the 1990s was accompanied by neoliberal governmental policies that imposed profound social costs. Yet despite the social costs, and the gap between the rhetoric of rights and the capacity of people to exercise them, marginalized indigenous Bolivians have related

to the language of human rights and liberal individual rights as a source of empowerment.

Goodale's ethnography concludes that the most structurally marginalized indigenous rural communities are often the most fervent advocates for the very same legal regimes that produce their marginalization (151). This is because the indigenous peoples of Bolivia value modernity, not for its promise of economic progress, but for its promise of equality. The very idea of human rights with its enabling potential for those of indigenous heritage to envision themselves as entitled to human dignity is itself an empowering experience. This is so despite the fact that state legal institutions in Bolivia are weak, and thus the law is developed primarily and almost exclusively as a discursive system of representation and not of effective protection. Although this conclusion may be counterintuitive, it is quite in concert with transnational histories of empowerment. For example, Patricia J. Williams, in *Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of a Law Professor* (1991), notes that African Americans in the United States believed in rights to such an extent that they breathed life into them, despite the fact that the framers of the American constitution never meant for formal equality to pertain to those of African descent. The belief in the potential power of rights is something that in itself helps energize the struggle for actual equality.

Thus, Goodale is certainly correct to avoid characterizing the optimistic testimony of marginalized Bolivians as false consciousness. Their very historical invisibility is what makes human rights discourse such an attractive tool of empowerment. The concept of rights is the main marker of citizenship, inclusion, and visibility, and as such it provides the foundation for envisioning oneself as a modern subject capable of struggling for actual equality. How Bolivians will ultimately transform their nation remains to be seen, but Goodale's book provides a compelling invitation for considering the possibilities. Goodale tells the tale of the idea of the emancipatory *potential* of law as a phenomenon of modernity. And through this narrative he invites us all to witness the beginning of a fascinating new chapter in Bolivian history.

Richard Bourne

Lula of Brazil: The Story So Far

Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008, xiv + 285 pp.

Andrea Pacheco Pacifico, Post-doctoral Research Fellow, York University

In the fall of 2010, Brazil elected its first female president. As leader of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT or Workers' Party), Dilma Rousseff

became the successor to Luiz Inácio “Lula” da Silva’s highly successful if often controversial regime (2002–10). Although Lula’s presidential role has now ended, the account that Richard Bourne presents in *Lula of Brazil: The Story So Far* (“so far” referring to the point of Lula’s re-election in 2006) will nevertheless be intriguing reading for those interested in the details of how this immensely popular political figure first rose to power and then went on to maintain it.

Bourne is a seasoned British journalist and academic who has held a number of prestigious research posts. Prior to taking on the writing of *Lula of Brazil*, he was founder and head of the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit at the University of London. Bourne’s expertise, coupled with years of experience actually working in Brazil, allow for the presentation of a narrative that is both highly informative and readable. Bourne follows Lula from the time of his birth in 1945 until his initial election victory in 2002. He then concentrates on Lula’s first term in office from 2002 to 2006. Along the way he gathers valuable oral testimonies, a photo gallery, and other secondary sources to contextualize Lula’s personal and political life within the complex reality of Brazilian society and politics.

Lula was born in very humble origins in Brazil’s economically depressed Northeast region and had very limited access to education. According to Bourne, he is a living testimony of how hard a life can be in the country without public assistance (22). Much of his eventual success was owed in no small measure to the encouragement he received from his brother, Frei Chico. As Bourne shows, Frei Chico’s support was instrumental in Lula’s decision to become a union leader and to struggle against the military dictatorship that gripped the country from 1964 to 1989. Working in Lula’s favour were a number of characteristics, including his skills in leadership and his talents for accommodation (26). In addition, he demonstrated persistence, charisma, a sense of humour, and confidence. Moreover, Lula was not only a skilled orator, but also a good listener.

These natural abilities resonated with the need for change, given Brazil’s political and economic conditions during the 1970s and 1980s (29–31; 53–55). During these critical decades, Brazilians struggled for a return to democracy and for ethics in politics. The labour movement (the Workers’ Party was founded in 1980) was a central actor in these struggles, and it was as its leader that Lula came to play a pivotal role in efforts to unite social movements, intellectuals, and the Catholic Church to build a civil government. In Bourne’s view, Lula was never an ideological socialist or Marxist (89). Rather, he was an activist for social justice and labour rights whose energy was focused on achieving a better life for the many Brazilians whom he saw as facing the burdens of poverty and hunger.

After three consecutive attempts and contrary to all expectations, for the first time in the history of Brazil a poor uneducated candidate from the Northeast was elected president in 2002. That such a feat was achieved was, Bourne suggests, the result of Lula's ability to build and consolidate the many alliances and coalitions needed in order to secure the backing required to bring his party to victory. Lula's political skills were consolidated through his career as a union leader during the military regime. Bourne's account pays particular attention to this formative period in Lula's life, as well as to the nature of the alliances Lula forged to win the presidential elections. The author also describes the scandals that affected Lula's first government, the social and economic programs he implemented for the poor during this period of administration, and the international policies he put in motion to give Brazil greater visibility both in the region and overseas.

Bourne shows that from the very early stages of his presidency, Lula and his party committed to a transformation of politics to meet the expectations that existed among Brazilians who understood democracy also as a means of addressing the problem of corruption (176–177). However, corruption scandals tainted Lula's first term. Lula claimed that he had no knowledge of the problem and that he had been betrayed (191). As a response, some leading members of the PT were expelled from the party, the Congress, and the administration (181). This bold political action accounted in no small measure for Lula's successful bid for re-election in 2006.

As Bourne mentions (176–195), all scandals occurred during Lula's first term, and the high levels of corruption at that time can be explained in part by the insufficient attention Lula paid to several key aspects of government. In fact, his focus was the consolidation of the party's bases of support among the poor through its social policy programs (123). The severe criticisms of Lula and the PT that emerged were related to a lack of government ethics and transparency, which had initially been touted as important PT goals (105).

Lula managed to bring about a number of achievements during his first presidential term. However, his policies were subject to harsh criticism. In particular, while his presidential diplomacy and domestic policy sought to promote social inclusion and make Brazil one of the leading players in the world economic system (166), PT dissidents, mainly those who built the PSOL (Party of Socialism and Freedom), criticized Lula for not creating more jobs and for not reducing government bureaucracy or simplifying the tax system (171). Despite these criticisms, Bourne notes, the Brazilian economy under Lula stood on much better ground than it had in the years before he came to power.

For Bourne, ultimately, "Lula is a myth" (230), and this stature would serve as the source of some tension, particularly as his role changed from

being an opposition leader to becoming president. Although to this day the opposition and the media have not forgotten the cases of corruption and scandals that plagued him early on, from the portrayal that Bourne draws we can see Lula as someone who nevertheless managed to consolidate key alliances and party coalitions in such a way that allowed him to maintain power. Moreover, his government managed to secure strong support from Brazil's large poor population, who came to identify with Lula as one of their own and who saw him as the Brazilian leader who "made possible social investment and modest transfers of income" (230).

As Bourne demonstrates, Lula's two primary motivations remained the same from the time he began his career as a union leader through the tenure of his first period in office. Lula genuinely wanted "to end the worst poverty in Brazil" and "to respect and reward the contribution of Brazilian workers" (210). Although he still had much to do in this regard, by the time of his re-election in 2006, he had already become "a builder of democracy" and someone who had left Brazil and the world an important legacy.

With this volume, Bourne has produced a very effective account of Lula's rise to power, the nature of his intervention in politics, and the sources of his success. The book is a fascinating read to both experts in Brazil and those with only a general knowledge of the country. It will be interesting to see how other authors, or perhaps Bourne himself, will at some later stage come to assess Lula's second term as president and, moreover, to put his entire regime into perspective against the leadership that we are now waiting to see emerge under the newly elected Dilma Rousseff.

Nathalie Gravel

Géographie de l'Amérique Latine: Une culture de l'incertitude

Montréal: Presses de l'université du Québec, 2009, xxviii + 339 pp.

Thora Martina Herrmann, Université de Montréal

Latin America and the Caribbean is a complex macro-region that encompasses both great wealth and desperate poverty, countries as tiny as Belize and as enormous as Brazil, democratic and authoritarian governments, and a rich multicultural heritage. Most countries in the region share common roots in the Portuguese and Spanish empires, whose expansion during the sixteenth century was brought about at the harrowing expense of the conquest of and domination over the region's indigenous peoples. Notwithstanding these common roots, however, the countries of the region have not always followed similar historical paths. While they share the important legacy of

the colonial experience, they are also separated by cultural, ethnic, and geographic diversity, different national histories, variations in forms of political development, and particularities in local experiences.

Writing a geography textbook on this complex and fascinating macro-region that is Latin America and the Caribbean is not an easy task. Before taking on such a project, prospective authors need to consider a number of important "how to" questions. How to give equivalent coverage to a large number of topics? How to provide an accurate sense of the particularity of local experiences while simultaneously illustrating general themes? And how to offer enough detail to interest students of the region without overwhelming them with facts?

Nathalie Gravel's up-to-date introductory textbook, *Géographie de l'Amérique latine: Une culture de l'incertitude*, is highly successful in fulfilling all these competing objectives. Her book covers a wide range of regions and topics, making it an excellent teaching textbook and reference work. It can support a wide range of teaching options, but will be particularly helpful for introductory courses on Latin America and the Caribbean. Students new to the field will find much to aid them in comprehensively understanding the historical, political, economic, and social dynamics that have formed Latin American and Caribbean countries, as well as the processes currently shaping their future development.

Gravel offers the right balance between regionally focused and thematic/systematic chapters. Eight of the 12 chapters are thematic/systematic; the remaining four are dedicated to the different sub-regions within Latin America and the Caribbean. The regional chapters are especially important for their discussion of issues with geopolitical and environmental implications. As with other introductory textbooks, the chapters stand alone and can thus be assigned to students in any order desired by the lecturer. The methodology of providing both thematic and regional chapters implies that some subjects are examined in various places, an organizational feature that provides further flexibility in terms of using the book for a variety of course formats.

Topics covered include cultural history; land use, agriculture, and urbanization; military dictatorship and authoritarianism; urban growth and poverty; indigenous issues; social activism, revolutionary movements, and armed struggle; environmental conservation and human ecology; the relationship between trade-related development throughout the region; and social and economic development processes. Gravel offers a detailed discussion by sub-region, identifying the socio-economic processes and challenges facing their development. She puts particular emphasis on discussions regarding policies of assimilation and the homogenization of indigenous peoples. Issues of urbanization, development, and the insertion of Latin

America and the Caribbean into the world economy are also discussed in detail. All of these discussions provide readers with the means to assess the challenges Latin American and Caribbean countries have encountered in achieving political freedom, democracy, and transparency. Gravel embraces the importance of history, culture, and politics in understanding these and other key issues.

The introductory chapter presents an effective synopsis of the early twenty-first-century situation in the region, thus preparing readers with the background they will need to understand later chapters. The text includes as well a superb concluding chapter that very effectively, through a thought-provoking discussion, raises key issues related to Latin America's uncertain future. Chapters 1 and 2 explore the cultural history of the region and analyze demographic trends, ethnic composition, and migration patterns. These two chapters also discuss policies of assimilation and the homogenization of indigenous peoples. Chapters 3–6 provide a detailed discussion by region, from Mexico to Tierra del Fuego. The regional division is made up according to the physical units that constitute Latin America and the Caribbean in the author's view. She spatializes this geography from north to south: Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, the Southern Cone, and the Andean countries. Data and facts on trade and on the main political and socio-economic characteristics of each nation state are compiled in tables at the end of each chapter. An analysis of the emergence and consolidation of Latin American and Caribbean nation states and patterns of trade evolution is the focus of Chapters 7 and 8 of the book. Using case studies focused on sugar, tobacco, and coffee, these chapters analyze the impact of export monocultures.

Chapter 9 examines in detail various democratization processes in the Americas and clearly demonstrates the different types of democracy in existence today in the region. The example of the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre discussed in this chapter illustrates very well the birth of the World Social Forum (WSF) and the functioning of participatory democracy at the municipal level. This chapter, furthermore, offers a critical analysis of the role of civil society in Latin America, especially resistance movements such as the WSF. Indigenous and social movements are the focus of Chapter 10, which shows, by taking the example of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), the Zapatista Movement of Chiapas, and Brazil's Landless Movement (MST), how indigenous rights have evolved over time in Latin America. Chapter 11 deals very effectively with critical aspects of human ecology, including environmental conservation, fair trade, the impact of natural disasters on vulnerable populations (the case of El Niño in Bolivia), and the social and environmental impacts of large development projects (e.g., diversion of water). Chapter 12 examines

rural-urban migration, the factors contributing to urban poverty, and the precarious habitat conditions in large Latin American cities. The concepts of poverty, social exclusion, and food security are analyzed in detail, and their application to social science research questions is discussed.

The book is well grounded in relevant literature, with good bibliographies of contemporary research in the field. The text contains informative, clear, and up-to-date tables, graphs, figures, and photographs, all of which supplement the discussion and provide good visual support for the various explications of people and places. An easily comprehensible and lively style of writing as well as good organization makes the book very readable. Gravel's work provides sensitive treatment of a profoundly complex, highly diverse, and extraordinarily fascinating region. The author's affection for Latin America and its peoples shines through.

Géographie de l'Amérique Latine: Une culture de l'incertitude is highly recommended, especially to those who teach geography and Latin American and Caribbean studies. The up-to-date analysis of topical issues in this macro-region offers plentiful material for classroom debate. With discussions of such crucial contemporary issues as indigenous rights, globalization, and environmental impact, students in cultural geography, Latin American studies, sociology, political science, and rural development will find this book very valuable.

Paulo José Krischke

Populism and the Catholic Church: Political Crisis in Brazil, 1964

New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2010, vii + 185 pp.

J. Ricardo Tranjan, University of Waterloo

Paulo José Krischke is a prolific author on the topic of democratization in Brazil and Latin America. With *Populism and the Catholic Church: Political Crisis in Brazil, 1964*, he makes another important contribution to the field. In this book, Krischke examines the emergence and progressive transformation of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB), a process concomitant and interrelated with the rise and fall of Brazil's populist regimes between 1945 and 1964.

Key to understanding the structure of the book and the way Krischke develops his argument is the concept of the "secondary institution of a historic bloc." For Krischke, this means that, "[W]ithin the bourgeois 'historic bloc' the Church is not the institution in charge of the elaboration and diffusion of the dominant ideology.... Church intellectuals may interact, from a

relatively independent position, with the 'organic' (or representative) intellectuals and ideologies of the fundamental social classes" (20). In periods of political crisis, however, Church intellectuals may play a more decisive role by supporting or opposing the efforts of the contending classes. Moreover, in periods of political uncertainty the various arms and hierarchical levels of the Church may position themselves differently vis-à-vis competing political groups and ideologies, making the role of the Church even more intricate.

Krischke argues that in the time period he examines, the Catholic Church in Brazil became relatively autonomous from both the state and civil society. The Church's political actions were no longer understandable as the immediate expression of class interests nor were they the exclusive result of its own institutional concerns. Instead, the Church was embedded in a political dialectical process: it generated and propagated ideas that influenced the polity, but also absorbed and reacted to external ideological currents. In order to account for the transformation that affected Brazilian society during this period, Krischke considers not only the material, political, and ideological changes the society encountered but also the internal transformations of the Church, including the relationship among its different factions as well as the role of the Vatican. Having identified these concomitant processes, the author then sets for himself the task of providing an analysis of the ways in which they influenced each other.

Part I of the book is introductory and offers a critique of interpretations that have overstated the role of the Catholic Church in Brazil either as an agent of class interests or as an autonomous cultural institution (Chapter 2). Part II examines the transition from the *Estado Novo* (1937–45) to a limited democracy (1946–64) with a diffuse political integration articulated around the Populist Developmentalist Alliance (Chapter 3). The section also includes an analysis of the evolution of Catholic Action, a progressive pressure group within the Church that gained the support of the Vatican and founded the CNBB in 1952. This organization quickly became the main steering body of the Brazilian Catholic Church (Chapter 4). Part III describes the breakdown of the fragile political alliance created among social sectors with fundamentally opposing interests and ideas and the political crisis that followed in the early 1960s (Chapter 5). According to Krischke, the various arms and groups of the CNBB reacted differently to the fast-deteriorating political scenario, making the Church increasingly more heterogeneous and advancing, through these competing differences, the institution's internal democratizing reform (Chapter 6).

Part IV brings these parallel developments together. In Chapter 7, Krischke argues that originally the Church's internal reforms and modern-

izing impulses nicely coalesced with the goals of the populist alliance. The Church withdrew its support from traditional sectors and instead helped to advance the developmentalist project, especially through the training of intermediate cadres and local leaders. At a second historical moment, however, the CNBB's stand encouraged the materialization of a widespread democratic movement among the popular sectors, which created a new set of tensions as the populist alliance could not respond satisfactorily to the emerging demands. Thus, in a paradoxical way, the Church also helped to delegitimize the populist alliance, whose final overthrow was brought about by the military coup of 1964.

Furthermore, through this critical period the Church internalized democratic demands for change. The Emergency Plan (1962) advanced significant reforms toward institutional pluralism, allowing for the coexistence of divergent political views within the Catholic ideological bloc. At the peak of the crisis leading to the downfall of the democratic regime, conservative groups within this bloc directly and indirectly supported the preparation of a military intervention. At the same time, however, the progressive sectors vacillated, as neither the crumbling populist alliance nor the conservative reaction represented the democratic project these sectors espoused. According to Krischke, the Church's overall ambivalent response to the military coup was the outcome of interrelated processes: the weakening of the populist alliance, the fracturing and radicalization of the political society, the growing autonomy of the Catholic Church, and the internal pluralization of the Catholic ideological bloc. As a "secondary institution," then, the Church both fuelled and reacted to these processes.

Several additional aspects of the book merit comment. First, Krischke offers a valuable lesson in how to use Gramsci's conceptual tools in the study of complex political conjunctures, while avoiding the normative tone often associated with Gramscian analyses. Second, the empirical research for the book includes interviews (conducted in the 1970s with key figures of the examined period) plus a systematic analysis of CNBB newsletters and correspondence; therefore the volume is of noteworthy historical value. Finally, Krischke's work here challenges established interpretations of the role of the Catholic Church in the crisis leading to the 1964 coup (e.g., Bruneau, 1974; De Kadt, 1970), thus making a significant contribution to the literature on the political history of the Brazilian Catholic Church (e.g., Mainwaring, 1986).

Students of Liberation Theology and the Popular Church in Latin America are likely to find Krischke's detailed historical analysis of this initial period very informative. More broadly, this volume adds to a list of recent books that examine Brazil's long and tortuous path toward democracy

and, with the hindsight of more than 20 years since the end of the military regime, bring fresh perspectives to historical processes that help to explain the successes and failures of the country's democracy. Krischke's approach to the study of the Catholic Church as a secondary institution in the processes of democratization in Brazil may continue to yield interesting results if applied to subsequent periods of the country's political history. In his conclusion, the author encourages precisely this line of research. We can only hope his call is attended.

Yanna Yannakakis

The Art of Being In-Between: Native Intermediaries, Indian Identity, and Local Rule in Colonial Oaxaca

Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008, xxi + 290 pp.

W. George Lovell, Queen's University

Articulated from start to finish in ardent revisionist mode, *The Art of Being In-Between* contributes to an ever-growing historiography that depicts indigenous peoples not as the victims of Spanish rule but instead as agents of their own myriad destinies. Writing about the Mexican state of Oaxaca from early to late colonial times, Yanna Yannakakis focuses her attention on what she calls "native intermediaries"—indigenous actors who served as cultural brokers, negotiating but also policing relations between fellow community inhabitants and the Spanish regime. As a result of their capacity to manoeuvre interlingually and interculturally, these key players "produced a common symbolic framework through which native peoples and Spanish officials struggled over forms of local rule and the meaning of Indian identity" (xiv).

Yannakakis invokes at the outset Lesley Byrd Simpson's celebrated phrase of there being "many Mexicos" to investigate and on which to publish research findings (ix). She observes that similar diversity can be found in Oaxaca alone. Yannakakis asserts that it is "in regions that scholars have tended to identify as 'peripheral' where colonial processes and negotiations were at their most dynamic" (xiv). This assertion leads her to zoom in on the Sierra Norte region of Oaxaca as "an ideal setting in which to examine the work of native intermediary figures" (xiv). What follows is erudite micro-history, a layering upon layering of teased-out detail that in the end culminates in a nuanced *gestalt*, one in which local outcomes in the Villa Alta district of the Sierra Norte are placed in larger spatial and temporal contexts.

Yannakakis reacquaints us with two of Mexico's better-known go-betweens before rescuing from oblivion the deeds of other such figures hitherto unrecognized or thus far only marginally appreciated. First is Doña Marina, the woman who served as strategic interpreter for Hernán Cortés in the crucial first years of conquest; she is employed by Yannakakis to illustrate the inadequacy of categories such as Spaniard and Indian, conqueror and conquered. In Yannakakis's view, Doña Marina "represents the power of native intermediaries to ignite debate and produce divergent meanings" (7). Equally influential in this regard was Gaspar Antonio Chi, a member of the Maya nobility who served Spaniards as confidante, informant, and translator in the "spiritual conquest" of Yucatán. In recognition of the services he performed, Chi petitioned the Crown for the right to receive a pension as his life drew to a close.

While Chi's and Doña Marina's dealings are much acknowledged, Yannakakis unearths information about lesser-known individuals of similar cast. Two examples are Jacinto de los Angeles and Juan Bautista, who chose to disclose practices of "idolatry" among their village associates and kin. An incensed mob intimidated the Dominican friars whom the two men served into releasing them from monastic safety. The "martyrs of Cajonos" (2) were apprehended, beaten, and whipped by those they had accused, eventually disappearing, presumed dead. In her analysis of such incidents, Yannakakis makes clear that while the art of being in-between often brought advantage, recognition, status, and reward, collaboration could come at a high cost.

While she reconstructs events and circumstances, situations and dilemmas, abuses and injustices most assiduously throughout, Yannakakis saves the best for last. Her final chapter, "From 'Indian Conquerors' to Local 'Indians,'" is reason enough for any discerning reader to delve into the "shadow system" (56) of indigenous politics with which Yannakakis so insightfully grapples. The spotlight here is on residents of the Analco barrio of Villa Alta, whose ancestors hailed from Central Mexico and who assisted Spaniards in the conquest of the Sierra Norte. The pivotal role of these *indios conquistadores*, and generation after generation of their descendants, was to serve the Crown as "an occupying and coercive force throughout the colonial period" (192). The decision by Spanish authorities to revoke privileges that offspring of the Indian conquistadors of Analco had by then enjoyed for some two and a half centuries—exemption from paying tribute was among the perks that were rescinded—triggered a court case that allows Yannakakis to tell of but one remarkable experience among many.

The sources at her disposal include the *Lienzo de Analco*, a cloth painting that provides a "pictographic history of the conquest of the sierra and map of the region" (195); Yannakakis views it as "an indigenous counter-

point to the Spanish narrative" (195). Leaning on the research findings of Florine Asselbergs (2004), Yannakakis informs us that a native artist (*tlacuiloque*) was responsible for producing the *Lienzo de Analco* soon after the conquest; the work epitomizes a medium in which "geography did not exist independently from history. It was the story that made up the maps" (197). Yannakakis identifies strong parallels between the *Lienzo de Analco* and similar *lienzos* from Quahquechollan and Tlaxcala. She maintains that "the conquest [of the Sierra Norte] was a joint effort" in which "Indian conquerors were not conquered Indians but rather conquering allies of the Spaniards," emphasizing that "Indian conquerors established their domination over the local population violently, and militarily, thereby privileging their identity" (198–199).

Yannakakis concludes that it is not possible to establish with certainty whether the inhabitants of Analco were the direct descendants of Tlaxcalan auxiliaries or whether their ethnic origin was more diverse. What is unequivocal, however, is the nature of their involvement with the colonial regime. They not only waged wars of conquest in the first place but, after the worst of the fighting was over, helped Spaniards to suppress "a rebellion in the Nextizo Zapotec community of Tliltepec in 1531, a general rebellion that shook the region in 1550, an uprising in Choapan in 1552, and a Mixe rebellion in 1570" (195). Thereafter, throughout the seventeenth century and during the first half of the eighteenth century, "the natives of Analco played an indispensable role in law enforcement and peacekeeping," and were deployed as "transporters of prisoners from village jails to the prison in Villa Alta; messengers of orders and decrees to native cabildos and interpreters; schoolmasters, prestigious witnesses, and spies" (206). Such engagement resulted in their being regarded with "a combination of respect, fear, and loathing among the local indigenous population" (206).

Eventually, though, following the Bourbon Reforms of the second half of the eighteenth century, the position of privilege that native intermediaries had been able to carve for themselves was significantly undermined. In the eyes of an impecunious Crown intent on extracting the maximum revenue possible, the offspring of the indios conquistadores were now seen as "nothing more than local Indians" (218). Henceforth, they were expected to pay tribute, rather than be exempted from it.

Yanna Yannakakis is to be congratulated for producing an elaborately conceived and elegantly wrought monograph. It is a volume worthy of attention, especially on the part of colleagues interested in issues of indigenous identity, native resistance, and collaboration, and how geography shaped the outcomes of colonial rule in a remote but captivating corner of Spanish America.

María Eugenia Anguiano y Ana María López Salas (editoras)
Migraciones y fronteras. Nuevos contornos para la movilidad internacional

Barcelona: Icaria/CIDOB, 2010, 351 pp.

Marlene Solís, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte

La globalización ha trastocado la territorialidad de los estados nacionales y con ello se han redefinido las fronteras siguiendo la tensión entre el incremento de los flujos internacionales y el cierre selectivo del tránsito fronterizo. El libro que María Eugenia Anguiano y Ana María López nos presentan tiene como objetivo poner en perspectiva distintas miradas de la interrelación entre migración y fronteras. Las editoras reúnen trabajos que tienen como referentes diversos contextos, lo cual permite imaginar un mapamundi en el que la movilidad poblacional se especifica según los factores de atracción y expulsión que entran en juego entre territorios que ocupan una posición asimétrica dentro de las relaciones de poder. La obra permite entender la migración internacional y las fronteras en sus dimensiones contextual y relativa, para así pensarlas a través de sus múltiples interrelaciones. Una muestra de la riqueza de estos trabajos corresponden a los casos de las fronteras de México-Estados Unidos, Nicaragua-Costa Rica y Argentina-Bolivia.

El capítulo de María Eugenia Anguiano inicia con una semblanza histórica de la emigración de mexicanos hacia Estados Unidos, en primer lugar, señala que se trata de emigración laboral con carácter masivo, que se ha mantenido en el tiempo y en la misma dirección, pues solamente entre los trabajadores y residentes no autorizados, en el 2008, se contabilizaban más de siete millones de mexicanos. Otro rasgo que definió a los emigrantes, sobre todo hasta los años sesenta, fue su temporalidad y circularidad: cruzaban fundamentalmente hombres jóvenes a trabajar en cultivos de temporada. Los principales cambios de la política migratoria de Estados Unidos han obedecido a distintas orientaciones: formalización de los flujos a través del *Progama Bacero* (hasta 1964); control selectivo por un sistema de cuotas por país de origen (hasta 1982); disminución de inmigrantes indocumentados mediante la amnistía y la regularización; y, a partir de los noventa, *securitización* de la frontera. En este último periodo hay un incremento sin precedente del presupuesto asignado al Servicio de Inmigración y Naturalización y se multiplican los controles fronterizos, sobre todo a raíz de los atentados del septiembre del 2011, cuando los muros existentes se refuerzan y se construyen nuevos; al mismo tiempo que se hace un uso intensivo de tecnologías de punta para la vigilancia; y el personal de la

patrulla fronteriza triplica su número para alcanzar los 12,00 efectivos en 2006. Adicionalmente, Estados Unidos desarrolla una estrategia para promover, fortalecer y expandir acuerdos bilaterales en materia de seguridad con sus países vecinos, de tal forma que la noción de frontera se extendió del norte al sur de México. Frente a ello, este país ha puesto en práctica un plan para controlar los flujos de migrantes, estupefacientes y armas, destinando recursos para incrementar y modernizar los puntos de control existentes en el sureste y sur del territorio. En la frontera sur de México, que colinda con Guatemala y Belice, el flujo principal de personas lo han conformado los guatemaltecos, sobre todo, a raíz de los conflictos armados ocurridos en el siglo pasado, cuando entraban al país en calidad de refugiados. Además se ha conformado un mercado laboral de jornaleros, así como un flujo importante de personas de Centroamérica que atraviesan el país rumbo a Estados Unidos. La política migratoria de México ha implicado el registro de los trabajadores agrícolas, la firma de acuerdos para permitir el desplazamiento de visitantes temporales, así como la restricción de permisos de trabajo de acuerdo a la demanda existente en los estados del sur y sureste.

El texto de Abelardo Morales tiene como objetivo analizar la frontera de Nicaragua y Costa Rica desde la perspectiva de las regiones transfronterizas. Tiene como punto de partida que lo transfronterizo forma un espacio que traspasa las líneas de separación y origina una integración entre los territorios colindantes, debido a que los procesos sociales tienen una naturaleza extraterritorial. En este análisis el autor define las tramas socioterritoriales en América Central, integrada por Guatemala, Belice, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica y Panamá, y señala los efectos de la posición marginal que ocupan frente a los centros de poder, en las condiciones sociales de vulnerabilidad y en la situación de pobreza de sus habitantes. Los problemas de estas poblaciones han cambiado aceleradamente por los procesos de integración de la región a la economía mundial, mediante megaproyectos internacionales de construcción de infraestructura, como el Plan Puebla-Panamá y la Red Internacional de Carreteras Mesoamericanas. El caso de la frontera de Nicaragua con Costa Rica se ha definido por las tensiones entre los países desde el periodo colonial. En 1888 se ratificó el Tratado de Límites para delimitar la línea fronteriza entre estos países, pero la función demarcatoria no se concluyó hasta un siglo después de este tratado, pues la zona fronteriza se mantuvo como un espacio relativamente integrado por su unidad ecoambiental y cultural; al mismo tiempo que se conservó aislada y marginada del resto de los territorios de ambos países. En la actualidad, se encuentra habitada por más de un millón de personas, la mayoría nicaragüenses, se caracteriza por ser un espacio binacional organizado en tres ejes, reconocidos por centros urbanos que proporcionan servicios a las regiones

colindantes: el eje occidental, el oriental caribeño y el eje central. El autor identifica un momento de quiebre en la región fronteriza que se configuraba a partir de su límite difuso entre los dos países, cuando a finales de los setenta el territorio fue parte de las operaciones militares de las guerras en Nicaragua, en las que participó los Estados Unidos. Más recientemente, en 1990, se produjo otro cambio en la situación política de Nicaragua y Costa Rica, se inició un proceso de pacificación y de reformas económicas, y la frontera recuperó su función en el tránsito de mercancías y personas. En este nuevo momento el lado nicaragüense quedó rezagado frente a la dinámica de desarrollo de Costa Rica y su inserción en la economía mundial.

En el caso de la frontera de Argentina con Bolivia, Susana María Sassone y Geneviève Cortes, se proponen explicar las relaciones entre las políticas migratorias de Argentina y el control de las fronteras, así como las respuestas de los migrantes a las condiciones del cruce resultantes. Por lo que en este capítulo se articulan tres enfoques: la frontera como límite y espacio de control político, la frontera como un lugar material del cruce y la frontera como objeto de representaciones ligadas a las prácticas y experiencias propias del migrante. En principio es importante considerar que la presencia de extranjeros ha sido parte del proceso de poblamiento argentino. Sin embargo, el número de población no nativa se mantuvo por un largo periodo debajo de los tres millones, alcanzó el punto más alto en 1960, cuando inició un descenso que dio lugar a la *argentinización* de la población en las décadas siguientes. A partir de 1991, empezó una dinámica distinta pues el peso relativo de las personas nativas disminuye y cambia la composición de las personas extranjeras: los inmigrantes de origen limítrofe aumentaron en relación a los no limítrofes. La política migratoria de Argentina se ha diseñado siguiendo tres etapas: la primera etapa comprendió un siglo de la vida institucional del país y se orientaba a la búsqueda de agricultores y mano de obra cualificada de origen europeo, mientras tanto los inmigrantes de origen no europeo entraban al país en calidad de indocumentados por lo que, entre 1949 y 1981, se sucedieron cuatro regulaciones migratorias para esta población. La segunda etapa, se caracterizó por ser más cerrada y restrictiva, aumentaron los controles fronterizos, y —en 1992— se abrió otro proceso de regularización de indocumentados. La tercera etapa ha sido contradictoria e incierta, pues no respondía a la composición de los flujos integrada principalmente por bolivianos, paraguayos y chilenos, en lugar de ello se mantenían los privilegiando a la inmigración europea. En 2004, se presenta un giro en la política internacional al ajustarse a la realidad de la dinámica de inmigración argentina, se promulga una ley que permite mejores condiciones para los extranjeros, se apeg a al reconocimiento de los derechos humanos, y busca superar la discriminación existente hacia los inmigrantes

límitrofes. Hoy en día, los lugares de control de la inmigración son administrados mediante la combinación de medidas internas y externas más o menos estrictas. En particular, el cruce de la frontera argentino-boliviana se torna una marca en la experiencia de vida de migrantes bolivianos, desde su perspectiva la frontera representa una barrera pero también un recurso para lograr mejores condiciones de vida; por lo que el desafío de cruzar se enfrenta siguiendo diversas estrategias.

El común denominador en estos capítulos es el eje diacrónico como ordenador de la reflexión, al presentar un recuento histórico de las políticas migratorias y su relación tanto con los cambios en los perfiles y la dinámica de los flujos migratorios, como con los nuevos controles y formas de cruce de las fronteras territoriales y simbólicas entre países.

Arnold J. Bauer

The Search for the Codex Cardona: On the Trail of a Sixteenth-Century Mexican Treasure

Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009, xiv + 182 pp.

Alan Durston, York University

Arnold J. Bauer, a senior social and economic historian of Chile, has been searching high and low for a sixteenth-century Mexican codex that may not even exist. The Codex Cardona is, or was, a richly illustrated history of Aztec and early colonial Mexico that was purportedly written in the 1550s. It was made especially valuable by its maps of early colonial cities, and there were several attempts to sell it for astronomical sums. In 1982 historian Anthony Pagden wrote a report for the art auction house Sotheby's describing the Codex Cardona as "the most important source in the early colonial history of Mexico to come to light in the present [twentieth] century" (38). In 1985, Bauer was present (apparently as something of an interloper) at a showing of the Codex in the Crocker Nuclear Laboratory at his home institution, UC Davis, where inconclusive tests were carried out regarding its provenance and authenticity. The anonymous owner subsequently tried selling the Codex to Stanford University but was unsuccessful. The Codex then disappeared from view until 1999, when it was offered to Christie's in New York. This attempted sale also failed (as previously, due to concerns regarding the work's genuineness) and the Codex disappeared once again, so far for good.

After seeing it at UC Davis in 1985, Bauer found himself unable to put it out of his mind, and from 2004 to 2006 dedicated considerable time and

effort to tracking it down and establishing its origins. His sleuthing suggested that the Codex had belonged to a prominent Mexican architect and collector who bought it, a few pages at a time, from a book dealer who in turn believed it may have come from a Nahua community. The man, known as *El Arquitecto*, then lost it to (or had it stolen by) a very shady group of characters who, Bauer believes, broke it up once again for piecemeal sale because it had become too "hot." Although Bauer never found the Codex Cardona, he was able to obtain a set of high-quality images of parts of it, eight of which are reproduced in his book.

Mesoamericanists and colonial Mexicanists who read Bauer's account with a strictly specialist interest (perhaps misled by the fact that the publisher is the very scholarly and monographic Duke University Press) may be disappointed. However, the title is clear: this is not a book *about* the Codex Cardona. It is a very personal narrative that includes extended passages (entire chapters) of pure fantasy, the shared musings of Bauer and his friend and colleague David Sweet (these passages are helpfully set apart with a different font). Clearly, for Bauer the thrill was in the chase: travels, conversations, fortuitous discoveries and encounters, and remembrances—not to mention many fine restaurants and cafes. Bauer's is a story that only an outsider to the field could have told. Significantly, he makes no attempt to analyze the images he obtained; at all moments he is careful not to offer an opinion on technical issues, limiting himself to citing the opinion of the experts.

The Search for the Codex Cardona seems in many respects to emulate the work of Jorge Luis Borges and Umberto Eco. Indeed, at times one almost expects the Codex to become *The Name of the Rose*'s "book that kills." However, as Bauer says, "I don't do fiction" (59). Instead, it was Bauer's own life that took on the characteristics of a bibliocentric mystery novel. Bauer then completed the circle by writing his own nonfiction but highly novelesque narrative. The story ends with a very Borgesian moment when Bauer realizes that the Codex Cardona is probably lost forever ("like Hemingway's big fish torn apart by the sharks") and that all that remains of it is the book he himself has written (170). It hardly seems necessary (or fair) to point out that as a writer Bauer is no Borges. A lifetime of historical writing is probably not the best preparation for trying one's hand at something like this. However, the account is engaging and thought-provoking. It may not be great literature, but historians of all stripes will read it with both pleasure and profit.

In particular, Bauer leads the reader to reflect on issues of textual authenticity and forgery that tend not to receive sufficient attention from historians. The poststructuralist undermining of concepts of authorship and authenticity can make questions about forgery seem quaint and outdated.

But recognizing that all texts (especially the “false” ones) are historical sources and that all texts are part of extensive webs of textual relationships does not detract from the importance of answering the “wh-” questions (who, when, where, why, etc.) as precisely as possible. Historians need to be open to the possibility of misrepresentation in this regard, not in order to throw out the “fakes,” but because the “wh-” questions matter, and because misrepresentation itself is an interesting and historically significant act.

Admittedly, the line between the forged and the authentic can be a blurry one, and it is certainly a culturally specific one. For instance, we know little about where this line was drawn in colonial notarial contexts. How flexible were the ligatures tying person, time, place, and text? Can someone sign on another’s behalf without a special note being made to that effect? Issues of intentionality are also hard to uncover. Were the eighteenth-century Mexican *títulos primordiales* that purport to be early colonial documents still forgeries if they were intended for internal community consumption rather than submission to law courts? However, these grey areas only enhance the need to think more, and more critically, about forgery. The notion that forgery is not an issue that historians need concern themselves with reflects a broader lack of attention to the “diplomatic” (including paleographical and philological) characteristics of our sources.

As he approaches the end of the book, Bauer leans toward the belief that the Codex Cardona “probably was an authentic sixteenth-century work” (168). However, he also presents us with an elaborate forgery scenario involving Robert Barlow (a US Mesoamericanist active in Mexico City in the 1940s) and a team of *tlacuilos*—experts in reproducing ancient Mexican scripts for the tourist trade (Chapter 6). Although he is, ultimately, unsuccessful in answering them, we can see that the “wh-” questions matter very much to Bauer: they are what propel him in his search. At the same time, the Borgeian vision of a universe of interconnected texts that make playthings of their writers and readers allows him to take philosophical distance from this search and transform it into a new and captivating text.

Oral Thomas

Biblical Resistance Hermeneutics Within a Caribbean Context

London and Oakville: Equinox, 2010, 238 pp.

Judith Soares, The University of the West Indies, Barbados

Oral Thomas’s most recent book, *Biblical Resistance Hermeneutics Within a Caribbean Context*, is a timely and well-crafted response to what the

author understands as the historical and contemporary weakness in Caribbean hermeneutical practice. Writing within the context of national liberation movements for social justice and with a special interest in elucidating the role of the “interpreters” of biblical texts in this process of liberation, Thomas’s work is geared at identifying critical shortcomings in their contributions. Primary among them, in the author’s view, is the inability or unwillingness of theologians and practitioners of the faith to understand biblical texts as products of social processes, social contradictions, and the basis of societal change, that is, as socio-ideological productions themselves.

Moreover, Thomas notes that the interpretation of biblical texts in any socio-cultural situation and in any epoch of Caribbean history is critical as a tool to effect societal change precisely because such texts were written not in abstraction, but from a particular perspective out of specific social circumstances. In this matrix of theology, ideology, politics, and economics, biblical hermeneutics and particular interpretations of biblical texts have the potential to become a “weapon of struggle”; but, they can also dampen the revolutionary potential or blunt the revolutionary edge of social forces concerned with social justice. Hence, interpretation and contextualized re-interpretation of Christian doctrine are critical to the effectiveness of biblical texts as a tool of analysis within peoples’ movements for social change. Thomas’s commitment to a Caribbean constructed on the foundation of justice with cemented pillars of freedom and equality is reflected in his thesis that biblical hermeneutics within the reality of the Anglophone Caribbean must focus more on the meaning of biblical texts and less on the Bible itself as religious text. Combining Marxist analysis and Gramscian theorizing, the author advocates the innovative use of liturgy and worship by the “organic intellectuals” of the Church as a means to construct a critique of ideology and to politicize and radicalize culture as a “weapon” of resistance.

Drawing on selected narratives (e.g., biblical narratives, slave revolts, cricket, carnival, national budgets) from the historical and contemporary Caribbean, Thomas creatively demonstrates that reading the Bible is not just about “collecting facts for spiritual formation and faith development” (174). Reading the Bible is first and foremost a socio-political activity. It is about reading into biblical texts in order to create an “alternative consciousness” that leads to a world based on just social, economic, and political relations in a region historically scarred by the cruelty of colonialism and slavery and battered by the afflictions of contemporary capitalism and globalization. To this end, Thomas advocates a “resistant reading” of the Bible (8). It is a reading strategy that embraces the cultural meaning of contextual realities, laying the basis, as it were, for a commitment, both ideological and political, to being involved in the “struggle” for social change and social justice.

“Resistant reading” of the Bible is a refreshingly new way of doing theology in the context of the Caribbean, but with utmost relevance to the countries of the South with similar characteristics and experiences of colonialism and Empire.

In encouraging and creating new thinking and practice, Thomas challenges contemporary theologians to develop a biblical hermeneutic that not only opposes the status quo, but also creates the context for the development of social consciousness and a socially inclusive “activist agenda” (174). Such an agenda would lead the socially disadvantaged to resist the negative influences of capitalism and globalization and to work toward the overthrow of those systems of dominance that have shackled the peoples of an ex-colonial—and now neo-colonial—world. In this struggle, biblical hermeneutics become a weapon of resistance against all forms of domination and discrimination. In short, Caribbean theologians are being urged by Thomas to read the Bible through the eyes and the lived experiences of those who historically have been cast away and socially excluded in contemporary society. The goal is to pay attention, through worship, to both the imperfections in the human condition and the failure of the body politic to provide the objective conditions for relations of social justice.

The historical materialist methodological approach adopted by Thomas and now eschewed by the erstwhile Caribbean intellectual Left, is aptly employed here. Not only does this methodology allow for an understanding of Caribbean society as an interrelated whole, but it also allows the reader to make links and connections as they come to grasp the epistemological question of the relationship between social being and social consciousness. In this respect, the chosen methodological approach has proven to be an effective method of studying social phenomena and social processes, a theme running throughout the book, and a method of resistance and social change, as Thomas has reminded us in Chapter 3 of his work.

This original reconstruction of the concept and practice of biblical hermeneutics introduces a new dimension in the discourse on hermeneutics and the interpretative method in Caribbean religious thinking and practice. It also sets Thomas apart as the first Protestant theologian and academic to advance a theory that can serve as a guide both to further the work on Caribbean liberation theology—still in its infancy—and to support Caribbean liberation movements. As recorded in the work, the blend of theology, ideology, politics, economics, theory, liturgy, worship, and history has resulted in a flavourful recipe for connoisseurs of sound scholarship.

This work—well-grounded in both extensive and intensive research—makes a significant contribution to the literature on Christianity and religion, theology, and liberation theology. It also makes a significant contribution to

an understanding of culture, sports, politics, economics, and sociology as theology and, moreover, theology as an ideology and an act of conscience. It makes very good reading and has broad appeal. Students of theology, practitioners of the faith, economists, political scientists, social scientists, social activists, politicians and all those believers, unbelievers, and non-believers involved in resisting social pain and social injury in the interest of social justice will take note. What Thomas has written is not just a pedagogical tool; it is also a call to conscience and a call to action.

Natacha Borgeaud-Garciandía, Bruno Lautier, Ricardo Peñafiel, et Ania Tizziani (éds.)

Penser le politique en Amérique latine : La recreation des espaces et des formes du politique

Paris : Karthala, 2009, 408 pp.

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Comment penser la particularité du politique en Amérique latine au cours de la dernière décennie? C'est la question qui a motivé un colloque en 2007 à l'Université de Paris I, réunissant experts latino-américains de différentes disciplines: anthropologie, économie, sciences politiques, sociologie, psychanalyse et droit. Cet ouvrage collectif est le fruit de cette rencontre. Le livre est divisé en cinq parties: (1) Politiques publiques, technicisation et moralisation du politique; (2) Droits, droits de l'Homme et justice; (3) Sujets populaires et représentations du politique; (4) Le travail et le politique; (5) Religion et politique. L'hypothèse centrale de l'ouvrage est que l'Amérique latine connaît un processus de dépolitisation. Toutefois, cela ne signifie pas la disparition du politique, mais plutôt une nécessité de repenser ses nouveaux espaces et formes de mutation. La clef d'interprétation théorique repose sur la complexe distinction entre la politique et le politique. La politique est ce qui concerne l'exercice du pouvoir (Azaïs, 310), ce qui est lié à l'ordre de l'institué, ce qui correspond à l'administration et à la préservation du pouvoir. En revanche, le politique est ce qui appartient à l'ordre instituant un nouveau sens symbolique dans la société (Lefort, 310). À titre d'exemple, le gouvernement, les partis politiques et les syndicats font partie de la politique. Par contre, le politique n'a pas d'espace défini dans la société, il est le lieu de l'émergence de nouvelles formes de subjectivité. D'une part, certains articles traitent de ce processus de dépolitisation, technicisation et moralisation des politiques sociales et des droits de l'homme. D'autre part, d'autres articles se penchent sur de nouvelles pratiques de mobilisation po-

pulaire et de nouveaux espaces d'expression du politique à partir du travail ou de la religion. Étant donné que le politique ne se trouve pas dans des espaces institutionnels, tout d'abord il est nécessaire de comprendre le sens qu'il acquiert auprès des « gens ordinaires ». L'analyse multidisciplinaire des différents cas—l'Argentine, le Mexique, le Venezuela, le Chili, le Brésil et le Nicaragua—est la caractéristique la plus remarquable du livre. Le lecteur peut ainsi comparer les différentes trajectoires de chaque pays, et nuancer les interprétations courantes du « virage à gauche » dans la région. Les transformations des sociétés latino-américaines sont loin d'apparaître comme un processus homogène, dénué de contradictions et de tensions. Ce qui semble être en rupture avec le passé n'est qu'une expression de continuité. Par exemple, les politiques sociales en Amérique latine mises en branle par les nouveaux gouvernements dit de « gauche », sont loin d'être innovatrices et en rupture avec la décennie néolibérale (Lautier, Ceballos, Lo Vuolo, Bey). L'analyse de la gestion de la catastrophe naturelle (1999) au Venezuela démontre la moralisation des demandes des victimes affectées par le gouvernement de Chavez (Vasquez Lezama). La promotion des droits de l'Homme par des commissions de vérité et réconciliation, plutôt que d'être une source d'approfondissement de la démocratie, moralise et dépolitise le conflit en refusant l'appel à la justice pour les victimes du terrorisme d'État (Lefranc, Doran). En ce qui concerne la question de la représentation du politique, l'analyse du soulèvement populaire dans les bidonvilles au Chili n'est pas une simple manifestation de violence, mais l'expression du politique (Peñafiel). L'expérience des usines sans patron en Argentine, au lieu de signifier une rupture avec la figure du patron, est expliquée par le paternalisme qui traverse l'imaginaire des travailleurs (Quijoux). Par ailleurs, l'analyse de la relation entre les phénomènes religieux et politiques—pentecôtisme au Brésil (Aubrée) et péronisme en Argentine (Cucchetti, Mallimaci)—souligne la nécessité de considérer ces deux phénomènes non pas comme opposés, mais comme complémentaires. En ce sens, les articles remettent en cause l'hypothèse du remplacement de la politique par le religieux en vogue en Europe (Doran).

Bien que nous ne puissions pas rendre justice à chacun des dix-neuf articles et aux cinq commentaires, il y a essentiellement deux critiques que nous pouvons effectuer à l'ensemble du livre : une critique sur la forme et une critique sur le fond. Premièrement, les deux concepts fondamentaux de « la politique » et « le politique », qui donnent sens à l'ouvrage collectif, ne sont définis que tardivement à la page 310. À notre avis, il aurait fallu inclure un premier chapitre afin d'expliquer et développer l'utilisation de ces concepts. Deuxièmement, nous remarquons l'absence de réflexion sur l'une des expériences latino-américaines les plus intéressantes en termes du

politique : le cas bolivien. Le rôle joué par les mouvements sociaux et les partis politiques (MAS) en Bolivie met en lumière la question fondamentale de l'organisation et du changement des rapports de pouvoir à l'égard des groupes dominants. Enfin, bien que cette lacune soit un choix délibéré des directeurs de l'ouvrage, une question importante reste ouverte : comment à partir de ces nouveaux espaces du politique la remise en cause du néolibéralisme devient un problème de construction d'alternatives pour l'ensemble de la société ?

Fernando Ignacio Leiva

Latin American Neostructuralism: The Contradictions of Post-Neoliberal Development

Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008, xxxvi + 315 pp.

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In this book, Fernando Leiva provides a well-written and superbly researched critical assessment of Latin American “neostructuralism,” a term he uses in specific reference to the body of development literature and policy recommendations emanating from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) since 1980. The prefix “neo-” in neostructuralism reminds readers that there existed a previous epoch characterized by “structuralism.” This was in the 1950s and 1960s when ECLAC was the site of emergence of an innovative analysis and discourse on the question of development. In that earlier time period, ECLAC’s contribution provided the basis for the consolidation of new strategies that sought to overcome the main obstacles the region had experienced in its economic development trajectory. The names Raúl Prebisch, Celso Furtado, and Anibal Pinto, among others, became connected to this influential school of Latin American structuralism.

Leiva’s analysis of the newer neostructuralism period serves as the anchor around which the author considers not only ECLAC’s critical transformation in its theoretical approach to development but also the failures this approach has thus far produced. This is a point to which I will return below. The objective of the book is twofold. One of Leiva’s aims is to analyze the set of ideas regarding development that ECLAC has produced and refined since the 1980s. The other is to use this analysis to question its applicability for the region today as an alternative vision of development. Leiva’s conclusion is that neostructuralism has failed. His dual approach

allows him to connect neostructuralism's failures—particularly in terms of economic policy recommendations—to the theoretical weaknesses his analysis identifies. For example, the uncritical appropriation of the notion of opportunities in a globalized world, particularly a regional version of export promotion through “opened regionalism,” is closely connected to ECLAC's inadequate theoretical considerations of the significance of power constellations in general and the weight of transnational companies in the functioning of international markets more concretely. Alternatively, Leiva makes a strong case for the revival of the theoretical spirit inherent in the earlier intellectual production of ECLAC that, through the contribution of theorists like Prebisch and Furtado, so effectively brought attention to the need to address asymmetric power relationships existing across and between regions of the world economy, and within Latin American countries themselves.

A key objective of ECLAC's original economic policy formulations was related to altering the social relations of production that underlay the region's position in the world economy. This is unsurprising given structuralism's particular stance on asymmetrical configurations of local, regional, international, and personal levels of power, and, additionally, on the past and present international division of labour. While this tradition in theorizing development and the options for the region might run through the institution's intellectual history, Leiva makes clear that the orientation of ECLAC's inquiry has shifted substantially in the period under study in his book.

As a result of its shift in focus, ECLAC's role in the generation of critical thinking about development as both concept and practice has also suffered a drastic transformation, bringing the institution closer to a more acceptable, mainstream research agenda and policy design. Nonetheless, as Leiva observes, in their own specific ways, both approaches have offered much more than just an industrialization policy alternative. Rather, ECLAC's emphasis historically has been upon transforming a much broader set of factors that influence productive agents' decisions as a means of bringing about a more egalitarian society. What distinguishes ECLAC's intellectual production from more conventional economic thought is precisely this engagement with the “non-economic sphere” and a concern for the role of the state within it. The question, of course, is how the more recent contribution of theorists and researchers in ECLAC propose to respond to the challenges the Latin American region continues to face in order to overcome its developmental deficit.

Leiva's most critical indictment against neostructuralism is the omission and effacement of power and power relations that mars its analysis (33–35). A particular expression of this problem has been the evidently inadequate

instruments governments have developed to regulate transnational corporations and their role as the most dynamic agents in the implementation of export-oriented policies so central in the economic restructuring of the region. The consequence has been that the untamed interests of these corporations have prevented the consolidation of a strategy aimed at refurbishing the region's industrial structure in such a way that the nature of its exports could be effectively transformed. On the contrary, the increasing share of natural resources in Latin American exports has marked a new stage in the development of the region. As Leiva also shows, erratic growth rates, growing inequality, and the concentration of income all paint a bleak picture for the region. Further, if "neoliberalism" is understood to be the only realistic, progressive economic strategy, the prospects for Latin America and the Caribbean appear even more discouraging.

Although one of the central arguments in the book is that neoliberalism is quite prevalent within economic policy-making circles in Latin American (see in particular Chapters 7, 8, and 9), in my view this is only true for the case of Chile. Indeed, the influence of neoliberalist ideas appears pervasive among policy makers in this country, a fact that leads Leiva to account for policy failures in Chile as "apparent" failures of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism has not, however, managed to achieve the same degree of influence in policy-making processes in other countries of the region.

To strengthen his critique of neoliberalism's theoretical claims, in Chapter 8 Leiva—relying in part on the French regulationist school—develops the notion of "mode of regulation," through which he can introduce an understanding of the more general conditions for the "reproduction" of capital and its mechanisms of exploitation that, in turn, explain the economic failures of neoliberalism. By extension, his theoretical strategy requires the existence of some form of "economic or social surplus" as the source of new investment and distribution, which, Leiva argues, is part of structuralism's original vocabulary. In my opinion, this argument in the book can be developed on its own, without trying to read those notions of regulation/reproduction and/or social/economic surplus in the vocabulary of the structuralisms of the 1950s and 1960s. These notions require a *general* theory of prices (or value). They also require some understanding beyond ECLAC's original theorizing of the conditions of asymmetry in power relations that are the basis of hierarchical structures in the world economy.

Notwithstanding these limitations, Leiva makes a strong case for a more radical political economy with a capacity to elucidate power relations between and within units of production. He also undertakes a comparison between alternatives (e.g., Bolivia under Evo Morales and Venezuela under Hugo Chavez) and what in contrast has come to be known lately as

the “modern” left (the cases of Chile and Brazil, for example). It is in this context that Leiva provides a detailed analysis and evaluation of Chile’s economic strategy over the past 20 years.

Finally, there are few books in the English language that have undertaken an analysis of neostructuralism with the passion and seriousness that is found in Leiva’s contribution. Given its singularity, *Latin American Neostructuralism* will remain a very important source of analysis on development and economic strategies in the Latin American region. The book should become a starting point in any debate regarding alternatives to overcome the region’s dismal social and economic performance and neostructuralism’s potential contribution to promote change. Neither structuralism nor neostructuralism had or have, perhaps unfortunately, been radical discourses. Instead they have advocated for structural reforms that could tilt the balance toward a more egalitarian and communitarian world. The task now, and for which Leiva’s work provides critical insight, is to push the propositions further, helping clarify the grounds for a more radical and emancipatory alternative for Latin America in the future.

David Recondo

La démocratie mexicaine en terres indiennes

Paris : Karthala, 2009, 452 pp.

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Le livre de David Recondo est ce qu’on appelle un bon livre : il porte sur un sujet intéressant, il est abordé avec une perspective pertinente et il est facile à lire. Un leitmotiv se dégage : la transition démocratique au Mexique est tellement riche et complexe qu’on a de la difficulté à généraliser.

Comme le démontre son étude de la reconnaissance officielle des us et coutumes dans l’État de Oaxaca, les dynamiques des trois niveaux de gouvernement au Mexique (fédéral, étatique, municipal) s’entrecroisent et les acteurs, très diversifiés, circulent avec plus ou moins d’aisance entre les trois, faisant émerger une transition démocratique à vitesses et contenus différents. De ce point de vue, Recondo fait une contribution importante à l’étude du fédéralisme mexicain.

Cependant, c’est le rôle changeant des communautés indigènes dans les systèmes politiques mexicain et oaxaquène qui se trouve au cœur de la réflexion de Recondo. Il analyse avec détail leur place dans la formation de l’« ancien régime » post-révolutionnaire et leurs transformations au fur et à mesure que le PRI décline comme parti hégémonique, que les organisations

sociales autonomes font leur apparition et que la révolte néozapatiste au Chiapas voisin bouscule tous les calculs politiques. Recondo n'arrête pas de nous le rappeler, la longue transition mexicaine s'est faite sans feuille de route et au gré de l'évolution contingente des équilibres politiques. Le résultat n'est donc ni homogène ni systématique.

C'est dans ce cadre que fut adoptée la réforme concernant les us et coutumes à Oaxaca. Traditionnellement, la plupart des 570 communes oaxaquènes élaient leurs autorités suivant des procédures propres à chacune d'elles. Celles-ci avaient émergé du contact avec les pouvoirs colonial et national et des efforts pour minimiser leur influence dans les affaires intérieures des communautés indigènes. Le PRI servait de médiateur et légalisait ces procédures en nommant ces élus comme ses candidats aux élections municipales. En échange, les communautés indigènes votaient massivement (fréquemment à 100%) pour tous les autres candidats du PRI —à la présidentielle, au poste de gouverneur et aux législatives fédérales et étatiques.

À partir de la réforme de 1995–98, ce n'est plus le cas, car les communes et leurs autorités sont désormais légalement reconnues. Au total, 418 communes passèrent officiellement au régime coutumier. Uniquement pour les élections municipales, les partis sont interdits de présenter des candidats et les décisions communautaires en matière d'autorités locales sont reconnues par l'État. Pour les autres élections, étatiques et fédérales, le régime électoral partisan est maintenu.

La réforme, bien qu'unique en son genre, est limitée, car elle ne touche que le domaine électoral. Cependant, sa portée donne lieu à des confusions. Dans le sillage des reconnaissances étatique et fédérale du multiculturalisme et en syntonie avec le discours néozapatiste sur les droits autochtones, la reconnaissance des us et coutumes au niveau municipal fut interprétée comme une acceptation plus vaste du droit coutumier—qui, comme le souligne Recondo, n'est pas nécessairement ancestral, car la coutume peut être une invention récente. Pour compléter cette réflexion, on pourrait analyser comment certaines communes décidèrent d'appliquer ce droit coutumier à la distribution de la terre et, dans certains cas, au droit civil et pénal. L'incapacité de l'État à mettre un terme à ces pratiques et à les substituer avec un accès garanti à ses propres institutions contribue aussi à l'hétérogénéité légale et politique de Oaxaca.

En dépit de quelques affinités électives avec la démocratie, Recondo critique les us et coutumes comme porteurs d'un potentiel autoritaire important. Bien que l'histoire politique récente de Oaxaca confirme cette appréciation, elle est basée sur une perspective strictement libérale de la démocratie. Cependant, une perspective plus souple aurait été davantage utile, car, en

dépôt des percées de la modernisation, les organisations indigènes continuent à exiger la parité entre les droits individuels et collectifs, notamment les néozapatistes, mais aussi les Servicios al Pueblo Mixe, à Oaxaca. D'ailleurs, l'APPO—la coalition d'instituteurs, étudiants et intellectuels qui se révolta à l'été 2006 contre l'enclave autoritaire oaxaquène—, reprit ces mêmes us et coutumes comme éléments centraux du nouveau régime démocratique qu'elle proposait.

En outre, les droits collectifs ne sont pas étrangers au droit mexicain. Déjà la Constitution fédérale de 1917 reconnut le droit collectif à la terre à travers les *ejidos* et les terres communales. Les politiques indigénistes des années 1930, aussi limitées furent-elles, reconnurent les droits linguistiques des autochtones. L'amendement constitutionnel sur le multiculturalisme, en 1990 à Oaxaca et 1994 au niveau fédéral, précède aussi la reconnaissance des us et coutumes. Cette réforme est certes une innovation, mais elle a de nombreux antécédents. Du point de vue théorique, l'intégration des droits collectifs dans la démocratie libérale est aussi un travail en cours. Les réflexions de Will Kymlicka dans *La citoyenneté multiculturelle* (2001) ou de Charles Taylor dans *Multiculturalisme, différence et démocratie* (1997) en sont des exemples importants.

Un autre concept théorique que Recondo reprend souvent et qui mériterait une réflexion plus approfondie est celui d'hybridation. Dans le livre, il est utilisé dans deux sens complémentaires, mais distincts. D'un côté, il fait référence aux coutumes « ancestrales » recyclées et remaniées pour les adapter à la conjoncture politique, souvent avec pour but d'exclure des adversaires. De l'autre, il fait référence aux réformes destinées à permettre la cohabitation, dans un même système politique, de procédures démocratiques et de pratiques autoritaires, les unes légitimant les autres. Puisqu'il semble qu'on trouverait ici une réponse à la question de pourquoi les transitions mexicaines (et autres) s'écartent systématiquement de l'idéal démocratique, hybridation est un concept à retenir et à développer.

Nous aurions aussi souhaité une analyse plus poussée de l'évolution des us et coutumes depuis 2000—et surtout des événements de 2006, qui mirent Oaxaca sur la carte médiatique mondiale et qui montrent, plus que nul autre, la portée, les limites et les contradictions de la transition démocratique au Mexique. Pour l'instant, elles sont autant de questions de recherche. Néanmoins, ce livre, publié aussi en espagnol (*La política del gatopardo. Multiculturalismo y democracia en Oaxaca*, Mexico, Publicaciones de la Casa Chata, 2007) est un instrument précieux pour la recherche, autant pour les informations et les analyses qu'il contient que pour les questions théoriques et empiriques qu'il suscite.