

accomplished for this work. If one of his aims was to establish the role of indigenous peasant communities as protagonists of Guatemalan history, this objective is attained. Perhaps the most striking aspect of this book is the way it lets the actors themselves speak. One can thus appreciate the peasant's relentless efforts to denounce land expropriations, to condemn forced labour systems and to plead for justice. The testimonial quality of the documents used by Cambranes to illustrate the degree of political consciousness displayed by Guatemalan peasants during the nineteenth century is unquestionable. Its value, as a recompilation of episodes in Guatemala's agrarian history makes up for the text's theoretical, and (in this English translation) grammatical, shortcomings. It serves to shed light on present-day agrarian struggles in Guatemala.

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KARL SAPPER, *The Verapaz in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: a contribution to the Historical Geography and Ethnology of Northeastern Guatemala*. Translated by Theodore E. Gutman (Institute of Archaeology, University of California (Los Angeles), Occasional Paper 13, 1985. Pp. xviii + 53. \$8.50)

Among English-speaking geographers, the inability to command a second language creates an increasing need for good translations of enduring works. In the Mesoamerican context, few contributions have suffered more from linguistic myopia than those of several distinguished German scholars who were active in the field in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Karl Sapper (1866–1945) is not a name with which many in our discipline would today claim familiarity. Yet the fact is that the achievements of this remarkable man—in archaeology, climatology, ethnohistory and vulcanology as well as in geography—put him in the ranks of the very best. It is therefore heartening to have available, in English, Sapper's study of the Verapaz region of Guatemala, first published in Munich in 1936.

The Verapaz is perhaps best known as the laboratory within which the Dominican humanist Bartolomé de las Casas attempted to enact his lofty ideals of how Hispanic culture could peacefully transform and elevate native American ways. Sapper reconstructs the spiritual conquest of the Maya in the sixteenth century with empathy and care, discussing beforehand the complexities of the contact-period situation and the frustrations all alien conquerors, however well-meaning, have experienced in this remote and troublesome land. The utopian vision of Las Casas, contends Sapper, never materialized, certainly not among the lowland Chol Maya and with only limited results among the more highland Kekchí and Pokonchí Maya. Although he organizes his monograph chronologically, Sapper throughout moves from past to present, creatively mixing field observation with historical interpretation. Some of the insights thus afforded are penetrating. Consider, for example, the following reflection on indigenous sense of place and Maya response to the colonial policy of *reducción*:

All groups have in common a touching love of their homeland, which they leave only unwillingly. Whenever possible the Indian looks for a hut for himself and his extended family far away from neighbors, having been brought up in the single-residence milpa system of widely dispersed habitations with long distances between neighbors. Those who, like myself, have spent hundreds of nights in such Indian huts, with their internal and external silence, and with an almost ideal condition for the upbringing of children, which is based on imitation of behavior, can comprehend this predilection for single residences in the rain forest where no outside influences disturb the peace of nature and family.

With that kind of attitude, the Indians found the Spanish system of *reducciones*, or collective settlements of dispersed inhabitants in villages or towns, extremely disagreeable. . . . This frequently caused the people to flee into distant forest regions and caused the clerical authorities to continuously search for the missing people. Occasionally the church or the entire village was burned in order to force the priests to abandon the settlement. Thus it is clear that the system of *reducciones*, which was so courageously introduced and energetically

promoted by Bartolomé de las Casas, was contrary to the particular psychological needs of the Chol, who were quite unhappy in these villages. The system was more successful with the Kekchí and the Pokonchí, who submitted to it as much as they had to but apparently took frequent leave to their silent fields in the forest so that they would not completely miss out on the lovely calm and solitude.

This extract serves to illustrate not only the quality of Sapper's thinking but also to highlight how sensitively Theodore Gutman has translated from the original. Not even the outlandish assertion Brian Dillon makes in the Preface about soccer being "the twentieth-century equivalent of the ancient ball game" or his avoidance of any reference to the ongoing conquest of the Maya that scars contemporary Guatemala can detract from a fine monograph. This is a stimulating piece of research by a geographer of singular accomplishment who deserves to be acknowledged, read and referred to widely.

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JEAN STUBBS, *Tobacco on the Periphery: a Case Study in Cuban Labour History, 1860-1958* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985, Pp. xiv + 203. \$42.50)

For much of the Third World, the fashioning of an international division of labour implied the shaping, distortion and often destruction of once indigenous national industries, with attendant impacts on social class and occupational structure. Stubbs examines how the development of the Cuban tobacco industry was held back in such a way as to maintain an archaic structure of cultivation and production that wrought considerable changes for the nature and composition of tobacco growers and manufacturers, the industry's workforce, and struggles between manufacturers, the state and workers.

In the first of three parts the author explores the development of the tobacco industry itself. Throughout the nineteenth century cigar manufacturing was Cuba's industry *par excellence*, catering to a rapidly growing export market with several huge factories. Late in the century the inchoate U.S. tobacco industry developed behind state protection, thereby severely circumscribing Cuba's cigar market. Until 1899 U.S.-Cuban tobacco relations were almost exclusively mercantile. During U.S. occupation in 1901, however, the American Tobacco Company bought up and came to control 90% of all cigar exports and had eliminated or co-opted some of the most important members of the tobacco oligarchy into its two subsidiaries. The ATC strategy was to buy up major factories, streamline manufacture, transfer production for export to the U.S., and guarantee leaf. This period marks the beginning of the prolonged tobacco industry decline and the rise of Cuba as a raw material supplier, such that by the 1920s total cigar exports were one-third of their 1880 total, while leaf exports doubled. While turn of the century mechanization in cigarette production led to complete factory production, outwork and petty production had a long lifespan in cigar manufacturing, where the cigar machine arrived only in the late 1930s. Even then, local independents and workers struggled to ensure state limitation on its use for export production only, so that the home market was controlled by small local concerns and petty rollers.

In the short second part on Relations of Tobacco Production, Stubbs analyses the protracted breakdown of the peasantry with capitalist plantation agriculture, and the formation of an urban industrial proletariat. The intensified sharecropping which accompanied the large plantations meant that the small peasant grower class disintegrated to a large extent into a new "semi-peasantry, semi-proletariat which spilled over into other tobacco sectors" (p. 66) and a vast, largely seasonal and rural workforce. Gender, race and craft differentiation highlighted the development of the tobacco working class. One interesting story is the struggles by males to restrict female entrance into the early mechanized cigarette and later cigar factories, stemming from conditions