

the USSR attack on Finland; cracked down on the Party in his last days in office; and chose a non-leftist as his successor.

Herman never comes to grips with the Mexican Revolution and its impact on Mexican society. As Alexander points out in the Introduction, Herman does not speak to the problem of Mexican Communists in dealing with the Mexican Revolution, nor does he stress the effects of Communist disparagement of the Mexican Revolution and the insistence upon advocating the Russian Revolution as a model. Mexican nationalism was xenophobic in general, not just anti-American, and the revolution, imperfect as it was, gave people hope that Mexican answers would be found to Mexican problems.

The merits of the book are several. It proves again that Communism and the Comintern in Mexico were straw men. It provides a sketch of early Mexican Communist Party history. Using it with caution, scholars can build on this useful beginning.

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*Cuba under Castro: The Limits of Charisma.* By EDWARD GONZÁLEZ. Boston, 1974. Houghton Mifflin Company. Tables. Index. Pp. xii, 241. Paper. \$5.95.

Edward González has written a political analysis of the Cuban regime that can be read on two levels: it is both a textbook and a treatise. As a textbook, it is a knowledgeable, concise, and clearly written description of the evolution of the political system of the revolution, beginning with its roots in the prerevolutionary situation and carrying the story forward to recent changes that stem from the "failure" of the 1970 sugar harvest. The author discusses the long history of nationalism in Cuba, the collapse of legitimacy under Ramón Grau San Martín, Carlos Prío Socarrás, and Fulgencio Batista, the deep generation break produced by that collapse, the guerrilla spirit that emerged triumphant from the Sierra Maestra, the quick movement from mild reform to socialism and aspects of pure communism, the complete break with the United States and the increasing dependence on the Soviet Union, the emergence of new organs of mass mobilization and administration, the stress upon *conciencia* and the "new man," and finally, recent partial retreats from the most radical political postures at home and abroad and a greater reliance on bureaucratic rationality and material incentives to bolster economic performance. As a text the book would be very useful to new students of the Cuban experience

if combined with sources that give the details on economics, education, public health, culture, and other of the less-political aspects of the revolutionary society that González purposely minimizes.

As a treatise, the book is aimed at students of comparative politics and contains a key thesis: “Above all, I have stressed the centrality of Cuba’s charismatic leader in shaping the revolution and sustaining the regime over the years—but have shown how ultimately there have been limits to Fidel’s charisma owing largely to the very personal character of his regime” (p. x). Here González applies Max Weber’s model of the institutionalization of charisma and seeks to analyze Fidel Castro not just as a Cuban but also as a type. Toward the end of the volume he writes: “Ultimately, however, economic development was the Achilles heel of the *fidelista* regime. Fidel was effective politically on both the domestic and international fronts. But his failure to promote the island’s sustained economic development led, in the end, to his regime’s growing subordination to Moscow by the late 1960s and . . . to heightened Soviet tutelage after 1970” (p. 218).

González believes that Fidel’s personal style of leadership and his great ability to communicate with and inspire the masses was essential to survival during the early years. It was a style that reflected the events from Moncada through the Sierra Maestra to triumph in Havana: daring, improvising, idealistic, and organized through a network of individual loyalties tied directly to the leader. Nothing less would have defeated Batista, thrown back the U.S. supported invasion, and made possible the radical transformation of economy and society that occurred in the 1960s. But the failure to fully institutionalize the regime led to poor economic planning and inadequate daily performance; according to the thesis, the very improvisation and personal rule that was politically successful was economically confusing. To make up for poor production, Fidel had to turn to the Soviets for greater subsidy, and partly under pressure from them, he relinquished his detailed control over economic activities to technicians, bureaucrats, and army officers. The analysis of these historical events is meant to suggest a general lesson (although it is not developed to its full implications): revolutions can be won by charismatic leaders but not administered by them for a long time.

González’s model is consistent with the trend of events and is shared by most writers outside of Cuba, but it is not the only reasonable interpretation. It involves assumptions about the relative weight of causal influences that go beyond the data themselves and stem from the perspective of the author. One alternative approach would be to

develop a more explicit analysis of how much economic growth is possible in a short decade by a revolutionary society that faced the problems of Cuba, both internal and external. I suspect it would show that under these real constraints the performance was in fact quite good and that therefore Fidel's leadership was as successful in economics as in politics. One of the main reasons it is often called a failure is that Fidel himself set such high goals—but they cannot be accepted as the sole measure of performance by outside evaluators. Indeed, the outsider might conclude that the improvements in productivity in the last three years are more the payoff on earlier investments in schools and factories than the result of the specific shift toward bureaucratic rationality, and thus recent trends may justify Fidel's earlier decisions. And one might worry more about the deadening effects of bureaucracy (a theme of Weber's that González ignores) rather than accept it as a useful calming of Fidel's improvisations. My point is not to argue that González is necessarily wrong, but to stress that alternative perspectives might be right, and that a restrained style of academic objectivity in writing does not by itself remove the influence of the unstated theoretical and political convictions of an author—and here we face the limits of social science.

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*Roosevelt and Batista: Good Neighbor Diplomacy in Cuba, 1933–1945.*

By IRWIN F. GELLMAN. Albuquerque, 1973. University of New Mexico Press. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 303. Cloth. \$12.00.

In 1960 Robert F. Smith published his penetrating study, *The United States and Cuba: Business and Diplomacy, 1917–1960*. In two chapters Smith demonstrated that New Deal Diplomacy relative to Cuba in the period 1933–1934 was characterized not, as usually conceived, by a fundamental change in American diplomatic policy but in a change in the tactics of American diplomacy. While overt intervention in a military sense in Cuban affairs tended to decline, the United States continued to intervene to maintain a government favorable to American business interests. Even the abrogation of the Platt Amendment marked no real change, and was essentially “an inexpensive gesture to Cuban nationalism” (p. 157).

Now in *Roosevelt and Batista*, Gellman substantiates Smith's conclusions with a detailed study, based on research in the correspondence of American ambassadors to the island, of the Good Neighbor Policy