

The author argues that as the sugar industry spread, bringing with it an expanded slave population in the early 1800s, revolts took place, often led by Blacks recently brought over from Africa and now wanting their freedom. As the sugar industry went into decline by the 1840s, working and living conditions deteriorated, providing additional incentive for revolts. All revolutions were crushed; punishment, particularly in the later period, was quite harsh; and fear of such revolts was always common in the white population. Baralt shows that slaves consistently resisted their bondage, first with rebellions and later by murdering owners. Rebellions were easy to quash because they frequently were small, the island too little to hide fugitives, and the government able to marshal sufficient strength quickly.

Slaves fought for their personal freedom and, less frequently, for that of Puerto Rico. They usually made detailed plans before a revolt and followed a common pattern of seizing weapons, killing owners, and fleeing their properties. Contrary to common belief, the government did not always execute rebels; officials also used banishment, imprisonment, and condemnation to public service.

What might have enhanced his study would have been a chapter-length analysis of how slave revolts in Puerto Rico compared to those in Cuba, other Caribbean islands, and in the southern United States. Such a comparison would contribute additionally to our understanding of the Puerto Rican situation. Regardless of this suggestion, Baralt has done a competent job.

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NATIONAL PERIOD

On the Periphery of Nineteenth-Century Mexico: Sonora and Sinaloa 1810–1877. By STUART F. VOSS. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1982. Notes. Maps. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xv, 318. Cloth. \$17.85.

On the Periphery is a welcome contribution to regional historiography for northwestern Mexico during the formative period of the national republic. Basically a political history of the dominant class, Voss's study centers on the "urban notables" who vie with each other for control of state and district offices, their rivalry centered around the governorship. Socioeconomic data are well researched and used to supplement the political narrative, but not employed as the integrative element that could

explain the historical development of a society in formation. The book is structured as a comparative study of Sonora and Sinaloa, rich in information, though not always balanced in treatment because of the generally more abundant sources for Sonora.

The author makes excellent use of local newspapers for the period as well as microfilmed archival collections and not easily accessible regional bibliography; however, he relies heavily on English travel journals and foreign consular reports for descriptive data. His research could have been enriched by consulting directly local and regional archives (state, episcopal, municipal, and parish), the Archivo General de la Nación's holdings for nineteenth-century Mexico (recently made accessible), and the archives of the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores. In interpretive historiography, Voss refers to well-known North American authors, but his conclusions could have been strengthened had he placed his study within the framework of recent socioeconomic syntheses published in Mexico on nineteenth-century national development and taken into account recently published research on the region.

On the Periphery provides good treatment of the Apache question and the resistance of Indian communities to the loss of land and water rights to private landholders. Voss handles well education as an indicator of social development. In the earlier chapters he provides a convincing explanation of the regional application of federalist and centralist arguments; however, for the restoration period the author paraphrases Pesqueirista arguments taken from Sonoran state newspapers on federalism versus centralism at the national, state, and local levels. The problem is couched in fiscal terms and in reference to military defense, but not related critically to the economic interests of the "notables," whose perspective is still local regarding productive capacity and commercial outlets.

Voss criticizes the performance of the Sonora and Sinaloa state legislatures, yet does not complete his analysis of the relationship between politics and private gain. As he implies, but does not make explicit, commerce is the main source for the accumulation of wealth, the prime concern of the ruling class. The final chapters are more narrative than analytic in discussing the regional-national dichotomy and the fundamental contradictions in applying liberal ideology to prevailing social structure: government is at all times oligarchical, for the popular classes do not participate openly in the struggle for power.

The present reader finds that two arguments basic to Voss's history bear discussion. First, the characterization of Sonoran society as urban during the first half of the nineteenth century: although the leading families prefer to live in an urban environment and, more important, Her-

mosillo and Guaymas dominate commerce and the state's economy, it can be argued that the centers of production and the working population are concentrated in mining camps, haciendas, and ranches—all in the rural sector. Second, the author's interpretation of *periphery* or *frontier* as opposed to the center: he implies, through the triumph of Porfirista adherents in the region and in prediction of Sonoran participation in the Revolution, that the northwest enters fully into national politics and society as the nineteenth century draws to a close. It can be argued, however, that the northwest remains on the frontier, its economic development of the Porfirian period due largely to United States investment and markets. Finally, the comparative presentation of Sonora and Sinaloa is not brought to a conclusion in terms of the similarities and major differences between these two regional societies.

In summary, *On the Periphery* is a carefully woven, historical narrative, scrupulously attentive to detail. The argument could have been strengthened by the explicit statement of hypotheses regarding the formation of class interests and the integration of the northwest into international markets before the consolidation of a national market in Mexico.

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CYNTHIA RADDING

The Great Rebellion: Mexico 1905–1924. By RAMÓN EDUARDO RUÍZ. New York: W.W. Norton, 1980. Notes. Map. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiv, 530. Cloth. \$24.95.

The key to understanding Ramón Ruíz's study of Mexico during the first quarter of this century is his choice of the word *rebellion* to describe what several generations of Mexicanists have called The Revolution with a capital "T" and a capital "R." Ruíz sets forth in this book an interpretation of the events of those years as being less revolutionary, particularly in the leftist sense, than the conventional presentation of armed and marching Zapatistas and radical innovators of constitutional and socio-economic reform has led us to believe. Violence, he holds, should not be confused with revolution, nor reform and renovation with the restructuring of society and ideology. "Given the narrow goals, the rebellion was essentially a face-lifting of Mexican capitalism." Furthermore, "The *tiny band* in disagreement wanting more radical change suffered failure and even death, as exemplified by the fate of Emiliano Zapata and Ricardo Flores Magón" (p. 7, emphasis supplied). This interpretation is not novel, but Ruíz brings to it a wealth of detail and examples gleaned from his