

lection, in short, is an able introduction to Central America and deserves a wide audience.

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*Reforma Mexico and the United States: A Search for Alternatives to Annexation, 1854–1861.* By DONATHON C. OLLIFF. University: University of Alabama Press, 1981. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. viii, 213. Cloth. \$21.50.

The era of Porfirio Díaz (1876–1911) has often been described as the beginning of United States economic domination of Mexico. But like many other aspects of Porfirian Mexico, United States penetration and control of the Mexican economy had its roots in the Liberal period under Benito Juárez (1857–72). It was during these critical decades that the basic outlines of the Porfiriato emerged: a centralized political dictatorship, large-scale land concentration, and an intense desire for foreign investment as the key to economic growth. This last goal—the formation of a United States economic protectorate over Mexico—is the central theme of Donathon C. Olliff’s book, *Reforma Mexico and the United States*. Olliff argues that most of the literature on the Reforma period, by focusing on the political and religious struggles, ignores or demotes the crucial economic goals of the Liberals. And he offers a clearly stated argument (unfortunately the best expression of it is buried in the bibliographical note): “the desire to have Mexico become a protectorate of the United States was common among all varieties of liberals . . . not [from] a lack of patriotism, but [from] a desperation born out of a keen sense of the need for material development, an almost mystical belief in the transforming powers of capital and technology, and a pessimism produced by three decades of government by chaos in Mexico” (p. 184).

Olliff supports his thesis well. Drawing on archival material in Mexico City (principally that of the foreign ministry) and the National Archives in Washington, D.C., he takes the reader through the complicated series of negotiations that finally culminated in the signing, but not the final ratification, of the McLane-Ocampo treaties of 1859. The study shows that on each of three attempts to establish formal economic relations with the United States, Mexican Liberals were eager to situate Mexico as an economic dependency of the United States. The principal reason this never happened until the Porfiriato was that the United States and in particular President James Buchanan wanted to acquire Mexican territory, not economic influence. In the face of pressures for territory, Mex-

ican Liberals showed great skill and flexibility in forging treaties that preserved Mexico's national land, and at the same time granted the United States remarkable control over Mexico's economic future.

As competent as this study is, it misses opportunities to move beyond the details of diplomatic intrigue and maneuvering to explore some of the implications of the central argument. One fertile field for exploration is the relationship between Olliff's thesis and the general descriptive assumptions of the dependency approach to international relations. Clearly this work presents an opportunity at least to mention these relationships. Nor does it venture beyond its chronological limits to put the Reforma economic ideas into the larger context of nineteenth-century attitudes toward economic development. Both of these explorations would have added depth and meaning to what is otherwise an informative and well-executed diplomatic history.

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*Revolution from Without: Yucatán, Mexico, and the United States, 1880–1924.* By GILBERT M. JOSEPH. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982. Illustrations. Notes. Tables. Figures. Maps. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xviii, 405. Cloth. \$49.50.

In a convincing, neatly revised version of his dissertation, Gilbert M. Joseph contributes to a subject of major current import—regional aspects of the course, nature, and origins of the Mexican Revolution. *Revolution from Without* is another of the “new history” studies that emphasize economics and politics by focusing on small communities, special interest groups, and societal relationships. If many of the objectives of the Mexican Revolution have not been realized, or if the movement is multiregional rather than unitary, a thorough examination of occurrences in a specific area such as Yucatán may reveal further explanation of why this is so. The author also proposes to use the subject matter and locale to test the validity of the neo-Marxist debate on international economic dependency theory and its corollary, the failure of a region to develop economically.

Joseph agrees with some Mexican intellectuals that the movement had to be brought in from without for Yucatán to experience revolution. The realities of the old regime for various reasons precluded local initiative. Henequen, the monocrop of Yucatán processed to make binder twine for the North American farmer, was produced in factorylike rural enterprises owned by an entrenched class, the captive of international