

toward recent journalism. The overall impression is one of very hasty research, driven by a collective desire to criticize United States support of the regime and the unexamined fear that El Salvador might become another Vietnam. The chapters, however, are too brief (the chapter on the Catholic church in El Salvador is four pages long) and summary to be of more than cursory value. The bibliography at the end of the book is extensive, but incomplete, with many important sources missing.

This book appears to have been written by students with incomplete academic training, to appeal to fellow students already in opposition to United States policy in El Salvador. There is little that is new or even well synthesized, and there are now several books that cover the same territory better (T. S. Montgomery, Marvin Gettleman et al., and Jaime Labastida et al.). This book should be read only by persons doing research on the anti-United States policy groups that emerged on El Salvador.

New Mexico State University

JOSÉ Z. GARCIA

Order without Government: The Society of the Pemon Indians of Venezuela. By DAVID JOHN THOMAS. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982. Tables. Maps. Figures. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 265. Paper. \$17.50.

The Pemon are a dispersed group of savannah- and forest-dwelling, Carib-speaking Indians of southeastern Venezuela. Thomas provides a solid, problem-oriented ethnography of that interesting and attractive society. The problem is of importance for historians and political scientists as well as anthropologists: how is a truly egalitarian social order maintained?

In the first two chapters the problem is introduced; and the people, their setting, and history are generously sketched. The next three chapters contain the meat of the book; they detail, with a nice balance of ethnographic generalization and specific case histories, the social world of the Pemon—kin and neighbors, leaders and followers, and “forces of disharmony.” The next chapter exemplifies the cultural rules and concepts just extracted, by means of a thematic analysis of three Pemon myths. The conclusion pulls together the evidence accumulated about the social relations and institutions that permit the Pemon to perpetuate their remarkably peaceful and unexploitative society. A graceful and humane epilog sees all too clearly the inevitable end of this society, as the Pemon are “civilized”—which, for them, means being incorporated into the lowest rung of rural Venezuelan national society.

The essence of Thomas’s argument is that in the absence of shortages that would permit economic coercion, the Pemon forestall political coercion by implanting all individuals in a dense, but fluid, social network where the demands and responsibilities relating any two people are continuously negotiable (within limits) and the principle of the essential autonomy of the individual is protected ultimately by the ability of any person simply to distance himself spatially from an intolerable situation. The point is well substantiated and the book is a valuable addition to the literature.

Pennsylvania State University

STEPHEN BECKERMAN

Chan Chan: Andean Desert City. Edited by MICHAEL E. MOSELEY and KENT C. DAY. Foreword by DOUGLAS W. SCHWARTZ. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982. Maps. Illustrations. Figures. Tables. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xxii, 373. Cloth. \$29.95.