

social and economic issues, which, though they had already surfaced before 1950, could not be activated until the second half of the century.

The wide variety of socioeconomic circumstances in Latin American countries has given women's political activities a significant diversity. Miller imposes some unity and a common thread to the narrative with the theme of the pursuit of social justice, which most women's groups—even those of opposite ideological orientations—have upheld as their overriding concern. The statements and activities of many of the post-World War II organizations Miller cites suggest that many women's associations have gone against the grain of conservative politics and stood squarely in the camp of dissenters, not always beneficially to them or to women's causes. Legitimacy and recognition have not been easy to achieve, and internal splits have slowed the pace of that process. Yet in the 1980s women's issues achieved an irreversible momentum.

This study gathers a significant amount of data distilled from national and international organizations, women's own writings, and recent works by political scientists and historians. There is much to commend in this synthetic effort to present an alternative version of the recent past, although much remains to be done to gain a full view of women's history. As Miller states, "it is critical to distinguish between the mobilization of women . . . and the improvement in the status of women" (p. 138). Miller has focused on the political aspects of that mobilization, congruent with her interest in underscoring the pursuit of an ideal of social justice. Other aspects of women's history—labor, education, health, family structure, rural life—and the degree of change in their status remain to be studied in greater depth. However, those interested in the means women have used to enact their own interpretation of the politics will find much to learn here.

ASUNCIÓN LAVRIN, Howard University

*Latin American Land Reforms in Theory and Practice: A Retrospective Analysis.* By PETER DORNER. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992. Tables. Bibliography. Index. ix, 108 pp. Cloth, \$22.95. Paper, \$9.95.

Despite the broad title, this is an essay specifically about the merits of land reform as public policy for economic development in Latin America. After 1959, U.S. fears of regional instability, coupled with an increasingly vocal intellectual disaffection from neoclassical theories of international trade and development, made the concept of land redistribution as public policy appealing to U.S. and international agencies providing technical and financial assistance to Latin American governments. The charter of the Alliance for Progress (1961) expressed this sentiment. Agricultural development economists and consultants were encouraged to focus on the theoretical and applied problems of land tenure reform in Latin America.

In those years, Peter Dorner and his colleagues at Wisconsin's Land Tenure Center (established with AID funds) made an influential "economic case for land re-

form,” arguing that a series of institutional transformations brought about by a “particular regime of policies” would result in more equitable economic growth (p. 19). Their case rested fundamentally on the potential consequences for policymaking of an observed inverse relation between farm size and productivity. Dorner’s monograph evaluates these theoretical insights and the policies derived from them in light of the outcomes of land reform over 30 years of swift socioeconomic change throughout Latin America.

After a skeletal overview of the most noteworthy reform policies and land tenure changes in various Latin American countries, Dorner concedes that there can be “no clear and definitive judgment” about the effect of these policies (p. 56), since “a number of significant changes have taken place which are not related to land reform” (p. 50); and he acknowledges “the near impossibility of isolating the consequences of reform efforts from the totality of dynamic forces driving change and development” (p. 33). In any case, lack of “political will,” obstructive legal procedures, and unexpectedly complex land tenure patterns have frequently stood in the way of implementation. As for theory, Dorner argues for the continued relevance of the inverse farm size–productivity relation as a guide to public policy, the green revolution notwithstanding. Despite dramatic shifts in population structure and the expansion of industrial and other nonfarm sources of income, Dorner concludes, land reform is still needed, although “the potential gains from even a well-structured and supported land reform are likely to be more limited than would have been the case 25 to 30 years ago” (p. 73).

This essay should interest historians in at least three ways. First, the inconclusiveness of Dorner’s attempt to assess the impact of land reform initiatives on the trajectory of recent rural transformations raises questions about the proper place of policy in historical explanations of change. Causal links between policy and outcomes are too often assumed. Second, this text can be profitably read as a source for the history of rural development strategies for Latin America in the wake of the Cuban Revolution. Third, Dorner’s analysis of specific themes in land economics and rural social relations is often enlightening; for example, on the problems of production cooperatives (pp. 52–56). The book also contains a useful bibliography.

EMILIO H. KOURÍ, Harvard University

*Histoire du chocolat.* By NIKITA HARWICH. Paris: Editions Desjonquères, 1992. Plates. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. 291 pp. Paper.

Nikita Harwich’s *Histoire du chocolat* summarizes the history of chocolate from its origins as a beverage among the Maya to its emergence in the twentieth century as an industrial food product consumed throughout much of the world. The book is one of a series by Editions Desjonquères that also includes studies of sugar, tea, and coffee.

Harwich divides the history of chocolate into three stages. The first, “The