

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.

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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

Beverage of the Gods,” summarizes what little is known of the myth and reality of chocolate’s origins. Harwich identifies the particular characteristics of cacao as food, medicine, and money, and outlines the early commercialization of production as it shifted from Soconusco to Izalcos, and then in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to Venezuela. Much of the discussion is descriptive, based on well-known sources, and it offers little that is new to Latin American historians.

The second stage, “The Industrial Horizon,” begins with a botanical description of cacao and the problems of planting and harvesting, then turns to the question of mechanization. New technologies led to the increased availability of traditional chocolate beverages and to new powders, syrups, and candies that would dominate the twentieth-century market. Control over these markets has been maintained by a small group of companies—Hershey and Mars in the United States, Cadbury and Rowntree in England, Nestlé in Switzerland—names that have become synonymous with the product. The commercialization of production was accompanied by expansion of cacao plantations in Ecuador, Brazil, and the Caribbean, which threatened but did not end the dominance of Venezuela. That end came in the twentieth century, as West African and Asian production surpassed that of Latin America. Section 3, “The Time of Chocolate,” details the rise in production and efforts to stabilize prices. It also includes recent data on consumption, chocolate fads, and nutritional information.

As chocolate became more commercialized, the traditional centers of production in Latin America lost ground to new producers. Spain, the major consumer of chocolate into the eighteenth century, became marginalized as the main centers of demand moved north of the Pyrenees and then across the Atlantic. Careful attention to shifting demand and its impact on Hispanic countries would have made this study more interesting to Latin American historians.

Histoire du chocolat is helpful as an introduction to the historical significance of cacao and its products. It has the advantage of presenting chocolate as a food that has multiple social, economic, cultural, and regional implications. In that sense it serves its purpose. Readers searching for a focused analysis of the historical changes in production, distribution, and consumption of cacao will have to look elsewhere.

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Bello and Bolívar: Poetry and Politics in the Spanish American Revolution. By ANTONIO CUSSEN. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Appendix. Notes. Bibliographical essay. Index. xiii, 208 pp. Cloth. \$49.95.

Literary criticism has such a bad reputation—as an art of esoteric hair-splitting—among the practitioners of other disciplines that a historian may hesitate to open a book with poetry in the title appearing in a literary studies series. In this case,