

however, such hesitation is soon overcome. Antonio Cussen writes clearly and succinctly, and generally holds one's interest even when he is wringing political significance, as he does with some frequency, from Andrés Bello's views on Roman literature.

Cussen's own surprisingly lucid ventures into literary criticism seem quite plausible, though a professor of Spanish (or Latin) might better pass final judgment in this respect. The specialist in history will applaud Cussen's persistent effort to put literary analysis into historical context. True, the historiographical underpinnings of the study are not its strongest point. The historical sources cited are curiously scattered and are often dated; an extreme example is the citing of a work by Diego Barros Arana and Miguel Luis Amunátegui, reprinted in Havana in 1967, in support of a highly misleading discussion of ecclesiastical censos during the revolutionary period (p. 121). One can quarrel with other points of historical background too, but these are usually of quite minor importance.

Cussen states frankly in the preface that the book is written from Bello's perspective, not Bolívar's. He does devote space to the Liberator's own foray into literary criticism of Bello, but for the rest Bolívar enters intermittently into the discussion as reference point or foil. One does not, in the end, learn much, if anything, new about Bolívar himself. On the other hand, Cussen presents a view of Bello that may not be new in its broad outline but is full of nuances based on textual analysis of Bello's poetry and prose—almost as much of the latter as of the former, despite the title. We see an educated creole, whose true preference was for enlightened reformism under Spanish rule, ultimately forced to embrace outright independence; and a constitutional monarchist who accepted with misgivings the inevitability of liberal republicanism. There were undoubtedly many more such reluctant patriots than are identified as such in the standard history texts. Nor would it be easy to find a more perfect exemplar of conservative liberalism—or liberal conservatism—than what Bello in his Chilean exile finally became. Curiously, the book never mentions the one thing most historians will first associate with Bello's name: his role in Chilean legal codification. But then law codes probably do not have much in common with poetry.

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*Ciudad de Guatemala: dos estudios sobre su evolución urbana (1524–1950)*. By GISELA GELLERT and J. C. PINTO SORIA. Guatemala City: Editorial Universitaria, 1992. Maps. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. 81 pp. Paper.

This brief, pioneering effort, comprising two studies conducted under the auspices of the Centro de Estudios Urbanos y Regionales (CEUR) at the University of San Carlos, is a welcome foray into the little-explored field of Central American urban history. In looking at the history of Guatemala City from its foundation in the late

eighteenth century to the fall of Jorge Ubico in 1944, Gisela Gellert offers the tightly focused perspective of a historical geographer, while J. C. Pinto Soria tries to place Gellert's results in the broader context of the social and political history of the country as a whole. Taken together, these essays are an important scholarly contribution to the urban history of Latin America and are indispensable for those interested in the field. The book should also be of great interest for anyone seeking to understand the role of urban struggles in the contemporary era, particularly since the writers made every effort to signal possible connections and to situate the reader with reference to contemporary landmarks.

The book provides a basic trajectory of Guatemala City's growth: the essential demographic profile, the creation of new neighborhoods, the expansion of infrastructure and services, the phases of state-directed urban planning, and the correspondence between those patterns and national political and economic developments (Gellert's essay is illustrated with nine helpful maps). In different ways, however, both authors manage to use these findings to offer some fresh historical insights into Guatemalan social history.

Gellert displays a sensitivity to questions of spatial differentiation, architectural styles, and population movement that allows her to show, for example, the marked adherence of the wealthy and eminent families to the architectural style and spatial layout inherited from the colonial period. By comparing the relatively benign rhythms of urban growth with the spectacular export boom of the period 1870–1895, Pinto Soria confirms this picture of a deep continuity and conservatism in patterns of urban living among the rich and powerful. Their findings should force us to ask new questions about the traditional assertion of a slavish adoption of European intellectual and cultural fashions by the dominant classes during the Liberal era, as well as the idea that 1871, and the beginning of the Liberal Reforma, marks the point of a profound break with the Conservative past.

Future studies might want to make use of newspapers as both expressions and organizers of urban space and culture, and also to develop strategies to incorporate the urban representations that can be found in novels, memoirs, and photographs. (Pinto Soria's study in particular returns rather too often to the same two travel accounts for prose depictions of the city.) Nevertheless, considering that this book is a genuine first effort to map the history of Guatemala City, the authors have accomplished an enormous amount in the most concise manner possible and have laid solid foundations for further research.

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