

public utterances. In doing so he managed to alienate almost everyone. However, the author softens his criticism by acknowledging that all of the problems preceded Echeverría and continued unresolved under the leadership of future presidents.

Samuel Schmidt demonstrates Echeverría's failure to deliver a program consistent with his "anti-imperialist" and social democratic rhetoric. Yet he also uses the years of Echeverría's regime to advantage in offering the reader useful insights on the Mexican political process. Before Díaz Ordaz, Schmidt argues, all Mexican presidents had backgrounds in popular politics; thereafter, they came from the bureaucracy. Despite the book's title, the author does not really blame Echeverría for the long-term decline in the status of the office. He sees that decline in the context of a more complex process; but at the same time he is severely critical: ". . . because of personal flaws and the opposition of the bourgeoisie, [Echeverría] achieved only extended confrontation, destabilization of the economy, repressive pacification, and alienation of the regime's allies in all sectors of society" (frontispiece).

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The Decline of Community in Zinacantán: Economy, Public Life, and Social Stratification, 1960–1987. By FRANK CANCIAN. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992. Photographs. Maps. Tables. Figures. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xix, 300 pp. Cloth. \$42.50.

The municipality of Zinacantán, located in the central highlands of Chiapas, Mexico, very likely has been the most intensely studied rural community in Mexico over the past three decades. Thanks to the Harvard Chiapas Project and its director, Evon Vogt, a number of dedicated anthropologists have devoted decades to the study of myths, gossip, humor, oral tradition, religious hierarchies, shamanism, settlement patterns, land use, corn farming, ethnic and class relations, courtship and marriage, local history, and more in Zinacantán; its neighbor, Chamula; and other indigenous communities. Few researchers know Zinacantán better than Frank Cancian, the author of two earlier books on the community, who now explains how Zinacantán has changed since he first began his research in the early 1960s.

Cancian announces his thesis in the title of his new book. By decline of community, Cancian means a decline of the closed, corporate peasant community. During the 1970s and 1980s, Zinacantecos found new and more lucrative occupations, the gap between richer and poorer increased, public life became more decentralized (as new hamlets were created, new offices proliferated in hamlets, and hamlets became more independent of the center, Hteklum), open political conflict divided the community, and the cargo system declined as a marker of status. Cancian describes these changes in a careful and detailed manner, and this description is the

core of his study. Explanation is another matter. As the author notes: "I believe it is possible to be clear about what happened in Zinacantán, and not so clear about how to interpret it" (p. 200).

Rather than force his data into one neat, theoretical approach, Cancian believes that several frameworks (modernization, Marxism, the historical visions of Eric Wolf and G. William Skinner) should be used to interpret Zinacantán. He shows how each provides insights regarding specific problems of explanation. Cancian ends his study with two conclusions: outside change transformed the work and economic well-being of Zinacantecos, but social life in the community responded largely to local interactions. For those less interested in Zinacantán itself, Cancian explains that what happened there during these years is one example of how a local system relates to larger regional, national, and global systems. In this case "it becomes possible to say that the causal effects of the national and international systems are greater in economic life and less in social life, and that the importance of the local system is greater in social life and less in economic life" (p. 202).

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Soldiers of the Virgin: The Moral Economy of a Colonial Maya Rebellion. By KEVIN GOSNER. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992. Maps. Tables. Appendixes. Notes. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. xiv, 227 pp. Cloth. \$29.95.

With this work, Kevin Gosner contributes to a growing body of literature dealing with the varied experiences of Maya peoples under Spanish colonial rule. His regional focus is highland Chiapas, his principal objective to situate in cultural and historical context the native rebellion that occurred there in the early eighteenth century. Indeed, the elaborate fixing of context consumes Gosner's talents for five dexterously woven chapters; only chapter 6 (38 pages in all) reconstructs case particulars of the uprising from archival and published sources. An ornate context certainly reflects Gosner's impressive knowledge of current thinking in Mesoamerican anthropology and history, and other fields as well. It also allows what he has unearthed about the insurrection to be examined and placed in a complex, nuanced framework. His book's structure, however, holds the reader not in narrative suspense but in narrative suspension, and when empirical findings are finally revealed, the frustrating sensation is of too little, too late. This is indeed a pity, for Gosner's subject is of crucial importance in helping to discern the fine line between resistance and revolt that still charges ethnic relations between the Maya and their oppressors, whether in highland Chiapas or in neighboring Guatemala.

Gosner renders his version of the Tzeltal Revolt differently from those articulated by, among others, Victoria Bricker, Severo Martínez Peláez, Herbert Klein, and Robert Wasserstrom. Gosner casts his in the concept of "moral economy" perhaps best associated with the work of E. P. Thompson and James C. Scott. This concept, asserts Gosner, "by focusing on the construction of social norms,