

Estrada Cabrera and Jorge Ubico, who betrayed indigenous “nationalists” and “democrats” by granting UFCO the means to stifle all competition and vestiges of economic independence. Dosal does not explain what motivated these “authoritarian and corrupt presidents,” but he makes clear that they—more than the officials of UFCO or the State Department—warrant condemnation.

Kurt Petersen reaches the same conclusion in his study of the maquila industry, a linchpin of Guatemala’s contemporary effort to overcome the legacy of the UFCO-caudillo collaboration. Having deemed futile any attempts at agrarian reform, the Christian Democrats who brought civilian government to Guatemala in the 1980s opted to pursue a development strategy that encouraged nontraditional exports. Of these, the fastest-growing maquila is the garment assembly industry. Armed with compelling statistics and personal testimony, Petersen shows the complicity of the Vinicio Cerezo and Jorge Serrano Elias administrations in fostering a socioeconomic environment that hardly improves on its predecessors. Maquila workers’ pay is abominable, and their working conditions are even worse.

Highly disparate in methodology and tone, these two works complement each other by clarifying the primary responsibility of successive Guatemalan governments for the deplorable state of the nation. Collectively, then, they provide hope that Ramiro de León Carpio can make a difference.

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*The 1990 Elections in Nicaragua and Their Aftermath.* Edited by VANESSA CASTRO and GARY PREVOST. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1992. Tables. Notes. Appendixes. Bibliography. xiv, 240 pp. Cloth, \$55.00. Paper, \$24.50.

This book carefully examines the causes for the Sandinista defeat in the hard-fought 1990 Nicaraguan elections. Each of four authors uses a chapter to explore the complex reasons—including the U.S.-funded and directed Contra war and the U.S.-imposed economic embargo—for the electoral defeat of the incumbent government and the victory of the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO). Also included is an adequate, though not extensive, discussion of such often-neglected factors as the horrendous economic conditions that resulted from the U.S.-backed military actions, the economic war, and the frequently ineffective way the Nicaraguan government managed the externally generated economic problems. The result is easily summarized in one phrase from the book: “In 1989 the salaried workers retained less than 10 percent of the real purchasing power they had in 1980” (p. 20). Little wonder that, according to post-election surveys, only 43.9 percent of the workers and employees voted the FSLN ticket.

In the lead chapter Paul Oquist, who oversaw much of the Sandinistas’ pre-election polling, finds that the most important factors in the FSLN defeat were the U.S. aggression, the new international climate that facilitated it, and the Sandi-

nistas' inability to fulfill previous promises. The last resulted partly from growing verticalization and bureaucratization in the Sandinista party.

In chapter 2, William Barnes explores the reasons so many of the pre-election surveys erred. (Quite a few Nicaraguan and U.S. pollsters had Violeta Chamorro's UNO beating Daniel Ortega's FSLN by a margin of 15 to 25 percent.) According to Barnes' analysis, neither fear of the Sandinistas nor fear of their expected reprisals was a major factor in the inaccuracy of the polls. Instead, Barnes concludes, although the race was close at the beginning, in the end the undecided votes swung overwhelmingly to Chamorro because a vote for Ortega provided little or no hope for an end to the Contra war or a relaxation of U.S. pressure.

Vanessa Castro examines politics in the Nicaraguan countryside in the third chapter. She concludes that the pro-UNO vote suggests the existence of voting patterns based on historical and traditional norms and dissatisfaction with Sandinista rural policy, the Contra war, and the embargo. Even more precise analysis shows that areas with well-functioning, effective state and collective farms gave the majority of their votes to the FSLN. Castro further suggests that Sandinista electoral support was also linked to the political quality of local Sandinista leadership and its ability to inform and convince the local people of the positive structural transformation enacted by the Sandinista government.

Finally, Gary Prevost examines Sandinista responses to the electoral defeat. After critically examining past policies and structures in the Sandinista party, he finds that the FSLN since 1990 has alternated between cooperation with Chamorro's UNO government and opposition to it. Prevost finds that as of 1992, the FSLN was maintaining a significant political presence in Nicaragua and was involved in a process of transformation and internal reform. He expresses hope that the changes will be sufficient to overcome the lack of democracy in the party and the reality that, since 1990, the FSLN has lost touch with many of the common people.

Although these essays do not always advance common themes, their diversity only adds to a more sophisticated understanding of those crucial elections. A fuller discussion of outside electoral financing might have strengthened the work even more, but that theme is covered elsewhere. Appendixes include the FSLN statutes, the 1984 and 1990 election results, and 1990 election surveys. One of the best treatments of an early battle in U.S.-orchestrated democratization, *The 1990 Elections in Nicaragua* is required reading for those who hope to understand Nicaraguan politics in 1990 and thereafter.

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