

vincing. The sections on early republican Lima, the slave market, and the legal basis of slavery greatly contribute to our understanding of the period. Because of the author's theoretical sophistication, this work should be read not only by those interested in republican Peru but also those studying slavery and abolition in general.

The publication of these two books demonstrates that the work of Alberto Flores Galindo will continue to enrich the Peruvian social sciences for decades to come. It is to be hoped that his writings are carefully and critically read and that other scholars continue his legacy. These two books give us grounds for optimism on that score.

CHARLES F. WALKER, University of California, Davis

Region and State in Latin America's Past. By MAGNUS MÖRNER. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993. Maps. Graphs. Tables. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xiv, 142 pp. Cloth. \$32.50.

As conceptual and analytical categories, region and state have begun to elicit considerable interest among Latin Americanists. Magnus Mörner, however, argues in his most recent book that area specialists only rarely define these terms or engage in discussions that might relate studies of specific regions or of state behavior to larger theoretical debates concerning the nature and function of the state and its relationship to civil society. The objective of this book is therefore to explore the question of "the relationship, over time, between the state in Latin America and civil society on the regional level" (p. xi) and to examine this relationship from both comparative and theoretical perspectives.

The author introduces his study with a brief historical overview of diverse theories of state and region. Michael Mann's Weber-inspired conceptualization of the state, which distinguishes between "despotic" power (direct, forceful power exercised by the state and its elite) and "infrastructural" power (the state's ability actually to penetrate society and impose centrally devised policies), becomes the basis of Mörner's analysis of the evolution of specific Latin American states. To approach the question of region, Mörner opts for geographer David Robinson's notion of the "meso" regional sphere, defined as "a city or town with a hinterland" (p. 7).

Having specified his analytical terms, Mörner proceeds with a short summary of the historiography of region and state in Latin America from the colonial period to the present. Finally, Mörner selects four case studies to illustrate the relationship: the colonial state's segregation policy in Spanish America, the tension between race and citizenship in postindependence Venezuela, the Quebra Quilos movement in Brazil, and the impact of immigration on national politics in Argentina.

Although Mörner's project is worthwhile and timely, this book is ultimately

disappointing. It spends too much time filling in the historical background in each country-specific chapter, and too little exploring and articulating comparative and theoretical issues. The author's conclusions are rarely more than a few sentences or a paragraph long. Moreover, no attempt is made to suggest an analytical framework or tentative hypotheses that might serve as the basis for future study. Thus neither of the author's initially stated objectives—to link empirical work with theory and to compare the variations in the relationship between state and region over time and between countries—is satisfactorily achieved. This work certainly has suggestive aspects, but the text is simply too short (102 pages) and too broadly drawn to permit more than a very superficial analysis. Finally, the brevity of this tome and its elevated cost considerably restrict its potential audience.

MARY ROLDAN, Cornell University

In Default: Peasants, the Debt Crisis, and the Agricultural Challenge in Mexico. By MARILYN GATES. Boulder: Westview Press, 1993. Tables. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. xii, 274 pp. Cloth, \$49.00.

As the twentieth century ends, Mexico faces a fundamental crisis in agriculture and rural life. It is a crisis of sustenance for many Mexicans and a challenge to policy and legitimacy for the Mexican state, which still claims to represent a revolution that demanded agrarian justice. The agrarian reform of the 1930s, the great compromise that pacified rural rebels and stabilized the state, is daily proclaimed a failure. The critics argue that land reform and ejidal communities may have ended a revolution, but subsequently they have neither fed Mexico nor sustained rural welfare.

The present regime promotes such criticism and offers policies aimed at reversing the agrarian reform, opening *ejidos* to the privatization of landholding and the penetration of agribusiness. Implicit in the new program is the assertion that the problem is the *ejido*, communal tenure linked to state power and programs. The solution offered is private property and market incentives.

Marilyn Gates's study of Mexican agricultural policies and rural development in recent decades offers a vision most useful for understanding both the rural crisis and the government's proposed solutions. Her book places detailed case studies of several *ejido*-based, government-planned development projects in the state of Campeche in the context of national agricultural policies during the 1970s and 1980s. The integration of local studies based on extensive fieldwork and interviews with a probing analysis of national policies is most illuminating.

Rural Campeche was historically an area of *milpas*—subsistence production by Maya peasants—interrupted only by the henequen boom of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the 1970s, however, the state saw “development” and “productivity” as solutions to deepening national shortages of land, food, and foreign exchange. Landless peasants from central and northern Mexico were settled