

Sections 3 and 4 deal with the economic and financial ills of Latin America since the 1970s. Chapters range from Miles Kahler's review of the Latin American debt crisis of the 1980s to Karen L. Remmer's unflattering assessment of the IMF's role in Latin American stabilization. Robert E. Norton's piece on Jeffrey Sachs of Harvard University (the "Dr. K." of the 1980s and 1990s) is hagiographic, and Catherine M. Conaghan's chapter on Bolivia reconfirms the view that the success of Bolivian-inspired reforms depended on Sachs' anointment of the program. His imprimatur imparted legitimacy, honesty, and even theoretical correctness.

The book is a delight to read. It provides a solid account of the turbulent history of inter-American financial diplomacy, and it generates new insights on Latin American economic and financial reforms since the 1980s. The book would have been complete had Drake provided a concluding chapter on how the new trend toward globalization of the world economy has reduced the sovereignty of the nation-state. Interventions will take a different form in the future, generated not by a single nation-state but by a coterie of global corporations and borderless global systems. The forces of finance, resources, telecommunications, informatics, and the environment that have so far reshaped the present will define future strategies of economic, commercial, and financial relations with Latin America.

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Las formas y las políticas del dominio agrario: homenaje a François Chevalier. Edited by RICARDO AVILA PALAFOX, CARLOS MARTÍNEZ ASSAD, and JEAN MEYER. Guadalajara: Editorial Universidad de Guadalajara, 1992. Notes. 319 pp. Paper.

The Mexican Revolution and the Limits of Agrarian Reform, 1915–1946. By DANA MARKIEWICZ. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1993. Tables. Notes. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. viii, 214 pp. Cloth. \$37.50.

In May 1990, a group of academics gathered in Guadalajara to pay homage to François Chevalier, whose seminal work, *La formation des grands domaines au Mexique* (1952), gave new shape and impulse to the study of Mexican rural history. Evocative of the feudal ceremonies described by Chevalier's mentor, Marc Bloch, this homage was a formal public acknowledgment of dependence, gratitude, and admiration on the part of generations of scholars variously influenced by the writings of a master historian. The meeting's broad title, *El Mundo Rural Mexicano a Través de los Siglos*, reflected well the vast scope of the themes and inquiries that can be traced to Chevalier's fundamental work; in essence, no less than the study of continuity and change in forms of land tenure, social relations, culture, and politics in rural Mexico.

Unfortunately, the resulting festschrift, a collection of 17 interpretive essays and research reports by Mexican and foreign historians and anthropologists, does not deliver on this promise. The subjects are quite diverse, ranging across four cen-

turies. Included are essays by Gisela von Wobeser on hacienda foreclosures; Heriberto Moreno García on rural business companies; Marta Eugenia García Ugarte, David Brading, Luis González, and Friedrich Katz on ranchos and rancheros; Eric Van Young and Carlos Martínez Assad on rebellions and ideology; Romana Falcón and Ricardo Avila Palafox on *jefes políticos*; Guillermo de la Peña on the structure of rural social movements; and Jean Meyer on agrarian anticlericalism, to name some. Geographically, the Bajío, the west, and the north predominate.

The central problem is that despite the book's title, many of the papers have no meaningful connection to what is distinctive about Chevalier's agrarian scholarship and thus seem entirely out of place here, their independent merits notwithstanding. Too often it is easy to forget (and hard to see) that these essays were meant to be inspired by Chevalier's work. Lacking this anchor, the collection as a whole comes across as incoherent, even random, and it fails to do justice to the rich legacy of Chevalier's rural studies. Still, a few of the essays are quite good, and those on the rancheros, taken together, hint at what could have been achieved overall.

Part applied revolutionary theory and part historical argument, Dana Markiewicz' book proposes a sweeping revisionist interpretation of the goals and accomplishments of Mexico's agrarian reform, from its origins in the Revolution of 1910 to its effective demise at the hands of Miguel Alemán in 1946. Against official and academic versions of its history—which represent it as a determined, if not entirely successful, redistributive drive by governments more or less committed to redressing the social inequities that precipitated the Revolution—Markiewicz contends that “despite its often radical-sounding agrarian reform rhetoric, the post-Porfirian regime never intended to fulfill peasant aspirations” (p. 3). In terms of improving rural well-being, moreover, bourgeois land tenure reform is intrinsically sterile, because by preserving the rights of private property it renders itself powerless to “mitigate the contradictions of capitalist accumulation” (p. 168). In Markiewicz' view, agrarian reform developed as part of a bourgeois “Bonapartist” strategy, designed initially to buy social peace and end the Revolution but broadened subsequently to secure the allegiance of peasants during military revolts and to help consolidate the new political regime.

These are intriguing and important propositions, difficult to dismiss but even harder to demonstrate. Unfortunately, Markiewicz' choice of principal, unitary characters—“the peasantry,” “the bourgeoisie,” “the state,” “the regime,” “the workers,” “the capitalists”—robs these issues of their true complexity. In the end, some of the points she makes are more programmatic statements than explanations. Perhaps Marx could escape that fate, but not everyone else can manage to. What Markiewicz does show is that most of the presidents during the years in question were not friends of land reform, but rather opportunists and reluctantly acquiescent participants; that in every administration—including that of Cárdenas—agrarian legislation and policy were prey to all kinds of Machiavellian political considerations; that the institution of the *ejido* did not and could not bring wholesale

social justice to the countryside; and that despite profound changes in the nation's agrarian structure, in 1946, as in 1910, private agriculture still reigned supreme. Policies and end results do not tell the whole (or even the most revealing) story, however; and it is risky to fashion historical explanations out of them alone. It is strange, for example, that rural entrepreneurs, and businessmen in general, do not figure prominently as actors in Markiewicz' account, even though she identifies them as the prime beneficiaries of the government's largesse.

Perhaps this book's more lasting contribution lies in its insistence that Mexico's land reform and the *ejidos* it created be studied in the context of a capitalist economy and not in isolation from it, as has so often been the case. Moreover, despite its shortcomings, this volume is well worth reading because it marks the beginning of what promises to be a long battle over the meaning of *la reforma agraria*.

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El congreso en la primera república centralista. By REYNALDO SORDO CEDEÑO. Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1993. Maps. Tables. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. 472 pp. Paper.

Reynaldo Sordo Cedeño's book should be read as a companion volume to Michael P. Costeloe's *Central Republic in Mexico, 1835–1846: "Hombres de Bien" in the Age of Santa Anna* (1993). Whereas Costeloe's work is a comprehensive account of the centralist decade, Sordo Cedeño's study examines the role of Mexico's national congresses in the establishment, evolution, and demise of the centralist republic created by the Constitution of 1836 (commonly known as the *Siete Leyes*).

Sordo Cedeño challenges conventional historical wisdom in regard to the period 1833–1841. He demonstrates that General Antonio López de Santa Anna did not orchestrate the transition from federalism to centralism in 1835, and that the church and the army played an insignificant role in this process. Sordo Cedeño shows how a minority of legislators skillfully outmaneuvered their political opponents and capitalized on various circumstances to establish centralism. The *Siete Leyes* were designed to empower the upper echelons of the middle class (*hombres de bien*), thereby removing the threat of social chaos and guaranteeing progress and order in Mexico.

Sordo Cedeño is clearly sympathetic toward the efforts of Mexico's legislators. But their well-meaning endeavors could not halt the erosion of popular support for the *Siete Leyes* brought on by the country's economic problems, diplomatic pitfalls, and longstanding political rivalries, as well as the charter's inherent weaknesses. Sordo Cedeño explains how these difficulties allowed the military to regain its political influence between 1838 and 1841. In the end, Santa Anna dismantled the *Siete Leyes* and established a personalistic dictatorship in 1843.

Historians who desire to supplement Donald F. Stevens' recent categorization