

tonk music, like tango or country-and-western (but bawdier), and has gravitated toward their common theme of female faithlessness. It is the musical medium that allows the Santo Domingo poor, in Hernández's words, "to hear the sound of their own voice." From the 1960s to the 1980s, bachata was spurned by the Dominican middle class, who found it in poor taste, to put it mildly. Record stores refused to sell it. Bachata circulated instead on crudely pressed 45 rpm disks sold by street vendors and often played in bars and corner stores where shantytown dwellers gathered to pass the time. A few radio stations broadcast bachata along with the sort of public service announcements—about lost people seeking their families, for example—of interest to the rural-urban migrants who flooded into Santo Domingo during those years. In the 1990s, though, bachata—like the blues or samba and so many other popular musics before it—has begun to move "from the margins to the mainstream." Many readers will have heard bachata, without knowing it, among the international hits of the Dominican recording artist Juan Luis Guerra.

Bachata: A Social History of Dominican Popular Music is the work of a superbly qualified researcher with personal Caribbean roots. Pacini Hernández really knows her stuff, and the reader who opens her extraordinarily lucid book will soon know a lot, too. Here is a wealth of information collected through extensive interviewing, persistent footwork, keen observation, and lots of listening to bachata—detail in the music itself, its evolution and variety, its social context, its historical background, its lyrical themes, its recording and commercialization, and its relationship to competing popular genres—all harnessed to a comprehensive, well-articulated interpretation. The author not only understands the nuances herself, she knows just how to explain or translate them, as well.

Any reader interested in Latin American popular music will enjoy and benefit from this book. Its unusual virtue is to combine impressive breadth of perspective with equally impressive depth and thoroughness. Readers who have heard of bachata, or Colombian *música carrillera*, or Peruvian *chicha*, but who have little idea how they fit in a broader picture of contemporary Latin American popular music, will find much clarified in these pages—to say nothing of readers who have never heard about any of this. And many readers who have, in fact, never listened to bachata will come away from Pacini Hernández's in-depth descriptions feeling as though, somehow, they have.

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Reinterpreting the Banana Republic: Region and State in Honduras, 1870–1972.

By DARIÓ A. EURAQUE. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. Maps. Tables. Figure. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xxvi, 242 pp. Cloth, \$39.95. Paper, \$18.95.

The key to understanding the exceptionality of Honduras in the 1980s is the unique political culture that emerged on the Caribbean coast, a "noncentral region" heretofore dismissed as an appendage of fruit companies. According to Euraque, "the North Coast

developed a liberal and defiant social and political culture that cut across class lines and that served as the basis for distinguishing Honduras in twentieth-century Central American history, and whose legacies affected the character of the crisis of the 1980s" (p. xx).

While Euraque conceived this monograph as a regional history, the first four chapters of *Reinterpreting the Banana Republic* explore national developments. Euraque then concentrates on developments in and around San Pedro Sula, which in the 1960s emerged as Honduras's industrial capital. The industrial leaders, many of them immigrants linked to the banana industry, developed a reformist ideology, as evidenced by their support for the banana workers during the strike of 1954. The military officers who took power in 1972 adopted this "enlightened" ideology and implemented substantial agrarian reform that staved off a revolutionary movement in the 1980s.

Euraque argues that the 1972 military coup empowered only the vision of the San Pedro Sula elite. The elite influenced national politics, but they did not gain control of the government and they were certainly not "reactionary" like other Central American oligarchs. Unfortunately, Euraque does not provide enough data to complete a comparative analysis. Important family names are mentioned throughout the text, but Euraque does not identify and analyze the investment and kinship patterns of elite family networks, making it impossible to compare this study with those of Enrique Baloyra on El Salvador or Marta Casañs Arzú on Guatemala. Euraque attacks the theories advanced by Donald Schulz, Deborah Sundloff Schulz, Edelberto Torres-Rivas, and Héctor Pérez Brignoli about the absences of an oligarchy, but he never actually proves that a Honduran oligarchy exists.

He does, however, document and explain the evolution of a new bourgeoisie that owes its origins to foreign investment, a significant contrast to the coffee barons of El Salvador and Guatemala. The San Pedro Sula elite developed in association with the banana companies. However, the argument that the North Coast was never simply a "fiefdom" of Samuel Zemurray is unpersuasive. True, Hondurans were not victims of foreign capitalists, but the banana companies initiated and controlled virtually all of the industries that developed in the region.

This monograph could have been improved with some careful editing. Chapters overlap chronologically and topically, and frequent subdivisions within each chapter do not clarify the analysis. But this monograph is still the most impressive piece of historical scholarship available on Honduras; and Euraque, like Sam "the Banana Man," has established a monopoly on the field.

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