

views are not challenged nor, in most cases, even brought to bear. But no matter what their particular specializations, all urban historians of Latin America will likely find that this collection includes at least several essays of interest to them.

JOHN E. KICZA, Washington State University

*Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930–1940.*

By MARY KAY VAUGHAN. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997. Maps. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xiii, 262 pp. Cloth, \$45.00. Paper, \$17.95.

Mary Kay Vaughan's most recent work joins a host of provocative reinterpretations of Mexico in the 1930s. Focusing on the "socialist" schools of the Cárdenas era, Vaughan provides a thorough and nuanced portrait of what happened when the "leviathan" state under the aegis of the Cardenista "juggernaut" ran up against rural Mexicans. In short, Vaughan finds that the postrevolutionary state and its cultural project did not emerge unscathed from their encounter with common Mexican people in the rural classroom. "The cultural revolution," she concludes, "lay not in the state's project but in the dialogue between state and society that took place around this project."

Vaughan organizes her analysis around a core of case studies—of a government institution (the Secretaría de Educación Pública) and its policymakers, of teachers, and of rural towns and their schools. After an introduction that explains the centrality of primary rural education to postrevolutionary cultural politics, she tackles the SEP and its putative agents, illuminating tensions between government officials in the cities and teachers in the countryside who were familiar with local conditions. Then Vaughan investigates the fate of Cardenista educational initiatives in two states: Puebla (with a chapter each on Tecamachalco and Zacapoaxtla) and Sonora (the Yaquis and immigrants to the Yaqui Valley each receive a chapter). For all six of the substantive chapters, Vaughan has thoroughly combed the relevant Mexico City, regional, and municipal archives, read local newspapers and the field notes of United States anthropologists, and talked with people who lived in the period and participated in its polemics. Her conclusion situates her findings in the context of the Gramscian notion of hegemony.

Although the book has the feel of a collection of essays, with each chapter taking up a different set of issues and able to stand on its own merits, several common themes emerge. One of Vaughan's most original and significant findings is an apparent paradox: schools both inculcated official values and at the same time provided communities with rhetorical tools to contest the very initiatives championed by the state. Postrevolutionary education—abetted by modes of informal education such as civic festivals—provided a language in which petitioners for government redress or favor could couch their complaints and demands. Why did the government provide this potentially subversive set of skills? The answer—implied by Vaughan—is that this *modus operandi* allowed the government to incorporate new constituencies *on its own terms*.

Vaughan's book provides detailed proof for what has been mostly suspected or sur-

mised about the 1930s: Cardenista programs generally failed in their attempts to impose policy. Instead, the programs became enmeshed in town-by-town, state-by-state negotiations with common people. Importantly, while the state lost myriad battles over specific initiatives, it won the war for hearts and minds. The state did this in good part by gradually coming to dominate the terms of debate, terms it implanted through educational and other means. In shedding light on the mechanics of this epic contest, Vaughan's book will serve as a benchmark for future examinations of the government projects of the 1930s and beyond; of schooling; of "peasants" and the "state"; and of the relationship among government institutions, policymakers responsible for local-level implementation, and representatives of Mexican communities.

DAVID LOREY, Latin American Program, Hewlett Foundation

*Decentering the Regime: Ethnicity, Radicalism, and Democracy in Juchitán, Mexico.*

By JEFFREY W. RUBIN. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997. Photographs. Map.

Notes. Bibliography. Index. xii, 316 pp. Cloth, \$54.95. Paper, \$17.95.

In 1981 a Zapotec Indian movement named the Coalición de Obreros, Campesinos y Estudiantes del Istmo (COCEI) won municipal elections in Juchitán, Oaxaca, becoming the first leftist government in Mexico since the 1920s. Although the army removed the COCEI from power in the summer of 1983, through a combination of militancy and negotiation the movement went on to win elections and has governed the city several times since. Yet although the COCEI has promoted democratic politics, an administration responsive to a diverse citizenry, and active and innovative Zapotec cultural institutions, it has also exhibited numerous ambiguities concerning such matters as violence, internal democracy, and gender relations. As a result, it has become one of the most militant, enduring, and contradictory social movements in contemporary Mexico.

In *Decentering the Regime*, Jeffrey Rubin concurs with anthropologist Howard Campbell (*Zapotec Renaissance: Ethnic Politics and Cultural Revivalism in Southern Mexico*, Albuquerque, 1994) in his judgement that Juchitán's history of class, gender, and ethnic relations since precolonial times is key to understanding this twentieth-century social movement. As a political scientist, Rubin's distinctive contribution is his challenge to state- and regime-centered approaches to Mexican politics, particularly the literature on corporatism, which sees power as something that can be amassed and brokered and hegemony as synonymous with homogeneity and centralized power. Joining a number of poststructuralist academics writing social histories of Mexico, and inspired by such scholars as Michel Foucault and Raymond Williams, Rubin argues that "the presence of the state has been uneven and incomplete across both geography and political life" (pp. 12–13). Instead, he finds "enduring regional counterweights to national power in Mexico" (p. 11), one of which is Juchitán.

How have these regional autonomies been achieved and sustained through time?