

Juchitecos constructed and reshaped a “regional domain of sovereignty” based on different class, ethnic, and national alliances. During the rule of political boss General Heliodoro Charis from 1934 to the 1960s, a multiclass Zapotec alliance ensured local, if not egalitarian, control of political and economic resources in the region. In the early 1970s, the reformist municipal government of Manuel Musalem Santiago (Tarú) represented an elite ethnic leadership that searched for new ties within the national economy while strengthening its control over land and local government. And in the 1980s and 1990s, Zapotec workers, peasants, and students forged a multifaceted regional democracy through new and oftentimes contrasting class, ethnic, and national alliances.

Rubin maintains that resistance in Juchitán was possible, in part, because “whole domains of civil society remained largely outside of the state’s control” (p. 195). On the basis of points like this, Rubin suggests that there is a greater heuristic value in making cultural and subregional comparisons across nations than in limiting the study of Mexican politics or regimes to this one country (p. 263). Even so, Rubin’s study is at root a history of the engagement of the COCEI with national political processes. We learn, for example, that the entrenched Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) was indeed present in Juchitán, both in formal settings like the Communal Land Commission and the Livestock Association, and in everyday life within family networks. Indeed, in part the COCEI derived its strength by opposing the PRI’s corruption and failed economic projects, as well as from splits between reformists and hard-liners within the official party. Moreover, COCEI leaders continually negotiated with government officials, negotiations made possible by a common language shared by a generation of leaders who had personally experienced the 1968 student movement. Thus, one of the strengths of this book is that in “decentering the regime,” Rubin challenges reified notions of the state by describing and focusing on a wide array of state actors; struggles between federal, state, and local government agencies; and contradictory state policies.

HELGA BAITENMANN, *El Colegio de la Frontera Norte*

Forging Mexico, 1821–1835. By TIMOTHY E. ANNA. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xv, 330 pp. Cloth, \$40.00.

Distinguishing between independence and nationhood and harkening back to Nettie Lee Benson’s classic study on provincial deputations, Anna argues in *Forging Mexico* that the provinces created the first federal republic in Mexico during the early 1820s. Even though this thesis is decades old, Anna further underscores its verity while at the same time referencing both traditional and recent literature on the political events and controversies of the 1820s and 1830s.

Forging Mexico is structured chronologically. As might be expected from an author who has written four monographs on the independence era, Anna emphasizes the late colonial period and the first several years after independence. In the first five chapters of this eight-chapter book, he interprets the impetuses that gave rise to federalism. These

impetuses included the Bourbon territorial reforms that created intendancies, which reinforced a sense of “provincehood”; the representative political institutions created during the Napoleonic interlude (1808–14); and the regional rebellions and political agendas of Mexican rebels after 1810.

In the final three chapters, Anna recounts the most prominent political controversies and conflicts of the decade from 1825 to 1835. He begins with the presidency of Guadalupe Victoria (1825–28), analyzing Victoria’s lack of political leadership and the controversial role of Masonic lodges. The following chapter begins with the turbulent 1828 presidential election and continues up to that of 1832. Here Anna emphasizes the contest between states and the federal government for political influence, drawing attention to the significance of the state-based militias. With elegant prose, Anna discusses the repression, intimidation, and blatant use of force by agents of the Anastasio Bustamante administration, tactics that while further strengthening federalist sentiments in the states also destroyed the state-based militias. In his final chapter, Anna focuses on the impact of the 1832 civil war and on the emergence of regional factions and caudillos as a logical response to the increasing power of the national government in Mexico City. He understandably pays particular attention to the emergence of the *santanista* faction on the national scene.

The principle strength of *Forging Mexico* is that it integrates the reflexive and investigative works of the past decade with research based on the correspondence of some of the major political actors of the early independence period. Additionally, by stressing the power of the provinces, Anna’s work should permanently lay to rest the nineteenth-century conservatives’ condemnation of federalism as a foreign import. Finally, Anna’s explanation of the rise of regional caudillos should stimulate further research into the emergence of strongmen throughout Latin America.

But there are two principal weaknesses of this work. The first is poor copyediting, evident in numerous inconsistencies of tense and other occasional glitches that catch the eye of those accustomed to reading undergraduate papers. And a purist will wonder why the map on the jacket is a stylized drawing of post-1853 Mexico, given that the author stresses the vastness of Mexico *before* the loss of its northern territory. The University of Nebraska Press might have served the reader better. These weaknesses aside, historians of the era, as well as anyone interested in understanding the challenges that confront those who have tried and are trying to “forge” new nations, will find this work a valuable contribution to the literature.

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