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Enrique C. Ochoa. Feeding Mexico: The Political Uses of Food since 1910

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archists debate the Enlightenment, and events in Spain drag the entire empire on a roller coaster ride, set off by the Napoleonic Wars, from absolutism through constitutional monarchy and around again. Van Young does not negate the value of these lines of exploration but notes their almost complete inability to explain the ways in which the majority of Mexicans—rural, indigenous peoples—thought about and participated in the events of 1810–1821. This, then, is “the other rebellion” to which the title refers: the actions, goals, and world views of the rural masses at the time of the Independence War.

The book is divided into three parts. The first is a collective profile of participants, drawn primarily from the evidence gathered by the colonial authorities on almost 1,300 captured insurgents. The quantitative data, supported by a close reading of a wide variety of qualitative sources, yield provocative results. The findings suggest that rebels included more indigenous men than generally acknowledged in other studies of the war. Comparison of places of origin and arrest indicate that the rebels’ universe of action was intensely local. Van Young also concludes that a complex web of social relationships and understandings, rather than economic distress or ideological commitment, drove insurgent participation. The second part of the book analyzes local and regional leaders whose names are much less familiar to the audience than those of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, Ignacio de Allende, and José María Morelos Pavón. The roles of indigenous notables, parish priests, and bandit-rebels all come under scrutiny, as Van Young presents the consequences of New Spain’s feudalization for local power relations. The bulk of this section focuses on parish priests, with results that challenge much of the received wisdom about priestly relationships with the insurgency and indeed the broader place of the clergy in colonial rural society. A dazzling deconstruction of popular violence and ideology highlights the third section of the book. A multichapter “anatomy of a riot” in the village of Atlacomulco in 1810 serves in many ways as the book’s centerpiece. Here, the author emphasizes the historicity of rural uprising during the insurgency, though the broader crisis of the Spanish empire and insurrection across New Spain added further dimensions to long-term local conflicts and patterns of contention.

This book must be read with care. It is filled with complex arguments, subtle distinctions, and thick description. Throughout, the author engages in an auto-critique and responds directly to potential objections to his methods and data that might come from scholars as varied as poststructuralists and historical sociologists. Indeed, along the way to his conclusions about rural folk and Mexican independence, Van Young provides a thorough tutorial on the dilemmas and possibilities of contemporary historical inquiry.

The book’s conclusions reiterate the intense localism and continuity of modes of action and ideologies that characterized rural upheaval during the Independ-

dence War. Van Young asserts that indigenous peasants thought and spoke of community, not state or nation. There was little cross-class, cross-ethnic alliance, and little ideological common ground between the rural masses and those with state-level visions. The “other rebellion” of local, indigenous cultural resistance and defense of community shared the historical moment with Mexico’s achievement of independence and, almost inadvertently, contributed to it, but it would be inaccurate to conflate the two into a unified phenomenon.

The book’s conclusions place the author’s findings in a comparative context, focusing on studies of the U.S. War of Independence and the French Revolution. This exercise strengthens Van Young’s critique of models of revolutionary upheaval that emphasize materialist explanations and allow little room for cultural and ethnic structures and understandings. With treasures throughout, readers with specialties beyond those of the book’s primary audience, as well as those squarely within it, will be greatly enriched by sticking with this book to the end.

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ENRIQUE C. OCHOA. *Feeding Mexico: The Political Uses of Food since 1910*. (Latin American Silhouettes.) Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources. 2000. Pp. xiii, 267. \$55.00.

The management of the social conflicts inherent in food distribution have posed dilemmas for all post-revolutionary regimes. When ruling elites claim to govern in the interests of workers and peasants, popular access to food becomes an ineluctable symbol of their political legitimacy. Postrevolutionary regimes therefore face the contradictions inherent in trying to keep wage foods cheap and available for urban consumers at the same time that they must induce producers to generate an adequate supply. Like most postrevolutionary regimes, the Mexican state usually put the interests of urban consumers first, ahead of peasant grain producers. What made its strategy quite distinct, however, was its combination of pragmatism and flexibility, which allowed its extensive intervention in grain markets to become a successful tool for managing conflict and reproducing the regime’s long-term political stability. Enrique C. Ochoa reveals the workings of the often opaque political process that drove the changing patterns of state intervention in grain procurement and distribution from the 1930s through the 1990s, meticulously charting its rise and fall.

This book is the first serious political history of food distribution in twentieth-century Mexico, making it an original contribution to the rich existing historical literature on Mexican social policies (e.g. social welfare, agrarian reform, housing, labor). Ochoa shows how the changing nature and degree of state intervention were closely tied to the broadly political impera-

tives facing the regime. By keeping wage goods cheap, especially in Mexico City, the government could reinforce its more overtly political controls over organized labor and thereby benefit national industrialists—another example of what Ochoa terms the state's "authoritarian responsiveness" (p. 15). The agency mandated to carry out this mission of assuring urban food supplies and balancing urban and rural interests took different forms and names over the decades, but for clarity Ochoa refers to it as the State Food Agency. The study's main focus is on the national-level political economy issues, rather than region-specific or local dynamics such as the neighborhood or village politics of food prices and clientelism.

This book shows convincingly that government food policy was driven primarily by interest group politics. Ochoa's study therefore makes a significant contribution to the broader rethinking of the "long wave" of mid-century Mexican political stability and economic growth. This period has been cast as relatively static, as though the regime simply coasted on its revolutionary legitimacy until the 1968 student movement challenge, but recent reassessments have revealed that apparent social peace required continuous reproduction, as the regime was constantly engaged in a strategic balancing act. Ochoa's study highlights the shifting social and political pressures on the state, leading to different patterns of winners and losers from state intervention in grain markets.

The book is crisply written and clearly organized, including useful snapshot chapter conclusions. Drawing on highly original archival materials, Ochoa presents a wealth of tables and original data. The chapters are divided in terms of persuasively distinct stages of the ebb and flow of state intervention, concluding with an analysis of the puzzling compatibility between long-term state intervention in grain markets and Mexico's persistent poverty.

The study's main limitation is that the detailed, systematic coverage of state policy during most of the twentieth century is not sustained in the final discussion of the contemporary period. The State Food Agency was dismantled, but several of its key food distribution programs live on, most notably the means-tested "targeted" subsidies such as the urban milk and tortilla distribution programs that still reach millions of families. While the government abandoned grain producers under the cover of NAFTA, it continued to subsidize millions of rural consumers by supplying more than 20,000 village food stores (a program that survived in spite of repeated attempts by neoliberal policy makers to eliminate it). The state withdrew from grain markets with one hand but reintervened with the other, sustaining a set of large-scale policy tools that helped to buffer the political cost of Mexico's wrenching economic restructuring in the late twentieth century. This point only serves to bolster Ochoa's main conclusion, however, which is that when it comes to an issue as politically sensitive as food, state imperatives

and interest group politics can trump the ideologies of state managers.

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SILVIA BRENNWALD. *Die Kirche und der Maya-Katholizismus: Die katholische Kirche und die indianischen Dorfgemeinschaften in Guatemala 1750–1821 und 1945–1970*. (Beiträge zur Kolonial- und Überseegeschichte, number 81.) Stuttgart: Franz Steiner. 2001. Pp. 287.

This book analyzes the Catholic Church's work in the rural parishes of western Guatemala during the Bourbon reform era of Spanish colonialism and the quarter century between the overthrow of the republic's "liberal" regime in 1944 and the onset of the genocidal military repression after 1970. Silvia Brennwald's primary conclusion is what she describes as a paradox: while institutionally and economically powerful, the Catholic Church of the late colonial period had little success in reforming the Mayas' practice of Catholicism. By contrast, during the mid-twentieth century, when Guatemala's Catholic Church had lost much of its privileges and wealth and started from a position of weakness in the rural areas, it was able to achieve major changes in the Mayas' religious practices.

During the Bourbon reform era, most priests in the Maya regions tolerated unorthodox religious practices and superstitions, such as ancestor worship, nahualism (the belief in animal alter egos for each human), and shamanism. The priests and bishops were highly dependent on the Maya communities for their income and well being. In the conflict between their mission to dominate the Mayas spiritually in accordance with orthodox Catholicism and their own material interests, they frequently chose the latter. While harshly repressive of any Maya behavior that threatened ultimate control and resource extraction, the clergy frequently considered it in its own best interest to pursue a policy of toleration and looking the other way regarding Maya religious practices.

After over seventy years of domineering Liberal regimes, by 1945 the Catholic Church was extraordinarily weak in Guatemala, with just over one hundred priests in the entire republic and no resident priests in most rural Maya parishes. When priests finally did return to the western highland's rural parishes in the 1950s, they confronted a flourishing Maya folk Catholicism, directed by traditional village elders, heads of *cofradías*, and shamans. Brennwald recounts the entire spectrum of developments that lead to the renaissance of the Catholic Church in Guatemala between the 1940s and 1970. It began with the vigorous campaign by Archbishop Mariano Rossell y Arellano (1939–1962) to restore the influence of the church hierarchy in national politics and institutions, combining anti-communist crusading, nationalism, and social work. The breakthrough came in the 1950s and 1960s, when