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Fox, Jonathan. **The politics of food in Mexico: state power and social mobilization.** Cornell, 1993 (c1992). 280p bibl index afp ISBN 0-8014-2716-9, \$39.95

Fox (MIT) examines the limits and possibilities of reform in Mexico through a detailed analysis of food policies pursued during the 1978-82 period. Chapter 2 is especially significant for its theoretical considerations and provides the framework for the analysis. Building on the strengths of both state- and society-centered approaches for explaining distributive policies, the author argues that the most promising method focuses on the interaction between the state and society. Utilizing this interactive approach, the study analyzes SAM (Mexican Food System), a subsidy program designed to create a food policy of national self-sufficiency. Although most of SAM's policy benefits favored traditional elites and failed to reach the poorest people, the Peasant Store program, which relied on creating democratic regional consumer organizations to challenge opponents of reform, provided a significant exception. In his path-breaking analysis of why and how this transpired, Fox provides a significant contribution for understanding this important policy development; in doing so he suggests the future possibilities and strategies for reform and political change in Mexico. A thoroughly scholarly work with extensive footnoting, a comprehensive bibliography, and a useful index. Advanced undergraduate; graduate; faculty.—*R. L. Delorme, California State University, Long Beach*

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