



BOOK REVIEWS

GENDER, STATE, AND MEDICINE IN HIGHLAND ECUADOR: MODERNIZING WOMEN, MODERNIZING THE STATE, 1895–1950 by Kim Clark. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburg Press, 2012, p.255, \$27.95

Kim Clark's *Gender, State, and Medicine in Highland Ecuador* contributes to an extensive literature on everyday forms of state formation analyzed through the lens of gender, public health, lived experience, and on-going negotiations between social actors and the state. While Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Peru have enjoyed considerable attention from scholars in the field, Clark's study of Ecuador is a welcomed addition to a still burgeoning scholarship that looks at similar processes in other countries like Colombia and Bolivia.

In 1895, liberal elites from Ecuador's coast seized power and began to sponsor social programs and build institutions to fulfill their vision of a secular, modern, and prosperous nation. *Gender, State, and Medicine* examines how the implementation of child welfare programs, the regulation of prostitution, and the establishment of a school of midwifery and nursing in Quito impacted the lives of women. In particular, Clark is interested in women who were neither privileged nor completely marginalized, those who benefitted from their ambiguous positions in Ecuador's social hierarchies and enjoyed greater autonomy from close social scrutiny experienced by elite women or the constraints experienced by Quito's poor. Women like Matilde Hidalgo, the first graduate from Universidad Central's medical school, and unlicensed midwives like Carmela Granja played an active role in configuring and challenging state agencies and projects.

Gendered assumptions entered child welfare programs at several levels. First, these projects emphasized the roles of women as mothers and guardians of the health of Ecuador's future generations. Second, Ecuadorian women participated in the implementation of these programs as social workers and state employees. Lastly, the state was seen as paternalistic and in charge of protecting the nation's vulnerable populations. State programs to control venereal disease and regulate prostitution brought women and their bodies under close surveillance. Similar to government attempts to regulate this trade in Bogota in the early decades of the twentieth-century, Ecuador's Servicio de Profilaxis Venérea placed the burden of prevention on individual prostitutes, rather than on brothels. Unlike Mexico where under the post-revolutionary state brothels became sites for state intervention, in Ecuador individual prostitutes were held accountable. Explaining the differences in policies between countries like Ecuador, Colombia, and Mexico opens new lines of research.

Clark's analysis also highlights how various social actors used a language infused with morality, respectability, and honor to make demands on institutions and/or challenge state projects. For instance, some women



registered in Quito's Sanidad who were no longer working as prostitutes or others or who claimed were mistakenly entered on the registry chose to challenge their immoral and illegitimate status. To do so, these women relied on networks of men who could vouch for their respectability and honor. These men represented a form of social capital for these women. Like former prostitutes, women who entered Quito's midwifery or nursing program needed to prove their good conduct and often provided letters from respectable men, former or current employers, neighbors, relatives, etc. These fascinating instances show that women in Ecuador actively engaged with existing power structures and manipulated them for their own benefit.

Clark relies on institutional records from the Servicio de Sanidad, the Junta de Beneficencia, the Hospital San Juan de Dios, the Escuela Nacional de Enfermeras, and oral sources from women who received training and employment from state institutions. These records give Clark insight into how state projects tried to modernize women, turning them into objects of state intervention through child welfare and anti-venereal disease campaigns while opening spaces for them to participate in the making of the state, through their professional training as scientific midwives (obstetricians) and nurses. The women in Clark's narrative negotiated their positions and pressed the limits of the Ecuadorian state. It was precisely in these spaces between experience, agency, and structure where Clark argues the state was formed. Clark's narrative allows us to see the formation of the Ecuadorian state as a process, through everyday practices that included various social groups and embodied different perspectives. The use of institutional records and oral sources allows Clark to show fissures between state policies, and lived experience.

Gender, State, and Medicine in Highland Ecuador is an important book. It is clearly written, and rigorously researched. Clark's focus on Quito opens up new lines of research for scholars interested in examining similarities or differences with the experience of women in cities like Guayaquil, or Ecuador's rural areas. Finally, the development of studies on gender, medicine, and the state in the Andes, particularly in countries like Ecuador, Bolivia, and Colombia provides fruitful points of comparisons with Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina for which a larger body of Anglophone literature exists.

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OUTLAWED: BETWEEN SECURITY AND RIGHTS IN A BOLIVIAN CITY. By Daniel M. Goldstein. Durham: Duke UP, 2012, p. 327, \$24.95.

In *Outlawed*, Daniel Goldstein presents us with a complex anthropological study centered on life in the poor, marginal barrios of Cochabamba,

Bolivia. It is his second book on this topic, following *The Spectacular City* (2004). Although *Outlawed* is an ethnography based on fieldwork with participant observation, traditional ethnographic description occupies only about forty percent of the text. The remainder is roughly forty percent theory and engagement with other literature, and twenty percent discussion of the personal role of the anthropologist. Each of the three elements contributes something to make *Outlawed* a valuable, if somewhat disjointed, work. Reference to the people of the barrios is the one thread that unifies an otherwise disparate series of chapters organized primarily around the theoretical themes of security, engaged or activist anthropology, community justice, and human rights.

In the first chapter, Goldstein puts the lives of barrio residents into the context of security, a common international concern since 9/11, and explains how their lives are made insecure by the lack of legal title to the land, by the lack of police protection and other city services, by the threat of robbery, and by the overall shrinkage of state aid to the populace in the Neoliberal era. In their lack of legal protection, then, barrio residents are "outlawed." The actual description of barrio life drawn from fieldwork does not begin until the second chapter, which is the most personal and in some ways, the most useful. Goldstein explains how he tried to give something back to the subjects of his research, first by helping found an NGO to serve the poor barrios, and then by leading students on service learning trips to help construct a community center. He frankly discusses academic life, stating that he was called into the office of a senior colleague and told not to be a "do-gooder," and that only tenure allowed him to disregard this advice. Goldstein's description of how his NGO evolved so far from his original intentions that he decided to abandon it, and his discussion of the possibilities and practical aspects of service learning, should be required reading for anyone wanting to engage in activist anthropology or otherwise help the people they study.

The following chapters concentrate more on the people of the barrios, with abundant descriptions and quotations derived from fieldwork. Goldstein opens with the tragic death of seven-year-old Wilmer Vargas, struck by an unregistered taxi while working as a street vendor. In the following days, the taxi driver's union arranged a restitution payment, funeral, and burial with Wilmer's parents, so that the state was entirely absent. Nevertheless, Goldstein repeatedly and convincingly insists on the "absent presence" or "phantom presence" of the state, meaning that while the state is absent in terms of police protection and other services, it is all too present in demanding land legalization, death certificates, and compliance with all kinds of bureaucratic demands. Goldstein describes how the residents of one barrio, largely unprotected by the state, have come to rely on the innovative leadership of their *dirigente* don Miguel. The personality of don Miguel that emerges is one of the high points of the book, especially when he manages to defuse two situations when some



barrio residents urged the lynching (actually, burning alive with gasoline) of suspected thieves.

Chapters 5 and 6 deal with how barrio residents and others discuss lynching in the context of indigenous community justice practices validated in the recent Bolivian constitution, and as part of the international discourse of human rights. Goldstein determines that barrio residents do not practice an essentialized indigenous justice (imagined in what he calls “race-space-time”), but rather cobble together bits of various legal practices (through “legal bricolage”) as they improvise their own local government. He also highlights how barrio residents often view human rights as a concept imposed by the developed world which only serves to protect thieves and undermines barrio security.

Since theory dominates this book, how it is received will depend very much on whether or not the reader appreciates highly theoretical works. *Outlawed* shares the problems of similar works: it cannot be described as eminently “readable,” and only time will tell whether Goldstein’s theoretical contributions will be taken up and expanded on by other scholars, or whether they will be forgotten within ten to twenty years. Many ethnographies engage less profoundly with theory than does *Outlawed*, and thus spend more time with the actual people who are the subjects of research. In the end, the reader will remember the death of Wilmer Vargas and the achievements and personality of don Miguel more than *Outlawed*’s theoretical language, and will perhaps wish that the book had concentrated more on stories like theirs.

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THE PARAGUAY READER. HISTORY, CULTURE, POLITICS. By Peter Lambert and Andrew Nickson (ed). Durham and London: Duke, 2013. p. 475, \$27.95.

The Paraguay Reader is a much needed and therefore welcome contribution to the practically nonexistent field of Paraguayan studies. Anyone who wishes to better understand Paraguay will find this book indispensable. As stated in its introduction, Paraguay has been surrounded by myths for too long. It is true that myths sometimes bring wealth to culture; nonetheless Paraguay’s “myths” tend to perpetuate injustice. I appreciate, therefore, the way in which this book weaves history, culture, and politics into a whole narrative. Its contextualization of those unfair myths open up the possibility of gaining a more comprehensive understanding of other constituting myths. The most notable intention of the editors is to find an equilibrium among the many different points of view regarding Paraguayan history, culture, and politics. Maybe the search for this equilibrium explains the absence of the greatest Paraguayan writer,

Augusto Roa Bastos. While his spirit dwells in the thoughts of other writers included in the collection, the reader nonetheless needs to be aware of this important absence.

Peter Lambert and Andrew Nickson have divided the book following general chronological development into seven sections. The chronological approach, while at times simplistic, allows for an easier understanding of the Paraguayan problematic. The First Section, "The birth of Paraguay," opens with a sacred *guaraní* chant "The Foundation of Human Speech" that had not been published in English previously. This section constructs a sense of the colonial period using the anthropological discourse generated during the twentieth century about the relationship between the *Guaraní*, Jesuits, and the Spanish colonists *élite*.

An anonymous report on Paraguay to the London Press published in 1824 inaugurated one of the most traumatic times in Paraguayan history, "The Nationalist Experiment," which was characterized by the generation of many ambivalent effects.

This period consisted in the creation of a self-sufficient, modernized, and independent Republic, as well as a bloody, violent and unjust war, the war of Triple Alliance. Oscillating between extremes, the section offers an interpretation of "justice" embodied by a relation to the Sovereign, Francisco Solano López. The line marking disagreement about the rightness of the war plays out as a difference between those who loved their sovereign, and those who opposed him.

From the ruins of the war, the liberal national project produces its effects. In the Third Section again the editors show us a swinging point of view spanning from Rafael Barrett's treatment of the devastating system of capitalist production in the *yerba* plantation to Natalio Gonzalez's idealized view of modernization and progress based on a delusive nationalism.

Resistance to the liberal project, which put human bodies, lands, and natural resources up for sale, arrived with a strong nationalist discourse. Indeed, in the creation of Paraguayan "national identity" much blood was to be spilled. In the Fourth Section, "From the Chaco War to the Civil War," the editors' selection moves beyond the war *per se* (strategies, battles, consequences) to bring the human side of the horror to light.

The war's absurdity, arbitrary acts, and injustice left the country isolated, far from "civilization" and deeper in myth. Paradoxically, the myth of Paraguayan isolation was fed by an external source: the Cold War. Alfredo Stroessner's regime used the communist threat as justification for repression, and democratic façade. The Fifth Section also approaches resistances to oppression by retrieving texts engaged with human rights. The editors place emphasis the tense relationship between inside and outside, isolation and globalization, which concluded in 1989 (same year as the end of the cold war), when another military figure, Andrés Rodríguez, helped reconcile the military regime with the traditional Colorado party.

By the end of the book, Paraguay enters into the transition to democracy. It was a time full of hope and eagerness, challenges and



disappointments. The old Colorado party and the new organized forces (once repressed social movements) struggled to find their relevance in a democratic system. After 35 years of Stroessnerism, implementing democracy in Paraguay was no easy task. The Sixth Section shows the complex intersection between an authoritarian history, international influence, and the people's desire for change.

The last Section is probably the most ambitious but also, perhaps the most problematic. Here, in "What Does It Mean to Be Paraguayan?" the editors themselves, among other writers, attempt to characterize the infinite complexity of the Paraguayan people. Even with the absence of Augusto Roa Bastos from this collection—one of the greatest authors from Latin America—this work is of paramount importance for preliminary studies on Paraguayan history, culture and politics.

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CLEANSING HONOR WITH BLOOD: MASCULINITY, VIOLENCE, AND POWER IN THE BACKLANDS OF NORTHEAST BRAZIL, 1845–1889 by **Martha S. Santos**. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012, p. 320, \$58.50.

In her book *Cleansing Honor with Blood*, Martha S. Santos examines how masculinity was created and adapted by Brazil's northeastern inhabitants, *sertanejos*, from 1845 to 1889. Her study focuses on the backlands, or *sertão*, of the state of Ceará, a region where seasonal droughts, ties of patronage, and political destitution were common. In her monograph, Santos confronts the *sertanejos'* stereotype as naturally violent men. Instead, she argues that the free poor *sertanejos* reproduced preexisting notions of hegemonic masculinity in their quest for greater social, economic, and political power and rights.

In an impressive effort to understand how identities emerged from the day-to-day interactions of men and women, Santos examined more than four hundred court records, as well as poems, novels, and other forms of popular literature that shed light on family and gender dynamics within that society. From this analysis, she realized that the preoccupation with honor went beyond social and symbolic manifestations of masculinity. Honor was an important element of self-recognition and placement in society, and men practiced their *machismo* in diverse circumstances and against different actors such as women, neighbors, slaves, and even large plantation owners. In this sense, Santos argues that masculinity was manifested, even violently, in diverse settings of social interaction which included family dynamics, and disputes over land.

One of the book's interesting contributions is the examination of how land proprietorship shifted in the mid-1800s to include midsize and small landholdings. Santos explains that this occurred due to several reasons,

including new inheritance laws, which offered some free poor *sertanejos* the opportunity of owning land and prospering, if only temporarily. This created new gender dynamics, especially within the domestic sphere. Since these new landowners proudly exerted their masculine role of providers, and even as slave owners, they reinforced the hegemonic masculinity based on wealth and power. However, things changed with the Great Drought of 1877, which altered the system of rural patronage and, through forced migration, created new gender roles and dynamics.

In Santos' discussions of masculinity, the link between traditional representations of manhood in Brazil's *nordeste*, and the perpetuation of gendered and unequal relations is evident. The popular interpretation of *sertanejos* as inherently violent complicates an accurate examination of the complexities behind their masculinity. For Santos, masculine identity and violence were shaped by daily experiences and hardships. In other words, through their struggles for economic subsistence and power, men reinforced hegemonic masculinities based on honor. But, as Santos clearly shows, masculinity was not a fixed identity, and men and women renegotiated roles according to socio-economic and political contexts.

Santos also addresses the experiences of the *sertanejas*, as the poor free women living in that region were known. She examines how women used legal resources to defend their honor, especially when men were absent from family life due to forced seasonal migration. In a thought-provoking discussion of femininity and power, Santos illustrates how the *sertanejo* society reinforced patriarchy by implementing violent practices against strong, autonomous women who were left behind as heads-of-households, while their husbands migrated in search of employment. This created both a contradiction and a challenge: while women turned to legal institutions for protection against violence and public accusations, the local judicial system perpetuated traditional patriarchal rules and gender expectations. In other words, the *sertanejas* were relegated to a system of constant disputes for rights, even proprietorship rights, and defense of their honor.

Martha S. Santos' book is an important addition to the existing scholarship, especially since there are not many works evaluating the intersections of patronage, gender, race, class, and political constitution in Latin America. Her research builds on works of scholars such as Gerald Greenfield, Stanley E. Blake, and Cecelia McCallum. These focused either on state intervention and policies in the *nordeste*, on the creation of a regional identity and national symbol, or on the current struggles of women in the coastal areas and urban centers of Brazil's Northeast. Santos, on the other hand, attempts to examine the complex relationship between state presence, environmental and economic hardships, social structures, and gender relations by demonstrating that these factors do not exist in separate spheres, but overlap.

In her concluding remarks, Santos calls for a reevaluation of Latin American *machismo*, and for a closer examination of how masculinity,



femininity, and socio-political factors interact. In this sense, it is paramount that scholars examine the lives of populations that remain in destitute conditions in Brazil's interior regions. Questions such as how gender relations, community ties, and even nationalism are experienced are pertinent and deserve attention. Finally, Santos' monograph could benefit from a comparative examination with other states in Brazil's *nordeste*, such as Pernambuco and Bahia. This would facilitate a broader understanding of how different communities in similar conditions shaped gender identities and social ties.

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THE MAYAN IN THE MALL: GLOBALIZATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND THE MAKING OF MODERN GUATEMALA. By John T. Way. Durham: NC Duke University Press, 2012, p. 310, \$24.95.

J.T. Way's, *The Mayan in the Mall*, provides a welcome history of the making of modern Guatemala since the 1920s that innovatively melds historical research with analysis of contemporary cultural trends and ethnography. The author seamlessly narrates Guatemala's conflicted past and fraught present through the stories of its diverse protagonists, whether using historical records, oral histories, or contemporary interviews and observations. The book deftly shows how larger structures and politics (from regional to national to transnational) impinged on everyday lives as everyday people like butchers, social workers, vendors, and activists also actively shaped the unfolding of history and the particular geography of Guatemala.

The author argues for continuity, rather than rupture, in Guatemala's historical trajectory. This analytical framing enables the reader to understand how Guatemala's present is informed by its past, as well as to perceive the continuing dialectics between chaos and rationality and the intense concentration of wealth and power alongside the fragmentation of social and political life (11). Some of the strongest contributions of the book include the focus on continuity, historical dialectics of chaos/rationality and concentration/fragmentation, the analysis of the integral role of the informal economy in sustaining the nation even as it continues to be marginalized or even criminalized, and the critical analysis of development and modernization, or what Way often calls, the making of the "modern anti-modern," of which the "Mayan in the Mall" (4) becomes the perfect symbol.

Way convincingly argues that Guatemala has not suffered from a *lack* of development, but rather that its present predicaments and paradoxes have arisen precisely out of how capitalist development has been enacted

(43). While this is not necessarily a new argument, the blending of historical research and contemporary ethnography make this point particularly convincing and vivid. As Way demonstrates throughout the book, “Perpetuating the myth that Guatemala is underdeveloped perpetuates the myth that development can solve the very problems it has created and continues to create” (11). Much attention in Guatemalan studies has been paid to the legacies of war and the effects of contemporary neoliberalism, but this book nuances the legacy of war by pairing it with a historical understanding of development, and especially of development through terror.

Way points the reader to important historical continuities that continue to plague Guatemala such as the maintenance of starvation wages and labor exploitation, racial and social exclusion, concentration of wealth and land, a model of capitalism that has long privileged international capital over Guatemalans, a sustained ideological commitment to high-modernist planning despite realities on the ground, the dynamic of what Way calls, downward moral displacement, which shifts the blame for development’s failures onto the poor themselves, and the establishment of neoliberalism through a context of state terror, which has led to fragmentation and disillusionment of the left and popular opposition (183). Way’s analysis is therefore illustrative in understanding other contemporary paradoxes and problems (some that postdate this book) such as the election of Otto Perez Molina, popular opposition to foreign mining and militarized state responses and human rights abuses, and the contested Rios Montt trial. As Way shows us (92), Guatemalans still hope for development and security and paradoxically often look for them in the very places and agents that have generated and exacerbated these problems. Perhaps this reader was looking for some way forward, since as the author points out, the current malaise is not natural, but has been *developed* and can therefore be changed. Yet the reader is left quite pessimistic, as contemporary organizing remains fragmented.

While the book may be too weighty for some undergraduates (to follow the many acronyms, changing institutions, etc.), its focus on broader issues of development and underdevelopment, development through terror, and the making of urbanity historically and in the neoliberal era, reaches beyond Latin Americanists to appeal to wider audiences interested in urban studies, peace and conflict, and the politics of development. The book is an insightful contribution to the field, but could have benefited from more explicitly threading the concept of the “Mayan in the Mall” throughout the book and engaging more with the scholarship on neoliberalism, exclusion, and violence in contemporary Guatemala. Although the book delimits itself to the 1920s to the present, for readers not as familiar with Guatemalan history, more explanation of the legacy of the plantation economy, Guatemala’s racial and class politics, and dependence on cheap, exploited labor would help better ground the argument. Moreover, due to the complexity of the argument and large amount of history covered, while



the conclusion offers exciting ways to apply the analysis to contemporary trends from urban violence to Evangelicalism and pop culture, the book would have benefitted from a conclusion that also more clearly summed up the author's argument and tied the chapters together.

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