

Book Reviews

Matthew Amengual, *Politicized Enforcement in Argentina: Labor and Environmental Regulation*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016. Figures, tables, appendix, notes, bibliography, index, 286 pp.; hardcover \$99.99, ebook \$80.

The book is motivated by an empirical puzzle: how can states that lack most of the basic features of competent bureaucracies, such as meritocratic recruitment and political insulation, enforce regulations? To answer this question, it studies two policy domains, labor and environmental regulations, and attempts to explain why these regulations are enforced unevenly across different provinces and industries in a country characterized by institutional weakness.

The answer, the book argues, lies in the crucial role played by informal institutions. Specifically, these institutions allow societal organizations that have an interest in enforcement to influence state bureaucrats and deflect other organizations interested in noncompliance—mainly business. Unions and other civil society organizations compensate the shortfalls of weak bureaucracies by providing state officials with the information, material resources, and political support to produce enforcement. Amengual's work constitutes an innovative contribution to the study of enforcement in Latin America, as the book advances new theoretical hypotheses and concepts to understand the determinants of enforcement, backed by an impressive amount of empirical evidence.

Amengual's empirical work is remarkable, both in his research design and in the breadth and depth of his fieldwork. In terms of its research design, the book constitutes an excellent template of how to exploit the empirical advantages of the subnational comparative method. By analyzing two policy areas in four Argentine provinces, it simultaneously explores the impact on enforcement of variations in the capabilities of state bureaucracies, the strength of civil society organizations, and the distinct political dynamics inherent in each policy domain—labor and environmental laws.

In addition, the author conducted an impressive number of interviews with state bureaucrats, labor leaders, and neighborhood activists; engaged in participant observation by accompanying state bureaucrats during inspections; and gained access to internal records of inspections from provincial bureaucracies. This data collection effort not only constitutes the most comprehensive empirical study of labor inspections in Latin America to date, but also provides scholars a glimpse of an important but frequently opaque phenomenon that can hardly be assessed through quantitative data: the politics behind the enforcement of labor and environmental regulations in Latin America.

Moreover, unlike the few important studies that have approached the issue of labor enforcement by analyzing the evolution in the number of inspectors or inspec-

tions, this book takes a more qualitative approach by analyzing differences in types (not numbers) of inspection. This approach does have its own methodological challenges: the book sometimes lacks systematic data to score the values of the different types of inspection across industries or provinces, and therefore the reader is forced to take the author's word for it when he decides to score each case. Nevertheless, this novel empirical approach provides a creative template for future researchers to rethink how to measure policy enforcement beyond aggregate numbers.

The most important contribution of Amengual's work is that it challenges much of the conventional wisdom of the field, especially among scholars who study—and very often tend to idealize—the role of Weberian bureaucracies and civil society organizations in development. Three central ideas typical of studies on the politics of development are challenged—or qualified—by this book. First, this book challenges the idea that autonomous, Weberian state bureaucracies are a necessary condition for the successful implementation of public policies, a crucial argument in the works of Chalmers Johnson or Peter Evans. When states lack Weberian bureaucracies, Amengual argues, strong civil society actors can fill the vacuum by influencing bureaucrats and providing them resources to achieve decent levels of enforcement.

Second, the author provides an alternative definition of state capacity, which, instead of looking at the degree of political insulation of state bureaucracies, focuses on their “administrative resources.” Indeed, while the established approaches focus on traits typical of Weberian bureaucracies—meritocratic recruitment, job security—Amengual argues that in developing countries characterized by institutional weakness, these approaches are too demanding to understand variation in state capacity. Instead, he advances the hypothesis that the amount of bureaucracies' administrative resources, such as the number of inspectors, their level of education, or the availability of computers and means of transportation, instead of their degree of political insulation, can better explain variations in enforcement in the developing world.

This reconceptualization of states' strength has both advantages and drawbacks. On the one hand, by focusing on Weberian ideal types of state bureaucracies, the literature on developmental states had set an extremely high bar for scholars studying developing countries, since Weberian bureaucracies tend to be very rare, found in exceptional countries like South Korea or Taiwan. By lowering the bar of what we should expect functioning states to be like, Amengual's focus on states' administrative resources instead of “autonomy” sheds light on a dimension of the state that can potentially show more empirical variation across the developing world.

On the other hand, by becoming too minimal, this definition of state capacity loses some of the analytical leverage provided by Weberian approaches to understanding bureaucrats' preferences. Specifically, Weberian approaches are based on the idea that state capacity is partly a function of bureaucrats' preferences. Indeed, institutions such as meritocratic recruitment or job security are crucial to the extent that they produce a particular set of incentives for bureaucrats; specifically, they generate an *esprit de corps* that makes bureaucrats identify with the bureaucracy's mission instead of looking for personal gains by offering rents to private actors. By making its definition of state capacity less demanding and focusing only on states'

administrative resources, the book leaves an important set of questions unanswered: why do bureaucrats who count with administrative resources hold preferences in favor of enforcing labor regulation? In the absence of an *esprit do corps*, why don't they just accept the bribes offered by employers for not enforcing the law—especially when, as Amengual shows, in most cases they are underpaid political appointees? Further elaboration of bureaucrats' preferences in cases of institutional weakness will be a welcome addition to the book's theory.

The book also challenges the idea that civil society's involvement always has a positive impact on the enforcement of public policies. It provides, instead, a much more nuanced approach. On the one hand, the book argues that the existence of unions or neighborhood groups has a positive effect on enforcement, making weak bureaucracies enforce labor and environmental regulations. On the other hand, it argues that these groups' pressures generate uneven patterns of enforcement when the state is weak. In other words, the corollary of the book's argument is that a strong civil society produces, in contexts of institutional weakness, inequalitarian outcomes, directing states' scarce resources to economic sectors where social actors are already strong—although this seems to be more evident in the case of labor than in environmental regulations.

Even though, curiously, the author does not use the term throughout the book, strong social groups interacting with weak states seem to produce a situation of "capture" that rewards the strong while leaving the unorganized and weak segments of society unprotected. These findings provide new evidence for two well-established bodies of research. They are certainly consistent with the literature on the insiders-outsiders divide, which is skeptical about the influence of union organizations on the well-being of the informal or unorganized working class. However, the book also introduces an important caveat to this finding: when the state's administrative resources are high, strong insiders can actually combine their resources with those of state bureaucrats to provide widespread and strong enforcement among the organized and unorganized alike. This finding is consistent with, and contributes to, the numerous studies on development that have demonstrated how state capacity and equality are closely linked in the developing world.

The book leaves unanswered an important question that could be explored by future studies on the impact of state-civil society ties on public policy outcomes. Amengual grants a key role to these ties, as these informal institutions are a precondition for successful cooperation between state bureaucrats and civil society organizations. However, it is not entirely clear, in the theory or in the empirical evidence, whether these ties are something that preceded state bureaucrats or something that is strategically created by them in order to enforce legislation when the political circumstances force them to act. In the case of labor enforcement, the author seems to embrace the former approach: the book convincingly shows how the Peronist Party's previous links with unions in the Argentine provinces had an important effect on who got appointed to provincial labor ministries or secretariats, and hence, on the enforcement of labor regulations. However, in the case of environmental regulations, the latter approach seems to predominate: the book shows how protests

from neighborhood organizations force reluctant state bureaucrats to establish relations with them and enforce the law.

In sum, the unanswered question is, are preexisting ties a precondition for successful cooperation between state bureaucrats and civil society organizations? Or can strong civil society organizations force reluctant state bureaucrats to establish ties with them? And if both scenarios are possible, do the different origins of ties—organic versus instrumental, long-term versus short-term—have an impact on the likelihood and quality of enforcement? These are the type of important theoretical questions triggered by Amengual's fascinating book.

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Matthew C. Ingram, *Crafting Courts in New Democracies: The Politics of Subnational Judicial Reform in Brazil and Mexico*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. Maps, figures, tables, appendixes, bibliography, index, 392 pp.; hardcover, \$110.

The view that strategic interactions between social and political actors are what explain institutional emergence and transformation has prevailed during the last few decades. The model rests on the premise that actors behave rationally in order to maximize their own preferences and interests, and therefore individual behaviors are driven by cost-benefit calculations. In the case of political actors, it is assumed that their central ambition is to get access to powerful institutional positions and to remain in control of them. Even if it is not explicitly stated, politicians are considered to be essentially pragmatic, since they adopt those courses of action that are better suited to achieving those goals.

Partly as a reaction to these assumptions, a growing number of works have begun lately to “bring ideas back” in the analysis of institutional creation and transformation. Matthew Ingram's book should be considered a remarkable example of this trend. As the author clearly states on the first page, his central concern is to address the questions of how and why particular ideas exert influence on shaping institutions. In his case, the focus is on those institutions on which the judicial branch is organized at the subnational level in Mexico and Brazil. The initial puzzle is the uneven landscape observed in both countries: while in some Mexican and Brazilian states courts are weak and dependent, in others they have gained both autonomy and institutional power as a result of judicial reforms.

One of the book's main contributions is found in this general approach, which gives a central role to ideas; the other in its focus on the subnational level. As we know, the study of subnational politics in Latin America (and the rest of the world) has gained momentum in recent decades, and institutional reforms have begun to be analyzed at that level. As the seminal work by Richard Snyder (2001) points out, “scaling down” to the subnational level has two major advantages: it allows us to observe political phenomena that can be occluded if we look only at national politics, and the number of observations multiplies, which gives us more material for systematic comparisons.

However, the subnational politics agenda has been dominated until now by a list of growing and yet limited topics: subnational authoritarianism, causes and consequences of decentralization, effects on political careers, and so on. Within the general topic of institutional creation and transformation, Ingram's work sheds light on an area that has been disregarded, or at least has deserved less attention: subnational judicial institutions. Certainly, the study of subnational politics has not completely ignored the judicial branch, but most works have assumed that the way judicial institutions evolve is a side effect of dynamics principally affecting the executive and legislative branches. As Ingram asserts, this lack of attention is indeed surprising, considering that provincial courts are the ones that deal with the most significant portion of lawsuits and therefore have a greater impact on citizens' lives.

Looking at Mexico and Brazil, Ingram proposes an innovative argument to explain processes of judicial reform in posttransition contexts. His theoretical account is based on two main notions: programmatic commitments, rather than strategic calculations, are central to understanding judicial reform processes; and in order to explain the transformation, it is necessary to pay attention not only to politicians but also to judicial branch insiders (namely, judges). In a nutshell, the book argues that changes in the judicial system will be more likely when politicians with ideological commitments are in power and build coalitions with reformist judges.

However, contrary to the prevailing view, these actors fight for stronger courts not as a result of cost-benefit calculations of the effects of reforms on their future careers but because they are convinced that this is best way either to ensure democratic practices or to build a framework friendly to the market economy. This explains why some of these attempts might be described as irrational from a pure strategic perspective, and why they are carried out even if they imply high political costs for those who are pushing for them.

To advance his approach convincingly, Ingram has to deal with an accepted alternative explanation that states that institutional reforms in general and judicial reforms in particular are the result of challenges posed to actors by current or expected increasing electoral competition. According to this view, the causal mechanisms behind politicians' eagerness to strengthen courts might be several. Politicians might promote transformations in order to show their reformist credentials and to gain electoral support for themselves or their parties in the future. Incumbents might seek judicial autonomy as a way to secure their enacted policies or to protect themselves from prosecution once they leave office. Alternatively, politicians might look for judicial reform as the solution to avoid deadlock and facilitate governance. What all these approaches have in common is that strategic calculations are central to explain politicians' decisions and that actors outside the executive and legislative play only a limited and secondary role in the process. These two premises are certainly the ones that Ingram's book attempts to challenge and overcome.

In order to test the ideational argument and also to consider the plausibility of alternative explanations, Ingram's book adopts a mixed-methods strategy, combin-

ing a large- N analysis with a small- N approach. This allows the author, on the one hand, to identify those variables that exert a greater influence on the strength of the judicial branch at the subnational level, both in Mexico and Brazil, and on the other hand, to trace processes that facilitated judicial reforms in particular Mexican and Brazilian states. An important point is that these quantitative and qualitative approaches are not disconnected, since the former is used to identify those cases that are later studied in a deeper way.

The empirical section of the book is very rich. It reveals both the extensive fieldwork the author carried out in six states in both countries and the systematic collection of data that was necessary to perform the statistical analysis.

In the Mexican case, the large- N analysis generates straightforward findings that confirm that programmatic commitments are more important than electoral competition to understand judicial reform and court strengthening. In a few words, judicial change is observed in both noncompetitive and competitive environments that share a common feature: ideologically programmatic governors (from either the left or the right). The Brazilian case is more complex, given the fluid character of its party system and the varied effect of ideological orientations, which seem to be significant only in states with consolidated parties. However, two puzzles emerge from the analysis: first, unlike the case of Mexico, the Brazilian right is not associated with judicial strengthening; second, PT governments at the subnational level do not significantly correlate with judicial transformation.

Trying to understand why this is the case, the study finds it relevant to pay attention to conditions that existed before judicial reforms. On the one hand, the orientation of the previous authoritarian regime is important; on the other hand, the level of strength of the judicial branch before reformist attempts is relevant. Whereas in the case of Mexico the hegemonic PRI could be located at the center of the ideological spectrum, authoritarian subnational governments in Brazil were situated at the right. This explains why judicial reform was more likely in this country when state government began to be controlled by parties at the center or left of the ideological spectrum. In addition, in those cases where the judicial branch was already strong, reforms promoted by leftist parties like the PT did not attempt to increase but rather to curtail their autonomy, and conflict emerged.

The small- N section tests those findings by analyzing in depth the fate of judicial reforms in three states in Mexico and three in Brazil. Using process tracing techniques, the author reconstructs the dynamics of judicial transformation in those contexts and identifies the factors that allowed or prevented its occurrence. Indeed, while ideology was central to explain reforms in cases such as Aguascalientes and Michoacán in Mexico and Acre and Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, transformations were absent in states that can be described as authoritarian enclaves (like Hidalgo in Mexico and Maranhão in Brazil), where elites blocked them to continue controlling patronage resources. In addition, the cases show that on some occasions, national institutions might become relevant and local actors will try to use them in order to promote changes at the local level.

For all the points discussed above, this book is a must-read for everyone interested in subnational politics and institutional analysis, and an invitation to explore the existence of similar dynamics in other Latin American countries.

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Russell Crandall, *The Salvador Option: The United States in El Salvador, 1977–1992*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016. Photographs, maps, figures, list of organizations, bibliography, index, 698 pp; hardcover \$99.99, paperback \$39.99, ebook \$32.

Even though it ended a quarter-century ago, the Salvadoran civil war of the 1980s remains stubbornly relevant. Extreme levels of externally funded violence ripped the country apart, prompting mass migration to the United States, and in turn, cultivated a web of organized crime ties. Yet at the same time, the guiding principles of U.S. policy toward El Salvador were consciously copied in Iraq because of their perceived success.

Russell Crandall has produced an exhaustive (five hundred pages of text plus more than one hundred of endnotes) and compelling analysis of that policy, using declassified documents in addition to the massive literature already published on the topic. The guiding question—contained in the title—centers on how some policymakers hold it up as a counterinsurgency and state-building model (not unlike Plan Colombia). The moniker “Salvador option” originated with the U.S. Department of Defense and was meant to be complimentary.

Crandall employs “thick description,” giving careful qualitative attention to context, including the historical background, the key domestic players, the regional relevance, the broader international setting, and shifts in U.S. domestic politics. This approach is similar to that of a number of other very good books in the past few years on U.S. policy (e.g., Morris Morley and Chris McGillion’s *Reagan and Pinochet*, Brian Loveman’s *No Higher Law*, Lars Schoultz’s *That Infernal Cuban Republic*, Bill LeoGrande and Peter Kornbluh’s *Back Channel to Cuba*, and others). This approach makes it possible to explore causal mechanisms, to demonstrate how the relevant political actors interacted, and to show the full context in which those interactions took place.

One important consideration, which others have noted as well, is that the Reagan administration was not monolithic at any time, and evolved, most importantly when George Shultz replaced Alexander Haig in 1982 but also when Jeane Kirkpatrick left the administration in 1985, not to mention when different ambassadors arrived in San Salvador and when George H. W. Bush took over. This granular

focus reveals how ad hoc U.S. policy tended to be at any given time, changing according to shifts in personality and the outcomes of bureaucratic infighting. These shifts created tactical inconsistency, even though the essential goal of combating Marxism remained constant. Copying it elsewhere, therefore, was not such a simple matter.

Crandall dives deeply into the context. A central theme is that the United States wanted a moderate (José Napoleón Duarte) in office rather than the ultraconservative Roberto D'Aubuisson of the ARENA Party and used very large sums of money in undemocratic ways to make it happen. The 1982 presidential elections involved the U.S. Agency for International Development, the American Institute for Free Labor Development, and CIA-organized campaign materials. This is not unlike the work that went into electing Eduardo Frei in Chile in 1964, which was also intended to manipulate elections to avoid what the United States considered extremist candidates. Unlike the Chilean case, in El Salvador the Reagan administration actually chose candidates, and was successful in forcing ARENA to run an entirely different candidate than D'Aubuisson. The dollars surging in made the U.S. ambassador into a proconsul.

Once Duarte was elected, the United States held fast to him, even as the army's extrajudicial killings went on, and in general the army and oligarchy remained ultra-violent and inflexible. The military leadership distrusted Duarte because he was too moderate for their taste but accepted him because that moderation was essential to the free flow of U.S. aid. From the U.S. point of view, this calculation was a desirable outcome, though not one conducive to long-term structural change.

A persistent problem was that the Salvadoran army was inept and vicious in the field, no matter what kind of training it received. Soldiers were famously mistreated by their superiors, corruption was rife, and training was minimal. As a result, the U.S. Army brought budding officers back to its own training bases. As Crandall notes, by the end of 1983, the United States had trained over half the officer corps, and almost entirely outside the country. Gradually, the Salvadoran army became almost entirely dependent on the United States.

More broadly, Washington had no serious plan for changing the conditions that generated armed conflict in the first place (despite knowing quite well what those conditions were and paying lip service to land reform). Indeed, that inattention to structural inequalities helps explain how El Salvador is still beset by poverty, homicide, and organized crime. The civil war has been over for many years, but conflict is constant. This is one of the serious drawbacks of the Salvador option, which focused intently on the near term. "Success" referred to shoring up a government against a Marxist insurgency, but not much more than that. The longer-term ripple effects received scant attention.

Above all, the Cold War motivated everyone. The United States viewed El Salvador from a global lens while the Salvadoran army and oligarchy considered themselves in a fight to the death. The FMLN used vicious tactics of its own and did everything it could to disrupt elections, which, it argued, legitimized a corrupt capitalist puppet government. With help from the Soviet Union, Cuba and Nicaragua were major players, though the Sandinistas eventually expressed some regret because

of the ferocious response by the United States. D'Aubuisson himself lamented that his country was a Great Power battleground, even as he reveled in the battle.

Crandall's goal is to lay it all out, sparing no one and trying simply to understand motivations, causes, and effects, which is not easy. The civil war has hardened into caricature for many people, depending on their ideological orientation. He does not try to show how his analysis might fit into existing international relations theory, which I think would be a fascinating exercise; it could contribute to theories of foreign policy decisionmaking. But his analysis can also connect to constructivism, because the concept of human rights hovered over all decisions, while its interpretation was a matter of dispute. Public statements and private discussions did not always send the same signals.

And what of that original guiding question? As with the rest of the book, Crandall avoids giving simple or easy answers. Reagan administration officials clearly believed that their approach had been successful. From their perspective, U.S. policy had ensured that El Salvador held elections rather than becoming Communist, while keeping the far right at arm's length to protect budding democratic institutions. The Salvador option involved the U.S. military's advising and helping to coordinate a counterinsurgency strategy, and belief in its success led to the George W. Bush administration's applying it to Iraq after the 2003 invasion.

As Crandall relates, however, the result in El Salvador was also carnage that went on and on until both sides were worn out, the Cold War was ending, and Washington didn't care so much anymore. For years, no one could even agree on what "negotiations" should mean. Everyone sought to take credit for the peace agreement (though no one wants to take credit for the bloody aftermath we see now). As an option for export, this is hardly reassuring.

The Salvador option makes little sense when taken out of its own specific context, though it is hard to avoid the conclusion that inserting yourself into civil war carries heavy ethical and practical implications that are rarely taken into consideration. To the extent that policymakers even ponder them, the long-term effects of policy are not always obvious. It is a common conclusion in the history of U.S. policy toward Latin America, and no different in El Salvador.

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Luis Fernando Angosto-Ferrández, *Venezuela Reframed: Bolivarianism, Indigenous Peoples and Socialisms of the Twenty-First Century*. London: Zed Books, 2015. Appendix, bibliography, index, 312 pp.; paperback, ebook.

Indigenous movements in countries like Bolivia, Mexico, Ecuador, and others with sizable indigenous populations have been addressed in several scholarly studies, but we know less about indigenous movements in Venezuela and their relationship with the Bolivarian revolution associated with the late radical leader Hugo Chávez. In *Venezuela Reframed*, Luis Fernando Angosto-Ferrández gives a detailed account of the political organization and strategies of Venezuela's indigenous population, who

constitute 2.8 percent of the overall population of the country. He argues that in contrast to countries such as Bolivia and Ecuador, which were home to organized and militant indigenous movements that preceded the rise of pink tide leaders, in Venezuela the indigenous movement was catapulted into existence by the Bolivarian revolution itself, and in turn, it helped to shape its parameters.

Much has been written on the interface between social movements and the state in Venezuela, going beyond simple notions of co-optation to address the ways that social movements both have been empowered by the state and in turn support the state for mutual benefit. *Venezuela Reframed* follows in this path, showing that the indigenous actors who participate in government programs are not simply “subordinated clients,” but are also agents shaping their own destiny.

Angosto-Ferrández identifies three main streams of indigenous collective action, including electoral participation, indigenous groupings affiliated with the state, and extra-institutional mobilizations that critically engage the state. In early chapters, he gives a summary of the emergence of indigenous organizations, arguing that in urban and periurban areas, the oil wealth of the country had made it somewhat possible to provide basic social services for indigenous people. In 1989, the *Consejo Nacional Indio de Venezuela* (National Council of Venezuelan Indians, CONIVE) was formed. This organization sought to operate at a remove from traditional party politics, but when the Bolivarian movement came into existence, CONIVE was more readily associated with this alternative current. Although the leaders of this institution referred to themselves as a movement, before Chávez came to power they were not organized as a movement.

Chapter 2 examines how the process of forming an *Asamblea Nacional Constituyente* (National Constituent Assembly, ANC) to reform the constitution in 1999 was one of the main catalysts that spurred the organization of indigenous people. The ANC needed an organization to process the demands of indigenous groups and to coordinate the election of indigenous representatives, and in the process, CONIVE was transformed into a key interlocutor between indigenous people and the state. Angosto-Ferrández shows how indigeneity also became one of the central sources for the creation of a Bolivarian collective identity. Although he does not mention the Afro-Venezuelan movement, one of the issues raised by Afro-Venezuelan leaders is that they were not given the same level of recognition as indigenous peoples at a constitutional level.

Venezuela Reframed examines indigenous enfranchisement in Bolivarian Venezuela through the passage of laws, territorial recognition that grants land titles to indigenous communities, and funding of local projects through indigenous communal councils. In many of these cases, the initiatives were driven from the local level. In July 2004, I myself attended a meeting of the Piaroa indigenous group in the southern state of Amazonas for self-demarcation, or to identify collectively the land that pertained to them and then to prepare a document that gave the historical, cultural, and practical reasons that they should be given title to the land. The Piaroa community had been meeting for five days continuously, and they had produced a strikingly rich map that included not just rivers, highways, and official roads but

burial sites, historical sites, plants, and other markers of indigenous presence. It was clear that the process was being directed by the indigenous people and there was broad community participation.

In addition to electoral engagement and state-sponsored groupings, *Venezuela Reframed* also explores the kinds of contentious collective action that indigenous groups have engaged in at the margins of and outside of official state-sponsored networks. In chapter 6, Angosto-Ferrández looks at the Yukpa movement in the Perijá mountains of Zulia state and the eight-day hunger strike launched by the late José María Korta, a Jesuit priest who was one of the founders of the Indigenous University of Tauca (UIT). During his action, Korta acknowledged Chávez's commitment to the indigenous population, but he said that demarcation of indigenous territories had not been achieved. In response, the Ministry of the Environment sent a document to restart the process of demarcation with the participation of indigenous representatives and a parliamentary commission. Angosto-Ferrández presents this case as an example of the fluid and responsive relationship between indigenous groups and the state, which build and transform each other in dialectical conflict and cooperation.

In the last chapter, Angosto-Ferrández raises one of the key issues in the relationship between social movements and the state, which can be seen in other countries with indigenous populations and left-wing leaders, such as Ecuador and Bolivia. This is the issue of extractivism. According to Angosto-Ferrández, the Venezuelan economy's dependence on an export-oriented and import-based extractivist model presents a key contradiction for the Bolivarian state, which can be resolved only by looking at the broader global picture. Bolivarian socialism is dependent on the extraction of nonrenewable resources, which sometimes brings the state into conflict with indigenous groups who claim territorial rights to lands that are subject to mining or other extractive processes. Not all indigenous groups oppose extractivism; some are in favor of mining, but they all seek greater regulation of extractive practices and greater participation in the management and control of extractive activities.

Angosto-Ferrández provides a detailed account of the political and electoral mechanisms of indigenous participation in Bolivarian Venezuela, but I would have liked to see more of the anthropological thick description of indigenous lived experience. Angosto-Ferrández carried out extensive fieldwork in the Gran Sabana region of Bolívar state, but we do not see much of that ethnographic work reflected in the book. It would have been good to get a sense of how indigenous lives are changing, to hear about some of the collaborators and indigenous subjects whom Angosto-Ferrández came across in the field. The fieldwork would have given him a unique vantage point on a community about which little is known, but we do not hear much about how everyday life intersects with the political and what ethnographic insights he might have gleaned from the question of indigenous movements in the Chávez era.

Nevertheless, *Venezuela Reframed* provides us with an important account of an understudied movement. As Angosto-Ferrández tells us, many accounts of pink tide countries tend to present indigenous movements as existing in opposition to the

state or as co-opted by the state, but this book provides a more complicated picture of that relationship.

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Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud, eds., *Environmental Governance in Latin America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. Tables, figures, map, bibliography, index, 350 pp.; hardcover \$31, ebook.

Academic interest in environmental governance has been on the rise. While meanings of the concept vary, its use is typically intended to signal a transformation in the organizational and institutional geometries of environmental decisionmaking. In particular, scholarship on the subject calls into question state-centric understandings of environmental authority and regulation, among other ways, by drawing attention to the multiactor, multiscale nature of the sociopolitical systems through which human-environment interactions are governed (Bridge and Perreault 2009).

In broad terms, contributors to the edited volume *Environmental Governance in Latin America* adopt such a perspective. They do so with the collective aim of assessing how environmental governance is being (re)shaped across Latin America, and with what social and environmental implications. The book, which is open access and can be downloaded at no cost from the publisher's website, is the result of a collaborative four-year research project, funded by the European Union, which brought together researchers from ten Latin American and European institutions and from a variety of academic disciplines. For scholars of Latin American environmental politics, the book is important reading, both for its cogent assessments of cross-regional patterns and trajectories and for the innovative analyses advanced in many of the chapters.

One of the volume's principal concerns is to assess the consequences for environmental governance of the rise of new, ostensibly postneoliberal governments. As Joan Martínez-Alier and Mariana Walter demonstrate in their analysis of "sociometabolic" trends in Latin America (chapter 2), economies across the region have experienced a process of "reprimarization" in recent decades, entailing renewed dependence on renewable and nonrenewable resource extraction. Within this general trend, however, governments have taken different approaches to the regulation of extractive activities, with some left-leaning administrations forsaking the neoliberal model that had been widely adopted in the late twentieth century and (re)asserting state involvement in and control over extractive industries.

Pablo Andrade A., in chapter 4, provides valuable insight into these experiments in postneoliberal resource industry governance through a detailed comparative analysis of the new regulatory frameworks for mineral and hydrocarbon exploitation that have been instituted in Bolivia and Ecuador under the administrations of Evo Morales and Rafael Correa, respectively. In chapter 5, Benedicte Bull and Mariel Aguilar-Støen advance understanding further through an analysis of the role of elites in shaping environmental governance trajectories in a variety of leftist

and center-left governments (including Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and El Salvador). As these authors note, elites are often presented as the agents of exploitation in critical nature-society scholarship, but they are “rarely the object of direct scrutiny” (142). Bull and Aguilar-Støen’s analysis of elite dynamics across a range of cases helps to explain why, for progressives, many of the region’s left-of-center governments have produced disappointing results in the realm of environmental governance. Nevertheless, the authors identify reasons for optimism; namely, the nascent formation in some countries of a “new, environmental technocratic elite” (157) that could, over time, strengthen environmental policies and practices.

Another key issue addressed in the book is that of bottom-up environmental governance innovations. As Fábio de Castro, Barbara Hogenboom, and Michiel Baud discuss in their introduction to the volume, governments, development agencies, and corporations now generally agree on the need for local groups to be involved in environmental governance. In practice, however, formal participatory mechanisms tend to offer only limited opportunities for such groups to influence governance decisions. In this context, it is not uncommon for local populations simply not to engage with official participatory mechanisms.

Meanwhile, to (re)assert their agency in environmental governance, various groups, often in coordination with civil society or government allies, have developed their own strategies for influencing decisions and sustaining control over processes occurring within their territories. Such bottom-up tactics, and their relationship to broader-scale political-economic dynamics, are the focus of both chapter 9, by Leticia Merino, and chapter 10, by David Barkin and Blanca Lemus. The former examines the role of local institutions in community forestry in Mexico, and the latter addresses alternative, locally based strategies for achieving socioenvironmental justice, drawing, in particular, on research undertaken in the Mexican state of Oaxaca. Additionally, in chapter 11, Mariana Walter and Leire Urkidi analyze the rise of community consultations in large-scale mining projects, providing important new insights into both the contexts in which such mechanisms have emerged and the reasons they have spread across the region.

A third important issue this volume attends to is the hybrid character of environmental governance. As Castro, Hogenboom, and Baud discuss in their introduction, systems of environmental governance in Latin America typically incorporate elements from several models, and a number of the empirical chapters demonstrate the complex ways that hybrid governance arrangements are constructed (and reconstructed) through the practices and struggles of diversely situated actors operating at various scales. This dynamic is perhaps most clearly illustrated in Mariel Aguilar-Støen, Fabiano Toni, and Cecilie Hirsch’s analysis of the varied ways that Latin American countries have engaged with the global forest and climate initiative known as REDD (chapter 8). The authors identify three broad strategies that Latin American countries have adopted in implementing and shaping REDD efforts (the “assertive strategy,” the “accommodating strategy,” and the “resisting strategy”) and document how REDD is being reconstituted as it is implemented in individual countries.

A fourth concern is the ideological and epistemological underpinnings of environmental governance. In chapter 1, Martínez-Alier, Baud, and Héctor Sejenovich take up this issue as part of their excellent overview of the varied strands of environmentalism that have emerged in Latin America across time. The chapter analyzes how Latin America's specific historical experiences have shaped perspectives on environmental issues in the region and assesses how these ideas have informed environmental governance trajectories. This is an issue Sejenovich also speaks to in chapter 7 through his critical examination of the relationship between poverty alleviation and sustainable development in Latin America.

In addition, based on their research in the Mixteca region of Mexico, Mina Kleiche-Dray and Roland Waast offer an analysis of the growing role of indigenous knowledge in environmental and development governance (chapter 3). And in chapter 6, Cristián Parker, Gloria Baigorrotegui, and Fernando Estenssoro investigate the discourses of strategic actors (including company executives, government officials, and NGO leaders) involved in debates over the mining industry's consumption of energy and water. These authors' insightful analysis reveals key fault lines in how the actors studied represent the water-energy-mining nexus and relates these representations to the actors' differing worldviews on nature-society relations. Collectively, then, these chapters point to a complex knowledge politics that underlies and animates struggles over environmental authority, decisionmaking, and regulation in the region.

While the volume's chapters are united in their effort to identify and understand the "features, dynamics and direction" (3) of environmental governance in Latin America, the contributing authors adopt a diverse set of theoretical approaches to do so. Readers of the volume as a whole may find unsatisfying the relative lack of an overarching theoretical perspective. In fairness, though, the wider environmental governance literature exhibits a similar conceptual eclecticism, with scholars drawing on a range of theoretical traditions—institutional political economy, ecogovernance, common property theory, among others. In this sense, the theoretical diversity on display in this book is symptomatic of a broader condition.

In addition to this theoretical issue, it is worth noting that at least two concerns central to contemporary environmental politics in Latin America are not directly investigated in the book. First, though Martínez-Alier, Baud, and Sejenovich, in chapter 1, discuss the history of conservationist environmentalism in Latin America, the present-day politics of protected areas and other forms of official nature conservation do not receive focused analysis. Second, as Eduardo Silva notes in the afterword, the book pays little attention to issues of urban environmental governance in Latin America. For a world region in which about 80 percent of the population lives in cities and in which growing urbanized areas face an array of environmental challenges (e.g., air pollution, waste disposal, water provisioning, land use planning), the environment question is clearly not just a rural one. In general, it is vital for studies of environmental governance to develop analytical approaches that bridge the urban-rural divide, including addressing the multiple forms of connection—and disconnection—between the region's cities and its zones of natural resource extraction.

These critical reflections notwithstanding, this book is a very welcome addition to the literature on environmental politics in Latin America. It is notable for its innovative analyses of a number of important cross-regional trends in environmental governance, and will be especially useful to readers interested in the social and environmental dimensions of Latin America's natural resource economies.

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Eduardo Alemán and George Tsebelis, eds., *Legislative Institutions and Lawmaking in Latin America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. Figures, tables, notes, bibliography, index, 296 pp.; hardcover \$90, ebook.

Few areas in the study of politics are marked by such an overwhelming theoretical, methodological, and empirical consensus as the one observed among students of legislative politics. The pool of shared concepts, methodological approaches, and forms of measurement in this literature resembles an archetypical normal science status *à la* Kuhn. Concepts like agenda-setting power, partisan power, legislative cartel, or supermajority, among many others, are systematically shared by students of the U.S. Congress and those concerned with the intricacies of Latin American legislatures.

Arguably, this basic agreement provides a reasonable ground to produce good results for every research initiative. It is in this context that *Legislative Institutions and Lawmaking in Latin America* emerges as the state of the art for those interested in the effect of institutions and politics on the policymaking process. The editors of this book, along with a small but select number of country experts, ensure an excellent work that deserves the attention of scholars interested in legislative politics.

Alemán and Tsebelis argue that the lawmaking process can be explained by three independent dimensions. First, the partisan dimension asks for the presence or absence of a majority condition of the president in parliament (either partisan or coalitional) and how stable and cohesive this majority is at endorsing the preferences of the executive branch. Second, the institutional dimension covers both positive and negative agenda-setting rules governing executive-legislative relations. This dimension covers the set of rules and procedures that regulate the conditions under which legislation moves forward or can be obstructed by different actors in both branches of government. Third, the positional dimension relates to the ideological location of different actors involved in the policymaking process, as their relative policy location alters the chances to get legislation enacted in different institutional settings.

Since the mid-1990s, students of Latin American politics were mostly convinced that what mattered the most to change the status quo and get legislation passed was the presence or absence of stable and cohesive majorities backing up the executive branch. To a large extent, this was the main corollary for those who contributed to the debate around the perils and advantages of parliamentary and presidential regimes, led by Juan Linz and followed by Matthew Shugart and John Carey, Scott Mainwaring, and more recently by Fernando Cheibub and Sebastian Saiegh. In contrast, this book contends that although the political condition of presidents is still crucial, the set of legal devices involved in the agenda-setting power in legislatures may facilitate or inhibit their chances to endorse their policy preferences, along with their ideological positioning.

The dimensions proposed by the authors are not new in the literature, but their integration into a single tridimensional account is fairly intuitive, and the authors make use of Tsebelis's classic geometric formalization to specify the combined effects on the policy outputs. Governments under minority conditions in parliament may be as successful as majority governments, depending on the nature of the majority. If a president holds a majority party (or coalition) in parliament but is unable to discipline that party (or coalition), this political condition inhibits the chances to move legislation forward. A disciplined minority party may be more efficient at enacting legislation and even at obstructing unwanted bills by negotiating with proximate parties and by using the legal devices that grant the power to propose, amend, and veto legislation.

Regarding the interaction between positive agenda-setting powers and the location of actors in the policy space, Alemán and Tsebelis are particularly interested in three different rules, known as closed rules, open rules, and amendatory observations. These rules vary in the extent to which the agenda setter has a power asymmetry in regard to other agents in moving legislation forward. For instance, closed rules determine that there is a "take it or leave it" proposal made by the agenda setter, while the amendatory rule implies that the agenda setter has the power to propose the last offer to amend bills. Open rules determine that all actors are allowed to introduce changes to legislative bills.

For these three types of rules, with which parties, factions, or even individual legislators operate in legislatures, agenda setters located close to the center of the ideological spectrum are more likely to get policies close to their ideal point. But as the authors argue, "the weaker the formal prerogatives over the agenda the more important locational advantage becomes" (12). Thus, being at the periphery of the spectrum always decreases agenda setters' chance to benefit, and the opposite is true for veto players, considering negative agenda-setting powers. In this case, veto players located at the periphery become extremely powerful in the lawmaking process (21).

The arsenal of agenda-setting devices (both positive and negative) is important. It ranges from gatekeeping rules that grant monopolistic rights to presidents to initiate legislation in certain policy areas, to block and partial veto (with or without amendatory observations), open and closed rules for committee proposals, sequencing prerogatives, executive decrees, urgent bills, and scheduling authority. All these

rules may make presidents more or less institutionally powerful, to the extent that they can provide legal devices to control (or not) the lawmaking process. Of course, presidents' political condition, in terms of having or not having a stable and cohesive majority and their location in the policy space, will largely determine the extent to which they rely on those legal devices to enact their policy preferences.

Seven case studies nurture this book (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay), guided by a set of empirical expectations laid out in the introductory chapter. These cases offer a wide range of variation across Latin America, but it is important to notice (as the authors mention) that other important cases are not included in the analysis. In short, the empirical expectations combine both the agenda-setting rules in the hands of presidents and legislatures and the political status of these agents.

With the exception of Uruguay, the scale of the seven cases makes it difficult to avoid comments for each one of them. The Argentine case teaches us that minority governments are not as contentious as the literature predicted long ago. Presidents are not granted major agenda-setting powers, and yet negotiations with proximate parties have moved the status quo to favor the executive branch. In contrast, Uruguay shows that a majority party government is far from being a panacea. While more than two-thirds of executive bills clear parliament, the small set of important bills sponsored by the executive branch are amended by the majority party. Thus the president has a majority in the legislature without being a rubber stamp. Brazil is another case in point because presidents are armed with important agenda-setting powers, yet parties are strongly committed to twisting the preferences of agreements forged among coalition leaders. Moreover, the Mexican case illustrates that minority presidents can be successful at striking policy agreements and vetoing unwanted bills, even in the absence of coalitions. All this occurs in a context of diminishing agenda-setting powers in the hands of the executive branch and slow party system change.

The editors and country experts do a nice job of theorizing and providing empirical evidence to support the expectations of the model laid out in the introductory chapter. But the chapters could have followed the tridimensional account in a more integrated fashion. They underestimate one of the most important implications of their own work: the book speaks very well about Latin American elites. Notice that there are no "imperial presidents" circumventing parliaments or pushing their preferences using their battery of legal instruments to set the agenda and block the opposition parties. Similarly, there are no "recalcitrant legislatures" obstructing every single piece of legislation promoted by the president. Thus, executive-legislative relations in many Latin American democracies flow in a setting of transactions among institutions. This is good news, but there is even more to say about those actors operating in both branches of government.

Parties, largely devalued among citizens in all countries of the region, seem to play a crucial role in legislatures. Indeed, parties ask for a place at the negotiating table, even in those cases where executives dominate the lawmaking process with approval ratings above two-thirds. Here, parties from government and opposition

frequently introduce changes before legislation gets passed, affecting their ability to represent the interests of their own voters. In addition, and important, the negotiated mood in which legislatures seem to work makes policy reversals more unlikely in the near future. Thus negotiation leads to policy stability, which is also welcomed in the Latin American context, full of records of policy reversals that do not help economic and social progress in the region, not to mention democratic stability.

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Joseph S. Tulchin, *Latin America in International Politics: Challenging U.S. Hegemony*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2016. Bibliography, index, 235 pp.; hardcover \$60.

After almost three decades since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, scholars are asking why Latin America is still playing the role of an antagonist rather than a protagonist in international politics. Joseph S. Tulchin's response is that "the nightmare of U.S. hegemony and the historical legacy of anti-Americanism affect decision-making in Latin America today and are an important dimension in even the most scrupulously realist evaluation of factors in foreign policy decision-making" (3). Tulchin's book is an attempt to explain how "in the last two centuries after independence, the recurring and persistent conflicts between the United States and Latin America have left a painful and bitter legacy that compromises efforts to achieve community in the hemisphere" (5).

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, few Latin American nations would stand up against the Colossus of the North. Latin America's lack of agency is deeply rooted as a direct consequence of U.S. hegemony on the continent. As Tulchin points out, "the United States imposed its hegemony on Latin America" (31). Given Latin American dependence on the United States not only for security, in the context of the Cold War international environment, but as a primary destination of its commodities, Latin American nations, rather than exercise agency, would defer to the United States to assume the hemispheric responsibility. While some countries today attempt to exercise agency, others are still captive to historical memory and trapped in defensive anti-Americanism. This anti-American posture became even more prevalent with the rise of the "pink tide," a group of left-wing political leaders led by the late Hugo Chávez and including Bolivia's Evo Morales, Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega, and former Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in opposition to the United States.

Other examples of this movement for "posthegemonic" regionalism include the creation of UNASUR and of CELAC, which was a deliberate attempt to exclude the United States as a form of collective agency (14). But as Tulchin points out, the central focus of U.S. policy toward Latin America continued to keep more powerful players out of the region (33). Even with the announcement by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on November 18, 2013 at the Organization of American States that

“the Monroe Doctrine is over,” the United States continues to push powerful states such as Russia, China, and Iran from exercising agency in the Western Hemisphere.

Under the auspices of protecting Latin America, the United States, according to Tulchin, has given the following reasons for intervention in Latin America: “instability threatened to precipitate armed conflict and endanger the lives of civilians or, worse, open the way to intervention by a hostile power—that is, a power hostile to the United States” (56). U.S. intervention under the pretense of preventing armed conflict was particularly expressed during the Cold War years as the United States intervened in many Latin American countries and brought bureaucratic authoritarian regimes to power. As Tulchin states,

politics throughout the hemisphere in the first three decades of the Cold War were unstable and polarizing, with a strong tendency toward the erosion of democracy. Where the armed forces had achieved institutional status, this trend culminated in something called bureaucratic authoritarianism and national security states, in which the armed forces and their civilian allies assumed power in the name of the nation, security, and anticommunism. (87)

But even though Cold War politics reduced the scope of foreign policy autonomy in most Latin American countries, some took it upon themselves to oppose U.S. hegemony (66). Tulchin calls our attention to the fact that “with the end of the Cold War, the nations in Latin America realized they had space in the international system within which to operate and that the zero-sum power game imposed upon them by the United States could no longer be sustained” (125). The “new world order” was an opportunity for Latin American nations to exercise their agency. There are several examples of such an attempt, such as the Lima Group, with Peru, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, to offer support to the Central Americans seeking a peaceful solution to their civil conflicts (94). Also, the Esquipulas Process was initiated under the leadership of Costa Rican president Oscar Arias. The Esquipulas Process was a double-edged sword for the nations of Latin America. On one hand, it marginalized the United States in the peace process and therefore complicated the challenges confronting the Central American countries. On the other hand, it opened new space for those countries to exercise some autonomy and agency (97).

In the context of a post-Cold War international system, Latin American nations are also pursuing closer proximity to each other via regionalism. Tulchin explains that “regionalism would become the dominant theme in collective efforts to form a Latin American identity and community that somehow would be free of U.S. hegemony” (137). The new regionalism in Latin America is the central issue in the effort to build a hemispheric community with rules (154). As far as Latin American nations are concerned, the best avenue to establish their own prerogatives and agency without Uncle Sam’s involvement in their internal affairs is to establish a Latin American identity (154).

Another important posthegemonic attempt by these nations to establish their own agency was the creation of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our Amer-

ica (ALBA). ALBA members advanced the idea of “socialism for the twenty-first century.” ALBA was “an ideological movement that set itself against the imperialism and neoliberalism of the United States” (140). Led by Chávez, ALBA members included both Fidel Castro and his brother Raúl Castro, as well as Daniel Ortega, Evo Morales, Rafael Correa, and Manuel Zelaya of Honduras (140). Although Lula da Silva was cajoled to join this organization, he refused.

If it is true, as Kerry proclaimed, that “the Monroe Doctrine is over,” what does the future hold for Latin America “after hegemony?” With the “end of history” and the victory of the United States over communism and command-control economies in Eastern Europe, will Latin American nations have greater latitude to exercise their agency, or will it be business as usual, as Latin American nations attempt to outdo one another, creating greater regional divisiveness? Tulchin’s answer is that while Latin America has advanced somewhat toward greater agency, “there is no such unitary actor in Latin America who might respond to U.S. proposals in a rational manner, nor has there ever been” (160).

Given Latin American’s suspicion toward a U.S. attempt at closer reconciliation between the two regions, many Latin American leaders are still trapped in their anti-imperialist position toward the United States. For example, “as Obama recognized the end of U.S. hegemony and reached out the hand of partnership, the only thing on which a majority of Latin Americans agreed by way of response was that they would not allow the United States to use partnership as a mask for continuing its dominance in the hemisphere” (160). Furthermore, as U.S. policymakers see the asymmetry of power between the United States and Latin American nations, they believe that the United States will always be the rulemaker and Latin American nations the rule takers. On the other hand, “Latin American policymakers will go to extraordinary lengths to avoid following the U.S. lead and avoid U.S. hegemony even if that appears to go against their own interests” (160).

Despite Tulchin’s pessimistic outlook, there are some positive signs that things could improve in the future. Tulchin points out four key elements of hope: transnational networks, information technology, globalization, and the transition to democracy (161–62). Tulchin argues that “as [Latin Americans] become increasingly confident in the expression of their agency, leaders in Latin America have become enthusiastic supporters of transnational networks and increasingly respectful of soft power ... globalization and the Internet have played important roles” (161).

With the advancement of computer information technology (CIT), parts of the world once unknown are just a click away in the postindustrial world of the twenty-first century. According to the *Internetworldstats.com*, as of November 2015, Latin American Internet users accounted for 49.6 percent (both South America and Central America combined). Facebook users for South America, as of November 2015, numbered 210,874,200, while Central America accounted for 76,040. As the world becomes more interconnected, CIT will have a transformative impact on countless lives. As Tulchin points out, “more people feel they are part of a great global village” (162).

Globalization and the transition to democracy have also transformed Latin America. The impeachment of Brazil’s president Dilma Rousseff is a case in point.

Despite the tumultuous months of discussion in both the House of Representatives and the Senate regarding the impeachment process, the Brazilian military stayed in the barracks. While the consolidation of democracy in Latin America remains feckless and in its infancy, most Latin Americans recognize that a return to bureaucratic authoritarianism is not a solution, either. Globalization and the transition to democracy, as Tulchin observes, have “established the conditions for the policymaking process that had been lacking in so many countries and had marked a critical difference between the United States and Latin America since independence in how they understood world politics” (162).

As Latin American nations become an integral part of the post–Cold War international system, there is an emerging desire to participate in international affairs and foreign policy, not only from policymakers but also from the people of Latin America. This growing desire is a central feature of these nations’ emerging agency in world affairs, resulting from “the development of an epistemological community of foreign policy experts with their increasingly sophisticated theoretical framework for understanding policy” (162). As evidence of this movement, many Latin American universities, especially the University of Brasília, are now offering master’s degrees in international relations.

With the easing of tensions between the United States and China, Russia, and Iran, these countries are eyeing Latin America as an alternative to the United States as a strategic and economic partner. As these countries increase their foreign direct investment in the Americas, there is concern in the United States about the impact of their involvement in an area traditionally seen as the U.S. backyard, and its consequences to the national security of the Western Hemisphere.

In the final analysis, Latin American nations have a tremendous opportunity to formulate their own policies and gain control over their own destinies, Tulchin believes (167). The big question remains, can they do it? Can they unite and speak as one collective group? As Tulchin eloquently points out, “hegemonic or not, the United States is still the most powerful country in the hemisphere, and many Latin American countries are tied to the United States through trade, investment, immigration, or the violence from the illegal traffic in drugs” (167–68). As the international system of the twenty-first century is recalibrated to accommodate the changes taking place within it, Tulchin’s *Latin America in International Politics* is a must-read for those interested in Latin American history, international relations, and comparative politics.

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Kevin P. Gallagher, *The China Triangle: Latin America's China Boom and the Fate of the Washington Consensus*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. Tables, figures, bibliography, index, 256 pp.; hardcover \$27.95, ebook.

The China Triangle is an ambitious book, written by one of the most prominent scholars of Sino-Latin American relations. Building on more than a decade of excellent research, Kevin Gallagher's volume has three interrelated components: a comprehensive review of China's engagement in the region, an analysis and critique of Latin America's approach to globalization—the latter contrasted with China's own integration into global markets—and a series of policy recommendations that draw on developmentalist precepts and post-Washington Consensus sensitivities.

On the whole, this is an excellent book, and one that without a doubt will become an instant reference for students of Latin America's relations with China. Yet as I will argue, there is an underlying tension between Gallagher's aim to reach a broad audience and provide policymakers with a suitable toolkit to deal with China, on the one hand, and his analytical endeavor, on the other. Unfortunately, the nuance of the cross-regional relationship—and the wider global dynamics that drive it—is sacrificed at times in favor of a simplistic narrative and a palatable message that is inherently more optimistic about the possibilities for regional development than what the author's previously published work would suggest (Gallagher and Porzecanski 2010).

Gallagher's main argument is that Latin America was institutionally and strategically unprepared to capitalize the resource boom—or the “China lottery,” as he dubs it—that ran from 2003 to 2013, when economies across the region experienced growth rates not seen since the early twentieth century. Now, as the boom wanes, the region confronts the impending need for reform, a reform that will require, according to Gallagher, “navigating the China Triangle”; that is, carefully devising strategic linkages with China and the United States, building on the region's comparative advantage in natural resources, and taking the best from the Washington and Beijing Consensuses to “embed the state in a way that enables a well-functioning marketplace that can deliver growth, employment, inclusion, and sustainable development” (10). Gallagher's formula is hence a mix of good governance and financial competence with an important dose of industrial policy.

The story of how Latin America missed the opportunities brought by the resource boom is told in chapter 2, “A Tale of Two Globalizations.” Here, as in some of the subsequent chapters, the author offers a broad-stroke analysis of two diverging stories of globalization: Latin America's tale of defeat and China's success saga. This is problematical. In trying to provide a picture contrasting the two trajectories, the author disregards many of the contradictions in China's own road to development. While Gallagher is ready to recognize some of the challenges China faces today, these are, in a way, minimized as externalities to a story of success: corruption is deemed a result of needing to deal with “more money,” inequality is paired with burgeoning urban growth, and China's environmental crisis is presented as the consequence of needing to fuel a miraculous economy (39). In discussing China's “gradualist

approach to globalization” (34) and its success in boosting growth and reducing poverty, the author also overlooks the authoritarian premises of the Chinese experiment, which many authors have deemed essential in facilitating the exploitation of labor and silencing of dissent that have allowed the country to become an undisputed factory to the world (see, e.g., Walker and Buck 2007).

These omissions are possibly a consequence of the book’s main endeavor, which is no other than to discuss what China means for Latin America and how the region should learn from positive experiences elsewhere to confront globalization in the twenty-first century, rather than to open a debate on globalization and development. Here, China serves as an idealized “other,” a mirror that reflects one’s own shortcomings. Gallagher’s take on Latin America’s engagement of globalization adopts, hence, a harsher tone.

Initially, in fact, the author seems to discard any progress made in the last two decades as a mere corollary of China’s growth and its role as a lender in the region. Just as in the nineteenth century, we are told, Latin America is letting a unique opportunity go by before its eyes. The culprits are plenty: low capital investment, low savings, neglect of research and development, and a pervasive lack of preparation for the financial upheavals associated with volatile commodity prices—all of which boils down to poor policy choices. As the pages proceed, though, the analysis gains in granularity, and we learn not only that the region has made important advances in poverty and inequality reduction or has strategically invested in education, but that a number of countries are already implementing some of the policies that could help overcome the developmental impasse. Brazil, Bolivia, and Peru earmark commodity revenues for health, education, and environmental expenditure; Chile has developed a copper stabilization fund that allowed it to extend stimulus packages after the global financial crisis; Brazil’s development bank (BNDES) champions long-term investments; and eight Latin American countries manage sovereign wealth funds that help to avoid overreliance on natural resources (152–53).

To these positive experiences, Gallagher adds further recommendations. He remarks on the imminent need to “upgrade institutions to capture windfalls from the commodities sector” (150); suggests the development of “bond markets denominated in domestic currencies” to mitigate some of the impacts of volatility (151); highlights the urgency of investment in infrastructure, innovation, and the environment (154); and cites Peter Evans to advocate for an active role of the state in steering the private sector toward long-term industrial development goals, while at the same time promoting transparency and accountability, and in this way departing from the classical developmental state archetype (161–63). What Latin America needs, after all, is “getting the political economy right” (160).

As the conclusion returns to the initial framework, one of the weaknesses of the analysis becomes apparent. What Gallagher initially framed as a triangular relation between Latin America, China, and the United States, and a story of two globalizations, turns out to be the tale of just one globalization and many actors. The triangular geometry (favored by many China-Latin America scholars; see Denoon forthcoming) falls short of explaining the competitive pressures experienced by the region

as a whole—that is, aggravated resource dependency, deindustrialization, and environmental fragility—as Latin American states compete to attract transnational investments on a global basis. For example, for all the China talk, Canadian and local companies remain the major players in the region's mining sector, and the European Union still accounts for 35 percent of the region's foreign direct investment and remains a key partner in development cooperation.

Moreover, the loss of industrial jobs is endemic not only to Latin America but also to other developing and developed regions that struggle to keep pace with the levels of dispossession and exploitation in China and South and Southeast Asia at the hands of globalized capital. Thereby, where Gallagher proposes democratic and accountable developmental states equipped with state-of-the-art financial policy tools, critical contemporary literature on the developmental state often deems it a relic of the past—made possible only by a unique conjunction of geopolitical circumstances and national development architectures that no longer hold (Carroll and Jarvis forthcoming).

It is in this new global scenario of flexible accumulation that, indeed, many of Gallagher's policy prescriptions could help Latin America to transform the windfalls from natural resource exploitation into both better living standards and higher industrial and innovation capabilities; and in this pursuit, it is certainly necessary that the region leverage its competitive advantage in its relations with China and the United States, while, one would hope, not neglecting its engagement with other state and nonstate actors within and beyond the region.

Yet the world's two largest economies and their governments are not monolithic actors but two of the main stages on which flexible capital grounds its transnational prowess. Here, China's developmental story is, if anything, a reminder of a world of post-Fordist and postnational development, with formidable wealth cohabiting with intracountry inequalities of obscene proportions and states increasingly needing to entertain complex juggling acts as they try to engage global value chains without surrendering too many social and environmental standards in the process. Indeed, if one brings in dimensions of development, such as the issue of rights (labor, indigenous, environmental, etc.), the Chinese model of development pales in comparison with the progress made in Latin America in recent decades.

Analytical and geometrical discrepancies notwithstanding, *The China Triangle* is a must-read for anyone interested in China's role in the region, and will open a debate on the present and future of Latin America's globalization. *The China Triangle* provides a great deal of detailed information on China's dealings with the region, tackles important debates about issues of industrialization and sustainability, and offers careful policy advice. Gallagher's new book is perhaps marred only by not fully getting the (global!) political economy right.

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