

BOOK REVIEW ESSAY

Recently on the Latin American Right

Aaron Coy Moulton

Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas, US
Email: aaroncoymoulton@gmail.com

This essay reviews the following works:

Revolutionaries for the Right: Anticommunist Internationalism and Paramilitary Warfare in the Cold War. By Kyle Burke. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018. Pp. ix + 351. \$35.95 paperback, \$19.99 eBook. ISBN: 9781469666204.

Moral Majorities across the Americas: Brazil, the United States, and the Creation of the Religious Right. By Benjamin A. Cowan. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021. Pp. x + 294. \$29.95 paperback, \$95.00 hardcover, \$24.99 eBook. ISBN: 9781469552077.

Who Killed Berta Cáceres? Dams, Death Squads, and an Indigenous Defender's Battle for the Planet. By Nina Lakhani. London: Verso, 2020. Pp. 328. \$26.95 hardcover with free eBook. ISBN: 9781788733069.

The Condor Trials: Transnational Repression and Human Rights in South America. By Francesca Lessa. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2022. Pp. xvi + 375. \$65.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9780300254099.

La derecha mexicana en el siglo XX: Agonía, transformación y supervivencia. By Xóchitl Patricia Campos López and Diego Martín Velázquez Caballero. Puebla: Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Montiel y Soriano Editores, 2017. Pp. 254 paperback. ISBN: 9786077512776.

How Political Parties Mobilize Religion: Lessons from Mexico and Turkey. By Luis Felipe Mantilla. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2021. Pp. viii + 265. \$34.95 paperback, \$110.50 hardcover, \$34.95 e-book. ISBN: 9781439920169.

There Are No Dead Here: A Story of Murder and Denial in Colombia. By Maria McFarland Sánchez-Moreno. New York: Hachette Book Group, 2018. Pp. 327. \$28.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9781568585796.

Organized Violence: Capitalist Warfare in Latin America. By Dawn Paley and Simon Granovsky-Larsen. Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada: University of Regina Press, 2019. Pp. x + 284. \$34.95 paperback. ISBN: 9780889776104.

Over the past few years, scholarship on the Latin American Right has become as diverse as the very movements and ideas examined.¹ This is even seen in experts' preferred

¹ This review tries to alternate the use of *Right* and *Rights* in accordance with the terminology preferred by the respective work.

terminology. Though acknowledging the range of sometimes conflicting forces at play, works coming out of the United States tend to employ the singular *Right* (*derecha*) that reflects the academic debate over divisions between the country's so-called Old Right and New Right. Meanwhile, works published in Latin America have been more comfortable with the plural *Rights* (*derechas*), which is quite rare among their English-language counterparts.² Overshadowing this difference of vocabulary are persistent scholarly debates over a host of other issues: the influence of European fascism on local variations, the legacy of personalist dictatorships and professionalized military regimes, the interplay of local conflicts and the international Cold War, the circulation of transnational ideas and peoples who converged at some moments but diverged at others, the translations for terms such as *derecha extrema* (extreme Right) and *ultraderecha* (ultra-Right) to denote a group's affinity toward racism or violence, and the relationship of contemporary manifestations to their historical predecessors. Sandra McGee Deutsch's *Las Derechas* sparked a gradual reconsideration of long-held assumptions that right-wing Latin Americans merely adopted US or European views while remaining inside their respective nation-states' borders.³

Now, recently accessible depositories, technological advancements and the internet, and new methodologies and digital humanities are allowing experts to bring together scholarship that once appeared only in magisterial yet overlooked, scattered works throughout the Western Hemisphere. Compilations and colloquia, best evidenced in those facilitated by Ernesto Bohoslavsky and Stéphane Boisard, proliferate thanks to the diversity of topics.⁴ Given the double-edged joys and challenges of this dynamic field, the resulting texts require more space than ever before, as with Magdalena Broquetas and Gerardo Caetano's three-volume history of the Uruguayan Rights.⁵ With innovative multiarchival and multidisciplinary methodologies, the literature regularly acknowledges the transnational networks spreading among and underpinning the Latin American Right, exemplified in how studies of US economist Milton Friedman's eponymous Chicago Boys are no longer limited to Augusto Pinochet's Chilean regime but follow these acolytes of neoliberal capitalism throughout the Western Hemisphere.⁶

Given its subject's varieties, the historiography lacks any overarching or monolithic definition of the Latin American Right. Still, certain characteristics and ideals are strikingly common.⁷ Right-wing Latin Americans tend to identify with an Iberian or "Hispanic" whiteness while upholding traditional social, cultural, and gendered norms regarding patriarchy and heterosexuality. Reinforcing these views is an adherence to near-fundamentalist Christianity. For the better part of two centuries, these religious ideals drew primarily upon the region's Catholic heritage from Iberian colonialism, but

² This resembles the use of *fascism* versus *fascisms* and *anticommunism* versus *anticommunisms* throughout the scholarship.

³ Sandra McGee Deutsch, *Las Derechas: The Extreme Right in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile: 1890–1939* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

⁴ Ernesto Bohoslavsky and Stéphane Boisard, eds., "Les droites latino-américaines pendant la guerre froide (1959–1990)," *Cahiers des Amériques Latines* 79 (2015); Ernesto Bohoslavsky y Stéphane Boisard, eds., "Las derechas en América latina en el siglo XX: Problemas, desafíos y perspectivas," *Nuevo Mundo, Mundos Nuevos* (2016); Ernesto Bohoslavsky, Rodrigo Patto Sá Motta, and Stéphane Boisard, eds., *Pensar as Direitas na América Latina* (São Paulo: Editora Alameda, 2019). At the time of writing, Bohoslavsky's *Historia mínima de las derechas latinoamericanas* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México) was forthcoming.

⁵ Magdalena Broquetas and Gerardo Caetano, eds., *Historia de los conservadores y las derechas en Uruguay*, 3 vols. (Montevideo: Ediciones de la Banda Oriental, 2022).

⁶ David Díaz Arias, *Chicago Boys del trópico: Historia del neoliberalismo en Costa Rica (1965–2000)* (San José: Editorial UCR, 2021); Sebastian Edwards, *The Chile Project: The Story of the Chicago Boys and the Downfall of Neoliberalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, forthcoming).

⁷ Kirsten Weld, "Holy War: Latin America's Far Right," *Dissent* (Spring 2020), <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/holy-war-latin-americas-far-right>.

Protestantism's inroads in Latin America have brought along evangelical strands reinforcing those traditional values. Of course, global and local conflicts often intensified adherents' commitment, as with conservatives' identification with fascist dictator Francisco Franco during the Spanish Civil War, the global legitimization of right-wing regimes' anticommunist policies in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, the implementation of neoliberal economic models in the late twentieth century, and opposition to the pink tide in the twenty-first. Representing this broad array, the works reviewed here provide a fascinating panorama into both the historical and contemporary ideas and peoples that have shaped the Latin American Right. Some focus on events within particular nation-states while others trace the transnational reach of significant movements and personalities.

It is fitting to open this review with Xóchitl Patricia Campos López and Diego Martín Velázquez Caballero's compilation, *La derecha mexicana en el siglo XX: Agonía, transformación y supervivencia*. Until recently, scholars of the Latin American Right had limited interaction with contemporaries in other countries. There were stark difficulties in accessing relevant collections, and useful theses or articles often appeared in local venues lesser known to non-country specialists. Thanks to digital technologies, this has begun to change. The study of Mexican anticommunism is no longer limited to Mexicanists, and Mexicanists regularly contribute to studies on other regions. Today, scholars of Brazil or Colombia are familiar with conferences and publications in Mexico such as the journal *Secuencia*, which publishes articles that span the Western Hemisphere.⁸

Campos López and Velázquez Caballero's collection attempts to embody these shifts, and readers can treat the work as a small taste of the scholarship on the Latin American Right coming out of Mexico-based institutions. Though leaning heavily on political science and theory, the collection also includes anthropologists and historians. Scattered throughout the essays are references to the 1910 Mexican Revolution, the administration of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–1940), and other key events that propelled the Mexican Right. However, much of this historical discussion is astoundingly superficial and narrow, possibly due to the editors' decision to author six of the eleven essays themselves, a choice that will frustrate readers wishing for a broader vista of the Mexican Right. This is a disservice to a compilation that could have incorporated more voices to broaden its scope and better resonate with a wider audience.

Fortunately, the volume does offer useful tidbits. The editors' first essay offers a brief but useful review of the past half century of research on the Mexican Right from political scientists, summarizing how the field has tackled the subject. Later, they examine how some Mexican figures and political parties adhere to the idealization of a Hispanic heritage, an opposition to modernity, and other characteristics of the Right. As in any edited volume, the essays are understandably limited by space constraints, as in the anthropologist Elio Masferrer Kan's overview of the Spanish Catholic Church's influence on Mexican politics. The author's discussion of the church's role in social control is quite brief, and readers wanting more on its "influence on the regimes' National Security Doctrine ideology" (47) will have to consult studies detailed later in this review. Austreberto Martínez Villegas's essay traces how the "culto a Cristo Rey" was summoned by groups on the Mexican Right against the Mexican Revolution, particularly during the Cristero Rebellion of the late 1920s. Whereas the editors' essay on religion relies on the secondary literature, Martínez Villegas taps into primary sources for a more detailed case study that notes how militant Catholics leveraged the Cristo Rey mythology to push back against modernity. Despite Martínez Villegas's standout work and Franco Savarino's clear discussion of fascism in Mexico, most of the compilation's essays are rather superficial samples of their topics. Readers must turn elsewhere for a more complete picture of the Mexican Right.

⁸ *Secuencia: Revista de Historia y Ciencias Sociales*, available at secuencia.mora.edu.mx/index.php/Secuencia.

For those interested in the Mexican Right, Luis Felipe Mantilla's *How Political Parties Mobilize Religion* provides a glimpse into the role religion has played in Mexican politics over the past century. The heart of Mantilla's text is a comparative analysis of how political parties in Mexico and Turkey mobilized religious communities. Foremost is the author's attempt to explain the rise of Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan and of Mexico's Vicente Fox, whose election in 2000 dislodged the dominant Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI) from the presidency. Whereas Erdogan's influence endures today, Fox's election did not portend a similar national shift. The author offers an entertaining comparative analysis of how the two countries endured, at overlapping times, similar eras of liberal reforms (Benito Juárez and La Reforma versus the Tanzimât), dictatorships (Porfirio Díaz and Abdülhamid II), and revolutionary disruptions (the Mexican Revolution and World War I) that led to secular state parties (the PRI and the Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, or Republican People's Party) and a subsequent religiously infused backlash. Both Mexico's Partido Acción Nacional (National Action Party, PAN) and Turkey's Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party, AKP) tapped into religion to attack their secular opponents; however, differing political contexts and religious ties led to different outcomes. As Mantilla argues of Mexico, the Catholic clergy's appeals for political mobilization based on religious ideals were circumscribed between the end of the Cristero Rebellion and the 1970s. It was only following the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s that the Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano turned away from its reliance on the upper echelons of the Catholic hierarchy to incorporate the ecclesial base communities. The result was increased networking by the PAN, alongside more coordination among a diverse coalition of right-wing religious groups. A new era of activism led to important electoral victories for the PAN in the 1990s and 2000, but this success paradoxically saw increased tensions not found among their Turkish counterparts. After courting conservative Catholics without explicitly Catholic proposals, the PAN saw its electoral success undermined by a confused mixture of appeals that frustrated secular voters who were not invested in such issues and Catholics demanding much more. Support for the antiabortion Comité Nacional ProVida, Fox's passionate overtures to John Paul II, and the (surprising) legalization of same-sex marriage "highlighted the limitations inherent in the PAN's limited religious mobilization strategy" (177).⁹

Although Mantilla's text is heavy on discipline-specific language and theory, scholars from other disciplines may still find it useful. They could tap into the data set and methods used, which Mantilla outlines in chapter 1. Political scientists, historians, and others could easily dig deeper into these conflicts, perhaps tracing them further back. Outside this material, some experts might find limited utility in this brief work. The discussions of political alliances and the trajectories of figures such as the Catholic activist José González Torres derive from others' scholarship, and much of Mexico is left out in Mantilla's broad sweep of the country. Experts on the Mexican Right will note the limitations in applying such sweeping models to the country's diverse landscape. Did religious mobilization in Oaxaca resemble that in Guadalajara, a hotbed for the Cristero Rebellion that has stood out as a bastion of conservatism and anticommunism? How did Mexico's dirty war of the early 1970s, a time when Cold War resources were leveraged to suppress dissidents, impact the political alliances at the heart of Mantilla's discussion?¹⁰ Mexicanists will also ponder his

⁹ Some Mexicanists will question why the author did not consult Yemile Mizrahi's authoritative works, such as *From Martyrdom to Power: The Partido Acción Nacional in Mexico* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), which would have shed light on the PAN's internal structures and added crucial details to Mantilla's analysis.

¹⁰ Readers less familiar with Mexican historiography, and its discussions over terms such as *dictablanda* and *perfect dictatorship* to describe the PRI's ascendancy from the 1940s into 1968, can consult Mary Kay Vaughan's succinct review, "Mexico, 1940–1968 and Beyond," *Latin American Research Review* 53, no. 1 (2018): 167–176.

definition of *religious mobilization*. A deeper engagement with the literature on the Mexican Right would have allowed Mantilla to add essential nuance to his rather general analysis, such as further exploring the PAN's response to Vatican II and its calls for social justice.

Turning to Colombia, Maria McFarland Sánchez-Moreno's *There Are No Dead Here* delves into right-wing paramilitary forces and the violence unleashed thanks to their financial and ideological alliances with the nation's governments. The author tries to build the text around three central figures: the human rights lawyer Jesús María Valle, who was murdered in 1998 for investigating the connections between politicians and paramilitaries responsible for countless human rights violations; the prosecutor Iván Velásquez, who spearheaded the resulting investigations; and the journalist Ricardo Calderón of the newspaper *Semana*. Along the way, McFarland references numerous other figures. In the aftermath of the drug kingpin Pablo Escobar's downfall, paramilitaries gained increasing influence, benefiting from their association with those opposed to leftist guerrillas. From the opening section to the last pages, the author vividly recounts the violence paramilitaries unleashed upon the Colombian people, as with the murder, rape, and torture of civilian peasants in the 1997 Massacre of El Aro.

All of this is set against the backdrop of the rise of Álvaro Uribe, who as governor of Antioquia and later president further institutionalized the use of paramilitaries such as the Convivirs (Cooperativas de Vigilancia y Seguridad Privada) to destroy the guerrillas. McFarland details how Velásquez and the Cuerpo Técnico de Investigación (Technical Investigation Team, CTI) confirmed links between the military and the Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá (Peasant Self-Defense Forces of Córdoba and Urabá, ACCU). Those investigations were sabotaged, allowing the ACCU to join fellow groups and form the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, AUC). Calderón's reporting at the beginning of the new millennium brought these associations to light; his interviews also highlight fascinating schisms among paramilitaries over their ideology, their drug running, and more. Building upon Velásquez's work, Calderón's articles, and her own interviews, McFarland shows how paramilitary groups through voter intimidation and fundraising influenced the elections of like-minded figures throughout the country.

The book meticulously details the judicial back-and-forth, the political wrangling, and the high stakes surrounding the demobilization schemes and public allegations over Uribe's and his brother's direct involvement with the paramilitaries. Although readers might be familiar with some notable moments, McFarland brings together multiple strands, previously reported individually, to illuminate how the paramilitaries intervened in the nation's constitutional and judicial crises. The author should be commended for successfully compiling the numerous hints from the 1990s into the 2000s about the official overlap between the official Colombian Right and the paramilitaries. McFarland never shies away from noting how the state's resources or the US government's assistance amplified the paramilitaries' reach and permeated civil society. One day, scholars may dig deeper into these and other factors driving the paramilitaries and their allies, weighing the roles played by drug money, antiguerrilla hostility, and ideological affinities. Until then, McFarland's work will be the most reliable scholarship.

Nina Lakhani's *Who Killed Berta Cáceres?* will resonate with many readers, including those seeking a straightforward introduction to the contemporary Right in Latin America. Among the works surveyed here, this one touches most directly on the recent past. The March 2016 murder of the Honduran environmental and Indigenous rights activist Berta Cáceres must be understood alongside the Right's other recent manifestations across the region, such as the election of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, the Chilean Right's opposition to the 2019 *estallido social*, and the 2019 right-wing coup and subsequent repression in Bolivia. Lakhani provides a rigorous examination and contextualization of Cáceres's murder. Moreover, the text has a narrative structure that makes it accessible for the classroom and for those seeking a readable, relatively quick introduction to this topic.

The book is at its best when tracing the long trajectory in Honduras of neoliberal disaster capitalism, popularly depicted in Naomi Klein's *The Shock Doctrine* and examined in various Latin Americanist works.¹¹ Although other works have examined Cáceres's murder in the context of her resistance to the Agua Zarca hydroelectric dam project, Lakhani reconstructs a more complete portrait of the Honduran activist. Her mother's family was exiled and persecuted by the dictator Tiburcio Carías. Later her mother supported, and her brother joined, leftist guerrillas against US-backed right-wing regimes throughout Central America. Berta grew up helping her mother with pregnant women in rural areas and refugee camps during the 1980s before herself joining El Salvador's Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional. The 1994 Zapatista uprising in Mexico inspired her to found the Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas de Honduras (Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras, COPINH) and eventually work with the Lenca in Río Blanco. Over the following two decades, Cáceres criticized neoliberal development projects, from the Free Trade Area of the Americas to the Plan Puebla Panamá, that used the language of the free market and modernization to appropriate the lands held by Indigenous communities.

The people behind these neoliberal machinations were also products of that history. The Honduran industrialists and landowners who sought to acquire Indigenous people's lands had been galvanized in part by the Cold War. All the while, the nation's economic elites utilized their military and police forces, many subsidized or trained with the US government's counterinsurgency resources during the 1980s, to intimidate rural communities and campesino families. Although the Cold War faded into the background for many observers, those behind the 2009 right-wing coup against President Manuel Zelaya utilized the same anticommunist, neoliberal ideology to suppress democratic protesters and impose their schemes to exploit the nation's energy resources, through mines and dams, on Indigenous people's lands. Just as Cáceres's history of activism would position her against the Agua Zarca dam project, the dam company Desarrollos Energéticos SA (DESA) was led by and employed people trained in counterinsurgency at the US School of the Americas or at the Centro Regional de Entrenamiento Militar in Honduras. These same figures had long persecuted activists like Cáceres, and some of them were directly responsible for her murder. As Lakhani concludes, the subsequent investigation and trial failed to stem the systemic injustice underlying the case. Dozens of Indigenous and environmental activists have been killed, and even more silenced and intimidated, by Honduran elites, their state, and their allies.

One limitation of Lakhani's text is its examination of the multiple institutions behind Agua Zarca and similar projects. Behind DESA were the nation's energy company, officials throughout the government, various holding companies, and others whom Lakhani highlights. Still, there is more to be uncovered about entities officially residing inside and outside Honduras who sought to profit off the project. Lakhani does note the role of the Obama administration and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in eventually blessing the 2009 coup, but the author warns that "the opaque way of doing government in Honduras makes tracing concessions and contracts hugely challenging" (92). In fact, the task of uncovering all the hands through which World Bank loans for the project passed becomes harder with time. Even if we may never definitively know how many transnational corporations and financial institutions backed the Agua Zarca project or turned a blind eye to DESA's activities, Lakhani has produced a revelatory work despite such hurdles.

Fortunately, readers interested in those transnational connections are able to turn to the other four works surveyed here, beginning with Dawn Paley and Simon Granovsky-Larsen's *Organized Violence*. The editors address Lakhani's case study, among others, to explore how states and corporations deploy the language of development while blaming

¹¹ Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007).

Indigenous and impoverished communities that refuse to relinquish their lands or resources. The volume argues that our very view of “organized violence” must broaden to consider how, rather than focusing merely on the people committing violence, contemporary capitalism demands the accumulation of resources and so necessitates violence against dissenters. Refining this definition of *organized violence* allows the contributors to reconsider how state institutions, nonstate armed groups, and those in between share a similar goal underneath the umbrella of neoliberal capitalism. Thus, all chapters seek to unveil how transnational elites have cloaked themselves in the post-Cold War’s expansionist language and ideology that justify unfettered dispossession and violent repression.

The individual contributions all center on the book’s thesis about organized violence. The first half, on Central and South America, opens with Mary Finley-Brook’s survey of extreme energy injustice, in which the process of accumulation and extraction disproportionately affects impoverished and Indigenous communities, and Tyler Shipley’s chapter on Honduras, both following how transnational capital’s recent expansions have gone hand in hand with systemic violence. These are marvelous companions to Lakhani’s work, as Finley-Brook notes how such violence can be found throughout Latin America, while Shipley identifies similar projects throughout Honduras. Likewise, Luis Solano’s chapter outlines the transnational links behind Tahoe Resources, the Canadian-US mining corporation behind the Escobal mining concession in San Rafael Las Flores in Santa Rosa, Guatemala.¹² This case study demonstrates the insights to be gained from uncovering the myriad groups behind entities such as Tahoe Resources. Solano documents the company’s contracting of military-industrial firms with experience in the so-called War on Terror, its hiring of Israeli security firms, and its recruiting of Guatemalan elites. The racist language that Tahoe’s security chief used when ordering his forces to fire upon peaceful protesters reveals much about the company’s view of local populations. Turning to Paraguay, Arturo Ezquerro-Cañete finds that the transnational agribusiness capital behind agro-extractive projects, as with soybeans, has dispossessed campesinos of their lands while using the state to criminalize any grassroots opposition to genetically modified crops, pesticides, and agrochemical-related illnesses. Together, Paula Balduino de Melo and Rosalvina Otálora Cortés’s chapters could be perfect accompaniments to McFarland’s book in that they delve into the violence along Colombia’s Pacific coast and mining sector and also examine Afro-Colombian women’s resistance against transnational corporations’ involvement in that violence.

The second half zooms in on Mexico, unsurprising in light of President Felipe Calderón’s war on drugs, which escalated the stakes among those seeking to extract the nation’s valuable resources. In their chapter, Guadalupe Correa-Cabrera and Carlos Daniel Gutiérrez-Mannix expand upon Correa-Cabrera’s work in *Los Zetas Inc.*¹³ In Tamaulipas, paramilitaries and organized crime groups have maneuvered in ways akin to transnational corporations, diversifying their revenue streams with oil and gas theft. Despite the government’s claims to the contrary, evidence continues to show that local, state, and federal forces sent to protect the resources and populace have made deals with those criminal elements, suppressing dissident and popular organizations through violence. Similarly, Ana Del Conde and Heriberto Paredes Coronel’s chapter locates the overlap of legal and illegal economies in Michoacán, where multiple criminal groups vie for influence over metal deposits and violence has devastated local communities. The authors’ discussion of the so-called self-defense groups La Familia Michoacana (Michoacán Family) and Los Caballeros Templarios (Knights Templar) is a fluid transition to Antonio Fuentes

¹² This is a translated summary of a report from the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA) and MiningWatch Canada.

¹³ Guadalupe Correa-Cabrera, *Los Zetas Inc.: Criminal Corporations, Energy, and Civil War in Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2017).

Díaz's chapter, which offers an overview of similar movements throughout Mexico, all in the shadow of neoliberal capitalism, organized crime, and increasing violence in the broader economic competition. With Michoacán still in sight, Patricia Alvarado Portillo's brief chapter examines how the city Lázaro Cárdenas has been a locus for the transnational movement of capital, corporations, and people under neoliberal capitalism that has seen the violence typical of state-backed forces and organized crime. Michelle Arroyo Fonseca and Jorge Rebolledo Flores turn the reader's focus to Veracruz, comparing the pursuit of resources and the escalating violence unleashed by drug-trafficking organizations and local elites. The volume's chapters wrap up with the familiar but ever striking reminder of the role of mass incarceration by Elva F. Orozco Mendoza.

Among the works in this review, Benjamin A. Cowan's *Moral Majorities across the Americas* has received the most plaudits for laying out the transnational worldviews and international connections of Brazil's Religious Right, and rightfully so. Quite prescient considering Bolsonaro's continued popularity, Cowan's text is a necessary intervention in a historiography that long overlooked nonstate right-wing forces of the Cold War era. Cowan begins by recapturing the conservative legacies of Dom Geraldo Proença Sigaud, Dom Antônio de Castro Mayer, and Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira, the latter the founder of the Sociedade Brasileira de Defesa da Tradição, Família e Propriedade (Brazilian Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property, TFP). Together, they denounced Vatican II for its concessions to democracy and modernity and for lending fuel to movements for social justice. As these Catholic leaders turned to ideological allies in Rome and elsewhere, US-based Catholics admired Mayer and Sigaud for their traditionalist stances. Simultaneously, evangelical Protestants championed a remoralization of the nation against women's liberation, drugs, homosexuality, and other alleged sins, as pastors and propagandists borrowed from Billy Graham and other US-based religious figures. Throughout, the military regime's various intelligence organizations shared similar views of Vatican II's supposedly subversive message and in the 1980s offered moral and financial support. In contrast, the small evangelical Left was confined to serving those marginalized by the evangelical Right's moralism and was lumped by government officials into a grand subversive conspiracy.

The evangelical Right seized upon multiple opportunities to collaborate with ideological allies across the globe in a shared crusade against modernity. Throughout the 1980s, Brazilian evangelicals admired televangelists Jimmy Swaggart, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and more. This went far beyond interviews and publications. The TFP established chapters in the United States and throughout the world, TFP members allied themselves with the World Anti-Communist League (WACL), and US-based conservative activist Paul Weyrich's International Policy Forum allied with the TFP. Cowan deftly analyzes how the Religious Right circumvented internal fractiousness by using antimodernism as their ideological glue. This transnational Religious Right mourned a youth, an era, and a world divested of supernatural divinity. By pushing back against progressive Christianity and all the supposed sins of the twentieth century, these organizations together sought to restore hierarchical Christianity and moral virtue.

Though a masterful work, *Moral Majorities* leaves plenty of avenues for future research on the hemispheric and global Rights. Numerous people, organizations, and events await deeper research. Some might even extend Cowan's perspective deeper into the past. Cowan briefly notes that Dom José Maurício da Rocha, whose intellectual influence radiates throughout the resulting right-wing coalition, supported the fascist Integralists of the 1930s and that Sigaud's allies circulated anti-Semitic works. However, Cowan simply attributes these sympathies to these archconservatives' admiration of a mythical medieval era and speeds along to the 1960s. Yet this raises important questions about the role of fascism and anti-Semitism within these networks. Building on Cowan's global analysis, future scholars might assess the influence of António de Oliveira Salazar's Portuguese regime or of decolonization on the Right. Scholars can learn much from Cowan's superb

methodology. Alongside unprecedented research in Brazil-based collections, the author consulted relevant works at the Library of Congress, Princeton, and the University of Oregon. From Jesse Helms to Billy James Hargis, papers for the US-based conservatives who appear in the text have become only more accessible in recent years.

Unfairly overlooked due to its wide scope, Kyle Burke's *Revolutionaries for the Right* is a perfect companion to *Moral Majorities*. Whereas Cowan traces transnational links on the Religious Right, Burke uncovers ties among right-wing paramilitary forces across the globe during the Cold War. Initially, Latin Americanists might be a bit overwhelmed with a text that follows US-based conservatives Marvin Liebman, William F. Buckley, Clarence Manion, John Singlaub, and more, yet these activists spent the better part of half a century building what Burke terms an anticommunist international, a global coalition capable of overturning communist influence in regions where they feared official governments and nation-states refused to intervene. The first chapter introduces multiple right-wing figures and organizations, from Liebman's Committee of One Million and the Asian Peoples' Anti-Communist League to the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations and Mexican anticommunist Jorge Prieto Laurens. What will especially interest readers is how, in the 1950s, these various groups failed to cohesively unite, exemplified by the fleeting international attention given to Prieto Laurens's 1954 anticommunist conference or the World Anti-Communist Congress for Liberation and Freedom. Instead, it would be the Cuban Revolution, the Vietnam War, and decolonization that sparked bonds that momentarily overcame the local disputes and endemic anti-Semitism constantly fracturing these ideologically like-minded groups. Including Cuban exiles and supporters of Moïse Tshombe in Katanga, this transnational collaboration led into the WACL, the American Council for World Freedom, Raimundo Guerrero and the Federación Mexicana Anticomunista (Mexican Anti-Communist Federation, FEMACO), and the Confederación Anticomunista Latinoamericana (Latin American Anti-Communist Confederation, CAL). These entities championed South American military regimes, Central American death squads, and Operation Condor. The book's second half tends to focus on Singlaub's international adventurism, whether in his work with the staff of *Soldier of Fortune* magazine or lobbying wealthy elites for financial assistance. Joined by Larry McDonald and Theodore Shackley, these US-based conservatives leveraged their respective reputations and organizations to assist right-wing paramilitaries anywhere they felt the US government was failing to stave off communism's advance. They were especially involved in facilitating private military support to Contra guerrillas against Nicaragua's Sandinista government, to Guatemala's Movimiento de Liberación Nacional, and to El Salvador's death squads. They also intervened in conflicts in Angola, Afghanistan, Laos, and Cambodia.

This is a solid, wide-ranging work. Burke meticulously combed through numerous primary and secondary sources. As with Cowan's text, readers could certainly use *Revolutionaries for the Right* as a blueprint for future research. Where most scholarship in Latin American Cold War studies highlights how the rise of Fidel Castro spurred anticommunist activists in the Western Hemisphere, Burke stresses that the Cuban Revolution intertwined with decolonization in Africa to propel paramilitary organizations throughout the world, offering a guiding point for scholars to dig deeper. Likewise, Burke's study also speaks to the burgeoning interest in right-wing links between Latin America and Asia, with recent research identifying how conservative ideologies brought together anticommunists across the Pacific.¹⁴ Further scholarship could borrow from Burke's

¹⁴ See Mónica Naymich López Macedonio, "Historia de una colaboración anticomunista transnacional: Los Tecos de la Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara y el gobierno de Chiang Kai-Shek a principios de los años setenta," *Revista Contemporánea* 1, no. 1 (2010): 133–158; Ignacio Araujo and Ernesto Bohoslavsky, "The Circuits of Anti-Communist Repression between Asia and Latin America during the Second Cold War: Paraguay and the World Anti-Communist League," *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe* 31, no. 1 (2020): 105–125.

methodology. Obviously, others could follow Burke by consulting the myriad materials on US right-wing activists at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, but similar collections can be found throughout the United States. For instance, historians might use documents of the John Birch Society housed at Brown University, the records of Liberty Lobby at the University of Oregon, and the various documentation from the TFP, FEMACO, and dictators' lobbyists that can be found at the University of Kansas. Thanks to substantial progress in declassifying sensitive files in London, others might interrogate not simply the British government's views but also its relationships with Latin American right-wing organizations, another subfield receiving growing interest.¹⁵ Although Burke offers a decent panorama of leading outlets, readers might be interested in further exploring how the conservative grass roots responded to these matters, for Latin America played a key role in both elites and nonelites' worldviews. Furthermore, Burke repeatedly stresses how frequently Latin American anticommunists complained that the US government failed to lead the global struggle against communism, certainly a topic meriting further consideration.

Finally, Francesca Lessa's *The Condor Trials* offers a stellar two-part examination of Operation Condor, including both the origins and aftermath of this campaign of terror. Scholars have focused primarily on the mid- to late 1970s, when Operation Condor was the clandestine collaboration between South American military regimes to eliminate the members' supposed communist threats which included labor organizers, social activists, and more. Whereas John Dinges and others made adept use of interviews and the available documentary record to reconstruct Operation Condor's general structure, Lessa benefits from a broader swath of declassified internal reports to pinpoint key shifts and episodes previously unknown.¹⁶ Lessa is able to confirm crucial arguments made by others concerning the rise of this network, such as the role of National Security Doctrine, Brazil's fear of a conglomeration of leftist radicals in the late 1960s, and the impact of the 1973 Chilean coup. More originally, she divides Operation Condor's chronology into five distinct phases. As the author contends, the Condor System in the late 1970s was merely one phase in a broader continuum of transnational repression, a theoretical framework that complements well J. Patrice McSherry's assessment of these military regimes' parallel state designed to eliminate those designated as threats to their members' security.¹⁷ The ad hoc collaborations of the period between 1969 and the mid-1970s evolved in the late 1970s into the coordinated, formal system of intelligence sharing, torture, and disappearing of victims officially termed Operation Condor. Though others have suggested the importance of these foundations, Lessa nails down the chronological shifts.

Lessa intersperses the first half's examination of Operation Condor with stories of its victims. This prepares the reader for the book's second half, in which Lessa recounts the transnational efforts that brought to justice some of those who committed and enabled these right-wing regimes' brutal violations of human rights. Extending the narrative in this way reminds the reader that right-wing atrocities during the Cold War continue to reverberate throughout the Western Hemisphere and beyond. This history of transnational justice dovetails with Lakhani's *longue durée* of Honduran neoliberalism

¹⁵ See Grace Livingstone, *Britain and the Dictatorships of Argentina and Chile, 1973–82: Foreign Policy, Corporations and Social Movements* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); Kevin John McEvoy, "Before the Rubble: Britain's Secret Propaganda Offensive in Chile (1960–1973)," *Contemporary British History* 35, no. 4 (2021): 597–619; Aaron Coy Moulton, "'We Are Meddling': Anti-Colonialism and the British Cold War against the Guatemalan Revolution, 1944–1954," *International History Review* 44, no. 5 (2021): 1108–1126.

¹⁶ John Dinges, *The Condor Years: How Pinochet and His Allies Brought Terrorism to Three Continents* (New York: New Press, 2004).

¹⁷ J. Patrice McSherry, *Predatory States: Operation Condor and Covert War in Latin America* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

and Cowan's note about the failure of a Brazilian evangelical Left to push back against the Religious Right.

In addition to showing how Latin America's Rights opposed the pursuit of modernity, studies must also grapple with the subsequent ripples and reverberations unleashed by these reactionary crusades, and these works could serve as a suitable springboard, whether on climate and energy catastrophes or migrant and refugee crises. These methodologies might contribute to an examination of recent events in Venezuela, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, or elsewhere. Additionally, the sources, tools, and more employed here could be redirected to interrogate the Rights' pre-Cold War predecessors, to measure the impact of US and extrahemispheric influences, and to follow the legacies of transnational corporations and other nonstate conservative forces. All these subjects certainly deserve far more attention, as demonstrated in the books reviewed here.

Aaron Coy Moulton is associate professor in Latin American History at Stephen F. Austin State University. Multiple institutions have supported his work on right-wing transnational networks, his research appearing in various outlets, including the *Journal of Latin American Studies* and *Cold War History*. His current project, *Caribbean Blood Pacts: The Guatemalan Revolution and the Origins of the Caribbean Basin's Cold War, 1944–1954*, reveals how Guatemalan exiles, Caribbean Basin dictators, transnational corporations, and British imperialism set the foundations for what became the US government's infamous coup.