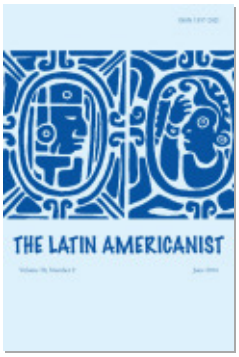
Religion and State Formation in Postrevolutionary Mexico by Ben Fallaw (review)



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en sus empresas y otro en la política con resultados positivos en sendas actividades.

Si bien politólogos como Peter H. Smith abordaron el tema de las elites y su reclutamiento en México a lo largo del siglo XX, su afirmación de que en este país se habían mantenido separadas las elites políticas de las económicas es refutada por el libro de Gómez Estrada. Por su parte, Roderic Ai Camp ha explorado el tema de las elites políticas mexicanas y su rotación durante el siglo XX, pero el grueso de su trabajo se centra en las tres últimas décadas de la centuria. Varios historiadores han usado la teoría de las elites para explicar el devenir de grupos de políticos y hombres de negocios en México. No obstante, no se han centrado en la historia de cómo estos grupos de poder se han interrelacionado y evolucionado. Así, nos encontramos frente a una obra que contribuye a explicar la consolidación del poder de los sonorenses desde la perspectiva de la teoría de las elites y las camarillas, un camino novedoso, que no había sido utilizado para explicar el devenir histórico de los políticos mexicanos en las décadas de 1920 y 1930. La historia que nos presenta *Lealtades divididas,* teje muy adecuadamente la vasta información que la nutre, aunque en ocasiones el lector es arrollado por la cantidad de datos que se presentan y el autor pareciera perder la brújula que lo debía guiar para explicar el devenir de la camarilla estudiada. En cualquier caso, se trata de un libro de historia que interesa a todo aquel que dese profundizar en el poder y las prácticas políticas en México durante el siglo XX.

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Religion and State Formation in Postrevolutionary Mexico. By Ben Fallaw. Durham: Duke UP, 2013, p. 360, $25.95.

Ben Fallaw's extraordinary new book, *Religion and State Formation in Postrevolutionary Mexico*, ostensibly explains religious violence in four Mexican states: Campeche, Hidalgo, Guerrero, and Guanajuato. In the process, however, Fallaw tells us much more. Challenging a number of widely held assumptions about this period, he describes convincingly how and why the revolutionary project failed in the countryside. Fallaw's guiding principle is that microhistory matters. Local factors including individual personalities, topography, events both recent and in the distant past, the relative strength of various institutions, and class, gender, ethnic, and generational differences, all figure. The remarkable thing about this book, however, is that it manages to keep hold of these local variables without losing sight of explaining something broader about the country as a whole.

Religion and State Formation explains how, during the Segunda (the second wave of postrevolutionary religious violence erupting during the 1930s) each side's worst assumptions about the other were reinforced.

For revolutionaries, "fanatical" Catholics lacked the sense to accept what was good for them: land and education. Instead, they "blindly" followed parasitic priests locked in a malevolent alliance with greedy landowners, who stopped at nothing to protect their wealth, which they of course possessed only through the exploitation of their own ignorant, impoverished followers. On the other hand, Catholics saw federal schools as dens of immorality explicitly designed to turn their children away from God. Ejidal grants might provide land, but often as not without the water, credit, or seed to make it profitable, and at the expense of one's freedom. Government officials tied to the state were in the best cases corruptible, and in the worst cases, petty tyrants who withdrew from the common people their few pleasures: canceling holidays, outlawing drink, and punishing ordinary acts like ringing the church bells. In reality, as Fallaw shows, true iconoclasts were rare, as were priests who explicitly endorsed violence, but the existence of both extremes fueled stereotypes on both sides of the conflict. Once a group of individuals accepted one of these opposing views, they rarely switched loyalties, even when external circumstances changed.

Recent works on this period have made steady gains on incorporating gender and ethnicity into the analysis. Fallaw does an especially good job at teasing out notoriously complex intersections between class, gender, ethnicity, generation, and locale. For example, one might expect mestizo landlords to perpetuate forced labor drafts, but Fallaw's careful research uncovered alliances between these and Nahua elders, splitting a Nahua community's allegiance along generational lines. The relationship between gender and religiosity is particularly sticky. Most contemporary observers agreed that women were more likely than men to be Catholic and conservative, but often empirical evidence is lacking. Fallaw picks apart the ways both the institutional church and its many lay counterparts were gendered, which often made all the difference to the outcome for revolutionary reformers.

Finally, *Religion and State Formation* adds to Fallaw's already substantial contribution to our understanding of revolutionary politics. This book is particularly good at exposing the sometimes counterintuitive power of the *voto morado*, or Catholic vote, on especially gubernatorial elections. We are given yet more evidence of the fragility of the revolutionary state and the relative unpopularity of its social project, but we also see a surprising level of real democratic power, exercised from below. Ironically, this power frequently led to the hardening of local and regional cacigazgos, many of which were startlingly self-contradictory. Fallaw gives numerous examples of revolutionary caciques who themselves represented the greatest obstacle to the success of the revolutionary project in areas under their control, but who could hardly do otherwise and expect to win elections.

Reading this book, I found myself repeatedly frustrated and saddened as revolutionaries squandered opportunities to enact lasting and desperately needed changes by picking the wrong battles (quemasantos, closing

down popular schools, stealing images from their family altars), or picking the wrong agents of change (corrupt, antagonistic, and/or sexually predatory individuals). As institutions, the church and state in this period were strikingly similar: they were both weak, both conciliatory, and both focused on winning over the long term. They both wanted stability, peace, and dominance. Outnumbered zealots on both sides fueled the worst prejudices of the other; isolated local events bloomed into nationalized hysteria, which in turn further entrenched opponents who failed to realize either their similarities or their many shared objectives. As a result, the worst of both sides too often triumphed, and Mexico's opportunity for meaningful change was lost. A bittersweet story, really, of the long, slow road to democracy, purchased at the expense of equity for the campo.

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From Enron to Evo: Pipeline Politics, Global Environmentalism, and Indigenous Rights in Bolivia **by Derrick Hindery (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2013, p. 303, $55).**

From Enron to Evo examines how indigenous populations navigate consultation and consent in development and land conservation debates related to extractive industries. The book draws on extensive ethnographic research, including interviews, participant observation, and document analysis during several trips to Bolivia (dissertation research between 1999–2000, and shorter trips between 2002–2011). Hindery examines agreements between the Bolivian state and multinationals Enron and Shell in the 1990s, and more recent state-led models of extraction to explore the shifting contexts of indigenous mobilization, or the "nexus of Indigenous politics, 'development,' and environment" (17).

Rooted in a political ecology framework, *From Enron to Evo* critically evaluates the movement from the neoliberalization of Bolivia's extractive industries, to Bolivian forms of 'state capitalism' through the case of the Cuiabá natural gas pipeline. The book constructs a long and detailed history, including interventions by the World Bank, which facilitated financial backing for pipeline construction from private industries, including Enron and Shell. Hindery notes the Bank's own acknowledgement of the contradictions produced by its support of a project that would undermine the institution's aims to reduce poverty in the country. With preliminary approval granted in 1998, the pipeline would traverse sensitive lowland ecosystems, prompting indigenous peoples and international conservation organizations to protest continued construction efforts.

Hindery argues that international attention to the pipeline project, while significant in detailing its potential impacts, also resulted in a model of 'fortress-conservation.' Indigenous populations were excluded from