

learning process. The PCV was not included in this systemic pact, which led to a guerrilla movement in the 1960s supported by Cuba.

During his second term in office, this time as democratically elected president, he initiated the emancipation from a patronage society with procedures of modern democracy, established a changed role of the oil industry and started an agrarian reform. In foreign policy he promoted the so-called Betancourt Doctrine: only democratically elected presidents should be recognised by other governments. Carrera Damas distinguishes between two main phases in Betancourt's role in history. The first consisted in a sustained effort as an individual, ideologue and politician. The second, from 1959 to 1964, was dominated by the tasks of reinstallation, consolidation and preservation of modern democracy. His assessment is positive: 'He was the founding father of one of the most successful and long-lived modern democracies, along with India and Japan, that emerged from the flames of the Second World War' (p. 326).

Readers looking for a biography should consult other books: Manuel Caballero's *Rómulo Betancourt* (1979), Robert J. Alexander's *Rómulo Betancourt and the Transformation of Venezuela* (1982), the dissertation by Herbert Koenke, *Person and Situational Components of Political Leadership: A Case Study of Romulo Betancourt* (1983), or the writings of Arturo Sosa. Just like the Spanish version of 2013, the translation does not contain a bibliography, a chronology or an index.

Betancourt had a clear vision about his position in history. It took this reviewer several weeks when writing his PhD about parties in Venezuela until he could finally achieve an interview with him in Caracas in 1981. During the conversation, Betancourt highlighted the national and regional sources of Acción Democrática. He even compared the activities of the Socialist International in Central America, which became known after the 'Conference in Caracas' 1976 between European and Latin American leaders, to the Communist International!

The book concentrates on the specific role of Betancourt in the genesis of modern democracy in Venezuela until 1970. During his government corruption cases were rare and he refused to be a candidate for president in the 1970s. These lessons are still relevant for Venezuela. Not only Venezuelan historians like Caballero and Carrera Damas consider Betancourt the country's most important politician in the twentieth century. Mexican historian Enrique Krauze also sees him that way. Why were politicians not able to modernise the Pacto de Punto Fijo? Why did forms of personalisation and authoritarian government reappear in Venezuela? These burning issues are not the subject of this book by Carrera Damas. But the path he describes, from Betancourt's revolutionary beginnings to the moderate statesman at the end, would certainly be helpful for the future of the polarised country.

Nikolaus Werz

University of Rostock, Rostock, Germany

Portillo, Suyapa G. (2020) *Roots of Resistance: A Story of Gender, Race, and Labor on the North Coast of Honduras*, University of Texas Press (Austin, TX), xxxiv + 385 pp. \$55.00 hbk.

This book, more than any other recent publication about Honduran history, not only deeply contextualises the social and political development of Honduras after the 2009 coup, it simultaneously offers deep historical perspective for characterising the outcome of the recent November 2021 general elections. Honduras's first woman president is the head of a left-leaning electoral coalition consisting mostly of post-coup parties and leaders who defeated traditional parties and is committed to a transformational overhauling of decades of traditional and right-wing clientelist politics, a culture of economic corruption and *machista* ostracism of marginalised gender orientations.

The book is clearly written, and very readable for a range of audiences. One target audience, mostly academic, is concerned with a range of interdisciplinary literatures: labour history, social movements, gender, and complicated and multi-layered relationships between the recent past and present through varied concepts of memory, in Latin America and the Caribbean and elsewhere.

Another audience for this book, potentially a much broader one, is the non-specialist one interested in the origins of the coup in Honduras in 2009, and the current situation there, given the international coverage in the media and social media during the last few years and during the November 2021 elections. A particular audience is the general one in Latin America and the Caribbean that is interested

Book Reviews

in the history of radical movements in Central America and their current status vis-à-vis the Left in the region.

The book's title, its preface and introduction, and especially chapters 6 and 7, entitled 'La Huelga del 1954: Labor Organizing in the Banana Labor Camps' and 'Contemporary Movement Leaders Reflect on the Legacy of the 1954 Strike', neatly capture the author's main purpose and the book's major arguments: to connect, characterise and ground the resistance and social movements in Honduras after the coup of 2009 in the roots, character and legacies of the 1954 banana strike and its historiography and generational memories, even when the book's reach extends to the Honduran past of the 1890s, especially focusing on the country's north coast and its banana economy.

More specifically, the author argues that the 1954

strike was transformative for workers and brought national attention to their issues and lives on the north coast. Ultimately, the strike dramatically challenged the export economy and resulted in improvements for workers. It brought respect from a previously recalcitrant Honduran government that was reluctant to challenge foreign domination, and it generated momentum for the labor movement and the continuation of liberal reforms. More importantly, the banana-worker strike and the general strike that followed allowed working-class Hondurans to envision a broader struggle, awakening a sense of possibility and change; the emergence of a radical politics among banana workers created opportunities for all working-class people. Among other workers, the strike movement renewed a commitment to leftist principles and ideals that had long been suppressed. (p. 3)

Moreover, today,

the working class in the banana fincas has transmitted the memory of the 1954 strike by modelling the leftists' organizing processes, charting the formation of the movement for their children and grandchildren in stories and sometimes in nonverbal ways. The memories are shared in patronas' kitchens, in the bajos de los barracones (the areas underneath the barracks' stilts), in the workplace, and by workers with sons and daughters as they enter the workforce in the fincas or the packinghouses. In union halls today, the memory is passed down with pride to demonstrate resilience, survival, and triumph over injustice. The strike is also invoked with some caution to convey the power of the company, the reach of US foreign intervention, and the overzealous Honduran state, which protects the company more than workers. These memories are passed down among union members, their families, their communities, and many others, constructing a collective value and belief in justice for workers. Memories, passed down in secrets and silences, have been important to historicize the movement, develop consciousness and solidify their identity as radicals, organizers, and movement builders. The resistance movement of today is looking back to past organizing efforts as sources of inspiration and as proof that were valiant resisters in their past, despite repression. (p. 228)

This is a fascinating and bold argument on its own, but also because it engages what might be termed 'banana republic' historiography and general narratives about the so-called 'classic' banana republic in ways never seriously done, particularly in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5, which mostly cover the period between 1944 and 1957. Given the publicity associated with the 2009 coup, and its continuing legacy today in Honduras and far beyond, the book's accomplishment is superbly relevant to Honduran scholarship and contemporary debates beyond it, not only to a very broad academic audience in the United States and beyond, but for an educated general public as well. In fact, it freshly links Honduran history to the present in ways that virtually no other history book about Honduras has done.

Finally, more specifically, the book engages with literatures on gender and race in the historical context in the Caribbean world of agro-export cultivation and production by using oral histories and often nuanced reading of the meagre archival record on these matters for the period focused on the 1940s to late 1950s, the narrative illustrated with wonderful photos of workers and *patronas* never

before seen. This is a major and unique contribution to modern Honduran and Central American historiography.

D. Euraque
Trinity College, USA

Stanfield-Mazzi, Maya (2021) *Clothing the New World Church: Liturgical Textiles of Spanish America, 1520–1820*, University of Notre-Dame Press (Notre-Dame), xvii + 432 pp, £40.00 hbk.

The sixteenth-century Iberian conquest of the Meso-American ‘New World’ coincided with the Council of Trent’s strong impulse to define boundaries and to extend standards in liturgical practice (*decencia* or ‘decency’). The thrust of missionary Catholicism into the Hispanic world resulted in remarkable and enduring forms of syncretic artisanal accomplishment in the production and modification of pre-Hispanic textiles and ritual materials to the new Catholic liturgy. Maya Stanfield-Mazzi’s *Clothing the New World Church* is an extensive study of the indigenous practices of artisanal pre-Hispanic woollen, feather, as well as lowly cotton work in response to colonial imperatives that in many cases show the adaptation of pre-Hispanic and pre-colonial artisanal and artistic form not just to Hispanic Catholicism but to the global sphere of Spanish Empire.

Iberian Catholicism was highly attentive to the hierarchy of materials in liturgical (‘order of service’) and ecclesiastical usages. Liturgical fabrics could convey transcendent qualities, including iridescence, luminosity, passion (i.e. emotional provocation): uplifting symbols of life and resurrection. Their production and display fortified new Christian communities.

In five chapters, Stanfield-Mazzi sets out the ways in which indigenous working of silk, woollen, feather and cotton and lace arts brought indigenous practice into the colonial space, and were in turn displaced or modified by global currents unleashed by European exchange. The book also brings into focus the craftspeople: ‘oficiales’ (skilled indigenous workers who did not pay tribute) and craftswomen – illiterate and thus anonymous. Their descendants continue to work in these crafts, including silk production, weaving, embroidery, lace and fabric-dyeing in contemporary South and Central America.

The ‘most decent’ material for liturgical surfaces was silk, a pan-Eurasian product spun from silk-worm cocoons. Silk’s rareness, its shininess and its capacity for iridescence pointed at transcendence. Much sought after by the new churches of the Hispanic world, silk came to the New World through imports but also the introduction c. 1550 of silkworm-farming and the application of indigenous dyes, including the brilliant cochineal reds of the Alta Mixteca. But the flowering of Mexican silk-production was brief, and sharply dropped off following the appearance of low-cost Chinese silk in the 1580s together with a Tridentine suspicion of indigenous ‘idolatry’, which was alleged in indigenous presentation in these beautiful forms. ‘Global silk’ together with Tridentine ideology proved too strong for a frail emergent transplant.

The second chapter assesses embroidery, a craft that brought the colour and luminescence of stained glass into New World liturgical fabrics. Indigenous embroidery adapted to Tridentine suspicions by emphasising emblematic designs over narrative ones. The great craft of indigenous embroiderers could not however earn them more than a ‘second class position’: they could never become masters; Iberian guild restrictions bit hard into indigenous crafts practices.

The highly original third chapter demonstrates the productive contact of indigenous feather work and Tridentine Catholicism. Pre-contact feather work was highly advanced by 1520: Aztec iconography attests to this. It dazzled the conquistadors, combining New World bird plumage including that of the humming bird (a genus unknown in Europe) to produce iridescent impact. Stanfield-Mazzi shows that this fascination with Mexican feather work resulted in the export, from New Spain’s bishoprics, of feathered mitres – bishops’ hats – to Habsburg Europe. The towering Tridentine reformer Carlo Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan (1564–1584), wore a Michoacán feather mitre: a sign of a global Catholic community and a shining object of transcendence.

Chapters 4 and 5 address Inka transfers of pre-Hispanic craft practices into Catholic liturgical imaginary. Inka woollen capes (*q’umpa*), worn by elites and prohibited to commoners by pre-Hispanic