

## Reviews

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*The Blind Man and the Loon: The Story of a Tale.* By Craig Mishler. Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2013. Pp. vii + 246, list of illustrations, foreword, preface, acknowledgements, introduction, conclusion, afterward, appendices, notes, references, index.

The result of forty years of research, Craig Mishler's *The Blind Man and the Loon* is a significant example of what twenty-first-century folklorists do. Mishler's text is an auto-ethnography—a work in which Mishler acknowledges his role as a “curator, biographer, interpreter, and friend” of the story as well as those tellers whose continual reiterations span across the subarctic from Alaska and Northwest Canada to Labrador and Greenland (xx). The narrative, in variation, spans eight regional groups or “oicotypes”, “moving fluidly across the continents of North America and Greenland like gigantic herds of caribou” (xxv). Mishler gives ample evidence of the “livingness” of the tale as it has emerged from time immemorial (when loons could speak with people) into popular media: films, compact discs, radio broadcasts, a ballet, a composition of chamber music, theatrical performances, and various literary adaptations (119-20). Mishler says that an estimated 33 million people have seen the abbreviated film adaptation/revision *The Loon's Necklace* (123). Mishler has also “discovered . . . eighty-six artistic works “based on the tale created by no less than fifty-four different artists”—paintings, etchings, sculptures, woodcuts, and masks (96). Contemporary Native storytellers Annie Blue (2009), James and Maggie Gilbert (1973), and Kenny

Thomas (2000) are included under Mishler's designation of artists.

The text includes Mishler's commendable discussion of the contributions and shortcomings of well-known folklorists Hinrick Rink, Emile Petitot, Franz Boas, and Knud Rasmussen, as well as criticisms of semi-literary variants by such notable authors as N. Scott Momaday. The ethics of collecting, translating, and redacting are brought into question. Mishler calls Native storytellers cartographers. He contends that “the story of the Blind Man and the Loon is a cognitive map of ancient Indian and Eskimo cultures, plotting systems of knowledge, emotion, belief, and value” (154). The tale is, in many respects, a cautionary tale. “Even when corrupted” by ignorant, unaware, unethical collectors who don't acknowledge their informants, edit out portions (the violence) of the tale, or mash versions together, the story remains “a vibrant, protean piece of culture, a life force,” says Mishler (155).

If anthropologists, ethnographers, folklorists, and mythographers can be called scientists, Mishler's text is dense with the stuff of scientific investigation: data, facts, maps, folkloric structures (the morphology and molecular structure of the narrative), and linguistic analyses (original native renditions set alongside translations). Drawing on an analogy from Darwin's study of groups of finches, Mishler groups various versions of the tale into eight “regional oicotypes.” However, it is in the chapters discussing the function and possible meanings of the story that Mishler's text takes flight and travels with the loons. The story is troubling in any Native variant (popular redactions tend to leave out the violent reci-

procity). A blind man (often a shaman) in a subsistence culture is tricked out of his kill for food by a selfish, cruel, and angry grandmother or wife. Often left to survive on his own, or with the help of a sister, loons take pity on the medicine man and restore his sight through their healing medicines or rituals. With his sight restored, the man returns to his people and wreaks vengeance on the woman who betrayed him.

The above oversimplification of the narrative runs counter to what Mishler advises for any retelling; but the essential disturbing details are there—void of the ethnopoetics typical of the telling by Maggie Gilbert rehearsed in Chapter Four. Of particular delight is Mishler’s reference to a YouTube site where Maggie’s voice can be heard speaking the story in Gwich’in with the sound of her clock chiming in the background (86). Maggie’s Gwich’in version of the tale includes the children of the medicine man who collude with their mother in the betrayal of their father. The shaman kills his wife and abandons his children because of their mutual treachery. The shaman’s relatives are not happy with his behavior; and Maggie believes the man’s behavior is too “harsh” (82, 88). Such a telling seems to demand commentary. The narrative has mythic import and, therefore, reveals a female as instigator of the disruption of a problematic yet harmonious cultural ethic. The creation of violent reciprocity ensues—a role given to a male of some spiritual stature. Is gender hostility foundational? That the tale has endured through time is referenced by Maggie’s continual punctuation of the story with “they say.” And “they say” is a typical reference to mythic/historical/

psychological truth.

Mishler is “convinced” that the story is told “by Natives everywhere in the North because it weaves together several basic themes or tenets of indigenous Native American and First Nations life” (137). Among these themes are: the necessity of sharing food in subsistence cultures, the significance of kinship cooperation, the conflicts that can dismantle families and cultures, the obligation of Native peoples to care for the disabled, and the sympathy that must endure if tribal peoples are to endure. Of particular interest to Mishler are the transformative elements in the tale: “the transformation of a blind man into one that sees, the transformation of a wicked woman into a narwhal” and the ritual transformation brought about by the power of the loons to heal. The killing of various animals—polar bear, moose, deer, buffalo—by the shaman might also indicate a passage into manhood, including the arrival of “sexual potency.” Dimensions of psychology, sociology, ethnography and social justice rise up in Mishler’s commentary. The durability of the tale can be attributed to the fact that “the tale offers practical and symbolic solutions to complex social problems such as the breakdown of the nuclear family and the destruction and loss of kinship rights and obligations” as well as decoding the formulation of the ethical demands of cultural identity formation (155). Additionally, the tale teaches while it entertains.

While Craig Mishler insists that folktales like the Blind Man and the Loon be “respected as the private property of the storyteller, of the community, or of the indigenous tribal group” from which they come, they are also models of human

communities' efforts to establish meaning that transcends boundaries and provides insight into collective archetypes that contribute to our cross-cultural humanity. Essential to such insight is the unveiling of violent reciprocity that appears to be deep-rooted in many mythologies—an insight continually discussed by René Girard in the multiple conferences dedicated to Girard's thought. Such violent reciprocity can be seen in numerous instances in contemporary political and religious practices. When Maggie Gilbert ends her story with, "That's what is said about it./And so that's it./That's the end of the story" and her husband adds, "Nothing more," could that be an indication of the discontinuity of cultural life-ways or the loss of cultural integrity brought about by violent reciprocity? The publication of *The Blind Man and the Loon* by the University of Nebraska Press is yet another contribution of the press to the world's body of knowledge. The text could be used in university classes within various disciplines: anthropology, sociology, psychology, and, of course, the humanities.

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*The Undiscovered Country: Text, Translation, and Modernity in the Work of Yanagita Kunio.* By Melek Ortabasi. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2014. Pp. xiv + 329, list of figures, acknowledgments, abbreviations, introduction, notes, bibliography, index.

Casting a long shadow in folklore studies in Japan, as well as numerous other countries, Yanagita Kunio (1875-1962) has often been the subject of historiographic studies in both Japanese and English. Yet, as Melek Ortabasi observes in the introduction to *The Undiscovered Country*, these accounts have tended to filter their understanding of Yanagita's works through certain reductive positions. Some, especially those that grew out of the Post-War scholarship on Yanagita in Japan, approach the study of his works primarily through his notoriety as an ideological maverick who "even during his lifetime...was regarded as an eccentric, domineering crackpot almost as often as he was labelled a brilliant, versatile iconoclast" (4). Others, by contrast, beginning with the English-language scholarship following Ronald Morse's 1974 doctoral research and extending into later Japanese language works, "have gravitated toward a deconstruction of his text, treating them as natural though not particularly desirable symptoms of larger historical, political, and cultural trends" (8). This "Jamesonian stance," the author observes, tended to read Yanagita's texts "against the grain, thus 'disclosing the absent cause that structures the text's inclusions and exclusions...[and] restor[ing] to the surface the deep history that the text represses.'" Not necessarily

wholly rejecting either position, Ortabasi instead envisions this book as "part of a new category of scholarship on Yanagita that continues to examine his significance in the political/cultural discourse on nation and modernity in Japan, but by shifting to a focus on what his writing *does do*" (9). The intervention Ortabasi offers, in other words, is to "privilege both the historical context and the materiality of [Yanagita's] texts," rather than seeking to submerge these texts into a reading of either the author or the socio-politics of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Japan (9-10).

Despite its basic aim to intervene in the scholarly analysis of the works of Yanagita, *The Undiscovered Country* is one of those rare academic works that is successfully able to produce both a deep analysis of a limited group of materials and a much broader set of critiques that resonate well beyond the study's subject. In particular, Ortabasi's exploration of "translation" as "both a literal practice and an extended metaphor," offers readers a fascinating analytical lens through which to approach both the ethnographic process and the works of ethnographic scholars more broadly. To begin with, it illuminates Yanagita's efforts to "look outside mainstream domestic discourse, or the metaphorical target culture, 'eschew[ing] fluency for a more heterogeneous mix of discourses' in his texts by showcasing archaic and obscure localisms to write *his* version of the Japanese cultural narrative" (12). Yet, while this approach has often been critiqued for its connections with Japanese nationalism, Yanagita's methodology also unintentionally "repeatedly expose[d] the constructedness of cultural identity, thus

undermining his own quest to repair the fissures he perceived in the national body" (13). Finally, Ortabasi argues "[n]ew approaches have much to gain by judging Yanagita's writing on its ability to reinterpret and resist more powerful cultural discourses, rather than how it conforms to them" (19).

Each of the work's five chapters picks up this exploration of the process of translation in Yanagita's works, focusing on different aspects of the meaning of this term and how it played out in different periods of his scholarship. In the first chapter, one of the best argued sections of the work, Ortabasi examines Yanagita's translation of orality, that central concept in 20<sup>th</sup> century folkloristics, in the context of his well-known *Tales of Tōno* (1910). Although long considered the founding text of folkloristics in Japan, Ortabasi notes (following Marilyn Ivy) that this interpretation only emerged after the text was republished in an expanded edition in 1935, once folk studies had already come into its own, largely through Yanagita's efforts. Instead of reading the text as the opening salvo in the battle to create folk studies, Ortabasi argues that it should instead be considered in relation to the contemporary literary movements, of which Yanagita was an important, if sometimes erstwhile, part. For instance, Ortabasi argues that Yanagita's conscious choice to adopt the neoclassical *bungo* style of language in this text was not nostalgic rejection of the more popular vernacular style associated with modernist naturalism. Rather, it was a rejection of the privileging of the internalized and psychologized subject in modernist literature, in favor of a view of consciousness as "something

socially, even communally, constructed." This socially constructed consciousness was only accessible, in Yanagita's view, through an "unironic and frank depiction of people who recognize their ties to each other and to the landscape" (41, 46). As such, by setting up his text with a reader-directed yet personified narrator who can guide the reader through this socially-constructed landscape rather than filter it through his own internal perspective, Yanagita, as translator rather than author or observer, offers a "model for modern subjectivity...a modern analog of the storyteller, who weaves the narrative to link traveler with villager, individual with community" (54).

Working both thematically and in loose chronological order, Ortabasi's remaining chapters apply the concept of translation developed in the beginning of the book to examine a variety of other aspects of Yanagita's work. These include, in chapter two, his reinterpretation of pre-modern genres of travel literature as translation to bring forth "the awareness of the foreign within the self" (97) and, in chapter three, his attempts to develop a methodology for folk studies as interpretive "self-translation." In chapter four, Ortabasi deftly outlines Yanagita's rejection of the standardization of Japanese in favor of dialect speech that did not "spring fully formed from the heads of scholars but would emerge over time through a communal process of self-aware play and experimentation with language" (169). In doing so, Yanagita argued, this language could better "translate" the diverse experience of meaning in everyday living into speech. In the fifth chapter, Ortabasi addresses the ways in which Yanagita attempted

to apply his radical critique of modern subjectivity and his formulation of folk studies methods to break down the existing disciplinary approaches in school textbooks and create a more accessible and open-ended textual pedagogy.

Like the works it studies, Ortabasi's book is a densely layered and deeply erudite affair. Though clearly written and not overly laden with technical discussions, it is not a text that could be easily approached by students or non-academic readers. It is, however, a book that should be read widely in the fields of literary studies, translation studies, and folkloristics. The richly theorized interpretive work presented here, in the context of the works of a single, if extraordinary, scholar, offers a stimulating reappraisal of the possible relations between the ethnographer and the ethnographic text, as well as an intriguing view of the nature of modern subjectivity.

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*Seeking the Promised Land: Mormons and American Politics.* By David E. Campbell, John C. Green, and J. Quin Monson. New York City: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. xiv + 294, preface, acknowledgements, data appendix, bibliography, index.

**O**n October 9, 2014, in the midst of a particularly contentious midterm election, the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints issued a letter to be read to Church congregations throughout the United States urging members to register and regularly exercise their right to vote. This letter, like those circulated each election cycle, admonished Latter-day Saints to study the candidates and support wise, honest leaders, but it did not recommend specific candidates. Instead, the Church maintained its political neutrality and clarified that admirable characteristics could be found in candidates across the political spectrum. Despite the Church's political ambivalence, its membership is markedly not. In fact, 65% of Mormons in the United States identify as part of, or lean towards, the Republican Party, making Mormons the most Republican religious group and one of the most Republican subcultures in the United States. This has not always been the case. In *Seeking the Promised Land*, political scientists David E. Campbell, John C. Green, and J. Quin Monson trace the evolution of Mormon political preferences from Joseph Smith's 1844 presidential candidacy to Mitt Romney's bid in 2012. In this excellent work of social science, the authors examine the intersections of Mormonism and American politics by mining twenty-eight surveys and public opinion polls to

reveal the political preferences and peculiarities of Mormons in America. These findings expose a paradox in the Mormon experience that is central to the text: have Mormons become both "quintessentially American" and a "peculiar people," simultaneously occupying a spot in the American mainstream and one along the fringes of American society?

The book is divided into the three sections: "Mormons as an Ethno-Religious Group," "Political Behavior of Mormons," and "The Consequences of Distinctiveness." In section one, the authors outline a framework for best understanding the above-mentioned paradox by examining Mormonism as a religion and Mormons as a people, with overviews of their doctrine, culture, and history. As an ethno-religious subculture, Mormons, the authors argue, thrive in a state of tension with the broader culture, at odds with both secular society and other religions. This tension and the perception of peculiarity nurtures a strong sense of internal cohesion among Mormons and tight-knit religious communities throughout the world, which, in turn, "enable Mormons to thrive even in the face of a culture they perceive as a threat to their beliefs" (42). While not all Mormons within these communities (or, as the authors call them, "sacred tabernacles") are alike, differing in levels of religious activity, compliance to institutional authority, insularity, and self-conscious affinity with the group, the authors conclude that levels of religious activity are the most significant indicator of "Mormon-ness" and serve to reinforce political affiliation.

Section two traces the development of partisanship among American Mormons, arguing that during the nineteenth

and twentieth centuries, Mormons have evolved through three distinct political periods in response to particular political, historical, and cultural stimuli: periods of exclusion, re-involvement, and partisanship. Prior to Utah's statehood in 1896, Mormons, and by extension Utah, participated in a state party system that differed from the rest of the country, eschewing the Democrats and Republicans in favor of the Utah-bred People's and Liberal parties. Throughout much of the twentieth century, as they sought to accommodate the social, cultural, and political demands of the nation, Mormons affiliated for periods with both the Democrat and Republican parties. Since the 1980 election of Ronald Reagan, though, Mormons have overwhelmingly supported the Republican Party and have been, arguably, the most politically distinctive religious group of the twentieth century. The authors link Mormons' extreme partisanship with changes in both the political parties and in Mormons themselves. First, reiterating the ideas of Armand Mauss, the authors argue that in the post-World War II era, Mormonism shifted its assimilationist views in which they actively removed sources of tension with society to a policy of retrenchment, doubling-down on distinct beliefs and practices. In so doing, Mormons returned to nineteenth century levels of political cohesion and aligned with the conservatism of the Republican Party at a time when Republicans and Democrats took sides in the cultural politics of gender roles, sex, abortion, marriage, religion, and race. Despite Mormons' strong support for the Republican Party, the authors make an important observation about the central role of religious doctrine in

shaping Mormon opinion: "[Mormon] religious beliefs and culture shape their political opinions, even if this means that they are slightly out of step with other politically conservative groups... [W]hen LDS leaders make explicit the connection between Mormon teachings and political views, Mormons generally follow their leaders' cues" and not necessarily the party line (127-128). In other words, when the LDS Church leadership makes the Church's position on an issue known, Mormons will align themselves with that view even when such an alignment puts them at odds with their ideological predilection.

The final section shifts the narrative's focus to examine the evolving public opinions and political ramifications of Mormons' distinctiveness. The authors use the cases of LDS presidential candidates including George Romney (1968), Morris Udall (1976), Orrin Hatch (2000), Jon Huntsman, Jr. (2012), and Mitt Romney (2008 and 2012) as historical gauges to trace how American attitudes towards Mormon candidates' faith have evolved and been politicized. These attitudes have largely changed for the better with Americans gradually becoming more accepting of Mormons as they learn more about Mormonism or have personal relationships with Mormons. However, whether or not these more accepting attitudes signal a new period of political acceptance for Mormons remains uncertain. While public opinion polls conducted during and after Mitt Romney's 2008 and 2012 bid for the presidency show a growing positive public perception of the LDS Church, the authors warn that Mormons' political cohesiveness may ultimately prove to be a deterrent for the

non-LDS public. Echoing the findings of a variety of sociologists and political scientists, the authors point to the growing disaffection among Millennials towards religion as a reaction to merging of faith and conservative politics. As more and more Americans follow suit, eschewing ethnic, cultural, and religious communal associations, the authors contend “the Church’s perceived affinity for the Republican Party could limit the effectiveness of LDS leaders’ voices in the public square. Prophetic voices are most likely to be heard and heeded when they rise above the partisan fray” (261).

The authors make clear in their title that this book and its arguments are limited in their geographical scope to America. Mormonism began as an American religion, some have called it the American religion, and as such the authors rightfully examine the link between American Mormon beliefs and practices and American politics. How, I wonder, would the authors’ arguments differ if examined in context of the international LDS Church? Are Brazilian Mormons, Korean Mormons, or Ghanaian Mormons as politically cohesive or as distinctively conservative as American Mormons? What factors influence a country’s Mormon political leanings? Size? Longevity? Ratio of converts to those born into the Church? While these questions are outside of the scope of this book, Campbell, Green, and Monson have demonstrated a model that bears repeating for transnational comparative purposes.

Furthermore, in their explanation of the reasons Mormons gravitated to the Republican Party, the authors drew upon numerous case studies and surveys in order to link Mormon doctrines with so-

cial issues. While I certainly agree with their conclusions, the argument would be more persuasive had the authors also discussed why, when aligning with a political party, the party’s views on social issues trumped other political policies such as immigration, national security, or poverty for Mormons. This issue is especially significant today in light of the Church’s recent statements on immigration and poverty, suggestive of a growing fissure between the Republican Party’s platform and the LDS Church’s teachings.

For all the graphs and complex quantitative statistical analysis, *Seeking the Promised Land* is surprisingly readable. The prose is refreshingly to-the-point and Campbell, Green, and Monson have done well to eliminate potential linguistic and departmental barriers by avoiding an over-abundance of discipline-specific terminology. As such, students throughout the humanities and social sciences will find the work’s arguments accessible. Furthermore, researchers interested in understanding contemporary Mormon issues, their political attitudes, and the rationale behind these attitudes, will find this book a much needed contribution to the otherwise scant shelf on Mormon political attitudes and the attitudes of others towards Mormons.

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*Neoliberalism, Interrupted*. Edited by Mark Goodale and Nancy Postero. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013. Pp. 317, acknowledgements, abbreviations, editors and contributors, notes, references, index.

**N**eoliberalism, *Interrupted* presents Latin America as a global laboratory for new forms of governance, economic structures, and social mobilization. The volume's title signals a repeated theme throughout the chapters: in Latin America, neoliberalism is simultaneously being challenged and naturalized. At present, Latin America is a site of social, political, and economic experimentation on the one hand and intractable structural vulnerability, violent resistance, and retrenchment on the other. New forms of contestation render other potential ideologies for radical social change unthinkable.

In the introductory chapter, the editors write, "In contemporary Latin America, real challenges to the 'neoliberal world order' coexist with and even reinforce enduring patterns of exploitation and violence" (4). Under these conditions, revolution can appear anachronistic and structures perpetuating inequality often seem inevitable, even as social change and contested governance are underway: the idea of revolution seems out of place in some Latin American contexts, thereby naturalizing social inequality even in the face of social transformation. One of the strategies of the volume as a whole is to resist black-or-white judgments about whether or not transformations are substantive or merely aesthetic.

The contributors to *Neoliberalism, Interrupted*—both Latin American and

Latin Americanists—privilege the categories of everyday lives and social practice in order to explore the meanings, consequences, and possibilities associated with regional reactions to neoliberal hegemony and what can be described as "maturing neoliberalism," as well as the construction of alternatives. Through a collection of ethnographic observations, the volume illustrates the complexity of how neoliberalism is unfolding in Latin America. With respect to neoliberalism, "maturing" does not necessarily mean "entrenched"; instead the authors describe various, often contradictory, ways in which neoliberalism is both challenged and re-inscribed, depending on shifting political circumstances and the historical/geographic context.

The authors employ an ethnographic lens to explore how individuals are identified as neoliberal and postneoliberal subjects. The volume attempts to deconstruct binary oppositions that are commonly used to describe social change and contested governance in Latin America: indigenous/mestizo, national/transnational, and neoliberalism/socialism. However, the authors are unable to resist other types of grouping. On one hand, they use a tripartite model for categorizing Latin American countries: 1) classic neoliberal states that delegate legal and moral responsibilities to non-state agencies (Chile, Colombia, and Argentina), 2) democratic authoritarian states where the power of the state has been reinforced, and, 3) states that have fueled exploitation, exclusion, and violence, but have been reconstituted as essential agents of social and political change (Brazil, Costa Rica, and Paraguay). While Goodale and Postero identify Bolivia, Ecuador, and

Venezuela as “arguably postneoliberal,” they emphasize that this does not necessarily indicate the withering away of the state. On the other hand, the authors employ a binary model to divide Latin America into countries characterized by conservative neoliberal resistance to political and economic realignment (Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru) and revolutionary governments (Bolivia, Venezuela, Ecuador). In the former case, neoliberal subjectivity is aligned with citizenship; in the latter, a shift to “postneoliberalism” has meant that neoliberal governmentality no longer defines individual subjectivities.

In these various ethnographic examples class inequalities are not discarded; rather, class relations are re-contextualized into new power structures. For example, while the traditional political class has in some cases been displaced, “revolutionaries” are positioning themselves as the new elites and are consolidating power even as they pursue revolutionary goals. While a robust human rights framework is emerging (and with it, an emphasis on economic equality, political participation, and state responsibility), this framework leads to new forms of inclusion and exclusion. Thus, the authors are not making an argument about how neoliberalism is resulting in net gains or losses in equality—they are pointing to how power structures are reconfigured by shifting contexts.

The second chapter of the volume is dedicated to Nancy Postero’s examination of how neoliberal reforms were extended in Bolivia in the mid-1980s. Privatization of state-owned enterprises, the dismantling of social services, and the lowering of barriers to foreign capital

led to increased unemployment, massive rural to urban migration, and greater poverty. Indigenous and peasant groups responded to neoliberal policies by using ethnicity to frame their demands for territory and recognition. Despite racism, indigenous activists wielded political reforms to their advantage and the first self-identifying indigenous president, Evo Morales, was elected to office. Despite ongoing resource extraction on indigenous lands and neoliberal engagements in global markets, the discursive link between anti-neoliberalism and decolonization initially legitimized the Movement Toward Socialism (MTS) government’s efforts to indigenous constituents. With Morales’ 2009 reelection, the MTS government is now attempting to implement a far-reaching new constitution. Both right-wing elites and indigenous communities who have supported the Morales regime express skepticism about its full realization. That is to say, although some initial advances have been made in the realm of human rights, Postero notes a generalized hesitance with regards to overly hopeful projections about the future.

In Chapter 3, Sujatha Fernandes reaffirms Hardt and Negri’s 2000 assertion that populations impelled by hybrid rhetoric of the post-Cold War era can be subversive in creative ways that both support and undermine the construction of postneoliberal states. In Venezuela, state rhetoric of resistance to U.S. imperialism is reconfigured by community activists as resistance to *all* forms of power, including the anti-imperialist Bolivarian state. Thus, Fernandes describes how wide-spread resistance to power can simultaneously have productive and

counter-productive effects.

In Chapter 4, David Gow draws our attention to a series of challenges to the hegemony of maturing neoliberalism unfolding on a small scale in Colombia. Modest alternatives are being developed in the interstices between the discursive frame of the nation state and the ideology of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). While these interstitial challenges are often obscured, Gow uses ethnography to reveal the important role ethnicity places in how responses to neoliberalism are framed.

Ethnographic observations in Chapter 5 on neoliberal reforms and protest in Buenos Aires underline how the role of the state is changing but has not diminished. Marcela Cerrutti and Alejandro Grimson document the shift from social movements focused on housing and land tenure in the 1970s and 1980s to demands resulting from neoliberal reforms and massive unemployment in 1990s. While millions were employed at soup kitchens and community centers during Carlos Saúl Menem's presidency, Cerrutti and Grimson argue that heavily subsidized unemployment and government provision of food are examples of how much the poor rely on the Argentinian state.

Analiese Richard's, in Chapter 6, underscores a telling dichotomy: NGOs in Mexico are either criticized for being market-oriented, or hailed as incubators of democratic values. She points to sharp contradictions between the class orientation of NGO founders and their populist goals. NGOs form strong connections with political elites and in an attempt to be "taken into account" in policy decisions, but at the same time surrender their capacity to openly chal-

lenge the neoliberal model. That is to say, the very mechanisms that allow NGOs to have any impact incite hypocrisy by not allowing NGOs to live up to populist rhetoric and instead reproducing neoliberal frames.

Chris Krupa describes how the president of Ecuador, Rafael Correa, has instituted a truth commission meant to uncover violence and terror unleashed during former President León Esteban Febres-Cordero's time in office. Febres-Cordero is considered Ecuador's "neoliberal founding father;" thus Krupa underscores Correa's strategic attempt at having the truth commission usher Ecuador into a "postneoliberal" epoch.

In Chapter 8, Veronica Schild describes how industrialization destroyed rural production, leading to a new class of urban poor in Chile. She portrays Chile as an "enabling state." The state's approach is two-fold: the "caring state" targets poor women and aims to transform them into responsible citizens by teaching them to claim their rights to health, pensions, and education, while also exercising their choices as consumers and workers. The "punitive state" disciplines workers who are deemed non-compliant or dangerous. Similarly to Richard, Schild demonstrates how neoliberal reforms in the past twenty years have restored capitalist class power and control since many on the Left are more concerned with pragmatic politics than prior hopes of overarching social change.

In Chapter 9, Elana Zilberg emphasizes the partnership between violence and the diffusion of market logics. In the context of "neoliberal securityscapes," new categories of neoliberal subjects—poor migrants, service workers, and

"gang youth"—are both constructed and disciplined. The U.S border is an important site of discursive production since it produces migrants as "illegal aliens" and "disposable people" upon whom state violence can readily be enacted. Zilberg argues that as transnational criminality becomes a target for U.S. intervention, these interventions in turn breed more violence. Zilberg points to El Salvador's inability to control citizen security and, thus, draws attention to the decentralization of the El Salvadoran state. At the same time, transnational global market relations have also produced transnational migrant entrepreneurs who gain political and economic power upon returning to their home countries.

In the postscript, Venezuelan sociologist Miguel Ángel Contreras Natera obscures the line between politics and scholarship. He coins the term "fractured tectonics" to point to how contemporary examples of experimentation and contestation in Latin America are intimately associated with the very exploitative practices that they seek to overcome. This notion reiterates an important conceptual thread that runs throughout the volume: as discursive layers shift in Latin America, what meaningful challenges to neoliberalism are occurring in the present day?

Contreras Natera coins the term "the colonial-modern logos"—shorthand for the dominant discursive and epistemological framework ordering social relations in postcolonial societies. He argues that for alternatives to hegemony to be long lasting, the foundations of "the colonial-modern logos" must be uprooted. That is, in order for a new model of insurgency to arise in Latin America, "critical

and deconstructive thinking" about the logic behind social relations in postcolonial societies must occur.

*Neoliberalism, Interrupted* will be of interest to Latin Americanists, ethnographers, economists, and scholars focused on social and political change. The edited volume is a rich collection of ethnographic examples that bring to the fore the complex in-weaving of contradictions, disjunctions, and creative ferments underway in neoliberal and "postneoliberal" Latin American countries. The volume's weakness is that it does not clearly define the contributors' understanding of neoliberalism nor postneoliberalism. While the editors cite Foucault, Rose, Postero, and Rudnyckyj when they briefly mention that "scholars have argued that a central element of neoliberal governance is the encouragement of a civic identity in which individuals are urged to take responsibility for their own behavior and welfare," (8) they do not elaborate on how they themselves are employing neoliberal governance.

The volume should be commended for pointing to complex cases that "interrupt" totalizing notions of neoliberalism; but by the same token, this "muddying the waters" may leave readers without a clear understanding of how neoliberalism operates. The core theme of the book is the dubious and uncertain nature of neoliberalism in Latin America. Thus, the volume aims to use ethnographic examples as gray-toned correctives to black and white portrayals of neoliberalism, thus resisting both overtly hopeful and pessimistic outlooks for the future. The book does not offer a series of positive and negative case studies—rather, as the title suggests, the cases collectively

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suggest that neoliberalism is constantly being challenged, rearticulated, and reinscribed.

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