de la región. Una nación que se revela más abarcativa, más ampliada, no así más democrática ni más plural. Quien impusiera ‘sus’ significados de la nación se haría de un plus de legitimidad política de la mayor importancia. Por eso consideramos fundacional la discusión intelectual sobre la nación en la década de 1920, en la que esos significados se tramitan prioritariamente en el campo cultural e ideológico y, recién hacia finales de la misma, se objetivan políticamente.” Bien lejos de toda forma de historicismo, ¿es que acaso se puede retacear la persuasividad de ese “espejo” para entender varios de los procesos históricos que se sucedieron con posterioridad? ¿Es que acaso esas y otras proposiciones del libro no pueden interpelar genuinamente trayectorias y comportamientos contemporáneos que se despliegan hoy mismo en nuestro continente?

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*Caciquismo in Twentieth Century Mexico* gives the reader much to consider. With the goal of updating David Brading’s edited volume, *Caudillo and Peasant in the Mexican Revolution* (1980), it sweeps through the century in multidisciplinary fashion, describing ejidal caciques, urban caciques, labor caciques, national caciques, Cristero caciques, institutionalized caciques, university caciques, and gatekeeper caciques. As is inevitable in a collective work, some authors address central issues more squarely than others and not all agree, but Knight’s excellent introduction and Pansters’s meticulous conclusion do a good job of drawing things together.

Brading’s book concentrated on the period from 1910 to 1940. It also focused on caudillos, while the present volume uses caciques as its organizing concept. The reason for that, Knight indicates, has to do with definitions of the two terms. Eschewing the position that a caudillo is merely a cacique writ large—operating on the state or national, as opposed to local, level—Knight cogently asserts that a caudillo is a warlord, while a cacique is a political boss or broker who functions during periods of relative peace. Both use violence, but the caudillo is the product of more violent times. Since 1940, then, caudillismo has not been viable in Mexico, leaving caciques the obvious focus for a book that wants to chart clientelism up to the present.

The volume is divided into three parts: the first covering the period of revolutionary fighting and its aftermath; the second focusing on the middle of the century; and the third concerned with contemporary events. Part one consists
of Jennie Purnell’s chapter on Che Gómez in Juchitán, Oaxaca; Christopher Boyer’s piece on the caciques of Naranja, Michoacán; Matthew Butler’s treatment of Cristero caciques in Coalcomán, Michoacán; and Keith Brewster’s study of Gabriel Barrios in the Sierra Norte de Puebla. In this section, an important concern is the distinction often made between “traditional” and “modern” caudillos or caciques—the former rural, local, and informal, the latter perhaps more impersonal and more fully integrated into the state. Purnell’s clear analysis of Gómez is the only one in this volume that treats the era of revolutionary fighting, in which traditional forms supposedly dominated, but she argues that Gómez did not reject the state, as a traditional cacique might, but rather sought to appropriate the state’s local manifestations. Brewster’s nuanced chapter contends that Barrios’s focus on building infrastructure demonstrated the modern inclinations of an otherwise apparently traditional cacique.

The middle section consists of Marco Antonio Calderón’s chapter on the lasting role of Lázaro Cárdenas in the sierra P’urhépecha of Michoacán; works on Chiapas by Stephen Lewis and Jan Rus; and María Theresa Fernández Aceves’s essay on the union leader Guadalupe Martínez in Guadalajara. Calderón’s somewhat unfocused chapter traces the changes Cardenismo brought to indigenous communities in Michoacán, where his presidency was a watershed between traditional and modern practices of caciquismo. Lewis comes down at a similar place on this issue using slightly different terms. He finds caudillismo stamped out by 1940, but caciques flourishing thereafter in highlands Chiapas. In one of the volume’s more interesting chapters, Rus demonstrates how the expulsion of Protestants from Chamula villages between 1965 and 1977 had its roots in conflicts between caciques and dissidents over political and economic issues, conflicts that only gradually gained a religious dimension. Fernández Aceves is the only author in this volume to note that a woman might function as a cacique.

The final section contains Salvador Maldonado Aranda’s look at union caciques in greater Mexico City; Rogelio Hernández Rodríguez’s chapter on Carlos Hank González; José Eduardo Zárate Hernández on caciquismo’s persistence during Mexico’s recent democratic opening; Pansters on a neoliberal university cacique; and Pieter de Vries on the performance of caciquismo. Hernández Rodríguez offers something of an apology for Hank González, one of Mexico’s most notorious leaders in recent decades, concluding that Hank lacked the “direct and personal power” (270) required of a cacique. Arguing that the decline of the PRI has not ended caciquismo, Zárate Hernández finds that it has instead provided new options for local caciques, who play one party against another. Pansters agrees about the persistence of caciquismo, maintaining that during the 1990s José Doger Corte became a cacique as rector of a Puebla university. Finally, de
Vries suggests that the performance of caciques, as they seek to convince that they can navigate the bureaucracy and access resources, merits attention.

This book does not resolve such issues as whether a line can be drawn between traditional and modern caciques, or whether modernity undermines caciquismo. One obstacle to such resolution has to do with the failure to keep the distinction between caudillo and cacique clear. Several authors, for instance, are at pains to demonstrate that the intrusion of the state does not end caciquismo, though Knight’s definition suggests that it is precisely the presence of state institutions that makes caciques, as opposed to caudillos. The definitional fluidity continues up to the point, especially in the work of Zárate Hernández and Pansters, that the reader might wonder if the authors are not stretching caciquismo beyond all recognition. Zárate is perhaps too idealistic about democracy when he condemns local operators who take advantage of the recent democratic opening to play one party off another as caciques. True, these people are mediators, a key element of the definition of cacique, but is that not true of all politicians in their representational capacities? Zárate’s data might in fact be taken to prove the proposition he seeks to refute: that multiparty competition puts caciquismo in peril.

One might also complain of awkward, unclear, and opaque language in some chapters. One reason for that is that many authors (Maldonado Aranda, Pansters, de Vries, and others) introduce and theorize at great length before offering details to support their claims. The result is more argument by assertion, and somewhat less building of carefully crafted arguments, than might be ideal. Such complaints aside, though, this is a rich and challenging look at caciquismo from numerous perspectives, required reading for anyone who seeks to understand the phenomenon.

Samuel Brunk

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Conceptions of “geography” have changed significantly in past years, especially in our usual comprehension of the relationship between the science of mapping and maps, spatial reality itself, and the significance of geography in human relations. In her essay “Places and Their Pasts,” Doreen Massey asserts that “places... are always constructed out of articulations of social relations (trading connections, the unequal links of colonialism, thoughts of home) which are not only internal to that locale but which link them to elsewhere. Their ‘local uniqueness’ is always already a product of wider contacts…” This secular asser-
tion has broad implications and thus begs specific and critical application. The emergence of that 19th century place called the nation-state is one such locale that requires this kind of analytical intervention. In this context, the technology of maps and map making situated within the wide scope of cartographic discourses and practices was a powerful method with which to both imagine and act upon the developing nation state. In his ground-shaking (and -plotting) book, *Cartographic Mexico: A History of State Fixations and Fugitive Landscapes*, Raymond Craib judiciously employs these interpretive tools to the case of the inchoate nation-space of late 19th and early 20th century Mexico. Hard on the heels of a protracted and brutal series of wars of independence culminating, but never completely resolving, in 1821, Mexico’s leaders and popular classes spent the next century debating and fighting -amongst themselves and against outsiders- the terms and spaces that would eventually comprise the United Mexican States. Key among this task was the acquisition and regulation of the nation’s land facilitated by government institutions such as the Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística and the Comisión Geográfico-Exploradora.

Mexican government sponsored cartographic projects to privatize and delineate communal lands and waterways with the hopes of presenting a stable, liberal nation for purposes of financial regulation and foreign capitalist investment -what Craib designates as “state fixations”- entered a crucible of local, human-centered contingencies or “fugitive landscapes” and emerged as reciprocally constituted spatial designs. Fundamental to Craib’s narrative is the creative interplay and agency of local people and the surveyor as state representative. Focusing most of the work on local cultivators in the strategic Gulf Coast state of Veracruz, Craib demonstrates how their agrarian practices and conceptions of spatial order and importance radically shaped the designs and intentions of the surveyor. At the same time, the richly textured role of the surveyor betrayed the fact that this government official was far more than a simple synecdoche for the state. Instead, surveyors served as political brokers between an amorphous government and local populations. Further complicating this relationship, occasionally surveyors were members of local communities.

Craib’s sophisticated and nuanced application of critical theories of space enhances the relevance and application of the work beyond its Mexican context. Uniquely engaging and integrating the work of theorists as diverse as Foucault, de Certeau, E.P. Thompson, J.B. Harley, and James C. Scott, *Cartographic Mexico* chronologically spans the historical development of Mexico’s cartographic regimes from the mid-19th century to the 1930s. The work provides the reader with a valuable, densely crafted introduction that examines the theoretical and historiographic significance and location of the book within its Mexican context. Chapter One discusses Antonio García Cuba’s 1858 *Carta general de la
*República Mexicana*, the first published national map of independent Mexico and its designers and promoters’ goal to visually naturalize Mexico as a unified and historically coherent whole despite the country’s debilitated and fragmented status in the aftermath of the Mexican-American War. The central core of the book (Chapters Two-Six) focuses on the state’s attempt to “forge” spatial designs of rule during the reign of President Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911). In a carefully choreographed and polysemous analysis, Craib examines the Comisión Geografía-Exploradora’s conflicts and negotiations with veracruzano villagers over land division, water rights and the assertion and consolidation of rule. Through critical and creative engagement with a vast range of primary source material (e.g. maps, official and personal correspondence, government reports, criminal records, and travel accounts), Craib clearly explains the often vexed attempts by government official in Mexico City to incorporate and control their distant colleagues in the provincias: political power was situated in and influenced by an intricate cultural and visual matrix that was part and parcel of the lives and careers of local, regional, and national political actors. Indeed, cartographic projects were as much about delineating legible spaces as they were about fixing populations within those spaces for strategic political gain. The centrality of these mapping projects and their attendant administrative and institutional structures to the processes of Mexico’s state formation cannot be overstated. Chapter Seven’s examination of the communally owned ejido under the years of Lázaro Cárdenas in the 1930s extends and reexamines the development of land surveying and regulation in postrevolutionary Mexico. The ejido played a critical role in the competitions over land tenure between the country’s eroding peasantry and an increasingly muscular agrarian bureaucracy.

Such an ambitious and broadly chronological project prompts the further research of critical issues briefly elucidated in the work. Two areas that future scholars might consider developing further include Mexico’s relationship with the United States and gendered dimensions of relevant social actors and spaces. Building on the discussion of mid-century imperial territorial ambitions of the United States (pp. 24-26), scholars might examine the sustained transnational dimensions and influences of Mexico’s strengthening and increasingly mutually dependent economic and political relationship with its northern neighbor. How did Mexico delineate its own nation space against the aggressive designs of a Manifest Destiny inspired United States? How would an examination of the role of gender and its constructions, not only in the social dynamics of the predomi-
nantly male surveyors and villagers but also in the state’s and local population’s gendered articulations of the “natural” spaces in their contestations over power, complicate this spatial narrative? How did new legal rights and laws of property
ownership for women in late nineteenth century Mexico (e.g. patria potestad) complicate the competing fixity and fugitiveness of state/local interactions?

Like the cartographic projects themselves, Craib’s elegant prose, replete with poetic turns of phrase, is structured not in a unilinear progression but as a series of related essays that assert their argument cumulatively and challenge the reader to view them as parts of a complex whole. Contributing to Mexico’s historiography of liberalism, the Porfiriano and post-Revolucionario state formation, the work stands at the intersection of the history of science and state formation, and intellectual and cultural history. Cartographic Mexico concludes with a succinct epilog that bridges its historical arguments with pressing spatial concerns in contemporary Mexico. In a post-NAFTA age where “neo-” liberal projects, global economies, autonomy-seeking Zapatistas, and fugitive transnational migrants increasingly challenge fixed state notions of space, Craib’s book provides us with a prescient guide to the persistent challenges underscoring the continued forging of the Mexican nation.

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This fascinating study of women in postrevolutionary Mexico brings to life the multiple forms of struggle that women engaged in during the late 1920s and the 1930s. Based on extensive research, it both offers telling examples of women’s local activism and shows the connections between it and the larger political context in which it occurred. Thus, this book illustrates the dynamic interplay that existed between women’s efforts to improve their conditions on the local and national level and the political forces that supported or opposed them on the regional, national, and international levels. One other major contribution this book makes is it highlights the Communist Party of Mexico’s active support of women’s rights as well as its sustained engagement with women’s mobilization.

Olcott argues that one of the major issues confronting Mexican women (and men) following the Revolution was to what degree and how were women integrated into or excluded from this new and evolving polity. Were women citizens of the new Mexico? What did citizenship mean in terms of rights and responsibilities for them? One of the key points of contention was the extent to which women’s political participation challenged their gendered identities as mothers and homemakers and, concurrently, men’s power. Although some women pushed