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Vincent C. Peloso, Barbara Tenenbaum, eds. *Liberals, Politics and Power: State Formation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America.* Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1996. 306 pp. $25.00 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8203-1800-4; $50.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8203-1777-9.

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Destroying myths is a difficult business. Through repetition and the ability to reinforce stereotypical representations of complex cultural phenomena, myths have a tenacity that makes them difficult to counter. The collection of scholarly essays in *Liberals, Politics and Power* attempts to disavow one of the more tenacious myths plaguing Latin American studies–the belief that political movements in Latin America can only be read as attempts to copy European or North American examples. In their investigation of Liberalism in nineteenth century state formation, Peloso and Tenenbaum have gathered together a collection of essays that challenge the popular claim that "Latin American liberalism is a derivation of European thought and politics, not a product of local experience" (p. 3). The ten case studies and one literature review included in the volume explore the role that domestic political dynamics played in the formation of Latin American states. They find that liberal movements in Latin America may have been informed by European political thought, but were developed within political frameworks shaped by power relationships that, not only differed from those of Europe, but also varied widely from state to state within the region. The contributors' findings raise serious questions about the validity of dependency theory and Eurocentrism to explain the many manifestations of liberalism in Latin American states during the turbulent nineteenth century. However, as the final chapter, by David Bushnell makes clear, destroying the myth of imitation will take additional, systematic, research.

The case studies cover a fairly representative sample of Latin American states: Cuba, Mexico, the ill-fated Central American Federation, Brazil, Peru, Argentina and Uruguay are treated individually. An additional chapter presents a survey of responses to liberal economic policies by Chilean, Colombian and Peruvian artisans. The case studies cover both political and fiscal reform movements as well as popular representations of liberalism in the mass media. The concluding chapter presents a review of historical literature and suggestions for additional research. The research presented in the volume suffers from the problems that plague most historical studies of early Latin American states -limited primary source material–but the authors make convincing arguments using the material available. Surprisingly, though, the volume lacks a concluding chapter that summarizes the progress the collection makes in challenging mainstream thought on liberalism in Latin America–a perplexing omission, given the forceful argument about the limitations of mainstream literature made in the introduction.

The introduction argues that Latin Americanists have reinforced the treatment of Latin America as a New World copy of European traditions by relying on two modes of analysis–dependency theory and the Eurocentric tradition. This approach, they argue, has been successful in producing some useful studies, but neither dependency theory nor Eurocentrism "provides a framework for exploring the nineteenth century as a seedbed for a uniquely Latin American liberal ideology and politics" (p. 4). They point to the inability of Latin American studies to develop a typology of dictatorships in nineteenth century Latin American states as an indicator that the assumptions of dependency theory and Eurocentrism fail to take into consideration one very important factor: the internal political dynamics of the new Latin American states.

The first chapter, "Elections and Popular Political Participation in Mexico, 1808-1836," by Richard Warren, explores the factors that extended political participation in Mexico from an elite privilege to a popular right. Warren argues that this explosion of popular political activity, caused by the dual influences of elite fragmentation and economic stagnation, gave Mexican liberalism a distinct nature. Based on his analysis of voter turnout and political discourse, Warren argues that the competing models of state formation being debated in early nineteenth cen-

tury Mexico had two things in common–they began with a belief that political legitimacy was based on public will rather than divine providence, and considered the support of the Mexican public a key factor for gaining political power. He concludes, however, that despite public discourse in favor of popular sovereignty, liberal and conservative elites were equally concerned with maintaining social control.

Ralph Lee Woodward, Jr. examines the emergence of liberal and conservative factions within the creole elite of the Central American Federation in the following chapter, "The Liberal-Conservative Debate in the Central American Federation, 1823-1840." Woodward's study argues that the political conflict generated by liberal attempts to restructure social relations and economic policy was partially responsible for the failure of the Federation. He claims the collapse of liberal rule in Central America was caused by a failure to realize that the existence of legislation, in and of itself, does not guarantee social or cultural change.

Carlos Marichal's study of Argentine fiscal policy, "Liberalism and Fiscal Policy: The Argentine Paradox, 1820-1862," argues that the fifty-year process of national governmental consolidation following Argentine independence was a result of a series of profound social, economic and political paradoxes that are played out in the administration of the Governor of Buenos Aires province, Juan Manuel de Rosas. Marichal concludes that despite the fact that Buenos Aires relied on "liberal" fiscal policies to generate stable state revenues, the Rosas administration used those revenues to fund a non-liberal political regime and that it was not until this paradoxical relationship between political structure and fiscal policy was overcome, that a truly liberal parliamentary regime was to succeed.

Continuing the theme of paradoxical relationships between traditional definitions of liberalism and their manifestation in Latin America, the fourth chapter, "The Authoritarian Roots of Liberalism: Uruguay, 1810-1886," examines the emergence of a liberal Uruguayan state from nineteenth century military rule. Fernando Lopez Alvez explores the fifty-year process of consolidation of the liberal state in Uruguay between 1810 and 1860. He argues that the geographic nature of the political struggles between rural and urban factions over the control of the state-building process provided the Uruguayan state with the autonomy to consolidate the rule of liberalism. While political factions in other states split over ideological differences, his study indicates that in the Uruguayan case, liberals and conservatives identified themselves primarily with regional political parties, rather than parties of ideas. It was this geographic identification, combined with military rule, that allowed urban elites to staff the Urugayan state with liberal-minded officials.

Chapter Five, "Paying for Caudillos: The Politics of Emergency Finance in Peru, 1820-1845," explores the politics of emergency finance that kept the Peruvian "republica militar" afloat during the disastrous battles for state control from 1820 and 1845. Paul Gootenberg argues in this chapter that traditional materialist interpretations of caudillismo have claimed that states engaged in fiscal survival strategies that emphasized free trade and foreign lending, resulting in economic and political dependency to external forces. However, as his analysis of Peruvian caudillo finance demonstrates, liberal economic policies of free trade were postponed during caudillismo and instead, Peru relied on a program of "merchant nationalism" that used forced loans from merchants to fund the various military regimes during 1820-1845.

An additional exploration of fiscal policy is found in David Sowell's chapter, "Artisans and Tariff Reform: The Sociopolitical Consequences of Liberalism in Early Republican Spanish America." Sowell examines the responses of Artisans to the ideology of economic liberalism and the free-trade export policies that it fostered. Sowell uses his review of the schism between artisans and elites to show that elites adapted their political and economic policies to changing economic and political environments across the continent.

Vincent Peloso's chapter, "Liberals, Electoral Reform, and the Popular Vote in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Peru," turns the focus of the book back to political liberalism. His study of Peruvian election reform between 1845-1872, reveals that the political consciousness of Peruvian society improved dramatically due to electoral reforms, despite the fraud and violence they produced. Peloso argues that the reforms ultimately failed because Peruvian liberal elites "abandoned principles in favor of power" (p. 204) and failed to overcome the contradictions in their desire to guarantee the political rights of the public while preserving the interests of wealthy elites.

Barbara Tenenbaum's article, "Manuel Payno, Financial Reform, and Foreign Intervention in Mexico, 1855-1880," creatively explores the shifting Mexican interpretation of fiscal liberalism through an examination of the writings of Manuel Payno, who guided changes in Mexican fiscal policies. Tenenbaum ties changes in Mexican liberalism to reactions to foreign intervention on Mexican soil and argues that Payno's reinterpretation of Mexican liberal economics "set the stage for the unparalleled

growth of the state and public finance during the Porfiriato" (p. 229).

The examination of political ideology continues in the following chapter by Roger Kittleson, "Ideas Triumph Only after Great Contests of Sorrows: Popular Classes and Political Ideas in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 1889-1893." Kittleson creates an "initial social history of the Republic in Porto Alegre" (p. 236) through an examination of the differing interpretations of the Republic found in elite and mass political projects. He concludes that the First Republic was instrumental in bringing differing definitions of the goals of a Liberal Republic into the political arena because the involvement by the "povo" contributed new interpretations of liberalism to political discourse.

Louis A. Perez, Jr. contributes an analysis of Cuban liberalism in "Liberalism in Cuba: Between Reaction and Revolution, 1878-1898." In his analysis of the Ten Years War (1868-1878), Perez analyzes the failure of the Autonomist government as a product of a combination of international and domestic political factors. He argues that political relations within Cuba polarized over the issue of independence and liberal attempts to walk the middle path failed to gain support from elites. In addition, Perez claims that the economic power exercised by the United States over Cuba was irreconcilable with the political dominance of the territory by Spain within a colonial framework.

In the concluding chapter, "Assessing the Legacy of Liberalism," David Bushnell argues for a reassessment of the historical legacy of liberalism in Latin America. Bushnell three strands of the literature on Latin American liberalism: liberalism as ideology; liberal political action; and liberal economic policy. He concludes that any claims comparing the effectiveness of liberal institutions in Latin America with those in Europe or the United States, must await detailed studies of the significance of elections and the extent to which they provided for public participation. Bushnell also argues that the myth of Latin American liberalism as an imported ideology cannot be disproved until additional research into the comparative evolution of local adaptations of the ideas of liberalism is conducted.

The studies in Peloso and Tenenbaum's book represents a valuable first step towards re-directing Latin American studies away from treating the history of the continent as a failed attempt to reproduce European institutions and philosophies in the New World. The questions it raises make a strong case for additional research into the uniqueness of Latin American interpretations of political ideologies.

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