

office of mayor of Bogotá and the governorship of the important department of Valle.

Overall, Posada's treatment of his nation's history is designed to vindicate the Colombian political establishment's vision of itself. According to him, elite fidelity to liberal and democratic values has served as a bulwark against the dictatorships and militarism commonplace in Latin America. But while this contrast between Colombian and Latin American history is meaningful, its *causes* are much more complex than Posada is willing to admit. Comparative analysis of Colombian history shows how the country's ethnic composition favoured construction of popular identities that coincided with those of elites (we are all Colombians), while the country's failure to develop a viable export economy during the nineteenth century limited the power and appeal of liberal political economy among the elite. Both conditions help explain the violent and inconclusive nature of Liberal-Conservative conflict throughout that century and the partisan, clientelist, exclusivist two-party political system that resulted from such conflict. That system endured through most of the twentieth century in part because the export economy that moulded Colombian life until recently – a coffee economy dominated by small, family-run farms – severely constrained the strength of organised labour and the parties of the left. It is the weakness of popular forces and the left that best explains the relative absence of militarism and dictatorship in Colombian history.

But if Posada's overall thesis is simplistic and self-serving, his argument concerning the relative competitiveness of Colombian elections both before and especially after the Frente Nacional is compelling. Those who interpret the historical weakness of the Colombian left as the result of a conspiracy by an especially astute and repressive ruling elite are deluding themselves. The Colombian elite, far from being more repressive than its counterparts in other Latin American nations, has in fact been less so. This is true not so much because of the liberal and democratic values that Posada celebrates in his book, but because popular forces during most of the nineteenth century, and labour and the left during the twentieth century, have been weak.

Fortunately, the conditions that have long weakened the Colombian left are now on the wane. And it seems likely that once the left is freed of the weight of the guerrilla insurgency – and of the leftist myths that have helped to sustain it – its electoral fortunes will soar and its own broad understandings of liberalism and democracy will flourish. Posada's book may not be very good history but, to the degree it helps undermine those leftist myths, it contributes in its own way to *la nación soñada*.

University of Washington

CHARLES BERGQUIST

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Alan McPherson (ed.), *Anti-Americanism in Latin America and the Caribbean* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2006), pp. x + 301, \$85.00, \$25.00 pb; £50.00, £17.50 pb.

The subject of Alan McPherson's collected edition is one that is quite familiar to students of US–Latin American relations, but one which has taken on global significance at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Whether prompted by the United States' leadership of the economic processes of globalisation, US promotion

of values such as consumerism and secularism, or the recent adoption of a unilateral foreign policy, anti-Americanism has erupted with a new intensity around the world. The authors quite reasonably examine instances of anti-Americanism in what can be considered the birthplace of such ideas as a means towards a better understanding of the phenomenon in its global manifestations. The collection offers some valuable contributions to our understanding of anti-Americanism in Latin America.

One of the more interesting examples of the roots of anti-Americanism is Jeffrey Taffet's discussion of Eduardo Frei's effort to distance himself from the United States during the course of his presidency. Taffet details the manner in which the Johnson administration used the financial resources of the Alliance for Progress to strong-arm Frei into rolling back a recently announced increase in copper prices. After bowing to US pressure, the Chilean president not unreasonably expected the United States to offer generous terms in ongoing loan negotiations, only to find his administration held to impossible standards of fiscal stringency in order to secure badly needed funds. The essay offers insight into how Washington's use of aid programmes to pursue its own specific national interests can alienate even committed allies.

McPherson's article on Cuba and Panama, and Kirk Bowman's study of Brazil both deal with how inter-American elite alignments and realignments can affect anti-Americanism. Bowman illustrates how Brazil's industrialisation and the development of agribusiness placed the country's economic interests at odds with those of the United States. Conflicting economic interests, combined with the end of the Cold War ethos that had bound the elites of the two nations together, helped encourage increased anti-American sentiment in the continent's largest country. Another source of Brazilian anti-American sentiment in the contemporary era has been the convergence among transnational advocacy groups that brings together progressive groups from both halves of the hemisphere in support of such issues as women's and workers' rights. McPherson utilises the concept of political culture to contrast Cuban and Panamanian relations with the United States in the mid-nineteenth and early twenty-first centuries. His approach illustrates the persistent anti-Americanism of Cuban elites, ranging from the era of José Martí to the rule of Fidel Castro, which was rooted in the fear of total domination by the United States. In contrast, Panama's rulers adopted a pro-American stance reflecting their sensitivity to the nation's status as a commercial nexus within a US sphere of economic influence.

In an interesting use of political culture and elite convergence approaches, William Walker seeks to explain why anti-Americanism has not intensified in Colombia, despite Washington's interference in Colombian domestic affairs as a part of its war on drugs. Specifically, Walker concludes that the subdued response of Colombians to US intrusions resulted from a convergence of elite security interests and the emergence of a common political culture.

As the authors themselves conclude, much of what they have uncovered about anti-Americanism points to a close correlation between economic interests and the course of anti-Americanism in these countries. John Britton's essay views anti-Americanism in Mexico as driven by specific economic policy disputes. Yet some of the articles also point to other important influences. Jason Parker's essay on Jamaica traces the ambiguity of West Indian attitudes toward the United States. During Franklin Roosevelt's presidency, Jamaican activists found themselves torn between the potential of using US influence to accelerate the decline of British power in the

region, and the fear of Washington extending its own imperial reach into the West Indies.

While the individual essays make valuable contributions, the volume does not make much use of the new approaches to inter-American affairs. Although Bowman's treatment of progressive groups in Brazil touches on popular roots of anti-Americanism, most of the essays focus on elite forms of anti-Americanism, or deal with mass protests as essentially the product of elite manipulation. In an era when studies of international relations have been enriched by perspectives drawn from race, gender and subaltern studies, the volume would have benefited from several articles utilising such approaches. Despite that limitation, the collection succeeds in generating a number of stimulating explorations of anti-Americanism, providing an important starting point for further re-examination of a phenomenon that continues to grow in significance in the contemporary global environment.

University of Houston

THOMAS O'BRIEN

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David Scott Palmer, *U.S. Relations with Latin America During the Clinton Years: Opportunities Lost or Opportunities Squandered?* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2007), pp. xv + 125, \$24.95, pb.

In this short retrospective, David Scott Palmer provides a deft survey of President Bill Clinton's Latin American policy, taking him to task for failing to capitalise on the fortuitous inter-American relations he inherited from President George H. W. Bush. In 1992 most Latin governments were freely elected and shared Washington's faith in the neoliberal economic prescription of free trade and open markets. Hemispheric concordance was at its zenith. Whereas Bush responded 'appropriately and effectively' to this opportunity, Palmer argues, Clinton 'failed to seize the moment to build and sustain an effective Latin American policy' (p. xi), thereby 'squandering the opening provided by a felicitous convergence of forces'. This failure 'contributed to the renewed disquiet in the region over U.S. policy' evident today (p. 95).

A partisan deconstruction might summarise this argument as: (1) George H. W. Bush did a good job in Latin America; (2) Bill Clinton screwed it up; and (3) the dismal state of contemporary relations is Bill Clinton's fault (implicitly, not George W. Bush's). Palmer is not nearly so partisan in assessing the particulars of Clinton's policy, which he reports fairly and accurately. He is correct that Clinton's policy suffered from the low priority that the president and senior officials accorded the region, and their inclination to let domestic politics colour their decisions. He gives Clinton credit for successes on important issues like NAFTA ratification, the Mexican peso crisis, Mexico's transition to democracy, the Guatemalan peace accord, and the Summit of the Americas. Nevertheless, Palmer's overall judgment on Clinton is thumbs down – more so than I think the evidence warrants.

Palmer rests his argument on capsule sketches of seventeen Clinton policy decisions and a data-based assessment of Latin America's political and economic progress during the Clinton years. The decisions cover a grab-bag of issues from the Mexican peso crisis to the return of Elián Gonzalez to Cuba. Their shortcoming is their brevity. Apart from seven case studies that receive detailed treatment, the descriptions run to no more than a few paragraphs – too short to capture the