

encontrar sus relatos. La temprana muerte del también director de *La otra virginidad* (1975), ocurrida en un accidente automovilístico en 1980, no contribuyó a la escasa difusión de su obra. De modo que esta empresa editorial en 2020 se convierte en una deuda saldada con la literatura mexicana.

El primer volumen de estas *Obras completas* incluye, además de los relatos de *El viaje*, diez cuentos sueltos, varios de ellos publicados en revistas y antologías; reseñas de la época, entre ellas las de Julieta Campos y Julio Ortega; artículos de académicos contemporáneos y un par de testimonios de la hermana y la hija del autor. Mónica Braun preparó para esta edición una cronología de la vida de Torres, así como de sucesos clave en su narrativa. A esto se añaden mapas de lugares que aparecen mencionados en los cuentos. La detallada e ilustrativa edición crítica estuvo a cargo del propio José Luis Baena quien, habiendo estudiado a fondo la obra de Pitol, se ha ocupado ahora también de la obra de otro escritor de origen mexicano menos reconocido que tampoco escatima en el ánimo cosmopolita.

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Review Essay: Developmental Aspirations contra Internationalist Solidarity: Mexico and the Global Economy

Thornton, Christy. *Revolution in Development: Mexico and the Governance of the Global Economy*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2021. 301 pp. ISBN 9780-5202-9715-9

Zolov, Eric. *The Last Good Neighbor: Mexico in the Global Sixties*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2020. 388 pp. ISBN 9781-4780-0543-8

Mexico's standing on the international stage during the mid-decades of the twentieth century encapsulates the contradictory struggle of the global periphery to find a way out of underdevelopment while remaining true to the principles of international solidarity. Mexican foreign policy offers a rich tapestry to approach the set of ideals and aspirations that, in the decades following the Mexican Revolution, galvanized social and political forces in favor of a more equitable international distribution of wealth. Christy Thornton's *Revolution in Development* and Eric Zolov's *The Last Good Neighbor* explore the uncharted depths of Mexican internationalism and cultural diplomacy to offer a vivid picture of Mexico's role in shaping the economic order that emerged from World War II. Making use of an extensive collection of primary sources and archival materials, these works provide new evidence to better understand Mexico's international projection and the limits imposed on it by the country's economic and geographical proximity to the United States.

Both monographs challenge conventional narratives about the reach of Mexico's internationalist agenda. While *Revolution in Development* traces the impact Mexican interventions had in shaping the set of rules and institutions that came to regulate the global economy in the aftermath of World War II—a history that subverts the narrative of a monolithic, ready-made US program for the new world order—*The Last Good Neighbor* offers a detailed account of how Mexico leveraged the good neighbor policy to forge new alliances and counterbalance the influence of the United States in the context of the global sixties. Revisiting key moments in Mexican foreign policy from the late 1950s and 60s, *The Last Good Neighbor* contests the narrative that has presented Lázaro Cárdenas and Adolfo López Mateos as competing figures in Mexico's

strategic fight for economic and political sovereignty. Instead, the book emphasizes the role Cárdenas played as a trusted interlocutor of the Mexican government, whose political clout helped the López Mateos administration (1958-64) contain the demands for radicalization advanced by the Mexican left in the wake of Bandung (1955), the Cuban Revolution (1959), and the Non-Aligned Movement (1961). Both works contribute a Mexican perspective to the growing field of Global South studies, offering new pathways to specify Mexico's semi-peripheral position within the global economy. While working with different timelines, both monographs set the 1970s as the temporal limit to their studies, reading the contradictions of the Luis Echeverría administration (1970-6) as the historical boundary to the developmental project of the Mexican state.

Thornton's *Revolution in Development* unearths Mexico's long struggle to achieve political representation and uphold redistribution as a guiding principle of the legal structures and financial frameworks of the global economy. The book foregrounds the compenetration between nationalism and internationalism to reexamine Mexico-US relations in the light of an emergent Global South mobilization. Ultimately, Thornton demonstrates that Third World demands not only informed but rather helped shape US hegemony. The book follows a cast of first and second-line Mexican officials and representatives (ministers, ambassadors, staffers, subsecretaries, diplomatic attachés) whose interventions boldly pushed for an alternative international vision based on the principles of national sovereignty, equality among nations, nonintervention, and international solidarity. Thornton's study of Mexico's sustained effort to advance these principles exhumes the stunning compendium of radical ideas and progressive convictions that informed Mexico's pursuit of development in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution. For example, the book follows the shift from the advocacy for *smaller* countries to the advocacy for *debtor* countries championed by José Manuel Puig Casauranc, whose prescient formulation of international finance as a social relation (52) undergirded Mexico's demand for a new philosophic conception of credit based on solidarity and the mutual accountability of debtor *and* creditor countries (Chapter 2). Likewise, the book shows how Mexican interventions around the question of the imbalance in the terms of trade galvanized Latin American countries in their struggle to secure the resources needed to expand industrialization and defend the interests of primary-exporting economies against those of the industrialized world.

The first half of the book captures the atmosphere of dynamism, possibility, and enthusiasm that characterized the Mexican 1940s, a period marked by full-blown industrialization and urbanization. The receptive climate for international cooperation, however, quickly became undone once the possibility to use international organizations as an effective mechanism to curb US economic power began to threaten the geopolitical interests of the core countries. The struggle for the creation of the International Trade Organization, derailed by US capital after the UN Conference on Trade and Employment held in Havana in 1947 (Chapter 6) is a case in point. Such reversal led Mexico to deepen its import substitution industrialization project and opened the door for future administrations to pursue a more independent foreign policy in the context of the global Cold War. Mexico's "flirtation with neutralism," (149) particularly during the López Mateos administration—the focus of Zolov's *The Last Good Neighbor*—became a central feature of the Mexican state's strategy to counterbalance US power and defend the principles of representation and redistribution that had come to define Mexican foreign policy during the previous decades.

In turn, *The Last Good Neighbor* focuses on Mexican foreign policy and cultural diplomacy during the 1960s to argue that the López Mateos administration enacted a "global pivot away from dependency on the United States" (206) and toward Third World solidarity. With the support of domestic left-wing political mobilization, this strategy, a hallmark of the López Mateos administration, ushered in a period when Mexico came to play a central role in international

negotiations thanks to its position as a privileged interlocutor between the United States, Latin America, and the Third World. *The Last Good Neighbor* emphasizes López Mateos's clever use of the good neighbor policy against US intervention in internal affairs. The window of opportunity created by peaceful coexistence and the radicalization of the Latin American left in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, allowed Mexico to carve out a place of its own at the international negotiation table and consolidate its regional leadership as a counterweight to US geopolitical ascendancy. Mexico's aggressive cultural diplomacy—as demonstrated by Anastas Mikoyan's visit to Mexico for the inauguration of the 1959 Soviet Exhibition (Chapter 2), the official visits of Jawaharlal Nehru (1961), John F. Kennedy (1962), Josip Broz Tito (1963), and Charles de Gaulle (1964), among others, as well as López Mateos's travels through Eurasia (1962-1963)—lent weight to the demands advanced by Mexico in different international fora. In parallel to the revision of Mexican foreign policy, *The Last Good Neighbor* surveys the political effervescence and the ideological fluctuations of the Mexican left, from the emergence of a new political ethos in the late 50s (Chapter 1) to the new left's subsequent fragmentation along the fault lines of vanguardism and cosmopolitanism (Chapter 6). Zolov paints a careful picture of the shifting role the Mexican intelligentsia played as a mediator between the state and the middle classes, with particular attention to Carlos Fuentes as a key figure in the cultural landscape of the Mexican 1960s.

While *The Last Good Neighbor* convincingly complicates lopsided readings of Mexican foreign policy, one of the main problems the book encounters is how to explain convincingly the choice of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz as López Mateos's successor. The two main reasons advanced, the absence of a unified front on the left to oppose the nomination and López Mateos's confidence in the unstoppable momentum of internationalism, reveal a more fragile balance between Mexico's developmental aspirations and its economic dependency than the book's main argument seems to allow for. Zolov hints at a third possible answer when he argues that the "central paradox of Mexico's newfound internationalism, however, was that it occurred in concert with a *strengthening* of diplomatic relations with the United States," (198) a statement that resonates with Thornton's use of the notion of a Mexican Paradox to designate a corporatist development project that became deeply dependent on foreign capital. The growing contradictions between Mexico's internationalist apertures and its deepening economic dependency gave place to a frivolous cat-and-mouse game between Mexico and the United States that is perhaps best exemplified in the campaign to adopt a Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States that became the capstone of Echeverría's foreign policy—an episode that both *The Last Good Neighbor* and *Revolution in Development* revisit in their closing pages.

The negotiations leading to the introduction of the charter reveal the benefits Mexico had come to enjoy as a dependable ally of the United States and corroborate the degree to which Mexico's relative independence had become *de facto* sanctioned by Washington. However, as the project moved forward, it ran into the hardening of US protectionism and the mounting pressure from US capital, which ultimately prevented the charter from becoming a reality. Meanwhile, the violent response to the student-led protests of 1968 and the spiraling repression that would snowball into a decade-long dirty war, irreversibly widened the gap between the Mexican state's domestic and international deportment. Echeverría's return to an activist foreign policy aligned with Third World causes became, as Zolov suggests, "a central factor in sustaining the ideological appeal of the ruling party, despite mounting social opposition, for nearly thirty more years" (295). As the Third World began to coalesce around the demand for a New International Economic Order, Mexico found itself struggling to find a way out of its increased reliance on foreign borrowing, which would, in turn, lead to a "total restructuring of the Mexican economy" at the hands of "the

very institutions that Mexico had initially championed as necessary for the redistribution of capital” (Thornton 193). The clock on Mexican developmentalism was about to run out.

To conclude, it is worth considering some of the lessons that can be derived from Mexico’s decades-long struggle for representation, redistribution, international autonomy, and economic independence. First, as modern and contemporary history has repeatedly demonstrated, solidarity, regardless of its ideological underpinnings, is difficult to achieve, and even more difficult to defend. Mexico’s ambivalent position toward Third World struggles—curtailed by the desire to protect its position as a US ally and to take advantage of the opportunities delivered by a rapidly changing international context to advance its own economic interests—reveals what a formidable obstacle a system structured around the uneven distribution of wealth and power presents to the creation of international instances of solidarity. Second, despite Mexico’s sincere efforts to create a financial order that worked in favor of the less powerful nations and its adamant rebuke of the international mechanisms that produce misery for some and wealth for others, the country’s structural dependency on foreign borrowing and the increased capacity of international financial institutions to demand changes in policy as a condition for access to credit, should prompt a renewed skepticism toward reformist illusions—something that Thornton’s *Revolution in Development* makes explicit by framing its narrative as a cautionary tale for recent efforts directed at South-South cooperation. Finally, the fragmentation of the Mexican left, its inability to subsume its ideological differences in favor of the consolidation of a strong, autonomous left-wing movement that could lend its support to the democratic struggles being weighed at home and abroad, should remind us that, however strenuous, organization is the most significant weapon of the oppressed in the pursuit for a more just world.

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Barrera, Jazmina. *Linea nigra*. 2019. Ciudad de México: Almadía, 2020. 164 pp. ISBN 9786-0786-6748-2 [Primera edición, La Rioja, España: Pepitas de Calabaza]

Cuando estaba embarazada, un amigo escritor me sugirió que lo anotara todo. Salí de la cena convencida de hacerlo, pero estaba en mi primer año del doctorado y me comió la escritura de tareas y ensayos académicos. Tampoco leí mucho sobre maternidad en esos tiempos. Estaba inmersa en lecturas de medieval, del siglo diecinueve en Latinoamérica y España o de poesía vanguardista latinoamericana. El diario quedó como una idea y muchos momentos de mi embarazo y los primeros meses de maternidad quedaron en una bruma de hormonas y desvelos.

A mediados del 2020, cuando mi hija ya tenía dos años y estábamos confinados en casa, me metí a un grupo de lectura sobre maternidad. *Linea nigra* fue una de las primeras lecturas que hicimos. El texto se publicó por primera vez en España, editado por Pepitas de Calabaza en el año 2019 y, al año siguiente, salió una nueva impresión de Pepitas de Calabaza, Almadía y la Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León. Este libro difícil de clasificar, que es al mismo tiempo un ensayo creativo, un diario de embarazo y de lecturas, un relato o un trabajo de ficción, escrito en fragmentos en primera persona y cuya narradora tiene el mismo nombre que su autora, me llevó a lugares de la memoria que pensé que habían quedado en el olvido. Este texto deja a sus lectores pensando en la forma—de la escritura, del cuerpo, del embarazo y la maternidad. Leer a Jazmina Barrera es sumergirse en la experiencia de la maternidad de alguien más al tiempo que recuerdas o imaginas la propia. Es repensar tu relación con tu madre y su maternidad, así como