

dealing with press freedom due to its honest and empirically grounded account of the complexities and tensions involved in attempting to universalize the Western model of liberal press freedom.

Another strength of *Channeling the State* is its intersectional analysis of participation in community media. Chapters three “Class Act” and five “Mediating Women” look deeply into the relational and shifting power dynamics in place within the construction of inclusive and participatory media in Venezuela. All too often analyses of alternative and community media view marginalized groups as a collective monolith without paying attention to the intersectional identities present within them. Schiller, on the contrary, shows that mechanisms of exclusion and invisibility are present even among those struggling for visibility and power.

Overall *Channeling the State* is a much-needed contribution to the fields of community media and Latin American Studies. Its publication at this time when Venezuela is in the midst of a serious political and social crisis serves to nuance and balance one-dimensional and biased accounts of the situation in the country. It is also a strong statement on how anthropological socio-centered ethnographic work in the area of media studies can play an important role in counterbalancing the proliferation of short-sighted technocentric studies of digital media platforms.

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KRIS LANE, *Potosí: The Silver City that Changed the World*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019.

The recent book, *Potosí: the Silver City that Changed the World*, by Kris Lane is a valuable contribution to the study and understanding of Andean civilization and history. Lane explores at length the fascinating story of the fabled *cerro rico* or rich hill of silver discovered in 1545 in what is current-day Bolivia, and the extraordinary impact that one of the most famous and prosperous mining cities in the world had on Andean as well as global economic development. He chronicles the unbelievable riches and diversity of residents in this sixteenth-century boomtown, which made Potosí “an improbable global city.” Lane’s lively narrative most effectively draws together the wealth of primary sources, extensive archival research, and considerable secondary scholarship on the colonial historiography of the region, to provide the first contemporary chronological narrative and basic history of Potosí accessible to the general reader as well as scholars in the field. His concluding, “Bibliographical Essay,” is an especially

valuable summation that informs readers of the rich and varied research and writings inspired by the City of Silver.

Lane's book challenges the overly simple theories of dependent underdevelopment and of economic exploitation centered on extractive mining. Instead, Lane asserts, "Potosí was thus a space for self-realization as well as cutthroat capitalism. The two went together" (p. 44). The book catalogues the indigenous serfdom of the *mita* system of forced labor and the desperate plight of African slaves sweating away their short lives in the hot, dark, and dangerous mines. But if Potosí and the *Cerro Rico* represented the "mouth of hell" in the judgment of Bartolomé de Las Casas, generating the Black Legend of Spanish greed and cruelty, they also encouraged and developed Andean indigenous entrepreneurship. Although, according to one story, the simple, indigenous man, Diego Gualpa, first discovered the silver ore, most of the mine owners were Europeans. Nevertheless, indigenous prospectors and refiners and even the freed descendants of African slaves were able to claim and to realize wealth and social standing. In 1600, the bullion merchant, Pedro de Mondragón, who was actually a mestizo, was described as a "very rich Indian." Lane observes that such "social and economic hybridity . . . was pure Potosí" (p. 43). Thus this great wealth brought about "the reordering of native Andean social hierarchies" (p. 42).

Moreover, the silver riches of Potosí, as Lane demonstrates, changed the world and had repercussions not only in Europe but as far off as India and China. Potosí soon became a vibrant hub of conspicuous consumption and global commerce. The silver and millions in bullion paid off Spanish debts in 1557, Potosí was elevated to an Imperial Villa in 1561, and by the 1570s had a population greater than 50,000, one of the most populous in the world at the time. Potosí had an unprecedented impact on the global economy and financial markets as well as on the new global economic and political order. The discovery, exploitation, and mining of the Cerro Rico silver revitalized global commerce which had stagnated because of the lack of specie or precious metals of gold and silver upon which international monetary exchanges and money transfers within Spain's colonial empire relied. Potosí put an end to the "bullion famine" and soon produced close to half of the world's silver within its first century in existence, and around twenty percent of the world's silver between 1545 and 1810. The silver wealth fueled Spain's wars and imperial ambitions and for a time ensured its status as a great power. Moreover, the wide diversity of inhabitants and unbelievable wealth of consumer goods from far across the seas served to make Potosí an early modern world city whose growth and development was "reliant on sustained connections to the rest of the globe" (p. 16).

The long-boom and bust mining city of Potosí also presents a fascinating history of early mining techniques employed by the Incas and other indigenous

people and of the challenges introduced by technological innovations in the 1600s and after 1750 to revive the mines. The environmental devastation and natural and human disasters that threatened to destroy the city, and its slow decline in later centuries, are carefully examined. Nevertheless, like the phoenix, Lane concludes, Potosí always seems to rise from the ashes. Lane explores the numerous myths, conflicting stories, and controversies over the fabled city and Cerro Rico. Lane's narrative also takes into account native cultural practices and the indigenous miners' beliefs and their offerings to *el Tio*, the guardian of the underworld and devil spirit of the mines. Lane, moreover, considers the various historical controversies and polemics that have arisen in light of the available historical record. For example, in "Summing Up," he weighs the claim made by Eduardo Galeano in *Open Veins of Latin America* that in three centuries Cerro Rico consumed eight million lives, and the radical view that Potosí represented an example of "the world's worst case of imperialist greed" (p. 181). And although Lane carefully documents the strikes and uprisings by the often oppressed and militant miners in his narrative, he concludes that, "Potosí killed, but it also revitalized" (p. 182). He emphasizes the "often controversial social processes" and "contradictory impulses" of the city, and notes the ambivalence and paradox exemplified in the Villa Real's colorful history. In his analysis, the polemics against unrestrained resource extraction and global capitalism, and the "grand narratives of exploitation compress and oversimplify history" (p. 183). He includes anthropological work that suggests that the largely indigenous miners of today also view their fate and lives in the mines with ambivalence.

In the brief "Epilogue," the book summarizes the major development in Potosí since independence, and the ups and downs of the mining sector with the collapse of silver and the rise of tin and the tin barons, the nationalization of the mines with the 1952 National Revolution, and finally the re-privatization and rise of cooperative mines. Throughout it all, the Cerro Rico, although riddled with holes and nearly collapsing, still provides various ore. During much of the twentieth century Potosí became a hotbed of political unrest and unionist agitation and rebellion. In a few pages, Lane summarizes the period from 1952 to the rise and rule of Evo Morales and the indigenous president's ambivalent and sometimes strained relationship with the miners. Higher commodity prices helped the cooperative miners and led to periodic protests vis-a-vis the Morales government. Although Lane describes the depressed Potosí that he first visited in 1995 as a thriving metropolis of over 300,000 inhabitants, today severe environmental problems abound, most critically the accumulated contaminants of centuries of mining and the struggle over dwindling water resources.

As part of the University of California World History Library, Kris Lane's *Potosí* is a valuable resource. The author includes detailed sources and an ex-

tensive bibliography, and especially an appendix that collates the observations of selected early chroniclers of Potosí. And although Lane describes himself as a newcomer and interloper to the history of Potosí, he has delivered a marvelous work that brings together a library of writing on this fascinating topic and all under one cover.

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LUIS RONIGER, *Historia mínima de los derechos humanos en América Latina*. Ciudad de México: Colegio de México, 2018.

Un nuevo título, *Los derechos humanos en América Latina*, se agrega a la excelente colección *Historia Mínima* de El Colegio de México, donde fueron publicados, entre otros, *Las ideas políticas en América Latina* y *La deuda externa de América Latina*.

Reconocido estudioso de los derechos humanos, Luis Roniger indaga, desde la lente analítica de la sociología política comparada, distintas configuraciones históricas en la formación y consolidación de esos derechos; a tal fin su nuevo libro focaliza situaciones representativas de tendencias más abarcadoras que no son privativas solo de ciertos países o regiones latinoamericanas investigadas.

Desde el inicio, esta pionera investigación no se limita a historiar avatares en el desarrollo discursivo de los derechos humanos. Consecuentemente, en la primera parte el autor va más allá de contextualizar las instituciones, las normativas legales, el orden político, la estructura socio-económica y el campo cultural: su gran esfuerzo es dar cuenta del proceso de implementación de los derechos humanos en las políticas públicas y prácticas sociales. Tal propósito se lee en la completa exposición de la segunda parte, titulada “La cristalización del discurso universal de los derechos humanos. Su ampliación, desplome y resurgimiento.”

Cronológicamente este proceso corresponde al impacto del populismo y la redefinición de los derechos sociales y económicos; a situaciones de polarización política, el terrorismo de Estado y los discursos salvacionistas. Basándose en una investigación previa realizada en la Universidad Hebrea de Jerusalén con el politólogo Mario Sznajder, Roniger recapitula el legado de las violaciones de derechos humanos en escala masiva, el exilio político y los intentos de superar el pasado de represión mediante la instauración de la justicia transicional.

La tercera configuración estudiada es el estadio posterior al reconocimiento y apoyo retórico de los derechos humanos, en el cual su implementación a través de políticas públicas fue sesgada y de aplicación parcial.