

American countries (Mexico, Colombia, Panama, and Costa Rica), but essentially with the end of the Cold War, did the civil wars in Central America come to an end, leaving Central America in ruins, with nefarious reverberations, as we can see in the political and economic trajectory of the Northern Triangle countries nowadays.

I commend Vanni Pettinà for his successful effort in offering an analytical and engaging interpretation of the Cold War, bringing to the fore many of its major processes and events. It is obvious that all along this superb piece of work, there is an inherent and unresolved tension between the “regional” (referring to Latin America as an homogenous political entity), and the variance one can find between Mexico, Cuba, Costa Rica, Colombia, Brazil, and Chile, just to mention some of the relevant countries referred to. This is a synoptic piece of work and an attempt to make simple a very complicated historical period. Thus, I wish that the conclusions and the epilogue would be longer and more elaborated, perhaps contrasting this very tumultuous period of the Cold War with the previous one, and especially with the post-Cold War years.

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MICHAEL J. BUSTAMANTE & JENNIFER L. LAMBE (EDS.), *The Revolution from Within: Cuba, 1959-1980*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2019.

Michael J. Bustamante and Jennifer L. Lambe’s edited collection *The Revolution from Within: Cuba, 1959-1980* makes an important and timely contribution to the densely populated field of Cuban Studies, injecting fresh insight by challenging some of the dominant, prevailing tropes that have long characterized the scholarly study of the Cuban Revolution, both on and off the island. In so doing, the book also interrogates what the very act of writing the history of the Revolution might mean, particularly when set against the intensely polarized master narratives emanating from Havana and Miami.

The volume comprises fourteen chapters organized into three parts: “Stakes of the Field,” “Case Studies: The Revolution from Within,” and “Concluding Reflections.” The first opens with a thoughtful essay by Bustamante and Lambe (chapter 1) reflecting on the nature of the historiography of the Revolution and the new directions it might take. The co-editors raise numerous fundamental questions in this respect, notably whether it is ever possible for historical studies of the Revolution to remain neutral given the centrality of history to the revolutionary project. Since 1959, the country’s leaders have staked much of

their claim to legitimacy on a teleological master narrative that positions the Revolution as the culmination of the nineteenth-century independence struggles. This overtly political use of history, argue Bustamante and Lambe, renders any academic analysis of the Revolution unavoidably ideological. The co-editors make it clear that, while this collection is not necessarily immune to that fate, the book does at least aim to move beyond old debates and official discourse, to instead produce a Cuba-centric, antiteleological, “‘organic’ history of the Revolution” (5).

The difficulty in writing such a history in a very practical sense is laid bare, however, in Part One’s final chapter (chapter 3) by Jorge Macle Cruz, a former curator at the National Archives of Cuba. Macle Cruz offers a necessary reflection on the fact that not only has historical research in Cuba been hindered by a lack of open access to archival material, but that the archives themselves lack consistency in their upkeep, with many valuable documents remaining uncatalogued. He thus justifiably questions the extent to which the Revolution can be examined “from within” when much rich primary material is out of reach.

The eight case studies compiled in Part Two go some way towards answering Macle Cruz’s question by making use of novel sources in and outside of Cuba that allows for the investigation of underexplored subjects. Drawing on a “largely untouched” archive at Yale University (70), for example, Lillian Guerra sheds light on the relatively unknown story of the photographer Andrew St. George (chapter 4). Guerra argues persuasively that St. George’s images played a far greater role in the mythification of the rebel leaders while they were still fighting in the sierra—essentially laying the groundwork for the aforementioned master narrative—than the more well-known and widely cited journalist Herbert Matthews.

A focus on culture as a site for investigating changes in the revolutionary project links the majority of the essays compiled here. Based on interviews, films, and magazine articles, Elizabeth Schwall (chapter 7) effectively demonstrates how ballet and cabaret—seemingly at opposite ends of the cultural spectrum—provide a “vivid, underutilized lens for examining the reach and limits of state power in 1960s Cuba” (148). Schwall shows how dancers and choreographers both conformed with and challenged the political order, testing the limits of what was deemed permissible, while also exploiting the opportunities created by the Revolution’s valorization of arts and culture.

The complex nature of the lived experience of the revolutionary project is also exposed by María A. Cabrera Arús (chapter 9). She reveals that, despite the very real increase in the availability of material goods thanks to Sovietization, there existed a discrepancy between the claims touted in official discourse and the practical accessibility of such goods for everyday actors. She also highlights

how this new material landscape, so indelibly linked to the Soviet rapprochement, created contradictions in a socialist society, and one with a history of expressing nationalism through its material culture at that (197). Cabrera Arús's findings are a welcome complement to the recent trend in Cuban Studies for reevaluating the long-standing characterization of the 1970s and 80s as a period of wholesale, uniform Sovietization, by exposing a more complex landscape of competing discourses and responses to structural change.

The same can be said for Bustamante's own contribution, in which he discusses the "commemorative excess" of the 1970s (220), when the state media bombarded Cubans with calls to celebrate the country's heroic past (chapter 10). A further simplified version of history—attributing the Revolution's victory entirely to the rebel leaders, rather than "the people"—abounded in speeches, a new wave of espionage films, and in the construction of museums, which stood at odds with the future-focused spirit inspired by Soviet technological advances. Bustamante asks whether the ubiquity of memory might have been met with public fatigue as the gap widened between a heroic past and a more mundane present. He rightly acknowledges, however, that in attempting to measure popular attitudes, one risks over-generalizing Cuban society as a knowable monolith.

Part Three's chapters work well in tying together and contextualizing the fascinating, if ultimately disparate strands, of the preceding case studies. In comparing the Cuban case with the Haitian and Mexican Revolutions, respectively, Ada Ferrer and Alejandro de la Fuente (chapters 12 & 13) dispense with the notion of Cuban exceptionalism, with Ferrer calling for the consideration of "comparative, connected and transnational histories" (287) as a means of deepening our understanding of Cuba's internal dynamics. Lambe's essay (chapter 14) supports this plea, advocating a move away from the focus on US-Cuban relations that tends to dominate analyses of the Revolution, and which is conspicuously absent here. She does, nonetheless, make the valid and often forgotten point that Cuban researchers face financial and political obstacles that frequently preclude their participation in the exploration of these lesser-known transnational connections. We thus risk, she posits, excluding their voices from any new historiography, when we would do well to remember that "Cubans were the authors, however constrained, of the island's revolutionary's futures" (314).

In its very inclusion of these Cuban voices alongside external observers, this book is certainly a step in the right direction towards a new approach to the study of the Cuban Revolution. While it does not claim to offer a blueprint for what such an approach should look like, this collection asks probing, perceptive questions to this end that historians of the Revolution would do well to consider. Its compilation of multiple perspectives and nuanced explorations of

overlooked subjects render it a valuable resource for students and researchers alike seeking to look beyond worn out polemics and polarized interpretations.

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DEBORAH SHNOOKAL, *Operation Pedro Pan and the Exodus of Cuba's Children*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2020.

Deborah Shnookal's new book on Operation Pedro Pan is a strong contribution to the scholarship of U.S.-Cuban relations, and in addition, it contributes to our understandings of how young people have been used by states in contests over migration, power, and ideological commitment. Between 1960 and 1962, just over 14,000 Cuban young people moved to the United States without their parents through a system of easy visa waivers with heavy ideological implications. The United States painted itself as a savior "rescuing" children from Communist Cuba while, years later, Cuba would represent itself as a victim whose children had been kidnapped.

Many of the young people who came over as "Pedro Pans" have since written memoirs, most notably, Carlos Eire's *Waiting for Snow in Havana: Confessions of a Cuban Boy*; however, Shnookal's is the first major analysis by a historian. She argues that Operation Pedro Pan was not simply a humanitarian program to protect Cuban children, but rather that it was intimately connected to the United States' broad array of covert attacks against the Castro revolution in the early 1960s.

At its heart, this is not a history of the life of the young people involved; instead, it is a political history of the program which, the author asserts, was organized and executed to destabilize the Cuban revolution.

One of the strengths of Shnookal's scholarship is its juxtaposition of the Pedro Pan operation and the 1961 Literacy Brigades. She emphasizes the youth and energy of the revolution and posits that these two competing projects defined a generation. She demonstrates that many of the Pedro Pans were not young children but, rather, politically aware adolescents. Some parents wanted their teenagers in the United States and away from the dangers of counter-revolutionary activity, while other Cuban youth might have been flirting too closely with revolutionary politics for their upper-class parents' comfort. In contrast, she emphasizes that among the middle class young people who remained in Cuba, thousands joined the Literacy Brigades and traveled into the countryside. This formative experience created bonds of loyalty to the revolution for decades.