

The final two chapters delve into the legacy of the Vargas era. Thomas D. Rogers carefully analyzes Vargas' suicide letter for its content, context, production, and meaning. This chapter can be nicely used at the undergraduate level by combining it with analysis of the actual text. Jerry Dávila's closing chapter can be read as an epilogue to the entire volume. He provides historiographic interpretations and scholarly debates about the Vargas era and shows how these changed and lingered over time. To examine the question of memory, Dávila uses textbooks, museum exhibitions, and songs.

Broad as the volume is, important themes have been inevitably excluded or marginalized. Although covering the Vargas Era, starting with its pre-1930 origins and ending with its legacy during the late twentieth century, the emphasis is still on the 1930s and the *Estado Novo*. Like the critiqued historiography, the volume leaves the populist phase under-explored and the 1945 to 1951 period ignored. The geographical coverage of the volume corresponds to the centers of national politics. Thus, as frequently happens in studies of "Brazil," Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Rio Grande do Sul overshadow the rest of the country.

Vargas and Brazil is an important contribution to the reconsideration of the Vargas Era and is useful to teachers and researchers alike. Teachers will find individual chapters helpful in teaching Latin American history of labor, authoritarianism, populism, and regionalism. Readers interested in mid-twentieth-century Latin American history and in populism and its legacy will enjoy an engaging and challenging volume that invites farther discussion. Finally, anyone who wishes to be updated on Brazilian modern history cannot afford to ignore *Vargas and Brazil*.

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JOCELYN OLCOTT, MARY KAY VAUGHAN, and GABRIELA CANO (eds.): *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics and Power in Modern Mexico*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2006.

The Mexican Revolution has fascinated historians and specialists of Mexico for years, but the role of women in the revolution has traditionally been absent except for some brief mention of *soldaderas* and *Adelitas*, female participants viewed as exceptional. *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics and Power in Modern Mexico* is an important set of essays that explores the dynamics of both sex and gender in Mexico before and after the revolution. The outcome of a conference held at Yale University in 2001, these fifteen essays give an overview of the revolution from a gendered perspective, concluding with an epilogue contemplating

gender and politics in modern Mexico. This volume will become a fundamental reading assignment for modern Mexican history, as well as for courses in women in Latin American history.

Specialists in Latin American women's history have often viewed the record of the Mexican Revolution with dismay. Although one of the earliest and most radical revolutions of the twentieth century, the Mexican Revolution did not lead to major changes in the status of women. Encumbered by high rates of illiteracy, large numbers of indigenous who spoke indigenous languages, and great inequities of wealth, Mexican radical reformers focused on these groups. Women's issues remained in the domain of the family and were associated with an enemy of the revolution—the Catholic Church. Indeed, Mexico became one of the last Latin American countries to give women suffrage rights. These realities obscured the often radical, as well as conservative, participation of women in the revolution, and enabled men to ignore women's demands. As Carlos Monsiváis put it in his fascinating, but unfinished foreword, "their loyalty and devotion were not worth much" (p. 12). Although Monsiváis referred to traditional women and their treatment by conservative men, the same could be said of revolutionary women and their reception by the left. Indeed, women achieved a degree of legal equality through a Civil Code in 1928, and thus Monsiváis concluded: "before achieving equality in politics, women gained equality before the law" (p. 15).

Gender issues can transcend femininity. One fascinating case of a transgendered man whom the Mexican Revolution lauded, but could not grant his wish to be identified as a man, can be found in Gabriela Cano's essay on Amelio Robles. Robles participated in the revolution as a man, spent his entire life with a male identity, but was buried under an epitaph that labeled him as "*la coronela Zapatista*," thereby inscribing his memory in female garb (p. 53). Similarly, women's efforts to modernize their appearance by cutting their hair also met fierce opposition, as seen in Anne Rubenstein's essay. Women fought back, but short hair remained problematic for women in Mexico City.

Liberal reforms for women included divorce in the state of Yucatán, but few Mexican women could avail themselves of this right. Rather, as Stephanie Smith shows, the diverse groups of women who tried to avail themselves of this right through revolutionary tribunals often found their desires thwarted. Foreign women, rather than local ones, benefited the most from the availability of divorce until conservatives finally rolled back the revolutionary laws. However, as Smith put it, "women with various social interests constantly challenged it and shaped it" (p. 108).

One area where the revolution paid attention to women's issues is connected with the integration of orphans and illegitimate offspring into families. This, however, as Ann Blum has noted, did not take place until the administration

of Manuel Ávila Camacho in the late 1930s and early '40s. Before that time, adoption proved much more complicated. As Blum points out, efforts of the revolutionaries to wrest the family from the domain of the conservative church led only belatedly to such reforms after the Cristero Rebellion of 1926-29.

This led to another complication in the perceived usefulness of women to the revolution. Like men, women visibly participated both for and against the revolution, but the revolutionaries chose to remember the latter, rather than the former. Cristina Boylan's essay on conservative women has been linked to Jocelyn Olcott's work on women in the Mexican Popular Front to show how women on both the left and the right of the political perspective lost out to their male counterparts. Neither group was destined to direct or control the revolution, and women's divisions often played a role in this process.

The fact that women had little control over the revolution also played an important role in the fate of working-class women. Three essays by María Teresa Fernández-Aceves, Heather Fowler-Salamini, and Susan M. Gauss analyze women workers in both rural and urban areas where the masculine desire for power and authority, as well as the belief that women inherently belonged in the home, or at least, under control within the workplace, served to limit the accomplishments, but never the spirit of working-class women.

What does all this say about the Mexican revolution? First of all, it affirms that women of all ethnicities, both for and against the revolution, demanded change and made their presence known during this turbulent era. But, as theorists in women's studies have often shown, revolution for men has not always implied radical change for women. Or, it might have been that the women of the Mexican revolution proved to be too revolutionary for their male counterparts, as evidenced by the greater success of Zapatista women in political events of recent years. But what this volume makes abundantly clear is that Mexico has never suffered a shortage of women who insisted on more control over their lives and families, and their legacy forms as central a part of modern Mexican history as that of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary men.

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MARK OVERMYER-VELÁZQUEZ: *Visions of the Emerald City: Modernity, Tradition, and the Formation of Porfirian Oaxaca, Mexico.* Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2006.

This elegant book addresses a multitude of thorny issues related to Mexican urban history, visual culture, and modernity. The title is particularly apt: from