

PEOPLE, RELIGION, AND NATION IN
MEXICO FROM INDEPENDENCE
THROUGH THE REVOLUTION

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THE BIRTH OF MODERN MEXICO, 1780–1824. Edited by Christon I. Archer. (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Books, 2003. Pp. 257. \$65.00 cloth.)

CLERICAL IDEOLOGY IN A REVOLUTIONARY AGE: THE GUADALAJARA CHURCH AND THE IDEA OF THE MEXICAN NATION (1788–1853). By Brian F. Connaughton. Translated by Mark Alan Healy. (Calgary, Alberta and Boulder: University of Calgary Press and University Press of Colorado, 2003. Pp. 426. \$65.00 cloth, \$27.95 paper.)

MONUMENTS OF PROGRESS: MODERNIZATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN MEXICO CITY, 1876–1910. By Claudia Agostoni. (Calgary, Alberta and Boulder: University of Calgary Press and University of Colorado Press, 2003. Pp. 228. \$45.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper.)

CHURCH AND STATE EDUCATION IN REVOLUTIONARY MEXICO CITY. By Patience A. Schell. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003. Pp. 253. \$50.00 cloth.)

BECOMING CAMPESINOS: POLITICS, IDENTITY, AND AGRARIAN STRUGGLE IN POSTREVOLUTIONARY MICHOACAN, 1920–1935. By Christopher R. Boyer. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003. Pp. 320. \$60.00 cloth, \$25.95 paper.)

POPULAR PIETY AND POLITICAL IDENTITY IN MEXICO'S CRISTERO REBELLION: MICHOACÁN, 1927–29. By Matthew Butler. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. Pp. 272. \$99.95 cloth.)

MILITARISM, ETHNICITY, AND POLITICS IN THE SIERRA NORTE DE PUEBLA, 1917–1930. By Keith Brewster. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003. Pp. 215. \$47.00 cloth.)

Upon his return from a tour of Oaxacan indigenous communities, liberal governor Félix Díaz (1869) underscored the importance of public education in his annual address to the state legislature. "The instruction

of all classes of society," the governor declared, "is the only way to regenerate the spirit of the people, purging them of their vices and passions through sound doctrines." Education, he continued, "will weaken their customs, bring order to their unruly habits, and inspire in them a pure love of occupation and work, a profound respect for law and justice, a rational and dignified obedience of authority, and a pronounced affection for honor and virtue, the very qualities without which the edifice of a democratic republic cannot be sustained."

As a republican military commander in the War of the French Intervention (1862–67), Félix Díaz had spent a good deal of time with indigenous Oaxaqueños; most notably, he led a battalion of Zapotec national guardsmen from the Sierra Juárez to victory over the imperial army in the decisive battle of La Carbonera in 1866, paving the way for the republican reconquest of Oaxaca. But when Díaz contemplated his former soldiers and their like from the perspective of the governor's office, he clearly did not view them as Mexicans in the same way that he considered himself to be Mexican. Rather, Díaz, along with virtually all of his liberal contemporaries, believed that the people who inhabited Mexico would have to be radically transformed in order to become Mexicans, true citizens of a liberal political order and members of a modern and prosperous nation-state. Revolutionary elites would articulate much the same view—and advocate quite similar projects of social transformation—in the decades of the 1920s and 1930s.

Nineteenth-century liberals and twentieth-century revolutionaries believed, above all, that modernization required the secularization of Mexican society and politics. Sharing much the same view as modernist theorists of nationalism (e.g., Anderson 1983, Gellner 1983, Hobsbawm 1990), liberal and revolutionary state builders assumed that citizenship was incompatible with religiosity, except insofar as the latter was treated as a purely private affair, limited to Sundays and a few holy days, and taken neither too literally nor too seriously. Popular religiosity—with its processions, superstitions, pieties, patron saints, and innumerable fiestas—was of particular concern, given that it was widely viewed to be the primary source of the vices, passions, customs, and unruly habits of which Félix Díaz spoke.

Scholars have paid a good deal of attention of late to the transformative projects of liberal and revolutionary state builders in Mexico. But considerable uncertainty remains as to the nature and significance of local and regional variations in these projects, as conceived and as implemented, and the extent to which they were resisted, accommodated, ignored, or embraced by the would-be objects of transformation—which is to say the ordinary folk of Mexico, most of whom lived in the countryside, almost all of whom considered themselves to be Catholic, and some unknown proportion of whom identified as members of a Mexican

nation, even as they undoubtedly defined that nation in quite different ways. Most scholars of nation-state formation have considered Church and state to be natural antagonists, demanding as they did incompatible loyalties and resources; national identities, in order to be truly national, must supersede all non-national ones, including religion, at least when push comes to shove, as it so often has in Mexico. Recently, however, more serious and sustained attention has been paid to religiosity, popular and otherwise, and to the contributions of both Church and Christianity to the construction of a Mexican national identity and community (e.g., Brading 1991 and 2001, Lomnitz 2001, Voekel 2002).

All of the books reviewed in this essay explore elite perceptions of the masses, elite projects of social and political transformation, and the reactions of ordinary Mexicans to the projects intended to transform them. The works thus address questions of state building, nationalism, political culture, and, most generally, the construction of collective identities, national and otherwise. Several give serious reconsideration to the role of the Church in Mexican history as well, characterizing it as an agent of, rather than an obstacle to, the development of a Mexican national identity. The time period under consideration stretches from the Bourbon Reform era of the late eighteenth century to the first two decades of revolutionary state formation (1920–1940), while the actors include Creole conspirators, the high clergy of Guadalajara, Porfirian hygienists and sanitary engineers, millenarian Indians, anti-clerical *agraristas*, devout *cristeros*, Protestant missionaries, urban school teachers, and *caciques* and *caudillos* of various stripes.

The essays collected in *The Birth of Modern Mexico, 1780–1824* examine diverse aspects of Mexican society and politics, ranging from royalist propaganda campaigns to the millenarian tendencies of Indian insurgents and the fortunes of the late-colonial mining industry. Christon I. Archer, the volume's editor, provides a lively overview of the independence era in his introductory chapter, emphasizing the multiple fractures of colonial society, enduring conflicts between Mexico City and the regions, the often confused responses of different social groups to events in Europe, and, above all, the colonial elite's altogether pessimistic assessment of the common folk they encountered. Pedro de Laguna, a European-born Spaniard sent to Oaxaca to resurrect the local militia in 1896, "shuddered at the potential disorders threatened by the wild fiestas and fandangos attended by local men and women and the infinite numbers of lawless vagabonds who inundated the city" (10). Even the elites most closely associated with the modernizing transformations envisioned by the Spanish Enlightenment "were in fact less than enthralled by the state of the country and its population." "Viceroy Conde de Revillagigedo," for example, "a leading reformer dedicated to the sciences, modern architecture, and urban improvements

such as sanitation, parks, drainage, paving, and street lighting, perceived little that was positive about the Indians and confused *castas* who formed the majority of the general population" (8). Most politically-active Creoles desired neither revolution nor independence, but rather some degree of political autonomy within the empire, sharing few goals with—and having little understanding of—the popular insurgents. The overall picture that emerges from Archer's introduction is one of an almost accidental independence, achieved in the absence of any coherent nationalist ideology and certainly without a widely shared national identity.

Nowhere is the gulf between elites and masses presented in starker terms than in Eric Van Young's contribution. Drawing on evidence and arguments presented in *The Other Rebellion* (2001), Van Young contends that popular and elite rebels shared nothing by way of a common agenda, the mostly Indian insurgents having no interest in either nationalism or the capture of state power, because their "cognitive map" was such that they could imagine neither state nor nation. Van Young attributes participation in the insurgency to the Church's late-eighteenth-century attack on heterodox forms of religious practice: "Popular forms of piety were thenceforth sanitized, restricted, or suppressed outright, provoking considerable (sometimes violent) resistance on the part of Indian villagers in particular" (52). These assaults on popular religious practice, in combination with a "widespread belief in the messianic attributes of the Spanish monarch" (53), produced popular insurgency. But Indians could only think in terms of the village church or the coming of the messiah. Echoing Hobsbawm's (1984, 20) assessment of peasant politics as being centered on either the parish pump or the universe—"[t]here is no in-between"—Van Young writes (55):

The meaning of rural popular culture for the dynamics of rebellion, therefore, is that Indians particularly among popular rebel groups, at least in the heartland of New Spain, tended to blur or simply to chop out of their political cosmology the very middle-level structures represented in creole thinking by the concept of the nation. This difference in the cognitive map and worldview of Mexicans represented a discontinuity between popular and elite cultures that no political ideology, program or national mythology could easily bridge.

In a "short coda" to his essay, however, Van Young notes that this bridge would be built within several decades, given the existence, by about 1860 if not before, of numerous cross-class and cross-ethnic movements that were "inscribed more firmly and consciously within coherent ideological frameworks and national projects," and "a more or less common discursive framework among Mexicans" (55–56). This implies that significant changes in cognitive maps and popular cultures can occur much more quickly than the concepts themselves, as usually understood, might suggest.

Paul J. Vanderwood's essay complements that of Van Young's in focusing on "the interplay between religion and political action" (165) during the independence wars, but it is much more speculative in character. Like Van Young, Vanderwood emphasizes the significance of the assault by Church and Crown on popular religious practice during the Bourbon Reform era, when "[m]iracles, idolatry, cults, processions, fiestas, and indeed much of the religious world of the natives came under aggressive review" (177), even though "at this point we can only speculate about the impact of these events on the mental world and behavior of ordinary rural Mexicans" (178). Vanderwood contends that the existence of "millennial-style beliefs" among the popular insurgents has been well documented, even if the causal relationship between such beliefs and participation in the insurgency has not yet been established. Much of the rest of the essay consists of a discussion of popular religion and millenarianism and suggestions as to how they might be studied.

Hugh M. Hamill and Virginia Guedea explore different aspects of the relationship between Creole elites and popular insurgents in their respective contributions to the volume. Hamill asks why Creole rebel leaders opted to mobilize popular support in the Hidalgo rebellion, given that they had no particular economic or social agenda in mind, and could not be certain of containing popular insurgency once it was unleashed. His answer suggests significant limits to the depth and breadth of Creole nationalism: because of the manifold divisions within Creole society, insurgent leaders could not count on the support of Creoles outside of their own personal networks. Much of the essay focuses on a royalist propaganda campaign in 1808–09, the success of which is used to demonstrate the lack of widespread support for insurgency. According to Guedea's essay, Mexico City Creole elites wanted greater political autonomy rather than independence. It was only after their repeated attempts at conspiracy were met with increasing repression that a few such Creoles openly broke with the royalist government, some joining the insurgent armies and most opting to provide the rebels with intelligence while remaining in Mexico City.

Timothy E. Anna's essay on Agustín de Iturbide's role in early state formation underscores one of the central themes of the volume, that of the almost unexpected nature of independence, achieved just seven months after Iturbide issued the Plan of Iguala and well before the formation of anything approximating a nation. Thus, "Mexico provides an obvious example of a place where historians can begin making links, largely still missing, between the achievement of independence and the creation of Latin American nation-states" (187). Creole nationalism, according to Anna, is better characterized as "proto-nationalism, since the sense of the nation's identity that characterizes the writings of contemporary thinkers was highly personal,

sometimes idiosyncratic, and frequently motivated mainly by anti-Spanish sentiment" (190).

The Birth of Modern Mexico, 1780–1824 also includes essays by John E. Kicza on the elite Iturbe e Iraeta family and its activities during the independence era; Christon I. Archer on the counterinsurgency campaign conducted by Félix Calleja in 1815–16; Anne Staples on the mining industry; and Jaime E. Rodríguez on the struggle between the legislative and executive powers during the first few years of independence. In the introduction, Archer refers to the essays as being revisionist in character, and argues that they suggest a new periodization that blurs the significance of the years 1810 to 1821 as a dividing line between eras. But neither Archer nor the other contributors refer very explicitly to any of the debates in the historiography of the period, and the volume may be of greatest interest to those relatively well-versed in the relevant scholarship.

Brian Connaughton's *Clerical Ideology in a Revolutionary Age: The Guadalajara Church and the Idea of a Mexican Nation (1788–1853)* is a substantially revised and translated version of the author's 1992 *Ideología y sociedad en Guadalajara (1788–1853)*. Building on Adrian Hastings's (1997) argument concerning the Christian origins of modern nationalism, Connaughton contends that the Catholic Church constructed a providential understanding of the Mexican nation, in which Mexicans were seen as God's chosen people, "the standard-bearers of a divine mission" (308). "Contrary to imagining the national community as a secular experience, as Benedict Anderson would have us expect," Connaughton writes, "these clerics conceived of a commonwealth whose progress was a Christian pageant most faithfully reflecting the deep-felt beliefs and desires of the people" (14).

Connaughton examines a truly prodigious number of sermons, pamphlets, and published letters, written by the high clergy of the diocese of Guadalajara in the period between the Bourbon Reform era and Santa Anna's final days in the presidency, to trace changes in the way Church leaders understood and talked about independence, sovereignty, representative government, nationalism, and the relationship between Church and state. He argues that the Church was neither traditional nor reactionary in its views, but rather combined a providential understanding of nationalism with liberal concepts of good government—especially constitutionalism and liberty—in order to create a place for itself in the new order and to defend itself from intrusions by the state:

Nationalism as promoted by clergymen thus aimed at re-sacralizing Mexican bonds of community and elevating common destiny to a sense of mission. While this was grounded in clerical conviction regarding the non-Jacobin character of the Mexican people, and thus hoped to ensure ecclesiastical presence in society and constitutional guarantees for the clergy in the polity, this nationalism

contributed to an imagining of the Mexican nation as a community under law, bound by a territorial—if not ethnic—past and destined for a sovereign, national future of increasing social and economic improvement. (16)

Connaughton certainly succeeds in challenging the conventional depiction of the Catholic Church as traditional, reactionary, and anti-national; in contrast, he paints a vibrant picture of the high clergy's creative struggle to grapple with the role of the Church—and the role of Catholicism—in newly independent Mexico, and to participate in the construction of both state and nation. He has less to say about the degree to which the clergy's providential nationalism succeeded in finding a broad audience, or how it might have survived the various onslaughts of liberal and revolutionary anti-clericalism, but he does suggest that "there still is a complex mix within Mexican nationhood of two distinctive projections of what it means to be Mexican" (20).

Like Connaughton, Claudia Agostoni is a Mexico-based historian whose book was published as a collaborative effort by the University Press of Colorado and the University of Calgary Press as part of their Latin American and Caribbean Series, making it a truly North American effort. Agostoni's *Monuments of Progress* examines two Porfirian projects intended to modernize and moralize Mexico City and its inhabitants: a set of public monuments erected along the Paseo de la Reforma to commemorate historical and secular heroes; and a mammoth drainage and sewage system, intended to remove the city's wastes and prevent its flooding by the tainted waters of nearby Lake Texcoco. Why Agostoni chose to combine the study of public monuments with that of drainage and sewage is not altogether clear, and the book offers relatively little that is new by way of theorizing; however, it captures some very intriguing stories about the Porfiriato, albeit in a somewhat disorganized and repetitious manner.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the book is Agostoni's discussion of hygienists and sanitary engineers in Mexico City who saw their work as central to the regeneration of both the city and its inhabitants, and who thus concerned themselves with anything and everything that might be the cause of disease, including "working class housing, schools, hospitals, public markets, parks and plazas, cemeteries, sewers, stagnant waters, abattoirs, factories and any other site that could have a detrimental effect on public health" (23). Modernization, in their minds, would require transforming the intimate habits and character faults of the Mexican people themselves, "for it was the ignorance, backwardness and immorality of the urban population—in particular the urban poor—that led to disease and premature death" (30) and so gravely weakened the Mexican nation.

Agostoni's argument with respect to the link between the construction of monuments and the construction of national identities will be

much more familiar to most readers. Referring to the expropriation of ecclesiastical property in Mexico City during the liberal reform period, she writes: "The secularization of urban property and land was part of an attempt to forge a national identity within the urban landscape, and the secularization of public expressions led to a search for historical heroes and events that would legitimize the emergence of the liberal, secular, and independent nation-state." Religious place names and celebrations were replaced with civic ones, and "[p]ublic sites such as avenues, parks and plazas became the places where these celebrations would take place and where the monuments that narrated the national, secular and official version of Mexico's history would stand" (78). While it sits somewhat awkwardly in the midst of four chapters on disease and the urban environment, the chapter does provide a useful and accessible account of the role of architecture and public monuments in nation formation.

Patience A. Schell's *Church and State Education in Revolutionary Mexico City* shares Connaughton's concern with the similarities and differences between religious and secular nationalism, and that of Agostoni with official understandings of public morality and the role of the state in shaping it. Her book also provides an important counterpoint to Christopher R. Boyer's and Matthew Butler's books on revolutionary anticlericalism in rural Michoacán. Schell's focus is on public and Catholic education in Mexico City between 1917 and 1926, and her argument is that in spite of the anti-clericalism of the 1917 constitution, and the growing conflict between the Catholic Church and the new revolutionary state, both Church and state shared quite similar goals as far as education was concerned.

According to Schell, "Catholic social activists and the revolutionary governments identified the same problems in society, including poverty, vice, and illiteracy, which they sought to ameliorate through education. Both groups believed that the poor and working classes needed refashioning into either loyal, patriotic Mexicans, or loyal, patriotic Mexican Catholics" (xix). From the end of the armed revolution in 1917 to the onset of the *cristero* rebellion in 1926, the author argues, Church and state were in relative accord over the transformative goals of education, and there was a fair amount of cooperation between secular and religious educational institutions in light of these shared goals, at least in Mexico City. Whereas public education was aimed at creating a prosperous and patriotic citizenry and nation, Catholic schools differed mainly in providing an "alternative vision of Mexican nationalism" in which "Catholicism was an essential aspect of national identity that served to unite Mexicans from different regions and ethnic backgrounds" (35). Thus religious and secular educators both wanted to nationalize and moralize Mexicans, the main difference being the way

they conceived of the role of the Church and religion in public morality and the nation.

Schell compares the public and religious versions of primary, vocational, community, and adult education in Mexico City, and recreates the experience of the classroom, for teachers and for students, in both public and Catholic schools in considerable detail. This organization lends itself to a good deal of repetition, but the author provides a wealth of empirical material (not all of it, perhaps, absolutely necessary) on curricula, pedagogy, classroom activities, and the lives of teachers. Throughout the book, Schell demonstrates the extent to which "church and state programs complemented each other and intersected ideologically, even as the political relationship between the two institutions was becoming more troubled" (174). The book concludes with a discussion of the breakdown of that relationship in 1926–29, and an assessment of the ramifications of the Church-state conflict during the *crisiada* on education.

The interactions of Church and state may have been more cooperative than conflictual in matters of urban education, at least prior to the crisis of 1926, as Schell argues, but the same cannot be said for the Michoacán countryside, as evidenced in Christopher R. Boyer's *Becoming Campesinos* and Matthew Butler's *Popular Piety and Political Identity in Mexico's Cristero Rebellion*. Both books provide a close examination of local and regional variations in revolutionary state formation, focusing on *agrarismo* (the movement in support of the government's agrarian reform program), education, and anti-clericalism as projects of social and political transformation, and on the varied local and popular responses to those projects. Boyer emphasizes the interplay between elite and popular discourses in accounting for the construction and widespread adoption of an inclusionary *campesino* cultural identity, whereas Butler provides a fine-tuned account of local variations in how people organized and lived their daily lives, especially with regard to religion, in explaining divergent partisanship in the counterrevolutionary cristero rebellion.

Boyer sets out to explain how rural folk in Michoacán came to call themselves *campesinos*, a term rarely employed by anyone prior to the 1920s. He argues that *campesino* was first adopted by militant agrarista leaders as a political identity that connoted support for class struggle and anti-clericalism, in the effort to recuperate land and build a revolutionary citizenry in the countryside. By the 1940s, however, the term *campesino* was employed far more generally as a cultural identity, becoming much more inclusionary and compatible with multiple identities (religiosity, ethnicity, gender), and losing much of its political militancy and virtually all of its anti-clericalism in the process. The central puzzle of the book is thus how a radical and exclusionary political identity, employed by a movement that never had more than minority support, came to be adopted as a form of cultural identification by the majority of rural Michoacanos.

Much of the analysis is dedicated to “village revolutionaries”—the schoolteachers, local caciques, union organizers, and petty politicians—who mediated between revolutionary and clerical ideologies as articulated from above and the political cultures of rural communities. In Boyer’s analysis, “[t]he interplay between local histories and political ideology—and between and among villagers, village revolutionaries, clergymen, and politicians—slowly established new bonds of social solidarity in the countryside and eventually defined what it meant to be a campesino” (13). Even as he provides a detailed and nuanced account of the often violent conflicts within and between villages in the Michoacán countryside of the 1920s, Boyer asserts that the people who would come to call themselves campesinos rejected much of the divisiveness of revolutionary politics, especially anticlericalism. “[C]ountry people,” according to Boyer, “were no more inclined to accept potentially divisive ideologies than they ever have been.” “As a result,” he concludes, “they embraced campesino identity but rejected what they regarded as undesirable elements of postrevolutionary ideology” (43–44).

Matthew Butler’s *Popular Piety and Political Identity in Mexico’s Cristero Rebellion* weaves together many of the themes discussed in this essay with admirable clarity and grace, including the impact of the Bourbon Reforms on local communities, the evolution of secular and religious nationalism, the episodic conflict between Church and state in independent Mexico, and the construction of political identities during the revolutionary era. Focusing on eastern Michoacán, Butler “seeks to explain why some people chose to participate in the cristero rebellion, why many others did not, and why others actively opposed it.” “The main argument,” he contends, “is a simple one; that religion mattered as peasants negotiated a path between the conflicting agendas of Church and state, and that the popular antagonisms which attended the cristero revolt included genuine ideological, indeed religious, differences between the contending peasant factions” (3).

The argument isn’t so much simple as it is elegant and compelling: according to Butler, agrarista and cristero communities in eastern Michoacán were characterized by “different levels of religious commitment, distinct forms of religious practice and meaning, and diverse religious identities” (9). The Catholicism practiced in the northern part of the region—which supported the cristeros—was quite orthodox in character, centered on Christ and the sacraments, and dominated by the clergy; in the agrarista south, in contrast, more heterodox forms of Catholic practice prevailed, priests were few in number and short on influence, and religion was far less central to local life and identity, the Catholic Church in some places having been joined or replaced by Protestant congregations. Butler explains these different configurations of religious belief and practice in terms of divergent local and regional

histories, tracing the timing and interaction of economic, social, and political changes, beginning with the Bourbon Reforms and extending to the eve of the revolution. Butler's careful and considered analysis of religious practice and parish organization in relation to political partisanship makes for an unusually substantive cultural argument, and the book deserves a far larger readership than the hefty hardcover price is likely to allow.

In *Militarism, Ethnicity, and Politics in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, 1917–1930*, Keith Brewster examines the military and political career of Gabriel Barrios Cabrera, and the cultural and political dynamics of the regional *cacicazgo* he inherited from the liberal leader Francisco Lucas in the Puebla sierra. Thus Brewster revisits the same region studied by Guy P.C. Thomson (1991, 1999) and Florencia Mallon (1995), his analysis focusing on the revolutionary rather than the liberal era. But whereas Thomson and Mallon both conclude, albeit with different qualifications and degrees of emphasis, that the indigenous *serranos* became patriotic Mexicans through their participation in the liberal National Guard in the second half of the nineteenth century, Brewster argues the concerns of Barrios's clientele remained purely local in character, limited to stability and protection for their families and communities after years of revolutionary violence and political turmoil. In spite of their participation in national movements and incorporation as a battalion in the federal military, the Indians of the Sierra Norte remained a mystery to politicians and military commanders in Mexico City—hence the need for cultural intermediaries such as Gabriel Barrios Cabrera and his brothers. The indigenous *serranos*, meanwhile, could and did employ elite discourses with respect to state and nation, but they did so in a purely instrumental sense, their concerns and identities remaining rooted in their communities. The intended objects of a century and a half of elite projects of social and political transformation, the *serranos* of Puebla remained, in Brewster's analysis, profoundly untransformed, even as they carefully managed their participation in the broader society and polity.

All of the books reviewed in this essay grapple with the formation of a state and nation in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Mexico, a process that required—at least as conceived by elites—multiple transformations in the ways in which the common folk of Mexico organized, lived, and thought about their daily lives, in matters both mundane and transcendent. Connaughton and Schell make important contributions to the view from above, in highlighting the role of the Church in the development of Mexican nationalism, as well as the extent to which ecclesiastical and secular authorities shared similar understandings of the sorts of changes that would be required to create a modern Mexican nation-state. Boyer, Brewster, and especially Butler all provide compelling accounts of how and why some of the intended objects of

transformation—rural villagers in eastern and central Michoacán and the northern sierra of Puebla—responded to the opportunities and threats posed by state formation at the local level in the ways that they did, as well as of the implications of these responses for the nature of the Mexican nation-state.

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