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Gladys McCormick. *The Logic of Compromise in Mexico: How the Countryside Was Key to the Emergence of Authoritarianism.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016. xiv + 284 pp. $32.95, paper, ISBN 978-1-4696-2774-8.

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The rise of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI) in Mexico is fascinating and depressing but it was never inevitable. The PRI rose to power through a combination of adaptability and coercion and through the use of revolutionary ideas and symbols to gain power.[1] Along the way, it created an authoritarian regime that lasted for more than seventy years. Gladys I. McCormick's excellent study *The Logic of Compromise: How the Countryside was Key to the Emergence of Authoritarianism* reinforces the notion that the PRI was both flexible and coercive, but in focusing on rural areas she also shows how the people who lived there both resisted and accommodated the ruling party. McCormick is interested in how that happened and how the countryside served as a testing ground for tactics, ranging from run-of-the-mill corruption to horrific violence, that the PRI would later employ against urban protestors. In the process, McCormick weaves a compelling narrative with important insights into how the PRI's dominance pervaded Mexican life.

At its core, McCormick's work is a study of relationships, for patron-client relationships were the basis of how things got done in the countryside. McCormick focuses on the Jaramillo brothers —Antonio, Rubén, and Porfirio. It is through them that the reader can see how the logic of compromise was rationalized at various points. Thus, McCormick has written a kind of collective biography to demonstrate the costs and benefits of working for or against the state in the era under consideration, roughly 1930 through the 1960s. More generally, rural peasants faced a choice: resist or accommodate. In nearly all cases, they chose the latter, as the former generally meant violence. In McCormick's study, the Jaramillo brothers become avatars for those choices, as Antonio, who chose accommodation, survived, while his more rebellious brothers were murdered by state actors.

McCormick establishes context for the logic of compromise in the first two chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the state of Morelos in the era of Lázaro Cárdenas, while chapter 2 illustrates the political and social limits of *cardenismo*. In the first chapter, McCormick shows how social and economic hierarchies in the countryside were coopted by the revolutionary party and then used to create a state-controlled hierarchy. Under Cárdenas's direction, this was seen as somewhat benign, but, as McCormick shows, later PRI leaders used Cárdenas's work to extend the state's control over the countryside. The limits of *cardenismo* can be seen in the rural cooperatives set up by

Tata Cárdenas himself. The PRI used state run cooperatives to implement their divide-and-rule tactics, mostly by pitting different classes of workers against each other through the vehicle of the Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos (Confederation of Mexican Workers, CTM), the official state union. Rubén Jaramillo was one of the main proponents of Cárdenas's programs, bringing him enormous prestige. As the PRI gained more and more control over the countryside, corruption became the norm and Rubén was left out in the cold. In a remarkably short period of time, corruption was accepted as one of the costs of doing business in the postrevolutionary world.

Chapters 3 and 4 explorie the concept of the logic of compromise. In chapter 3, McCormick delves into the various meanings of the logic of compromise and how it affected different groups of people through the prism of Antonio Jaramillo's life. In a nutshell, Antonio was neither radical nor fully compromised and, in fact, "straddled both camps at different moments" (pp. 88-89). Crucially, once the local leaders in Morelos and Puebla had compromised themselves, it became easier for their constituents to accept both compromise and corruption on the part of regional and national leaders. McCormick notes that the logic of compromise was based on old patterns of patron-client relationships, which made it relatively easy for the PRI to move rural peasants away from idealistic *cardenismo* and toward more pragmatic goals. One of those who resisted the logic of compromise was Porfirio Jaramillo, who rose to prominence in Puebla in the 1950s. Porfirio and his supporters offered the people of Puebla a distinct alternative to the PRI and its logic of compromise. In response, the PRI undermined Porfirio's movement from the inside by demonstrating the benefits of compromise rather than resistance. Through these two chapters, McCormick elegantly demonstrates the costs and benefits of accepting the PRI's rule. Some, like Porfirio, paid for their rebellion with their lives. Others, such as those who accepted the system, made material gains over the course of the 1950s, although most of those gains were only small in scale. McCormick shows the limits of *cardenismo* and how that impacted ordinary lives in the countryside, which adds strength to her argument. All in all, these two chapters are the heart of McCormick's study and they provide an excellent foundation for similar works in other regions.

Chapters 5 and 6 build on the foundations laid in the previous chapters and demonstrates how the PRI's flexibility allowed it to flourish during the Cold War. In the main, the party leveraged certain Cold War truisms for its own gain and, in the process, institutionalized the revolution. As a result, the party became the only legitimate defender of the revolution and its symbols, which would be crucial as several groups worked to reappropriate both in the 1960s and 1970s. McCormick deftly shows how the Dirección Federal de Seguridad (Federal Security Directorate, DFS) became an instrument of social control as it worked diligently to infiltrate various communist and suspected communist sympathizer organizations, such as unions. McCormick's most important contribution in this chapter is to recognize how government-sanctioned corruption fed into government-sanctioned violence and vice versa. At the same time, she demonstrates how the party learned to employ different shades of divide-and-rule tactics when it came to repression. In the end, as McCormick discusses in chapter 6, peasant rebellions, such as those led by the Jaramillos, were repeatedly undermined by the logic of compromise and then finished off by the party's repressive techniques. Even as Rubén Jaramillo called for a renewed revolution in agrarian areas, he was undermined by his own allies who wanted to work from within the system to change "our" revolution. By the end of the 1950s, the revolution was thoroughly institutionalized, in large part through the rural logic of compromise.

The seventh chapter takes a macro view of the repression and the results over the course of

the book's time frame. McCormick incorporates both narrative history and memory theory to show how the various protagonists, especially the Jaramillo brothers, have been remembered or forgotten within the context of the institutionalized revolution. In institutionalizing the revolution, the party sought to define who was a "good" revolutionary and who was a "bad" revolutionary. For example, Emiliano Zapata was seen as a "good" revolutionary, in part because had been safely dead since 1919. This meant that Rubén and Porfirio Jaramillo fell into the "bad" revolutionary category because both had actively worked against the state through the 1940s and 1950s. McCormick uses these examples to demonstrate how collective memories change and mutate over time. The memory of Rubén, for example, is both intimately tied to his relationship with Cárdenas and the local reputations of himself and his family. That is, Rubén is seen as one of the primary catalysts for Cárdenas's programs in Morelos on the local level while he is virtually forgotten at the national level. Similarly, the sheer violence of Rubén's murder shocked those who lived in Cuernavaca and Mexico City because they thought they had left the violent past behind. Despite the anger that followed, the party's system of authoritarianism endured, in part because of the logic of compromise. That is, those who lived in Cuernavaca and Mexico City had more to gain from operating within the system than from rebelling against it. McCormick's study reinforces that idea time and again as she shows how the PRI's power structures were both implemented and maintained despite the protests of rural peasants. Indeed, with the benefit of hindsight, we know exactly how strong these structures were because we know the PRI was in power until 2000. McCormick deftly shows how this continuity was practiced in the countryside and then unleashed on urban areas.

McCormick's work is well written and well researched and sheds light on a topic that is not always granted the attention it deserves. In demonstrating agency at all points, she notes how the countryside challenged and even altered many of the central party's plans, often to the benefit of rural peoples. Yet, at the same time, these rural communities became complicit in the institutionalization of the revolution under the PRI. McCormick's work is fascinating and a worthwhile addition to the historiography of modern Mexico.

Note

[1]. Dan Cothran's ***Political Stability and Democracy in Mexico: The "Perfect Dictatorship"?*** (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994) offers a good analysis of the PRI's flexibility and how it co-opted revolutionary symbols and ideas for its own gain.

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