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*Waves of Protest: Popular Struggles in El Salvador,
1925-2005* (review)

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between the government of Evo Morales and the neoliberal past from which he is said to be making a radical break. Yet Goodale is more adept at saying these things than at showing them. Readers looking for a more empirical or contextualized rendering of law on the ground in Bolivia will find the pickings slim. A handful of vignettes and a few tables detailing kinds of legal cases anchor an ambitiously wide-ranging work. After two chapters devoted to establishing his approach to law, the third chapter turns to sketching the actors and institutions that compose the legal universe of the province of Alonso de Ibañez, where Sacaca is found. Subsequent chapters take up the experiences of indigenous women who might look to the courts for rights and possibilities not always available to them in their daily village life, discourses of human rights as advanced by an NGO-supported legal services center in the region, and ideals of development as represented by the personnel and practices of transnational development NGOs in the area.

This is a promising set of themes, but the analysis is not always adequate to the ambitions of the discussion. Goodale makes note of pinup erotica on the wall of the office of the judge who might be hearing cases brought by indigenous women; the formulaic agenda for an NGO-led human rights workshop; and the television staples of the pensiones at the transnational crossroads of Sacaca's main plaza, including the Simpsons and professional wrestling. These are evocative traces of the fields of tension he wants to examine. However, while we know why Goodale found them striking, we learn little about the perspectives of the wide range of other participants in these encounters with law and liberalism. This is particularly frustrating in the context of the very expansive understanding of the law being advanced here. With law—"[t]he ill-definable sum total of all of this complicated normativity" (p. 76)—potentially about everything, it is sometimes difficult to see the contours of his intended intervention in legal studies or to appreciate what this newly ground lens of the law brings to our understandings of Bolivia.

Though the writing is quite dense in places, the tone of the book is engaging and the issues raised are important and far reaching. Scholars and students familiar with the region or with the various bodies of literature he grapples with will appreciate many points of the discussion. As a gateway to Andean/Bolivian studies, legal studies, or the anthropology of modernity, however, *Dilemmas of Modernity*, offers little solid to grasp.

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Waves of Protest: Popular Struggles in El Salvador, 1925-2005. By Paul D. Almeida. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008. Pp. xxii, 298. Figures. Notes. Works Cited. Index. \$25.00 paper.

Paul D. Almeida uses the Salvadoran case to modify the political process model of social movements to better fit nonwestern societies. The original framework was based on the analysis of protest movements in stable democracies and thus focuses on increasing electoral opportunities and access to state actors. Almeida finds that this "regime liberalization-induced mobilization" (p. 14) model works well for the political openings in Sal-

vadoran history in 1927-1930, 1962-1972, and the mid 1980s. It cannot explain, however, how movements continue to mobilize when states close these openings, as in 1930-1932 and 1977-1981. Almeida develops the concept of “regime intimidation-induced mobilization” (p. 14) to explain how dissidents use the organizational capacity built during liberalization to radicalize protests as previous gains are wiped away by repression. He also suggests that increasing repression in 2004 may mark the beginning of a new cycle of intimidation-induced mobilization in El Salvador.

Almeida further argues that the antineoliberal protests of the 1990s and early twenty-first century do not fit into either model and thus require a theory of “globalization-induced protest” (p. 14). This combines the access of the liberalization period with the erosion of economic conditions associated with periods of intimidation. He characterizes the 1999-2003 movement against healthcare privatization as one of the largest and most successful examples in Latin America.

Almeida’s analysis of the alternating periods of liberalization and repression from 1925-1984 is quite good, especially in his explanation of how dissidents were able to continue mobilizing during the early stages of repression. His warning of a potential reversal of recent gains is also important. There is a glaring omission from Almeida’s account, however. He gives scant attention to the role of social movements in the negotiation of the peace accords and their partial implementation. Given its previous focus on dismantling the repressive state, why wasn’t the Salvadoran opposition able to use the 1992 accords to actually do so? While this question is important in and of itself, it also has a substantial impact on the challenges facing Salvadoran protestors in the neoliberal era. As Almeida argues, mobilization by globalization is most successful “in societies that have undergone substantial regime democratization” (p. 29). El Salvador still does not fit this description, however, because of the continuing impunity resulting from the failure to implement the peace accords. Indeed, this is a key factor behind the surge in repression starting in 2004 identified by Almeida. (President Mauricio Funes’s 2009 decision to violate the accords by further militarizing public security is very worrying in this regard.)

Almeida’s account of globalization-induced mobilization provides a very good explanation of why there was often little resistance to the early stages of neoliberal reform. He runs into trouble, however, in his analysis of the latter stages of neoliberalism. He is overly optimistic about the level of democracy in this era, citing improved “access” even as the ruling party (and governments throughout the region) sided with international financial institutions while ignoring their constituents. (See Guillermo O’Donnell’s work on delegative democracy, for example.) Nor does he consider the resulting widespread disillusionment with democracy in the region—especially El Salvador. Almeida is correct that the growing power of the main opposition party (FMLN) in the Assembly was an important element that encouraged protest by showing that change was possible. We must also appreciate, however, the impact of events outside El Salvador, including the protests that brought down Ecuadorian President Bucaram in 1997 and the 1998 arrest of General Pinochet.

Finally, Almeida’s characterization of the 1999-2003 movement against healthcare privatization in El Salvador as successful is less than convincing. According to Almeida’s own

account, each “success” was followed by government backtracking and the need for further mobilization. In contrast, protest movements in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Argentina forced neoliberal governments from power. Furthermore, these nations have made much more progress in undoing neoliberalism, especially during the period covered by Almeida (before Funes was elected in 2009).

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Reckoning: The Ends of War in Guatemala. By Diane M. Nelson. Duke University Press, 2009. Pp. xxxi, 403. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$94.95 cloth; \$25.95 paper.

Diane M. Nelson’s elaborate and exceedingly erudite description of developments in Guatemala cover the period from the termination of the Civil War (ca. 1996) to the end of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) in 2005. Nelson’s postmodern framework is obvious throughout, as she adopts an incredibly large number of tropes and metaphors to describe and interpret the complicated history of this period. Her elaborate account provides detailed information on important persons, events, and diverse social units, including Maya communities, NGOs, political parties and organizations, the Guatemalan state, the United States and other foreign powers. Her account of salient events that occurred during this period reveal her profound and detailed knowledge of recent history in Guatemala, and this alone makes the book invaluable for anyone interested in recent developments in that effervescent country. Each of Nelson’s eight major chapters is constructed around one or more metaphors created to cast light on postwar Guatemala. The metaphors, such as “Maya ritual celebrations,” “horror movies,” “carnivals,” “Lamarkian bio-politics,” and “audits” are complex, and Nelson brilliantly employs them as revelatory devices. It is necessary to read carefully Nelson’s elaborate interpretation of such metaphors in order to appreciate their relevance to the complex recent historical developments in Guatemala.

Professor Nelson engages in constructionism throughout this long and detailed account. The boundaries between all sociocultural categories are blurred, including gender, ethnic, and national identities that exist only through their ties to one another. She claims that her position has emerged through years of personal experiences in Guatemala, where she discovered that all identities—and basically all activities—are constantly constructed and reconstructed; boundaries are inevitably changing, even those between civil society and state. Her field experiences have caused her to adopt an only slightly stronger cultural relativistic stance than her continuing left wing activist stance. Nelson’s postmodern methodology is made clear throughout her long discourse, as she admits the pastiche of collaborators, friends, drinking partners, scholars, lovers, and soul mates, all of whom contributed in some way to her study. She is open about the eclectic nature of her methodology. She repeatedly identifies herself as a partisan “solidarity activist,” and explains that she spent much of her research time among educated Mayas and Ladinos (many of them revolutionaries), and relied heavily on contacts made through (solidarity) friends and also in