

of sacred lands, on the one hand, and urban informal sector workers aspiring to pensions, urban transportation infrastructure and well-remunerated public sector employment funded by the rents from natural resource extraction, on the other? It is in vexing questions such as these that the complexities of interactions between progressive governments and social movements – with demands that are heterogeneous and sometimes incompatible with one another – come to the fore.

Beyond the volume's normative assumption that the degree of convergence between progressive governments and social movements defines success or failure, some readers of the book will chafe at occasional lapses into ideological drivel. Perhaps most egregious, for this reviewer, was the reference in Chapter 8 to Hugo Chávez succumbing to cancer, 'which some speculate may have been induced by Washington' – the sole citation being from a discredited conspiracy theorist. Such peevish notwithstanding, the collection offers comprehensive coverage of social mobilisations from the Left and useful insights regarding state–social movement interactions, both of which are sure to remain prominent features of the Latin American landscape for many years to come.

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Timothy W. Lorek, *Making the Green Revolution: Agriculture and Conflict in Colombia*

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The future of the Earth's food production is the subject of serious reflection in academia and among citizens who are concerned about sustainability and improving agroecological systems. But what processes have installed these concepts as common sense in societies with heterogeneous production systems that overall support monocultures of great impact such as maize, wheat or soybeans? Has the history of agricultural science irrevocably activated technical solutions to the food problems of modern societies? Based on a detailed and in-depth study of the Colombian path of agricultural innovation in the twentieth century, *Making the Green Revolution* addresses the centennial history of applied agricultural research in Valle del Cauca, a tropical region geopolitically defined during the Cold War as a 'paradise' for research. Through the contributions of specialised networks, this area promoted the advance of sugarcane monoculture coupled with the rise of the sugar industry. Timothy Lorek traces how sugarcane production led to the homogenisation and

standardisation of a socially and biologically diverse tropical valley under the protection of development programmes that turned into rhetoric the local tensions associated with the displacement and exclusion of previous settlers. Lorek dissects a complex history that expands the narratives of the Green Revolution, showing that these spaces made uniform by monoculture and the corporate form of monopoly are, paradoxically, the result of a rich and diverse – and often conflicting – encounter between knowledge, know-how and traditions, both from the valley itself and Colombia, as well as from the rest of Latin America and the United States.

With this work, Lorek confirms himself not only as a rigorous environmental historian but also as a transnational historian with a clear perspective and methodology focused on the study of the links between the United States and Latin America. Moreover, he adds a profound critique of the processes of theoretical and historiographical construction between academia of the global North and South. Thus, Lorek's book is not limited to recounting how societies at both poles of the continent collaborated or competed in developing the innovations that gave rise to the Green Revolution, nor does it stop at telling the story of how inter-American landscapes have been mutually shaped by the mobility of species and knowledge. More importantly, Lorek succeeds in showing how Colombia has been at the centre of the creation of developmental policies and their early critique through the pen of individuals such as Albert O. Hirschman. This is remarkable because it distinguishes this work from others specialising in Colombia by allowing the reader not only to fully understand Colombia's place in the world and its role in historical change, but also how the nation has been influenced or transformed by external agents. Thus, the author encourages thinking of these processes as multiple green revolutions, rather than a univocal history of the Green Revolution with a capital G.

As Lorek details, the creation and management of the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in Colombia, still in operation today, synthesises local, national and international objectives to hierarchise a process of scientific research and innovation. This, despite the interest of promoters in decentering its activity by appealing to the supposed objectivity and apolitical nature of science, is recognised in Lorek's writing as a complex legacy of the intense period known as 'La Violencia', the genesis of an armed conflict that has been demobilised without conclusion and, of course, of an agribusiness that has displaced the yearnings for social justice associated with agrarian distribution. Recognising the entanglement of science, philanthropy, industry and social mobilisation requires highlighting the positioning of actors and thus abandoning narratives that assume clearly defined boundaries. The reader will be surprised to learn that although this research centre is surrounded by sugar crops, the research it produces does not have this application. Thus, what is the relationship between agribusiness and the Green Revolution? Lorek's book provides the explanation that domestic agricultural research, coupled with the adoption of new technologies since the 1920s, forged international linkages that were exploited by entrepreneurs to boost the sugar industry. In part, this was the result of the failure of the Colombian state to centralise the modernisation process, in contrast to other experiences associated with the Green Revolution, as was the case of Mexico. Lorek thus confirms that these windows of opportunity were well exploited by agents with diverse interests, in a very

broad conception of civil society, in which businessmen and other agents, such as foreign philanthropic foundations like the Rockefeller Foundation, participated in the capitalisation of the modernisation process of this sector of the economy. However, if we consider occupations, the book is populated by the experiences of farmers, producers, itinerant experts, agronomists, businessmen, scientists, philanthropists, politicians and diplomats. As for nationalities, there are fascinating stories about Americans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Colombians. More precisely, the identity of the people of Valle del Cauca is presented as a field of experience in the construction of landscapes of modern tropical agriculture.

Despite the rise of decolonial and postcolonial studies at the turn of the twenty-first century, are historical studies with a different *locus* of enunciation now creating new narratives of the Green Revolution in a globalised and technologised environment? For scholars who want to delve into the intricacies of the subcontinent's past, there are still few comprehensive studies reporting in detail on cross-cutting processes like the Green Revolution's modernisation of the rural world. Lorek's work transcends the limitations of the stories to local processes – valuable in themselves – or traditional emphasis on the agents of globalisation – necessary for abandoning autarkic narratives. There are few authors like him who take care to build a history based on the examination of different scales, whose function is not to add up to broaden the horizon but to invite the reader to understand the multiplicity of stories woven in the articulations of those scales, which are nothing more than individuals with their aspirations, illusions, fears, ambitions and genius.

Lorek succeeds in telling these stories thanks to a detailed review in English and Spanish of existing production, as well as a systematic search of archives in different parts of the United States, Colombia and Puerto Rico. The author's commitment to innovative knowledge production is evident both in his learning of Spanish and in his brave departure from historians' own categories to explore the interdisciplinary nature of his object of study. In this way, the book manages to refine narratives that, until recently, were concentrated in interpretations from sociology and political science. These fields were early to take the pulse of the so-called Green Revolution and of the companies, such as the sugar mills of Valle del Cauca, that transformed the world's agri-food system and are the basis for the ultra-processed foods that flood the world's markets today. Thus, I consider this work to contribute to the field of Latin American studies, and not only to the field demarcated by Colombianists, as it details the venture into the future, which in my opinion is the defining mark of the Latin Americanist vocation. To summarise, this book raises informed questions about the future of the socioenvironmental process linked to the Green Revolution in Colombia, the most important being how the actors of the present will or will not appropriate this past to reflect on matters as urgent as the construction of peace and as enduring as the role of science as an engine of social change.

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