

Sanabria's second step consisted in moving back and forth between events in the interlinked communities of each region and identifying the macro forces that accounted for local economic transformations and the nature of the articulation among them. It is in this section of the book that he develops his point that local processes cannot be understood simply in terms of global ones. The interplay between local and global processes, as well as individual attempts to negotiate their situations, determined shifts in potato agriculture, the emergence of a market for land in the Pampa, and the observed responses to coca eradication campaign in Chapare.

In the second half of this book Sanabria develops the third step of his analytical strategy: to identify who controls resources at national and local levels, and to examine the impact of power differences on the deployment and competition for resources. Using individual case studies he illustrates how income inequalities arose in each area. Missing from this analysis is a discussion of the political gaming within Pampa and of the use of political power to obtain state land grants, negotiate sharecropping arrangements, accumulate land, or gain important privileges. The omission is rather surprising since the author convincingly argues that "competition over resources is an eminently economic and political undertaking" (p. 197).

Less successful are his polemical attempts to place his analysis within the various theoretical writings in economic anthropology. One could argue with many of his summary portrayals, but what he says in the rest of the book is of greater weight than his 17-page introduction.

***Dangerous Encounters: Meanings of Violence in a Brazilian City.* DANIEL TOURO LINGER. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992. x + 289 pp., maps, tables, photographs, glossary, bibliography, index.**

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Dangerous Encounters sets out to explain the meaning of urban violence in Brazil and, more generally, how the Brazilian case may shed light on questions of interpersonal violence. Given the fact that violence is one of the realities of Brazilian daily life and one that puzzles and concerns all sectors of the population, a book that seeks to "integrate cultural, social, and psychological considerations into a substantially recursive general interpretive scheme" (pp. 15–16) is most promising.

Linger analyzes two cultural forms/rituals that, when juxtaposed, complement one another, although they "portray contradictory worlds" (p. 9). Carnival, Brazil's yearly party that often provides a context for eruptions of violence, and *briga*, defined by Linger as a lethal street confrontation between strangers or sworn enemies, are studied in São Luís, a small city in Northeastern Brazil. For São-luisenses, Carnival is "a chance to *desabafar*, to expel the frustration and anger inevitably accumulated during the previous year. If one does not relieve this internal pressure through harmless acts of venting

(*desabafos*), it may break through as aggression, creating a dangerous situation for the person as well as for others" (p. 15). According to Linger, "Carnivals and brigas put on public display an interior drama—the way individuals resolve, or fail to resolve, the inevitable tension between impulse and structure. São-luisenses conceive this tension in cybernetic terms" (p. 235).

Basically, Linger proposes an emic folk hydraulic model of Brazilian culture. Carnival is a ritual moment of release, or *desabafó*, where song, dance, and intense play serve to let out the frustrations of the year. While a standard analysis of earlier Carnivals describe it as a ritual where hierarchical relations are temporarily reversed—Linger mentions this literature in his own analysis—his own explanation sees Carnival and its accompanying *desabafó* through the lens of cybernetics. "Desabafó therefore operates as an equilibrating mechanism in what are culturally constituted, cybernetic theories of personality and of society" (p. 83). The advantage of Linger's cybernetic and synchronic approach is that it searches for explanations in the context of interaction rather than in that of historical constitution; in his detailed analysis of *briga*, his work is at its strongest.

Linger's treatment of *briga* explains why frustrations are not necessarily vented across class lines even if the source of poor people's humiliations are to be found in their everyday class relations. The chapters devoted to *briga* provide a beautiful integration of various theoretical perspectives that culminates in the analysis of one case at length, "The Murder of Sérgio." This case explains why Sérgio, an unarmed medical student experiencing various frustrations with his life, was executed in public at the peak of a bar fight by Cosme, an off-duty policeman with a reputation for violence. Linger uses a Batesonian notion of schismogenesis to explain how a series of humiliations and provocations between these two cultural actors enabled them to perform in a *briga* that culminated in a tragic death. The cycle of vengeance reflects Bateson's schismogenesis in the following manner: "In the end, because the moods of both men eventually become 'altered' (i.e., out of control; the interaction becomes what Bateson [1972b (1935)] would call 'schismogenic') through the exchange of insults, they find themselves in the cycle of vengeance that is *briga*" (p.117).

The advantage of this type of explanatory model is that it is simultaneously cultural (relating to the folk model), social (event centered), and psychological (accounting for individual variation), without reducing actors completely to automata or essentialized stereotypes of "the poor" or some other category; a shortcoming of this type of model is that it refuses to recognize Brazilian cultural constructions of class, race, and gender in their more complicated forms and is perhaps overly reminiscent of structural-functionalist analysis, although in reverse, since it explains a system that is dysfunctional and reproduces violence. Although Linger's treatment of *briga* as a folk hydraulic model is innovative and does seem to explain how violence can become incorporated and sustained within cultures, it assumes a very high level of intersubjective sharing

across a wide range of actors, something that anthropologists have recently called into question. Linger, for example, does not consider machismo important in his account. He claims rather that: "Not many men in São Luís, however, are machões, and commonly both men and women view the hair-trigger readiness to fight, the sexual bravado, and the hypersensitivity to insult that characterize machismo as foolish and even ridiculous" (p. 111). Linger does, however, mention that most of the physical violence of brigas is initiated by men, but only does so in a footnote (p. 246). The briga model proposed here seems to involve a gender dimension that remains unsatisfactorily addressed throughout the text. Similarly, Linger's briga model leaves class relations, and especially the image of the poor and their specific relationship to the wealthy, out of this analysis. Although he states that "brigas occur mainly (though not exclusively) within the lower socioeconomic strata" (p. 240), we are not given much "thick description" concerning what living as a member of that strata would look like.

Dangerous Encounters does provide an excellent interactional account of violence and succeeds in identifying the various elements composing an ethnopyschological folk model—a model of tension produced by humiliation, its healthy release, *desabofo* (seen in Carnival), and briga, the moment of breakdown in an imperfect system.

Looking for God in Brazil: The Progressive Catholic Church in Urban Brazil's Religious Arena. JOHN BURDICK. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. xii + 280 pp., notes, photographs, glossary, bibliography.

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Christian Base Communities (whose acronym is CEBs in Portuguese), inspired by liberation theology, have become widespread throughout Latin America, but are especially prominent in Brazil given the military repression of the 1960s and the deep socioeconomic disparities underscored by the Brazilian economic "miracle." This is a well-written, nuanced account of a CEB in São Jorge, a town of 8,000 inhabitants, in the district of Duque de Caxias, the largest suburb of Rio de Janeiro.

Burdick assesses the CEB in regard to its inability to attract new members, unlike Pentecostalism and the Afro-Brazilian religion of *umbanda*, as well as its lack of involvement in progressive social change. The author is candid about being a sympathetic critic; he wants "to assist Catholic pastoral agents and clergy by identifying external and internal obstacles to their project" (p. viii). While he occasionally uses the combative language of the religious marketplace, for example, the "battle for souls" (p. 5), he does not view Pentecostals or *Umbandistas* as the "obstacle" to Catholic attempts to create a viable community or a progressive movement. Indeed, CEBs and Catholicism occasion the majority of critique. Burdick convincingly argues that privileging the perspective of "the poor" in liberation theology masks both differences among poor people and the

dependence of CEBs on clerical authority. CEBs unintentionally favor a small working-class elite because of the emphasis on literacy and participation in weekly meetings. The very poor simply cannot afford to attend so many meetings, and are made to feel ashamed of their inability to read or to master the abstract language of liberation.

Burdick situates the CEB within "a kind of political economy of polyphony" (p. 228) to explore how the multiple voices of religion undergo further fracturing in response to different audiences. Although he does not include the full range of religious diversity in São Jorge (omitting two small pentecostal groups and two larger Baptist and Adventist churches), Burdick deftly describes Catholicism, Umbanda, and the large Assemblies of God congregation. He focuses on the CEB, but has a fine ear and eye for all four local waves of Catholic thought and practice historically. After introducing liberation theology and the CEB movement, Burdick looks at São Jorge as a town and "religious arena." He then devotes separate chapters to the links between religious discourse and class; gender and domestic conflicts; unmarried youth; racial hierarchies in Brazilian society; and Catholic and Pentecostal involvement in political movements.

The analyses of race, gender, and political involvement are especially subtle, both for the range of voices we hear and for how participants assess the structures in which they are enmeshed. "Negro" participants in Umbanda, for example, are far more subversive in their stance on race and racism in Brazil than are "white" practitioners. Similarly, Burdick shows nicely how Pentecostalism cannot be dismissed as hopelessly apolitical or reactionary. Indeed, Pentecostals often become more effective participants in local working-class politics than do CEB members.

Burdick reserves his major critique for the theological stance of CEBs; rather than the clear distinction between secular and sacred worlds found in Manichaean "cults of transformation," like Pentecostalism or Umbanda, CEBs remain a "cult of continuity" (p. 151). By insisting on the importance of worldly identities, Catholicism makes it difficult to develop an oppositional discourse to the deeply rooted racism and sexism of Brazilian society, and remains too conciliatory for the hard-nosed confrontations of class-based politics.

His emphasis on discrete "cults" seems at odds with Burdick's interest in the reinterpretation of religious discourse by distinct audiences. It is least convincing in his discussion of unmarried youth. Neither Catholics nor Pentecostals have great success in recruiting the young. Yet Burdick argues that the marginal advantage enjoyed by Pentecostals is due to their clear-cut shift in identity and ready alternatives to worldly temptations. That CEBs require youth to perform a "psychological balancing act" (p. 124) between renouncing and accepting youth culture, however, is reminiscent of old arguments about "marginal" people caught between cultures. It belies both the degree to which we all, and certainly Brazilian Pentecostals, constantly juggle different identities, and the author's own emphasis on fractured discourses. Indeed, Burdick notes that even Pentecostal youth are not immune to the