

Book Review/ Reseña

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***Antifascism(s) in Latin America and the Caribbean: From the Margins to the Center.* Edited by Sandra McGee Deutsch and Jorge A. Nállim. Cambridge University Press, 2025. 268 pp. \$120 hardcover or ebook. ISBN: 9781009522083.**

This volume is a definitive contribution to the historiography of antifascism in Latin America. Editors Sandra McGee Deutsch and Jorge A. Nállim argue that antifascist movements in Latin America have been understudied and have often been viewed as marginal to European antifascism, and the works that have discussed antifascism in the region have focused on European émigrés rather than Latin Americans themselves. The contributors to this edited volume detail the ways Latin Americans have resisted fascism in their own national context; as Deutsch and Nállim write, the contributors “focus on locals . . . and on appropriations, resignifications, and transformations in local and regional contexts.”

The volume emphasizes the political diversity among antifascists, led by Communists in the 1920s and 1930s, but including anarchists and democrats. Resistance narratives such as anti-imperialism and Communism are complicated by antifascists’ opposition to European fascist regimes, especially after the German-Soviet nonaggression pact in 1939 (taking Communists loyal to the Comintern out of the antifascist movement until Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941) and the entry of the United States into World War II (making support for the Allies a vital plank of antifascism, while the Roosevelt administration maintained support for authoritarian regimes, especially in the circum-Caribbean).

The book brings a sharp focus on gender and ethnicity. Gender is, of course, an important consideration given fascism’s own forms of masculinity and traditional gender roles, while blood and soil nationalism excludes nonfavored ethnic identities. Cara K. Snyder’s chapter on a Brazilian transgender soccer team in the era of President Jair Bolsonaro seemed at first glance to be anachronistic, but very nicely complemented the work of the

other authors who studied women's roles in antifascist movements. Pedro Cameselle-Pesce describes how Afro-Uruguayans mobilized in opposition to Italy's invasion of Ethiopia. John Lear notes that *indigenismo* was an ideological tool for antifascist Mexican artists, and Deutsch and Nállim note the same for Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre's APRA party in Peru. Patricia Harms reports that the Guatemalan women who edited several literary journals in the 1930s and 1940s identified as *ladina*, an uncertain ethnic space between white and indigenous in Jorge Ubico's fascist-style dictatorship, and Deutsch and Nállim note that a female antifascist group in Argentina included *criollas*, an ambiguous ethnic category that often means mixed race.

Seven of the nine contributors focus on cases of antifascist activities in the period from 1924 to 1945. Sandra Pujals reviews the role of the Comintern in organizing antifascist activities in the circum-Caribbean. Lear analyzes antifascist iconography in works by Mexican artists, especially the work of Diego Rivera. Cameselle-Pesce studies the role of Uruguay's relatively developed labor movement and the country's "democratic exceptionalism" in antifascist mobilization, especially in the 1930s, when Uruguay's own government had fascistic elements.

Vanesa Miseres compares the experiences of women in Chile and Argentina, both among those who joined or supported the Republican cause in Spain and those who founded feminist political magazines in their home countries. Harms covers similar topics in her discussion of women editors of literary magazines in Guatemala. Aaron Coy Moulton also discusses the role of women in opposition to the Tiburcio Carías dictatorship in Honduras, and the complication of support for the Allies' cause while the US supported the Carías, Somoza, and Trujillo regimes. Nállim focuses on writers' associations in Argentina and Chile, with different political trajectories in the 1930s, given the authoritarian Concordancia governments in Argentina but the more antifascist Popular Front governments, which included the Radical, Socialist, and Communist parties, in Chile.

The final two chapters are more contemporary. Ariel Mae Lambe discusses the status of elderly Cuban veterans of the Spanish Civil War in revolutionary Cuba. The legacy of Cuban antifascism in the 1930s was not emphasized by the Castro regime, as Castro surprisingly maintained diplomatic and trade relations with Franco's Spain. Long after Franco died, some Cubans who fought against Franco in the 1930s were celebrated, but only if their politics after 1959 were deemed appropriate by the regime. Snyder's chapter on Brazil also considers antifascism's legacies in the fields of sport, national identity, and gender identity, using the methodology of deep reading of several photoshoots of the trans *futebol* team members.

That Latin America would have indigenous antifascist movements should not be surprising since the region has had indigenous forms of fascism among its varieties of authoritarianism. Corporatism and integralist nationalist ideologies were common in the region in the early and mid-twentieth century, from Mexico's *sinarquismo* to Peronism in Argentina. Moulton discusses this point regarding the Carías dictatorship in Honduras, and Nállim provides an interesting discussion of antifascists' opposition to Peronism (such that antifascists celebrated the military overthrow of Perón in 1955). Deutsch and Nállim do note that Latin Americanists need to more thoroughly research the complexities of fascist racial attitudes, but the volume's overall inattention to Latin America's own development of ideologies closely related to Mussolini-style fascism is perhaps a weakness.

The coherence of the edited volume is quite remarkable and makes *Antifascism(s)* a definitive contribution to the literature on antifascism, the history of opposition movements in Latin America, and ethnic and especially gender identities' intersection with political movements. The well-written chapters make the book accessible to undergraduates and essential for historians of the 1930s and 1940s. This volume is also timely as the lessons of antifascist movements from the past are highly relevant to our own political moment.

Brian Turner is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, VA. His publications include studies of Paraguayan politics and history and of Mexican politics. He is past president and treasurer of the Middle Atlantic Council of Latin American Studies (MACLAS).
