

These failings are all the more sad in light of the fact that Lodwick's study provides useful raw material to show that imperialism is a complex and essentially cultural process, and often perpetrated with the best of intentions. However appealing and worthy a subject Miss Moninger is for a biography in other respects, unless "casual cultural imperialism" is taken more fully into account, the central realities of her life and career remain to be analyzed.

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Robert F. Arnove. *Education as Contested Terrain: Nicaragua, 1979-1993*. Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1994. Pp. 234. U.S.\$54.95 cloth.

This comprehensive and well-designed book analyzes educational changes in Nicaragua in two contrasting historical periods. The first is the Sandinista one that began with the triumph of the popular revolution in 1979. The second is the post-Sandinista, under the leadership of Violeta Chamorro, who took power in 1990 as a result of elections within the context of the U.S.-supported counter-revolutionary war. The underlying research theme is the role of education in the processes of political and economic transformation in Nicaragua. The scope of the research is enriched by the two contrasting historical projects that the two periods represent.

The author explores the role of education in the unfolding of the Sandinista popular, nationalistic, anti-imperialist, political project and of the new model of capitalist accumulation based on alternative social relations of production and mixed forms of ownership. He then examines the role of education in the counter-revolutionary transformative process led by Chamorro and the Union Nacional Opositora. Chamorro tried to reintegrate the country into the world capitalist economy, to accord priorities to market mechanisms, and to bring back values that had been questioned by the revolution (for example, traditional conservative Catholic values).

Historical reality has helped to make this book an interesting one, Chamorro and her right-of-centre coalition won by a margin of fourteen percentage points. The Frente Sandinista por la Liberación Nacional remained the single party with the largest number of votes. The setting generated conditions for fascinating contradictions and dialectical plays to dispute political spaces.

The book begins with a discussion of the Sandinista regime's aims and achievements: attempts at expansion and democratization and concomitant changes in the political culture; limitations and setbacks growing out of

internal difficulties; conflicts and contradictions resulting from the impact of the U.S.-supported war; the literacy crusade; the Atlantic coast issue; and the battle over private schools and curricula.

It then examines the Chamorro period: the attempts to change education within the context of a neoliberal socio-economic plan in line with international financial institutions; the new educational *Guidelines*—which denounced the deviation from traditional values—and the response by a leading Sandinista educator. Arnove questions whether these policies would contribute to further conflict or to the reconciliation of differences between contending forces. He describes the battles over curricular changes and values; textbooks' replacement; the development of civics, morality, and politeness as a new subject; and issues of human sexuality and family gender roles. He also deals with the privatization of education, the move to weaken the teachers' union and the students' union, the political culture in schools, and the resistance to the reinstallation of Catholic conservative values.

In a chapter on higher education, the author discusses the problems universities face stemming from the "neoliberal model of economic development that has generated widespread poverty and intensified the gap between the rich and poor in individual nations and between the North and South" (pp. 160–61).

According to Arnove, literacy and adult basic educational policies were arenas abandoned after the 1990 change of government. Relevant issues here are initiatives from nongovernmental organizations, conflict over content, and discussion of the promise and limits of literacy programs to promote social change and reconciliation. The strong influence of a very conservative Catholic Church is revealed here. The book concludes with serious questions about the often overemphasized transformative role of education in generating a new political culture and greater prosperity.

There is no doubt that this is a well-researched, powerful book and a very important contribution to scholarship in the area of educational change, especially in Latin America. Arnove's conclusion calls for caution in thinking about the power of education systems to contribute to dramatic changes in the formation of a new person, the creation of a new political culture, or the fostering of a model of capitalist accumulation. The book certainly unveils the limitations of the transformative power of education in Nicaragua. I tend to concur with the author, although the U.S.-supported war created an overwhelmingly disturbing social setting. The book also recreates the internal contradictions of the left in its search for a grassroots democratic model while still being tied to some elements of the vanguard tradition. It brings out the difficulties in challenging values rooted in tradition, no matter how oppressive

they are. The issues are discussed in national and international contexts with richness and rigour.

The final reflection, however, puzzles me. Arnove writes, "What schools can do best, if they are given the leeway and support to do so, is teach communicative and computational competencies and cultivate the reasoning powers, ethical commitments, and aesthetic sensibilities of individuals of all ages" (p. 211). He goes on to say that the goal of education for democracy and for critical, participatory citizenship, and the respect for human differences and contrasting views are worthy ideals (p. 211). No doubt these are plausible goals and ideals. But I wonder if the author in setting these goals and claiming greater autonomy for the education system is separating the discourse from the concrete socio-political practice. For example, are these goals and aims attainable in the Nicaraguan society, where, as Arnove shows, there exists an incredible socio-economic gap produced by the economic model and reinforced by the demands of the International Monetary Fund? Perhaps the challenge is too overwhelming. However, this book is an excellent account of contemporary educational history in Nicaragua.

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Christophe Charle, dir. *Les universités germaniques, XIXe-XXe siècles*. Paris: Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique/Service d'histoire de l'éducation, 1994. Pp. 167. FF 70,00.

The beginnings in North America of systematic postgraduate education, and the rise of the research university on both sides of the Atlantic are often credited to the German example. To take one American case, the Johns Hopkins University opened in 1876 with the aim of matching or even surpassing the German university. Titular professors at Johns Hopkins were distinguished scholars, dominant in university government and influential on American social and industrial policy. In this they differed little from their "mandarin" colleagues in Berlin and Göttingen. Most Johns Hopkins men studied in Prussian, Saxon, and Bavarian *Fakultäten*, and Hopkins students were encouraged to do likewise. By 1900, across the United States, universities and colleges claimed to be open to the winds of Germanic science, but not, be it said, at the cost of the traditional American emphasis on undergraduate teaching.

In Canada, the German example produced similar effects, but on a different timetable and in a different way. Recent biographies of Robert