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multinational oil companies from the country. Even so, Venezuelan production, which accounted for 34 percent of the cartel's initial output, declined steadily.

Chapter 8, on immigration and economic growth, is interesting because it shows how migration can play a role in a country's economic development. This was particularly true for the United States in the nineteenth century, for instance. Venezuela and other Latin American countries at the same time also encouraged European immigration, with varying degrees of success. The distinction made by the author between his primary example of two contrasting groups of migrants, one solely from Colombia and the other from the whole of Europe, is an artificial one with little heuristic value. Finally, chapter 11, on the political economy of industrial policy, suffers from the author's desire to wander into the general realm of politics, as we are given a fascinating though flawed history of the country interspaced by a discussion of industrial policy. Other chapters also suffer from a lack of historical perspective, relying too heavily on certain sources that have not fully understood the dynamics of what was happening at the time. On a more general point, it is a pity that some of the chapters were not edited more rigorously for content, grammatical mistakes, and ease of reading. The last is particularly relevant given the level of econometrics in the book. Hopefully, this will not deter a wider audience from reading the book, because it does bring a breath of fresh air to the wider debate on economic growth and politics. The story that unfolds in this excellent contribution to the literature is a good one, and the book is likely to become essential reading for understanding Venezuela's economic decline during the last two decades of the twentieth century.

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Screening Neoliberalism: Transforming Mexican Cinema, 1988–2012.

By IGNACIO M. SÁNCHEZ PRADO. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2014. Notes. Bibliography. Index. viii, 291 pp. Cloth, \$55.00.

The product of cinephilic passion and impressive erudition, well argued and comprehensive in scope, this book may well be the definitive critical study in English of Mexican cinema at the turn of the new millennium. In several ways, the book picks up where other recent texts addressing contemporary Mexican cinema leave off. Covering filmmaking activity over four presidential *sexenios* (from Carlos Salinas de Gortari to Felipe Calderón), the analysis extends from the early nineties, when the state loosened its reins on the film industry, and into the period when film exhibition (as opposed to television) became skewed toward the middle and upper classes as the industry was privatized and Mexican producers, actors, and directors began aggressively seeking opportunities abroad (especially in the United States). Hence the term "neoliberal" in the book's title refers to both a new model of film production and distribution and to an ideological reorientation of the mainstream Mexican cinematic message.

Through a series of carefully interwoven and meticulously cross-referenced exegeses of a diverse array of films (from authorial statements to generic entertainment),

Ignacio M. Sánchez Prado attempts to answer questions that most other scholars have only dared to ask, namely, can a “Mexican” cinema exist without significant state sponsorship, market protection, and promotion? The answer that the author astutely provides is “yes, and no.” No, if one is looking for a renewal of what the author, after film historian Charles Ramírez Berg, calls a “cinema of solitude,” a type of Mexican cinematic exceptionalism whereby, enveloped in formal innovation and bold thematic material, explorations of gendered and cultural identity are hitched to the quest for nationhood, all with the institutional support of the state. Yes, if one is willing to contemplate the postexceptionalist millennial cinema on its own terms, as a middle class-oriented medium that, on the one hand, still features the exhibition of authorial experimentation in the state-run Cineteca Nacional and at film festivals (pp. 196–97, 208), and, on the other, relocates the sociopolitical (albeit with new stakes attached and different degrees of legibility) within the commercial sphere.

In narrating the history and mapping the textual landscape of this complex transformation, the author’s goal is twofold: first, to demonstrate the resilience of Mexican cinema even in its postnational iterations, and second, to register the stylistic and thematic fallout from the physical and ideological distanciation of the medium from the massive popular audience that was (and continues to be, with televisual reruns of Golden Age favorites) its sustenance. Sánchez Prado largely achieves this goal first by conducting film research on-site, which allows the inclusion of many lesser-known (and less commercially successful) films that he compares to national and international blockbusters, and second by constantly taking into account the targeted audience for each category of film and, by extension, bringing into relief the “spectator-in-the-text.” (Fittingly, the book begins with a graphic description of movie attendance in a working-class neighborhood and ends with references to high-end shopping mall venues with tickets priced at twice the national minimum wage [p. 247n1].) Unlike other strictly chronological or thematically organized studies of Mexican cinema, Sánchez Prado’s book is structured into four historically overlapping segments that gradually trace the arc from early nineties uncertainty and disenchantment to post-Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) global initiatives on the part of vanguard auteurs, such as Carlos Reygadas, as well as the Oscar-nominated and Hollywood-bound “three amigos,” Guillermo del Toro, Alfonso Cuarón, and Alejandro González Iñárritu. Each segment focuses on a distinct discursive trend associated with neoliberalism: the nostalgia for, or parodying of, waning *mexicanidad* (chapter 1), the reinscription of national identity in new genre cinema (romantic comedy, discussed in chapter 2), attempts at critically addressing sociopolitical realities within neoliberal frameworks (chapter 3), and the parenthetical or minimalist referencing of Mexico in new transnational coproductions (chapter 4). One of the strengths of this book is that it is metacritical, engaging in an intense conversation with previous and contemporary studies of Mexican cinema; it is also informed by recent theoretical literature on national cinema, cultural citizenship, narratology (especially the open ending [pp. 118–19]), and cinematic genres, and it hence provides a valuable scholarly resource.

The book’s main weakness is that Sánchez Prado ultimately drops the discussion of women’s cinema and feminist intervention that is rolled out in the first two chapters, and

the author shows some timidity in approaching producers as direct sources of information. The conclusion appears to have been written in haste, trying to catch up to 2013 rather than casting a retrospective, synthetic glance. Nevertheless, it is a highly readable book that will easily complement both previous and contemporary texts in a graduate course or add depth to undergraduate survey courses.

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Zero Hunger: Political Culture and Antipoverty Policy in Northeast Brazil.

By AARON ANSELL. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

Photographs. Maps. Figures. Tables. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography.

Index. xiii, 239 pp. Paper, \$32.95.

Northeastern Brazil has long been characterized as a region dominated by traditional social and political patronage. Scholarship on the postindependence period has found patronage to be at the root of social and economic underdevelopment, an obstacle to democracy, and, ultimately, a cause of regional backwardness. Anthropologist Aaron Ansell has written a thoroughgoing critique of recent academic and political approaches to patronage based on studying the implementation of Fome Zero (Zero Hunger) and Bolsa Família programs in the pseudonymous *município* of Passarinho in the Brazilian state of Piauí. Ansell challenges the notion that patronage is a locus of economic and political exploitation and instead proposes a new model for understanding patronage termed “intimate hierarchy,” in which patrons and clients are potentially, if not economically and politically, equal and thus agree to exchanges that are mutually beneficial. He resuscitates Sidney Mintz and Eric Wolf’s notion that horizontal and vertical exchanges are complementary, and he presents poor rural Piauienses as rational actors who seek to improve their economic situation by engaging in exchanges with local politicians and state officials.

In his study of rural villages, Ansell details the pervasiveness of hunger and its social manifestation as the “evil eye”—the desire for a meal or a neighbor’s cow or crops. He draws a distinction between what he calls “ocular wealth,” or “visible and visually impressive forms of wealth” (p. 52), which is subject to envy and the evil eye, and “purse wealth,” or “cash, checks, [and] government welfare cards” (p. 62), which is immune from the evil eye. Ansell also outlines labor patterns, including the traditional but less common *mutirão*, or collective community labor, and the more common “‘day-trading’ compact,” or labor exchange, between two farmers (p. 59). In addition to horizontal exchanges, Passarinho’s residents engaged in vertical exchanges with economically and politically connected village leaders. It is onto these relationships that Ansell maps the effects of Zero Hunger and Bolsa Família. Ansell focuses on the ways in which officials used these programs to combat hunger, circumvent traditional patronage, and break the dominance of conservative local mayors who did not support the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT). Ansell argues that officials had little understanding of the complexities of patronage in Passarinho, overestimating the degree of elite coercion, ignoring the