Stephen J.C. Andes and Julia G. Young, eds.

Local Church, Global Church: Catholic Activism in Latin America from Rerum novarum to Vatican II. Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2016. Pp. 353. Hb, \$59.95.

As their subtitle suggests, editors Stephen J.C. Andes and Julia G. Young include eleven chapters plus their own introduction and final reflections on “Catholic Activism in Latin America from *Rerum novarum* to Vatican II.” Throughout their essays, contributors buttress the editors’ contentions that “increased focus on social justice, lay organizing, and clerical activism [...] were actually well underway by the late nineteenth century” and that this earlier, pre-Vatican II period was “remarkably transnational” (xiii).

Part I, “Catholic Social Encyclicals across Borders,” includes chapters by Lisa M. Edwards and Dain Borges. Edwards’s well-placed first chapter focusses on the ways that Vatican officials issued guidelines to help Catholics respond to the threats of socialism and secularism, c.1850–1930. Readers gain an understanding of the general political and social environment of the period, but are provided few concrete examples of how church and lay leaders responded to the changing political and social environment or why socialism and secularism so threatened institutional interests. Borges’s beautifully written entry allows the reader to understand the deplorable state of the Brazilian church in the nineteenth century and its steady amelioration during the first decades of the twentieth. His accounts of Padre José Antônio Maria Ibiapina, Antônio Conselheiro, Júlio Maria, and Dom Sebastião Leme are coupled with inciteful comments on the lost opportunity of most church leaders to champion the abolitionist movement and to dramatize the crippling effect of state funding which supported and at the same time stifled the church.

Part II, “Martyrdom and Catholic Renewal in the Mexican Revolution,” contains chapters by Matthew Butler, Robert Curley, Yves Solis, and Stephen J.C. Andes. Butler’s long, detailed examination of the Mexican Nocturnal Adoration men’s confraternity documents and demonstrates how theologically sophisticated members in Mexico City and Puebla began this movement in 1900, which became strong in rural areas by the 1920s. “Adorers” viewed attendance at Mass and public invocation of the Sacred Heart as heroic actions that would help the church survive secular persecution. Those who wanted “a good religious reason to move from symbolic to bloodier forms of sacrifice in the service of the church, even to Cristero militancy, could find it in the rituals and rhythms of the Nocturnal Adoration” (90). Curley’s superbly documented chapter uses Francis Kelly’s *The Book of Red and Yellow* (Chicago: The Catholic Church Extension Society of the United States of America, 1915), sixty-one

letters included in consular dispatches, and various affidavits to document the real and perceived persecution of Mexican clergy and laity during the revolution, and to demonstrate how these accounts influenced American Catholics to decry the treatment of church and faithful in Mexico. Solis's fascinating chapter uses documents from the Vatican's Secret Archives to explore the role of the "U," a secret Catholic Mexican society founded in 1915, whose members operated in at least fifty-two areas and whose goal was no less than to destroy the postrevolutionary state. While the chapter demonstrates how "forces outside local and national Catholicism influenced the trajectory of Catholic activism," unclear are the ways these "activists" demonstrated an increased focus on social justice prior to Vatican II (127). Editor Andes's engaging mini-biography of Sofía del Valle, charged by Mexican Catholic officials to influence US Catholic opinion regarding the persecution faced by Mexicans with a view toward raising money for Mexican Catholic Action, demonstrates how this indefatigable promoter of conventional spaces for women, following the example of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–97), serves as an example of an expanding Catholic international society during the first half of the twentieth century.

Part III, "Fighting for the Soul of the University," consists of articles by Jaime M. Pensado and Colin M. Snider. Pensado's forceful treatment of the Corporation of Mexican Students, founded in 1957 with support from the Mexican episcopate and under the tutelage of David Mayagoitia, S.J., finally, for the first time in this anthology, focuses on "the social commitments of the Catholic Church [...] [and its] young and socially committed activists" (176). He concludes by cautioning against "the caricature of the right and the Catholic movement during the period as monolithic, isolated, and/or merely reactionary" (180). Turning to Brazil's Catholic University Youth (JUC), Snider builds upon the themes in the previous chapter by exploring how many of the nations' "generally privileged university youth" committed, in 1959, to "political action as part of its evangelical commitment" (187, 190).

Part IV, "Development or Liberation?" contains articles by Catherine C. LeGrand, Mary Roldán, and Susan Fitzpatrick-Behrens. LeGrand offers a fascinating account of the Antigonish Movement of Canada and Latin America and, like the two previous chapters, demonstrates how progressive streams of Catholicism existed prior to Vatican II and contributed to the later theology of liberation. Begun in eastern Canada in the 1920s and 1930s, eventually tens of thousands of the movement's adults formed study groups that promoted subsidiarity in Catholic social teaching, many of them searching "for a 'third way,' neither free-market capitalism nor state socialism" (211). Building upon the Antigonish Movement, in 1959, St. Francis Xavier University established the Coady International Institute, where more than two thousand students

from over one hundred countries learned about Antigonish-inspired cooperative movements which “gave rise to the first Christian-based communities” in Latin America (229).

Careful line-editing and attention to spelling and accents apparent in all previous chapters comes to a sudden end in Roldán's treatment of Popular Cultural Action (ACPO) in mid-twentieth century Colombia. One wonders if an earlier draft was mistakenly inserted as the final version. The author details the development and growth of Latin America's first Catholic radio network and the growing interest and participation of Colombian lay and secular leaders in several international seminars. This reviewer yearned for more information about the content of those radio transmissions and a better understanding of how the cozy working relationship between US and Colombian government and banking officials could have “laid the foundations for participatory and transformative forms of social action that emerged after Vatican II,” especially since a deeply committed activist such as Camilo Torres “express[ed] [...] frustration and disappointment with the limits of transnational social activism beholden to collaborations between the Vatican, members of the Latin American church hierarchy, secular elites, and private corporate interests” (246, 272). Fitzpatrick-Behrens's well researched contribution to the volume describes the rapid growth of Maya cooperatives immediately prior to and after Arbenz's military overthrow in Guatemala. Catholic missionaries, particularly Maryknoll, pioneered the development of cooperatives in which Maya laity served as leaders with civil and religious responsibilities. The author notes that “the very success of Mayas in the cooperative movement later made them targets of military repression” (303). While Pensado had rightly cautioned the reader not to resort to caricatures of the right when assessing the hierarchical church in pre-Vatican II Latin America, it still seems rather odd that Fitzpatrick-Behrens does not provide a serious assessment of Archbishop Mariano Rossell y Arellano's influence on events in Guatemala.

In their “final reflections,” the editors reaffirm their thesis: “A flawed teleology exists in the historiography of Catholic activism in Latin America. In this narrative the Catholic Church before the Second Vatican Council was conservative, preservationist, concerned with its institutional interests as opposed to the plight of the poor and fundamentally antimodern” (305). “Catholic activists,” they state, “began clearing new paths for the Catholic Church's mission for several generations before the 1960s” (308). Their reliance on the words “activism” and “activist” to make their case is instructive. Few scholars would doubt that activism and activists—promoting their own causes—did not exist prior to Vatican II. Less clear are the ways that most of the “activists” considered in the first half of the book could be seen as precursors to a movement that

emphasized interpreting scripture through the plight of the poor and changing sinful seriocomic structures that keep poor people poor.

Though multi-author anthologies are not meant to be encyclopedic, the scant attention paid to the Society of Jesus was surprising, especially since some members espoused the pre-Vatican II commitment to social justice that the editors were keen to document. The Society is not included in the Index, nor do chapters examine the influences of distinguished Jesuits such as Belgium-born Bernardo Bergöend (founder of Catholic Action for Mexican Youth, 1913), Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro (martyred in 1927 for his activism during the Cristero War), or Saint Alberto Hurtado (staunch promoter of social Catholicism and the founder of Chile's "Hogar de Cristo"). Contributors apparently did not consult Jeffrey Klaiber's essential work *The Jesuits in Latin America, 1549–2000* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2009).

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