Adrian H. Hearn

Diaspora and Trust: Cuba, Mexico, and the Rise of China. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2016. 266 pp. (Cloth US\$ 89.95)

Diaspora and Trust offers readers a comparative look at the impact of the rise of China in Cuba and Mexico. A unique blending of macrolevel economic analysis and microlevel ethnographic work, Adrian Hearn moves fluidly between different scales of analysis, steeping readers in a discussion of international trade agreements and shifting national economic policies, while inviting them into the ramshackle building of a Chinese association in Havana's barrio chino, or a Tijuana taxi cab where local actors humanize statistics and acronyms. At the intersection of his macro- and micro-analyses of Chinese-Cuban and Chinese-Mexican economic relations is the concept of trust. Hearn argues that the Chinese concept of *guanxi* (relationship or social connection) to which trust is integral is the key to the new paradigm of socioeconomic development emerging in both Mexico and Cuba. The social capital that can be generated from *guanxi* is rooted in Chinese diasporic communities and can lay the groundwork for the kinds of vertical synergies that will help governments make the most of China's rise while containing its potentially devastating effects.

It is a wonder that Hearn is able to pack 15 years-worth of ethnography in two countries into 222 pages, covering China's relations with Cuba and Mexico and those of its diaspora communities with Cubans and Mexicans since the 1850s. In addition to being remarkably concise, his ambitious methodology juxtaposes interviews with Chinese, Cuban, and Mexican government officials as well as street vendors and taxi drivers with analysis of government documents, corporate agreements, statistics databases, and newspaper reports. What emerges is a compelling and multifaceted study that leaves readers wanting more. Hearn's four tightly constructed body chapters are flanked by an introduction and conclusion in which he draws out the main arguments of the book as well as his own methodological, historiographical, policy-oriented contributions.

The first chapter focuses on Sino-Cuban relations. Hearn explores Cuba's 2011 *Lineamientos* reforms, which opened up a private sector in Cuba, in the context of China's efforts to push Cuba toward its own brand of market socialism since the 1990s. Under Raúl Castro's administration (2008–), Sino-Cuban relations have flourished and the Cuban government has responded positively to Chinese encouragement and pressure to change its economic policies. Chapter 2 turns to Mexico. If, in Cuba, the Chinese are pushing the Cuban government to relinquish some control over the economy to stimulate growth, in neoliberal Mexico, China's economic presence is ravishing the manufacturing

sector, leading to the painful realization that the state must intervene to protect its vulnerable industries and producers. Chapters 3 and 4 explain how the Cuban and Mexican governments could benefit from investing in the development of vertical synergies built on horizontal linkages as each is compelled to reassess its economic policy in the wake of China's rise. Delving deeply into the Chinese diaspora communities in Cuba and Mexico, these chapters show how initiatives built on *guanxi* are leading to promising collaborations with China-based investors. Hearn believes that if the Cuban and Mexican governments can learn to value these horizontal linkages for what they are worth, Cuba might be able to harness China's rise and Mexico might have a chance at mitigating its destructive power.

The choice of Mexico and Cuba for the book is particularly successful for many reasons. As Hearn himself indicates, both countries have historic connections to China and long-established Chinese diasporic communities. Both countries also share an intimate and tense historical relationship with the United States that has shaped, for better and worse, their economies and societies. Given these broad similarities, Mexicans and Cubans have often thought through shared problems together, or in relation to one another. For example, in Chapter 3, Hearn cites a Cuban urban planning specialist who in 2011 looked to Mexico's losing battle against Chinese contraband as an example of what might befall Cuba if it did not proceed cautiously with its economic opening. Such an example points to a triangular relationship between Cuba, Mexico, and China deeply informed by the economic and geostrategic position of both Latin American countries vis-à-vis the United States. Indeed, as Hearn points out, in the context of the rise of China, Mexico and Cuba, which constitute together profitable and vulnerable borderlands between the United States and Latin America, are becoming testing grounds for Sino-U.S. relations. Perhaps Hearn might have contextualized his choice to focus on Mexico and Cuba in a broader Latin American and even hemispheric American context. Such a move would have helped readers understand why centering attention on Mexico and Cuba is useful for understanding the impact of China's rise in Latin America and the Sino-U.S. confrontation that it augurs. As it stands, Hearn renders a book that is well researched, refined, important, and timely. Most impressive of all, *Diaspora and Trust* is accessible without lacking complexity or sophistication. It will appeal to academics and nonacademics equally.

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