and sustainability more broadly. Ultimately, for the health of the environment, it is not what you say that matters but what you do.

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Rebecca Janzen, *Liminal Sovereignty: Mennonites and Mormons in Mexican Culture*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2018. Pp. 254. Hardcover, $95.00 USD.

The Mennonites and Mormons who migrated to Mexico between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries do not fit easily into Mexican cultural norms. Both groups migrated in order to practice their particular religious ideals more freely. For Mennonites the aim was to retain German as their primary educational and social language, at a time when this was being threatened by Canadian government policies, and to avoid the use of modern technology. Mormons were drawn by Mexico's flexible definition of family which allowed for the continuation of polygamy, a practice threatened by US laws. Traditionally perceived to occupy a marginalized space in Mexican society, the Mennonites and Mormons are granted a space at the edges of the nation by Janzen. She argues that these two groups align with central tenets of Mexican identity, including the concept of *mestizaje* (a term for Mexicans of mixed ethnicities), and have done so from the beginning of the twentieth century to the times of violence and death in the early twenty-first.

The book is organized into five chapters structured as a series of "windows" within a loosely organized chronological approach. Janzen begins her account with the arrival of the Mennonites in Mexico and the return of Mormons to Mexico, both during the 1920s (Mormons left Mexico in 1912 due to the upheaval created by the Mexican Revolution, 1910–1917). Chapter one focuses on how migration documents and photographs depict these two groups. Chapters two and three address the ways Mennonites and Mormons experienced the issue of land redistribution during the 1930, 1940s and 1950s, one of the principal features of the post-revolutionary constitution. In chapter four the book leaps chronologically to the 1980s, focusing on the involvement of Mennonites and Mormons as drug traffickers and victims within the rising drug trade at the US–Mexico border. Janzen contextualizes this

activity with reference to the economic debt crisis of 1982 and the subsequent World Bank–mandated neoliberal reforms. The fifth and final chapter explores love, technology, and death in Mennonite communities from the Mexican perspective, through several films. Janzen's particular use of these windows "reveal the views of government officials, ejidos [communal landholding organizations], novelists, and television producers towards these groups," concluding that they reveal how "Mennonites and Mormons have been viewed in different ways: with hostility, uneasy acceptance and, on occasion, with admiration (xxix)." Janzen employs a wide variety of sources including visual and print culture, photographs, film and television, comics and government archival documents.

Despite the presence of Mennonites and Mormons in Mexico for almost a century, relatively little scholarly attention has been directed to these groups and Janzen's work begins to fill a critical historiographic gap. Although some aspects of the research here are compelling, such as the chapters on agrarian reform and drug trafficking, the work requires a tighter focus to support the author's primary argument that Mennonites and Mormons do not exist apart from Mexican culture and society. It is notable that Janzen applies cultural perspectives from the US towards the Amish to make these conclusions and even draws on US television dramas to seek to understand the nature of Mexican attitudes towards Mennonites. While one of the most fruitful historical subjects is in the area of agrarian reform, the author fails to interrogate government decisions on land reform in favour of Mennonite landowners through the lenses of classism and racism which continue to impact indigenous communities. While the connections between cultural sources and historical events offer up new questions regarding immigration and identity, as well as issues of exceptionalism, the author's admission that many of her "conclusions are possible only through the work of the imagination" (85) weakens the work's overall effectiveness. However, it sets the stage for further archival work and in-depth community oral history to substantiate the arguments set out here.

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