

For her work on the more contemporary period, Frazier herself enters as a participant-observer. She accompanies the Sebastián Acevedo Movement Against Torture and other human rights and worker actions. Frazier's immersion clearly enhances her (and therefore, our) understanding of the power of collective memory. She conceptually centers on Chile's northern frontier. In an instructive example of how memories shift and are redeployed over the course of a century, Frazier analyzes the infamous 1907 massacre at the Escuela Santa María of Iquique. She traces how cathartic, empathetic, and sympathetic collective memories reframe the massacre at different historical and political junctures.

It is somewhat difficult to follow the nuances of Frazier's distinction among forms of memory, and we might wonder how an empathetic collective memory pattern can conceptually capture the militant political expression that increasingly challenged the state in revolutionary terms in the 1960s and 1970s. Yet her analysis of and insight into the contemporary patterns of nostalgic lament among those who have struggled, resisted, and lost so much are powerful. She urges us to appreciate what can be learned from close attention to the borders, the songs and sounds, poetry, greeting cards, calls for remembrance, toward action. This is a welcome and serious substantiation of the significance of emotion, soul, and heart that constitutes popular identification with, or rejection of, or outcry against the state.

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REFERENCE

Hite, Katherine, and Leonardo Morlino. 2004. Problematizing the Links Between Authoritarian Legacies and "Good" Democracy. In *Authoritarian Legacies and Democracy in Latin America and Southern Europe*, ed. Hite and Paola Cesarini. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004. 25–83.

J. Christopher Kovats-Bernat, *Sleeping Rough in Port-au-Prince: An Ethnography of Street Children and Violence in Haiti*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2006. Maps, photos, tables, notes, bibliography, index, 249 pp; hardcover \$59.95.

This book addresses a topic, street children in developing countries, that has only recently attracted scholarly attention. The literature on Haiti, in particular, is heavily weighted toward analyses of this country's political history and diplomatic relations, rather than anthropological studies of its most vulnerable citizens. Homeless children, an everpresent sight in the streets of Port-au-Prince and the most moving examples of Haiti's abysmal economic situation, remain below most academics' radar, presumably

because they cannot be studied via traditional archival work and instead require lengthy fieldwork in filthy, dangerous slum alleys. (*Restavek* child servitude, a topic also long overdue for an academic study, is barely covered in this book because it does not entail homelessness.)

As we might expect, the fate of impoverished children and adolescents living on the streets of a Third World metropolis is nothing short of gut-wrenching. Sickness, sexual abuse, and physical violence are their common lot; the description of a child's corpse "found clogging a sewer culvert, because street children sometimes crawl into secret hiding places when they are not feeling well," powerfully conveys their misery (36). The author, however, refuses to view street children simply as victims (as many rich Westerners would) or roguish brutes (as is too often the case in Haiti); instead, he seeks to show how children adapt to a difficult environment and to portray them as thinking, acting individuals (xiii).

The author's methodology has some faults, though some are understandable given the difficult research conditions. The study, conducted in a few Port-au-Prince neighborhoods, was based on personal interviews with an unscientific sample of 50 children, chosen because of their willingness to collaborate; the sample tends to underrepresent girls, who form a minority of street children and are more prone to hide because of fears of rape. The subjects' high death rate and mobility also hindered follow-up interviews (11–13). An appendix listing the exact dates the author was in Haiti and a list of his interviewees would have helped clarify his methods.

Some of the findings reinforce known or expected characteristics of Haitian poverty. Most street children actually come from the provinces, not Port-au-Prince itself, as do the hundreds of thousands of slum dwellers who have fled the rural areas since the 1970s because of the agricultural crisis (24). Once they reach the capital's streets, they are exposed to chaotic car traffic, unclean water, and police abuse (28, 99). Some children are, furthermore, addicted to sniffing glue (*siment*). More surprising is that most homeless children are not orphans, but have parents or relatives in the provinces or even the capital itself. Some children were cast away because parents could not afford to raise them (the author cites the high cost of school supplies); others willfully chose the street because it grants them personal freedom, respite from domestic abuse, and opportunities to perform odd jobs (47–49, 71–73). These include legal ones (washing cars, carrying groceries, begging) and more rarely, illegal ones (theft, prostitution) and are surprisingly lucrative by Haitian standards. By the author's calculations, they allow a child to make twice the Haitian minimum wage, except when too sick to work (114).

Kovats-Bernat occasionally alludes to peculiarly Haitian cultural traits to illuminate the children's world. Children, for example, entertain

themselves with the popular *Krik? Krak!* stories of Haitian folklore (20–21). They also have no preconceived taboo against living outside, as Haitians consider an outside courtyard (*lakou*) as part of their house and slum dwellers routinely live most of their lives outside of their cramped dwellings (32). Two crucial dimensions, however, are missing from this analysis: race and class. Urban, upper-class bourgeois businesspeople and politicians, particularly light-skinned ones, often harbor deepseated prejudices against the dark-skinned rural peasantry. Scorn for the *lumpen*, as they call the poor, probably goes a long way toward explaining the lack of sympathy for the street children's fate. The author notices that adults are not shocked by the children's suffering, but he attributes it to a widespread belief that the children are responsible for Haiti's crime wave (51–53).

The children's interactions with other children form a fascinating study. Collaboration is common, as children band together to protect each other and share food. Meanwhile, they steal money from weaker children, rape girls, and fight bitter turf wars with rivals. The most terrifying example of street violence is *lage domi* (the sleeping war), in which rival children maim each other in the dead of night using razors or concrete blocks. Sleeping wars usually begin as a dispute, but the author argues that they allow the weak to get back at their more powerful rivals and thus serve as a powerful social equalizer (80–82, 118–24, 133).

Kovats-Bernat often provides fascinating insights when covering the present-day lives of street children, but he is on less secure footing when he delves into Haiti's more distant history. He is right to point out that the growth of Port-au-Prince's slums and homeless population is a recent phenomenon, caused by economic distress in Haiti's rural districts (24). It is inaccurate, however, to blame "three hundred years" of French sugar cultivation for the exhaustion of Haiti's soil when the sugar boom lasted for only 60 years in the mid-eighteenth century, long before deforestation and soil erosion reached catastrophic levels in the second half of the twentieth century (26).

Haitian nationalists would probably take issue with the book's opening sentence, "Haiti is the poorest and most volatile country in the Western Hemisphere" (1). The expression is a standard feature of sensationalist foreign media accounts, and regularly raises Haitian ire. Other passages also exaggerate a bad, but not apocalyptic, security situation. The author describes Haiti as "overarmed and heavily militarized" because 209,000 light weapons can be found in a country of 8 million people (83). The United States, by comparison, has 200 million guns for 300 million people (not to mention an army, while Haiti disbanded its own in 1995). A terrifying list of current security woes, ending with the comment that Haitians "run a greater risk of violent death than anywhere else in the Caribbean," would also have called for a justificatory

endnote, since Jamaica is usually cited as having the highest crime rate in the region (83).

Chapter 5, by contrast, offers a much better grounded analysis of *Lafanmi selavi*, an orphanage for *restavek* and street children the author visited repeatedly from 1995 to 1999. Founded by Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the orphanage is usually described as an example of this statesman's concern for the poor. But the orphanage, which at its height catered to as many as four hundred children, was, in the author's view, more a political than a humanitarian project. It was repeatedly raided by henchmen of Raoul Cédras after the latter overthrew Aristide in 1991 to symbolize the anti-Aristide repression.

Conversely, Aristide used it after he returned to power to showcase his ambition, inspired by liberation theology, to empower Haiti's poor (144). By 1997, *Lafanmi selavi* was operating a farm, a car wash, and radio and TV stations, but was little more than a Potemkin village, as Aristide and his subordinates skimmed operating funds for their own profit. In one of the most damaging accounts ever written about Aristide's personal trajectory from priest of the poor to petty authoritarian, the author shows that by 1999 the orphanage had become an underfunded slum inhabited by emaciated, abandoned children. When the older children revolted in 1999, Aristide sent in the police and shut the orphanage altogether, except for the TV and radio stations, which were needed for propaganda purposes; 380 orphans were sent back to the streets (160–61).

The book's last two chapters, in contrast to the preceding ones, mar an otherwise interesting work. Chapter 6 focuses on Aristide's second overthrow in 2004, a worthy topic of enquiry for a political historian but one that poorly meshes with the street-level study that came before it. The chapter also displays the tendency, common in the book, to sensationalize Haiti's security woes. Subheadings include "The War Begins" and "Port-au-Prince Burning," when Aristide's overthrow was a relatively bloodless coup in the long tradition of nineteenth-century *caco* uprisings (186–87).

Chapter 7 is even further removed from the day-to-day lives of street children as it attempts to point to the "large global machinations [that] are at the causal root of the problem" (211). The author, in a diatribe seemingly inspired by Immanuel Wallerstein's world systems theory (without any of its subtlety), attacks our current "world system of colonialism, unilateral military intervention, small arms and light weapon trafficking, debt and structural adjustment that ensures underdevelopment by maintaining global inequities" (199). A quick world tour of Western evil ranges from diamond exploration in Sierra Leone to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (leaving out three decades of massive foreign aid packages to Haiti) and concludes that this global system

“ensures the poverty and misery of the world’s poor to the benefit of the world’s most affluent” (210).

The link between Leonid Brezhnev’s blunders, Haitian homelessness, and the profit margin of Fortune 500 companies is tenuous at best. This outburst also seems to contradict earlier comments in the book that declining agricultural productivity is the primary reason impoverished Haitians flock to Port-au-Prince and that Aristide was the one who grossly neglected Haitian orphans. Limiting itself to the crux of its subject matter, street children in Haiti, would have helped strengthen a book that contains fascinating insights into a world at once so close and so distant from the shores of the United States.

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Teresa Alfaro-Velcamp, *So Far from Allah, So Close to Mexico: Middle Eastern Immigrants in Modern Mexico*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007. Maps, appendixes, bibliography, index, 272 pp.; paperback \$24.95.

John Tofik Karam, *Another Arabesque: Syrian-Lebanese Ethnicity in Neoliberal Brazil*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007. Glossary, bibliography, 214 pp.; hardcover \$68.50, paperback \$24.95.

Teresa Alfaro-Velcamp introduces us to a world that is a bridge between the Middle East, Mexico, and the United States. Her book is the result not only of extensive research in official documents of the Archivo General de la Nación but also of many interviews in different municipalities in Mexico, the United States, and even Lebanon, her native country. She also has consulted secondary archives, such as those in the Lebanese Emigration Research Center at Notre Dame University in Lebanon, one of the most important centers on the Lebanese diaspora in the world; and the archives of different families, municipalities, and libraries, such as that of Mexico’s Universidad Iberoamericana.

It was not until 1926 that the process of registering immigrants started in Mexico, meaning that before that year the data from the Secretaría de Gobernación are not very reliable. Deceased immigrants before 1926 do not appear in the archive’s documents, and many of the assimilated foreigners did not register when they were illegal. This explains the debate over who was the first Lebanese immigrant to come to Mexico. Alfaro-Velcamp sustains the well-known thesis of Father Boutros Rafoul (who does not appear in the foreigners’ archives) as the beginner of Middle Eastern migration to Mexico in 1878. However, the name that appears in the archives is Antonio Budib, who arrived in Mexico the same year and who was not mentioned in previous work on