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Reseña de "Strangers in a Foreign Land: The Organizing of Catholic Latinos in the United States" de George E. Schultze
The City University of New York
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creation of a pan-Latino framework for collective action that allows for successful challenges against the local political machine.

The last chapter by Luis Falcón examines Latino and Asian immigrants’ use of social networks to facilitate settlement and find employment. Falcón challenges the traditional notion that social networks have mostly positive effects by analyzing, for instance, the potentiality for exploitative conditions at the workplace, and the fact that ethnic mobilization serves to create social closure for other groups by denying access to information and resources. Falcón makes the reader aware of the limits of ethnic solidarity, and the need to explore in more detail the types of job settings that immigrant networks provide access to, and how they differ from immigrants that maneuver the market through mechanisms other than social networks.

In sum, the collection of critical analyses in Latinos in a Changing Society offers the reader a broad range of original insights into how the new social context is affecting Latino populations and how they are responding to it. The authors, all prestigious scholars working in different regions of the United States, successfully fill in with their studies some of the huge gaps that, unfortunately, are still present in the areas of policy analysis and research on the largest minority group in the country.

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**Strangers in a Foreign Land: The Organizing of Catholic Latinos in the United States**

By George E. Schultze, SJ


188 pages; $24.95 [paper]

**REVIEWER:** David A. Badillo, City University of New York—Lehman College

This slender and thinly researched volume seeks to “support Catholics and labor unionists who believe economic development in a society happens with work that provides a living wage.” While it may succeed as an organizing manual, it adds little to the scholarly literature on Latino Catholicism and/or labor history. There have been solid case studies on Mexican-American workers in Los Angeles, farm laborers in the Southwest and Midwest, as well as rural and industrial workers in the Midwest, but none of these is cited or otherwise acknowledged. This book mentions virtually none of the important authors or works in Latino religion—and little in Latino labor history—despite the considerable interest and academic production in these fields in recent years.

The author, Father George E. Schultze, cites his interest in that topic as owing to his Latino heritage (his maternal lineage goes back “hundreds of years” in the Southwest) as well as to the fact that he grew up in a union household in the San Francisco Bay area, where his mother worked as a cannery worker and later a machinist. His father was a shop steward in the Santa Clara Valley. He sees organizing as a means of assuring that “all participants in the work world obtain a living wage [and] create economic development through job creation” (p. 4). What remains unclear is how the author’s ideal of a higher standard of living and elimination of economic inequities has been realized in the past.

One would have hoped that as a Jesuit, Father Schultze might have offered new approaches with a fresh perspective.
Certainly other clergy have successfully tackled Latino subjects—recently, Father Charles Dahm on contemporary Mexican American immigrants in Chicago. Curiously, the book virtually ignores the Latino immigrant experience—its homeland antecedents and its operation in cities throughout the United States. Moreover, the reader is left wondering what exactly distinguishes Protestants from Catholics with regard to their organizing qualities.

The book is a collection of essentially unrelated essays. Chapter 1, entitled “Aliens No More,” is a cursory demographic presentation focusing on California. Here Schultze notes that organizing there has been more vibrant than in other parts of the country. This may be true, but even with respect to California much of the body of social science and historical literature is ignored, so no genuine hypothesis is put forth to be tested, or even explored. Moreover, the reader never learns the reasons for relative emphasis placed on bishops, priests, or Catholic laity at any given time, and there is no discussion of secularism and anti-clericalism in Mexico, Puerto Rico, or Cuba, or among Chicanos/Boricuas/Cubanos, and others of Latin American background beginning in the 1960s and 1970s. Certainly Latinos were not unified in their support either for or against the Church, but this question remains untreated (though later in the book Schultze does mention the boisterous protest against barrio social inequities by the young Chicano group known as Católicos por la Raza in the Los Angeles archdiocese, conducted in St. Basil’s Church on Christmas Eve of 1969).

Chapter 2, “Catholicism and Worklife,” conflates biblical citations with ecclesiastical history, ranging through short mentions of the Church fathers, medieval society, and the Catholic moral impulse, with some more recent items published by the U.S. Catholic bishops thrown in. It runs far afield from the book’s stated purpose and even more so from themes suggested by the book’s title and subtitle.

Chapters 3 through 5 are structured largely around a chronology of United States labor history pre- and post-World War I. One bit of information—Quebec Archbishop Elzear Alexandre Taschereau’s opposition to the Knights of Labor and the fact that Toronto Archbishop John Lynch was “quite sympathetic toward the Order and argued that workers had the right to strike and organize boycotts against monopolies”—is used to point out the importance of “local diocesan differences” (p. 53). Maybe, but what any of that has to do with the Latino experience in the United States remains a mystery.

A discussion of Robert Owen’s commune in New Harmony, Indiana, notes that “today’s small, often Church supported cooperative efforts around the world can be traced back to his activities that planted the seeds of worker-ownership in the hearts and minds of social thinkers and their followers.” The same paragraph mentions that the Catholic Church’s Campaign for Human Development has provided seed money for numerous small cooperative ventures in the United States often benefiting Latino immigrants (p. 47). Similarly, there is no logical exposition at work when we learn of Father Peter Dietz, who led the Militia of Christ for Social Service—a Cincinnati—based group dedicated to the promotion of Catholic ethics within the ranks of American labor.

The role of Catholic religious order clergy, a topic of considerable importance, is mentioned primarily with respect to the work of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Redemptorist, Paulist, and Jesuit orders, which helped evangelize immigrants.
from Europe in the Northeast and Midwest (p. 59). This analysis should have been expanded to cover urban Latino communities throughout the twentieth century, from San Antonio’s Mexican-American nuns to Cuba’s exiled Spanish priests, but this was not done. Jesuit Father Joseph Fitzpatrick was a leader of the post-World War II Puerto Rican community in New York City—within and outside of the Catholic parishes—and deserves mention for his advocacy of the rights of migrant workers, particularly in an era of overreaching on the part of powerful unions. Various archdiocesan clergy and bishops, moreover, from Father Bryan Walsh in Miami to Father Clement Kern in Detroit—and including also Archbishop Patrick Flores in San Antonio—were all key players in important aspects of the migration and settlement of Latino Catholics, and at least some of their stories should have been included.

There are a few pages on Cesar Chavez’s labor organizing efforts, beginning with the Community Service Organization in 1952, and mention is made of Dolores Huerta. But in his discussion of Chavez’s fasting, Schultze seems to confuse adherence to Catholicism with spirituality: “Chavez’s most successful fasts took the focus off him and placed it on the injustices suffered by the poor he had organized. He was not making demands on others; instead he was giving himself to the cause” (p. 98). This appears somewhat simplistic and not particularly revealing. More important, perhaps, would have been an analysis of the farm labor movement as indicative of the post-1965 trend toward ecumenism and Catholic-Protestant cooperation in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.

In Chapter 6, “A Swing to the Cultural Left Leaves the Catholic Church on the Sidelines,” the author mentions interesting potential topics, but fails to discuss meaningfully, for instance, traditional Latino views on machismo and homosexuality, and resulting conflicts in families and for Latinas in the workforce. Other “Catholic” topics such as Latino workers’ attitudes on abortion and gay marriage are promised and suggested but never explored, and certainly never researched. The final chapter, entitled “A Need for Change,” deals with events of recent decades.

Due to a lack of familiarity with Latino history Schultze seems to mischaracterize coverage of the immigration reform debates of the 1980s, when Latino civil rights groups such as MALDEF and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) opposed certain aspects of proposed legislation. They actually opposed the employer sanctions provision (because they believed that it discriminated against both native- and foreign-born Latinos), not amnesty, as Schultze seems to suggest. In fact these groups, MALDEF in particular, had already begun moving toward a broader approach to civil rights that focused increasingly on the rights of the undocumented, as well as on the already assimilating Chicano/Latino middle class.

Unfortunately, the book never introduces us to pertinent debates, such as that on the impact of undocumented immigrant labor on native-born Latinos and African Americans. Nor is there any discussion of the tensions produced by “new” Latino immigrants such as the Dominicans and Saldavorans, each with important urban, and indeed untold “Catholic labor,” sagas. Instead we are told of the success of a cooperative in Spain run by José María Mondragón as “the best example of a sophisticated, viable worker-owned enterprise” (p. 150). There is brief mention of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), but this is done without sufficient context or elaboration.
This reviewer would also have liked to have at least a summary discussion of Father Virgilio Elizondo, founder of the Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC) and prolific writer on the changing role of Mexican Americans, both locally and globally. MACC is mentioned in connection with bilingualism, but it, along with its founder, has had a much larger role in the “Latinization of the church,” and also in framing social justice issues. Elizondo’s theological works, including *The Future is Mestizo* and *Galilean Journey*, deserve serious treatment and diligent application to the world of the worker, apart from their value to students of Latino Catholicism.

Readers of this journal would be dismayed at the book’s exclusive regional focus—at those few points where such a focus exists—on California Latinos as a “leading indicator.” Certainly a book that purports to cover Catholic Latino workers would at least mention the Puerto Rican experience. Schultze points to the importance of the fall of organized labor’s influence in the late 1920s and its increasing activism in the following turbulent decade, but says nothing about the role of Puerto Ricans and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) in New York at that time. Nor does he seem aware of the work of labor leader Rose Pesotta in Puerto Rico during the 1930s, let alone the many ardent efforts of Puerto Rican organizers and workers on the island, as well as on the continent, both before and since. In sum, the absence of primary sources and unfamiliarity with the relevant books and articles, here as in other potential areas of inquiry, limit substantive discussion of both Latino Catholicism and labor history.

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**Pioneros puertorriqueños en Nueva York, 1917–1947**

By Joaquín Colón López, with an introduction by Edwin Karli Padilla Aponte

Houston: Arte Público, 2001

128 pages; $12.95 [paper]

**REVIEWER:** **LINDA DELGADO,** College of Mt. St. Vincent’s and National Association for Ethnic Studies

In the opening pages of this book, Olimpia Colón Aponte points out that her father’s volume will join the writings of Bernardo Vega and Jesús Colón to form an essential trilogy in understanding the historical, sociopolitical and cultural story of the *pioneros*, the early Puerto Ricans in New York. She is absolutely correct.

In 1998–9, I did several telephone interviews with Olimpia Colón for my research on Jesús Colón. Toward the end of the year she told me she had found a manuscript written by her father Joaquín Colón, who was the brother of Jesús Colón. She told me that she was negotiating with Arte Público on its publication. She was very excited because her father’s manuscript would correct some of the misinformation that was published as history. She went on to give me an example. She said, “We come from a very proud family. There is no way the Jesús could have been a stowaway as the history books describe him” (1999). She certainly piqued my interest! I awaited the publication of this book with great anticipation.

Joaquín Colón came to New York City in 1917 at the age of twenty-one. Later in that year, he wrote to his brother Jesús and asked him to come join him. The trips took about five days, and because of the war, they traveled at night in the dark. As with most migrants, they were