

Andrea Delgado, Review article of *Buying Into the Regime* and *The Chicken and the Quetzal*, *AmeriQuests* 13.2 (2017)

*Buying Into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States*, Heidi Tinsman. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014. 363 pp.) ISBN 978-0-8223-5535-9. Price \$28.95

*The Chicken and the Quetzal: Incommensurate Ontologies and Portable Values in Guatemala's Cloud Forest*, Paul Kockelman. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016. 190 pp.) ISBN 978-0-8223-6072-8. Price \$23.95

Methodology, time period, country, language, and subject area are some of the variables that operate under the realm of the inherently diverse and interdisciplinary field of Latin American Studies. One of the most simplistic characteristics of the discipline is a geographic focus on and in Latin American nations in the New World. However, simple spatial delineations do not completely encapsulate the full possibilities of research because Latin America is not a hermetic space closed off from contact or exchange with the rest of the world. Any study of the peoples, cultures, histories, literatures, economies, or societies of Latin America must also consider the overarching international and transnational context. Given the current trends of globalization, it is crucial for academic research to focus within, beyond, and across borders as the world becomes increasingly interconnected.

Two recent works that effectively synthesize the local with the transnational in Latin America are Heidi Tinsman's *Buying the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States* (2014) and Paul Kockelman's *The Chicken and the Quetzal: Incommensurate Ontologies and Portable Values in Guatemala's Cloud Forest* (2016). The authors come from diverse disciplinary backgrounds—ranging from anthropology to history to gender studies—and focus their works in vastly different geographic areas in Latin America, notably Chile and Guatemala. Despite the distinct research methodologies and regional focuses of each work, however, both books approach topics in Latin American area studies by framing them within a transnational context of the production and mutability of value. Tinsman's work examines the production and consumption of Chilean grapes and the resulting intersections with gender roles, socio-political ideologies, and capitalist exchange markets. Kockelman's work, on the other hand, examines an ecotourism-conservation movement that took place in Chicacnab, a village in the Guatemalan highlands, as a case study to understand how the intersection of distinct ontologies resulted in an alteration of local values among the Q'eqchi' people. Tinsman's historical focus and Kockelman's theoretical undertaking provide two complementary approaches to understanding the production of value. Both interdisciplinary books marry local Latin American spaces with transnational ones in order to contextualize historical events and value systems within a broader scope.

Heidi Tinsman's book *Buying the Regime* centers on Chilean grapes and ambitiously explores how they enter into dialogue with notions of commodities, marketing, gender dynamics, political ideologies, and consumption in both Chile and the United States. Her work participates in the realm of transnational studies and world history: she examines a Latin American commodity's path across borders in the late 20<sup>th</sup>-century while also analyzing ideological, economic, and socio-political exchanges between Chile and the US. In the introduction, Tinsman makes explicit her intention to avoid perpetuating an imperialist power dynamic between consumer and producer, between imperialist and exploited. While Latin American Studies usually focuses on local production for external consumption, she does not limit her work to this neocolonial dynamic. Instead, she aims to give agency to Chileans in the grape business, arguing that they deserve more credit for their successful implementation of neoliberalism and marketing campaigns in the US. Thus the scope of her work spans a wide range of geographic space and academic disciplines in order to provide a democratic, comprehensive, and transnational view of the production and consumption of a commodity.

The chapters in Tinsman's work are organized according to disciplinary lenses and thematic topics. Although not chronological, the chapters provide detailed and nuanced examinations of Chilean grapes in the contexts of economics, political history, feminism, gender studies, advertisement history, and comparative history. Chapter 1 reviews the history of grape production in Chile throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, from early fruit exports in the 1930s to the rapid growth in agricultural production during the Pinochet dictatorship of the 1970s. A partnership between the Universidad de Chile and the University of California encouraged bidirectional learning among businessmen and agriculturists in both countries. By the 1980s and 1990s, Chile had become an "entrepreneurial force" (Tinsman 2014, 60) exporting products across the globe, while local consumerism among the working class was increasing as well. Chapter 2 focuses on how Chilean consumption during the Pinochet regime altered male and female power dynamics and gender roles. By earning their own income, women fruit workers gained power and independence against the male authority. However, the "familiar dichotomy between women's family-based virtue and extra-familial vice" (87) created distinctions between good and bad forms of female consumption.

In Chapter 3, Tinsman switches abruptly from the history of Chilean production and consumption to provide a fascinating analysis of Chilean marketing campaigns in the US in the 1970s-1980s. Advertisements promoted grapes as a convenient, fresh, and healthy snack perfect for working women. Campaigns used motifs from the sexual revolution and counterculture in order to equate grapes with emancipation and sexual freedom. Chilean marketing also greatly downplayed grapes' origin in order to sever potential connotative ties to third world, exotic, and underdeveloped locations in an effort to characterize grapes as developed and modern. Chapter 4 covers the comparative history of fruit boycotts initiated by the United Farm Workers (UFW) and the Chile solidarity movements that "insisted on consumption as crucial terrain for political organizing and building democracy" (206). The parallel efforts emerged from varying concerns over labor laws, health risks from the use of pesticides, and complicity with the repressive Pinochet regime. Then Chapter 5 returns to Chile to review the path to democracy by analyzing the roles of the Catholic Church, the feminist movement, and the Santa María fruit workers' union. Finally, the Epilogue connects the aforementioned materials with the current globalization movement, suggesting that "many of the issues concerning critics of globalization were products of political struggles and changes taking place during the cold war" (258). Tinsman thus uses the commodity of Chilean grapes as a starting point to effectively trace the comparative histories of gender roles, consumption, and socio-political movements across time and space in both Chile and the US. Her in-depth historical analysis from Latin America offers transnational lessons that are applicable to current and future processes of globalization.

Tinsman's thorough historical investigation of the local and the transnational is aptly complemented by Paul Kockelman's intricate theoretical examination in *The Chicken and the Quetzal*. Kockelman studies the conservationist movement that took place in the Guatemalan highlands through the lens of adapting values and incongruous diverse ontologies. In the 1990s, the non-profit organization Proyecto Ecológico Quetzal (PEQ) sought to prevent further deforestation through farming by incentivizing people with alternative sources of income from ecotourism. This is the historical and spatial context in which Kockelman situates his work, which quickly moves beyond the conservationist efforts and into the complex theoretical realm of semiotics, values, and ontologies. His work gains momentum from each chapter to the next as he frames his work within ethnographic and theoretical lenses. The end of his dense work offers a compelling criticism of the overall discipline of anthropology. By providing an analysis of a case study as well as a meta-analysis of the academic discipline in which he writes, Kockelman establishes his book at the nexus of local and cross-disciplinary scales.

Overall, Kockelman's work follows a trajectory from the simple to the complex. He opens by laying out the historical and cultural contexts of Guatemala, and then moves on to examine values and ways of measuring meaning through ethnographic and theoretical lenses. In Chapter 1, he provides a historical overview of the Q'eqchi' town of Chicacnab in relation to the conservationist movement. Through ethnographic methods, Kockelman examines the incongruity between the intentions, assumptions, and values of the two groups of actors—the local Q'eqchi' communities and the NGO volunteers. Kockelman highlights this major thread of his book as the following:

An examination of what happens when actors who are accustomed to acting under radically different descriptions, and for radically different reasons, are capacitated (in the case of villagers) or primed (in the case of ecotourists) to interact under the same description—or, at the very least, to smoothly interact under ontologically different local interpretations in ways that can causally, performatively, and perhaps unconsciously bring about the possibility for interacting under similar global descriptions. (47)

In this way, Kockelman propels the rest of his theoretical work from the case study of interacting ontologies in Guatemala. In Chapter 2 he employs a linguistic and semiotic methodology to examine Maya ontologies through local vocabularies and idiomatic expressions. He explores the broad range of gendered associations of the Q'eqchi' word *kaxlan* “chicken” that include notions of masculinity, humor, jealousy, and female property ownership. Kockelman not only exhibits his mastery of the Q'eqchi' language and grammar structures, but also critically applies his knowledge of the language to ethnographically examine how the language is used and understood in Chicacnab.

In Chapter 3, Kockelman turns to the concepts of reciprocation and replacement in order to understand the quantification and the grading of use value. The principal question he raises is “how is it that two distinct entities can have the same use value?” (91). He approaches this inquiry through ethnography, an inherently “quantia-tative” and “qualia-tative” method, in order to examine the gender differences in the replaceability of women and men among the Q'eqchi'. Kockelman continues to explore quantitative and qualitative measurements in Chapter 4 through the processes of the remodeling and the modernization of Chicacnab houses or “public signs of one's nonreplaceability” (150). As the Q'eqchi' begin to update and decorate their homes, Kockelman reads this process as a change from a pressure to be equivalent, as dictated in the local systems of replacement, to a pressure to be commensurate, as stipulated in the money-making opportunities of ecotourism. Finally, in the Conclusion Kockelman goes beyond the Guatemalan case study of intersecting ontologies and value systems to discuss the notion of portability. His final remarks provide a critique of anthropology. While the discipline heralds the value of non-portability—of both people and ideas—Kockelman highlights the inherent contradiction: ethnographies provide knowledge through “one of the most decisively portable media ever made,” the printed book (169). Thus the scope of Kockelman's book goes beyond the realm of local Guatemalan communities and international NGOs by providing a meta-analysis of disciplinary thinking and production of knowledge.

Despite the great variations between Tinsman and Kockelman's works—from history to anthropology, from Chile to Guatemala, from agricultural production to conservation movements—both books effectively situate the subject matters within local, national, and transnational contexts as a means to better understanding the production and mutability of different types of value. Tinsman examines how the marketing and consumption of Chilean grapes affected women fruit workers, arguing for the use of a trans-geographic lens to study economic and political historical contexts

across borders. Kockelman, on the other hand, uses the Guatemalan case study to explore how values are changeable and portable in the face of distinct ontologies and ways of thinking from disparate parts of the world. Neither work fails to consider external factors and contexts affecting the issue in question. Both Tinsman and Kockelman focus on the notion of value, albeit in broad definitions such as market value, use value, and exchange value. Ostensibly, however, the juxtaposition of the two works highlights more differences than similarities. Four main contrasting areas have to do with the disciplinary backgrounds of the authors, the methodologies employed, how credibility was obtained, and the strategic incorporation of history and theory throughout their works. The examination of each of these contrasting elements illustrates the complementary nature of the two works' strengths and weaknesses, inclusions and omissions, perspectives and scopes.

The most important difference between Tinsman and Kockelman's works comes from the cross-disciplinary nature of the authors. The academic discipline of each author affects the purpose and efficacy of each work and its argument. For example, Tinsman is a professor of history and she focuses much of her research on issues of gender and sexuality. Given her interests and viewpoints, she crafts her book using the historical contexts of Chile and the US; each chapter provides an overview of historical place and time before diving into her specific analysis of advertisements or interpretation of women's changing roles and power. She utilizes an impressive spread of sources in her work, including archival documents, almost forty different periodicals, and countless numbers of academic articles and books. These sources allow her to contextualize each chapter within the broader political, economic, and social contexts within and beyond national boundaries. While Tinsman focuses her entire book on the recent 20<sup>th</sup>-century past, Kockelman, on the other hand, structures his book around ethnographic and linguistic analysis rather than on strictly temporal spaces. An anthropologist by discipline, he is concerned with the study of man through the lenses of ontology, aspect, and selfhood. Much anthropological sources come from firsthand ethnographic fieldwork conducted on site for extended periods of time. Extended fieldwork and participant observation help the anthropologist to gain an insider's perspective to local life, beliefs, and values. Kockelman's work thus derives from his experiences among the Q'eqchi' in Guatemala, and he puts these observations within a critical-theoretical lens to extrapolate conclusions about ontology and portable values. While both Tinsman and Kockelman approach a local space in Latin America within broader transnational, economic, and theoretical contexts, they utilize distinct organizational frameworks and different types of sources in order to develop and formulate their arguments.

Each author also establishes and maintains credibility through distinct methods. Part of the credibility they each earn comes from the unique qualities of their particular academic disciplines. Kockelman gains reliability as an author from his demonstrated expertise in Q'eqchi' language and linguistics. Not only does he provide translations for countless Q'eqchi' words, but he also explains the nuances of their usage and connotations in Chicacnab in order to ground his theoretical musings in the linguistic structures themselves. His facilitation with the language demonstrates to the reader his expertise and profundity of understanding, although his dense writing style makes the work seem impenetrable at times. Rather than focus on language, Tinsman gains credibility through her discussion in historical facts, trends, and dates to support her analyses and insights. When she talks about Chilean women fruit workers gaining power and independence through consumption, she provides relevant statistics and firsthand narrative accounts, always accompanied with precise historical dates and delivered through a clear and fluid writing style. Tinsman's credibility comes from constantly supporting her arguments with primary and secondary sources. Thus, the authors' research methods, academic disciplines, and writing styles affect how and in what way they develop credibility throughout their works.

As a result of each author's unique disciplinary framework, the presence and frequency of historical and theoretical background information throughout each book is quite varied. While Tinsman, as a historian, incorporates historical information and data in each of the chapters in her book, Kockelman only focuses on the history of the conservation movement in the first chapter. Both authors support the trajectory of their arguments with historical data to varying degrees of effectiveness. While Tinsman focused on providing historical contextualization in each thematic chapter, Kockelman moved on from historical events to the theoretical realm in order to dive deep into discussion of linguistics, ontologies, and incongruous values. Where Tinsman's work fails to cover the theoretical background of relevant notions—such as Marx's use- and exchange-value or Appadurai's work on globalization—Kockelman's work deliberates extensively on the ideas of Marx, Foucault, and Peirce, among others. Conversely, while Kockelman only briefly covered the historical interactions between Guatemala and foreign international actors, Tinsman constantly focused her thematic discussions within the frame of specific transnational interactions between Chile and the US. Kockelman and Tinsman's books effectively rest at the dichotomy of the historical and the theoretical, allowing for a synthesis of scope and perspective.

Despite each of the fundamental differences in topic, discipline, and approach, Tinsman and Kockelman's works greatly complement each other. Each work simultaneously fills in the methodological gaps and disciplinary limitations of the other. One focuses on the historical, while the other on the theoretical; one gains credibility through primary sources, while the other through linguistic expertise; one is concerned with changing gender roles and dynamics, while the other is ultimately concerned with larger issues in the discipline of anthropology. The unifying factor in both works is the focus on the nexus of the spaces of local Latin America and transnational relations and exchanges. Chilean grapes were not simply produced in Chile and exported for consumption in the US, but were also consumed in Chile by increasing women workers as well as strategically presented in advertisement campaigns. The value of grapes includes its use-value for consumption, its exchange-value for trade and business exports, and its sociohistorical value as an agent involved in modifying gender roles and female independence. Similarly, foreign NGOs did not simply impose a new, preferred value of ecotourism over traditional farming in highland Guatemala, but rather the clash of local and international ontologies resulted in a transformation from equivalence to commensuration, from reciprocity to replacement. By examining issues and themes in Latin American spaces through insider's perspectives, Tinsman and Kockelman avoid characterizing the relationship of local and transnational spaces as a hierarchical binary of undeveloped-developed, producer-consumer, traditional-modern, center-periphery. Instead, these two great works represent a complementary effort to adapt research to the increasing interconnectedness of peoples, ideas, and values in the age of globalization. By recognizing the complex bi- and multi-directionality of influence of ontologies and values, they grandly set the stage for future academics to connect regional studies with transnational studies in new ways.