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Reseña de "Extended Statehood in the Caribbean: Paradoxes of Quasi Colonialism, Local Autonomy and Extended Statehood in the USA, French, Dutch and British Caribbean" de Lammert de Jong y Dirk Kruijt (eds.)
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documents, and theorizes the Puerto Rican experience in New York and other states. The critique, however, must work at both ends. Social scientists have to break past the way in which the question has been posed when studying the varying realities of Puerto Ricans (failure, poverty, and dysfunction), and historians have to more completely engage with the study of the century-old Puerto Rican presence. In many ways, this confused, challenging, and ambitious work by a political scientist should serve as a reminder for historians of the work that lies ahead.

NOTES


organization similar to other mainland French departments, such as Hautes-Pyrénées and Pas-de-Calais. The U.S. Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico are the two “unincorporated territories” in the region, which belong to this metropolitan power but are not an integral part of its political system. Aruba and a group of islands that form the federation of the Netherlands Antilles (Curaçao, Bonaire, St Eustatius, Saba, and St Maarten) are “autonomous countries” within the kingdom of the Netherlands. While United States and the Dutch territories are nominally autonomous, the United Kingdom rules over its Caribbean “overseas territories” of Anguila, Montserrat, British Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos, and the Cayman Islands, with the more traditional mechanisms of colonialism.

De Jong has been an author and a public servant, having served a resident-representative of the Netherlands government in the Netherlands Antilles and Counselor to the Netherlands government on Kingdom Relations. Kruijt is a professor of Development Studies at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands and has also been concerned with the relations between the Netherlands and the Netherlands Antilles and Surinam. They have summoned a group of researchers from the Caribbean and Europe to examine the organization, functioning, and variations of these political systems.

There is little agreement in the current literature on territories with respect to the nature of the relationship between overseas possessions and their metropoles and with respect to their categorization. De Jong feels uncomfortable with the use of the concept “colonialism,” which he sees as biased and outdated. In order to distinguish the political arrangements of historical colonialism from the constitutional arrangements of contemporary departments and overseas territories, he introduces the concept of “extended statehood.” In the opening chapter of the book he lays out the central question that binds the volume: how the present constitutional arrangements between France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States with their respective possessions in the Caribbean region “work and how can they be put to better use in a highly interactive global world where more and more nation-states have become part of supranational arrangements” (p. 4).

Although the scope of the book is extremely broad, the collection of articles are, for the most part, case studies of territories that follow a common boilerplate outline, which includes such considerations as the nature of political organization, the question of citizenship, migration, development and poverty, metropolitan assistance, crime, corruption and the rule of law, and an array of social ills in territories. However, the contributors emphasize different aspects of this common plan. In their article “Fifty Years of Commonwealth: The Contradictions of Free Associated Statehood in Puerto Rico,” Jorge Duany and Emilio Pantojas-García describe the present constitutional relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States, the social and economic transformations in Puerto Rico under the Commonwealth, the question of citizenship, and the problems associated with migration to the United States. The authors believe that given the increasingly transnational Puerto Rican population, cultural nationalism will be more prosperous than political nationalism, and foresee the continuation of the Commonwealth arrangement for the time to come. Justin Daniel's article, “The French Départements d’Outre mer: Guadeloupe and Martinique,” discusses the ambiguous relationship between Guadeloupe and Martinique with France, the limits of local autonomy as a result of their dependency from the metropole, and their isolation from their regional environment. After explaining the nature
of the overseas departments, the author describes an ambiguous political scenario characterized by the rise of nationalistic feelings in the population of the French Antilles and the fears of separation from France.

The article by Lammert de Jong, “The Kingdom of the Netherlands: A Not So Perfect Union with the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba,” analyzes the intricacies of the present constitutional arrangements in the Dutch Kingdom and the growing tensions marked by the cultural differences between the citizens of Holland and those of the territories. He describes a “not so united Dutch Kingdom,” in which the common Dutch citizenship of Nederlanders of the metropole and those of the territories “does not go hand in hand with a communal identity” (p. 107), whereas the tensions surrounding the application of the Dutch policy of good governance has become increasingly at odds with the autonomous operation of the territorial state structure. In his article, “The UK Caribbean Overseas Territories: Extended Statehood and the Process of Policy Convergence,” Peter Clegg considers the recent policy debates following the conversion of British “dependencies” into “overseas territories” at the end of the twentieth century. Clegg is principally concerned with the debates that originated from the controls imposed by the British on the administration of their Caribbean possessions, particularly the metropolitan supervision of key areas such as the offshore financial services economy, human rights, and good governance. In analyzing the current proposals to reform the constitution of territories, Clegg concludes that, despite the tensions brought about by increasing metropolitan intervention in the administration of the territories, the inhabitants have no choice but to accept the controls exacted by the UK “as they wish to remain under the authority of the Crown for the foreseeable future” (p. 149).

There is a clear anti-independence posture in the editors who work from the premise that further decolonization and political independence are not realistic options. In that vein, they have also included a chapter by anthropologist Francio Guadeloupe titled, “Introducing an Anti-National Pragmatist on Saint Martin & Sint Maarten,” which explores the anti-independence discourse of one of the most popular radio disc jockeys in the island of Saint Martin, which is shared by both France and the Dutch.

As a conclusion to the book, de Jong outlines the ingredients for a balance sheet of the experience with extended statehood in the Caribbean. For all his initial enthusiasm with the prospects of extended statehood, de Jong is ready to accept that current political arrangements in the Caribbean “depend in large measure on what politicians on the mainland decide” and that that “they do not have enough clout to make much difference in decisions about the nuts and bolts of what extended statehood should include and how it must operate” (p. 197).

This book is an informative volume on the challenges faced by nonindependent territories in the contemporary Caribbean. I consider it an important source for understanding some of the problems and issues with respect to their constitutional structures. However, the theoretical attachment of the authors to the concept of extended statehood fences them within the confines of existing political arrangements and analytical views, precluding them from seriously exploring the ongoing debates in the British, the French, the Dutch, and the United States territories, where different voices and alternative futures are at play. Nonetheless, Extended Statehood is an important source for the study of contemporary colonialism and a welcome addition to the literature in Caribbean studies.