



# Race, Nation, and Market: Economic Culture in Porfirian Mexico

*Richard Weiner*

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**Prior to the Revolution of 1910**, economic ideals were a dominant mode of political and social discourse in Mexico. Scholars have focused considerable attention on the expansion of the market economy during this period—particularly its political, economic, and social importance. Richard Weiner now enhances our understanding of the emergence of modern Mexico by exploring the market's immense symbolic significance. *Race, Nation, and Market* traces the intellectual strands of economic thought during the late Porfiriato. Even in the face of Díaz's political reign, the market became the dominant theme in national discourse as contemporaries of all political persuasions underscored its social and cultural effects. This work documents the ways in which liberals, radicals, and conservatives employed market rhetoric to establish their political identities and map out their courses of action, and it shows how the market became an emblem linked to the identity of each group. Weiner explains how the dominant political interests—the científicos, the Mexican Liberal Party, and the social Catholics—each conceived economic issues, and he compares how they rhetorically used their conceptions of the market to promote their political objectives. Some worshiped it as a deity that created social peace, political harmony, and material abundance, while others demonized it as a source of social destruction. Weiner delineates their approaches and reveals how distinct notions of race, gender, community, and nationality informed economic culture and contradicted a laissez-faire conception of society and economy. By focusing on these rhetorical contests, *Race, Nation, and Market* offers a new perspective on social mobilization in late nineteenth-century Mexico as it also explores the related field of Porfirian economic culture and thought, about which little thus far has been written. In the face of today's controversy over globalization, it offers a unique historical perspective on the market's long-standing significance to political activism.

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