**Longue Durée**

*Visual Voyages: Images of Latin American Nature from Columbus to Darwin.*


*Visual Voyages: Images of Latin American Nature from Columbus to Darwin,* published on the occasion of the extraordinary, eponymous Huntington Library exhibition, is effectively a successor to *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* by Anthony Grafton with April Shelford and Nancy Siraisi (1992), a book that likewise distilled the current state of the field into an original and stimulating volume to accompany an exhibition. Daniela Bleichmar’s *Visual Voyages* explores images of nature in the region now known as Latin America between 1492 and 1859. Through a prefatory introduction and four chapters, the book shows how peoples of Latin America and Europe shaped art and science as they explored, imagined, depicted, used, and transformed nature. Bleichmar explores the purposes for which images were made, how their makers and viewers understood them, and how and why these images traveled. By building a narrative starting with close visual analyses of images and objects—from indigenous manuscript codices and feather capes to European prints, paintings, and watercolors—Bleichmar offers a new synthesis of how the study of Latin American nature was a visual pursuit.

In the post-Columbian era, knowledge of Latin American nature was undergirded by transatlantic collaboration: observing, drawing, translating, testing, preserving specimens, copying, painting, and printing occurred on both sides of the Atlantic, even in the process of creating a single work. Chapter 1 introduces three broad corpora: European illustrated travel and geographical literature, bicultural sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century accounts produced in Latin America, and the gargantuan geographical and natural historical projects of Juan López de Velasco and Francisco Hernández. At the Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco, elite, Christianized, indigenous pupils worked with Franciscan friars to translate indigenous botanical, historical, and geographical knowledge into the Codex de la Cruz-Badiano and the Florentine Codex. In these works, Nahua glyphs and botanical nomenclature were fused with Latin letters.
in a variety of European standardized hands or styles, and with the translations of Nahua grammarians and scribes directed by Spanish Franciscans trained in Europe.

From the late sixteenth century, richly illustrated works of geography and natural history were printed, translated, and circulated widely. These included the De Bry family’s 13-volume America collection of travel accounts (published from 1590 to 1634) and physician Nicolás Monardes’s Historia medicinal de las cosas que se traen de nuestras Indias occidentales que sirven en medicina (published in three parts from 1565 to 1574). Through these texts and their images, readers learned of plants and animals that would become sought-after commodities in Europe, and cochineal, chocolate, tobacco, and the passionflower are explored in chapter 2. Yet many products of indigenous farming also had spiritual significance, as, for example, modes of contacting the spirit world through smoking, eating, drinking, and dancing. European natural-commercial and moral economies were, consequently, also entangled. While naturalists initially feared diabolical connections to New World nature, by the eighteenth century the prevailing view of the region was as an earthly paradise.

Collecting was a particularly potent form of visual knowledge making. In chapter 3, Bleichmar uses curiosity cabinets and large projects of visual representation—in effect, paper museums—to think about how visual epistemology and classification were shaped by the problematic of Latin American nature. Cabinets, paintings, and visual encyclopedic projects like Luis Thiebaut and José Ignacio Lequanda’s massive 1799 painting of the inhabitants, flora, and fauna of Peru—which includes painted inscriptions whose modern transcription fills over 60 printed pages in small type—show makers constituting and communicating natural history information through emerging visual formats (pp. 150–54). Here one might have expected Bleichmar to engage with illustrated cartography, a rapidly diversifying and highly influential early modern mode of visual knowledge making. Renaissance maps had synthesized textual and visual sources to devise ethnographic diagrams that made connections between climate, geography, and human variety explicit and visual and that put the concept of humanity into alarming new conversations with the concept of the monster. Mapmakers made fundamentally new, comparative arguments about the nature of the Americas’ inhabitants but appear infrequently in this book.

In the popular imagination, natural history begins with Alexander von Humboldt and Charles Darwin. In chapter 4, Bleichmar shows how these and other northern European practitioners were in fact dependent on, influenced by, and part of centuries-long traditions, in which indigenous and Iberian participants and practices were central.

The overarching arguments—that images often had “both artistic and scientific dimensions,” that many images that “depicted nature . . . also functioned as instruments for producing knowledge concerning the natural world” and were vital for incorporating New World nature into European markets—will not surprise specialists (p. xiii). Nevertheless, ranging across heterogenous sources and half a millennium gives this book a particular potency, showing why histories of science must attend to the impact and legacies of colonial Latin American science and visual culture. New grand narratives such as this—complicated, nuanced, and cutting-edge—are needed if the fruits of academic
labor are to inform popular consciousness. *Visual Voyages* is a work of great erudition, lightly worn, and a valuable addition to university syllabi and to the personal libraries of specialist and general readers.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993122

*The Peyote Effect: From the Inquisition to the War on Drugs.*


Alexander Dawson has produced a stellar piece of comparative scholarship on the history of peyote and its uses in both Mexico and the United States. He opens his book with an 1833 cholera epidemic that plagued a small town in northern Mexico and the attempt by a pioneering doctor to use local remedies to solve the crisis. This introductory chapter paves the way for the multifaceted remainder of the book, in which scientific experimentation blends seamlessly with spiritual uses in the Native American Church in the United States and by the Wixarika in Mexico to demonstrate the complicated history of this small cactus. Dawson also problematizes the assumption that only indigenous peoples should consume peyote—that is to say, that nonindigenous peoples who consume the cactus are in some way violating peyote’s spirituality.

I found the chapters that emphasized the potential medical effects of peyote to be most valuable. Prior to reading Dawson’s study, I was unaware of the intense study of the cactus by scientists in Mexico, the United States, and Europe. These scientific investigations led to different debates about and perceptions of peyote and its usefulness for the medical community. For example, one of the first experiments with the cactus occurred in the United States, when a Texas man, Dr. John Briggs, consumed a “mescale button” and subsequently experienced a rapid heart rate and dizziness (p. 12). He recorded these physical effects in a medical journal article that later caught the attention of scientists elsewhere. The medical community and policymakers in the United States gradually came to characterize peyote as a harmful, dangerous, and addictive drug, and as a result it became classified alongside narcotics, its use closely controlled except in the rarest of circumstances (as in the Native American Church). Restrictive rules were put in place that helped to distinguish peyote as something only Native Americans could consume. Thus in the United States peyote became equated with indigeneity, much like it had during colonial times in Mexico.

Additionally, Dawson’s chapters on the studies conducted in Mexico by Salvador Roquet were disturbing, to say the least. In 1957, Roquet experimented with peyote use as a curative agent for individuals with extreme mental disorders. Using lights, terrifying imagery, and music in conjunction with peyote consumption was supposed to produce psychic “stimulation” in his patients, thus helping lead the afflicted people to emotional healing (p. 84). I found Roquet’s application of peyote as a way to cure mental illness to be fraught with problems; while on the one hand he had studied with indigenous experts...
such as María Sabina in order to learn about native plants and their applications, on the other his methods were quite unconventional. They displayed a sort of half understanding of peyote and the power that it has to distort a user’s perception of reality.

Descriptions of peyote by religious and secular authorities in the United States often mirrored earlier depictions of the cactus made by the Catholic Church (and others) in Mexico. For instance, Dawson notes that in the early decades of the twentieth century a prohibition movement had already coalesced that touted the dangers of peyote use among Native Americans in the United States. Reports called it a “dope drug among all the Indians who use it,” causing orgies and “drunkenness” that prevented indigenous people from assimilating and becoming productive members of US society (pp. 38, 53). This language is remarkably similar to that deployed by missionaries and government officials in Mexico, who critiqued peyote use among the Huichol because it kept them in a state of primitiveness and madness (p. 28). Thus assimilationists and prohibitionists on both sides of the border criticized the consumption of peyote because it was antithetical to the so-called civilized behavior that was the ultimate goal of the Mexican and US governments for their indigenous inhabitants.

This book will appeal to a variety of scholars who focus on the United States or Mexico. Scholars of Mexican history will find Dawson’s criticism of the racialization of indigenous people familiar yet refreshing, as he uses peyote to describe the othering of them since the earliest colonial times. And those interested in the United States will appreciate how Dawson traces the trajectory of peyote as a potential medicine through to its characterization as “poison” (in chapter 3) and its adoption by the Native American Church for their spiritual ceremonies. Throughout, Dawson problematizes the conflicting attitudes toward peyote and its frequent mischaracterization as a narcotic by US officials. Though the shifts in the text between the United States and Mexico, which Dawson admits reflect the history of peyote in both countries, could be a bit jarring at times, I think the complex organization helps create an impressive time line of the understanding of peyote and attempts to control it (p. 8).

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993133

Afro-Latin American Studies: An Introduction.

How has the field of Afro-Latin American studies evolved, especially in the last three decades? Afro-Latin American Studies: An Introduction answers this question by synthesizing the field’s early development, elucidating shifting discourses on racial democracy, and broadening analyses of race for understanding changes in the region. By assessing the discipline’s current state and investigative achievements and suggesting potential areas
for research, this ambitious collection makes a critical contribution to Afro-Latin American studies and the transecting disciplines of Afro-Latino and Africana studies.

The 14 chapters are divided into 4 parts, preceded by an introductory essay by the book’s editors. The first part examines colonial and contemporary inequalities. Roquinaldo Ferreira and Tatiana Seijas highlight how qualitative research and sociocultural studies addressing microhistorical and Atlantic paradigms have deepened our insights regarding the processes, experiences, and memories of the enslavement of Africans in Latin America. To heighten these perspectives, they call for the advancement of interdisciplinary and collaborative frameworks. George Reid Andrews explores patterns involving race, gender, and class, the evolution of economic and social disparities, and the varied responses by Afro-Latin Americans to ongoing inequities. As he notes, although the lack of statistical data continues to challenge the study of these intertwined areas, recent census figures provide new analytical resources for measuring, interpreting, and offering policy solutions to combat inequalities.

Brodwyn Fischer, Keila Grinberg, and Hebe Mattos outline the law and the ways institutionalized discrimination “both produced and cloaked . . . racial silence” (p. 130). Their study encapsulates the ramifications of political crises, ideological changes, and the ongoing marginalization of Afro-Brazilians. In the understudied area of Afro-indigenous populations, Peter Wade contends that scholarship, colonial structures, and postcolonial practices have traditionally separated indigenous and African-descended peoples into exclusive categories that have masked their connections and racial mixtures. Moving beyond such divides, he highlights the reality of this racial categorization as fluid and multivalent.

Part 2 examines politics from multiple angles. Frank Guridy and Juliet Hooker feature Afro-Latin American political thinkers, another neglected realm of inquiry, highlighting these thinkers’ diverse conceptualizations of blackness and involvement in core debates over race, nation, and citizenship. Tianna Paschel presents an overview of Black mobilization—particularly the role of Black newspapers, social clubs, and political parties—and its expansion through issues concerning rural and urban territoriality, women’s movements, and transnational engagements. Paulina Alberto and Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof seek to disentangle the “wooly conceptual knot” of racial democracy across the region by exploring ideologies, models, and dialogues that informed the discourse and the conceptual transition to the contemporary language of equality and inclusion (p. 265).

Culture and representation are central to part 3. Doris Sommer focuses on the “double and multiple registers of Afro-Latin American style” as emblematic of Black literary agency, particularly in fiction, drama, and poetry (p. 343). Alejandro de la Fuente engages Afro-Latin American visual arts, noting that such “techniques and visual cues” informed the configuration and usage of an array of colonial material culture (p. 351). These precedents inform modern debates over interpretation and creative invention surrounding national cultural production. Robin Moore illuminates the regional and international scholarly exchanges of music and blackness as well as efforts to center Black artistic expression at the institutional level that challenge musical canons.
Paul Christopher Johnson and Stephan Palmié trace the scholarship on African-derived religions. Diasporic spiritual beliefs, reinforced by import, vigor, sustainability, and syncretic interactions during the colonial period, maintain significance today, often in response to economic and political turmoil. Moreover, this essay is one of the few to comment on the role of the digital realm in expanding the circulation of African diasporic cultural forms in Latin America. Karl Offen underscores the multiple cultural geographies of the region, their links to practices of religion and traditional medicine, and their current relevance to areal claims and constitutional reforms.

The closing part emphasizes transnational themes. As Lara Putnam asserts, the nature and impact of mobility are defining aspects in the formation of Afro-Latin America. Recognizing the breadth of African diaspora and Black Atlantic frameworks, she targets individual lives and responses in regional and outlying spaces as well as ongoing efforts to renew the significance of these connections. The final chapter, by Jennifer Jones, engages the emergent field of Afro-Latinx studies and its positioning as a critical juncture for insights on Afrolatinidad, despite the marginalization of Afro-Latinx populations in the United States. Tracing this scholarship through its intellectual foundations in Puerto Rican studies, explorations of visibility and invisibility, and the present transnational shift, Jones asserts the role of Afro-Latinx studies as key to understanding “the geography of blackness” in the hemisphere (p. 605).

An obvious concern, which the authors acknowledge, is the overemphasis on Brazil and Cuba. In addition, the focus on enslavement allows for limited discussions of the substantial free populations of color that inhabited and influenced the region during the eras of slavery, rebellion, and independence. Contributors encourage expanded national and transnational inquiry as the field continues to evolve. Additional scholarly arenas could include language, cuisine, media, technology, and education.

Ultimately, this volume is vital for current and future scholars in exploring the origins and contours of Afro-Latin American studies. Moreover, the collection paves the way for new research that engages the centrality of race and its intersectionalities “for envisioning futures of equality, respect, coexistence, and belonging” in the hemisphere (p. 18).

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993144


Originally published in French by Éditions Karthala in 2012, Indígenas de la nación is a profound reflection on the political and social conditions that allow for the identification of certain groups or individuals as indigenous within the framework of the modern...
Mexican state, whose nationalist discourse—forged after the revolution of 1910–20 to give legitimacy to the new regime—postulates a close link between autochthony and nation. Based on a historical and ethnographic case study, this reflection is centered on how indigenous alterity is elaborated, lived, and practiced in Milpa Alta, a rural demarcation of the former Federal District (today Mexico City) comprised of 12 towns.

Milpa Alta constitutes an enclave of indigenous culture and is a core of resistance against modernity and miscegenation; its territorial organization can be traced back to the sixteenth century, and its demographic density is the lowest in Mexico City, with an above 85 percent native majority population. Until the mid-twentieth century the mother tongue of most of its inhabitants was Nahuatl. Although these features have supported both the local claims of an autochthony dating back to pre-Columbian times and the outsiders’ recognition of residents’ Aztec ethnic and cultural legacy, López Caballero argues against such continuity of identity from preconquest to modern times. Not that she questions the long-term native roots of this community; rather, she thinks of indigenous ethnic identity as an ever-changing discourse tied to political interests. The markers of autochthony, she contends, are inscribed in power relations associated with the process of nation-state formation and contribute to defining rights and duties, inclusions and exclusions. How these complex relations work in Milpa Alta, as one example of how they work elsewhere in Mexico, is the subject of her book.

*Indígenas de la nación* leads us through the history of Milpa Alta from the sixteenth to the twenty-first century by comparing two versions of this community’s founding origin myth. One version, formulated in the period of Spanish domination and contained in the seventeenth-century *Título Primordial de Milpa Alta*, states that the settlements in this demarcation have a Catholic and colonial origin, as their founding fathers obtained the land from the crown after an apparition of the Virgin (Nuestra Señora de la Asunción) revealed to them the place where a precious spring would emerge. The other version, of postrevolutionary roots, de-emphasizes the towns’ colonial heritage in favor of their pre-Hispanic past. Throughout the historical journey, López Caballero relates the transformation of this local identity and the narratives that sustain it to the centuries-old agrarian conflict between this community and the neighboring town of San Salvador Cuauhtenco over the control of a 70-square-kilometer portion of woodland, where the miraculous spring, Tulmiac, is located.

This exercise of analysis is based on a long period of ethnographic research and the careful examination of the cartography of land ownership and modern documentary evidence, combined with the revision of contemporary studies on the place that the indigenous Other occupies in Mexican nationalist discourses (by Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, Claudio Lomnitz, and Roger Bartra, among others). Thus, the author identifies three distinct ways that the Mexican state has organized its relationship to the primarily indigenous marginalized population of Mexico, which she calls “regimes of alterity.”

In the nineteenth century, the Mexican republic was constituted through persistent attacks on the church and the corporate rights of the rural population, in an attempt to dismantle the “colonial pact” that had established the legitimacy of Spanish domination. The colonial pact, with the adoption of Catholicism by native peoples and the concession
of land grants (mercedes) by the crown as its most important pillars, established a regime of alterity in which native identities—those of Milpa Alta included—ceased to be directly tied to the basic preconquest political unit, the altepetl. Instead, this regime adopted a more global articulation that connected native individuals to the colonial legal and territorial order as Christians and subjects of the crown within the república de indios. The twentieth-century postrevolutionary state reinstated the old colonial pact with certain modifications, cementing its legitimacy by recognizing, through the agrarian distribution program, the property rights of native communities with preconquest roots in their territories that had been recognized by the Spanish crown and had been dispossessed by the nineteenth-century liberal administrations’ land laws. In this national regime of alterity, indigenous autochthony was rescued as a principle for articulating territorial agrarian rights, but without the relative political autonomy that these rights had conferred on the Indian towns in the colonial order. This regime of alterity intertwines with the one that López Caballero defines as multicultural, more recently adopted in official rhetoric, which posits the existence of distinct ethnic groups, with clear boundaries more or less hermetic and sustained by hereditary affiliation. Thus, residents of Milpa Alta today define their indigenous identity as an ethnocultural legacy of Aztec roots transmitted through the blood and, on this basis, claim a certain territorial autonomy without implying separatism or questioning the legitimacy of the state.

As the author remarks, Indígenas de la nación is an ethnography of the Mexican state through the analysis of a particular indigenous community’s identity transformations. The book represents an important contribution to the current debates on identity politics and its relation to the nation-state.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993155

Transnational Hispaniola: New Directions in Haitian and Dominican Studies.

New narratives about the island of Hispaniola are indispensable to understanding relations between the Dominican Republic and Haiti beyond assumed xenophobia and Dominican racial superiority. Transnational Hispaniola offers a new perspective long overdue in Hispaniola studies. In this collection of essays edited by April J. Mayes and Kiran C. Jayaram, the authors engage in a discussion that looks at Hispaniola in its entirety. Looking at the entire island is sine qua non in creating a pan-Caribbean unity based on Caribbean African ancestry, anticolonial struggles, and present interconnections. This collection emerged from the Transnational Hispaniola conference, held at Rutgers University from 2010 until 2016; the editors arranged the book with the purpose of informing a wider audience of the papers presented at these conferences.
This book’s contributors provide an insightful and cohesive analysis of Hispaniola from an interdisciplinary perspective. Transnationalism works as the theoretical base bonding the chapters, which argue that globalization is not new in the Caribbean but started after 1492 and extended during the course of its history by spreading anticolonial struggle and republicanism. The book’s contributors come from varied disciplinary backgrounds, including historians, culturalists, anthropologists, linguists, and literary scholars. These diversely trained authors cooperate in creating an integrated body of knowledge pertinent to understanding Hispaniola through new narratives that challenge stale approaches tainted by nationalist points of view.

The book’s 12 contributions (not counting the introduction and epilogue) are divided into four sections based on their different perspectives on Hispaniola. All the contributions are based on poring through rare historical documents. The first section includes fascinating and provocative discussions about the transnationality of the border, the construction of subjectivity, and Dominican independence. The second section examines representations of Hispaniola in the literature of several Dominican and Haitian writers. I found the discussion of the evolution of Hilda Contreras’s writing very revealing. The third section examines more contemporary issues, such as the Dominican Constitutional Court’s decision to strip citizenship from hundreds of thousands of Dominican Haitians in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake. The last section looks into the shared traditions that unite music across the island.

This is a necessary book for rethinking the island of Hispaniola. Transnational Hispaniola not only reimagines the geography of Hispaniola but also unmasks old views of division and hate.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993166


Theological author, holy apparition, legend of the borderlands—over the four centuries since she lived, Sor María de Ágreda has amassed many divergent identities and contradictory legacies. The most persistent of these personas is the Lady in Blue, a woman who began visiting and catechizing the Jumano people of eastern New Mexico in 1628. By the nineteenth century, the Lady in Blue had eclipsed Sor María’s identity as a historical and authorial figure; she remains a pervasive presence in the borderlands today. But, as Anna M. Nogar’s meticulous and comprehensive Quill and Cross in the Borderlands posits, Sor María’s authorial and evangelical identities are fundamentally intertwined. In fact, Nogar contends, Sor María’s religious works, and subsequent royal and Franciscan advocacy, entrenched the Lady in Blue narrative.
Quill and Cross in the Borderlands unfolds in six roughly chronological chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 elaborate the textual origins of the Lady in Blue narrative and Sor María’s rise to prominence in Spain; chapter 3 argues that, by the late seventeenth century, Sor María had found a wide audience and devotional community in New Spain. Chapter 4, detailed below, posits that both Sor María’s interventions as a protomissionary and her religious teachings structured Franciscan and Jesuit evangelization in northern New Spain. The book’s final chapters track Sor María’s evolution from historical figure to legend—and the concurrent erasure of her influence as a writer. These chapters situate the Lady in Blue narrative within Sor María’s enduring legacy and dissect the multivalent ways that folklorists, colonial apologists, and marginalized communities along the United States–Mexico border have deployed her more mystical guise.

Nogar excels in her fine-grain, textually grounded analysis. She draws on a broad and varied source base, ranging from seventeenth-century miracle narratives to architectural renderings, library index lists, and operas. Nogar also shines in her engagement with visual sources. Her analysis of Edward O’Brien’s mural Our Lady of Guadalupe’s Love for the Indian Race at St. Catherine’s Indian School, for example, effectively demonstrates the contrary ways that viewers understood Sor María. For O’Brien, the nun symbolized the foreordained conversion and colonization of Indigenous peoples; for Native students, she was “Blue Eyes”—a kind and loving presence who mitigated the stern rule of the nuns at St. Catherine’s (pp. 284, 302–4).

Chapter 4 likewise stands out for its fluid integration of Sor María’s many faces. In this chapter, Nogar elaborates Sor María’s influence over the evangelization and colonization of the Californias, Pimería Alta, Texas, and Sinaloa. For missionaries in the borderlands, Nogar argues, Sor María’s writing provided evangelical praxis, and her bilocation ordained the spiritual conquest of the region’s Native peoples. The Propaganda Fide College of Santa Cruz de Querétaro, the Franciscans’ primary training facility in northern New Spain, centered Ágreda’s La mística ciudad de dios in its curriculum. Junípero Serra, father president of the Alta California missions, reassured himself that “as the Venerable Mother Maríá de Jesús affirms...the gentiles, upon looking at the sons of St. Francis, would convert to our Holy Faith” (p. 209). This understanding informs Nogar’s exploration of Marilyn Westfall’s short story collection Quartet in Blue in chapter 6 (pp. 306–11). The Westfall section encapsulates many of the book’s central themes: Sor María is the unwilling witness to the ways in which male leaders, both religious and temporal, misappropriate and deploy her bilocation and written work. Further, these pages center Sor María’s lived experience and her legacy’s tangible ramifications for Indigenous peoples.

Unfortunately, this section’s sensitive treatment of Sor María as a historical figure is the exception rather than the rule. Quill and Cross in the Borderlands’s unwavering focus on the nun’s reception, veneration, distribution, and readership leaves little room for Sor María, woman and scholar. Only chapter 2, which opens with a five-page summary of Sor María’s public life, offers glimpses of her personal charisma and dry, pragmatic voice. Nor does Sor María’s theology receive sustained analysis or synthesis. Instead, the nun’s controversial position on the Immaculate Conception—and its broad political and
religious implications—emerges piecemeal through unadorned block quotes and her detractors’ and supporters’ divergent responses to her work. Thus, despite Nogar’s efforts to reintegrate Sor María’s fractured personas, the actual content of Sor María’s theology and lived experience remains a cipher.

Finally, although she condemns folklorists’ “disturbing,” demeaning, and unspecific representations of Indigenous peoples, Nogar’s own treatment of Native communities is sparse at best (p. 275). Explicit and ongoing engagement with Indigenous subjects would have substantiated these critical assessments. More importantly, greater attention to Indigenous peoples throughout the text would have added a new dimension to Nogar’s analysis, demonstrating not only the ways that Spanish speakers received Sor María’s work but also how her legacy was experienced in the mission fields. Despite these concerns, Quill and Cross in the Borderlands will find an appreciative readership among religious historians, scholars of the book, and scholars of Sor María herself.

NAOMI SUSSMAN, Yale University


Until recently, Cuba has been neglected by American ecclesiastical historians. However, starting in the late twentieth century such authors as Eduardo Torres Cuevas, Edelberto Leyva Lajara, Ana Irisarri Aguirre, and Consolación Fernández Mellén have renovated this historical topic, and Arelis Rivero Cabrera’s book is a good illustration of this renewed interest. The book is divided into a lengthy introduction, five chapters, and an epilogue, in addition to twenty appendixes.

The opening chapter, after a balanced synthesis of the regular clergy’s settlement in the Indies, deals with the deployment of Franciscan convents in the island between 1530 and 1750; by the end of this period, there were nine convents and a hospice. Initially, they were included under the province of Santa Cruz, in Hispaniola, but from the early seventeenth century they were attached to the province of Santa Elena, which also included the Franciscan missions in Florida.

The second chapter studies the evolution of the Franciscan population in the province—which included Cuba and Florida, until the latter was transferred to Britain in 1763—and pays special attention to the friars’ European or American (creole) origins. Based on Maynard Geiger’s famous work as well as other sources, the chapter narrates the spectacular increase in the number of friars in the province between the late seventeenth century, when the order enjoyed the patronage of the Franciscan bishop Diego Evelino de Compostela, and the mid-eighteenth. In fact, the regular and secular clergy in general, as well as the novitiate, similarly increased with the structural expansion of the church in
Cuba, caused to a large extent by the economic growth undergone there during this period. This led to a *criollización* of the order in Cuba, a phenomenon that has also been attested for the Spanish American colonies as a whole. Rivero Cabrera claims that the new Franciscan friars represented a “wide social spectrum,” although most came from the middle tiers of creole society, as the elite placed their children in other orders, such as the Dominicans and the Mercedarians (p. 117).

The third chapter addresses a relatively neglected aspect of the history of the Franciscan order in America: the close relationship that the order established from an early date with Cuban society, from the elite to the lower classes, as well as the order’s influence on popular Cuban religiosity. Creole elements of Cuban society and members of petty local elites became involved in the foundation, construction, and decoration of churches and convents. The Third Order was a key vehicle for disseminating the Franciscan spirit and religiosity. In addition, the Franciscans seem to have been the only order to accept without qualms the associations (**cofradías**) and other devotional institutions organized by the black population, to the point that some degree of religious syncretism between African beliefs and the order’s devotional principles crystallized. Undoubtedly, the simple style and spirituality of the Franciscans, which focused on devotional piety and mercy, made them easier to approach for those at the bottom of colonial society.

Using the official records for the first attempt to sell the church’s mortmains, in 1822–23, the fourth chapter undertakes a detailed analysis of the economy of Franciscan convents in Havana, especially the most important among them, the Purísima Concepción. Unlike other religious orders, Franciscans had renounced possessing real estate and lived on alms, private donations, and, chiefly, the *censos* (rents) over rural properties whose owners ceded to the convents in exchange for religious services or as a financial instrument in commercial transactions. As Rivero Cabrera rightly points out, this system reflects the complex, close links between the order and colonial society.

The last chapter provides an overview of the period from 1770 and 1840, during which religious orders suffered the consequences of the (ostensibly reformist) policies carried out by the Bourbons and by liberal governments. In this context the few known cases of moral relaxation among friars, conveniently amplified by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in order to justify their policies, become more visible. The repeated decrees for the sale of mortmains, the closure of convents, and the extra tributes exacted in order to pay for the American and peninsular wars inevitably led to the order’s decline: by 1840, most friars had applied for secularization, and the order disappeared from Cuba. As Rivero Cabrera points out, however, a few years later the colonial authorities considered bringing back the order as part of their strategy to keep Cuba under Spanish sovereignty.

The whole work is solidly based on primary evidence from Spanish and Cuban archives as well as an abundant bibliography, which is handled with great skill. The appendixes provide abundant data about the number of friars and their origin, the missionary expeditions launched from Spain, and other quantitative aspects, in addition to the regulations of the Third Order of the convent in Havana. Clearly and precisely
within the humanities and social sciences, there are many disciplines that, in theory, might fruitfully inform and dialogue with one another but that regularly struggle to do so. Archaeology and history both deal with the past, but by its nature the former observes the patterns that define epochs while the latter targets the particularities of individual generations and lives. Anthropology and art history, meanwhile, might investigate the same cultural traditions, yet methodological guidelines frequently restrict their complementarity. The diverse civilizations of pre-Columbian Mesoamerica and their modern descendants, however, offer unique opportunities to marry these four disciplines to great scholarly effect. Mesoamerica has produced a vast wealth of archaeological and artistic treasures spanning millennia as well as a substantial—and mostly unrivaled in the Americas—corpus of ethnohistorical texts. It also maintains a strong and ongoing demographic and cultural presence today.

The Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in Washington, DC, has promoted such interdisciplinary approaches to Mesoamerican culture and history for decades. Its symposia regularly gather archaeologists, historians, art historians, and anthropologists to collectively and holistically address aspects of Mesoamerican life and culture from the Classic to the Late Postclassic period (ca. 200–1500 CE) and beyond. Some of the edited volumes derived from these collaborations have become required reading for all scholars of Mesoamerica, as they tackle innovative questions with a comprehensiveness that is simply beyond the reach of any individual scholar or discipline.

Smoke, Flames, and the Human Body in Mesoamerican Ritual Practice continues in this tradition. Derived from a 2015 Dumbarton Oaks symposium on body burning, the volume collects 13 essays, an introduction, and a short conclusion on the role of fire and crematory practices across Classic, Postclassic, and Late Postclassic Mesoamerica, from Guatemala, Chiapas, and the Yucatan to southern, central, and western Mexico. Oversize and copiously illustrated, the book explores archaeological remains, art, epigraphy, alphabetic and pictorial texts, and modern oral traditions from across the region that bear
on or describe the ritual use of fire and the burning of bodies and body parts. In addressing such sources, the authors draw out and contemplate Mesoamerican cosmological, theological, ideological, and biological understandings, explicitly following an analytical path, identified with Alfredo López Austin, that targets the intersection of ritual, myth, and narrative in Mesoamerica (pp. vii–viii). The collective result is a study that, taking cues from certain recurring Mesoamerican beliefs, considers flames, heat, and smoke as a kind of cultural and historical agent of transformation. Drawing from previous research into Mesoamerican understandings of the human body and its component parts, the contributors seek deep continuities between seemingly remote times and places while drawing conclusions about the beliefs of those who summoned and wielded fire and their reasons for doing so.

By design, the volume and most of its individual chapters transcend disciplinarity; as coeditor Vera Tiesler puts it in her own contribution, the goal is to “breach the interpretational constraints imposed by . . . disciplinary divides” (p. 206). In practice, this means that the authors juxtapose and make productive use of diverse, seemingly unrelated sources to reveal new information. For example, John F. Chuchiak IV examines Maya sculpture, pottery, and codices to help explain details found in Spanish accounts of Maya fire-related practices. Danièle Dehouve, meanwhile, reinterprets the famous Aztec New Fire ceremony as described in sixteenth-century texts by way of learned observations of modern-day practices involving fire among the Tlapanec Indians of Mexico’s Guerrero state. Oswaldo Chinchilla Mazariegos, meanwhile, ranges across time, space, and medium—burial sites at Tikal, Maya art and epigraphy, sixteenth-century Nahua evangelical texts, the Popul Vuh, and twentieth-century ethnographic reports and oral histories—to illuminate recurring tropes in Mesoamerican myths.

The volume’s interdisciplinarity constitutes and enables its distinct scholarly interventions but also opens potential pitfalls. Mesoamerica neither is nor ever was homogenous. In pushing beyond disciplinary guardrails and addressing a vast, diverse, and ancient region by way of a single, broadly defined characteristic, there is a danger of overimplying commonalities or linkages between distant eras and peoples. And indeed some chapters range back and forth across centuries and thousands of miles in search of possible resonances and echoes. Fortunately, the contributors largely adhere to careful methods that help them avoid haphazard conclusions and ensure that the volume is more than the sum of its parts. In this sense, it amply achieves its primary objective.

Smoke, Flames, and the Human Body in Mesoamerican Ritual Practice is dense, sophisticated, and elaborate and will mostly be of interest to professional scholars of Mesoamerica. Yet its thematic approach should also attract those who work on other parts of the world, particularly anthropologists and ethnographers. The ritual use of fire on human bodies is not uniquely Mesoamerican, and the volume explicitly and implicitly invites comparisons with other world traditions.

PETER B. VILLELLA, United States Air Force Academy

DOI 10.1215/00182168-7993199
In the past decade, bioarchaeology has turned to interdisciplinary collaborations to expand its relevance and impact. The case studies presented in *Bioarchaeology of Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica: An Interdisciplinary Approach* are an excellent example of collaboration that is diverse in its methodologies and international in nature. Producing multidimensional research strongly based in anthropological theory, this volume aims to interpret the complexity of dynamic relationships in the past. In many ways, aspects of this book also trend toward postcolonial approaches, avoiding trivialization of the past by showcasing the multifaceted experiences of ancient populations.

The foreword by Clark Spencer Larsen connects the embodied experience found in the skeleton to broader relationships of identity, the biological impacts of social processes, and the body as a site of knowledge creation. While aspects of these questions have long been a part of archaeological investigation, the methodology, interdisciplinarity, and international voices in this book breathe new life and new direction into them. In the introduction, editors Cathy Willermet and Andrea Cucina explain how the “cross-fertilization of work” serves to complicate assumptions about life in the past, particularly in reference to the themes of identity and migration (p. 3). Willermet begins the second chapter, “On Interdisciplinarity in Bioarchaeology,” by emphasizing the need for a “transdisciplinarity” in bioarchaeology, moving away from arcane specialization to multidisciplinary research design (p. 9). As Willermet argues, humanity is transdisciplinary and necessitates an equivalent framework to be captured and understood. Within this chapter and throughout the volume runs an undercurrent of equity—both in the representation of voices that are drawn out of the past and in those that are contributing to bioarchaeology in the present.

In the first of two sections, “Migration and Mobility,” three chapters traverse themes of population replacement, social and economic interaction, and biological and cultural affinity. Through a biocultural approach that weaves together sociopolitical and environmental history through space and time, Corey S. Ragsdale and Heather J. H. Edgar draw from dental morphometric data to analyze populations in the Valley of Mexico from the Preclassic through the Late Postclassic era. Interrogating the idea of ancestry, they demonstrate the chronological depth of population movement and resulting chronic restructuring of identity. Through analyses of strontium and oxygen isotopes, T. Douglas Price, Travis W. Stanton, and Andrea Cucina question how social and political dynamics shape motivations of migration in the Maya area. Like the authors of the preceding chapter, they challenge static ideas of identity, disentangling the movement of culture as ideas and culture as people. Andrea Cucina, Allan Ortega Muñoz, and Sandra Verónica Elizalde Rodarte explore how biological affinity relates to mortuary practices among the Maya in the Late Postclassic Yucatán, a period of increasing trade and cultural interaction. Pairing dental morphology and mortuary treatment, the authors illustrate how biological
similarity does not equate to cultural homogeneity, while, conversely, culturally similar groups can be biologically heterogeneous.

Part 2, “Ethnicity and Social Identity,” builds on the ambiguous, labyrinthine task of grouping populations. Amy R. Michael, Gabriel D. Wroebel, and Jack Biggs examine identity and ethnicity tied to cave burials from the Classic-period Maya. Integrating the ethnographic analogy of contemporary cave use and dental health as a proxy for socio-economic difference, the authors explore how burials reflect social structures. Shintaro Suzuki, Vera Tiesler, and T. Douglas Price turn to strontium isotopes from burials at Copán, Honduras, to interpret whether movement of goods could be equated directly to the movement of people or simply to the movement of ideas. In the only chapter not based directly in analysis of skeletal remains, Andrew K. Scherer, Charles Golden, and Stephen Houston uniquely integrate ethnography, ethnohistory, and art of the Classic-period Maya to explore understandings of belonging. Echoing a theme that runs throughout the book, this chapter emphasizes how the idea of identity is “very much situational, constituted and performed in the present” (p. 159).

The works in this publication follow a common thread of acknowledging diversity in the past. Through a collaborative bioarchaeology, this research challenges the imposition of static categories, drawing attention to the constant shift and strategic use of identity as a response to changing situational contexts. The implications of an interdisciplinary contextualization of bioarchaeological data are affirmed in Frances F. Berdan’s conclusion, which highlights the holistic narratives demonstrated in this volume. Identifying the research as “problem-oriented analyses,” Berdan rectifies the often-contradictory narratives as the result of multiple coexisting experiences in the past (p. 227).

This volume’s historiographic significance lies in its shift toward social bioarchaeology, adopting a culturally conscious and self-reflective perspective. While portions of the chapters are data-heavy—data that could provide ample fodder for comparative research—the contextual information and conclusions are written for a more general audience, ideal for courses centered on Mesoamerica, bioarchaeology, or identity studies. This volume will help readers understand that the past was never meant to be tied up in a tidy bow. It is meant to be poked and prodded, unraveling threads made visible by our own diverse and unique perspectives, which shape the methods and theories that we choose.

Keitlyn Alcantara, Vanderbilt University

doi:10.1215/00182168-7993210

Fifteenth–Seventeenth Centuries

Assembling the Tropics: Science and Medicine in Portugal’s Empire, 1450–1700.

The history of science in the early modern Iberian world is a blooming field. The recent decades have provided excellent contributions in English from historians based in both
US and European universities and research centers, not to mention myriad studies authored by scholars based in the Iberian Peninsula, who usually publish in their own languages. As in many other areas of history, the Portuguese side of this story is often the poor cousin. This is especially true for the subject of colonial medicine prior to the nineteenth century, which is what *Assembling the Tropics* primarily covers; hence a reason, among many others, to welcome Hugh Cagle’s first book. We have substantive studies for Dutch and British colonial medicine, but the Portuguese empire has lacked so far an all-encompassing, argumentative study, despite the solid work produced by several historians, especially Timothy Walker.

Written at the crossroads of various fields, *Assembling the Tropics* makes an artful use of the available primary sources and displays mastery of the relevant literature for different cultural zones of the early modern world. The book covers more than two centuries, from the mid-1550s to the late 1770s, and takes the reader successively from sub-Saharan Africa (chapter 2) to the Indian Ocean world (chapters 3 to 5) and the South Atlantic (chapters 6 to 8). Cagle’s purpose and research agenda are clearly presented in the first chapter of the book and recalled in its epilogue: the author seeks to investigate “distinctive cultures of inquiry” in the Portuguese empire concerning nature and disease in order to understand developments on the ground, “in each theater of colonial engagement,” and therefore “to reorient and pluralize the history of early modern science” (p. 309).

In so doing, Cagle rightly refuses a teleological (often-nationalistic) view of early modern Portuguese science, which is invariably associated with the rise of modernity and the historiographically controversial scientific revolution. He likewise questions the centrality of Lisbon and the metropole while giving room to medicinal developments on the ground, be it in South Asia or the South Atlantic. Needless to note, this exercise of relocation is incompatible with the diffusionist paradigm or the center-periphery model. Alternatively, such relocation implies strong engagement with a historiographical current, very much in vogue, that underlines the importance of movement and circulation, porosity and fluidity, and entanglements and connections. Finally, Cagle embraces a holistic view of the Portuguese empire; instead of spatially segmenting his work, he pays equal attention to the Indian Ocean and Atlantic Ocean settings as well as to the intriguing intertropical phenomena at stake.

*Assembling the Tropics* brings into play a plethora of figures, texts, places, and practices. Jesuit missionaries and obscure native practitioners—the embodiment of relocated expertise—populate this work. It is clear, though, that the Asian section of the book is dominated by Garcia de Orta and his *Colóquios dos simples, e drogas e cousas medicinais da India* (published in Goa in 1563), while the book’s Atlantic section is molded by Aleixo de Abreu’s *Tratado de las siete enfermedades* (published in Lisbon in 1623) and Ambrosio Fernandes Brandão’s *Diálogos das grandezas do Brasil* (written in 1618). These are chapters of impeccable scholarship, but it might be problematic to rely on a handful of authors and materials in order to demonstrate—without, somewhat ironically, being able to avoid a certain teleological stance—how the tropics were fully assembled by the late
seventeenth century; this leaves the impression that Cagle’s arguments and evidence are sometimes stretched too far.

On the other hand, if the emphasis is put on “proliferating centers and cosmopolitan colonies,” then we need to take the argument a step further (p. 16). What about scholarly medicinal conversations across the Iberian empires, with cities like Mexico City, Lima, and Manila probably taking an active role? (Abreu’s Tratado was written in Castilian, and one wonders what its readership was in colonial Spanish America.) Were there numerous, even if tense, scientific interactions with the Dutch in both oceans? (Cagle hardly mentions Willem Piso and Jacobus Bontius.) And why should East Asia be excluded from the Indian Ocean world when we know that Macao and Nagasaki were the locus of significant hybrid medical experiments in this period? The author favors the study of human entanglements but indirectly contributes to compartmentalizing the subject matter.

Despite these shortcomings, Assembling the Tropics constitutes an excellent and much-needed scholarly endeavor written in a clear and engaging style. Cagle’s work is geared toward historians and students of the Portuguese empire and the history of science (namely medicine) in early modern times but certainly has the potential to attract a much wider audience.

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DOI 10.1215/00182168-7993221

Verdades y mentiras en torno a don Diego de Mendoza Austria Moctezuma.

Don Diego de Mendoza Austria Moctezuma, the sixteenth-century cacique and indigenous governor of Tlatelolco, carried two of the most recognizable names of the colonial period. He was the namesake of the first viceroy of New Spain, Antonio de Mendoza, and the huei tlatoani Moteuczoma Xocoyotzin, whose names were linked in don Diego’s surname by “Austria,” suggesting the Hapsburg dynasty. María Castañeda de la Paz’s extraordinary study unravels all that is encapsulated in this name and its potent legacy. However, as she notes in the opening paragraph, her study is not of the governor of Tlatelolco but rather of how this name was associated with the production of documents of questionable legitimacy in the later colonial period. Noble natives, like the true descendants of don Diego, brought before authorities alphabetic and pictorial documents that supported claims to lands and position based on the status and deeds of their ancestors. Those records provide pragmatically motivated narratives of the history of native families and towns. Castañeda de la Paz’s study deals with a corpus of documents related to don Diego that were associated with native individuals and communities in the
seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who were not actually his descendants. *Verdades y mentiras en torno a don Diego de Mendoza Austria Moctezuma* teases from a wide range of archival sources the story of these not exactly false (though not exactly truthful) documents, who authored them, and why. These materials, as Castañeda de la Paz makes clear, provide a window on networks of native individuals and families interested in, for a variety of reasons, maintaining connections to the native past.

Don Diego de Mendoza Austria Moctezuma appears widely in colonial documents, including coats of arms, primordial titles, and wills. Stephanie Wood was a pioneer in analyzing parts of this corpus, particularly the variety of primordial titles known as the Techialoyan Codices, and deciphering the role of a muleteer by the name of don Diego García de Mendoza Moctezuma in their production. Castañeda de la Paz provides an overview of studies by Wood and others that laid the groundwork for this more comprehensive investigation of the figures involved with the production and dissemination of documents associated with don Diego. The book is organized into an introduction, four chapters, and a conclusion. Chapter 1 addresses the royal house of Tlatelolco and specifically don Diego and his three sons—Melchor, Gaspar, and Baltasar—and their descendants. Chapter 2 expands the scope of the study from Tlatelolco to the state of Hidalgo, where in the seventeenth century the descendants of don Diego’s son Baltasar established connections with an Otomi community. These are the key contacts that led to the exchange of ancestral materials from the royal house of Tlatelolco with the group of Otomi from Hidalgo, including the muleteer don Diego García. Chapter 3 focuses on a philological study of a selection of alphabetic documents, and through that analysis Castañeda de la Paz illuminates not only the nature of the documents but also the nature of the relationship between the Otomi families from Hidalgo and the true descendants of don Diego. Chapter 4 dives even more deeply into the question of the creation of pictorial documents, including primordial titles, specifically the Techialoyan Codices. At each stage of this study, Castañeda de la Paz meticulously traces the process of copying and circulating documents as she also sheds light on the authors of this trove of materials.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as many noble native families were losing status and lands, they sought to solidify their positions by preparing and presenting to authorities materials that proved the history of their families and the deeds of their ancestors. Though Castañeda de la Paz is not the first to note that some of these documents are reproductions produced outside the family lineage they purport to prove, *Verdades y mentiras* takes the study of the materials and the figures associated with them to an unprecedented level of analysis and synthesis. Castañeda de la Paz’s careful study of the connections between these documents and the individuals associated with them concludes that the key figure is the muleteer don Diego García, who learned the art of crafting documents from his uncle, Joseph, and his father, Roque. In the final paragraph of the book, Castañeda de la Paz cautions the reader to take heed of the lessons found in the case she presents: scholars must take great care in working with materials from the late colonial period that appear to be copies of sixteenth-century documents. She goes on, however, to clarify that there were understandable exigencies that motivated the falsifying of documents. Native individuals, families, and communities struggled more
and more urgently as the decades and centuries of colonial rule went by, and it was in that context that they sought ways to avoid, as Castañeda de la Paz says, the depths of misery. The truth and fiction of these documents need to be understood as products of those dire circumstances.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993232


Titled in reference to the biblical story of how Christ’s apostles received the gift of universal fluency, Tongues of Fire is the result of a four-decade research project on early modern evangelization in Oaxaca, Mexico. Intended as a Dominican-dominated complement to the Franciscan-focused works of Louise Burkhart on central Mexico and William Hanks on Yucatan, Farriss’s book is constantly in dialogue with those other regions and studies, and often with the Andes as well.

Divided into four parts, plus an introduction and conclusion, the book moves from broad institutional-social contexts to focused linguistic analysis. Part 1, “Language Contact and Language Policy,” reviews early attempts to convey the Gospel without actually learning local languages, via gestures and didactic images (chapter 1), indigenous interpreters (chapter 2), and lingua francas from Latin to Nahuatl (chapter 3). Part 2 then turns to the challenges of “evangelization in the vernacular”: studying Oaxacan languages with the help of indigenous collaborators, field schools, and published grammars (chapter 4), and evaluating missionary competence in preaching and confession (chapter 5). Part 3, “The Means and the Message,” shifts from ecclesiastical institutionality to indigenous targets, highlighting collaborations with elite converts in the process of teaching doctrine (chapter 6), as well as the difficulties of translating and preaching basic Catholic concepts such as sin and its effects, or the perils of idolatry (chapter 7). These issues are explored further in part 4, “Lost and Found in Translation,” which introduces early modern theories and practices of translation (chapter 8), presents a series of (mis)translation case studies including heaven and hell, sin, and the Trinity (chapter 9), and explores the importance of rhetoric and poetic speech in both Renaissance Europe and indigenous Mesoamerica (chapter 10). The splendid conclusion, titled “Doctrinal Legacies,” reveals how the often-awkward translations of missionary literature nevertheless became fossilized in practice, creating linguistic precedents repeated throughout the early modern period. Like the language of the King James Bible, translated phrases were taken up not only in later missionary texts but also by indigenous people, in wills and petitions and even spoken courtroom testimonies (p. 291).

Tongues of Fire has many strengths, including a regional focus on Oaxaca’s many languages (as opposed to just one, which is usually the case in Oaxacan scholarship). The
main text and notes thus provide an up-to-date survey of primary and secondary literature on the early modern histories of not only Zapotec and Mixtec but also Chatino, Chinantec, Netzicho, and other less studied tongues. The notes also present an excellent guide to Oaxacan documents in archives from Mexico, the United States, and Europe, and the main text demonstrates how much archival sources can reveal when read carefully and creatively—as when Farriss uses court records to gauge Nahuatl fluency among Zapotec speakers in the late 1520s and 1530s, or to gain a rough timetable for when Dominican missionaries learned Mixtec well enough to translate directly into Spanish (pp. 70–71, 75). Farriss also finds the unexpected and illuminating in early modern published sources, such as the often-cited (but seldom fully read) missionary histories of Agustín Dávila Padilla, Antonio de Remesal, and Francisco de Burgoa. My favorite example is when Farriss gathers references from all three authors about the use of indigenous page boys to carry ecclesiastical clothing (p. 311n55). Although Farriss’s discussions of missionary translations (above all from Spanish to Zapotec) are usually presented in summary (as opposed to providing the indigenous-language missionary text in parallel with a literal English translation), this is because such focused analyses can be found in the appendixes of her 2014 book Libana: El discurso ceremonial mesoamericano y el sermón cristiano, which triangulates sixteenth-century Spanish texts, their (mis)translation into Zapotec, and a retranslation of the Zapotec into present-day Spanish.

Farriss’s introduction opens by speaking about outer space, arguing that the languages and customs encountered by Europeans in the early modern Americas were so alien to Afro-Eurasian sensibilities as to seem from another planet (p. 1). This is a recurring theme throughout the book—indeed, the first footnote cites Douglas Vakoch’s 2011 edited collection Communication with Extraterrestrial Intelligence (see also pp. 2–3, 11, 85, 175, 285, 292). Such extraplanetary comparisons are actually faithful to early modern imaginations: in a manuscript from late 1508, Leonardo da Vinci wondered what the earth would look like if seen from the moon or from a star; in the epic Orlando Furioso of 1516, poet Ludovico Ariosto sent one of his knightly protagonists to the moon, transported in Elijah’s fiery chariot.

And so with its insistence on the Americas as alien, Tongues of Fire offers a critique of James Lockhart’s famous concept of “Double Mistaken Identity.” Lockhart was struck by the extensive similarities between European and Mesoamerican civilizations; in contrast, Farriss argues that “Iberians had so little in the way of culturally specific elements in common with Mesoamericans that the overlap in their repertoires of associations was infinitesimal” (p. 5). But do Farriss’s many examples of Catholic (mis)translations—confirmation as “the bishop placing a mark”; the vale of tears as a “place for crying”—disprove Lockhart’s broader claims about mutually intelligible Ibero-American parallels, in practices ranging from social hierarchies to tax systems to religious organizations to ritual calendars?

BYRON ELLSWORTH HAMANN, Ohio State University

doi 10.1215/00182168-7993243
Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and the Conquest of Florida: A New Manuscript.

The 1565 establishment of Saint Augustine and the Florida colony by Pedro Menéndez de Avilés was unquestionably one of the pivotal events in the colonial history of the Americas, not just because it was the first successful European colonial settlement in southeastern North America but because of its important role in the eventual history of the United States, of which it still forms a part. Among the earliest and lengthiest narratives of the Florida colony's establishment by Menéndez de Avilés is that of Gonzalo Solís de Méras, whose sixteenth-century account was first transcribed and published in Spanish by Eugenio Ruidíaz y Caravia in 1893 and subsequently translated into English by Jeannette Thurber Connor in 1923. Though later transcriptions and translations have been made, these first two have without doubt been employed the most in recent historical analyses. Both these and all subsequent renditions were based on the same original manuscript consulted by Ruidíaz y Caravia in Madrid within the private archives of the conde de Revillagigedo, a descendant of Menéndez de Avilés.

David Arbesú’s important new bilingual volume is the product of his 2012 discovery of a second early manuscript copy of the Solís de Méras narrative, in the family archive of the marqués de Ferrera in Asturias, Spain. This new manuscript was transcribed by a notary named Diego de Ribera in 1618, and even though it is not an original sixteenth-century manuscript, Ribera’s copy is actually more complete than the earlier Revillagigedo version and furthermore lacks the many crossed-out lines and insertions in the Revillagigedo manuscript, which editor Ruidíaz y Caravia seems to have glossed over without mention in his 1893 transcription. In this regard, one of the most useful aspects of Arbesú’s volume is his detailed description and explanation of both the Revillagigedo and Ferrera manuscripts and his careful scrutiny of differences in handwriting as well as text content and order. Using a microfilm copy of the original Revillagigedo manuscript provided by the St. Augustine Foundation in Saint Augustine, Florida (originally obtained in the 1960s by renowned Menéndez de Avilés scholar Eugene Lyon), Arbesú was able to compare the two manuscripts line by line, revealing not just that the two are indeed drawn from the same original narrative but also that the Revillagigedo manuscript is both incomplete and somewhat out of order, perhaps as a result of Ruidíaz y Caravia’s editorial rearrangement of the manuscript. In addition, Arbesú was able to match eighteenth-century handwriting on both copies of the manuscript, including numerous later corrections and insertions in the Revillagigedo manuscript, as well as a substantial block of text within the Ferrera manuscript apparently recopied from what may have been deteriorating sections of its 1618 original. All these detailed comparisons have allowed Arbesú to make a convincing case that this new volume contains what is now without doubt the best and most complete edition of Solís de Méras’s account of what he originally entitled The Conquest of Florida.

The new material now available from the Ferrera edition allows, for example, the restoration of the complete original narrative of conversations and interactions between
Menéndez de Avilés and his soon-to-be native wife doña Antonia, the sister of the Calusa chief named Carlos, during Menéndez de Avilés’s first visit to southwest Florida in February 1566 (found on pp. 95–98 in English and on pp. 268–70 in Spanish). The details of these interactions are missing from Ruidíaz y Caravia’s 1893 Spanish edition; when the narrative is read in its complete form, the story makes much more sense, revealing the confusion and frustration expressed by Antonia and her brother Carlos at Menéndez de Avilés’s initial refusal to take her and several other Calusa nobles back with him upon their departure and his reluctant acquiescence in order to avoid potential conflict.

Overall, Arbesu’s translations are very well done, striking an effective balance between faithfulness to the original Spanish and readability in English. Commendably, the volume includes the complete English translation as well as the full transcript in Spanish, both of which contain extensive and detailed explanatory endnotes. The 33-page introduction includes both a thorough overview of the historical context of the narrative and an in-depth comparison of the Ferrera edition with the Revillagigedo manuscript as well as other contemporary and derivative historical accounts. A bibliography is included, as is a very useful index. In sum, this new edition of the Solís de Merás narrative unquestionably belongs on the bookshelf of any serious scholar of sixteenth-century Spanish Florida and should take its place as the definitive edition of this important early narrative.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993254


Many really excellent studies of prostitution in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Latin America exist, but such works are sparse for the colonial period. Despite the prodigious and admirable growth in scholarly literature on gender in the colonial period, the lack of abundant documentation meant that studies of New Spain usually skirted the issue of sex work. Nicole von Germeten builds on this foundational literature and on the excellent study by Ana María Atondo Rodríguez published in 1992, El amor venal y la condición femenina en el México colonial. It was long past time for new insights, and this is a book that is clearly informed by the theoretical and activist approaches that have blossomed since the 1990s.

Von Germeten starts by tackling terminology; sex activists have rejected the term prostitute in favor of sex worker. However, the author explains that it would be anachronistic to adopt modern terminology. She traces how women who engaged in the sex trade were described from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth century. In the early colony, women who engaged in sex work were called rameras, mujeres públicas, or putas, and it was only in the eighteenth century that the word prostituta came into use. The evolution of terms reflected a societal and juridical change over the course of the colonial period. Von Germeten’s careful use of the changing vocabulary is part of the balancing act she performs of trying to examine questions of agency, particularly sexual agency, while still...
remaining true to the documents. She is very sensitive to the nuances of the court cases and to the interplay between the various actors in these dramas. She takes us from the early days of the colony to the brink of independence.

Von Germeten adopts a transnational approach, connecting ideas about sex work in medieval Spain to those that were transplanted in New Spain. This methodology includes using literature to enhance the information that comes from the archives. This approach is not entirely successful since the author abandons it after the first few chapters. This is part of the unevenness of the study; the author announces methods that she only deploys partially. At times, her work is very much situated in the Spanish and more general understandings of sex work in history, but as the book advances chronologically into the late colonial period, the link to Spain wanes.

Her book begins with an examination of the way that Spanish conceptions of sex work were defined and deployed in the early colony. The first two chapters provide a very dense and nuanced discussion of terminology and concepts within the complex world of sex work in Spain and New Spain. This section is based primarily on secondary literature, with only brief references to archival documents. The next two chapters delve into the less clearly defined transactional sex of mistresses and courtesans. In these relationships the transaction for sexual favors was not as obvious as those exchanges of streetwalkers and brothel workers, but nonetheless these women depended on the support of and gifts from men. Von Germeten deftly analyzes accusations and counterexplanations regarding the House of Wonders—the home of two sisters whose nighttime activities and visitors attracted neighbors’ suspicion and condemnation. Her chapter on courtesans is a highlight, examining the incredible life and times of Josefa de Ordoñez—actress, impresario, and a woman of great wealth.

The next chapters focus on the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, with attention to different types of transactional sex and the many identities that prostitutes assumed both in the streets and within families. One chapter uses the libros de reos from 1794 to 1798 to paint a picture of sex work’s places and patterns. Quite anachronistically, von Germeten refers to the police when such an organized force did not yet exist in Mexico. She follows with two chapters that explore both identities and family dynamics. Both these chapters rely primarily on a few elaborate documents, which the author re-creates for the reader by using the approach of the “archival turn” (p. 5).

Those who have read Atondo Rodríguez’s book will not find much new information here; rather, they will find an updating of approaches and methodology. This monograph does provide a very rich analysis and opens up this topic for an Anglophone audience. Unfortunately, the copyediting for this book was jarringly atrocious. Despite my quibbles, this book is an important addition to the scholarly literature on gender in colonial Latin America and sexuality studies. It should find an audience with specialists but also in upper-level classrooms.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993265
On March 5, 2019, a ruckus erupted in the New Hampshire state legislature when lawmakers wore strings of pearls to support a gun-rights advocacy group. The supporters of gun control felt mocked as pearl clutcher, while the adorned lawmakers and the gun-possession advocates they were supporting claimed they wore the necklaces as badges of conservatism. This little bit of local drama highlights the complexities embodied in our understandings of pearls, which Molly Warsh seeks to elucidate in *American Baroque*. She shows that pearls have global significance as an important catalyst to a variety of human behaviors.

Warsh manages to cover two centuries and touch on a wide variety of topics in a concise volume. While the book broaches environmental history, technological exoticism, slavery, and many other subjects that relate to pearls, Warsh pursues her argument that pearls “gave rise to a productive tension between vernacular, small-scale understandings of wealth management . . . and developing imperial understandings of the same” with an admirable focus (p. 8). By mapping but not exploring some of these byroads, Warsh produces a cogent argument that will lay the way for future explorations of pearls and that links with recent dissertations by Samuel Ostroff on pearl fisheries under the Dutch and British in the Gulf of Mannar and by Kjell Ericson on cultured pearls and the Japanese entrepreneur Mikimoto Kōkichi.

The book proceeds roughly in chronological order. The introduction and chapters 1 and 2 begin with Christopher Columbus, who supposedly discovered the Caribbean pearl beds, and underline the maritime nature of empire in the early modern world. In chapter 1, the appeal and symbolism of pearls and their importance is explained. Chapter 2 discusses consumption by European aristocracy in the sixteenth century and “the dialogue between individual imperative and imperial directive” as a framework for looking at “private approaches to wealth management,” theft, and smuggling (p. 50). In chapter 3, “ecological impacts, imperial administrative policy, and slavery in the Americas as a result of pearlng are considered. Warsh describes these as important for wealth management and its reflection in imperial bureaucracy. Chapter 4 moves into the seventeenth century by examining technological innovations in diving and the Cardona company, providing a comparison of New World pearlng practices and wealth management to those employed in Sri Lanka based on João de Ribeiro’s account of the Gulf of Mannar from 1680. These topics are used to explore the relationships between labor, production, and the crown. Chapter 5 focuses on administrative control and challenges to it posed by smuggling, which is also examined as a means of private wealth accumulation, especially among private citizens and prisoners of the Inquisition and others under the thumb of Spanish colonialism. These topics are explored as “networks of belonging and obligation” for not just the New World but also the Estado da Índia (p. 182). Chapter
6 brings in the English East India Company and consumption in northern Europe as a way of seeing how the administrative value of pearls diminished with increasing global trade, although they retained their symbolism. The conclusion summarizes the argument embodied in the book’s title: that pearls elucidate human relationships with the natural world, which in turn bring us to a new and better understanding of the rise and fall of empires.

World history can be difficult to accomplish because it often requires many languages, distant archives, and synthesis of large amounts of material. This project is no exception. Warsh has generally done an admirable job. Inevitably, some important regions (China and the Persian Gulf) were not examined, and potential topics, such as pearl color or medicinal applications, were omitted to create a cohesive argument. However, while one can understand the lack of Dutch-language archival sources from a historian of the Ibero-American world, the discorporate presence of the Dutch trading companies, which were active in these regions and in the pearl trade and were arguably more important than the English (who are examined) in Asia and the Americas in the seventeenth century, creates a focused but incomplete picture. The Dutch adumbration is highlighted by the fact that 7 of the 30 illustrations included in the book are works by Dutch or Flemish artists. It is an odd contrast to the deft and thoughtful way that Warsh includes discussions of these visual sources in her analysis. Serious students and scholars will mourn the employment of an “essay on sources” rather than a bibliography. The footnotes are comprehensive, but those not already familiar with the topic will not be able to locate the archival sources used extensively in chapters 2 through 5 or easily compile a reading list.

Undoubtedly, historians and students of the Spanish empire, luxury trade, the Columbian exchange, and world history will find this a valuable addition to existing scholarship. Our ancestors found pearls mysterious and speculated that they might have come from raindrops, bird spit, mermaid tears, or dragon hair. Today most people know how they are formed, but with American Baroque, we now know that they in turn contributed to the formation of empires.

Martha Chaiklin, Independent Scholar

doi 10.1215/00182168-7993276

**Eighteenth–Nineteenth Centuries**

*Svrivering Slavery in the British Caribbean.* By Randy M. Browne.

Randy M. Browne offers the most comprehensive account of the lives of enslaved Africans and their descendants in Berbice, part of present-day Guyana, after this colony transitioned from Dutch to British rule. In this relatively little-studied society, slavery rose exponentially before the 1807 British prohibition of the transatlantic slave trade.
Thereafter, Berbice experienced policies of “amelioration” of slavery typical of the British Caribbean. What sets Berbice and Demerara apart from the rest of the British Americas was the figure of the fiscal, a legacy of the Dutch legal system that continued under British rule. This fiscal heard complaints of slaves against masters and other enslaved people as well. A body of written slave complaints and protests, exceptional for the British Caribbean and underutilized by historians of the British Americas, constitutes the core of Browne’s evidence, alongside more common documents emerging from the amelioration policies. Inspired by Vincent Brown’s “politics of survival,” this book places surviving slavery, rather than seeking freedom, as central for the experience of Africans and their descendants by examining how enslaved men and women employed legal claims to pursue strategies of survival under some of the most horrid living conditions in the Americas (p. 4).

After an outline of Berbice during the beginnings of British rule, chapter 2 emphasizes that judicial complaints by enslaved people were generated because of the excesses of masters and slave drivers, which surpassed the everyday limits of violence, rather than by the daily abuse that characterized slavery. Slave drivers, one of the most common subjects of these complaints, are the focus of the third chapter, as they, mostly enslaved people themselves, appear profusely in these records. Chapter 4 examines marital discord files and presents the slave family both as a source of resilience and as a result of power struggles. Chapter 5, on the Obeah religious practice, shows a slave driver as an Obeah leader seeking to “bring things on the estate to order” for his community and thus seeking collective survival (p. 135). Chapter 6 reveals the moral economy of survival emerging from these petitions. Slaves conceived customary rights meant to assure their subsistence, which included basic necessities like allowances of clothing and food, slaves’ independent property, and the right to engage in market relations. The epilogue places the argument of this book in comparative hemispheric terms and rightfully identifies as a striking anomaly the US “Southern slaveowners’ ability to prevent enslaved people from using the law to seek redress,” which historians should explain rather than take for granted (p. 193).

Scholars from and of the Spanish Americas have long been writing about slave litigants, even before Frank Tannenbaum, given that lawyers focusing on slave petitioners and freedom wrote some of the first books on slavery in these countries. From Havana to Buenos Aires and from Mexico to Peru, US Latin Americanist historians have examined the relationship between the actions of enslaved men and women, the practices of colonial lawyers and notaries, and the legal and philosophical framework of freedom, with new additions by Bianca Premo, Michelle McKinley, and Rachel Sarah O’Toole, among others. The same could be said about the study of the significance of slaves’ independent economy, particularly in the Brazilian historiography, accessible in English. The overwhelming literature on slavery in the Anglo-Americas seemingly makes it almost heroic to engage significantly as well with the historiography for Spanish America and Brazil on these issues. Given that this is a journal of Latin American history, this reviewer feels it necessary to make this point. To be fair, the book gestures to comparisons in the introduction and epilogue and peppers throughout remarks about how the
Dutch and the English adopted the legal office of the fiscal from Spanish law and its application in the Americas.

Different from most of the Spanish Americas, in 1820s Berbice the new regulations of amelioration of slavery were implemented by the new office of the protector of slaves in the context of the debates about abolishing slavery in the British Caribbean. Browne correctly points out the importance of the implementation of new slave laws in the British Caribbean regulating master-slave relationships as one of the first steps leading to the prospect of abolition.

While the narrative of the book is exquisite and very well structured, some quantification about these slave complaints would assist readers in understanding the volume of such complaints as well as whether the amount of slave litigation and litigants fluctuated over time and, if so, how such fluctuation related to politics. This would help readers also evaluate whether, as the author claims, the documents on amelioration in Berbice “are the single largest archive of first-person testimony from and about enslaved people in the Americas” (p. 5). However, this does not negatively affect the presentation of Browne’s excellent central argument on the strategies of survival employed by enslaved men and women.

Alex Borucki, University of California, Irvine

doi 10.1215/00182168-7993287

Paper, $34.95.

This book excavates a deeper history of black political struggle in the Brazilian Amazon, beginning long before 1988. This year was when Article 68 of Brazil’s new constitution provided a legal avenue for the descendants of maroons (i.e., runaway slaves) to obtain collective title to their lands. But black peasant communities, and particularly maroons and their descendants, have been making political claims and defending their rights to land and resources for centuries. In The People of the River, Oscar de la Torre traces these struggles back to the time of slavery, through the period of abolition, and into the twentieth century. In doing so, the author makes an important contribution to our understanding of how Afro-Amazonian communities preserved their autonomy over time.

A central insight of the book is that the natural landscapes of Amazonia helped make maroonage and other kinds of freedom, even within slavery, possible. While policymakers bemoaned the temptations offered by the extractive economy, slaves and maroons learned how to use the forests and the rivers to their advantage. De la Torre describes this as a process of “environmental creolization,” whereby Afro-Amazonians developed mastery in the skills and lifeways of the tropical lowlands. Slaves learned, for example, where to find the groves of wild Brazil nuts, became skilled hunters of monkeys and
tapirs, and served as river and forest guides for traveling naturalists and explorers. In effect, they developed a “parallel economy,” based on illicit trade and unsupervised movement via dugout canoes and narrow foot paths; these activities extended far beyond the confines of the plantation and thrived out of the masters’ sight. Runaway slaves also made the natural world their own, relying on their growing knowledge of riverine and forest escape routes and utilizing geographical features like waterfalls to evade their pursuers. After abolition, these river- and forest-based skills enabled maroon descendants to maintain their hard-won autonomy, even as they moved closer to regional towns and commercial outposts.

Environmental creolization, de la Torre argues, was also a cultural process. Black slaves, maroons, and free peasants developed mythical and historical narratives around features of the landscape that had become important to their survival. This is where de la Torre’s innovative approach to oral history sources comes to the fore. In chapter 2, for example, he analyzes narratives about the Big Snake of the Trombetas River, putting these in conversation with fascinating archival evidence about the development of communities of escaped slaves along the river during the nineteenth century. The maroons combined West African and Amazonian myths and symbols as a way of remembering their passage through a new and often-forbidding landscape, their eventual triumph over those who sought to recapture them, and their forging of new networks, families, and communities along the rivers and lakes of the region.

In the reminiscences of black peasants today, de la Torre finds layers of historical memory that go back to the time of slavery. In interviews that the author conducted in and around the lower Amazonian towns of Vigia, Alenquer, Oriximiná, and Santarém, maroon descendants and other rural black informants link long-past experiences of slavery and escape with more recent forms of exploitation and resistance. Chapter 4 is especially rich, revealing the narrative merging of conflicts around the privatization of Brazil nut groves in the early decades of the twentieth century with struggles for freedom in the preceding century. Many of these informants take pride in the self-sufficiency of their communities; at the same time, however, they emphasize their long-standing relationships with local patrons, employers, traders, and politicians. The complex and varied nature of these relationships is corroborated by the extensive regional documentation gathered by de la Torre, which includes land possession deeds, notarial records, and wills.

That indigenous peoples make only fleeting appearances in the book seems purposeful, as the author aims to put Afro-Amazonians at the center of a regional history from which they are usually excluded. It would have added another layer to the analysis, however, to explore how the maroons and their descendants competed, collaborated, or forged kin relations with autonomous indigenous groups, fugitive Indians, and native villagers of the region. Yuko Miki’s recent book, Frontiers of Citizenship: A Black and Indigenous History of Postcolonial Brazil (2018), shows what can be gained from bringing these groups more fully into the same frame of analysis.

For Afro-Amazonians, knowledge of the environment developed out of long, often-painful experiences—seemingly endless treks, seasons of hunger, and encounters with
enemies both human and nonhuman. But as The People of the River reveals, this knowledge was also coproduced. It emerged from the common project of generations of Afro-descendant peoples, to build autonomous communities in landscapes imbued with their own history.

HEATHER ROLLER, Colgate University

doi 10.1215/00182168-7993298


In a fallen world, faith requires constant vigilance. That was the conviction of the Franciscans at the center of David Rex Galindo’s polycentric history of the colleges of Propaganda Fide. In 1683, a time of growing suspicion of the independence of the regular missionary orders in the Spanish world, the Franciscans established the first college for the propagation of faith at Querétaro, a textile center along the road to Mexico’s northern mining districts. By the time that Napoleon’s army invaded Spain, another 28 colleges had been founded in Mexico, South America, and Spain. Many of the most famous were established to support popular missions in the central dioceses of Spain’s empire, where the halting secularization of Indian doctrinas—their transfer from religious orders to secular priests—produced a shortage of pastors. So it was that in 1785, a few years after the dramatic expulsion of Jesuit priests, Franciscans from Querétaro’s college embarked on a mission to confess and preach to Catholics in the distant southern province of Oaxaca, one of the most religiously saturated regions in the Americas.

To Sin No More marks the latest in a collaborative series underwritten by the American Academy of Franciscan History, whose sponsorship of dissertations, conferences, and books has furthered scholarship on the evangelical efforts of Franciscans. New Spain receives the most coverage and contextualization from Galindo, particularly Querétaro’s college; beyond Tarija, in modern-day Bolivia, there is much less on colleges of the Andes. Yet the net effect of the book’s mobile perspective is an intriguing contribution to Atlantic history, a field that tends to employ a wide lens to view people, goods, ideas, and institutions as these moved through contiguous regions. Drawing on published studies of individual friars and colleges, meeting minutes, records of inspections, sermons and pláticas, and copious correspondence, individual chapters trace the day-to-day affairs of the colleges: their evolution and organization, the minutiae of college life, protocols for governance and missionary training, rifts and personal ambitions, and the connective tissue that bound the colleges.

The New World colleges heavily recruited Spanish friars, lending these institutions a peninsular demography unique among religious institutions in Spanish America and leaving a distinctly “Iberian cultural imprint” (p. 115). But missionary friars built little
from scratch. Old convent buildings were renovated for use as colleges to avoid costs and circumvent royal prohibitions on the construction of new convents. Libraries were stocked full of books by the most renowned of the friars’ predecessors, especially Franciscan Capuchins and Jesuits. Sermons and spiritual talks likewise recycled older materials, transposed into the plain style of the period. Atlantic developments were consequential and feature prominently, as when in 1769 Madrid suppressed the commissaries general in New Spain and Peru; nearly 30 years later, new requirements to participate in elections threatened to empower younger friars at the expense of their more experienced elders. The illustrative maps helpfully suggest the immense distances that the religious traveled on itinerant missions (pp. 193–94).

Because the Propaganda Fide colleges were not inclusive—they vigorously policed against the admission of Indians and Africans—it is the perspective of peninsular Franciscans that dominates Galindo’s study, with few exceptions. For instance, a set of certificaciones (official reports) is exquisitely used to characterize the activities of parishioners during missions, while hypothetical reactions of women to misogynist Franciscan discourses are creatively gleaned from scholarly literature. This institutional emphasis may leave some less convinced by a major refrain, namely that the network of colleges and missions contributed to the formation of a global, Atlantic Catholicism, in which Catholic ideas about sin and human salvation looked similar whether one stood on the isolated mountain ranges of Catalonia, along the plains of Texas, or in the urban centers of Spanish America. The claim accords a bit too neatly with the views of mission handbooks and religious commentary that rhetorically conflated indigenous Americans and European peasants when comparing their spiritual ruin and superstition, preferring to elide local contexts, customs, and languages in favor of universalist objectives and principles. By contrast, histories of religion in early modern Spain and Spanish America have shown that local initiatives and customs shaped encounters and that Catholicism’s meanings, forms, and agendas were plural, contingent, shifting, and certainly more than just Spanish.

By the time Spaniards were expelled from newly independent Latin American nations, in 1830, Propaganda Fide colleges had nevertheless seen to the spiritual regeneration of nominal Catholics in the old centers of the Spanish empire as much as the conversion of non-Catholics on its frontiers. This study shows how Franciscans, through their colleges, became integral to Spain’s imperial ambitions and recalls attention, somewhat unfashionably right now, from contested borderlands to central regions, where ciudades letrados were not just nodes of calculation, administration, and commerce but places of individual and collective faith—in need of reform, perhaps, and prone to backsliding and doubt—where people saw a future bound up with Catholic practice rather than strictly through secular routines.

PAUL RAMÍREZ, Northwestern University
doi 10.1215/00182168-7993309
For some scholars, US citizens’ involvement in the transatlantic slave trade after the United States and Britain made it illegal in 1807 is a familiar, though perhaps nebulous, topic. Leonardo Marques brings much-needed clarity to our understandings of this dubious trade, as *The United States and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas, 1776–1867* adds depth, substance, and nuance by meticulously detailing Americans’ willingness to illicitly engage in the nineteenth-century buying and selling of African bodies, primarily shipped to Cuba and Brazil. While most scholarship on the illegal slave trade is informed by and follows the trajectory of W. E. B. Du Bois’s classic study *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638–1870* (1904), Marques focuses on the “nearly ignored” slave traders, financiers, shipbuilders, and merchants who facilitated this trade. The thesis of Marques’s book hinges on two main arguments. The first assertion is that “the slave trade legislation of the early nineteenth century affected the participation of US citizens in the transatlantic slave trade” by making it illegal both for enslaved Africans to be imported into America and for Americans to engage in any aspect of transatlantic slaving (p. 8). The second assertion is that the rise of nation-states made enforcement of international laws banning slaving exceedingly difficult to enforce, especially as “the ideals of laissez faire” increasingly “characterized the post-1815 world” (p. 9).

Marques illustrates Americans’ unwavering commitment to the trafficking of Africans to generate wealth and comfort for themselves. First documenting the efforts of politicians, abolitionists, and naval officers determined to suppress slaving, Marques then considers how new legislation created legal, oceanic, and terrestrial fissures and margins for slavers to navigate and negotiate during their attempts to legitimately produce capital or to not get caught when surreptitiously slaving. To this end, some slave traders moved their operations offshore, first to Spanish Florida, from where they “smuggled [captives] into Georgia,” and to Spanish Texas, from where slaves were taken to Louisiana, where early nineteenth-century “smugglers” manipulated legal loopholes to launder captives and thus allow slavers to become “legally entitled to sell them within US territory” (pp. 67, 90). Americans then moved their operations to Cuba and Brazil (with the slave trade criminalized in 1850) and smuggled captives into both. The book considers how global conflicts during the Age of Revolutions freed many enslaved Africans while providing uncertainties that permitted slavers to flourish. For instance, the Haitian Revolution generated waves of refugees that broke on American and Cuban shores, which provided opportunities to smuggle captives into America. For instance, Marques explains that “Congress decided not to apply the penalties for violating the act of 1807” to the “more than three thousand slaves in Louisiana with their French masters” who had fled Cuba in 1809 (p. 86).

Situating the illegal slave trade in an Atlantic paradigm, Marques illustrates the global dimensions of American slave smuggling while demonstrating its far-reaching
repercussions. He considers commercial capitalism’s ability to transcend imperial and national borders and to insinuate itself into foreign economies and modes of production. Scholars have convincingly argued that, in some important ways, the modern insurance industry rose out of the need to insure against losses in slave trading. Marques suggests that America’s maritime supremacy grew out of this trade; according to him, “the United States became unquestionably predominant” in constructing ships for the slave trade, taking maximum advantage of the country’s “abundant supplies of cheap lumber and improvements in the US shipbuilding industry, which saw advances in vessel design theory” (p. 109). This made American ships the best and fastest vessels in the world and also allowed them to dominate the whaling industry during the early nineteenth century.

Reviewers can be deemed nitpicky for critiques that books should have considered a particular topic. Still, this book could benefit from a chapter that considers the illegal slave trade from the captives’ perspective, as in the book currently their agonies become subsumed by the focus on enslavers’ insatiable drive for profits. Advances in wind- and steam-driven ship designs seemingly increased slavers’ profits and captives’ miseries, with Marques explaining that the steamer Ciceron carried “more than a thousand captives” (p. 219). How did modernity transform the Middle Passage? Did shorter, relatively predictable voyage times, on wooden ships and especially steamers, convince slavers to more tightly pack, and perhaps more lightly feed, their human cargoes? How did the sight, sound, and smell of steam-driven slave ships contribute to captives’ terror?

The United States and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas, 1776–1867 is impressively researched and carefully crafted. Leonardo Marques provocatively broadens our understanding of the Atlantic slave trade. This book will evoke lively discussion in graduate-level courses but seems too tightly focused for most undergraduate courses.

KEVIN DAWSON, University of California, Merced

doi 10.1215/00182168-7993320

Imagining Histories of Colonial Latin America: Synoptic Methods and Practices.

Imagining Histories of Colonial Latin America is an innovative book that offers a blueprint on how to conduct historical research. Dedicated to William B. Taylor, the book is inspired by his teachings and includes essays on methodology, primarily on how to write history synoptically. In the introduction, Karen Melvin and Sylvia Sellers-García explain that a synoptic approach seeks to understand the past as a combined whole rather than a compilation of facts. In order to grasp the past, the editors recommend thinking about methodology alongside interpreting and writing; they propose to let the source suggest its method. The chapters in the volume walk the reader through the process of understanding one’s sources and discerning the best method to analyze and write about them.
The book is divided in four parts that include seventeen chapters. The chapters are organized according to not historical subjects or types of methodology but rather the research and writing process. Part 1 centers on the questions we ask sources. Part 2 focuses on the sources themselves and understanding their meaning and context. Part 3 deals with the ways in which we transform our engagement with sources into interpretative histories. Finally, part 4 shows how the histories we write depend as much on the questions we ask the sources as on the approaches we use to analyze them. In this last section, four scholars use their particular interpretation and research interests on the same source—an eighteenth-century handbook for confessors—to model what different research approaches look like.

In chapter 1, Melvin invites the researcher to read sources by attending to their many possible meanings and to the connections that exist between the evidence and the circumstances in which they were produced. Chapter 2 problematizes the dichotomies that have prevailed in our understanding of colonial Latin American history, which, as Paul Ramírez states, are present not only in our teaching but in our research. In chapter 3, Nicole von Germeten focuses on a regionalism that goes beyond economic specificities and takes into consideration racial hierarchies, social divides, and spiritual conceptions of space. The last chapter of this first part, by Ivonne del Valle, argues that literary studies (mainly the close reading of texts but also the use of theory) can be useful in approaching historical sources in order to arrive at interpretations that go beyond the basic information included in a document.

Part 2 opens with Brianna Leavitt-Alcántara’s chapter about the way in which laconic sources can open windows into the lives of our subjects of study. When these sources are placed within their accurate context, even their silences (common in formulaic legal documents) can provide a wealth of information. In chapter 6, Rachel Moore writes about the challenges of using “diffuse documentation” as historical evidence instead of working with a clearly defined group of documents. She suggests anchoring the documents in the foundational concepts that gave rise to the research and establishing linkages between the sources. Sean McEnroe models historical inquiry via the use of objects, specifically a sculpture. He analyzes the role of the artist, the fashioning of the object, and its reception, value, and meaning in its specific context. Lastly, Kristin Huffine suggests studying the colonial subject formation of subalterns by looking at the sources produced by the Catholic Church.

The third part of the book begins with José Refugio de la Torre Curiel advising against limiting our view to only two processes: change and continuity. He recommends aiming for a richer perspective on social practices that allows for both. Jessica Delgado warns about the challenges of writing the histories of subjects who appear only marginally in historical documentation, and she points to the need to creatively interpret and imagine the information lacking in order to adequately tell their stories. And in chapter 11, Sylvia Sellers-García gives practical suggestions on choosing a writing style suitable for a particular audience.

The last section of the book opens with Matthew O’Hara’s chapter, in which he describes the primary source that is then analyzed by four other historians in subsequent
chapters and highlights the methodological and epistemological issues that these scholars had to grapple with. Seth Kimmel focuses on the role of narrative and storytelling, Jennifer Scheper Hughes explores the ritual function of the sacrament of penance, Sean McEnroe uses historical comparison in order to place the document accurately over the long colonial period, and Paul Ramírez similarly contextualizes the document and points to the difficulties in interpreting its silences. Chapter 17 consists of the complete document, “Advice and Warnings for New Confessors by a Discalced Carmelite Friar and Priest,” translated by Karen Melvin, Paul Ramírez, and Sylvia Sellers-García.

The book closes with a poetic afterword by Kenneth Mills in which he weaves an early childhood memory with the historian’s craft. As the editors of the book suggest in their introduction, there is a defining relationship between our pasts and our historiographical work. Imagining Histories in Colonial Latin America is without a doubt a stimulating intellectual exercise that offers a pathway to historical research and writing.

MÓNICA DÍAZ, University of Kentucky

doi 10.1215/00182168-7993331


No Limits to Their Sway tells the story of the ephemeral, independent state of Cartagena, emphasizing “its development into a privateering republic, a polity that welcomed foreign outfitters, officers, and sailors by the hundreds, authorizing them to attack Spanish shipping on its behalf for a share of the prize money” (p. 6). Rethinking the Age of Revolutions from the perspective of a state that was eventually reconquered and obliterated illuminates the multiple contingencies and potential outcomes of a period that many still simplistically interpret as a transition from colony to nations. No Limits to Their Sway thus joins a host of recent studies that compellingly argue for historicizing the Age of Revolutions as a period of open-ended political futures.

Edgardo Pérez Morales takes independent Cartagena seriously as a nascent republic whose authorities were working hard to make it viable in the international sphere. Securing the new state’s viability required, among other measures, establishing commercial and diplomatic relations that could help Cartagena’s authorities sustain the war effort against Spain. As in any early nineteenth-century war, the navy was central to achieving this goal. Unlike well-established political entities with strong institutional foundations, independent Cartagena was served by a “private irregular navy” (p. 97). Had Cartagena had a regular navy, No Limits to Their Sway would have been a conventional naval history full of admirals, battles, and emblematic warships, largely based on admiralty records held in national archives. Such archives do not exist for Cartagena’s navy. Therein lies the book’s biggest challenge and greatest contribution.
Writing the history of independent Cartagena’s navy required building a naval archive out of a multiplicity of archives. Archival research in more than a dozen archives in six countries (Colombia, Spain, Cuba, France, the United States, and Jamaica) allowed Pérez Morales to recover the hidden history of an ephemeral navy that, during the first half of the 1810s, “became a force to be reckoned with” in Caribbean waters (p. 97). With about 40 ships manned by more than 1,500 sailors, the majority of whom were of African descent, Cartagena’s navy was strong enough to be perceived by Cuban authorities as a significant threat. For Spanish authorities in Cuba, despite the letters of marque through which Cartagena privateers sought to legitimize their actions, Cartagena’s naval agents were pirates who needed to be hunted and hanged.

While Cuba quickly emerged as the main enemy of independent Cartagena, Haiti became the small republic’s most important diplomatic ally and the United States one of its most vital commercial partners. Diplomatic relations with Haiti, officialized in 1813 with the deployment of Pierre Antoine Leleux as Cartagena’s representative before Haiti, made it possible for Les Cayes, on Haiti’s southern coast, to become one of the most important ports of call for Cartagena’s privateers (pp. 109–10). Commercial relations between US and Cartagena merchants, often materialized by Cartagena privateers, constituted what Pérez Morales calls “Cartagena’s tangible American connection,” a connection that effectively represented a lifeline for independent Cartagena (p. 56).

Besides imaginatively using numerous archives to reconstruct independent Cartagena’s international relations, No Limits to Their Sway offers an innovative approach to the study of port cities in the Caribbean and beyond. The book analyzes Cartagena from multiple geographic scales of analysis. Local politics, particularly the rivalry between the city’s patricians and plebeians, were key to Cartagena’s emergence as a “locus of early anti-Spanish sentiment and revolution” (p. 1). Economic and political competition with neighboring Santa Marta and the more distant viceregal capital, Santa Fe, proved critical to both Cartagena’s early disposition toward absolute independence from Spain and the short-lived nature of that independence. Regional Caribbean geopolitics influenced political events and daily life in Cartagena. And larger hemispheric and Atlantic connections supplied Cartagena with goods and information that proved central to the decisions made by the city’s leaders and its privateers throughout the first half of the 1810s. In this way No Limits to Their Sway convincingly demonstrates that during the Age of Revolutions the local, intraviceregal, Caribbean, hemispheric, and Atlantic spheres were deeply interconnected.

No Limits to Their Sway also aligns neatly with recent scholarship on sailors and maritime life, offering a highly informative prosopography of Caribbean sailors, many of whom were “born, spent considerable time, and die[d] at sea” (p. 75). By focusing on Cartagena privateers, Pérez Morales widens our understanding of Jack Tars and Black Jacks beyond the North Atlantic waters to which a vast historiography tends to confine them. For Cartagena privateers, as well as for sailors sailing from North Atlantic ports, the sea was far and wide, and their geographic spheres of actions were not constrained by artificial lines drawn by twentieth-century geographic areas of specialization. While
sailing under the flag of Cartagena, privateers, as Pérez Morales demonstrates, felt ultimately more truly connected to the sea.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993342


The Real Expedición Filantrópica de la Vacuna was, together with reforms in commerce, administration, and education, one of the most ambitious projects of the Spanish Enlightenment. Setting off from Spain in 1803, the expedition passed through the Canary Islands, Puerto Rico, and Cuba before arriving in New Spain in 1804. A branch of the expedition reached South America. Marking as it did a successful transition in medical theories and disease management policies, the expedition—especially the doctors and bureaucrats who made the smallpox vaccine available to children around the Spanish empire—has received a good deal of scholarly attention. Paul Ramírez presents a novel picture of the inoculation campaign in New Spain by shifting the focus to include the laypeople who received the vaccine—parents, indigenous villagers, barbers, and healers, whose active participation shaped the ways the campaign operated “on the ground.” Drawing on an impressive array of archival documents—criminal case depositions, villager petitions, village priest reports, sermons, satirical texts, and correspondence—Ramírez reconstructs the “unpredictable meetings of communities with agents of state-sanctioned policies and practices” (p. 18). The story he tells, chronologically broader and socially denser than many histories of the vaccination campaign, challenges some of the more entrenched binaries—expert knowledge versus vernacular knowledge, science versus religion, rationality versus superstition—that have framed the historiography of colonial Spanish science.

In the first chapter, Ramírez describes the role of pageantry and devotional images in fighting epidemics in the eighteenth century. The vaccine’s introduction in the nineteenth century would build on these earlier responses. The second chapter reviews the medical literature printed in New Spain throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, from vernacular how-to manuals to, by the colonial period’s end, a periodical press that promoted the exchange of medical information, of both expert and vernacular provenance. Much of the story told here is well known, but Ramírez underscores the participation of women, priests, occasional healers, Indians, and mestizos in the production of medical knowledge. The third chapter takes the Isthmus of Tehuantepec as a case study for analyzing why anticontagion methods, which separated sick children from their families and cordoned off regions from one another, did not work. Villagers’ refusal to comply with anticontagion measures, which escalated to mutiny in some cases, was shaped by affect between parents and children, by understandings of family responsibility, by the nature of commerce between the coast and the inland communities, and,
more mundanely, by the inability to enforce isolation. As one frustrated official put it, “For them, everything is a road” (p. 107).

Such were the social, cultural, and medical contexts into which the smallpox vaccine arrived in New Spain in 1804. The “domestication” of vaccine technologies is the topic of chapter 4. In one of the book’s more original passages, Ramírez analyzes how “entusiasmar”—that is, the production of delight, excitement, enthusiasm, and admiration—was crucial in presenting the vaccine, which, building on a long tradition of disease prevention, entered towns and villages amid celebrations involving processions, music, dance, fireworks, and sermons (p. 153). Blurring separations we uphold today between the secular and the sacred and between the rational and the sensuous, scientific authority arrived in New Spain as did civil and religious authorities, in the midst of spectacle. After running a successful campaign in New Spain, the inoculators set off for the Philippines, via Acapulco. But Ramírez’s story does not end here; he goes on to explore what kept inoculation going, especially at the critical moment of the wars of independence. How to transport, pay for, and administer the vaccine are the questions he examines in chapter 5, to reveal how the vaccine’s popularization depended on physicians and surgeons participating side-by-side with a variety of nonmedical agents, such as curanderas, hacendados, priests, and Indian governors.

For Ramírez, the study of medical technologies and their institutionalization cannot be circumscribed to the study of medical elites; the beliefs, affects, and prior experience of a much broader community determine how technologies are adopted and used. Enlightened Immunity is more than the story of the smallpox vaccine in New Spain; it is a lesson in how to read the archive against the grain and between the lines, to gain some degree of access to the responses of those who did not leave behind written records. Nineteenth-century enlightened contemporaries dismissed the attitudes of laypeople to the vaccine as irrational and superstitious, and later historians have found few reasons to study them; for Ramírez, judgments and rumors about the vaccine are never just about the vaccine but rather lay bare feelings, premises, and expectations about medical authority, health and disease, body management, and change. It is a conclusion worth considering by cultural historians, by historians of science, technology, and medicine, and by public health officials today, when vaccination is at the center of controversy more than ever.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993353


Hilda Sabato’s new book is a great experiment in interpreting the meaning and establishment of republican in Latin America between 1820 and 1870. Republics of the New World is written in a light style but demonstrates very profound and rigorous thinking.
The author uses few endnotes but supports her assertions with a vast and diverse bibliography of works—published in all the countries that she refers to, in addition to countries beyond the book’s geographical focus.

Even though she misses some recent and more regional studies, Republics of the New World is a great effort of synthesis; it also offers a very suggestive interpretation that tries to place the construction of the nation-state in Latin America within a more global narrative since republican regimes were based on the concept of popular sovereignty, a new political foundation for a historical process that included countries such as England, revolutionary France, and North America. Recognized as the doyen of nineteenth-century Latin American political history, Sabato masterfully argues for leaving behind interpretations of that history as one of failure, chaos, and anarchy. The author takes into account three different aspects that have been studied separately during the last three decades. However, they are closely linked with the main issues of her text: republicanism and what she calls the republican experiment. The practices she refers to are elections, civic militias or citizens in arms, and public opinion. These practices centered on political representation and helped to define the participation of that new subject of the modern nation-states—the citizens. Thus, Sabato tries to focus and analyze “the relationship between people and government that developed after the adoption of popular sovereignty as a founding principle of power” in all the republics that she discusses (p. 9).

The book is divided into five chapters. In the first one, Sabato offers a broad view of the historiography of republicanism and concludes that the formation and participation of citizens became the main impulse driving the political dynamics of the new nations. Elections, the fundamental practice of all regimes of popular representation, are analyzed in the second chapter. These elections did not conform to our currently held ideal of democracy—during the nineteenth century democracy was not completely established, and it was controlled by the few—but as Sabato points out, they did open channels for some of those who comprised the many (indigenous, mulatto, and biracial individuals) to reach power.

The formation of civilian militias, later called national guards, in most Latin American nations was another aspect of the new republican politics. Sabato affirms that through pronunciamientos, uprisings, and rebellions—often seen as negative phenomena in the historiography—these militias participated in some of those mobilizations, which allowed the many to have a deciding role in the development of political events normally dominated by the few.

The fourth chapter moves on to discuss public opinion, how it worked and how it was disseminated from different civic, economic, and political associations (called sociabilidades in Spanish), some of them rooted in old practices, others new and created during the nineteenth century (Masonic lodges, guilds, juntas patrióticas, sociedades de amigos, clubs). Public opinion also received much support from the press, which was multiplying and broadening its coverage throughout the nineteenth century. Public opinion was dominated by the few but frequently tried to include the many by practices like the reading aloud of writings, formal education (which is not discussed by Sabato), and civic ceremonies.
Finally, in the last chapter, the most important of the whole book, she analyzes what she has called Latin American republicanism as a revolutionary experiment and links together all the practices mentioned in the aforementioned chapters. Overall, Sabato highlights the relationship between the few and the many; although this relationship was socially and politically unequal, Sabato points out that it successfully allowed those republics to function. Sabato then directly addresses the still current historiographical debate over interpretations of Latin America as violent and antidemocratic.

In summary, this book will be required reading for those interested in the political history of Latin America (even though Sabato does not address some themes due to the wide time span covered in her book). The book is a must not only because of the novel interpretation that she offers but also because it is full of new ideas that help to think in new ways about the process of nation-state building for our continent, inserted within a more global history of republicanism.

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doi: 10.1215/00182168-7993364


The Ignored Contender: A Select Annotated Bibliography of the Cuban Autonomist Party (1878–1898) by Rafael Tarragó is a rare gem. Good old-fashioned annotated bibliographies are increasingly hard to find and yet remain among the most useful entry points into scholarly topics available today. Tarragó’s guide to the history of the Cuban Autonomist Party is the form at its best. Covering over 300 primary and secondary sources, it is safe to say that the “ignored contender” is ignored no more. Bringing an important chapter of Cuban history out of the shadows with authority, Tarragó’s volume, which contains the seeds of dozens and dozens of dissertation projects and book manuscripts, is a gift to scholars.

In his introduction, Tarragó defends the need to draw scholarly attention to the history of the Cuban Autonomist Party, the “ignored contender” in the contest to define Cuba’s political future. Shunted aside in the wake of the Spanish-American War by both the invading Americans and the Cuban insurgents, the party remained marginalized in Cubanist scholarship until relatively recently. Surely the fact that the history of the Cuban Autonomist Party and its work did not fit the revolutionary national narrative crafted after the Cuban Revolution of 1959 had something to do with it. In bringing the Cuban Autonomist Party to our collective attention, Tarragó helps us recontextualize the 30-year Hispano–Cuban conflict (1868–98) and late nineteenth-century Spanish and US colonial and imperial ambitions. The deeper study of the party, of its achievements and its failures, that Tarragó invites in this work stands to give us a much-needed, more nuanced understanding of Cuba’s nineteenth-century political history.

One of the greatest strengths of this work is the fact that Tarragó is himself a scholar of nineteenth-century Cuban history who has published a number of articles and book
chapters on subjects ranging from the history of US-Hispanic relations to suffrage and cultures of violence in Cuba. Tarragó’s deep knowledge of nineteenth-century history and his expertise are most notable when he renders visible, through his excavations of texts, chapters and sections of books that cover the Cuban Autonomist Party as only a secondary or tertiary subject. There are often no keywords in the titles that might clue the reader into the fact that the books he includes might be a resource for the topic.

The first half of The Ignored Contender contains annotations on 121 published primary sources. Tarragó starts with official writings, communique’s, and publications by and about the party. A section of writings by contemporaries about the party follows. The last section features the writings of the party members themselves. What is most striking about these three sections is that they all contain sources about the Cuban Autonomist Party produced and published by Cubans in and outside Cuba (Madrid, León, New York, Washington, Bogotá, Paris, etc.). This is noteworthy because it reminds us not only that national political parties beyond the Cuban Revolutionary Party were internationally recognized and discussed but also that Cuban politics broadly was both transatlantic and inter-American. I would wager that if we looked harder, we would find discussion of the party everywhere that Cuban expatriates and exiles resided in the late nineteenth century.

If there is one criticism I could level against this work, it would be that some of the annotations are more detailed and helpful than others. However, much more common are rich descriptions that inform the reader about not only the content of the text but its significance within a broader panorama of Cuban colonial politics in the nineteenth century. The Ignored Contender will be of interest to researchers and students at all levels working in Cuban politics as well as Spanish colonialism and US imperialism in the nineteenth century. Scholars interested in these subjects would be remiss if they did not use Tarragó’s bibliography as a starting point.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993375

Mexico City, 1808: Power, Sovereignty, and Silver in an Age of War and Revolution.

On September 15, 1808, more than 300 militiamen entered the royal palace in Mexico City and deposed the Spanish viceroy, José de Iturrigaray. The coup ended what
Tutino calls an unprecedented “summer of politics” in New Spain’s capital. Upon learning that Napoleon had invaded Spain and sent its monarchs into exile, Iturrigaray called for a general junta of the viceroyalty’s Spanish pueblos (towns) and most prominent subjects. As those events unfolded behind closed doors, Mexico City residents took to the streets to proclaim their loyalty to King Ferdinand VII and assert the sovereignty of “el pueblo”—the people. While other historians of Mexico’s independence era have alternately pinpointed Napoleon’s 1808 invasion of Spain, the outbreak of Miguel Hidalgo’s rebellion in 1810, the passage of the Cádiz Constitution in 1812, or its restoration in 1820 as the decisive moment in New Spain’s turn toward nationhood, Tutino asserts that the 1808 coup in Mexico City was no less important. He argues that the coup broke a nearly 300-year-old system of governance by consultation and mediation and marked the beginning of a new order in which military force, exercised in the name of popular sovereignty, dominated Mexican politics.

The book is divided into two parts. The first provides an overview of Mexico City’s society and economy from the Mexica era to the eighteenth century’s end. Tutino argues that New Spain’s “silver capitalism,” defined as “the economy focused on mining and the commercial, agricultural, and textile sectors that sustained it,” created networks of dependency that ameliorated the tensions of a highly unequal society and helped sustain the Spanish regime (p. xxiii). Tutino’s most original contributions here are his detailed analyses of the capital’s “integrated capitalist oligarchy”—the two dozen or so families of merchants, mineowners, and landowners who dominated New Spain’s economy (p. 43). Using archival collections in Texas, Washington state, and Mexico City, he traces those families’ relations with one another, the Spanish regime, and the lesser elites whom he calls “provincials”—the mostly American-born professionals, merchants, and estate operators who dominated the Mexico City town council. Tutino argues that despite the potential fault lines between European-born oligarchs, American provincials, and the city’s diverse majority of artisans, laborers, and small-scale merchants, each group’s dependence on silver capitalism helped limit social tensions and silence any murmurs of separatism before 1808.

In part 2, Tutino shows how the regime of petition and mediation, which had survived the eighteenth-century Bourbon reforms intact, collapsed with the 1808 coup. In chapters 9 and 10, which deal specifically with the events of the summer of 1808, he reconstructs the incidents that led to Iturrigaray’s sacking by a militia backed by the city’s most powerful merchants, audiencia judges, and two emissaries from the Seville junta. The plotters worried that Iturrigaray’s call for a broad-based junta threatened New Spain’s ties to the metropole and the lucrative silver trade that sustained the economy and had made many of their families’ fortunes. Appropriating the language of the crowds that had gathered on Mexico City’s streets earlier that summer, the coup’s architects claimed to act in the name of popular sovereignty. That decision, Tutino insists, established a precedent in Mexico for military interventions made in the name of the people but designed to preserve the power of the privileged.

Tutino crafts a compelling argument, though it is not entirely convincing. Certainly, the book’s first half conforms with the view of most modern-day historians of
colonial Spanish America that Spain relied far more on consultation and negotiation than physical force to rule its American empire. Tutino offers less support for his contention that the 1808 coup began a new era of militarism veiled in the language of popular sovereignty. When he writes that after 1821 “politics and power were affairs of armed men,” he glosses over a more complicated national political landscape and misses the substantial scholarship on the municipal-level politics that continued after Mexico's independence (p. 4). A deeper engagement with that research and the work of other historians of Mexico's independence era, including Jaime Rodríguez O. and Timothy Anna, might have strengthened Tutino’s argument by contextualizing it within the broader historiography of early nineteenth-century Mexico.

The book raises important questions that its relatively narrow evidentiary base prevents it from fully answering. What, precisely, were the connections between the 1808 coup and the revolutionary violence that erupted in the Bajío exactly two years later? Why did the disruption of the silver trade, which Tutino argues was the glue that held Mexico City society together, not lead to revolution in the capital, too? And what, in the end, was the significance of the semantic and political relationship he identifies between “los pueblos,” as the historical locus of sovereignty in Spain, and “el pueblo,” as an emerging concept of popular sovereignty in Spanish America in the early nineteenth century? What role would towns play in Mexican conceptions of sovereignty after 1808? An engaging, provocative book, Mexico City, 1808 offers valuable insight into the Age of Revolutions in Mexico and the broader Atlantic world and should spark generative debates among historians of the era.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993386

Twentieth–Twenty-First Centuries

*El movimiento nacional-popular: Gino Germani y el Peronismo.* By SAMUEL AMARAL.

In the last few years, the academic interest in Argentina about the history of Peronism has not receded. The literature dedicated to this political phenomenon has incorporated new topics, questions, and methodologies. At the same time, the history of the social sciences in Argentina has emerged as a prolific area of research. The book under review, written by Samuel Amaral, can be related to these two scholarly undertakings but does not fully correspond to either. In *El movimiento nacional-popular,* Amaral studies in detail the different interpretations of Peronism given by sociologist Gino Germani over the course of his three-decade career. Germani, an Italian émigré in Argentina when Juan Perón rose to the presidency in 1946, is considered one of the founders of scientific sociology in Argentina. He had a central role in this discipline’s institutionalization in the country. His early interpretations of Peronism’s emergence have had a long-lasting influence in the
academic discussions about the social origins of Peronism and have also been identified as having been used to legitimize the field of sociology in its early stages.

Amaral’s book deals with Germani’s ideas, leaving out other aspects of his work and biography. The study is divided into nine chapters, a conclusion, and an appendix. In the first four chapters, the author chronologically investigates the process of crafting a new category to talk about Peronism. Amaral shows that Germani first referred to Peronism as a form of fascism, but dissatisfied with this categorization—he recognized too many differences between Peronism and fascism—he ended up creating the original category of popular nationalism. Amaral explores the diverse influences from which Germani drew inspiration. He points out that Germani’s encounter with the ideas of Seymour Martin Lipset in 1956 helped him to hone his theory. In the fifth chapter Amaral studies the context of ideas amid which the Italian sociologist searched for new concepts to classify nondemocratic political orders. In the last three chapters Amaral investigates the evolution of Germani’s approach. The author dedicates an important bulk of his investigation to pointing out the flaws of Germani’s thesis and historical interpretations. Among other things, Amaral objects to Germani’s imprecise employment of categories such as masses and class, his narrow reading of Argentine history, and his lack of attention to the figure of Perón. Amaral is very critical of Germani’s use of the statistical data. Presenting the previous critics’ arguments but also using his own analysis of the empirical data, Amaral challenges the viability of one of Germani’s most important hypotheses: that Peronism was born from the support of new industrial migrants to metropolitan areas. Amaral’s recently published Perón presidente: Las elecciones del 24 de febrero de 1946 (2018), the first volume of a titanic study of the electoral results countrywide in 1946, shows how those who voted for Perón do not match the picture proposed by Germani.

One of El movimiento nacional-popular’s most interesting aspects is to illuminate how some of Germani’s most important questions about Peronism have remained practically unexplored, such as, for example, the causes for Peronism’s long-lasting survival or the simple question of who voted for Perón across the country. The book also provides an original and thorough examination of Germani’s influence on subsequent explanations of Peronism. The study is very detailed, and all of its arguments are backed with meticulous analysis. This is clearly one of the investigation’s virtues but also one of its problems, as it is quite repetitive and too narrowly focused. Even though Amaral decided to concentrate only on the realm of ideas, the book’s lack of dialogue with the studies that have investigated other aspects of Germani’s work and biography limits its findings and readership. To what measure Germani’s ideas about Peronism intersected with his positions on other topics, such as the scientific status of sociology or his changing position in the academic field, is a topic that the author chooses not to discuss.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993397
Comprised of an introduction and 11 essays, this edited volume examines musical representations of national and ethnic identities in Latin America. Editor William Beezley introduces the text by promising to focus on “especially operatic compositions, some with indigenous themes, and the rise of national cultural identity in Latin America” (p. 1). Several of the essays, including two by Beezley, have this priority, yet seven authors make limited or no mention of opera, dealing instead with such diverse topics as Mexican radio, rock-influenced music in Cuba, tango and folk music in Argentina, Brazilian carnival, and music in Mexican film. Despite the slightly misleading framing, the individual essays contribute usefully to histories of music, operatic and otherwise, in Latin America.

The volume brings together historians and musicologists, resulting in a variety of methodological approaches to Latin American music. Historians Sonia Robles and Jerry D. Metz Jr. analyze rich archival sources to show how different cultural brokers—radio businessmen, listeners, and government regulators in Mexico and municipal officials, carnival participants, and anthropologists in Brazil—negotiated and shaped musical practices. Historians William Beezley and Carolyne Ryan Larson helpfully synthesize secondary literature on complex musical developments in Guatemala and Argentina. Musicologists Robin Sacolick and Ketty Wong integrate close readings of musical scores in their respective essays on Salvadoran composer María de Baratta and the Ecuadorian opera Cumanda. A reprinted Guardian article by musicologist Jan Fairley recounts an interview with Cuban musician Silvio Rodríguez. Musicologist Janet Sturman and literary scholar Jennifer Jenkins analyze film scenes to discuss the role of music in Mexican cinema from the 1930s through 2006. Authors do not necessarily reflect on what different sources, methods, and approaches offer or how they can interact effectively, but their collective scholarship provides fertile ground for continued conversation about interdisciplinary approaches to musical cultures and listening practices of the past.

Along with methodological provocations, the volume intervenes in discussions of nationalism, with the most interesting contributions coming from authors who question or challenge the construct. Robles, for instance, shows how the Mexican government did not use music to foster national unity in the 1920s and early 1930s, in contrast to nationalistic efforts in other art forms. Her essay disputes depictions of an overpowering nationalism that completely and immediately infused culture in postrevolutionary Mexico. Other authors convincingly show the significance of regional rather than national identities. Metz details how Recife and Salvador performers resisted a national formula based on “the hegemony of Rio carnival,” and Larson reveals the ongoing and generative tensions between Buenos Aires tango and northern folk music in Argentine canons (p. 182). Moving from the regional to the individual, Sacolick contends that the work of Salvadoran composer Baratta was “postnational,” irregularly aligning with and diverging from official ideas about the nation (p. 126). These essays suggest that nationalism ultimately fails to encapsulate the complexities of musical agendas and experiences.
Along with nationalism, the volume focuses on “ethnic music,” a term that appears in the title but remains undefined. Based on content, here “ethnic music” presumably means compositions inspired by indigenous cultures and written for nonindigenous audiences. As an example, Guatemalan composer Jesús Castillo created the opera Quiché Vinak, “based on Mayan folklore,” for elite audiences in Guatemala City in 1924 (p. 69). In cases like this, authors reveal what happened and when without analyzing how structural inequalities based on class, ethnic, and racial differences were inherent to and reproduced by these productions. In short, most essays dodge a more critical treatment of ethnicity and race, but exceptions do exist. Sacolick, for instance, considers not only ethnicity and class but also gender in her discussion of Salvadoran composer Baratta. Regardless, the musical outcomes mentioned in this volume will no doubt inspire future work along the lines of scholarship by Robin Moore, Marc Hertzman, Christina Abreu, and others, who have investigated music to understand race relations, ethnic identities, and Latin American social and cultural history more broadly.

All in all, this volume does important work. First, it brings attention to understudied musical cultures of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Bolivia. Second, it makes some inroads in the study of opera. Third, it goes beyond the relatively exclusionary opera genre to discuss more popular expressions like Brazilian carnival, Argentine tango and folk music, Cuban nueva trova, and Mexican film music. Fourth, it is free of academic jargon and includes a reprinted primary source—a 1947 essay on “Afro-Cubanism” by Cuban writer and composer Alejo Carpentier—thereby offering a variety of essays appropriate for undergraduate syllabi on Latin American history and popular culture (p. 81). Fifth and finally, the volume undoubtedly provides points of reference for scholars analyzing music and cultural production more broadly in the countries represented: Mexico, Guatemala, Cuba, El Salvador, Ecuador, Argentina, Brazil, and Bolivia.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993408

Bread, Justice, and Liberty: Grassroots Activism and Human Rights in Pinochet’s Chile.

Historian Alison J. Bruey’s new work offers a rich analysis of grassroots resistance to the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet in the shantytowns surrounding Chile’s capital of Santiago. The book’s narrative centers around two of the city’s most iconic bastions of popular mobilization, the communities of La Legua and Villa Francia. The book moves chronologically through the history of these two neighborhoods by first reconstructing their early social and political formation. While La Legua emerged out of land occupations led by Chile’s Communist Party in the 1940s, Villa Francia was established as part of a Christian Democratic housing initiative in the late 1960s. Bruey then details how residents of each community confronted the September 1973 military coup that toppled Salvador Allende’s socialist experiment and the state violence that ensued. Other chapters
consider the popular experience of Pinochet’s neoliberal restructuring, which began in the late 1970s, as well as the economic crisis that followed those reforms in the early 1980s. The book concludes with an important revisionist account of the protests that engulfed Chile beginning in 1982 and 1983 and that set the stage for the return of electoral democracy less than a decade later.

One of the book’s most striking achievements is its use of oral histories to reconstruct the Pinochet era from the bottom up. Drawing on 90 interviews with residents of La Legua, Villa Francia, and other shantytown communities, Bruey brings to life as few others have the everyday experience of the dictatorship—or what she calls the “underground memories” that exist “below the radar of official discourse and media attention” (p. 18). Oral accounts also help anchor one of the monograph’s central claims: that consistent collaboration between Chile’s Marxist Left and progressive Catholics kept the hope of an alternative social and economic future alive, even during the darkest days of authoritarian rule. This argument—which, to paraphrase Bruey, reintroduces the human into Chile’s human rights history—stands in stark contrast to conventional accounts of the country’s antidictatorship struggles, which often sideline popular resistance in favor of oppositional elites (pp. 6–7).

As this reader sees it, the larger scholarly contributions of Bruey’s book are twofold. First, by locating the early emergence of anti-Pinochet resistance in Chile’s shantytowns, the author reveals both a new genealogy and definition of human rights work. Bruey convincingly maintains, for instance, that grassroots activists were just as—if not more—likely to emphasize the importance of social and economic rights as they were civil and political rights. “Although politicians and some influential scholars depicted poblador protest as an anomic, spontaneous reaction against the dictatorship and the economic crash of the early 1980s,” Bruey writes in her introduction, “for many grassroots activists . . . protest was a conscious struggle for democracy, for respect, for human rights broadly understood to include political and social rights, and, for some, renewed socialist revolution” (p. 9). This is a claim that will resonate with not only scholars of Chile but also twentieth-century Latin Americanists since it builds on recent reconceptualizations of the region’s Cold War as a series of struggles for a more socially robust form of citizenship.

Second, in retelling the history of the Pinochet years from the perspective of the urban periphery, Bruey stresses the continuities between the dictatorship and the historical eras that both preceded and followed it. In the process, she also rethinks the periodization of recent Chilean history. The ebullient demonstrations against Pinochet in the 1980s, the author notes, would have been unthinkable if not for less overt forms of resistance and organizing that took place in the mid- and late 1970s—a period that is too often seen as one of popular defeat. What’s more, Bruey is clear that precoup organizing traditions set the foundation for the resistance. This is a subtle but important gesture toward the durability of social and political change experienced during Allende’s Popular Unity revolution (1970–73). Finally, by taking her account of urban popular politics past Pinochet’s rule in the book’s epilogue, the author concludes with an insightful—and provocative—proposition that should spark important debate: when viewed from the country’s shantytown communities, the consolidation of neoliberalism after Pinochet, not the 1973 coup
itself, represented the greatest rupture in the social fabric of twentieth-century Chile. Once again, this is a forceful rebuke of conventional recent history as popularized by the centrist Concertación coalition that governed Chile from 1990 to 2010.

In sum, _Bread, Justice, and Liberty_ stands as the most in-depth English-language account of everyday political life during Chile’s violent dictatorship. Alongside works like Steve J. Stern’s three-volume study of memory and politics during the Pinochet and post-Pinochet eras, Bruey’s book should quickly become required reading for scholars of Chile’s Cold War dictatorship. It is also a model for engaged historical scholarship about grassroots visions of human rights in twentieth-century Latin America and beyond.

**Joshua Frens-String**, University of Texas at Austin

doi 10.1215/00182168-7993419


Ever since the liberal triumph in the mid-nineteenth-century War of the Reforma, Mexican Catholics have had a difficult time imagining themselves as full members of the nation: just as church and state are supposed to be independent from each other, citizenship and religious militancy have been understood as two radically different expressions of personal and collective identity, impossible to mix at the same time. If religion belongs to a premodern world of miraculous virgins, pious devotion, and controlling priests, citizenship refers to modern actors debating flesh-and-bone issues in the public square (or so the Mexican narrative of secularization goes). Robert Curley’s outstanding book shows that, during the first three decades of the twentieth century, the Catholic population of the state of Jalisco fully participated in the country’s political transformation as both modern and religious actors, as citizens and believers. They were not reactionary pawns of the clergy but autonomous laymen who first engaged in democratic politics to foster Christian social reforms and then to confront the anticlerical policies that threatened the very center of their lives. In the author’s words, revolutionary Jalisco witnessed the emergence of a “political Catholicism” religiously inspired and clearly reliant on the “tactics of mass politics” (p. 4).

Unlike many academic works on Mexico that present a single state or municipality as representative of the whole country, Curley acknowledges regional peculiarities and points out that Jalisco was characterized by higher levels of mestizaje and clerical density, as well as by a “fairly solid urban middle class” and a strong “agrarian middle sector” (p. 97). Because of its economic prosperity, this populous state of western Mexico had the capacity to sustain a large archdiocese with a vast network of parishes, seminaries, and pilgrimage sites, deeply intertwined with local society. By the turn of the twentieth century, this ecclesiastical network became the setting of the “social Catholicism” movement, which initially focused on finding solutions to such contemporary social problems as low wages, alcoholism, and
credit shortage. The outbreak of Francisco I. Madero’s revolution in November 1910, however, pushed Catholic activists toward the creation of Mexico’s first (and only) experiment with Christian democracy, the National Catholic Party (Partido Católico Nacional, or PCN). As Curley argues, Jalisco’s PCN, unlike the party leadership in Mexico City, did not stand for counterrevolution. It won free elections, enjoyed genuine popular support, and tried to introduce democratic reforms and progressive welfare policies.

For Jalisco’s Catholics, Madero’s revolution and the short PCN government in the state (1912–13) was an authentic democratic experience, the true fall of the ancien régime. The 1914 arrival of Álvaro Obregón’s Constitutonalist forces, in contrast, was locally “seen more as an occupation than a liberation,” for the imposition of radical anticlerical measures caused “a great deal of animosity” and lacked the popular legitimacy of PCN reformism (p. 112). Curley observes that Constitutonalist forces imposed a regime of revolutionary terror that started with the symbolic punishment of saints’ effigies and then followed with real executions. As in the PCN era, from 1915 to 1919 Jalisco’s Catholic population contested revolutionary anticlericalism through different means of democratic mobilization: written petitions to the federal government, public demonstrations and pilgrimages, amparo lawsuits, boycotts against specific businesses, and massive displays of social mourning, among other means. The relative success of these campaigns prompted the emergence of a Catholic labor union movement that, in theory, shared the same social spirit of the 1917 constitution. Local revolutionaries, however, abhorred Catholic unionism because it threatened their control of organized labor. Confessional unions were proscribed by Governor José Guadalupe Zuno in 1923, leaving Catholics without their main spaces for organizing themselves and peacefully voicing their demands.

The book ends with the Cristero Rebellion and the martyrdom of Anacleto González Flores, one of Jalisco’s most distinguished Catholic activists. For Curley, the 1926–29 uprising “consumed political Catholicism and the social movements that had underwritten it” (p. 269). After the loose arrangement between Mexico and the Holy See, indeed, the church hierarchy would promote a more vertical religiosity focused exclusively on spiritual affairs, and the government would gradually create a one-party political system, in which political Catholicism had no chance to fashion itself as a movement with legitimate aspirations. In this way, Curley demonstrates that the religious conflict is central for understanding the “distinct authoritarian character” of the post-revolutionary state (p. 270). If only for assessing this argument, historians of the Mexican Revolution should read this book and question themselves: How can we write histories from below that take seriously what millions of people actually believed and died for? As a minor criticism, I will only say that the author’s quarrel with different theories of secularization may distract some readers from the book’s larger issues. Despite these lapses of theoretical density, though, Curley’s work offers an intelligent, sympathetic, and well-researched history of revolutionary Jalisco.

PABLO MIJANGOS Y GONZÁLEZ, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas
doi:10.1215/00182168-7993430
José Del Pozo has provided a much-needed, well-crafted, and balanced interrogation of what has been researched, remembered, debated, and reimagined about Marxist president Salvador Allende in various fields of inquiry and creative production, including biography, literature, film, testimonials, and theater, in addition to historiography, since the 1973 coup. Over the book’s eight pithy chapters, Del Pozo also develops a contextual landscape that helps the reader grasp the extent to which such Allende-related material has been part and parcel of ongoing political clashes.

*Allende: Cómo su historia ha sido relatada* begins with what Del Pozo calls “Allende’s second death”: the assassination of Allende’s character by the new regime in the days and months following the Socialist physician’s suicide on September 11 (p. 15). Amid repression and censorship, and with the assistance of anti-Allende scholars like the historian Gonzalo Vial, that second death partially rested on the fiction that Allende was planning the assassination of generals and opposition politicians (the so-called Plan Zeta). Del Pozo then turns his attention to Chileans in exile, including filmmaker Helvio Soto and historian Alejandro Witker, who came to Allende’s defense in the mid-1970s. Witker, while living in Mexico, assembled Allende-related speeches, documents, and other materials that together became the “Salvador Allende Archive.” Furthermore, exiled political figures and intellectuals, including leaders of the Chilean Left, and media working abroad and clandestinely in Chile also defended Allende and endeavored to explain (with very little self-reflection) what the *via chilena al socialismo* was and wasn’t.

By the early 1980s, Allende’s public resurrection in Chile was well underway, with gatherings to mark the ten-year anniversary of the coup and commemorations at the site of the Socialist’s original interment in Viña del Mar. Later that decade, as the legitimacy-hungry Augusto Pinochet regime increasingly tolerated the political opposition, images and remembrances of Allende were front and center in the “No” campaign preceding the 1988 national plebiscite. This opening also saw a miniboom of books on Allende, including testimonials. At about that time, Fernando Alegría, who had worked for Allende as a cultural attaché and became a renowned professor in Spanish departments at Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley, published his novelized biography of the former president, *Allende, mi vecino el presidente* (1989). Seeking to “demystify” the president’s life and introduce it to a generation of Chileans born after the coup, Alegría fuses fictional elements with Allende’s speeches and other nonfiction material, contributing to what Del Pozo concludes is an “ambiguous” book (pp. 82–83).

After the return of democracy in 1990, Allende’s image saw further resuscitation in and outside academia during the civilian governments of Christian Democrats Patricio Aylwin (1990–94) and Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (1994–2000). Del Pozo examines the works of important figures like the sociologist Tomás Moulian, who, in his *Conversación interrumpida con Allende* (1998) and other contributions, criticizes the weaknesses of postdictatorship governments and presents Allende as a “moral example for the new...
generations,” as Del Pozo describes (p. 103). Moreover, while the 1990s saw structural conditions (including the founding of new publishing houses) that would seem conducive to the emergence of additional literature on Allende, many scholars, especially those without permanent faculty positions, were hesitant to work on Allende-related projects for fear of wading too far into what was an extant and heated national debate over the deceased leader.

Del Pozo moves on to a clutch of important biographies, including Diana Veneros’s *Allende: Un ensayo psicobiográfico* (2003) as well as distinguished filmmaker Patricio Guzmán’s documentary *Salvador Allende* (2004), which, in addition to Pinochet’s 1998 arrest in London, helped reignite focus on Allende in the early 2000s. That resurgence of interest included what Del Pozo describes as “the Right’s counterattack,” which saw interventions by the aforementioned Vial (until his death in 2009) and a series of polemical books by the philosopher Víctor Farías, who has argued that Allende was an anti-Semite and eugenicist, among other things. Del Pozo concludes the book with discussions of theatrical, cinematic, and literary contributions that creatively explore the dramatic circumstances of Allende’s death on September 11, as well as a robust treatment of historian Patricio Quiroga Zamora’s *La dignidad de América: El retorno histórico a Salvador Allende* (2016), which Del Pozo praises as a pro-Allende but genuinely balanced and critical analysis—an uncommon approach in the “broadened historiography” of the former president and his place in the evolution of the Chilean Left.

The book’s focus makes for a nicely concise discussion firmly grounded in Chilean circumstances, conditions, and actors that have influenced the production of Allende-centered scholarly and creative works since 1973. While one might quibble with Del Pozo’s conceptualization of what constitutes (a “broadened”) historiography, he has provided an insightful and quite valuable book that will appeal to specialists (among them, graduate students cramming for comprehensive exams) and many nonspecialists interested in Allende’s continuing presence in politics, academia, and cultural production.

**Patrick Barr-Melej**, Ohio University

doi:10.1215/00182168-7993441

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**Paisanos Chinos: Transpacific Politics among Chinese Immigrants in Mexico.**


Scholars of the Chinese diaspora in the Americas will want to read the latest addition to this growing field, *Paisanos Chinos*. It is a well-written and fairly well-researched book on Chinese Mexican political formation. Fredy González’s scholarship on the Chinese Mexican community, understudied in Latin American history and scholarship on global Asias, is excellent, rigorous, and compelling. By spanning myriad national spaces, often simultaneously—expansive and ambitious conceptual parameters—González’s work shows that transpacific webs of migration, intersecting with categories of race, class, and political affiliation, determined who belonged, ambivalently or not, to the Mexican body
Similar approaches have been adopted in recent scholarly work on Chinese in Peru and Nicaragua, but González is the first Latin American–trained historian to deploy a diasporic perspective to chronicle the history of modern Mexico from the vantage of a racial minority.

*Paisanos Chinos* is among the strongest monographs in a rather recent boom in studying Chinese Mexicans. González successfully counters a narrative entrenched in such studies. According to this narrative, in the 1910s revolutionary fervor and *mestizaje* isolated the Chinese; wanton violence ensued, especially in northern Mexico. Class and political cleavages between rival Chinese Tong organizations exacerbated Sinophobia throughout the 1920s, again sparking violence—mostly against the Chinese merchant classes—and business boycotts, which were partly fended off by the political collaborations of Chinese, Mexican, and some American officials. In the early 1930s, the Chinese were ousted from Sonora and vilified throughout Mexico; few Chinese communities remained after 1940, outside the political centers of Mexico.

Contrary to this narrative, González instead treats Sinophobia and Mexican post-revolutionary nationalism as historically contingent processes unfolding in the wake of other revolutionary nationalisms, specifically those in China and Japan. As González eloquently states in the introduction, the silencing of Chinese-descended people was especially apparent in Mexico, which mostly upheld the view that national identity was forged from the racial mixture of European criollos and indigenous peoples. The Chinese were neither, and despite holding citizenship, intermarrying, and establishing successful businesses, they had to struggle to assert themselves as rightful Mexicans.

As González convincingly argues, the strength of diasporic political ties was the most important factor in the long-term settlement of Chinese in Mexico. Political ties with Mexican officials, established amid earlier struggles in the 1920s and 1930s (covered in chapters 1 and 2), would prove vital to Chinese Mexicans and to Mexico’s overall standing as one of the Allies in World War II. Chinese Mexican politics were nimble, accommodating shifting wartime and postwar landscapes. At the same time, González reveals the ongoing tensions between the Guomindang and Chee Kung Tong as the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 raised conflicts over diplomatic recognition and the legitimacy of the Maoist project. While anticommunism reintroduced Sinophobia, it also opened opportunities to showcase the Chinese Mexican community nationally and internationally. Cultural diplomacy, namely through the annual pilgrimage of Chinese Catholics to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, fostered goodwill and allayed tensions about fears of a looming PRC threat.

While chapters 1 and 2 somewhat repeat the familiar history of Chinese Mexicans in Sonora and Baja California during the 1920s and 1930s, González takes great pains to enrich this narrative by highlighting the impact of anti-Chinese movements in places not previously studied: Tampico, Mexico City, and Chiapas. Without the political work of Chinese Mexicans in regions other than the Mexican north, anti-Chinese attacks in Sonora and Baja California may have been more ferocious and lasted longer. Certainly, the reassertion of Chinese Mexicans in the north would have been less robust.
González's focus on greater Mexico is a welcome addition to a body of literature in need of new frameworks, new questions, and unmined primary sources. I believe *Paisanos Chinos* provides these. González's knowledge of Pinyin romanization, Spanish, and English—a rare set of language fluencies even among most scholars of global Asias—allowed him to dynamically explore an array of source materials and international archives quite unique among historians of the Chinese diaspora in the Americas. For the most part, González draws on government sources and newspapers, particularly the correspondence contained in Chinese Legation records in Mexico. He also makes excellent use of Chinese Mexican newspapers as well as periodicals from other Chinese Tong organizations in the Americas. Finally, González mines relevant documents from national archival holdings in Taiwan, the United Kingdom, Washington, DC, and Mexico City while also incorporating key records from regional- and state-level archives in Baja California, Chiapas, and Tampico.

González is one of a growing number of academics who over the last two decades or so have worked to rescue history from nation-centered narratives. Such scholarship has produced a vibrant, diverse revisionism showing that Chinese communities in the Americas worked against nationalistic narratives. González's *Paisanos Chinos* stands out within the field of Latin American history by being seriously embedded in transpacific and diasporic perspectives.

Grace Peña Delgado, University of California, Santa Cruz

doi 10.1215/00182168-7993452

Exile within Exiles: Herbert Daniel, Gay Brazilian Revolutionary.


James Green has produced a pathbreaking portrait that combines compelling biography with critical historiographical contributions. Herbert Daniel, an important figure in Brazil’s left-wing politics and revolutionary movements, transformed his early struggle with homosexual desire into a career as a champion for gender, sexual, environmental, and social justice. Green’s vivid portrait is in itself a feat, given the multiple layers of clandestinity (underground guerrilla activity, closeted sexuality) that led Daniel to obscure major portions of his experiences. The narrative unfolds chronologically, as we follow Daniel from bookish child to medical student who blossomed into an activist and eventually an armed militant. From Daniel’s vital participation in the campaigns to foment armed revolution in Brazil, the book moves into his long exile, a time when his grief at leaving Brazil coincided with an increasing freedom to openly acknowledge his sexual and romantic desires. (Desires, it bears mentioning, which he had repressed to evade homophobic violence as well as to hold himself to the ascetic cultural and moral standards of a revolutionary.) The final chapters bear witness to Daniel’s long-term partnership with Cláudio Mesquita, his return to Brazil, and his renaissance as an activist
and politician, including his battle with AIDS and his triumph as a voice for those newly stigmatized by it.

This story, in Green’s meticulously researched and scrupulously respectful treatment, grants insight into the often-inscrutable and inaccessible experiences that Daniel shared with a historically significant subset of his contemporaries. We gain access to the frustrations of exile, the vagaries of counterculture and sexual revolution, the collisions of feminism and revolutionary politics, and the choices that could lead a young person from apathy through protest to terrorism, kidnapping, and guerrilla training, all in the service of an impossibly idealistic revolutionary mission. The historiography has been beset with debates and quandaries about how Daniel’s critical generation of Brazilians navigated each of these essential characteristics of this period. Green’s book offers a novel way of understanding and resolving such debates and quandaries.

We witness an adult Daniel, forged in the fires of guerrilla activity, long-term hiding, and exile, both committed and desperately clinging to the cause he had adopted as an adolescent. Even from the relative safety of Paris, he wished to return to Brazil and continue the revolutionary struggle—despite years of staggering physical and emotional hardship, the total decimation of the organizations he had helped to create, and the deaths of his close friends and comrades. In Daniel’s responses to these developments, we gain insight into thousands of other stories—of other youth who, like the friends and associates of Herbert’s whom Green exhaustively consulted for this book, abandoned their previous lives and went off to train, fight, and suffer horrific consequences, from torture to exile and death.

Green’s previous work as a pioneering historian of sexuality and gender in Brazil informs his analysis here of the moral traditionalism and antifeminism rampant on the revolutionary Left. The book attends to the constant tension in Daniel’s story between his hidden turmoil about sexuality and the overt homophobia and “excessive emphasis on revolutionary masculinity that was pervasive throughout the radical Left” (p. 119). With characteristic insight, Green invites readers to consider a way in which Daniel’s various feats of concealment and performance (living underground as a guerrilla and as a homosexual) dovetailed. Moreover, Daniel’s story as a gay revolutionary defies categorization in ways that illuminate the vast complexity of his time and his experiences. Fascinatingly, despite not subscribing to the same politics of intrepid masculinity as some of his peers, he ended up recurring to the same heroes: Che Guevara and Régis Debray. And where scholars continue to clarify the realities of sexual revolution and counterculture in 1960s and 1970s Brazil, Green shows us a Daniel who resists a simple divide between convention and cultural rebellion: in Europe, he eschewed both the moral rigidity of orthodox militants and the borderline countercultural desbunde of fellow exiles who “enjoyed smoking pot now and then, a practice also disdained by many on the Left” (p. 163).

While presenting a glimpse into such complexities, the book respectfully treats the many impenetrable nuances of this remarkable life. Green delves into well-reasoned, qualified speculation on several occasions, ever expanding the possibility of understanding the transitions that took Daniel from quiet student to violent revolutionary and
from avowed celibate to loving partner. What emerges is a very sensitive portrait of a life that, given the available sources—remarkably expanded by Green’s years of painstaking research—retains many of its mysteries. While this book might easily have engaged with historiographies about comparable youth and the “dynamics of survival” among doomed revolutionaries in other countries (María José Moyano’s work comes to mind), Green opts to illustrate Daniel as both unique and representative (p. 130). We are left, then, with a brilliant study, which draws on the peculiar poignancy of one biography to generate heretofore unhoped-for insight into the choices and experiences of a generation of Brazilians.

BENJAMIN A. COWAN, University of California, San Diego
doi 10.1215/00182168-7993463


Recent years have seen a steady and encouraging growth of academic interest in what is often called transnational history, rethinking local phenomena through global approaches. Nonetheless, this perspective has not yet produced a consistent body of research examining the Latin American clash of ideas that characterized the short twentieth century (1914 to 1991). This is particularly regrettable because this continent, due to the complex imbrication of ideological references and multiple political connections, deserves to be examined within a global perspective, in order to paint a broader picture beyond customary national categories by engaging in comparative and connected analysis.

Edited by the Chile-based historian Patricio Herrera González, El Comunismo en América Latina aims to expand our understanding of the Latin American Left, from the first regional influences of the Bolshevik Revolution to the immediate aftermath of Jacobo Árbenz’s fall in 1954, which signaled an exacerbation of the hemispheric Cold War. Thus the book focuses on an era for which the relationships between the international and Latin American Left have been more systematically examined than for the second half of the twentieth century. Latin American scholars—many of whom contribute to this volume—have been encouraged in this focus by access to files in the Comintern archives from 1919 to 1943, Olga Ulianova’s watershed publications of sources housed in the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History, and, more recently, the compilation La Internacional Comunista en América Latina en documentos del archivo de Moscú (2018), by the Russian historians Victor Jeifets and Andrey Schelchkov.

This edited collection brings together contributions initially presented at a conference held in 2015 in Santiago. As made clear by some of the contributors and in the introduction, by the eminent historian Barry Carr, the work deals with three main aims, all of them wedded to global approaches to Latin America: to highlight the local reception of international communist experiences, to emphasize the cultural dimension of
Latin American left-wing activism and identity, and to provide an innovative picture of the Left by sketching a transnational approach.

The 17 essays included in the book only partially achieve these goals. With a clear emphasis on Chile’s communism and the period prior to the Cold War’s unfolding, the collection noticeably marginalizes other geographical and temporal foci. Only two chapters tackle the 1950s (by Gerardo Leibner and Ana María Cofño), while nine chapters address the Chilean Left. South American countries such as Venezuela and Bolivia, as well as the Caribbean (with the exception of an article on Guatemala), are not represented in this volume.

The complexity of local reception of international doctrines (mainly Soviet-oriented ideology) is daringly reassessed by some revealing pieces (by Edgar Andrés Caro Peralta, Santiago Aránguiz Pinto, Rolando Álvarez Vallejos, Leibner, Patricio Gutiérrez Donoso, and Víctor Augusto Piemonte), bringing to the fore the creative nature of regional activism. The book undoubtedly succeeds in demonstrating that the Latin American Left was shaped in response to constant domestic readjustments and critical assimilation of international communism, and that thereby the region’s Left cannot be viewed as a mere appendix to an all-pervasive, Moscow-led ideological movement. The book also successfully reminds us that Latin America has been placed in the periphery in global analysis for far too long. By centering Latin America, some of the chapters (by Gutiérrez Donoso, Sebastián Rivera Mir, Carine Dalmás, and Cofño) provide a necessary cultural history of the Latin American Left, stressing local roots and original expressions of communist activism and labor organizing, which in some cases (discussed in chapters by Patricio Herrera González, Alexandre Fortes, and Jody Pavilack) resulted in unexpected commitments and cross-border connections.

Yet while the book successfully fulfills the first two main goals, it does not satisfactorily embrace the third aim, to offer a transnational approach to Latin American communism. The contributors (with the exceptions of Rivera Mir and Herrera González) remain within conventional national boundaries, rather than presenting ideas in terms of multidirectional networks and extrageographical circulations. While some authors position themselves as advocates of a transnational perspective, their chapters are limited to dealing with the local influences of an external actor, instead of pushing the reader to comprehend Latin America (and the global Left) as an interconnected totality, blurring regional frontiers and denaturalizing the concept of nation. We miss a more straightforward comparative study or a deeper examination of how a given bilateral relationship (say, the Soviet Union–Chile relationship) may impinge on an additional ideological or geographical unit, articulating a complex, broad, and truly interconnected Latin American transnational history.

One can only encourage scholarly works dealing with global, comparative, and connected approaches to the Latin American twentieth century, especially for the period after 1959, when the Cuban Revolution added an additional, pivotal piece to the complex hemispheric jigsaw. But in order to decisively move from a history of international relations to a more elusive transnational endeavor, we must collect (and merge via
Between 1913 and 1916, the US-run Isthmian Canal Commission (ICC) expelled some 40,000 people from Panamanian towns in the Canal Zone. Marixa Lasso is the first to unpack this fascinating story, usually only mentioned alongside the greater epic of the construction of the Panama Canal. She debunks the myth that this depopulation was necessary to building the waterway; some towns were flooded, but many could have remained and were dismantled after the canal opened. “The story of the depopulation of the Zone,” she argues, “is the history of political—rather than technical—decisions” (p. 3).

The politics of depopulation followed the larger politics of imperial erasure of modernizing but less powerful nonwhite peoples. US canal officials insisted on seeing Zone inhabitants—some Panamanians, but mostly West Indians and other immigrants such as Chinese, Spaniards, French, and Bengali—through the tropes of the premodern: indolence, ignorance, unfamiliarity with technology, and inability to self-govern. Yet those who inhabited the dozens of precanal towns—Empire, Gatún, Gorgona, Chagres, Cruces, and more—were integral to the transportation projects that for centuries connected the Atlantic to the Pacific. Especially by the nineteenth century, Panama’s peoples served as shopkeepers, hoteliers, vendors, artisans, boatsmen, muleteers, engineers, lawyers, and farmers. The ports of Panama had “never been quaint or traditional” (p. 21). When the technology changed—for instance, when the railroad came—they learned new skills. Panamanians also lived from the import-export business, which brought them significant wealth and internationalized not only their population but their products, from alcohol to home decorations.

Panamanians along these routes also practiced a republicanism in some ways more enlightened than the North American model. They enjoyed legal equality from 1821 on, regardless of skin color. Municipalities also largely self-governed, led usually by black mayors and town councils.

Yet North Americans insisted in codifying Panamanians as primitive natives fatally marked by their tropical wilderness environment. Travelers ridiculed contrasts between the jungle and modern technology, judging them incompatible. Others denied that Panamanian farmers could be practitioners of agriculture because they did not work on plantations, even though they exported bananas and coffee. North Americans instead saw their lands as “largely unused” (p. 85). The idea of Western civilization thus excluded black West Indian workers who served a railroad while including white British workers...
who spun cotton. Such racism made it easier for US observers to “erase” Panamanians not only physically, by flooding or moving their towns, but also socially, by ignoring their contributions.

Officials came to such conclusions only after debating—among each other but also with Panamanians such as Eusebio Morales and Carlos Mendoza—whether to recognize the modernity of Panamanians or to silence it. Panamanians, black and white, argued that the isthmus, as a hub of transportation and commerce, had long made of them a modern people. They struggled—unsuccessfully—to retain some Zone ports. The ICC’s process leading to depopulation occurred in three stages. From 1904 to 1907, the ICC experimented with creating five largely self-regulating municipalities. Perhaps because mayors pushed back too hard against official demands, the ICC in 1907 transformed the municipalities into “administrative districts” whose inhabitants could learn the habits of modernity. Yet, as the canal neared completion, American sections were increasingly more sanitary, screened-in, orderly, comfortable, and, ironically, government-controlled than native ones.

Only in 1912, eight years into canal construction, did President William Howard Taft’s order to depopulate come, prompting the third and final stage. Zone officials now no longer referred to Panamanians as “residents” or “inhabitants” but rather as undesirable “occupants” (pp. 142–43). Never did officials speak of depopulation as a technical necessity for the construction of the canal. “The reasons were deeply racial,” concludes Lasso (p. 149).

Few photographs, postcards, or even documents of the lost Panamanian towns exist, and so Lasso at times speculates or extrapolates from the few voices that have survived. A few gems, such as a letter of complaint, tax records, or a song, offer a welcome corrective to the dominant US documents. The author also reads well-known documents differently, finding, for instance, in travelers’ accounts clues as to the modern characteristics of the Zone.

Lasso’s greatest contribution is to resurrect the history of these forgotten towns, and her book belongs on the same shelf as Julie Greene’s masterwork, *The Canal Builders: Making America’s Empire at the Panama Canal* (2009). Written in stirring and accessible prose, *Erased* should be read by all those interested not only in Panamanian history or US–Latin American relations but also in experiments in exhuming the human collateral damage of Western colonialism.

ALAN MCPHERSON, Temple University

doi 10.1215/00182168-7993485

*The Street Is Ours: Community, the Car, and the Nature of Public Space in Rio de Janeiro.*


There were streets long before cars. Shawn William Miller’s *The Street Is Ours: Community, the Car, and the Nature of Public Space in Rio de Janeiro* explores how the invasion of
cars changed the street’s meaning. Streets once were the manifestation of culture, a three-dimensional space to do, be, exist, work, play, and more. They were a public good for all (p. 8). Through an examination of the evolution of popular streets in twentieth-century Rio’s downtown center, Miller argues that the automobile reduced the multifunctional street to a two-dimensional, segregated, modern space simply dedicated to transporting bodies and goods via cars (p. 15).

One has to first understand what the street was to understand what it has become. Chapters 1 and 2 use one of Rio’s most popular common streets in the nineteenth century, Rua do Ouvidor, and Rio’s first avenue, Avenida Central, to illustrate the complexity of the street before the car arrived. The street was a “natural resource, not unlike forests or fisheries,” of the urban environment separate from the civilized house that simultaneously allowed the movement of people and social, economic, cultural, and religious activities (p. 30). By 1906, the arrival of modern avenues, with their wider, open designs, created more public space for all the street’s various uses (pp. 64–69).

Cars finally make their disruptive, violent arrival in Rio between the 1910s and 1940s. Chapter 3 shows how as car consumption slowly increased, these loud, bulky machines allowed the rich to dominate public space and segregate themselves from the masses (p. 109). As chapter 4 illustrates, auto-pedestrian accidents then transformed Rio streets into deadly spaces that killed more people than any medical disease (p. 153). Using political cartoons and newspaper reports, Miller shows how public outrage deferred to general acceptance of the car and of its victims as “a heavy tribute” of modernity (p. 154). By 1973, “Brazil’s death rate per car was higher than in any other country that reported statistics” (p. 189).

Responses to the cars’ onslaught on public space were reactionary. Chapter 5 examines how insufficient driving regulation perpetuated this violence. By the early 1920s, the authorities mostly accepted traffic deaths as “acts of God” (p. 206). When officials finally introduced federal automotive legislation in 1941, the penalties on drivers for violent, negligent accidents were minimal. Reforms in 1966 actually removed speed limits (pp. 209, 223). Traffic deaths mounted as cars consumed the street. No public space was sacred. In chapter 6, Miller uses popular songs and poetry about cultural spaces lost to the new 16-lane avenue, Avenida Vargas, to illustrate the reactions to these changes (pp. 235, 239–42).

Rio also had to physically transform to accommodate growing numbers of cars. Chapter 7 examines how cars remade the public street into a place for free private parking. Drivers initially stored automobiles in garages like carriages before them, but by the 1930s the majority parked on the street for free (p. 284). Rio’s traffic became a nightmare. More cars needed more streets to move and park (p. 278). Government officials cut down hills and tore through mountains to build parking lots, tunnels, and highways for car-owning residents in the beachfront suburbs from Copacabana to Gávea during the 1960s (pp. 269–70, 275). Drivers parked everywhere, from the street to city squares and the sidewalk, with little retribution (pp. 286–87). Cars mostly won the fight for space, but Miller highlights some of the ways that the public resisted. One cheers for
the Rio transit directors who fought to regulate parking and reclaim sidewalks for pedestrians (pp. 293–304).

As a scholar of Brazilian fuels and automobiles, I sometimes questioned Miller’s predominant comparisons to the United States. Undoubtedly, the leading car country influenced Brazil policy (pp. 295–96). However, unlike residents of Rio, Americans moved out of cities to accommodate the car’s necessary spatial expansion. Further comparison to countries whose populations remained densely concentrated in urban cities even as car consumption grew, like Britain and France, might better serve Miller’s point. Similarly, discussion of other Latin American nations with persistently dangerous driving cultures might bolster Miller’s truly innovative introspection on the nature of cars and space in the twentieth century.

The Street Is Ours is a unique urban environmental history that makes one see that cities, not just the countryside, were once more than they are today. Community requires space; modernity, via the car, stripped that away. The book helps explain parts of Rio culture today, like the closure of certain highways on weekends in an effort to recapture the street’s multidimensionality (p. 323). Miller successfully creates a tangible history of something that one might otherwise only feel. Here is a history I did not think that I needed, and that is precisely the point.

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DOI 10.1215/00182168-7993496

La inolvidable edad: Jóvenes en la Costa Rica del siglo XX.

In Costa Rica, the study of youth has not only been undertaken by different disciplines (such as sociology and anthropology) but has also contributed to shaping interdisciplinary fields (such as communication and cultural studies). However, as noted by the editors of La inolvidable edad, “Historical studies on young people privilege the post-1950 period, which was when the globalized youth culture that currently prevails began to take shape” (p. 17). Thus the book draws a bridge between Costa Rican youth from both halves of the twentieth century in a way that allows each chapter to resonate with the others.

The chapter by Iván Molina Jiménez analyzes the debates and policies between 1913 and 1953 regarding access to public education as well as the democratization of education as part of a proposal for extending rights. These debates and policies are framed within the world economic crisis of the 1930s and US New Deal policies, as well as the Costa Rican debate on social mobility and the expectations of young migrants in the main cities.

Debates over young people in the first half of the twentieth century resonate both in Zaira Salazar Corrales’s analysis of the “fiesta de los quince años” from 1951 to 1971 and in Mario Salazar Montes’s study of public institutions’ limited ability to create youth policies from 1962 to 1971. According to Salazar Corrales, the “fiesta de los quince años,”
which first began appearing in the 1930s, emerged for the public as an event that integrated the commercialization of the female figure, the ritual of passage from youth, and the strengthening of social class ties. Salazar Montes analyzes how in the 1960s congressional discussions about incorporating young people into political and economic agendas took place. The protests against the contract between the state and the Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA) was labeled a “youth rebellion.” This event provoked the confrontation between political actors and the state’s strategies of policing based on moralization and sociocultural control. The confrontation of such strategies finally led the state to create the Ministerio de Cultura, Juventud y Deportes and to expand the electoral rights and political representation of young people.

Randall Chaves Zamora covers the protest against ALCOA. By reading the leading newspapers, he analyzes how the categories of college student, leftist, hippie, and young communist were used to articulate the discourse defining the protest. Such discourse would legitimize the use of police violence against the protest but was especially central to the spread of anti-Communism in Costa Rica.

David Díaz Arias and Sergio Isaac Hernández Parra cover the 1980s and 1990s. For Díaz Arias, the formation of youth identities in the 1980s was marked not only by the economic crisis but also by the patriotic project of the nation-state. Rodrigo Carazo’s government (1978–82) successfully involved young people in civic celebrations, ensuring that commemorations of independence had significant youth participation. By 1982, youth leadership had extended to solidarity with the anti-imperialist movements in Central America, accompanied by the creation of the Primer Consejo Nacional de Juventud and the Política Nacional de Juventud. After 1982, policies turned toward the insertion of young people, especially those from the rural sectors, into the state’s response to the deepening economic crisis. This process was a substantial part of an agenda to deradicalize youth and turn them into “agents of the State” (p. 153).

Hernández Parra delves into cultural issues, analyzing the “moral panic” linked to “satanic festivals” supposedly carried out by “heavy metal culture” (especially at the Cráneo Metal IV festival in October 1992). Media discourse, political and religious speeches, and accounts by police authorities as well as activists allow Hernández Parra to criticize social prejudices and adult-centric discourses that have caused heavy metal groups to be persecuted. Such persecution, rather than merely banning youth collectives, also aims to restrict their transgressive character.

This book is undoubtedly a significant academic contribution, not only for Costa Rica but for all of Latin America. Although the authors are correct in not using an age criterion for defining youth and in not associating youth with a transition to adult life, the book lacks a more substantial conceptual discussion of youth as a category. We can infer that the authors work from a notion of youth as a social group: high school students, “quinceañeras,” “metaleros.” However, such a conceptual discussion, which requires engaging other disciplines, could enrich future analyses. Nevertheless, the book is rigorous in its treatment of sources and its remarkable re-creation of political conflicts. These features differentiate this book from other studies that only see in young people a series of cultural expressions that come together in a palimpsest. For this reason, the
economic and cultural history that is told through the initiatives of young people, as the authors conclude, is critical for research agendas.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993507

Revolution in the Terra do Sol: The Cold War in Brazil. By SARAH SARZYNSKI.

Sarah Sarzynski's innovative study examines rural mobilization and repression in northeastern Brazil in the years surrounding the 1964 military coup, as well as the subsequent memorialization of political struggle. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, the region's rural poor organized for greater access to land and political inclusion, challenging centuries of slavery, latifundia, political violence, and corruption. Brazil's postwar oligarchic pact continued to suppress popular empowerment through legal restrictions on suffrage and rural unionization, which insulated the political dealmaking critical to advances in import-substitution industrialization. Yet by the early 1960s, political tensions had begun to chip away at the pillars of power in the northeastern region. Rising land values and land speculation prompted sharecropper and tenant evictions, rending the traditional patron-client bonds of rural society. Growing exodus to the cities magnified the cries for social change, the constituencies for populist politicians, and the visibility of marginalized populations through mass media. Agricultural output lagged behind urban food consumption, auguring worrisome bottlenecks for economists' developmentalist model and voter discontent for politicians. Visions of radical transformations in landholding and political power blossomed throughout Latin America in the Cuban Revolution's aftermath. Thousands of northeastern peasants and rural workers joined the Peasant Leagues, and labor unions organized by the Communists and the Catholic Church, to demand social justice and agrarian reform, “by law or by force.”

Northeastern Brazil’s radicalization during the João Goulart era (1961–64) has garnered ample scholarly and journalistic attention, yet Sarzynski’s incisive analysis adds to the standard approaches of political science and rural sociology. Whereas prior studies focused on nordestinos’ struggles for land and rights, Sarzynski showcases how actors from across the ideological spectrum deployed well-worn images of the region for political battle. By analyzing the historical narratives and cultural tropes that suffused political and popular representations of the Northeast, she critically adds to traditional historiographical emphases on peasant mobilization and counterinsurgency doctrine. In tracing the broader historical arc and cultural framework of northeastern Brazilian power struggles, she demonstrates the methodological value of an interdisciplinary approach to the history of Cold War Latin America.

Sarzynski builds on the work of Durval Muniz Albuquerque Jr., whose pioneering intellectual history The Invention of the Brazilian Northeast (1999) explored how the region’s so-called cultural essences were depicted by writers, artists, and intellectuals, and how this
othering operationalized regional elites’ political gambits in an emerging southern-dominated national order. While Albuquerque’s analysis cleaves to high cultural production, with scant consideration of particular policy implications, Sarzynski explores images of nordestinos in commercial and documentary films, conservative newspapers and Peasant League publications, chapbooks and oral histories, and Brazilian and US government reports, underscoring their impact on public perceptions and political outcomes.

Sarzynski skillfully unpacks how Brazilian conservatives and progressives, pressed to narrate sweeping social change in the Northeast, recycled or reinterpreted histories of latifundia, rural bossism, social banditry, millenarianism, and marronage. Sensationalism also sold, as evinced by the numerous Nordestern films and shock-value documentaries richly analyzed by Sarzynski. Although both the Left and the Right often drew on common cultural stereotypes of northeastern primitivism, religious fanaticism, racialized expression, and hidebound traditionalism, the political spin differed. Conservative fearmongers transposed the so-called barbarism of the Northeast’s legendary messianic leaders and rural outlaws onto the Peasant League organizers, rural union leaders, radicalized clergy, and their followers. They resurrected turn-of-the-century entrepreneurial bosses such as Delmiro Gouveia to spotlight modernizing elites. Progressives, on the other hand, reclaimed historical and cultural patterns of defiance to slavery, coronelismo, and social injustice as symbols of moral superiority, masculine virtue, and popular resistance, precedents for contemporary social movements. Sarzynski’s chapter on the instrumentalization of religious politics by conservatives, liberationist clergy, and commercial filmmakers is particularly exemplary in its source analysis.

Sarzynski then jumps forward to redemocratization to explore the memory of the Peasant Leagues. State repression ensured that the Northeast never became the Cold War’s “next Cuba”—in fact, Sarzynski examines conflicting assessments of the leagues’ ties to the Fidel Castro regime—but the region would symbolize resistance to Brazil’s oligarchic, authoritarian order and inspire current-day rural social movements. The book concludes with an extensive oral history with Zito de Galileá, an organic intellectual and former league organizer committed to preserving the peasant movement’s historical documentation and memory. Although Sarzynski might have provided more direct testimony from and discourse analysis of her informant rather than summary, she broadens the temporal scope in juxtaposing “outsider” and “insider” representations of the leagues and thus allows us to reflect on historical narration as a form of palimpsest (p. 252).

In northeastern Brazil, Cold War counterinsurgency doctrine could be readily vernacularized thanks to long-standing canards of cultural atavism and social pathology. Such notions, Sarzynski compellingly shows, were deeply rooted in concepts of race, gender, class, religion, and environment. Rural social movements sought to convert such concepts into ideological weapons, but they proved no match for the real ones wielded by security forces and landowners’ thugs.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993518

Referring to the Donald Trump administration, former US Treasury secretary Larry Summers recently fretted on Twitter, “I worry about the Argentinization of US government.” US public figures have frequently exploited the supposed relationship between Trumpism and Peronism in order to underline the authoritarianism of the controversial real-estate mogul turned president. Since the Cold War, US observers have cast Juan Perón as a symbol of authoritarianism and populism, the antithesis of liberal democratic modernization. Ernesto Semán opens Ambassadors of the Working Class by reflecting on Perón’s bad reputation in the United States. If on the one hand Perón is a stand-in for purported Latin American backwardness, on the other he evokes a moment when working-class concerns and struggles took center stage, a moment of mobilized factories, governed by social laws and workers’ rights, that liberals believe created so many obstacles to Latin America’s modernization.

In this book Semán explores one of Perón’s most ambitious projects: disseminating Peronist labor policy across the world. Between 1946 and 1952, hundreds of unionists took training courses for Argentina’s foreign service. In his fluid narrative, Semán weaves together private manuscript sources such as trade unionist diaries with oral testimonies and official reports. By interpreting these sources, Semán uncovers a story, hitherto ignored in the historiography, of trade unionists from small towns and the crowded working-class Buenos Aires suburbs who suddenly, to the horror of Argentine elites, occupied the stately halls of the country’s embassies and crisscrossed the world to spread Peronism. Semán sees these worker attachés as historical subjects with agency. From Moscow and Paris to other Latin American capitals, the worker attachés, many with backgrounds in the anarchist, socialist, and communist movements, acted as Perón’s representatives abroad and protagonists of their own Peronist project, shaped by their ideas and experiences. Yet they found their small victories curtailed by the American Federation of Labor’s opposition to Peronism and by suspicion in the Soviet Union and Eastern bloc countries.

Semán does not fall into the trap of simply analyzing the success or failure of Perón’s international project. Rather, he shows how the concept of Peronism was shaped by North American anticommunism during the Cold War. He notes how the United States worked systematically to reproduce a highly monolithic and limited notion of not only Peronism but also its close relative, populism. Semán examines how the US State Department’s partnership with the American Federation of Labor and, later, the Congress of Industrial Organizations was crucial in forging representations of authoritarianism and democracy, concepts used to justify US interference in other countries’ internal affairs.

Additionally, in keeping with recent trends in Latin American social history, Semán deconstructs hegemonic interpretations of populist leaders who promoted
developmentalism, such as Brazil’s Getúlio Vargas. In so doing, he relativizes the role of the state. Although this opens the way to treating workers as more than dependents co-opted or manipulated by populist governments, Semán does not clearly problematize the uses and abuses to which the concept of populism was put.

In the first chapter, Semán analyzes the historical processes that transformed Argentina in the 1930s, including the social question, modernization, and diplomatic relations. His narrative interprets Argentina in light of the international context. In chapter 2, Semán shifts to the role of the US State Department, the US embassy in Argentina, and North American trade unionism. Semán demonstrates how Peronism became one of US foreign policy’s leading foes in the early Cold War. The third and fourth chapters explore the project to spread Perón’s ideas abroad. Semán focuses on this project’s origins and characteristics before discussing the experiences of trade unionists sent to the United States and the Soviet Union—one of the book’s most innovative aspects. The final three chapters analyze worker attachés in Latin America, emphasizing the barriers encountered by Peronism in neighboring countries. Semán places the Argentine trade union movement in dialogue with international labor organizations.

Semán not only tells a fascinating story but also, by taking seriously the challenge of doing transnational history, should inspire reflection on how global history, when produced from below, can shed light on previously ignored issues. The book offers a global history told from South to North, establishing dialogue between two historiographies that rarely interact. Semán provides a social history of international relations with workers at its center, although Semán chooses not to cast his intervention in these terms. Ambassadors of the Working Class is obligatory reading for anyone interested in global history, the Cold War in Latin America, and, of course, Peronism and populism.

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DOI 10.1215/00182168-7993529


In A City on a Lake, Matthew Vitz adds an important, compelling study to the burgeoning scholarship on Mexico’s environmental history. At once also an urban history, a work of historical geography, and a political history of popular mobilizations and state formation from the 1870s to the 1940s, the book traces the rise and consolidation of a technocratic bureaucracy that dealt with efforts by working and middle classes of the Basin of Mexico to secure better housing and sanitation as well as to gain access to key natural resources. With the onset of the Mexican Revolution, the competing demands of different interest groups, Vitz argues, generated emancipatory opportunities for reducing inequalities and pursuing environmental justice—openings that were later closed by the exclusionary, capitalist priorities of postrevolutionary administrations.
The book is based on meticulous, extensive research. Vitz’s many sources consist of administrative and legal records housed in nine different archives, including the Archivo General de la Nación and the Archivo Histórico del Agua, in addition to a wide range of published primary sources, among them scientific studies in specialist publications such as the *Revista Mexicana de Ingeniería y Arquitectura*. This material is analyzed from a variety of disciplinary and theoretical perspectives, primarily in urban political economy but also in geography and sociology. Vitz has also read widely in the secondary literature, particularly environmental and urban histories, for many different parts of the world. For the historiography on Mexico, though, Vitz identifies with the neopopulist school of state formation, and while he contributes vital new knowledge about environmental history, he does so, in part, to reveal the limitations of Cardenismo, which emerges as having been less progressive, coherent, and consistent in its political agenda, when it came to ecological justice, than has previously been thought.

The book is organized first by chronology and then by a sequence of case studies. The first chapter, on the Porfiriato, charts the rise of scientific experts who espoused an “urban environmental imaginary,” in which they came to understand the city’s relationship with its hinterland in terms of public health. To promote sanitation, experts called for the construction of sewerage systems, the extension of the water supply infrastructure, and the further drainage of what remained of Lake Texcoco. If these engineering projects failed to accomplish their goals, thwarted as they were by an uncooperative nature, they nevertheless established certain precedents, namely a reliance on experts to guide environmental programs in support of sanitation. Further precedents were established during the Mexican Revolution, including new legal and discursive mechanisms for citizens to insist that the government guarantee basic environmental rights, as discussed in the second chapter. From this foundation, the next four chapters move on to examine the history of competing popular claims and government priorities in several settings during the 1920s and 1930s: in the old, central neighborhoods of the capital, where residents sought better and more sanitary housing; in the hillside villages to the south and southwest of the basin, where cooperatives’ demands for rights of access to forests required that they contend with conservation practices; in the lake areas of Texcoco and Xochimilco, where desiccation and the rise of dryland farming (as opposed to *chinampa*, or aquatic garden, agriculture) brought new challenges for local residents, especially as the expanding capital siphoned off ever more water; and in the growing, informal conurbations of Mexico City, where new forms of community organizing, in order to demand essential services and infrastructure, developed in tandem with the rise of government agencies such as the Department of the Federal District, all of which contributed to processes of what Vitz terms “urban state formation” (pp. 190–91). After co-opting new constituencies into its corporatist structures, Vitz argues, the Mexican government increasingly advocated pro-business policies in the 1940s. The last chapter follows the turn away from the fading egalitarian and democratic visions of the revolution to ever more exclusionary and exploitative environmental policies and practices.

Within this narrative, Vitz makes room for many ironies, contradictions, and intricacies. He does well to eschew generalizations and avoid abstractions; at every turn he
is scrupulous in identifying the individuals, communities, and agencies involved in specific aspects of historical change. One of this book’s many strengths, then, lies in Vitz’s skill in articulating the complexities of this history even as he fashions such a cohesive and engagingly coherent narrative. As such, the book would make for an excellent text to assign to advanced undergraduates. It deserves to find a much wider readership than that, though. This impressive, sophisticated analysis will be of considerable interest to historians and geographers, in particular, and will appeal to scholars interested in the politics of rapid urbanization and environmental transformation during the twentieth century.

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doi 10.1215/00182168-7993540