

Book Reviews

Manifest Destinies and Indigenous Peoples. Edited by David Maybury-Lewis, Theodore Macdonald, and Biorn Maybury-Lewis. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, 2009. viii + 258 pp., notes and index. \$29.95 paper.)

Robert J. Miller, *Lewis & Clark Law School*

Much has been written about Manifest Destiny in the United States. The authors of *Manifest Destinies and Indigenous Peoples* primarily focus on other countries in the Americas and examine how Manifest Destiny and its organizing principles were used against the indigenous peoples in those countries. The book is a collection of essays by professors from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, and the United States that were presented as papers at a conference at Harvard University in 2006.

The authors primarily address the time period 1865–89 and examine how frontier expansion was justified in their countries under Manifest Destiny themes. One cannot help but note the irony that these countries were only recently decolonized when they immediately began colonizing their indigenous populations. Interestingly, though, the chapter on Brazil claims that while the coastal peoples of Brazil had been devastated by colonization, the newly independent country romanticized the indigenous inhabitants of the interior and even adopted them as a uniquely Brazilian symbol, which continues to today.

While Professor Anders Stephanson writes that Manifest Destiny is “a unique American trope,” the authors almost uniformly describe the frontier advances against indigenous peoples as being justified by rationalizations

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that mirror those used in the United States. For example, no one can miss the theoretical similarity between the Argentine theme of the “Conquest of the Desert” in 1879–84, that explains and justifies Argentina’s expansion and treatment of native peoples, and Manifest Destiny in the United States.

The authors also point out that majoritarian societies and their financial interests demanded that indigenous peoples give way to the advance of “civilization” and nationalism. The citizens and elites of these countries developed narratives and themes that served their demands for expansion and acquisition of the assets of what should be “their” lands.

In Chile, Jose Bengoa demonstrates that the Mapuche people were numerous and militarily strong enough to mostly withstand the Spanish and Chilean advances from 1598 to 1881. Ultimately, though, Chilean ideas of a “southern destiny”—to reach in one contiguous line to the Straits of Magellan—prevailed over ideas of Mapuche independence and nationhood. The alleged “savage” existence of the Mapuches justified Chilean conquest.

Other chapters compare and contrast the advance of the frontiers in the United States and Canada. The claim is made that Canada was more humane and accommodating to native peoples. The authors admit, though, that this might have been due to differing issues of population and space, and that once Canada confederated in 1867 and absorbed British Columbia in 1881 it began to see itself as a nation that needed to expand and control its borders. It seems clear that conditions for indigenous peoples from Canada are not materially different from those of American Indians in spite of these alleged differences in policies and timelines. Assimilation and displacement followed as surely in Canada as it had in the United States.

One unifying principle of Manifest Destiny and expansion in these countries that the authors do not mention is the doctrine of discovery. Discovery is the international law that was developed primarily in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by Spain, Portugal, England, and the Catholic Church to justify the acquisition of non-European lands and assets. The elements that constitute the doctrine are clearly evident in the history and laws of many countries. These elements are also present in the historical and legal descriptions of the countries described in this book. The claims made against indigenous peoples by Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, and the United States emanated from this doctrine. “Civilized” Christians were considered superior to “savage” peoples and acquired God-given rights over indigenous lands and assets. The book would have given readers a wider and fuller view of Manifest Destiny if the authors had expressly included this alternative and supporting narrative to explain the frontier expansion and destinies of these countries.

In conclusion, this book is an interesting and intriguing comparative analysis of important historical and legal issues about colonization and indigenous rights that will be of interest to scholars, students, and the general public.

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Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives. Edited by Susan Sleeper-Smith. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. ix + 362 pp., introductions, illustrations, index. \$35.00 paper.)

Charles D. Chamberlain III, *Louisiana State Museum*

Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives is a welcome new contribution to the growing field of studies examining the relations between museums and indigenous peoples. Recent works in this field have generally focused on either historic conflicts between museums and Native Americans or recent native efforts to reclaim their historical narrative. *Contesting Knowledge*, which emerged out of a conference on the subject in 2007, merges these themes as it examines the transformation of public museums from cultural colonizers to collaborators and the recent explosion of tribal museums as indigenous communities increasingly represent themselves.

The first section covers the broad evolution that occurred in the exhibition of indigenous peoples and cultures globally from the 1800s to the 1990s. Focusing on exhibitions in the 1800s, the first two essays explore how Portuguese and English colonizers portrayed their Brazilian and African subjects as savages or cannibals, thereby justifying the oppression of these peoples. The two subsequent essays examine the reinvention of the modern museum in the past twenty years, as institutions have employed new strategies in interpreting indigenous history and culture. In response to criticisms from Native Americans of past exclusion in the creation of exhibitions, the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in Washington DC used an extensive dialogic process with tribes in the design and creation of the entire museum. Similarly, the District Six Museum in Cape Town, South Africa, emerged in the 1990s as a model partnership between a public museum and members of the surrounding indigenous community in interpreting the latter's history with great sensitivity and relevance.

As public museums have embraced a more collaborative role for Native Americans in the creation of exhibitions, the book's second section explores the successes and challenges of this process. Focusing on the recent prac-

tices at the Diefenbaker Canada Centre in Saskatchewan and the NMAI, four essays examine critically the processes in which the museums worked closely with multiple parties, giving unprecedented voice and design decisions to indigenous peoples.

Even as public museums make strides in engaging Native Americans in the creation and design of exhibitions, tribes increasingly seek cultural sovereignty through the establishment of tribal museums. This latest development is the focus of the book's third section, where the contributing scholars appraise the creation of the Oneida Museum in Wisconsin and the Zuni Museum in New Mexico as ways of exploring tribal identity, the efforts of northwestern California tribes to create their own archives as a strategy for pursuing federal recognition, and the strategies in both national and tribal museums for interpreting historic violence between natives and nonnatives. As the authors concur independently, most tribal museums now serve vital roles as community centers for education and preservation.

Contesting Knowledge will likely remain relevant for many years as the issues the authors present are ongoing and applicable to any tribal-centered exhibition or public museum collaboration. Modern tribal museums have enabled unprecedented control over the public face of the tribal community's history and culture while also serving a broader community function. State and national museums are also engaging themselves more with their surrounding communities and will naturally continue staging exhibits on indigenous history, thereby creating an enduring need for collaborative models. As such, the numerous articles within this volume offer a variety of examples of museums and indigenous communities working together successfully (and sometimes imperfectly) to create public exhibitions. These lessons can inform museum professionals' efforts to refine and improve any future exhibit collaborations with culturally distinct communities.

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The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast. By Lisa Brooks. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008. xlvi + 346 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, illustrations, notes, maps, index. \$22.50 paper.)

C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa, *Illinois College*

The Common Pot, by Lisa Brooks, makes a significant contribution to the evolving literature on Native North American writing before and after colonization. Offering new and provocative readings of eighteenth- and

nineteenth-century Algonquian and Iroquoian texts, Brooks avoids circumscribed portrayals of native writers as individuals stuck between two worlds, struggling to adapt to and simultaneously resist the structures of colonialism. She argues instead that native leaders such as Samson Occom, Henderick Aupaumut, Joseph Brant, and William Apess incorporated technologies of European writing into an older indigenous “spatialized writing tradition.” Far from a foreign concept to Indian leaders, this writing tradition, symbolized by birchbark scrolls and wampum belts (*awikhiganak* in the Abenaki language), mapped “relationships between people, between places, between humans and nonhumans, and between waterways that joined them” (12). Native leaders used writing as a tool, then, for social/community reconstruction and land reclamation from the colonial period onward.

The metaphor of the “common pot” served as a prominent trope in the writings and speeches that emerged from northeastern native space. This concept symbolized a cooperative, interdependent environment that “feeds and nourishes” (3–4). Inherent in the “common pot” was the notion of interconnectedness between large networks of human and nonhuman beings and, along with that, a shared responsibility to maintain social stability as well as community and physical health. Brooks suggests that all “inhabitants of the pot were fed from the pot and were part of the pot. Every part affected the whole” (5). Problems arose when European interlopers entered native space without an understanding of this concept. Brooks states that all genres of native writing from this period and location—protests, petitions, memorials, communal histories, political tracts, and speeches—sought to convey the common-pot concept and “re-member” a system that had been torn asunder. Many native writers saw divisiveness in the face of dispossession and the destructiveness of colonization as a profoundly dangerous problem, and consequently calls for Indian unity became one of the “resounding themes of the common pot” (61).

In the strongest chapter, titled “Two Paths to Peace,” Brooks traces the themes of unity and division, colonial dismemberment, and native reconstruction through long-standing traditions of peacemaking in native space. Following the American Revolution, two northeastern leaders who had allied with the opposing sides, Joseph Brant (Mohawk) and Hendrick Aupaumut (Mohican), drew upon established elements of the common pot as they presented visions for community protection and land reclamation in their writings and speeches. Although they clashed with one another throughout the 1790s, their work, Brooks asserts, attested to the continuing operation of indigenous systems of knowledge. She concludes that although “Brant and Aupaumut’s visions failed to produce a lasting peace . . . both made deep contributions to the common pot” (160).

As noted in the introduction, this book has the potential to influence a wide body of scholarship, from indigenous studies and native literary criticism to native history in New England and postcolonial studies. Brooks's interdisciplinary approach allows her to draw clear connections between difficult concepts in native epistemology, literacy, and spatiality. *The Common Pot* contains fifteen excellent maps (full-scale, color versions are available on the author's Web site) that are designed to convey conceptions of native space and provide significant guidance for the reader. Finally, Brooks's emphasis on the importance of place-based history exemplifies an Indigenous approach to historical knowledge that is worthy of high praise.

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Gideon's People: Being a Chronicle of an American Indian Community in Colonial Connecticut and the Moravian Missionaries Who Served There. Edited and translated by Corinna Dally-Starna and William A. Starna. (2 vols., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. Vol. 1, vi + 692 pp., acknowledgments, editorial and translation comments, introduction, illustrations, notes. Vol. 2, 656 pp., appendixes, notes, glossary, glossary of Latin terms and abbreviations, bibliography, indexes. \$170.00 cloth.)

Rowena McClinton, *Southern Illinois University Edwardsville*

From the early 1740s to late in the 1760s, the Moravian church of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, sent numerous missionaries to an American Indian community in the Housatonic Valley of northwestern Connecticut. The missionaries wrote of their experiences in diaries and other compatible records in an archaic writing convention known as German script. Because few scholars can decipher the script, the Starnas' contribution to eighteenth-century American Indian history in southern New England is enormous. What surfaces for the general and scholarly public for the first time is a daily record of the activities at Pachgatgoch, later Schaghticoke. The missionaries disclose a bustling community engaged in house building, hunting, fishing, farming, and the production of material goods in addition to conversions, marriages, births, and deaths. However, the decimating effects of famine, war, disease, and alcohol ate into the very heart of the community and generally left Indians seeking survival tools. In spite of these considerable obstacles, the Starnas contend that the Indians of Pachgatgoch were determined to maintain their identity and hold on to their diminishing ancestral lands. During this precarious time, working in their favor were Moravian missionaries who provided food, shelter, and spiritual suste-

nance. Germane to and pervasive throughout these Moravian writings are their zeal to convert “heathens” to Christianity and their tenaciousness to preach blood-and-wounds theology that became the centerpiece of their antirational brand of evangelical Christianity. Not surprisingly, the writings, by multiple missionaries, lack significant ethnography such as Indian cultural systems, dress, rituals, and origin stories.

Moravian success in converting Indians to Christianity and providing a sanctuary for the displaced attracted numerous Indians to the Pachgatgoch mission. Yet how all the Indians really felt about Christianity and the missionaries remains somewhat ambiguous. However, some of their multiple conversions disclose mutual trust and understanding. Maweseman, whose conversion gave him the Christian name Gideon, and his converted son, called Joshua, became central figures at Pachgatgoch. Their wives, Martha and Elizabeth, respectively, and Samuel, the husband of Gideon’s deceased daughter Maria, also played major roles. They formed the corporate nucleus that the Moravians needed to justify their spiritual successes among the Indians. As a pioneering outpost, Moravians depended on Gideon, whose fluency in English allowed him to serve as interpreter and assist in negotiating for food and other supplies from surrounding Indian villages.

Perhaps the most poignant cultural exchanges involve Indians demonstrating their affection for the Moravians when Moravian loss occurs. For example, as an orator, Gideon made a speech in a service describing his own anguish when missionary Joahim Heinrich Sensemann’s wife, Anna Catherine Ludwig, was killed in the 1755 attack at another Moravian mission, in Gnadenhütten, Pennsylvania, by French-allied Indians.

At other times, the Starnas’ work reveals Pachgatgoch Indians encountering lethal effects of alcohol. When leaving Pachgatgoch to hunt, fish, or trade, their sobriety was challenged, and surrounding colonists took advantage of their states of mind. Upon their return, however, missionaries and their comrades took them back into the fold. The message sent to these western Connecticut natives was that the Moravian Brethren listened to them and took to heart an honest concern for their safety. The Starnas argue that the Moravian appeal for temperance was a religious implication that aided native survival. Once Indians stepped over the mission’s threshold, Moravian tolerance and compassion reinforced Indian solidarity and welfare.

Carefully translated and edited, this two-volume edition of Moravian work at Pachgatgoch is exhaustive. In translating, Corinna Dally-Starna made the decision not to translate diminutives (she replaces them with a superscripted “d”), interrupting the narrative. The very pulse of blood-and-wounds theology was the use of the diminutive that placed all living creatures in a context of how small they really were in comparison to the ulti-

mate sacrifice God had made. Today translating those endings may appear illogical, but these are eighteenth-century German-Moravian concepts that are found throughout Moravian-generated documents. The two volumes also omit translations of other translatable terms contextualizing German-Moravian language. Because the British American landscape and all its iterations were foreign to the Moravians, they used the term *Welschkorn* to signify Indian corn. Ignoring this term as untranslatable implies to the reader that corn may seem a foreign food to the Indians.

These are minor considerations in light of the contributions the Starnas have made to the study of northwestern Connecticut natives. These two volumes serve as a worthwhile addition to our understanding of Gideon's people, whose lives are immortalized by missionaries who were there to record the mundane, the twisted, and the profound.

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Nicholas Black Elk: Medicine Man, Missionary, Mystic. By Michael F. Steltenkamp. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009. xxi + 270 pp., illustrations, preface, acknowledgments, chronology of events, notes, note on sources, reference list, index. \$24.95 cloth.)

Robert W. Galler Jr., *St. Cloud State University*

Nicholas Black Elk may be one of the most famous American Indians, but how much do readers really know about the man? John Neihardt's classic portrayal of his life in *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux* (1932) and Joseph Epes Brown's *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala* (1953) have given readers the impression of knowing about the famed Oglala leader and a sense of his people's traditions. Based on personal interviews with Black Elk, the books have inspired Indian and non-Indian groups, sold hundreds of thousands of copies, and led to an expanding body of scholarship. The only problem with the broad dissemination of these important books on Black Elk, according to anthropologist Michael Steltenkamp, is that the works mainly ignore the second half of Black Elk's life—a rather large omission. By examining both his early life and his more than forty years as a Catholic catechist on the Pine Ridge reservation, this new work provides readers with a far more complex man, who learned from an early age to “look for the Sacred wherever, and however, it might appear” (228). On a larger point, this book reminds us all that additional material in combination with prior knowledge on a topic

makes a story more compelling and raises new questions about what we think we know about historic figures.

Black Elk's Catholicism is not a new revelation. Steltenkamp, a Jesuit priest and professor of religious studies, examined Black Elk's Christianity in detail in his 1993 *Black Elk: Holy Man of the Oglala*, as had anthropologists like Raymond De Maille in *The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt* (1984). Based on an expanded set of published sources, his own archival research, and extensive meetings and interviews with Black Elk's people—particularly his daughter Lucy Looks Twice—Steltenkamp's current work provides the first “full portrait of Black Elk's life” in a single volume (xix). In the process, readers glean new perspectives on developments in American Indian history and are prompted to consider the significance of an icon of Native traditionalism having served half his life as a Catholic catechist.

Organized into eighteen thematically and chronologically arranged chapters, the work examines Black Elk's life from the context of his birth (likely around 1866) to his 1950 death and the contested legacy of his life. Readers learn about Black Elk's early experiences and visions, his training to become a “medicine man,” participation at Little Big Horn, travel to Europe as a member of the Wild West Shows (where he met England's Queen Victoria), and his participant perspectives at Wounded Knee. By Chapter 8, Steltenkamp presents Black Elk's 1904 “conversion” to Catholicism, and the remainder of the book addresses his life as a catechist, meetings with Neihardt and Brown, and connections between Lakota and Catholic traditions. What comes across throughout the book is less of the persistence of Lakota traditions in Black Elk's life and more of the evolving Christian influences on the Oglala catechist—including Christian themes within the Ghost Dance, exposure to Christianity in Europe, the influence of Catholic Oglala neighbors, and his confrontation with Father Joseph Lindebner, S.J., leading to “conversion.” As opposed to Neihardt, who presents a more tragic fate that befell Black Elk and Lakotas after Wounded Knee, Steltenkamp suggests that the tragedy led Black Elk to look forward and seek “resurrection from the ravine at Wounded Knee” (82).

Steltenkamp's writing style is more analytical than narrative, and consequently more appropriate for advanced students than a general audience. But all who venture into the book will gain from his efforts to humanize Black Elk. A visionary and sophisticated religious thinker, Black Elk is portrayed as a man with a sense of humor and an eye for new experiences. Ultimately, Steltenkamp shows that there were many ways to know Black Elk: as a devoted father, a loyal friend to Oglala Leader John Lone Goose, a committed companion to priests (despite a motorcycle accident with Father

Henry Grotegeers), a gifted catechist, and, for about fifty years, a man who most people on the Pine Ridge reservation knew simply as “Nick.”

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Constructing Lives at Mission San Francisco: Native Californians and Hispanic Colonists, 1776–1821. By Quincy D. Newell. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009. 277 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.)

Mariah Wade, *University of Texas at Austin*

Seldom does a book on the Spanish colonial missions link religious and secular practices to specific Native Americans who were connected to or resided at the missions. Granted, Newell's work benefits from the San Francisco mission registers, which, in their completeness and detail, afford the tracing of specific individuals to geographic areas and villages and often permit the piecing together of genealogies. Newell used these characteristics of the San Francisco registers together with early ethnographic work and some information from archaeology to portray the possible experiences of Native Americans (Indians, as Newell prefers to call them) as they engaged, and were engaged, in the process of becoming civilized and Christianized subjects of the Spanish crown. From going to church and building faith (also titles of specific chapters) to the possibilities and constraints mission requirements afforded or placed upon social behavior and social networks, Newell effectively explores register entries to sketch how Native Americans coped with the changes Franciscan missionary work brought to the lives of mission residents and to the indigenous surrounding communities. Many of Newell's observations have been made in several works published during the last decade or so, but Newell personalizes those observations with mission register data, opening spaces to understand nuanced individual and gendered decisions that are often generational and time sensitive. Her work also pinpoints and explains religious concepts and social mechanisms, particularly godparenting and *compadrazgo* (chap. 5), often puzzling to most readers and insufficiently clarified in their social and familial implications. Newell's discussion of native “buildingways,” but especially foodways, introduces elements of Native American agency as yet poorly explored and understood.

Chapter 6, “The Varieties of Religious Experiences at Mission San Francisco,” provides some of the most interesting discussions of how sacramental life played into and against Native American traditional life prac-

tices. Personal events of birth/baptism, death/burial, and managed or scheduled absenteeism (*paseo*) demonstrate well the difficulty of making generalized statements about Native American experiences under the mission system. Obviously, it is problematic to extrapolate Native American behavioral patterns from north California in the late mission period to other missionized areas such as Baja California, Florida, New Mexico, or Texas. Still, this work alerts researchers to interpretative possibilities and the potential of mission registers. This chapter is potentially also the most controversial in its discussion of the *monjerío* mechanism of control and of the *monjas* (157). The author's submission that monjas were somehow more devout than other female residents is certainly debatable given other evidence from the Alta California missions, including the strenuous defense Franciscans had to mount to justify that practice and their concerted efforts to ameliorate the living conditions of women in the monjeríos. More to the point, Newell presents sequester in the monjerío dwellings as an option to females of the appropriate age and social condition and as a way to earn them "monja status" (157), as if such residency produced enhanced status and represented "their commitment—or acquiescence—to the belief system that the missionaries taught" (157). Conversely, the evidence for three Native Americans who were buried with the Franciscan holy habit might well indicate that they were Third Order Secular Franciscans or had been given an equivalent honor due to their Christian deeds and behavior.

Although Newell's work focuses on Mission San Francisco and the late mission period, it makes a real contribution to Spanish Colonial Mission Studies and presents evidence to question the data from other missions and to assess the changes undergone in Native American and missionary practices through time.

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Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone: The Colonial Indian Slave Trade and Regional Instability in the American South. Edited by Robbie Ethridge and Sheri M. Shuck-Hall. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. 536 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$35.00 paper.)

Steven C. Hahn, *St. Olaf College*

How did the complex Mississippian societies of the American South become the decentralized Indian societies of the eighteenth century? This volume's fifteen contributors answer that question anew by employ-

ing the concept of a “shatter zone” to identify the causes of instability and map its effects in time and place. Those achievements alone make *Shatter Zone* noteworthy. What makes it potentially field changing is its embrace of multicausal models featuring violence that explain the Mississippian decline. While scholars have been rethinking the monocausal role of disease in the Southeast for some time, the evidence accumulated here sanctions the multicausal approach and may represent nothing less than a paradigm shift in Southeastern Indian history.

Ethridge introduces the subject by first identifying the shatter zone as a place rooted in the core areas of the South where Mississippian societies flourished and where three colonial empires—Spain, France, and Britain—established spheres of influence. Ethridge and many of her contributors emphasize violence as a central feature of the region’s colonial history, which is situated in a broader context that includes Iroquoia, the Ohio River valley, and, most important, the modern world system of capitalism emanating from European and colonial capitals. By doing so, Ethridge implies that the shatter zone should also be understood as a process whereby commercial slave raiding and disease interacted with the inherent fluidity of Mississippian societies to produce the decentralized Indian societies of the historic Southeast.

A defining feature of the shatter zone was the Indian slave trade, facilitated by mobile and armed native peoples intrusive to the region. William Fox’s opening essay identifies the Iroquois wars of the mid-seventeenth century as a catalyst for one such group, the Westos, featured in two chapters by Maureen Meyers and Eric Bowne. Meyers demonstrates that the Westos—Erie displaced by Iroquois attacks—fled south to Virginia, where frontier planters armed and employed them as slave catchers. Bowne follows the Westos south in the mid- to late seventeenth century and traces the effects of slave raiding from the Georgia coast to the Appalachian Mountains. Self-defense needs made some native groups receptive to English colonization and prompted those who were displaced to forge new societies from the remnants of the Mississippian chiefdoms.

As is implied by Bowne, the story of the shatter zone is also one of rebuilding. Perhaps the book’s principal strength is its presentation of archaeological evidence, which allows for the mapping of population movements that resulted in the coalescence of new, less stratified native societies like the Catawbas. Robin Beck, for example, identifies Westo attacks as a probable cause of the dissolution of chiefdoms in the upper Catawba River valley, whose peoples gravitated downstream where they merged with the lower Catawba valley’s indigenous population, which, as Mary E. Fitts and Charles Heath argue, formed the core of the Catawba nation. Ned Jenkins

reconstructs in novel detail a similar process of coalescence among the Creeks, while Sheri Shuck-Hall traces the recombination of peoples who formed the Alabama-Coushatta. Once the victims of slave raids, these and other coalesced groups took turns as slave raiders themselves around the turn of the eighteenth century, thereby perpetuating the cycle of violence that the Westos initiated a few decades earlier.

Turning momentarily away from particular Indian groups, *Shatter Zone* features two thematic chapters broaching the subjects of violence and disease. Matthew Jennings explores the Mississippian roots of the region's culture of violence and argues for its regenerative effect upon the Yamasees and Creeks. Paul Kelton's chapter on disease is perhaps the lynchpin for the book's thesis. Readers familiar with Kelton's work will recognize his main points, which are worth recounting: that animal and human disease vectors necessary for the spread of epidemic disease weren't present in the Southeast until the end of seventeenth century. Consequently, the region's first pandemic—the Great Southeastern Smallpox Epidemic of 1696–1700—occurred more recently than previously imagined and was directly related to the human networking fostered by the slave trade. Epidemics therefore cannot be understood apart from violence, and in this way Kelton achieves a synthesis on which many of the book's other chapters explicitly or implicitly rely.

The book's latter chapters investigate the epicenter and peripheries of the shatter zone. Looking south, John Worth assesses the impact of the slave raids in Florida, reminding us that the mission Indians received the brunt of the attacks, which penetrated to the southern reaches of the peninsula. Looking west, Marvin Jeter finds a different situation in the lower Mississippi Valley, where the effects of the shatter zone were felt little and late. Patricia Galloway and George Milne implicitly confirm Jeter's assessment in their respective investigations of the Choctaws and Natchez, the latter of whom still adhered to Mississippian political and cultural practices into the eighteenth century.

In an afterword, Ethridge emphasizes that *Shatter Zone* represents the first rather than the last word on the subject, and this is precisely how it should be evaluated. As Ethridge recognizes, many important Indian groups fall outside its purview, and knowledge of the Mississippian world's "inner workings" is incomplete. These unavoidable shortcomings aside, readers of varying expertise levels will all find this book immensely useful. Specialists will plumb the copious archaeological details for years to come, while those newly initiated to the field will appreciate the efficiently rendered syntheses of book-length works. Like any ambitious book, *Shatter Zone* credibly generates as many questions as it answers. Was the Southeast's geopolitical

landscape actually securely in place by 1730? Did the shatter zone encompass all of eastern North America, and if so, does that weaken or strengthen the concept's applicability? Does the emphasis on instability produced by violence swing the pendulum too far in one direction and blind us to continuity and cooperation? While the answers to these and other questions lie in the future, suffice it for now to say that the book has achieved something remarkable by ably presenting multicausal models for the Mississippian decline that will render the simplistic disease model a thing of the past.

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Spirits of the Air: Birds and American Indians in the South. By Shepard Krech III. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009. xvi + 245 pp., foreword, preface, illustrations, afterword, notes, bibliography, index. \$44.95 cloth.)

David G. Anderson, *University of Tennessee*

This book is a masterpiece both of scholarship and of the bookbinders' art. If you want to understand what birds meant to southeastern Indians, this is the book to read. Self-described as an "ethno-ornithology of the South" (173), this is also an excellent book for teaching contemporary peoples about the birds that were once present in the region and why all of us should appreciate those that remain. This is a book that will be of interest to bird watchers and educated laypeople as well anthropologists, historians, native peoples, and ornithologists. While the focus of the book is primarily on the colonial and early American national era, it is a volume anyone interested in southeastern Indians past or present will want on their shelf. Successive chapters, titled "Birds and American Indians," "The Birds," "Subsistence," "Material Culture," "Imagery," "Descent and Power," "War and Peace," "Spirituality," "Bird Spirits and Spirit-Birds," "Sacred and Secular Narratives," "Human Impact on Birds," and "Visible and Invisible Birds," document the birds of the region and how they were used and thought of by native peoples as well as by early colonists. Each chapter is a scholarly gem in and of itself; in combination they form a remarkable synthesis.

The ethnohistorical documentation is thorough and well referenced, making this an excellent book for anyone wanting to learn about southeastern Indian life in general as well as native people's relationships with birds. Subjects such as kinship and descent, how clan names were employed, how birds were perceived—indeed, what birds meant to southeastern Indians—

are explored in great detail. The author's scholarship encompasses natural as well as ethnohistory. He devotes appreciable attention throughout the book to determining which specific birds were being referred to in the historic accounts. Based largely on the ethnohistorical record (the author's specialty), the book also does an excellent job of examining the archaeological literature for evidence of the use of birds by native peoples in more remote antiquity. Of relevance to trends in the modern world, extinctions of southeastern species are discussed with particular reference to the Carolina parakeet, the passenger pigeon, and the ivory billed woodpecker, the latter of which may or may not still be with us. The roles of birds in contemporary native cultures are discussed, and specifically the use of plumage in powwows. The book also examines the use of feathers as decoration by colonists and subsequent encroaching populations as well as by native peoples. This book reminds us that feathers have been an important aspect of stylish attire in many cultures, including our own, in the distant and not so distant past.

The book is scholarly and intelligently written, while at the same time accessible and not at all pedantic, a rare combination that makes it a genuine pleasure to read. The text uses extensive footnotes instead of embedded references to document sources and follow up on specific points in more detail than the average reader might care to consider. The text does not employ references to specific figures, but the author has taken great care to ensure that the illustrations that adorn the pages of the volume are closely tied to the nearby text. Thanks to superb editing, readers will find references to specific bird types or species included in the comprehensive index, with page numbers of paintings depicting them given in italics.

Printed on high-quality paper stock and attractively bound and jacketed, this reasonably priced volume is exquisitely illustrated, with almost two hundred figures. Nearly every page contains a glorious color image of the birds of the region or a depiction of their use by native peoples, by early artists such as Audubon, Bartram, Catesby, Lawson, White, and many others. The pages of this book are like the plumage of the birds discussed within it. Everywhere there is a splendor of color, of the classic paintings that illustrate the subject matter of the volume, the birds of the South. The few black and white images are historical photographs that appropriately reinforce the scholarly discussion but that also serve to make the reader appreciate how much a treasure this volume is, for bibliophiles as well as scholars. The author makes the hopeful point that this book will encourage more specific work on the relationship between birds and native peoples. It should certainly inspire readers to such efforts as well as to a greater

appreciation for the “spirits of the air” that inhabit the southeastern United States. This book emphatically demonstrates, as the author notes (199): “For an environmental history of the south, birds matter.”

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Choctaw Crime and Punishment, 1884–1907. By Devon Abbot Mihesuah. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009. xii + 339 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, illustrations, afterword, appendix, bibliography, index. \$32.95 cloth.)

Robert D. Miller, *University of California at Riverside*

In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, the level of violence within Indian Territory proved deleterious to native communities. Existing scholarship reveals how land-hungry settlers often exaggerated reports of lawlessness within Indian Territory to justify the federal government’s intervention, necessitating a response from the leaders of the Five Tribes. Yet previous research has largely neglected the linkages between violence within Indian Territory and political disputes between Native Americans possessing radically different worldviews. Devon Abbot Mihesuah attempts to fill this void through her investigation of two political murders that occurred within the Choctaw Nation during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. Her work demonstrates how intratribal factionalism occasionally sparked violent confrontations between the pro-allotment Progressive Party and the more conservative and antiassimilationist National Party. These disputes fractured Choctaw society and convinced some tribal members that violence was the only tool left at their disposal to defend their interests and the sovereignty of their nation.

Mihesuah first examines the political intrigue connected with the murder of her great-great-grandfather, Charles Wilson. In 1884, Wilson, a U.S. deputy marshal and former lighthorseman, ran as the National Party candidate to serve in the Choctaw House of Representatives for Sugar Loaf County. Following the election, witnesses saw Robert Benton, the Progressive Party candidate, kill Wilson. Despite the testimony provided, a jury of twelve known supporters of the Progressive Party found Benton and his associates not guilty. Mihesuah effectively argues that Benton’s ties to Progressive Party leaders exonerated him of culpability for Wilson’s murder and enabled him to continue a successful political career following the trial.

Mihesuah also highlights the case of Silan Lewis, a member of the

National Party convicted for the murder of several Progressives in 1892. In the aftermath of a closely contested election tainted with allegations of fraud, Lewis and other conservative Choctaws retaliated by killing several Progressives. Though the perceived electoral fraud precipitated the outbreak of violence, members of the National Party had long resented the Progressives for bringing about changes in the Choctaw Nation that threatened the lifestyle that culturally conservative Choctaws preferred. In addition, the disproportionate economic power held by leading Progressives fostered resentment. Mihesuah devotes an entire chapter to the subsequent trials of Nationalists as these proceedings revealed the desire of Progressive leaders to seek revenge. In violation of Choctaw law, a judge targeted by the Nationalists presided over the case while a largely Progressive jury convicted Lewis and his compatriots of murder. Ultimately, the Progressive chief, Wilson Jones, relented to outside pressure and only insisted upon the execution of Lewis in order to avert the intervention of the U.S. government and the violation of tribal sovereignty.

In light of the destruction or disappearance of many of the pertinent court records, Mihesuah provides a compelling interpretation of these two political murder cases. Mihesuah supplements the remaining court documents with newspapers published in the Choctaw Nation at the end of the nineteenth century, as these publications frequently carried letters from Choctaw citizens, thereby providing additional native voices. Her creative use of underutilized sources merits replication, though Mihesuah could enhance her analysis of Choctaw publications by referencing Daniel Littlefield's work on Native American newspapers to provide a historical context for understanding the editors of these papers. In addition, Mihesuah's discoveries regarding the capacity of Progressive leaders to influence the outcomes of trials require further consideration to determine whether this represented a systematic attempt to silence Nationalist dissent through the employment of government-sanctioned violence. Nevertheless, Mihesuah's book effectively complicates the history of the Choctaw Nation by exposing the intersection of politics and intratribal violence and the need for further investigation.

A Very Mutinous People: The Struggle for North Carolina, 1600–1713. By Noeleen McIlvenna. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. x + 212 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, notes, bibliography, index. \$32.50 cloth.)

Stephen D. Feeley, *McDaniel College*

Compared to its imperious South Carolina and Virginia neighbors, North Carolina has often been described as a “vale of humility between two mountains of conceit.” Usually intended as a socioeconomic commentary, this also accurately describes the colony’s second-class status in the historiography of the Southeast. McIlvenna’s compelling story of religious and ideological struggle works toward filling this gap.

According to McIlvenna, North Carolina’s shaping as a vale of humility, characterized by hardscrabble yeomen farmers, a relatively underdeveloped planter class, and a sluggish adoption of African chattel slavery, was no mere quirk. Being blockaded by the Great Dismal Swamp and the treacherous outer banks slowed trade, communication, and the development of a prosperous rice or tobacco economy. Existing at the margins of Virginia and the English Atlantic world, North Carolina developed as a “sanctuary” (28) for runaway servants and slaves, debtors, and renegades fleeing the aftermath of Bacon’s Rebellion. McIlvenna argues that after the collapse of Oliver Cromwell’s revolutionary government and the restoration of monarchy in England, this neglected area was one of the few places where Levellers and Quakers could survive and flourish. These were not the mild Quaker burghers of William Penn’s Philadelphia or the martyrdom-seeking zealots who stormed Puritan meeting halls; instead, in their small scattered farms, North Carolina settlers enacted a largely secular society that nonetheless allowed religious freedom and nonconformity, valued widespread political participation, and opposed tithes, tariffs, and taxes as tools of hierarchical domination. Although largely silent on the issue of slavery, McIlvenna asserts that they rejected it on similar grounds.

Aligned against this radical proletariat was a “ruthless and aggressive” (163) cadre of would-be aristocratic Anglican planter elites who worked to create a less egalitarian, more hierarchical society on par with Virginia and South Carolina. McIlvenna works to show how Culpepper’s and Cary’s Rebellions (along with a bewildering array of lesser coups, contested elections, battles over oaths and vestry acts, and land grabs) can be interpreted through this fundamental social and religious struggle.

Admirably, McIlvenna works to incorporate Native Americans in this narrative. Indeed, the Tuscarora War (1711–13), in which a native coalition rose against colonial abuses, serves as her story’s final act, in which elites

seized power decisively by means of military assistance from South Carolina. In her efforts to paint North Carolina's humble settlers as living in peaceful common cause with the natives, however, she risks overstating her case. Disputes over fire-hunting, roaming livestock, and squatting cut across class lines, and the peace that largely prevailed before about 1700 probably owed as much to colonists' sparse population as to egalitarian principles. Indians hoping to rectify abuses often sought a government with the power and authority to enforce treaty provisions—even if it meant reaching past North Carolina to highly autocratic Virginia. If McIlvenna wants to imply that the Tuscarora War served as “one final fight for freedom” (presumably for both Tuscaroras and Leveller-Quaker yeomen), she would do well to explore the extent to which these groups' particular notions of freedom were ultimately compatible (148).

There are other moments when McIlvenna seems to strain to fit particular events into her narrative schema. This tendency, combined with rhetoric that unabashedly sides with the “hardy, rough-hewn farmers . . . [who] gallantly fought for their right to democratic, representative self-government” (160) may rankle readers preferring a more neutral tone and may raise questions of interpretation. Caveats aside, McIlvenna has produced a serious piece of historical research whose main accomplishment is to lift North Carolina from its doldrums as a historical backwater and highlight its rightful place as one of the most fascinating corners of the Atlantic world.

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Expecting Pears from an Elm Tree: Franciscan Missions on the Chiriguano Frontier in the Heart of South America, 1830–1949. By Erick D. Langer. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. xiii + 375 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, map, illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper.)

Landscapes of Devils: Tensions of Place and Memory in the Argentinean Chaco. By Gastón R. Gordillo. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004. xviii + 304 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, maps, illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper.)

Matthew A. Redinger, *Montana State University Billings*

Erick D. Langer's *Expecting Pears from an Elm Tree* and Gastón R. Gordillo's *Landscapes of Devils* are very different books, in their orientations, their goals, and their approaches, yet they share several points of inter-

section. Individually, they are impressive pieces of scholarship, but taken together, they present a new and intriguing examination of the Gran Chaco of South America.

Langer sets out to connect the history of republican-era missions to the well developed historiography of colonial-era missions in his effort to “reconceptualize the mission and its history within the context of the Latin American frontier” (5). Langer argues that rather than the missionaries being primary actors in drawing the Chiriguano to the missions, the native peoples themselves chose—for their own reasons—to take refuge in the missions. Indeed, Langer demonstrates that the Indians themselves demonstrated little interest in conversion but rather saw the missions as refuges from intraindigenous conflict and land pressures of cattle-raising Criollos. Moreover, the Chiriguano found greater freedom of movement on the missions than they experienced in the hacienda system.

This autonomy on the part of Indians in their decisions to move to the missions was manifested by the end of the nineteenth century in a precipitous decline of mission populations. Chief among the reasons for the population decline was emigration of Chiriguano from the missions. They chose to flee the missions for a variety of reasons—chief among which were to escape disease and famine in the missions of the Bolivian Chaco and to pursue greater economic opportunities in the sugar camps in northern Argentina. Particularly in times of drought or famine, the food provided on the sugar haciendas in Argentina proved very attractive. Indeed, the Chiriguano’s name for Argentina was *Mbaporenda*: “the place where there is work” (121).

Langer points to the experiences of Mandeponay, the most powerful chief of the Chiriguano on the missions, to reinforce his contention that the Franciscans who ran the missions at the end of the nineteenth century enjoyed little power over their charges. Mandeponay enjoyed tremendous influence on the missions; indeed, his decision to maintain six wives and to avoid conversion until he found himself on his deathbed demonstrates the lack of coercive force with which the Franciscans ministered to the Indians on the missions.

The relative balance of power between the Franciscans and the Chiriguano waxed and waned through the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth. The missions enjoyed greater influence as they provided an attractive refuge to Indians on the frontier facing increased pressure from whites. It was during these periods that the missions proved most successful in acculturating the Chiriguano and working to integrate them into the Bolivian national identity. However, when the sugar industry in Argentina was mechanized in the late nineteenth century,

the labor demand for Indians vastly increased, and Argentinean hacienda owners made ever more attractive offers to woo the Indians away from the missions. Eventually, the rise of liberal governments with their anticlerical agendas, increased white demand for mission lands, extreme drought and locust plagues, and finally the Chaco War (1932–35) conspired to erode the power of the Franciscans, until the Bolivian government ultimately secularized the missions in the 1940s.

In the end, Langer notes that the story of the Franciscan missions from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries provides an important lens through which we can understand efforts to integrate the Chiriguano into the Bolivian nation-state. Indeed, as Langer notes, the essential difference between the colonial mission experience and that of the republican era was that “the colonial system created subjects, whereas the republican states created citizens” (278).

Langer taps into an impressive array of archival sources to tell the story of the republican mission system in the Bolivian Chaco. Many of these themes find resonance in Gordillo’s *Landscapes of Devils*. Whereas Langer’s book is solid traditional history in his examination of the Chiriguano in the Gran Chaco, Gordillo employs a loose historical structure as a foundation for ethnography of the Western Toba Indians of the Argentinean Chaco. Gordillo’s work blends history and geography to examine the creation of the “bush” as a created geography “made tangible through the spatialization of memory” (3). He thus merges “the experiential dimensions of place making with the political economy that makes it possible by examining the materiality of memory, its embodiment in practice, and its constitution as a social force in the production of places” (4).

For Gordillo’s Toba, the bush became a geographical reality created by contact with white cattle ranchers. It was within the context of this created space that the Toba came to measure their world as divided between *marisca*, or the traditional pastimes of hunting, fishing, and gathering, and *trabajo*, or the realm of work in the modern world—agriculture, herding, craftsmanship, and labor on sugar operations. For Gordillo, a key catalyst of this dichotomy was the arrival of steam power to the sugar plantations of Argentina, which transformed the haciendas into *ingenios*—sites where intensive capital investment brought cane fields, refineries, and workers into coherent units. This transition from *marisca* to *trabajo* required significant transformations of the Toba as they were exposed to new geographies, new commodities, and even new conceptions of time itself.

This was not a transformation the Tobas readily accepted. Indeed, ingenio managers frequently had to go into the Chaco to pull workers out of the bush to work. It is within the context of this pressure to provide labor on

the sugar ingenios that we see the clearest juxtaposition between Gordillo's book and the work of Langer. These ingenio managers attracting workers to the Argentinean sugar operations was one of the most frustrating challenges for Franciscans trying to keep the Chiriguano on the missions. Like the Chiriguano, the Tobas also sought missions as solutions to increasing pressures in the Chaco. When asked why the Toba invited the missionaries into the Chaco at the beginning of the twentieth century, one modern-day Toba replied "because the ancient ones suffered too much . . . [while the mission Indians were] living in peace" and the missions promised "protection and education" (75–76). An interesting aside is that while the Roman Catholic Franciscans proved most successful at establishing missions in the Bolivian Chaco, the Toba preferred Anglican missionaries.

Gordillo notes that the missions' educational goals were compromised by children's participation in traditional pursuits of foraging, taking them away from schools due to labor migrations. The mission population started out high as missions provided respite from white pressures, but, as Langer points out in the Bolivian Chaco, the mission populations among the Toba fluctuated due to the mobility of the Indians. Indeed, the bush provided a "haven from the sanctuary" of the missions (96).

Ultimately, for Gordillo, the key issue was the way memories of modern Tobas worked to create the bush within their worldview. Toba conceptualizations of the bush—their specialization that arose out of their collective and individual memories of the life lived there—is intimately linked with dueling perceptions of *trabajo* and *marisca*: work and foraging, the modern and the traditional. The Tobas created their conceptualization of the bush through their existence within the tension between the work of modern life—the agricultural labor on farms, ranches, and plantations and the work on sugar operations—and their traditional foraging life of hunting, fishing, and gathering. While *trabajo* brings home the bacon, the Tobas hold special admiration for those who retain skills at *mariscando*. Gordillo notes that the farther modern Tobas get away from *marisca*, the less they "know" the bush, leaving them farther and farther from the defining element of their existence and leaving the bush increasingly distant from them as a defining point of reference in their lives.

Relying almost exclusively on fieldwork among the modern Tobas as his source, Gordillo paints a recondite portrait of the meaning of place and memory in the Argentinean Chaco. As a history, Gordillo's book leaves the reader wanting, but this ethnography, when combined with the more historically grounded work of Langer on the Franciscan missions among the Chiriguano, presents modern students and scholars with a seductive examination of central South America during the republican and modern eras. As

such, both Gordillo and Langer do justice to the native peoples whose very lives lie at the heart of the Gran Chaco.

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La Patria del Criollo: An Interpretation of Colonial Guatemala. By Severo Martínez Peláez. Translated by Susan M. Neve and W. George Lovell. Edited and introduced by W. George Lovell and Christopher H. Lutz. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. lii + 329 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, chronology, glossary, bibliography, index. \$84.95 cloth, \$23.95 paper.)

John F. Schwaller, *State University of New York at Potsdam*

Severo Martínez Peláez's now classic book has been available only in Spanish until now, in spite of having been originally published forty years ago. That a university press would support such an undertaking is *prima facie* evidence of the importance of this work. These comments, then, will focus briefly on a description of this landmark study and then a comment on the present edition.

Martínez Peláez, who passed away in 1998, argued quite forcefully that independence has done little to change the essential nature of Guatemala. A well-respected scholar, as a Marxist he was also committed to social and economic change, through revolutionary means if necessary. In this book, he held that the colonial period saw the rise of a few dominant creole families, in conjunction with an even smaller group of peninsular Spaniards, who came to control most aspects of life in the colony, while the native Maya people and persons of mixed racial heritage remained marginalized. With the arrival of independence and the liberal reforms of the latter nineteenth century, nothing fundamentally changed in the equations of power. His arguments drew on archival materials in Guatemala and Spain along with important printed sources and the secondary literature. The book was greeted with mixed reviews, but the fact that it has persisted and become a touchstone in analyses of Guatemala and much of Central America, for both the colonial and modern periods, speaks to its valuable contribution to the field.

The current edition makes this work accessible to readers who for one reason or another are unable to access the Spanish, even though it has gone through numerous reprints, in and outside Guatemala. It is an edited version of the original, since the original came in at over seven hundred pages with small print. The editors chose to present their closest approximation

in limited pages to what the original mammoth interpretive essay conveyed. One way in which this was accomplished was to significantly reduce the scholarly apparatus of the book by cutting down on footnotes and bibliography. The editors also sought to streamline the flow of arguments, which in the original could circle and become repetitious before finally landing on a salient point. While it would be easy to fault the editors for this lapse, it is perfectly understandable. Those who wish to become familiar with Martínez's work can use this edition quite easily. Those who wish to delve more profoundly into his arguments and sources will have to continue to consult the original. As a result, this current edition is obviously targeted for use in the classroom as a supplemental reader for survey courses and to provide a new generation of historians with an introduction to Martínez's ideas. It is no substitute for the original. At the same time, the translators and editors have taken great pains to convey the feel, as well as the impact, of Martínez' original work. In that regard, it is a faithful representation.

Taken as a whole, this is an admirable effort on all parts. Martínez Peláez's work has become the cornerstone of much of the history written about Guatemala in particular and Central American in general. With this edition, new generations of students and scholars can appreciate the impact of the original work.

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Black Mexico: Race and Society from Colonial to Modern Times. Edited by Ben Vinson III and Matthew Restall. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009. xvii + 278 pp., introduction, maps, figures, tables, bibliography, index. \$27.95 paper.)

Brian Stross, *University of Texas at Austin*

This edited volume of eleven essays on Afro-Mexicans evolved from a 2004 symposium at Pennsylvania State University concerning issues and directions in the study of black Mexico. Along with other writings by some of the authors represented here, this collection helps to define and refine contemporary issues in the study of Afro-Mexicans. These issues include the role of African slavery in Mexican history, the meaning and construction of racial and ethnic identity in Mexico, the contributions made by Afro-Mexicans to Mexican society during half a millennium, retention and transformation of African cultures transplanted to Mexico, changing visions of Afro-Mexicans by historians and others, the means by which Afro-Mexicans have struggled to survive and to resist oppression, and the dynamic contem-

porary situations of those who are currently viewed or who self-describe as Afro-Mexicans.

In 1570 some twenty thousand African slaves in Mexico comprised more than triple the number of Spaniards there. By the Colonial period's end as many as two hundred thousand Africans had been brought to Mexico. Perhaps because there is little question of the strong early impact both slavery and African people and cultures had on Mexican history and society, whereas identity, assimilation, and impact of their descendants are more controversial regarding later Mexican society, historians of black Mexico have focused their study on colonial Mexico. Relatively less attention has been devoted to more recent times, and this disparity is reflected in the volume under review. While 182 pages are given over to "Entering the Colonial World," the second section, "Engaging Modernity," has only 42 pages.

Ben Vinson's introduction to the book astutely identifies three lines of inquiry currently informing studies of black Mexico, noting that historical records are being rescrutinized for information they can yield toward understanding social processes occurring on a more global and more contemporary stage. The first involves study of cultural survival and transformation in contexts of contact. The second references general processes of freedom, slavery, and blackness. The third is devoted to understanding social organizational hierarchies and how blackness fits into categories generated by such hierarchical social processes. These lines of inquiry are clearly evident in the contributions to this volume. What is lacking in the volume are studies focusing on nineteenth-century and earlier twentieth-century Mexico, a lack recognized by the editors.

Studies in the last decade or so, including many in this volume, have engaged more modern perspectives and made use of newer methodologies and analytical techniques to re-mine extant historical data, and they have put the data in more sophisticated contexts, viewing it from such vantage points as provided by discourse analysis, ethnography, and contemporary political science. Similarly energized, the articles in the second section reflect newer perspectives on Afro-Mexicans derived from changes in both Mexican national perceptions and those of Afro-Mexicans themselves, as well as from a growing interest in Afro-Mexicans by anthropologists.

The consistently high quality of the articles, a significant diversity of writing styles, and excellent editing make for a useful, informative, and attractive book.

One thing stands out, overall, thrown into relief by the volume as a whole and especially by the section titled "Engaging Modernity." It is clear that the time is ripe for Afro-Mexicans to be self-identifying, recognizing

common problems and organizing as an ethnicity, just as indigenous Mexicans have been doing for a couple of decades, in order to reap whatever benefits derive from being recognized nationally as an entity with a distinctive cultural heritage and as an ethnic membership with all the human rights of others in the republic. The editors are to be congratulated for a first-class, timely, and well-contextualized volume.

DOI 10.1215/00141801-2010-055

Social Stratification in Central Mexico, 1500–2000. By Hugo G. Nutini and Barry L. Isaac. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009. viii + 272 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, photographs, tables, maps, appendixes, endnotes, bibliography, index. \$60.00 cloth.)

James H. McDonald, *Southern Utah University*

Hugo G. Nutini and Barry L. Isaac have crafted an ambitious exploration of social stratification and its transformation in Central Mexico from just prior to the conquest into the post-NAFTA era. This region was characterized in the preconquest and colonial eras as an estate-based system. The authors begin with an historical overview that explores the European and Aztec concepts of estate and stratification, how the Spanish colonial government also created a legal framework around estates based on racial identity, and then how the hacienda system (pervasive through much of the colonial and postcolonial eras) extended the estate concept into that economic form. The remainder of the book grapples with the major class-based transformation that has taken place in the post-Revolutionary period after 1920.

Nutini and Isaac begin by wrestling with the concept of class and make the distinction between “real” and “nominal” class—the former would be constituted by individuals who would self-identify in one class or another and where that self-perceived subject position would have real-world consequences; the latter would be identified by a researcher for analytical convenience. They further note that class is commonly identified and examined through a structural-objective model often seen in sociological approaches (e.g., reliance on household-level surveys that trade on material categories such as occupation, income, and so on). They note that such an approach tells us nothing about the complexity of class dynamics, including class formation, resilience, and change. Instead, they adopt an approach that can be traced back to William Lloyd Warner, who combined those structural-objective measures with other more anthropologically oriented variables

such as expressive behavior, ritual, symbolism, family heritage, and forms of consumption. Thus, they argue that class status is best understood as a combination of economic power in tandem with ideational and symbolic power. To have upper-class status is not just about having wealth and its entailments. Rather, it is about having the right stuff and the right behavior.

They contrast the aristocratic, estate-based model of stratification that embraced the region from preconquest times with the emergence of a plutocracy starting in the late 1800s. Estates can be thought of in two different ways. For example, we might speak abstractly of the noble versus commoner estate that crosscut both European and Aztec society. We can also speak of empirically grounded estates comprising land and people who exist in a stratified relationship. Nutini and Isaac underscore that while the conquest had many devastating effects, the Spanish and Aztec stratification systems were strikingly similar—land, power, and political-legal access were concentrated among a relatively small noble elite who controlled a hierarchically stratified estate of lesser nobles, distinguished commoners, and rank-and-file commoners.

Three racial estates were also created in the Spanish colonial order—Spaniards, Indians, and Africans—which form the foundation for the Mesoamerican caste system. Devastating epidemics and demographic collapse compressed Indian society, formerly distinguished by nobles and commoners, into one category, *macehualtin* (commoner), which then transforms into the colonial label of *indio*. In everyday practice, internally Indian communities compressed at a more or less rapid pace, though there remained distinctions based on wealth and birthright throughout the colonial period. White Spaniards quickly split into a small elite class and a very large impoverished class with a small middle class as buffer. African slaves complete the racial and ethnic constellation. Much as with poor Spanish immigrants, the African and mulatto population rapidly became an urban one and made up almost 35 percent of Mexico City's population in the early 1600s. As mixing between the three main racial estates increased into the 1600s, the caste system emerged to accommodate new racial complexities. *Mestizos* increasingly were lumped in with non-Spanish or non-Creole, and eventually the distinction evolves into Indian versus non-Indian. In 1822 the caste system, largely crushed under its own weight, was abolished with only the categories of mestizo and indio remaining in practical use. This, of course, sets the stage for conflict and tension in the post-colonial period between the conservative Creole aristocracy and the Liberal mestizo challenge to their dominance. Indians, whether one considers the label to be class or existentially based, remain at the bottom of a highly simplified racial-ethnic terrain of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In closing their historical overview, Nutini and Isaac examine the institution of the *hacienda*, which dominated the rural landscape from the late 1500s through 1940, with its demise through post-Revolution land reform. They seek to demystify the “legend” of the hacienda as a feudal socioeconomic form and argue that the Central Mexican versions were diverse in form, entrepreneurial and market-driven in orientation, and characterized by a specialized labor force. They contrast haciendas with Indian hamlets oriented toward self-sustaining agriculture. In between was a class of *rancheros*—rural, small-holder entrepreneurs. While *rancheros* and *hacendados* may have been equally subject to land reform measures that picked up significant force in the 1930s and 1940s, Nutini and Isaac correctly note that their fate varied considerably. Though they do not broach the topic, it could be argued that the Cristero Rebellion that arose in the *ranchero* regions of Central and West Mexico was as much about land and fear of land reform as it was about the anticlerical policies of President Plutarco Calles.

The latter half of the book focuses on the tectonic socioeconomic shift that occurs in the post-Revolutionary era after 1920. Land reform breaks up haciendas with land repatriated back to peasants in the form of the *ejido* (state-owned land on which peasants had use rights). It is a period where the old aristocracy is displaced and marginalized and a new plutocracy is transcendent. While the plutocrats give recognition to the prestige value of the old aristocracy, there is no mistaking where political power and economic clout lie. Nutini and Isaac detail a finely wrought analysis of the new class structure. In their discussion of the rise of the plutocracy, one is reminded of Fuentes’s *Death of Artemio Cruz* (1962) and its deconstruction of this new aggressive class of capitalists who play by a new set of rules. Those who influence national politics can be found in Mexico City with their less powerful, though highly visible, counterparts in the provinces. What ensues is a supple discussion of the Mexican class structure and its cultural expression. They also underscore the racialized nature of the post-Revolutionary class system with a white upper class, mestizo middle class, and a mixed Indian-mestizo lower class. It is noteworthy that movement down the class hierarchy is associated with decreasing class consciousness.

What, then, of indigenous communities within this new class structure that finds Indians relegated to the bottom rung? Nutini and Isaac argue that in the *longue durée*, Indianness is waning, especially in terms of religious practice, which they see as key to indigenous identity. They do add a much needed caution that a generalized mestizo façade may cloak deeper ideological differences. As an example, they point to the persistence of witch-

craft, sorcery, and *nagual* beliefs still extant in many parts of rural and urban Mexico. This is certainly the case for Guanajuato, where I have conducted field work in and around the glitzy colonial town of San Miguel de Allende. Sipping their lattes, tourists and expatriates would be shocked to know about the high frequency of witchcraft and sorcery practiced within the town and surrounding communities.

The book moves to its conclusion by considering how class is materialized through expressive culture, and the authors compare and contrast cultural manifestations as arrayed in the center (Mexico City) and the provinces. In the end, Nutini and Isaac make the provocative argument that as classes have been shaped and transformed over the twentieth century, Mexico has actually become an increasingly classless society. That is, there are real and conscious distinctions made between the top and the bottom of the social hierarchy. There is, however, a big middle with emulative consumption patterns that work downward into the households of the working poor whose dwellings may be humble, but who turn to their color televisions and stereos much like their far wealthier upper-class counterparts. Even the rural poor have experienced an eroding of class consciousness; in many parts of Mexico grinding poverty is softened by the influx of migrant remittances. To look at rural Mexico and argue that NAFTA has improved peoples' lots would be a misreading. What NAFTA has done is to further displace the rural poor into migrant streams whose impact has been to shore up dying rural communities with what amounts to direct foreign aid. Whether this has had any effect on stimulating rural development beyond elevating levels of consumption is an open question. Upon reviewing the tremendous distance Mexico has come from an estate-dominated aristocracy to a mobile, class-based society, Nutini and Isaac are forced to conclude that the rural and working poor, as Mexico's majority population, are here to stay at least in the medium term. Waves of economic instability starting with the 1982 debt crisis through the current global depression have systematically cast the die for all but the wealthiest Mexicans.

In sum, this book is a must read for anyone interested in the historical unfolding of stratification, class, inequality, and symbolic politics in Central Mexico. The book's scope is bold and its analysis provocative. It is very readable and thus will appeal not only to specialists but also anyone teaching upper-division or graduate courses on peoples and cultures of Mesoamerica.

Revolutions in Mexican Catholicism: Reform and Revelation in Oaxaca, 1887–1943. By Edward Wright-Rios. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. xiii + 361 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, notes, bibliography, index. \$23.95 paper.)

SilverMoon, *West Virginia University*

Faith is a difficult thing to research. However, in his work *Revolutions in Mexican Catholicism*, Edward Wright-Rios does a wonderful job exploring just this topic by looking at manifestations and negotiations of faith in the Archdiocese of Oaxaca in Southern Mexico during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As Wright himself admits, this is a complex story marked by negotiations that put at play institutional and devotional religiosity. Wright-Rios shows the church and Catholic faith in Oaxaca as constantly negotiated, where power itself becomes manifest in unexpected hands. He “knits together the worlds of the Archbishop Gillow with those of the devotees of Ixpantepec’s Virgin and Tlacoaxcalco’s Christ [Lord of the Wounds]” (7).

Perhaps the most interesting parts of this work are those that discuss alternately the devotions of this Virgin and *the second Juan Diego*, Nicha or Dionisia, an eight- or nine-year-old Indian girl visionary (207), and that of the miraculous Lord of the Wounds and the elderly seer and faith healer María Bartola Bolaños (167). This portion of the study moves beyond church history and into the realm of gender studies, offering a very important view of female religious empowerment. As the author notes about one of the photographs in the work, depicting an early-twentieth-century pastoral visit (273), the book itself “simultaneously reveals the enactment of idealized traditional order, an assertion [or rather several] of indigenous cultural identity, and the veiled but pivotal role of devout women in the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-centuries” (275). The supporting stories, such as *La Madre Matiana* and the Matiana’s prophecies, create a compelling tale that is hard to put down (255), leading the reader to the same conclusion reached by Wright-Rios, “that they represent a fabrication of intransigent Catholics pining for the return of church-state unity and extirpation of liberalism in Mexico” (258).

The one weakest moment in the work appears in the introduction with the problematic use of the term *subaltern* (7) and with what appears, at first glance, as a somewhat outdated discussion on “the study of religious change in Mexico.” The three schools that the author describes have long since been superseded by complex and multifaceted works such as those produced by Louise Burkhart and others working on ideas of religious nego-

tiations (11). He limits current research to three interpretations: Christian transformation, “pagan” resistance, and syncretism, leaving out the emphasis today given to border thinking, process, and negotiation. However, the author does tackle more updated ideas in the rest of the work.

Revolutions in Mexican Catholicism, and its well-researched and presented stories, are invaluable to anyone interested in religiosity in contested spaces, gender-faith-power relationships, and the power of popular devotions in the midst of cultural encounter zones (border spaces). This work achieves what it sets out to do: to explore the “emergence of a new Catholic devotion” (3) and “demonstrate the potent impact of the period’s militant Marianism and apocalyptic feminism in the church’s resurgence” (287). Wright-Rios’s style is clear and engaging and hence this work is accessible to both specialists and nonspecialists. It also serves as a powerful instructional tool with stories that are compelling and at times surprising, one of which will be part of my own upcoming graduate seminar.

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Global Maya: Work and Ideology in Rural Guatemala. By Liliana R. Goldín. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009. x + 264 pp., photographs, map, acknowledgments, introduction, appendixes, notes, references, index. \$50.00 cloth.)

Michael Ennis, *Duke University*

In her new ethnography of Guatemala’s central highlands, Liliana R. Goldín investigates the ways in which the Maya of the region have actively inserted themselves into the global economy. Goldín integrates qualitative fieldwork and extensive surveys to analyze how different subgroups among the highland Maya experience the global economy. This careful, evidence-based analysis of changing attitudes toward work is a valuable contribution to our understanding of contemporary Maya culture specifically and the transforming processes of globalization more generally. With its emphasis on oral tradition and thorough analyses of ethnographic and economic data, it should find readers in a broad range of disciplines.

Goldín provides excellent evidence of the motivations and consequences of new economic practices for individuals and communities. The work includes insightful discussions of several of the changes associated with global commerce in Guatemala, including increased class differences, perceptions of competition, and changing ethnic and gender identities.

Goldín foregrounds the language the Maya use to describe their experiences of the new economic activities. In chapter 2, she cites oral tradition—for example, jokes about rich and poor compadres and stories about “earth lords”—to establish many of the themes the book will elaborate and analyze. Unedited examples of oral tradition are included in the appendixes.

Based on these themes, the heart of the book contains four case studies of several Maya strategies for negotiating the central highlands’ limited economic opportunities. In turn, the book includes chapters that cover cottage textile industries in San Francisco de los Altos, vegetable production for local and border markets in San Pedro Almolonga, vegetable production for international export, and textile factory work. Again, the study is at its best when it focuses on the Maya’s own descriptions of their experience of work and sustenance. For example, the chapter on factory work yields some fascinating data, such as the Maya categorization of different factory jobs as hot, cold, and cool (141). Also, Goldín finds that the Maya view one of the chief benefits of factory work to be the opportunities it affords for socializing. She explains the seeming contradiction: “What is perceived to be less lonely and more social is, at the same time, the prototype of individual achievement and effort. In contrast, fieldwork . . . has the potential for cooperative engagement and shared outcomes” (142). To her credit, she attends to the changing perceptions of solidarity without imposing a preconceived set of judgments.

Survey data enable Goldín to control for differences based on generation, gender, and religious beliefs (particularly the growing significance of Evangelicalism). The results of these analyses can be alternately frustrating and insightful. For example, her discussion of gender differences in views on work usefully shows the relationships of gender to working ideologies. Unfortunately, the data do not always show such clear differences, and analyses that do not yield solid conclusions often end with an unsatisfying affirmation of the complexity of factors at play during such drastic changes. Fortunately, this shortcoming is more than offset by the excellent documentation of those changes. Goldín’s attention to detail and clear explication of the evidence of Maya experiences of economic change allow her to elaborate a clear set of conclusions about the local effects of globalization.

Maya Nationalisms and Postcolonial Challenges in Guatemala: Coloniality, Modernity, and Identity Politics. By Emilio del Valle Escalante. (Sante Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2009. x + 210 pp., bibliography, index. \$29.95 paper.)

David Carey Jr., *University of Southern Maine*

Compared with the scholarship addressing the Zapatista movement, the literature dedicated to the *movimiento Maya* or Maya movement in Guatemala is lean. Given the breadth and depth of both Guatemalan historiography and anthropological studies of Guatemalan Maya, this paucity is surprising. Subcomandante Marco's expert use of the Internet and international media notwithstanding, perhaps this disparity speaks to one of the fundamental differences between the Zapatistas—who comprise mainly poor and working-class Maya of southern Mexico and whose national and international appeal cuts across class lines—and the Guatemala Maya movement, whose principal participants and audience are intellectuals. In this way K'ichee' Maya Emilio del Valle Escalante's *Maya Nationalisms and Postcolonial Challenges in Guatemala* is both a welcome addition and limited in its scope.

By juxtaposing the works of Kaqchikel Maya writer Luis de Lión, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Rigoberta Menchú Tum, and Kaqchikel Maya journalist Estuardo Zapeta with those of Nobel Literature Laureate Miguel Ángel Asturias, anthropologist David Stoll, and journalist Roberto Morales, respectively, del Valle Escalante points to how the latter group misrepresented the sentiments and goals of the former. His textual analysis of these writings in chapters 2 through 4 is rich and insightful. Framing his study in theories of subalternity and colonialism, del Valle Escalante aptly demonstrates that “contemporary Mayan narratives promote nationalisms based on the reaffirmation of Maya ethnicity and languages” (2). And yet by focusing on just these six authors, he falls prey to one of his own erudite critiques of the Maya movement: the failure to incorporate the perspectives of poor and working-class rural Maya.

Del Valle Escalante's most cogent and far-reaching analysis emerges in chapter 5, in which he argues that education and educational reforms in Guatemala have “recycled the coloniality of power in relation to indigenous peoples” (128). He finds even multicultural pedagogical practices lacking because they demand so little of Ladinos. Extrapolating from de Lión's novel *El tiempo principia en Xibalbá* (*Time Begins in Xibalbá*), del Valle Escalante defines Ladinos' reluctance and often refusal to learn Mayan languages, histories, or cultures as a “Ladino problem”—a phrase that turns long-standing

rhetoric about Guatemala's "Indian problem" on its head. Throughout the book, del Valle Escalante argues that Mayas' historical struggle with colonial and neocolonial power informs their "anti-imperialist, anticolonial, [and] antiassimilationist nationalism" (124) and identities. But because he fails to explore that history or even to cite such Mayan historians as Edgar Esquit, who have so poignantly elucidated it, del Valle Escalante's arguments remain undeveloped at best and at times inaccurate. For example, in his otherwise enlightening discussion of Asturias's work, del Valle Escalante argues that Asturias's goal was "to promote Ladino or mestizo cultural identity" (31). But as historians have demonstrated, Guatemala never celebrated *mestizaje* or race mixing the way Mexico, for example, did. In sharp contrast to mestizo, Ladino was an exclusively European identity that came to represent "nonindigenous." By casting Guatemala as a Ladino nation after their 1871 military triumph, liberals intended to exclude Maya from citizenship unless they renounced indigenous society (Grandin 2000, 82–83; Reeves 2006, 156). In Guatemala, there was no middle ground.

Although Kay Warren's *Indigenous Movements and Their Critics* (1998) remains the definitive work on the Guatemalan Maya movement, del Valle Escalante's attention to the ways both Maya and their critics used writing to advance their agendas makes a valuable contribution to the rich literature on Guatemala's experience with modernization, capitalism, and neoliberalism. Scholars of the Maya and Guatemala will find much of interest in this book.

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Facing Racial Revolution: Eyewitness Accounts of the Haitian Insurrection. By Jeremy D. Popkin. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. xv + 400 pp., map, introduction, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$54.00 cloth.)

Manuella Meyer, *University of Richmond*

Haiti is once again in the news. The 7.0 earthquake that struck the country on 12 January 2010 has spurred and will most likely continue to spur tremendous interest in Haiti's past, present, and future. Interestingly, various editorials, news accounts, and interviews focus on Haiti's revolutionary history as a means to understand the country's supposed doomed fate.

Supplying half the world's sugar and coffee by the late eighteenth century, the French Caribbean colony of Saint-Domingue (now Haiti) was the apple in France's colonial eye. The symbol of grand colonial enterprise, the island sent shockwaves throughout the Atlantic. The slave insurrection begun in August 1791 led to the destruction of slavery in Saint-Domingue and the creation of the independent black republic of Haiti in 1804. The only successful slave uprising in history, the Haitian Revolution also bears the distinction of being the second successful independence movement in the western hemisphere. Unlike the American Revolution of 1776 and the French Revolution of 1789, the Haitian Revolution explicitly contested the system of racial hierarchy. As such, the dismantling of the colonial order and slavery by slaves represented, as scholar Sibylle Fischer (2004) notes, "the unspeakable, as trauma, utopia, and elusive dream" (2).

In recent years, scholars such as Fischer, David Geggus, Laurent Dubois, and Laënnec Hurbon, among many others, have produced insightful studies about the Haitian revolution. An exceptional addition to this rich body of work is Jeremy D. Popkin's *Facing Racial Revolution: Eyewitness Accounts of the Haitian Insurrection*. A renowned specialist on France's revolutionary history, Popkin compiles a fascinating collection of mostly unpublished primary sources left by eyewitnesses. In the introduction, Popkin observes that while there is a plethora of documentation on the political, military, and ideological aspects of the revolution, there is a lacuna of knowledge about the lives and experiences of the colony's everyday actors. Given the sparse existence of primary sources by people of color, Popkin selects sources from the colony's white minority. Although white men write nearly all of the accounts, Popkin argues that they provide more than just a white viewpoint. As everyday settlers and colonists, their stories provide a lens from which to explore the microphysics of race relations. Furthermore, it is possible to glean a variety of opinions and experiences

through records of their contacts and conversations with women, slaves, and free people of color.

Popkin looks beyond texts that are already available in English and does not include extracts from well-known writers such as M. L. E. Moreau de Saint-Méry and Pamphile de Lacroix. Among the selections are Auguste Binsse, a member of the pompon rouge pro-white faction who opposed any concessions to any other racial groups; a fragment from an unpublished contemporary play titled *Le philanthrope révolutionnaire ou l'hécatombe à Haïti*; the observations of a French naturalist named Michel-Etienne Descourtilz; the narrative of prisoner of war and religious convert Honoré Lazarus Lecompte; the deposition of Marie Jeanne Jouette, who was taken prisoner by the insurgents in 1792; and the recollections of a twelve-year-old boy named Élie-Benjamin-Joseph Brun-Lavainne, who was accidentally taken to Saint-Domingue on a French ship during the beginning of the revolt.

Popkin has not only collected these selections, he also provides the tools to understand them. He argues that we cannot fully understand the revolutionary Atlantic without understanding events in Saint-Domingue and how they were represented to contemporaries. Framing the accounts as part of a larger pro-slavery propaganda and survivor literature, each chapter contains useful commentary that provides critical background about the authors and events they describe. Popkin's commentary addresses the issues of narrative reliability and encourages readers to investigate the implications of the various authors' perspectives and subjectivities. In this manner, Popkin illustrates the extent to which the historian's materials are filled with ambiguities. In addition, Popkin is sensitive to the ways in which the genre of survivor literature can raise numerous moral issues. By devoting part of the introduction to a discussion of the ethical dimensions of presenting and reading these texts, he encourages readers to think about victims, victimizers, and victimhood. *Facing Racial Revolution* is a valuable resource for scholars and students alike. The accounts of actors on the margins of colonial life during a time of great upheaval sheds light on the complexities of slavery, colonialism, imperialism, racism, and radicalism.

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Performing Kinship: Narrative, Gender, and the Intimacies of Power in the Andes. By Krista E. Van Vleet. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008. xiv + 273 pp., introduction, maps, illustrations, appendixes, glossary, bibliography, index. \$50.00 cloth, \$24.95 paper.)

Jessica Joyce Christie, *East Carolina University*

“To be alone (*sapalla*) in an Andean community is to be poor (*waqcha*)”
—Krista E. Van Vleet

The context of the statement quoted above and arising questions, such as why *alone* is linked to *poor*, and when people are *rich*—a state that in turn entails many challenges—are the leitmotifs that interweave the chapters of the book *Performing Kinship*. For almost two years, Krista E. Van Vleet lived in the highland community of Kallpa, which, together with other widely dispersed villages, forms the Sullk’ata region situated in the northern part of the Department of Potosi, Bolivia. Due to her field experience, the author necessarily includes the methodology of participant observation. But her discussion does not stop here as many ethnographies do. Van Vleet has worked her way into the reciprocal relation network of *ayni* and become an active participant in the community of Kallpa. Thus her observations are grounded in a lived and dynamic social context and not presented as isolated and frozen in time. Her account of social relations at Sullk’ata is firmly embedded in anthropological and linguistic theory. Applying contemporary theoretical models to social reciprocity (*ayni*) at Sullk’ata, Van Vleet brings to the forefront that human relations in this Andean community as well as anywhere else are always agent- and context-specific, dynamic and changing. I will comment on some of the highlights in individual chapters.

After setting the stage of geographic context and background, Van Vleet offers “A Primer on Sullk’ata Relatedness” in chapter 3. This is a beautiful chapter exploring family and kinship relations and situating Sullk’atas as actors in cycles parallel to those of the Andean land and the cosmos driven by supernatural beings. Chapter 4 addresses sorrowing and grief at the occasions of a loved one’s death, migration, and a daughter’s marriage. While the first context applies cross-culturally, sorrow over marriage draws the reader’s interest. The author discusses and illustrates that sorrowing is generated by ruptures in the reciprocal bonds of *ayni* and the awareness that reciprocity may not always be returned. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 focus on gender relations, from the culturally accepted practices of young men stealing their women to husband and wife becoming established as a married couple and to the lived practice of married life, which includes acts of violence embedded in multilayered affinal ambiguities. Space limitations

do not allow me to refer to all of the intriguing and at the same time bewildering case studies, and I invite the reader to explore them.

In my opinion, the primary merit of the book is grounded in the approach, which balances field data with theory. Van Vleet does not simply write in the format of participant observation or a diary, even though she quotes her field notes. Her account of the Sullk'atas is embedded in contemporary theory, making the reader aware of her own biases and emphasizing that all social interactions are agent- and context-based, that the structure of dialogue carries meaning, and that Quechua terms do not easily translate into English. Although many of her observations confirmed Inka practices I have studied, the theoretical question remains open of how useful and applicable to wider scholarship ethnography is if all case studies are entirely moment-specific and subjective. The reader of Van Vleet's book gains individualized insights into the community of Kallpa, finds confirmation for some aspects of Andean worldview and social practices discussed in earlier literature, and expands his or her understanding of universal human dynamics.

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