

## Book Reviews

---

**American Indians, the Irish, and Government Schooling: A Comparative Study.** By Michael C. Coleman. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007. xii + 367 pp., acknowledgements, introduction, illustrations, notes, index. \$49.95 cloth.)

Jon Reyhner, *Northern Arizona University*

Coleman writes that comparative studies like his can help move Americans away from their sense of exceptionalism. He says his goal was to “*compare, on the one hand, the assimilationist policies and practices of American and Irish government educators from about the 1820s and, on the other hand, the responses of Indian and Irish peoples to these campaigns*” (5–6; original emphasis).

In 1824 the U.S. government established an Office of Indian Affairs, which in 1947 became the Bureau of Indian Affairs and still exists today, to deal with its Indian population and promote their “civilization.” In 1831 the British parliament established an elementary school system for all Irish children under the supervision of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, which ceased to function only after Irish independence in 1923. The goal of both organizations was to assimilate their indigenous populations into their country’s dominant culture. In the United States, the government relied heavily on funding missionary efforts to achieve this goal, until the end of the nineteenth century. However, because Catholic Indian schools were more successful in getting funding and expanding their services, Protestants pushed for the government to run Indian schools directly, which it increasingly did.

*Ethnohistory* 55:2 (Spring 2008)

Copyright 2008 by American Society for Ethnohistory

Coleman found many similarities, as well as differences, between the Irish and American Indian experiences with colonial education. In both cases, teachers acted as cultural missionaries, often providing only a very elementary, one-size-fits-all education with a vocational/industrial orientation and avoiding teaching Indian and Irish history because it was too contentious. Coleman discovered a gradual pragmatic acceptance of government school by both the Irish and Indians, who realized that without education they were like the warriors of the old days who used bows and arrows against firearms. For both groups, English was the language of schooling, prosperity, and power. In our new era of globalization, this has intensified, if anything, worldwide. However, while schooling effectively replaced the Irish and American Indian languages with English, Coleman says both Irish and Indian schools failed at their goal of total assimilation.

Differences between Ireland and America include the relatively sparse Indian population after epidemics of smallpox and other virgin-ground diseases, as compared to the denser Irish population, which helped allow the Irish to remain dominant in most of Ireland while Indians became a small minority in the United States. Also, while Irish education became more denominational over time, Indian education went in the opposite direction, as the government took on more and more of the educational effort because of the divisions within Protestant missionary efforts and their united antagonism to a strong Catholic missionary effort. Coleman also notes that the BIA was ethnocentric, seeing nothing of value in Indian cultures, but not racist, and promoted cultural genocide while helping prevent biologic genocide in a land, especially in frontier regions, where many “white” settlers held the view that “the only good Indian is a dead Indian.”

Irish independence and the continued existence of hundreds of Indian nations in the United States indicate both the success and the failure of colonial educational efforts. Ironically, the Irish and Indians were able to better mobilize to protect their rights as they became more literate through education, which undermined colonial efforts at hegemony. As Coleman concludes at the end of his excellent book: “The CNEI, BIA, and missionary enterprises were carefully planned and executed and were breathtaking in their cultural hubris. The responses of recipient peoples were complex, manipulative, and partly appreciative. Government schooling did change the Indians and the Irish and helped them adapt to the demands of modern life—but never in quite the ways intended by their supremely confident educators” (271).

**Native Americans and the Environment: Perspectives on the Ecological Indian.** Edited by Michael E. Harkin and David Rich Lewis. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007. xxxiv + 367 pp., foreword, preface, acknowledgments, introduction, afterword, index. \$24.95 paper.)

Adrian Tanner, *Memorial University*

In his 1999 book *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*, Shepard Krech questioned the image of North American Indians as ecologists. The book's controversial thesis was condemned by Indian rights activists and subjected to criticism by scholars. In 2002, the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming organized a symposium dedicated to this controversial thesis, with Krech as keynote speaker. While inspired by the symposium, the volume under review is not a conference proceedings—of the twenty-seven papers and two panel discussions given at the meeting, only four are included, while seven new chapters have been added.

In their introduction Michael Harkin and David Lewis, noting the unexpected controversy the symposium generated, point to the ambiguity in Krech's book. It consciously uses "ecology" in three distinct senses, while Krech says the title *The Ecological Indian* is partly ironic.

The text of Krech's 2002 symposium presentation makes up the first chapter of *Native Americans and the Environment*—he addresses the criticisms raised in the rest of the book only in the afterword. In the first chapter he surveys his book's many reviews, which he claims were overwhelmingly positive. To those who complained that the book played into the hands of anti-Indian extremists or that his examples were insufficient to support his conclusions, he responds that his intentions were misunderstood.

There follow two chapters by authors the editors label "Krech's critics," even though other chapters in the collection are also critical. In an understated but devastating critique, Darren Ranco challenges the book's whole approach. He notes that most of the substantive chapters offer no definitive conclusion to the author's main question about whether or not Indians are ecologists, as the popular image of them suggests. In addition, Ranco says other scholars have alternate analyses of the material in those few chapters where Krech thinks he has proved his point. Out of this insubstantial empirical base Krech tries to claim a scientific test of the ecological Indian image. But this is an image that Ranco notes was constructed largely by Hollywood and Madison Avenue, and he argues that "asking or assessing one culture to meet the standards of another culture's stereotype of them seems a dubious project" (34). As for Krech's more recent cases, Ranco notes that Krech takes no account of the influence of years

of poverty and colonial hegemony on Indian communities. Drawing on a paper by Marshall Sahlins, Ranco describes Krech's approach as part of the "invention of tradition" movement, which tends to misconstrue and trivialize beliefs, in this case by failing to understand why, from their position of relative powerlessness, ecological legitimacy—the observance of culturally based principles in dealing with the environment—is paramount to many modern reservation Indians. However, I feel Ranco is less successful when he tries to explain his alternative analysis on the basis of his own ethnographic material—I suspect he needs to supply more local cultural context to convincingly make his points. While Krech acknowledges Ranco's paper in his afterword, the brunt of this critique clearly eludes him.

The chapter by Harvey Feit provides a new analysis of northern Algonquian exploitation of beaver during the fur trade. One point that Krech repeats like a mantra is that the assumption of an endless supply of animals implied by a belief in reincarnation is incompatible with conservation and would have led to overexploitation. This overlooks another belief that animal corpses were sacred: it was offensive if they were left to rot or treated as garbage, which would have tended to impose some limits on waste. Feit shows that from at least the 1790s, the Cree were aware that the supply of animals was limited. He shows that through dialogue over many years, and after some missteps, Cree hunters and the traders were able to learn about the practice of conservation from each other. Krech dismisses this well-documented and detailed analysis in his afterword by stooping to academic one-upmanship: Feit is not a historian, he says, because he quotes documents provided or researched or quoted by others.

The chapter by Robert Kelly and Mary Prasciunas addresses another of Krech's case studies, the Pleistocene extinctions, concluding that climate change is a more likely cause than human predation. The role of human cognition in developing ecological behaviors is addressed by Ernest Burch, through consideration of Inuit and Inupiat subsistence strategies. He concludes that, while they may not generally see a connection between harvesting and the numbers of available prey, they still managed to achieve ecological harmony. He notes that the debate initiated by Krech, which has become over whether Native Americans were either rational conservationists or rapacious overkillers, is sterile, as actual behavior was based on complex beliefs involving both rational and nonrational aspects. Burch's paper is a welcome balance between the behavioral and cognitive aspects of the issue.

Dan Flores looks at another of Krech's cases, the near-extinction of the Great Plains bison, showing the complex set of environmental, climatic,

social, political, and economic conditions surrounding the hunt and the decline in herd numbers. He supplies much-needed historical context on the animal's role on the western plains in mid-nineteenth-century political and military struggles, both between Indians and Europeans and between different groups of Indians. Two further chapters address the bison: John Dorst examines how it is represented in both historical and modern museum displays and Sebastian Braun examines how it is represented in literature.

Two chapters cover northwest coast Indians. Michael Harkin shows that Kwakwaka'wakw ideas paradoxically stressed both regulation of harvest and celebration of excess consumption. Steven Langdon shows how the Tlingit have been harvesting salmon for two thousand years, spanning changes in technology and state regulation. He argues that Tlingit interaction with salmon is fundamentally social, with forms of human interaction extended to the human-salmon relationship, resulting in ethically based limits on harvest and escapement.

The chapter by Larry Nesper and James Schlender resonates with the nonscholarly debate that followed the publication of Krech's book, in that it is set in a region that is one of the hotbeds of the anti-Indian rights movement: Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan. In the 1980s, the courts recognized that Ojibwe treaty rights included hunting and fishing outside reservations, bringing the Ojibwe into conflict with local non-Indian hunters and fishers. The authors show how these tribes use a blend of biological science and their own law courts to manage their harvest.

Finally, David Lewis tells the harrowing story of a group of Goshutes almost driven to extinction, their traditional lands taken for a variety of environmentally damaging uses, who now see the only economic option for their reservation to be a storage facility for nuclear waste.

This is an important book that tries to escape the sterile "ecological Indian" debate by providing much-needed social and political context for the cases examined by Krech.

## Reference

Krech, Shepard, III  
1999 *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*. New York: W. W. Norton.

10.1215/00141801-2007-068

**Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place.** By Coll Thrush. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007. xxi + 326 pp., foreword, preface, notes, bibliography, index. \$28.95 cloth.)

James B. LaGrand, *Messiah College*

In his wide-ranging study of native people and native influence in the Seattle region, Coll Thrush takes aim at two gaps found in American Indian history. First, he tries to unify or integrate punctuated chronological periods in the histories of the various Northwest tribal groups who spent time in or around the Seattle region. He implicitly critiques those historical accounts of Indian people marked by abrupt breaks—the result of disease, violent conflict, or migration. Thrush instead weaves connections all the way from the native people who met Arthur Denny and his party on the beach at Alki Point in 1851 to the present. Second, he brings together Indian history and cultural myths surrounding Indian people into one framework. Here, accounts of trade networks stand side-by-side with stories Seattleites tell today about Indian ghosts who haunt sections of their city. Thrush's book is nothing if not ambitious. Beyond pursuing these tasks of unification, it self-consciously mixes the local history of the Pacific Northwest, the geography of the region, intellectual and cultural history, and moral jeremiad between two covers. Some of the more ambitious tasks meet with mixed results, yet the book as a whole has much to teach readers from many backgrounds and disciplines.

The book begins with a critical look at the legendary “Chief Seattle Speech” attributed to Seathl and the conventional origin story of Seattle that stars Arthur Denny as the lone hero. Thrush next provides a fascinating section on the social history of Seattle from the 1850s to the 1870s. He demonstrates that Seattle's fledgling economy relied extensively on Indian labor during this time, as native people cut timber, cleared land, built houses, and delivered mail by canoe. Personal relations between whites and Indians, too, were well developed during this time. Thrush tells of many marriages and the resulting mixed-race children, who were often condemned in vicious newspaper accounts cited from this period. Other connections were made in a prominent brothel that employed native as well as white prostitutes.

After the turn of the century, things seem to change. Seattle grows rapidly and local politicians pursue policies to restrict the legal and political rights of Indian people. Thrush himself acknowledges that Indian agency is hard to find after this point. Yet he presses on to make connections and linkages, now drawing meaning not from marriage certificates and business ledgers, but from the absences and silences of Indian people.

There are many important stories told after this point. Readers learn of the extensive commercialization of Indian heritage exemplified in the 1938 "Potlatch of Progress." Indians experience the booming wartime economy, the destructive force of postwar urban renewal, and the debates about radical protest in 1960s and 1970s, which led some young Indian people to take over Fort Lawton in 1970.

Yet the overarching theme of continuation and connection is under strain here. The historical actors themselves change. The Duwamish, Suquamish, Lake, and Shilshole people prominently featured in the mid-nineteenth century are in part replaced by the Sh'Klallam in the twentieth century. And as Indian peoples' role in Seattle's mainstream political, economic, and social order recedes, conventional sources too start to dry up. Particularly in the second half of the book, Thrush makes extensive use of what he calls "place-stories," by which he means the stories that whites told about Indians, Indians told about whites, and both groups told about the landscape. Thrush increasingly relies on these place-stories to forge challenging connections across time and space. But at times, they can not bear up under the load. Thrush's effort to reconcile the theme of Indian dispossession with the argument for the continuing relevance of Indian people in contemporary America is certainly understandable. But the continuity and connection on which he consistently focuses is only partly demonstrated.

None of this, though, should seriously detract from a book that contributes much to our knowledge of Indian-white relations in the Pacific Northwest during various eras. It also boasts a series of handsome and fascinating photographs of Indian people in the Seattle region since the 1860s and a meticulously researched "atlas of indigenous Seattle," which lists locations important to various Indian tribes for reasons of trade, settlement, or religious significance.

10.1215/00141801-2007-069

**Gall: Lakota War Chief.** By Robert W. Larson. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007. xvi + 301 pp., preface, illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. \$24.95 cloth.)

Roger L. Nichols, *University of Arizona*

This thorough study examines the life of the Lakota war leader Gall, focusing on the 1860s–1890s. While the first two chapters try to depict his infancy, childhood, and adolescence, the balance of the analysis deals

with his adult career as a warrior and band leader. Based at least partly on research done for the author's earlier biography of Red Cloud, this book illustrates Robert Larson's solid grasp of late-nineteenth-century Lakota ethnohistory. Each of the seven Lakota bands receives attention at times, but the narrative narrows to an examination of the Hunkpapa Sioux led by Sitting Bull and assisted by Gall.

Larson's knowledge of Lakota social customs, family relations, trade, and hunting methods appears repeatedly. His discussion of Sioux child-raising practices and the ways the tribal people taught children the physical and intellectual skills they would need as adults is impressive. He depicts tribal movements, hunting methods, leadership tasks, and customs of warfare effectively. Repeatedly, the individual leaders of bands and villages receive attention as the account presents Plains Indian life to the reader.

To establish his subject's identity, the author begins with Gall's experiences as a young hunter and warrior. The narrative demonstrates clearly that for much of his life, Gall looked up to Sitting Bull and served as his trusted subordinate and ally. In fact, Larson presents Sitting Bull as the younger man's mentor for several decades. Gall's role(s) at the Battle of the Little Big Horn, where he lost much of his family, receive careful attention, though this analysis gives him only modest marks for leadership and effectiveness in that struggle. Another turning point in Gall's life occurred when Sitting Bull refused to accept defeat by the U.S. Army and led his band into exile in Canada. Although Gall followed, he came to realize that surrender and moving to an agency offered his followers better chances than starvation in Canada. The last four chapters examine Gall's experiences at Standing Rock, where he accepted the need to cooperate with the agent James McLaughlin. In fact, the author suggests that to understand the reservation years, one must come to see that McLaughlin came to replace Sitting Bull as the warrior's mentor.

In this book, Larson faced considerable difficulty trying to present his subject as a real person. Frequently he is reduced to statements such as "Although Gall was not part of this inner circle . . . he was probably among that group." Clearly, the author lacks enough personal data to put meat on the bones of his subject. The Gall who appears in these pages seems more like a will-o'-the-wisp, or perhaps Banquo's Ghost. Except for two of the chapters that narrate his experiences at Standing Rock, the war leader just never becomes a real presence.

Throughout the narrative, the author mentions charges of opportunism and selfish actions leveled at Gall. He defends his subject as a realist who recognized that surrender and moving to an agency represented the only possible way to assure survival for his people. Once settled there,

he cooperated with agency officials, and Larson suggests that his actions helped persuade other reluctant Sioux to accommodate to the whites' demands on the reservation. The author has an excellent grasp of Lakota ethnohistorical affairs, but he lacked the personal material for a successful biography. His research is thorough, the prose is drafted carefully, and the maps and illustrations are clear and effective.

10.1215/00141801-2007-070

**Tatham Mound and the Bioarchaeology of European Contact: Disease and Depopulation in Central Gulf Coast Florida.** By Dale L. Hutchinson. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007. xxii + 288 pp., foreword, preface, acknowledgments, illustrations, tables, maps, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$59.95 cloth.)

Marie Danforth, *University of Southern Mississippi*

This book is a wonderfully holistic approach to the study of the effects of European contact in Florida using analysis of human remains. Excavated in 1984, Tatham Mound offers a unique research opportunity for a number of reasons, including presence of prehistoric as well as protohistoric components and its location in a region with a number of other colonial-period skeletal series. The ability to place findings in context both temporally and spatially is largely unparalleled in the Southeast, except possibly for the Georgia Bight. Hutchinson interprets data gained from over 350 burials using a variety of historical, anthropological, and biological sources, making this a study that will appeal to broad range of researchers.

The book opens with a general discussion of the history of early European contact in the southeastern United States. Hutchinson argues that the role of pandemics as the major agent of population and culture demise has been overgeneralized, ignoring the important contributions of political, military, and economic factors. In his review of the archeology of Tatham Mound, he notes that the burial mound represents "a snapshot of a protracted ritual cycle" (64) rather than a complete picture of mortuary practices; this theme is repeated often throughout the book. Although bioarchaeological study may be unfamiliar to many, Hutchinson effectively introduces the reader to the disease and nutrition conditions evaluated in human remains. Initially the Tatham Mound inhabitants appear to be quite healthy, but we are reminded how few diseases, especially acute ones, leave skeletal lesions. The reconstruction of diet, accomplished through dental

indicators, as well as chemical analysis of the bone, is especially informative about how subsistence practices in the Florida peninsula might have changed after the Spanish presence.

Perhaps most fascinating, however, was the analysis of trauma. Hutchinson presents a convincing case that many of the wounds were made with metal weaponry, which was not available in precontact times; his analysis of the type of wound involved, such as cuts to the shoulder to disable the right arm, was particularly well done.

The weaknesses of the presentation are few and very minor. For example, analogies drawn with mortuary practices seen in early contact sites in New York, which was colonized by the Dutch, to support patterns at Tatham Mound seem a stretch. In addition, the discussion of bone size is superficial, given the value of the marker as a cumulative indicator of nutrition and activity patterns. Also, the use of percentages for comparative purposes for frequency of certain health conditions between the precontact and postcontact components is understandable, but readers need to keep in mind the very small sample sizes involved for the older group.

The strengths of the book are easy to identify. First, the data are clearly presented in numerous maps, tables, and figures, making them available for use in future studies. Second, the writing style used is lively and very approachable to all; although by necessity technical at times, the text is not overly laden with detail or jargon. Third, the comprehensive approach taken results in one of the most comprehensive reconstructions of the biological and cultural effects of Spanish contact on New World populations. This book will surely become a model for future studies.

10.1215/00141801-2007-071

**The Cherokee Nation in the Civil War.** By Clarissa W. Confer. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007. xii + 199 pp., acknowledgments, introduction, bibliography, index. \$24.95 cloth.)

Laurence M. Hauptman, *SUNY New Paltz*

Clarissa Confer, an associate professor of history at California University of Pennsylvania, has written an all-too-brief treatment of a critical era in Cherokee history. Although she has done extensive research at the National Archives, the Gilcrease Institute, the Oklahoma Historical Society, and the Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, her narrative is mostly a rehash of works by Annie Abel, Edmund Danziger, Kenny Franks, H. Clark Gaines, Gary Moulton, David Nichols, and others.

In this book we read about many all-too-familiar topics: the deep scars of the removal era that beset the Cherokees, the John Ross–Stand Watie blood feud, Albert Pike’s efforts to sway these Indians to the Confederacy’s side, and the Keetowahs versus the Knights of the Golden Circle and their battle over slavery in the Cherokee Nation. The author presents a simplistic portrait of the divisions within the Cherokee Nation, namely between what she deems acculturated and traditional groups. Nowhere does she analyze how the different regions of southern Appalachia from whence they sprang and the different times they arrived in the Indian Territory affected the Cherokees’ outlook. Most glaringly, nowhere does she discuss the Cherokees’ relations with Indians not from the Five Civilized Tribes, those Plains and eastern removed Indians that made up the majority of Native Americans in the Indian Territory. Confer also states that her work is “not strictly a military history of Indian Territory” (8). That claim does not excuse her limited attention to battles that had dramatic effects on the Cherokees: Pea Ridge, the “Gettysburg of the West” (which gets three pages), and Stand Watie’s greatest victories—the capture of the supply-laden steamboat *J. R. Williams* (one page) and the Second Battle of Cabin Creek (two pages).

Despite these problems, Confer does add some new material to the discourse. The author graphically describes the horrible wartime conditions faced by the enslaved within Indian Territory or as fleeing refugees. Perhaps her greatest contribution is her treatment of Stand Watie’s wife Sarah, a refugee in Texas. Confer shows that the upper crust of Cherokee society had a different refugee experience than the thousands of Cherokees who faced starvation in Union Kansas, Confederate Texas, or the Indian Territory. Drawing on the excellent work of Drew Gilpin Faust, she shows that Sarah’s war-torn world was much like that of the wives of southern planters during the conflict. Sarah’s concern for her husband’s and her son Saladin’s welfare was constant, and she frequently urged them to show moral restraint. Her urgings were largely not followed, as shown by the brutal actions committed by both men, which the author strangely plays down.

The book ends with an epilogue, one that needed to be expanded to show more of the war’s impact. For example, present Cherokee opposition to Delaware and Shawnee efforts at federal recognition in part stem from the era of the Civil War. Although the negative vote on Freedmen citizenship is too recent to have been analyzed by Confer, the issue is a longstanding one within the Cherokee Nation and deserved more than a passing reference in the epilogue.

**Mesoamerican Voices: Native-Language Writings from Colonial Mexico, Oaxaca, Yucatan, and Guatemala.** Edited by Matthew Restall, Lisa Sousa, and Kevin Terraciano. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 245 pp., documents, images, glossary, maps, bibliography, index. \$25.00 paper.)

**Annals of His Time: Don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin Quauhtlehuanitzin.** Edited and translated by James Lockhart, Susan Schroeder, and Doris Namala. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006. 329 pp., figures, map, glossary, bibliography, index. \$55.00 cloth.)

Robert Haskett, *University of Oregon*

In 1541, an anguished Nahuatl woman named María Salomé of Malinalco demanded justice in the death of her son, Rodrigo, by means of a brief but moving petition addressed to the local Spanish *alcalde mayor* (judicial officer). Speaking on behalf of her family, she alleged that this needless death had occurred after a negligent Spaniard named Francisco Torres brought a loaded *arquebus* (musket) into the community. Either María Salomé or the notary who wrote the petition for her was able to cite a Spanish law that banned Spaniards from entering indigenous communities with loaded firearms. Whether justice was ultimately served in the case is unknown, but this humble Nahuatl petition—now ably translated into English for us in *Mesoamerican Voices*—is a treasure trove of valuable ethnohistorical information. In it, María Salomé speaks to us across both geographical and cultural time and space in a fundamentally human way; she is a bereaved parent seeking legal redress for the senseless loss of her child's young and unfulfilled life.

Two generations later, a much more sophisticated writer, Don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin Quauhtlehuanitzin, related the story of another kind of disaster in a set of extensive and detailed historical annals centered around events in Mexico City between 1577 and 1615. On 26 July 1607, a boat, “the kind they call a ship,” plying the inland waters between Texcoco and Mexico City with a cargo of cacao, other goods, and Spanish and indigenous passengers sank with a loss of all but four lives; these four survived by swimming to shore, while those who died washed up several days later. Chimalpahin informs us that because of this disaster, “the [service] of taking people across was discontinued” (97).

These and other historical vignettes, as translated and edited by James Lockhart, Susan Schroeder, and Doris Namala in *Annals of His Time*, provide us with a wealth of insights into the life, times, and thought of an indigenous man living under Spanish authority, as well as vital information about the complex civil and ecclesiastical life of the capital, its environs,

and its culturally diverse population. The post-Conquest focus of Chimalpahin's work, much of it indeed dating from the time in which this justly celebrated Nahua writer flourished, complements his better-known annals and texts concerning the precontact era, the past of the Mexicas, and the story of his own home town, Amaquemecan. The collective expertise of the editors, all of whom know Chimalpahin's oeuvre, his life, and his times very well themselves, positions *Annals of His Time* among the most important publications in English, Spanish, or any other language of or about the life, work, and writings of the Amaquemecan historian, and firmly establishes the significance of this text alongside the work of other Nahua annalists (such as the *Anales de Juan Bautista* [García 2001]).

Lockhart, Schroeder, and Namala make it clear that Chimalpahin's late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century annals obey the conventions of this great precontact form of historical record keeping. Chimalpahin not only translated a traditional Nahua genre into alphabetic Nahuatl writing, but also entered colonial subjects into an enduring precontact matrix. Where once dynastic details of the *tlatoque* (rulers) would have been featured, now the doings of high-level Spanish civil and religious authorities—viceroys, bishops, friars, priests—as well as indigenous governors, make frequent appearances. Unusual astronomical and natural phenomena (such as eclipses, floods, and earthquakes), sickness, fiestas, and other noteworthy events, such as the sinking of the passenger boat on Lake Texcoco, echo and replace notices of similar people and events that were standard fare in preconquest Nahua annals. In addition to their high-quality transcription and English translation (usefully presented in parallel on facing pages), the editors preface *Annals of His Time* with a scholarly discussion of the basic conventions of the annals genre, essential details of Chimalpahin's life and work, and the organization of the capital city in which he lived. The reader is in addition treated to a brief but informative discussion of the linguistic form of the text, with special attention being paid here to Chimalpahin's usage when it comes to a number of key terms (such as *altepetl*, *macehualli*, and *tlatoani*). A map, glossary, bibliography, and a multipart (and extremely useful) index are welcome features of the book.

María Salomé's humble petition is just one of sixty translated indigenous-language documents presented in the important new anthology entitled *Mesoamerican Voices*. This book is firmly situated in the enduring tradition of documentary compilations and can be seen as a linear descendant of Arthur J. O. Anderson, Frances Berdan, and James Lockhart's groundbreaking *Beyond the Codices* (1976), itself a collection of translated Nahuatl records of the "mundane" lives of colonial indigenous communities and people. Subsequently, the publication of translated Nahuatl docu-

ments that came from the vast socio-cultural world “beyond the codices” became more commonplace (usually concentrated on single genres such as testaments).

Now in *Mesoamerican Voices*, editors Matthew Restall, Lisa Sousa, and Kevin Terraciano have returned to a “beyond the codices”-style format to regale us with excellent English translations of post-invasion documents written by Nahuas, Mayas (both lowlanders and highlanders), Mixtecs, and Zapotecs. In two introductory chapters, the editors create an accessible overview of the cultures and history of the Mesoamericans prior to and after the Spanish invasion, acknowledging the destructive power of the latter event but nonetheless identifying a tenacious cultural durability in the face of these potentially disastrous events. This is followed by a particularly accessible discussion of both precontact precedents and the post-invasion spread of alphabetic writing among the Nahuas, Mayas, and Mixtecs, as well as an illuminating examination of the characteristics of the most significant postconquest documentary genres (annals, primordial titles, testaments, and land records, to name a few, though petitions tend to be short-changed in this discussion).

The documents themselves are arranged in nine thematically organized “chapters,” each prefaced by some pertinent comments amounting to a “first stage” analysis by the editors. Every document is also introduced by brief comments pointing out its main elements. Among these chapters, readers will encounter “Views of the Conquest,” “Political Life,” and “Society and Gender.” A particularly lively section, “Crime and Punishment,” offers petitions and other kinds of manuscripts detailing injustices and the seamier side of human existence, while “Religious Life” and “Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy” round out the collection. A glossary of significant indigenous-language and Spanish terms, a bibliography, and an index are all welcome and useful tools to have at hand. While one might have hoped for more “mundane” records in *Mesoamerican Voices* and fewer excerpts from well-known and oft-reproduced sources such as the *Florentine Codex*, gems such as María Salomé’s petition are highly illuminating. Her quest for justice tells us, among many other things, that indigenous women could and did attempt to use the colonial legal system to their own advantage. Women such as María Salomé must have had some inkling of how this system worked and could moreover rely on the more expert services of local indigenous notaries to address specific, pertinent points of law that might be enlisted in their support. Neither had to rely on the “superior” abilities of some Spanish lawyer to craft their appeal for justice.

*Annals of His Time* belongs to the more rarified literary atmosphere of the codices excerpted in *Mesoamerican Voices*, and in this way it is a somewhat more “traditional” kind of publication. This is certainly not a

weakness, however, since Chimalpahin relates so many important details, some of them indeed entirely “mundane.” This extremely valuable ethno-historical source is a boon for professional scholars but could be employed effectively in upper-division ethnohistorically themed seminars and most certainly in graduate education. *Mesoamerican Voices* is much more obviously designed for undergraduate classroom use; I am using it as of this writing in an upper-division lecture course that also enrolls some graduate students, but the volume could also play a role in lower-division introductory courses. Like the Chimalpahin work, however, *Mesoamerican Voices* can also serve as a source of first resort and example for scholars embarking on their own ethnohistorical/philological projects.

Chimalpahin’s annals and the various records presented by Restall, Sousa, and Terraciano reveal indigenous societies that were obviously being stressed in various ways by their “colonial” situations, but also peoples who nonetheless had come to terms with that situation and were able to move within it, both intellectually and physically. Both volumes remind us that the Mesoamericans were not powerless objects, but rather people with an ability to confront, and in some cases to rise above, the potentially destructive qualities of the nonindigenous presence in New Spain.

## References

- Anderson, Arthur J. O., Frances Berdan, and James Lockhart  
1976 *Beyond the Codices: The Nahuatl View of Colonial Mexico*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- García, Luis Reyes, trans. and ed.  
2001 *Anales de Juan Bautista: ¿Cómo te confundes? ¿Acaso no somos conquistados?* Mexico City: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios, Superiores en Antropología Social; Biblioteca Lorenzo Boturini, Insigne y Nacional Basílica de Guadalupe.

10.1215/00141801-2007-073

**Nahuatl Theater, Volume 2: Our Lady of Guadalupe.** By Barry D. Sell, Stafford Poole, and Louise M. Burkhart. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006. xii + 229 pp., acknowledgments, references, index. \$49.95 cloth.)

David Tavárez, *Vassar College*

The colonial accounts about the apparition of the Virgin Mary to a Nahuatl man named Juan Diego in Tepeyac, Mexico, in 1531 combine the dramatic

pathos of a portentous revelation with a tantalizing tale of conversion, in which Juan Diego's transformation stands for the spiritual shift of an entire continent. This narrative, which first appeared in full in a 1648 Spanish imprint by Miguel Sánchez and in a 1649 Nahuatl text published by Luis Lasso de la Vega, seems to hold few surprises for its students after three and a half centuries of exegeses. However, the two Nahuatl-language plays in this erudite volume—*Coloquio de la aparición de la Virgen Santa María de Guadalupe* (*Dialogue on the Apparition of the Virgin Saint Mary of Guadalupe*) and *El portento mexicano* (*The Wonder of Mexico*)—highlight a poorly known turn in the transformation of the Guadalupe narratives. These works' rhetorical peculiarities, creative reshaping of apparition accounts, and whimsical elements provide us with a canvas where the sacred embraces the farcical for the entertainment and edification of Nahua commoners.

In this volume, the second in an ambitious multivolume series devoted to Nahuatl theater, the challenges posed by the transcription and translation of these plays are resolved with exacting care, as the variants and grammatical infelicities found in all extant versions of the *Coloquio* and the *Portento* are diligently noted. Both plays, composed in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries, blaze separate trails as they depart from the exalted rhetoric of earlier Nahuatl plays. According to Poole (22), the anonymous *Coloquio* borrows 15 percent of its content from Lasso de la Vega's eloquent exchanges between Juan Diego and Mary, but this source is adapted with flexibility, rather than being treated as the ultimate word on the apparitions. Unlike its predecessors, this work lacks biblical references and does not closely follow the format of an established genre. Unfortunately, the culminating point—Juan Diego's exhibition of Mary's miraculously imprinted image—is marred by the absence of one folio. The play takes a radical turn here, for it follows this final miracle with a jarring *divertimento* featuring an unscrupulous physician who prescribes relief for a flatulent patient, only to be attacked by a mob armed with inflated bulls' bladders; thus, Marian devotion yields to colonial slapstick.

Like the *Coloquio*, the *Portento* provides comic relief in the form of two servants called Cacao Bean and Toasted One. It differs in that it assigns a higher social status to Juan Diego and a more active role to his wife and lacks a full ending. The *Portento* is the idiosyncratic creation of José Pérez de la Fuente y Quijada, an enigmatic Creole or mestizo author from Amecameca active between the 1660s and the 1710s who composed several works in a genre he termed *verso mexicano*. As Poole indicates, this is certainly not courtly Nahuatl, but a capricious language register. Such "Mexican verse" is, apparently, an attempt by a Spanish speaker to shoehorn Nahuatl words into a popular Spanish versification scheme—*arte menor*

verses of about eight syllables—which also features some assonant rhymes. One example may illustrate this procedure: as Juan Diego says *Yhuan no*, “and also,” his wife interrupts him with *Ma nomalcochpan*, “Come to my embrace,” thus completing an eight-syllable verse with flair. Such a task, however, sometimes requires the addition of morphemes to Nahuatl words in a nonidiomatic manner; as Burkhart notes, the author endeavors to give an “authentic” Nahua inflection to this hybrid work by working references to jade, turquoise, and flowers into the text.

In sum, this edition of two unorthodox and unique plays will compel scholars to rethink the trajectory of Guadalupan devotional narratives in late colonial times. Moreover, the two introductory chapters by Poole and Burkhart may be used by university instructors to ease their students into the study of Guadalupan apparition accounts from a vantage point that manages to merge the divine with the popular and the pedestrian.

10.1215/00141801-2007-074

**The Guadalupan Controversies in Mexico.** By Stafford Poole. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006. xi + 318 pp., preface, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$65.00 cloth.)

Barry D. Sell, *Independent Scholar*

When you stir the politics of national identity together with religious belief and scholarly investigation, you get a volatile mix that is sure to generate as much heat as light. In this case, the controversies involve the historicity of the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe of Tepeyac to the Nahua neophyte Juan Diego in early December 1531. This particular Marian devotion is one of the most potent and deeply felt symbols of *Mexicanidad* (Mexican-ness). Juan Diego’s recent rise to sainthood in the Catholic Church touched off the last big round of disputation, in which Stafford Poole took a leading role. Poole frames his own participation in the context of a centuries-long discussion. In the process, he makes a major contribution to the intellectual and religious history of Mexico from colonial times to the present day.

Potential readers are alerted at the outset that the author is going to put the accepted tradition of historicity into doubt. He brings to this task a broad range of skills and life experiences. He is a well-regarded historian of the early Mexican church. He is also a scholar of early Nahuatl and Nahuas who in 1998 helped bring out a critical edition of the foundational account in Nahuatl (originally published in 1649).

Just as important, he is an ordained Roman Catholic priest who early in life believed in the traditional account of the apparitions, and he has served as a college administrator. These last are just as important as his academic qualifications. I am reminded of a brief interview with a Franciscan priest in Mexico that was aired on Spanish-language television in the Los Angeles area. He spoke shortly before Juan Diego became a saint, declaring sharply that anyone who opposed the traditional apparition account was an enemy of indigenous people, an enemy of Mexico, and an enemy of the church. The news segment that contained this interview made it clear that his remarks resonated widely. In such an emotionally charged debate, a judicious temperament and an ability to understand the other side's point of view are as necessary as raw data and analytical skills. Poole passes on all counts.

While the book under review here can stand on its own, it is best read in tandem with Poole's earlier *Our Lady of Guadalupe: The Origins and Symbols of a Mexican National Symbol, 1531-1797* (1995). Since the first book deals more with sources and their interpretations, it frees up the second to expand on how individuals and institutions have used (or misused) sources and their varying interpretations.

It will surely come as a surprise to newcomers to this discussion that the earliest securely dated and attributed accounts of the apparitions of 1531 came more than a century later in two publications, first in Spanish (1648) and then in Nahuatl (1649). This is astounding if one considers the apparitions to be the premier religious event of the last 500 years in the Western Hemisphere. This mismatch between the relative lateness of the most crucial primary sources and the assurance sought by proponents of the apparitions leads to an inevitable tension in any discussion of the historicity of the events. It also makes for a fascinating story of individuals across five centuries (admirable and less than so on all sides of this debate), the nature of faith, the requirements of scholarship, and the prerogatives and politics of a major institution.

For those who appreciate work that shows the relevance of scholarship on early periods to contemporary concerns, this should serve well both in the classroom and in the study.

## Reference

- Poole, Stafford  
 1995 *Our Lady of Guadalupe: The Origins and Symbols of a Mexican National Symbol, 1531-1797*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

10.1215/00141801-2007-075

**Engendering Mayan History: Kaqchikel Women as Agents and Conduits of the Past, 1875–1970.** By David Carey. (New York: Routledge, 2006. xiii + 327 pp., note on orthography, introduction, illustrations, epilogue, glossary, appendix, works cited, index. \$24.95 paper.)

Cindy Forster, *Scripps College*

David Carey's ambitious compilation of 250 oral histories from the Guatemalan countryside reaches back to the beginning of agro-export liberalism, which appropriated peasant land and labor across Latin America. It closes a century later, before the full onslaught of neoliberalism, coinciding in Guatemala with the genocide of the military dictatorship. Carey fashions his book mostly from interviews with and by Kaqchikel-Maya women (the author conducted 100 of them). The women's portrayals of racism are stunning. Starting with the biography of Germana, a renowned midwife and Catholic Action leader, Carey goes on to explore women's labor histories in the agro-export zone and the highlands. A superb chapter details the 1944 Patzicía massacre, comparing it to the 1967 brawl in Comalapa between followers of Catholic Action and Mayan spirituality. The final case study addresses the exclusion of girls from schooling. Throughout, the interviews are interwoven with scholarly views. While census materials are used to good advantage, other archival sources are the weak leg in the tripod of oral texts, secondary sources, and archival documents.

For those who work with oral histories, it often seems a crime to alter the texture and flow of the texts. Such interventions lie at the center of current debates in the academy. Mindful of these conflicting views, I would say Carey's interpretations are often preliminary, even while evidence from the spoken texts is fabulously rich. He poses competing Mayan analyses but does not pursue these contradictions, since this would require privileging a particular line of argument or exploring the reasons for divergent opinions. In the end, ethnicity is reified to the extent that the narrative does not closely examine the lines of fracture among Kaqchikel (e.g., see p. 23). When Carey is willing to interrogate "the ineluctably complex" (178) and draw near to an analysis of divides such as age, class, or loyalties to the state, some of the book's best moments are achieved, for example, in the discussion of men's "obscuring" of women's protagonism to "reinvent" male power (173) or the author's invitation to challenge the "hidden privileges and assumptions that contributed to Latin American historiography" (213). Carey shows the ways in which gendered economic oppression both opened up new realms of experience to women and reflected or deepened their immiseration (81, 96, 103). Sometimes his adherence to the theoretical school that celebrates small acts of resistance can seem forced—as in the

example of a Mayan wife who carved out a special economic niche selling bread to prisoners via her imprisoned indigenous husband, who had lost his freedom as punishment for a massacre that killed hundreds of Mayans and a handful of Ladinos (145). On the basis of such moments, Carey argues that “negotiations between hegemon and subaltern did not result in wholesale victory or defeat for either side” (219). This is a judgment that can normalize the devastating poverty of the indigenous majority and minimize the racism practiced against them. Perhaps to argue that “Kaqchikel women were neither victims nor revolutionaries” (208) is too categorical. Ladinos and Ladinas are constantly shown hitting Mayan women, while the book’s silence on the subject of domestic violence is deafening (for an example, see p. 18 on “structures of power”). Neither do we learn of class struggles that laid the foundation for dense organizing networks among the Kaqchikel beginning in the 1960s.

While the ethnographic material in *Engendering Mayan History* is truly a contribution to our understanding, one might have wished for more. The epilogue, titled “Resurrecting Reconciliation,” offers an example. Here the author seems to argue for an abiding Mayan cultural strength out of which peace may be woven. The point is well taken, but his evidence is odd. He loosely joins strands from the lives of a midwife, a colonel, and a widow (221–24). The midwife Germana we have met earlier in the book, and the widow is internationally famous—Rosalina Tuyuc, a leader of a human rights group representing war widows, who also spent some time in Congress in a progressive party. The brief pages linking the three individuals raise unanswered questions. Why did the family of the midwife Germana sell her portrait, which was painted by a relative from memory because the family possessed no photos of her? Why is the colonel who bought it, and who came to believe her image saved his life in an alleged guerrilla attack, so nervous about traveling that he takes the portrait with him as a sort of magic shield? I was curious to see what the colonel had done, since guerrilla operations of this nature usually targeted powerful individuals with dramatic histories—people who crucified villagers, the founders of death squads, scions of corporate empires responsible for murdering labor leaders. In the relevant *Partes de Guerra* of the three guerrilla armies, I located references to false army accusations in the month of the alleged attack on the colonel, but no trace of the attack, though it appears in press cited by Carey. Perhaps it was an instance of the right wing making war on rival factions and accusing the guerrillas? Perhaps it was the fourth wing of the guerrillas, usually not engaged in military actions, or one of the short-lived guerrilla groups that came and went in the years of endless massacres? In any event, had the person carrying out the operation been a guerrilla,

it would have been someone like Rosalina Tuyuc's brother Juan, an ex-guerrilla commander who won national attention leading efforts to secure rights for thousands of ex-guerrilla combatants who are both poor and Mayan. So it hardly seems fair to place Rosalina and her work on behalf of indigenous widows in the same company as a Ladino colonel from the army that carried out the genocide. Apparently, Carey reasons that the colonel's respect for the supernatural powers of the Kaqchikel midwife offers a common ground for reconciliation with the army's mainly Mayan victims. Had the book been written in Kaqchikel or Spanish, such choices would identify the author with those on the right who are arguing for a certain kind of "reconciliation," inimical to others doing the work of the "recovery of historical memory." Scholars writing in English often claim they stand above such associations. However, I would suggest precisely the opposite and urge greater attention to the multiple lines of fracture in Guatemalan history in order to achieve a more accurate portrait of ethnicity and work toward the author's stated ideal of "mutual approbation, harmony, and cooperation between diverse peoples" (59).

10.1215/00141801-2007-076

**Vodou Nation: Haitian Art Music and Cultural Nationalism.** By Michael Largey. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006. 283 pp., illustrations, glossary, notes, bibliography, index. \$25.00 paper.)

Joshua H. Nadel, *North Carolina Central University*

In *Vodou Nation*, Michael Largey skillfully connects Haitian nationalism with a reclamation of Haiti's African roots through the creation of *mizik savant ayisien*—Haitian art music. Largey argues that both internal and external catalysts (U.S. occupation and black Atlantic ideas, respectively) led to the development of a cultural nationalism that, rhetorically at least, included the Haitian peasant as the elite looked inward to find the font of Haitianness. The book is a fascinating and cogent combination of early-twentieth-century Haitian music, history, intellectual currents, and ideologies.

Essential to his discussion of Haitian cultural nationalism is the idea of "cultural memory," the four elements of which, Largey contends, are crucial for understanding how elites shape cultural identity. With the exception of chapter 1, which assesses the impact of Jean Price-Mars's clarion call for the Haitian elite to understand their peasant compatriots, each

chapter focuses on Haitian or African American composers to explore one of these elements. Occide Jeanty, director of Haiti's military band in the early twentieth century, is Largey's example of "recombinant mythology" in chapter 2. This theory offers a compelling way to look at the spread of nationalism in a semiliterate society, suggesting that "successive retellings of archetypal stories" (17) are used to link heroes from different eras. Chapter 3 examines how Ludovic Lamothe "vulgarized" Haitian elite music by "borrow[ing] popular musical forms," while Justin Elie "classitized" it, tying the present to "an esteemed 'classical' past" (18). The operas *Ouanga* and *Troubled Island* stand as examples of "diasporic cosmopolitanism" in chapter 4. The works "embodied a felt connection between Africa, the United States, and Haiti," (148) "circumvent[ing] dominant narratives" and allowing Haitian and African American cultural elites to "participate . . . in a shared vision of black nationalism" (18). Largey's concept of "music ideology" (chapter 5) suggests that composers and ethnographers, such as Werner A. Jaegerhuber, make political decisions that can convey or obscure a music's origins through transcription.

For any work with the theoretical aspirations of *Vodou Nation* to have—as Largey writes about recombinant mythology—"meaningful applications," it must be connected to "historical, political, or cultural institutions" (71). And on this score, Largey does an excellent job. His theoretical discussions never stray far from ample historical and musical evidence, making his arguments about Haitian cultural nationalism more compelling. There are a few minor quibbles. Some of the musical evidence seems—for the nonmusicologist—unnecessary. A partial reproduction of Jeanty's "1804" (90), while aesthetically pleasing, is barely legible and Largey offers no analysis of the score. Other examples too have little in the way of explanation. On the other hand, when he does analyze measures of music, such as with Ludovic Lamothe's "Nibo" (109), it proves insightful, even for the musical neophyte.

While Largey effectively ties Haitian cultural nationalism to the wider black Atlantic via the United States and Europe, he could further elucidate regional links between the Haitian *mouvement indigène*, *indigenismo*, and other contemporaneous Latin American nationalist phenomena. He mentions, for example, that Justin Elie visited Cuba and met with Ernestine Lecuona, whose "younger brother, Ernesto would later write works that drew upon the musical resources of the Cuban countryside" (122). The inference is that Elie may have had some sort of contact or influence over the younger Lecuona. Largey also writes that the *noirisme* of François Duvalier and Lorimer Denis "bore some resemblance to pan-African movements such as *négritude*" (194) but does not discuss the importance of the latter to

the *griot* movement or any connections between the two. Ultimately, these do not diminish from the argument, but had they been fleshed out further they could have added greater depth to what is an impressive work. *Vodou Nation* will greatly appeal to scholars across disciplines: not only ethnomusicologists, but historians, anthropologists, and cultural studies scholars should find it useful for research and upper level teaching.

10.1215/00141801-2007-077

**Rain Forest Literatures: Amazonian Texts and Latin American Culture.** By Lúcia Sá. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004. Cultural Studies of the Americas, no. 16. 325 pp., index, bibliography. \$75.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper.)

Frank Salomon, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*

“Tupi or not Tupi, that is the question.” With this dinner-table zinger, Oswald de Andrade challenged his contemporaries to decide whether they would recognize Amerindian verbal art, Tupian and otherwise, as a formative influence on Brazilian letters. That was in 1928. Andrade was a partisan of the *antropófago* (“cannibal,” i.e., ethnographically minded) faction amid São Paulo’s modernist salons. Almost eighty years later his question is still a challenge, according to Lúcia Sá, professor of Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin American studies at Manchester University.

Sá is an enthusiastic latter-day “cannibal.” She does acknowledge the deforming pressure of European literary genres on whatever indigenous discourse literate Euro-Americans reproduced: pressures that range from missionary discourse of the sixteenth century through nineteenth-century romanticism to French and Italian avant-gardism of the twentieth century. But she also holds that even after accounting for such deformations, indigenous discourse still irreducibly informs the crucial identity-shaping works of literature in both Spanish and Portuguese.

This seems, at first, a hard thesis to credit. Every anthropologist who loves literature is disappointed time and again by obtuse, condescending, and manipulative literary representations of Amerindian verbal art. Yet Sá persuades one to reconsider, and perhaps even to believe, the optimistic “cannibal” view: that South American literature did ingest the verbal arts of its native foes and did acquire their strong substance.

This volume is an expansion of Sá’s Indiana University dissertation in comparative literature, Spanish and Portuguese. Its research base is opulent

for Brazil, and solid enough with regard to Venezuela, Colombia, and Paraguay. The argumentative structure is at once clever and robust. Four parts correspond to four contrasting regional engagements between the republic of letters and the lowland peoples. In each, Sá argues that a distinctive Amerindian theme—and not just an Iberian or creole ideology—shaped the literary results.

Part I concerns Roraima and the Cariban peoples of the Guianas, whose “geographical imaginary” is known to English readers via *Watumna* (David Guss’s 1990 rendering of Marc de Civrieux’s edition). Part II focuses on the far-flung Tupi-Guarani myth of the “land without evil,” resonant in the literature of Amazonia and the Platine countries and familiar to ethnohistorians through works of Hélène Clastres. Part III studies the Rio Negro (northwest Amazonian) tradition of Jurupary, a family of narratives about male initiation, the sacred flute, and the ideology of gender inequality. This region has become a “canonical culture” for anthropologists, thanks to Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, Irving Goldman, and Stephen and Christine Hugh-Jones among others, but it enters the literary cultures of Brazil, Venezuela, and Colombia via different channels. The most famous Northwest Amazonian source is the lost but translated Nheengatú-language *Jurupary* by Maximiliano Jose Roberto (Stradelli 1964 [1890]). Chapter 7, which unwinds the tangled source-critical history of Jurupary texts, is the most fascinating and indispensable section of the book. Part IV sketches a small part of the stupendously complex human landscape on the eastern flank of the Andes, focusing on the Peruvian Matsiguenga (Baer 1994) and their narratives of invasions and migrations. Surprisingly, the Gê peoples, despite a remarkable ethnographic shelf, have caught less literary than scientific attention (122).

Transverse to the four-part areal division runs an argument that writers of Spanish and Portuguese have folded Amerindian genres into the four narratives that unfortunately dominate fiction about “Indians”: the voyage of exploration with attendant “green hell” atmospherics; the Indian as prototypical hero of an emergent nation; the indigenous cultures as revolutionary alternative to colonial or independent states; and pseudo-ethnography, the fiction of “being there.”

Each part proceeds by providing, first, a chapter on the early entextualizations of indigenous discourse, whether by captives and missionaries such as Staden (1557) and de Léry (1578), or by later researchers from Schomburgk (1848), Nimuendajú (1914), Koch-Grünberg (1928), and Cadogan (1959) onward. These chapters (1, 4, 7, and 10) are the ethnohistorically crucial parts. They provide paths into the difficult bibliography of lowland

verbal lore, and they are a delight to read. They will be important teaching tools.

The intervening chapters argue that Amerindian texts translated by these authors are not just echoed in famous novels, but shape them as if from within. These affirmations concern Alejo Carpentier, Rómulo Gallegos, Antonio Gonçalves Dias, Darcy Ribeiro on his novelistic side, Raúl Roa Bastos, and even, in a contrary way, Sá's *bête noire* Mario Vargas Llosa. Sá does allow that nearly all of these writers obscure indigenous agency through various versions of the "vanishing race" myth (275-77). But she also thinks (as does this reviewer) that the threshold of a new, linguistically plural literature has already been crossed by ethnically oriented writers like Kaká Werá Jecupé (n.d.) and Umusi Pārōkumu with Tōrāmū Kēhíri (1995) at the end of the twentieth century.

*Rain Forest Literatures* presents an enticing invitation to ethnographically informed study of literature. It alone (or together with Lienhardt's 1992 *La voz y su huella*) could inspire valuable new courses. These might fit into a romance language program or an anthropology program equally well, given current theoretical commonalities.

The pending question remains, however, what will happen once that invitation gets accepted? Will literary scholars finally become willing to deal with actual indigenous languages? If humanists really do credit the "cannibal" thesis, learning American languages becomes, in this reviewer's opinion, a put-up-or-shut-up imperative.

Sá, however, does not go so far. Her mission concerns events *after* initial translation of Amerindian verbal art. With rare exceptions (189, on Tupian diminutives), she is not concerned with the linguistic constitution of Amazonian verbal art. That is, she does not engage ethnopoetics or explain artistic process within particular tongues. Basso's studies of Kalapalo Gê narrative, as well as Nuckolls's and Uzendoski's works on Amazonian Quichua (to name only a few examples), have already created openings to unsuspected worlds of artful language. They show how rhetoric, poesy, and persuasion exfoliate from particular languages' fine-grained properties. One can hope that readers of *Rain Forest Literatures* will want to enter those worlds.

In the meantime Sá has done a valuable job, not only in lucidly teaching English readers a rich vein of literature, but also in heralding an important future research venture. She has cut one side of a literary-linguistic-ethnographic wedge that may yet dislodge the "esoteric" stigma clinging to Amerindian verbal achievements.

## References

- Baer, Gerd  
1994 *Cosmología y shamanismo de los matsiguenga (Perú oriental)*. Quito: Abya Yala.
- Cadogan, León, ed.  
1959 *Ayvu Rapyta: textos míticos de los mbyá-guarani del Guairá*. São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo.
- Guss, David M., trans.  
1990 *Watunna, an Orinoco Creation Cycle*. Marc de Civrieux, ed. San Francisco: North Point.
- Jecupé, Kaká Werá  
N.d. *Oré Awé Roiru'a Ma. Todas as Vezes que Dissemos Adeus*. São Paulo: Função Phytoervas.
- Koch-Grünberg, Theodor  
1928 *Vom Roroima zum Orinoco. Ergebnisse einer Reise in Nordbrasilien und Venezuela in den Jahren 1911-1913*. 4 vols. Berlin: D. Reimer.
- Léry, Jean de  
1990 [1578] *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, Otherwise Called America . . .* Janet Whatley, trans. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lienhardt, Martin  
1992 *La voz y su huella: escritura y conflicto étnico-cultural en América Latina, 1492-1988*. Hanover, NH: Ediciones del Norte.
- Nimuendajú, Curt  
1987 [1914] *As Lendas da Criação e Destruição do Mundo como Fundamentos da Religião dos Apapocúva-Guarani*. Charlotte Emmerich and Eduardo B. Viveiros de Castro, trans. São Paulo: Hucitec/Edusp.
- Pārōkumu, Umusī, and Tōrāmũ Kēhíri  
1995 *Antes o Mundo não Existia. Mitologia dos Antigos Desana-Kēhíripōrã*. São João Batista do Rio Tiquié: UNIRT/FOIRN.
- Schomburgk, Richard  
1848 *Travels in British Guiana during the Years 1840-1844*. 2 vols. Walter E. Roth, trans. Georgetown, Guiana: Daily Chronicle.
- Staden, Hans  
2008 [1557] *Hans Staden's True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil*. Neil L. Whitehead, ed., and Michael Harbsmeier, trans. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Stradelli, Ermanno  
1964 [1890] *La Leggenda dell' Jurupary e Outras Lendas Amazônicas*. Caderno 4. São Paulo: Instituto Cultural Italo-Brasileiro.