



RESEÑAS

Maurizio Fabbri. *Saggi sulla poesia epica spagnola del Secolo d'oro e del Settecento*. Rimini: Panozzo Editore, 2014.

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Los seis ensayos que constituyen este libro: Magia, arte y mito en la épica cortesana del siglo XVI español; El *Carlo Famoso* de Zapata de Chaves; Presencias épicas en el XVIII; Francisco Ruiz de León, poeta épico del siglo XVIII; Las naves incendiadas de Cortés como tema y problema literario y político y Viera y Clavijo, cantor de la gesta de Cortés, se articulan en torno a dos polos: los que se refieren a la épica del XVI y aquellos que se ocupan de muestras pertenecientes al XVIII.

La difusión del arte y la práctica de las ciencias ocultas en la sociedad y en la cultura españolas y americanas de los siglos XVI y XVII puede observarse en las obras épicas de Lasso de la Vega, Saavedra Guzmán y Zapata de Chaves. En estos siglos la magia llamada “negra”, que había alcanzado una difusión considerable en los diversos estratos sociales, fue tenazmente perseguida por la iglesia católica española. No obstante, la lectura de obras de la época permite comprobar el espacio ocupado por la práctica de las ciencias ocultas, aun entre los intelectos más cultos.

En el ámbito de la poesía épica, los ensayos ponen de relieve la presencia de la magia y de elementos como la presencia de criaturas míticas, animales monstruosos, la práctica de la antropofagia y los sacrificios humanos, sobre todo referidos y atribuidos a los pueblos indígenas. La investigación del autor lo lleva a concluir que la inserción de la magia en la cultura española del siglo XVI no es un fenómeno episódico u ornamental, sino esencial y constitutivo de la materia poética.

Fabbri señala que los autores que han sido estudiados representan solo una minoría con respecto a aquellos cuyas obras han caído en el olvido. Ello se debe, al menos en parte, a que la crítica está convencida de que la épica se halla en un nivel muy inferior con respecto a los modelos italianos y a otros géneros, y ha acumulado juicios negativos sobre la llamada épica histórica o heroica. Sin embargo, este género tuvo buena acogida entre literatos y eruditos contemporáneos, así como por parte del público lector. El autor observa que dichos poemas cumplían una función cultural y social muy precisa y respondían a las expectativas de un sector de la sociedad española a la que no satisfacían las representaciones de personajes y de acontecimientos en los romances, las crónicas y las obras de teatro. De manera que la épica constituye una presencia constante en la conciencia

poética española, y los poemas compuestos en los Siglos de Oro son la expresión de una forma de pensamiento poseedora de múltiples características, en las que aparecen amalgamadas poesía, historia, teología, filosofía, ciencia y mitología.

Como ejemplo de una obra representativa de este género de poesía, se examina el caso del *Carlo famoso*, compuesto por Zapata de Chaves en 1566. Zapata pertenecía totalmente a la sociedad de mediados del siglo XVI y participaba de una atmósfera cultural dominada por las empresas extraordinarias e inauditas, y en la que los hechos realmente sucedidos se entrelazaban con las fantasías más increíbles. Así, de las páginas del *Carlo* emerge la España concreta y mágica de aquellos tiempos, donde se entrecruzan la memoria y la fantasía, lo vivido y lo imaginado, lo cotidiano y lo mítico, la sincronía y la diacronía de tiempo y espacio, todo ello expresado con elevada inspiración poética, en la que los versos de las octavas reales se adecuan a las diversas situaciones.

En cuanto a la épica en el XVIII, se realiza una reivindicación de poetas y obras, a la vez que se ofrece un panorama que invita a reconsiderar ideas sobre la épica de este siglo. En efecto, durante la segunda mitad del XVIII la épica se vio revestida de legitimidad en la *Poética* de Luzán (1737, 1789), para quien la “fábula épica” representaba el género mejor adaptado para someterse a las reglas del arte y para contribuir a una provechosa instrucción moral. Así, en 1755 Francisco Ruiz de León compuso la *Hernandía*, poema épico sobre la figura y las hazañas de Cortés, obra que anuncia el renacimiento de la épica española, luego de un largo periodo de abandono del género. La narración sigue de cerca la obra de Antonio de Solís (*Historia de la conquista de México*, 1684), hecho que señala un cambio en el gusto poético: a diferencia de los cronistas que inspiraron a los épicos del XVI (Díaz del Castillo, Las Casas, Sahagún), Ruiz de León prefiere la crónica de Solís, pues se proponía componer un poema épico recurriendo a hechos realmente acaecidos. Así, los “encantos mágicos” se limitan a unos pocos episodios y se manifiesta cierto interés filológico, por ejemplo al explicar el significado de los topónimos. La figura de Cortés aparece como modelo del héroe positivo, ejemplo de soldado victorioso y de constructor de civilidad, muy a propósito para gratificar a lectores testigos de la decadencia y de la pérdida de prestigio de España.

No hay que olvidar, además, que la épica tenía una significación en los planos político y patriótico, debido a que era un género que permitía ofrecer respuestas a la campaña denigratoria que se desarrollaba en Europa en contra de la colonización en el continente americano. Lo anterior está estrechamente ligado a la convocatoria que en 1777 publicó la Real Academia Española, con el tema del incendio de las naves de Hernán Cortés (figura que constituía el blanco principal de las críticas hacia la empresa conquistadora española). En el certamen participaron varios autores notables, como Fernández de Moratín, Vaca de Guzmán y Viera y Clavijo. Fabbri ofrece comentarios sobre los poemas de estos autores. Se

propone, en primer lugar, indagar acerca de las posibles razones por las cuales la obra del primero no ganó el premio, aparte de dos, bastante conocidas (que la Academia quiso castigarlo por la soberbia mostrada frente a los miembros de la misma, y porque su obra era de calidad inferior a la de Vaca de Guzmán, autor de *Las naves de Cortés destruidas*, poema premiado.), a saber: que Moratín no comprendió las intenciones de los convocantes en cuanto a los alcances políticos que se deseaban obtener a través del tratamiento del tema del concurso. En seguida se enumeran las cualidades del poema de Vaca de Guzmán, quien a juicio del autor sí supo tratar el tema de modo adecuado; su obra es un canto apasionado en defensa de España, rico en imágenes paradigmáticas y son alusiones políticas fácilmente descifrables. En cuanto al poema de Viera y Clavijo, *El segundo Agatocles. Cortés en Nueva España*, Fabbri lo examina con detenimiento, a partir de los manuscritos conservados, uno en Tenerife y el otro en Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

Con posterioridad al concurso convocado por la RAE, y a consecuencia de este, la figura y las hazañas de Cortés se convirtieron en un punto de referencia constante para cultivadores de la literatura en sus diversos géneros, con la finalidad de defender el prestigio y la cultura nacionales. Es notable el caso de los jesuitas expulsados de las posesiones españolas en 1767, quienes desde el exilio en Italia esgrimieron la pluma para unirse a la defensa de la cultura española, como Francisco Masdeu (en 1781), Bernardo García, Mariano Lorente y, de manera especialmente destacada, Francisco Javier Clavijero. En España, hacia el final del siglo, tomó la defensa de la patria Juan de Escoquiz, en su poema *México conquistada* (1798), en el cual se propone convencer sobre la legitimidad de la empresa de Cortés; se trata de la obra más extensa escrita en el siglo XVIII, subordinada a lo ideológico y con fines propagandísticos, mediante un discurso no exento de elegancia.

Al término de una lectura atenta de estos ensayos, se resienten dos aspectos: el primero se debe a repeticiones de datos, de ejemplos y en ocasiones de frases y citas idénticas de un ensayo a otro. El segundo consiste en algunas imprecisiones en cuanto a los nombres nahuas, probablemente porque el autor los transcribió tal como aparecen en las obras que examina, sin modernizar la escritura. Este hecho, que puede pasar desapercibido para personas no versadas en textos indígenas, es muy evidente para lectores mexicanos, o para expertos en el tema. Hay asimismo algún detalle historiográfico, como la afirmación de que la Malinche fue dada a Cortés por Moctezuma (página 124, nota 28), lo cual no es así: los indígenas de Tabasco le ofrecieron a Cortés veinte mujeres, entre las cuales iba Malintzin.

Sin embargo, lo que hay que destacar son los muy amplios conocimientos del autor en cuanto a la épica. El material que ofrece en estos ensayos es de gran utilidad para los estudiosos del género y constituye una herramienta didáctica invaluable, por la bibliografía señalada y por los

análisis que se realizan de los poemas. En conjunto, el libro es testimonio de un trabajo acucioso –basado en la consulta directa de fuentes– y de una auténtica pasión por los temas tratados.

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Elizabeth Smith Rousselle. *Gender and Modernity in Spanish Literature, 1789-1920*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014.

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Few monographs examining the modern subject in Spanish literature trace modernity in Spain, especially as it relates to issues of gender, to the eighteenth century. Those that do might make brief reference to Feijoo, or perhaps Josefa Amar y Borbón, but rarely do they go much beyond these now well-known examples. In *Gender and Modernity in Spanish Literature 1789-1920*, Elizabeth Smith Rousselle not only gives more than brief reference to the eighteenth century in her study of modernity and gender in Spain, she provides deep analysis of four important eighteenth-century literary texts as early examples of the reactions by male and female writers to “the sociohistoric phenomena of modernity” (3). Smith Rousselle reads these texts, which range from José Cadalso’s *Cartas marruecas* (1789) to Miguel de Unamuno’s *Dos madres* (1920), through their expressions of disillusion with the enormous social, political, and cultural changes occurring in Spain at the time of their composition. They are texts by both women and men, and Smith Rousselle proposes that an examination of their “gendered disillusion” reveals a better understanding of modernity in the Spanish context.

In the book’s “Introduction: The Female and Male Modern Subject,” Smith Rousselle looks to studies by Rita Felski and Jürgen Habermas to explore issues of modernity and gendered subjects. She also gives an overview of Hispanist studies by Kirkpatrick, Labanyi, Bretz, Johnson, and Iarocci, among others, of the modern Spanish subject. Smith Rousselle compares and contrasts the Spanish context with trends from other European countries, and sets out to make “a novel set of psycho-socio-historically related connections and interpretations about the phenomenon of gendered disillusion in particular texts” (14).

The body of the book is divided into four parts. Part I: “Disillusion and Optimism in the Age of Enlightenment,” consists of two chapters on works from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—Chapter 1 looks at José Cadalso’s *Cartas marruecas* and Josefa Amar y Borbón’s *Discurso sobre la*

educación física y moral de las mujeres; Chapter 2 juxtaposes José Mor de Fuentes's sentimental novel *La Serafina* against María Lorenza de los Ríos's comic play *La sabia indiscreta*. Part II: "(Dis)Enchanted Passion and Critique in Contexts of Romanticism and Realism" has two chapters on mid nineteenth-century Romantic and realist texts. Chapter 3 contrasts the *flâneur* character in Larra's articles to the male hysteric in Rosalía de Castro's short novels "El caballero de las botas azules" and "El primer loco." Chapter 4 focuses on the treatment of religion, a critique of positivism, and analysis of female characters in Fernán Caballero's *Simón Verde* and Benito Pérez Galdos's *Marianela*." Part III looks at other realist works from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—Leopoldo Alas's *Su único hijo* and Emilia Pardo Bazán's *La quimera*" in Chapter 5, and Benito Pérez Galdos' *Nazarín* set against Emilia Pardo Bazán's *Dulce Dueño*" in chapter 6. Part IV: "Symbols of (Dis)Illusion in the Early Twentieth Century," includes texts and authors from Spain's modernist Generation of 1898 in the early part of the twentieth century—Pío Baroja's *El árbol de la ciencia* and Carmen de Burgos's *El Perseguidor*" in Chapter 7, and Chapter 8 with Blanca de los Ríos's *Las hijas de Don Juan* and alongside Unamuno's *Dos madres*." Smith Rouselle has purposefully chosen works by "canonical" writers for analysis, which in the case of the women writers she explains as "those who are cited as exceptions and who represent the accepted voice of women among the intellectual elite of modernizing Spain" (181). Her purpose is "to locate intersections and divergences of privileged female and male subjectivity to generate further interpretations and examples of Spanish modernity from the center" (11). In the book's conclusion "Modern Spanish Subjects: Disillusioned Men and Hopeful Women," Smith Rouselle finds that although both male and female subjects in Spain dealt with issues important throughout European modernity—the "perils of positivism, the empty promises of science, and the gendered implications for modern individualism" (175)—, in Spain modernity held issues uniquely Spanish including its difficult relationship with Catholicism and the Church. Ultimately, Smith Rouselle finds that female subjects express less "unbridled disillusion" than their male counterparts, and she sees a continuity between eighteenth-century writers Amar y Borbón and Lorenza de los Ríos to the twentieth-century women writers like Blanca de los Ríos in their focus on marriage and on women's roles as mothers.

This book is an ambitious undertaking, tackling complex and contentious issues across more than a century of Spanish literature spanning a historical period that itself is marked by complexities and contradictions. *Dieciochistas* might question Smith Rouselle's selection and classification of representative texts from the eighteenth-century—for example passing over some of the period's published women authors such as María Rosa Gálvez in favor of María Lorenza de los Ríos's *La sabia indiscreta*, which is deemed canonical when it was only recently published in 2000 and never performed publicly in its day. There are also some

important omissions in Smith Roussele's bibliography for the eighteenth century. For example any discussion of gender and Cadalso should reference Rebecca Haidt's chapter on the *Cartas marruecas* in her 2002 book *Embodying Enlightenment*. However, there is still much to praise in Smith Roselle's book. That she begins her study of disillusion and modernity with the eighteenth-century reminds us of the debates over "pre-Romanticism" and Russell Sebold's concept of "primer romanticism," which in turn influenced more recent studies of modernity by Iarocci and others. The way Smith Roselle juxtaposes, compares, and contrasts texts by women and men; the selections she makes of both well-known and not-so-well known authors and texts; and her focus on the role of "gendered disillusion" make this contribution to studies on gender, modernity, and its eighteenth-century roots in Spain worth reading.

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Marc André Bernier, Clorinda Donato, and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink,
 eds. *Jesuit Accounts of the Colonial Americas: Intercultural Transfers, Disputes, and Textualities*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014.

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In this volume, Marc André Bernier, Clorinda Donato, and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink bring together the work of 19 scholars to craft a prismatic view of Jesuit accounts before, during, and even long after the 1767 expulsion, linking the Jesuits to the anthropology of the Enlightenment. Lüsebrink describes the Jesuit writings as framing a "paysage éclaté et parfois insolite, façonné par des temporalités diverses et incertaines" (421), that can only be understood through a multidisciplinary, transatlantic lens. The book demolishes the binary contrasts that can lock even comparative studies into set molds.

The editors divide the book's chapters into three sections. First, the volume considers the reception of the changing worldview within the Company of Jesus; this section examines the intercultural exchanges of "migration, translation, and transfer" (4). The book then turns to Jesuit intellectual disputes with authors connected to the encyclopedists, disputes that centered on theoretical versus empirical knowledge. The third and final section takes up the generic, rhetorical and logical underpinnings to the Jesuit writings. What can be discerned from even this short summary of the volume is that the authors not only deliver cutting-edge content on the

Jesuits' writing and its connection to the anthropology of the Enlightenment, but also illustrate a new paradigm for interpreting fields of study. In its conception and execution, *Jesuit Accounts* models the Jesuit model. It sets a new standard for interdisciplinary publication; the text successfully unites a field of study across time, geography, languages, cultures, and academic disciplines.

Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink describes the international Jesuit society as the “first global intellectual network in the history of mankind” (140). That description also might be applied to the authors who contributed to this volume: they are as varied and intellectually diverse as their material. They work in Austria, Canada, Germany, Italy, Mexico and the US. They study literature, history, art history, and anthropology. Their primary texts were written in many languages, from diverse times, published in Europe and the Americas. For example, Clorinda Donato’s chapter contributes a multifocal approach to Filippo Salvatore Gili’s text from his Italian, Spanish, and French cultural perspectives. And Lüsebrink’s “Between Ethnology and Romantic Discourse” (cited above) highlights the contributions of Martin Dobrizhoffer, an Austrian who wrote in Latin and German, was translated into French and English, and later influenced the texts of Sara Coleridge. One could argue that this volume creates its own interdisciplinary global network of intellectuals.

Diversity is the greatest strength of *Jesuit Accounts of the Colonial Americas*: the individual contributions are well written, and together make up a lovely mosaic. As I read the entire volume I was delighted to see several Jesuits (among them José de Acosta, Joseph Gumilla, and Francisco Javier Clavijero) appear in multiple chapters. New perspectives on the men and their work emerged as different scholars studied them from fresh perspectives and disciplines, or in different translations.

An additional contribution to the book’s diversity is that it includes French *criollosimo*, a vision of an integrated empire. It welcomes what for this reader were new voices and academic assessments of the Jesuits. Pierre Berthiaume, for example, studies two different conversion models within the Company: José de Acosta’s forced reductions in Spanish America versus Pierre Biard’s emphasis on the effectiveness of speech to accomplish conversion in New France.

Jesuit Accounts also contributes to the body of research on the Enlightenment by continuing to move it beyond the limits of the Gallic model. Margaret Ewalt illustrates how Father Joseph Gumilla’s work enlightened not only internationally famous authors like Alexander von Humbolt, but also Latin American novelists like Carpentier and Isaacs. The volume traces the complexity of Jesuit experiences in the New World and the transmission of their works through Europe and the Americas. The nature of the Jesuit’s boundary-crossing work, theology, texts, and lives offered the substrate on which new fields of study like ethnography and

anthropology germinated in the Enlightenment period, illustrating the Jesuits' enlightened approach.

As a reviewer, I find it difficult to choose chapters to highlight because this volume is one of the best that I have read in recent years. Especially commendable is Girolamo Imbruglia's "A Peculiar Idea of Empire," for example, which has a cogent summary of the shifting concept of mission within the Jesuit experience: he traces how the sacred and profane overlap, nuancing how the European and non-European Jesuits faced different tasks as clergy. Beatriz Alba-Koch's chapter examines Clavijero's complex identity as a Jesuit, Criollo, and *mexicano*, and unpacks the father's frustration with and simultaneous admiration of the indigenous people. Karen Stolley elegantly traces the causes and enactment of the 1767 expulsion, as well as the impact of the order for Jesuits *not* to write; her bibliography is also notable.

If there were to be any weaknesses, they might also be attributed to the remarkable diversity of this volume. There are clear differences in writing styles and especially in footnote use, and the French chapters appear only in parts two and three. However, it is abundantly evident that the volume has been expertly organized and edited. The introduction and preface are both insightful and useful in understanding the volume's aims and each chapter's contribution to the whole.

In short, *Jesuits Accounts of the Colonial Americas* is ground-breaking: the authors use Jesuit works not only for a study in and of themselves, but also to illustrate a methodology that successfully breaks down current limitations in the study of international, transcultural movements or bodies of work. This is an excellent resource, and should be in the library of any scholar who wishes to study the Jesuits. Its quality will be a difficult to match because of its inherent interdisciplinarity.

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Antonio Calvo Maturana. *Impostores. Sombras en la España de las Luces*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2015.

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Any attempt to account for the human propensity to distort would be a *cuento de nunca acabar*. That doesn't mean that the story needn't be told, though: falsification is (after all) a thermometer of social and cultural preoccupations in a given time and place, as Joaquín Álvarez Barrientos pointed out in his masterly panoramic study of literary fakery and apocrypha, *El crimen de la escritura. Una historia de las falsificaciones literarias*

españolas (Abada, 2014). Antonio Calvo Maturana's text lays claim to different territory: Across six chapters, an introduction and an epilogue, the author selects episodes of falsification across history (and not just in the period of the Spanish Enlightenment). The result is an entertaining, erudite, elegantly curated overview of a potentially limitless topic.

Imposture is difficult to categorize “por la variada casuística de sus motivaciones (honor, dinero, camuflaje, identidad sexual, el placer de engañar al prójimo, etc.), muchas veces combinadas” (17). Appearances were crucial to imposture during the period: “los códigos marcados por el atuendo y el comportamiento eran la carta de presentación ante el resto de la sociedad estamental” (31). There were passports and documentation in the eighteenth century; but in Ancien Régime society “la línea entre lo posible y lo imposible estaba aún por trazar” (20), and the success of an emulation very much depended on the ability to present oneself as meeting conditions for plausibility (20-21). Beyond an ability to manipulate clothing, behavior and appearance, the mounting of swindles and the peddling of false identities involved negotiating local and long-distance webs of knowledge, from parish registries to overseas cultural expectations around gender and authority. Though it comes as no surprise that the public punishment of imposture serves authorities' interests in reinforcing social order and harmony (24, 28-29), Calvo Maturana's larger aim in this study is to show that the impostor who pulls off a functioning falsification “nunca está solo, necesita de espectadores e instituciones que participen en el juego que plantea” (365).

Chapter One examines the ways in which imposture worked along the margins of laws and conventions. Sumptuary laws and expectations around dress rendered costume a matter of import for local and national governance. From fears around *tapadas* to legislation against *lujo* to prohibitions of masked balls and satires of fashion, imposture was inseparable from an obsession with the material, economic and semantic aspects of dress (31-42). Calvo further traces issues underlying the growth and uses of passports and their falsifications (e.g., restriction of movement; control of populations; fortification of state-generated privilege) (43-51). Along with the spread of passports came increasing sophistication in falsified documents; though sometimes simply changing one's name could be enough to construct a new life (53-54). In fact, “era difícil averiguar quién era una persona indocumentada y descontextualizada, pero era relativamente fácil saber si era o no quien decía ser” (49). Appearance was perhaps more important than documentation in the construction of a false identity.

Perhaps the hardest imposture to pull off is that of a monarch (57), and Chapter Two discusses examples of falsified identities of aristocrats and royalty. Calvo paints a broad canvas, examining cases from ancient history on through to the Romantic era— such as, for example, that of the Conde de Montalbán, who claimed, in early 19th-century Paris, to be the natural

son of Carlos III. The chapter also has a section on cases in which royalty (such as Czar Peter I) traveled incognito.

Chapter Three examines ecclesiastical impostors, from *falsos curas* to *falsos conversos*; and from muslims feigning Christianity to Lutherans feigning repentance. Fascinating sections on false inquisitors and false Jesuits highlight the ways in which the Inquisition “sirvió a numerosos impostores para ganar influencia sobre personas inocentes” (154), and the ways in which both *farsantes* and persons of authority “intentaron beneficiarse del aura que rodeaba a los jesuitas” (171). The chapter extensively traces the case of Francisco de Mayoral, whose early 19th-century career of impostures included both petty forgeries and impersonation of a Cardinal, and whom Calvo terms “uno de los mayores impostores españoles de todos los tiempos” (172).

Cases of spies, adventurers and conspirators, and “mujeres ‘en hábito de hombre’” provide the material surveyed in Chapters Four and Five. In these chapters, Calvo discusses a mix of famous cases (e.g. Alí-Bey; the Abbé de Choisy; La monja Alférez) and does not limit himself to a focus on Spain, nor to examples from the period of Enlightenment. However, readers interested in European gender and transgender history will find particularly attractive the information in Calvo’s pages on Spanish women feigning male identities (286-309, 334-346). Finally, in the brief Chapter Six, which again does not focus on either Spain or the Enlightenment, Calvo discusses famous “returns,” such as that of Martin Guerre.

The bibliography contains a good mix of manuscript, primary and secondary sources, though the fact that much of the book is a general survey may have limited the sources pertaining to Hispanic Enlightenment and eighteenth-century topics. Overall, *Impostores* is a well-written, well-researched and absorbing survey that will prove enduringly useful for anyone interested in the history of fakes, forgeries and (the seemingly limitless) human capacities for both deception and belief.

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 Niell, Paul B & Stacie G. Widdifield, eds. *Buen Gusto and Classicism in the Visual Cultures of Latin America, 1780-1910*. Albuquerque, U of New Mexico Press, 2013.

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This collection of essays examine the diverse ways in which classicism was “imposed, promoted, adapted, negotiated, and contested in Latin

America from late 18th century to early 20th century” (xiv). According to the contributors, classicism provides a methodological avenue to think critically about the power relations that are articulated and imagined through visual arts. As Paul B. Niell states in his introduction, the volume aims to provide new insights into how “visual classicisms in late colonial and early national Latin America appear as multivalent and multivocal phenomena driven by desires to impose imperial authority, to fashion the nationalist self, and to form and maintain new social and cultural ideologies” (xiv).

The book is divided into three parts. The first part “Redefining Urban Space and the Promotion of Classicism,” includes four well-researched essays devoted to urban localities such as Mexico City, Lima, Havana, and Cartagena de Indias. Susan Deans-Smith examines taste cultures in colonial Mexico by taking into consideration the relationship that place and aesthetics played in the colonial interactions between Spain and Mexico, with specific focus on Manuel Tolsá’s neoclassical equestrian statue of Charles IV. Isaac D. Sáenz studies the appropriation and reception of classical rhetorics by Peruvian Creole elites and Spanish authorities in order to integrate local elements in their discussions and constructions of the urban city of Lima. In Chapter three, Paul B. Niell centers on the case of nineteenth-century Havana and the construction of El Templete building designed to honor the founding of the city. For Neill, descriptions of the building highlight the conflicting viewers’ interpretations surrounding the perception of this place, which range from demonstrations of Creole Cuban loyalty to Spaniards’ belief that they still could rule the Americas. In the last chapter of this section, Carla Bochetti discusses the use of neoclassic aesthetics and antiquity to construct a national identity in the neoclassical buildings known as Centenary Park in Cartagena de Indias. For her, this aesthetic functioned as a vehicle to promote progress. In this section classicism is related to cultural patriotism, Creole agency, civic architecture, national identities, the search for social recognition, ideas of progress, and the pragmatic understanding and claiming of the colonial past.

Part two of the volume centers on the imprinting of classicism and its consumption. Kelly Donahue-Wallace studies the role that Mexican newspapers played in the promotion of the notion of taste and aesthetic judgment to a public deeply concerned with their social status in colonial society. In Chapter six, Charles Burroughs discusses the classicist architectural representations of enslaved labor in domestic spaces such as the plantations to justify and promote ideas of progress, social control, and discipline. In the next essay, Magali Carrera analyzes in great detail the rhetorics of *buen gusto* in the period of Mexican political transition to a Nation (1830-1850) by focusing on the visual material included by Ignacio Cumplido in his Spanish translation of William Hickling Prescott’s *The Conquest of Mexico*. Carrera argues that in the case of Cumplido, good taste served the objective of promoting “critical intellectual competences,” to resist “imperialist historical tradition” and to recognize “national history”

(138). In Chapter eight, Robert Bradley turns to the Pre-Columbian site of the Tiwanaku people in the Bolivian altiplano known as the Gateway of the Sun, and specifically to written descriptions about the site from writers such as Pedro Cieza de León, Alexander von Humboldt, and Leonce Marie François Angrand, among others, to understand how the imagery associated with the site is more concerned about interpreting the past while ignoring the forgotten Tiwanaku people. All four essays do an excellent job demonstrating the relationship between classicism and intellectual prestige, social status, class distinction, racial control, national history, and ambivalent constructions of the past.

The last part of the volume is devoted to well-thought discussions of practices and problems that characterized the artistic language, dissemination of taste, and didactic agendas in colonial spaces such as the plaza, the streets of the capital cities, the Cathedral of Cuzco, and Academy of San Carlos. Painting techniques and materials such as engraving calligraphy, rasgueo, portraiture, retables, print culture, smooth silver, marble, jasper, and bronze were utilized and manipulated to increase the didactic potential of the arts. Ray Hernández-Durán examines official chivalric representations such as the portrait of former Novohispanic viceroy, Bernardo de Gálves, to understand how local elites responded to royal sculpture and portrait adulations of imperial Spanish figures at a time of political and social unrest motivated by patriotic ideologies. Emily Engel discusses works of arts and architecture sponsored by Bourbon viceregal figures in late colonial Lima and Buenos Aires to illustrate the self-identification processes of these colonial authorities for whom aesthetic erudition, historical legacy, social prestige, and imperial ideologies went hand in hand. In the following essay, Maya Stanfield-Mazzi studies the artistic changes that took place in the Cathedral of Cuzco by focusing on the replacement of the Cathedral's altarpieces as a reflection of the transition from what she refers to as Baroque triumphalism to neoclassical renunciation at a time of political unrest. These altarpieces underline the riches of Peru's minerals and "the centrality of Cuzco by way of alchemical Christian symbolism" (245). The last essay by Stacie G. Widdifield centers on the 1881 centennial of Mexico's Academy of San Carlos and the manner in which print culture conceived the Academy as an institution in charge of promoting progress, civilization, and good taste. For Widdifield, print culture functioned as a visual technology that aimed to guide the public on how to understand visual images.

In sum, *Buen Gusto and Classicism in the Visual Cultures of Latin America, 1780-1910*, represents a cohesive volume of critical essays that effectively demonstrate how politics and visual cultures had been intrinsically intertwined in Latin America since the late eighteenth century. The aesthetics of classicism, highly influenced by the tenets of the Enlightenment, served as a hybrid discursive venue to conceptualize the colonial past and to envision the present. This contributed to notions of

patriotic commonality, local identities, and imperial ideas of good taste. My minor reservation with this book is the tendency to use the terms classicism and neoclassicism interchangeably without making any theoretical or temporal distinction among them. Also, the inclusion of issues of gender would have strengthened this already excellent book.



