than 70 million lb. in the 1820s to less than 20 million by the 1860s, as land and slave labor shifted from coffee to sugar agriculture. Pérez tells this story of transformation well, paying considerable attention to regional differences and local effects. If a “sugar revolution” did, in fact, occur in Cuba, it was facilitated by the effects of the great hurricanes of the mid-1840s, which intensified regional differences and promoted a new agricultural balance between the island’s mainstays, sugar, coffee, and tobacco.

This transformation had important social ramifications as well. The slave trade to Cuba declined in the 1840s under British pressure, and slave rebellions and rumors of them, like the “La escalera” plot of 1844, made planters particularly nervous. But the market for sugar was booming. After 1846, when slaves were in short supply, ruined coffee planters found their slaves in great demand on the sugar estates. At the same time, sugar planters also began to experiment with new sources of labor, like Chinese “coolie” workers. The nature and complexion of rural Cuba had been altered as a result of the economic transformation.

Pérez draws on his command of Cuban historiography and a limited set of archival materials for his main theme. He also provides some discussion of how the storms of the 1840s affected poorer Cubans and how the Spanish colonial regime failed to meet the challenge of disaster, as well as a cursory survey of Cuban literature and popular culture for other traces of the hurricanes’ influence. But more remains to be done. For example, a history of Cuban science has yet to be written. It would include figures like Andrés Poey, the early Cuban scientist and meteorologist, or Benito Viñas, the Spanish Jesuit, who directed Cuba’s first weather observatory and contributed to the theory and scientific observation of hurricanes. Other interesting matters to be explored are the economic impact of the storms in the longue durée and their political impact on the Spanish colonial, republican, and socialist regimes. Pérez provides an excellent bibliographical discussion that will help others to pursue these and other related topics. But Pérez set a more limited goal for himself in this book, and he has done an excellent job of reaching it.

Stuart B. Schwartz
Yale University


Through a combination of historical and ethnographical materials, de la Cadena analyzes perceptions of race in twentieth-century urban Cuzco—in particular, those associated with the notions of “indianness” and mestizaje. Her main objective is to debunk what she considers to be the “dominant” or “elitist” notion of mestizaje in Peru by expounding what she characterizes as the subaltern perspective. The book is divided...
into two clearly differentiated sections. The first one (chapters 1 to 3) presents the “elite’s” perceptions of race, largely on the basis of written sources (including municipal records, newspapers, and intellectual production), and the second one (chapters 3 to 6) discusses the “subalterns’” views, based on ethnographical information and interviews that the author conducted in the city of Cuzco during sixteen months between 1991 and 1992.

De la Cadena argues that dominant notions of mestizaje in Peru are rooted in a dichotomous view of the country, where “indianness” is associated with a primitive and rural condition, poverty, and illiteracy, and “non-indianness” with a coastal lifestyle, urban manners, economic success, and education. Within this scheme, mestizos are defined culturally (rather than biologically) as those Indians who, upon migrating to the city, acquire urban ways, become literate, and progressively give up their language and traditions—that is, stop being Indians. Mestizaje, thus conceived, presupposes “cultural passage”: from rural to urban, from Quechua to Spanish, from illiterate to literate, from poverty to affluence, from Indian to non-Indian. De la Cadena claims that these notions are well exemplified in modern times by the writings of novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, and that they were already entrenched in the thinking of indigenistas of the early 1920s and 1930s, the neoindianistas of the 1940s, and the Marxists of the 1960s to 1980s. Although in accord with the class language that they embraced, Marxists dropped allusions to race—replacing the term Indian with peasant—they did not eradicate the “culturally fundamentalist” notions that indigenistas had attached to Indians (which Marxists transferred to peasants) and that conceived of them as minors who could not speak for themselves and needed to be represented.

De la Cadena’s discussion of elites’ perceptions of race is enlightening as an intellectual history and constitutes a political critique of contemporary racist practices and discourses in Peru. Her treatment of gamonalismo (a form of peasant exploitation by petty hacendados or gamonales) and its representations, and her discussion of the various “pro-Indian” agendas and their limitations, will be of special interest to scholars interested in political discourses and representations of race in early twentieth-century Latin America. Her overall idea that racism can be perpetuated with cultural rather than racial allusions, is especially forceful in a country where phenotype differences between poor peasants and Andean elites are often nonexistent. An effective euphemism for Indian, de la Cadena tells us, is “ignorant.”

Her discussion of the “subaltern” perspective is, however, less persuasive. De la Cadena’s subalterns are relatively well-off rural migrants in the city of Cuzco (among them, market women, dancers, and university students) who espoused urban ways and improved their educational and economic standards but, unlike Vargas Llosa’s mestizos, neither reject their “Indian condition” nor give up their “indigenous culture,” which they conversely “celebrate.” To prove this claim, de la Cadena describes...
their fiestas, religious rituals, and dances in the city and its outskirts, where Quechua is spoken, bearing the imprint of various rural life traditions. De la Cadena emphasizes the “hybridity” of these practices in her attempt to show that these migrants—whom she calls “grassroot intellectuals”—have flexible identities and are not necessarily torn between (either “rural” or “urban”) dilemmas.

This claim is a most acceptable one, though it may come as no surprise to investigators who have been describing in analogous terms the cultural expressions of migrant populations in metropolitan Lima during the last few decades, or historians who have been following the routes and lives of Andean muleteers, petty merchants, peasants, and miners throughout the colonial period (and much before the notion of “hybridity” became fashionable in English-speaking academic circles).

What is more difficult to accept, however, is de la Cadena’s claim that these hybrid cultural expressions (to which she in a contradictory fashion sometimes refers as “de-indianization”) represent an “empowered” and “dignified” form of “indigenous identity” that contests the dominant construct of Indianness as a degraded condition. As is clear in these migrants’ own accounts (and she surely is aware) they not only make every possible effort to distance themselves from any identification as Indians; they also reproduce long-standing discriminatory practices against monolingual Quechua speakers and the extremely poor.

De la Cadena, in short, succeeds more in conveying the prevalence of discriminatory patterns that stigmatize Indianness than in expounding the ways in which they are challenged. Her claim that “subalterm” challenge “hegemonic notions of mestizaje” is, moreover, obfuscated by her own correct assessment that mestizaje in Peru never became a state policy or hegemonic ideology (as it did, for instance, in Mexico), precisely because of the lack of agreement on its political meaning among the different factions that advocated it (Hispanists, the APRA party, the Communist Party and neoindianists). Rather than a hegemonic notion of mestizaje, what seems at stake in this book are hegemonic constructs about Indians.

A final problem with de la Cadena’s rendering of the “subalterm” perspective is that she never gives a clear sense of what she actually means by “indigenous ethnicity” other than stereotyped and recurrent allusions to Quechua, ponchos, chuyos, and apus (that is, Andean language, dress, and deities) that her “indigenous mestizos” proudly displayed. This diffuseness may be related to the fact that, unlike the views of the elites, the subaltern views are not historicized in this book, thus remaining more prone to idealization, or to less critical examination. Except for some extremely intriguing pieces of evidence on the Tawantinsuyu movement—a unique, yet defeated, project to vindicate a nondegraded Indian identity, which, de la Cadena maintains, was fomented by self-proclaimed Quechua-speaking Indians in the 1920s (and on which the author, unfortunately, does not elaborate)—“subalterm voices” are largely missing in her historical section. As for the Cuzqueños in her ethnography, the issue is less a loosely defined “indig-
enous ethnicity” than various different forms of local and regional (Cuzqueño) traditions, in which more or less elite expressions compete with more or less popular ones.

In conclusion, this book, despite its high scholastic interest, succeeds more in conveying a political message than a theoretical lesson. De la Cadena’s treatment of term indigenous (in Spanish indígena) is not unlike Flores-Galindo’s treatment of the term andino (Andean) more than a decade ago. She is trying to purge “indigenous” from the social stigma that it conveys (if used at all in coloquial language) in Peru, but her own linguistic choices only serve to reinforce the depth of the stigma: In order to “achieve dignity,” her “indigenous” have to be mestizos. The difference between her project and Flores-Galindo’s is that whereas de la Cadena’s “indigenous” aims at celebrating an “ethnic” identity, Flores-Galindo’s “andino” was meant to stir a sense of national self-esteem—and was not caught in a linguistic trap. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with de la Cadena’s project, except for the fact that it is cast as if it were a “subalterns’” agenda. But the irony is that de la Cadena has targeted Flores-Galindo among those Marxists who essentialized “Indians” and meant to speak for them.

Cecilia Méndez-Gastelumendi
University of California, Santa Barbara

Women and the Colonial State: Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies, 1900–1942. By Elsbeth Locher-Scholten (Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2000) 251 pp. $27.50

Once a little-studied theme, recent work by interdisciplinary scholars has established gender as crucial to the understanding of colonial encounters. Locher-Scholten’s monograph extends the body of analysis on gender and the colonial state to the Dutch East Indies/Indonesia from 1900 to 1942. The study covers the beginnings of colonial modernization policy to the period of the late colonial state, primarily on the island of Java. Locher-Scholten focuses on both Indonesian and European women—their relationships to each other and the colonial state—and how colonial authorities perceived women of both races in formulating legislation. Her essays address a range of subjects—legislation of Indonesian female labor, domestic servants in colonial households, European fashion and food, suffrage for Indonesian and European women, and legislation of monogamous and polygamous marriage. Locher-Scholten frames this volume as “an analysis of how gender differences were constructed, reconfigured, and maintained in close (dis)harmony and, or intersecting with the differences of race, class, and . . . religion” (14).

1 Alberto Flores-Galindo, Buscando Un Inca: Identidad y Utopía en los Andes (Lima, 1987).