

Psalmodia Christiana. By BERNARDINO DE SAHAGÚN. Translated by ARTHUR J. O. ANDERSON. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1993. Photographs. xxxix, 375 pp. Cloth. \$39.95.

Late in life, the Franciscan friar and ethnographer Bernardino de Sahagún composed psalms or songs to enable the Nahuas to celebrate the holidays of the Christian calendar. His aim was to use native religious forms, particularly song and dance, to convey the Christian message and to extirpate non-Christian belief. Since the native religious calendar had set the rhythms of pre-Hispanic life and its replacement was key to the success of Christian evangelization, a new ritual calendar was vital. Pre-Hispanic forms of celebration revolving around music, dance, and poetry were important cultural expressions with rich implications. In and of themselves, song and dance were not antithetical to Christianity and could be utilized for Christian purposes. The *Psalmodia Christiana* was composed with that idea in mind. The work is structured on the liturgical year, following the January through December calendar: Christ's circumcision (Jan. 1) through Christmas. The language is richly poetic, but translator Arthur J. O. Anderson remarks in his preface that Sahagún's new poetry "never measured up to the old" (p. x).

In this volume, Anderson has produced yet another masterful, lengthy translation from Nahuatl of an important sixteenth-century text. Sahagún, of course, is a towering figure, many of whose works are well known and well studied. This particular one, however, has never been readily accessible to the scholarly community, for two reasons. First, the manuscript itself is quite rare and generally unavailable. Second, unlike other works of Sahagún, the *Psalmodia Christiana* does not have a contemporary Spanish translation. Thus, scholars who did not know Nahuatl would have been unable to read the text even if they could locate it. Although Anderson in his preface does not explore at length the text's potential for illuminating sixteenth-century cultural processes, this work is a major source for such exploration. For this reason, the publication of this superb transcription and translation is of considerable importance.

SARAH CLINE, University of California, Santa Barbara

Colonialism and Science: Saint Domingue in the Old Regime. By JAMES E. MCCLELLAN III. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992. Plates. Maps. Graphs. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xviii, 393 pp. Cloth. \$52.00.

In this study of eighteenth-century Saint Domingue, James McClellan continues his work on scientific societies and the historical interactions of science and colonialism. Intrigued by the striking success of Saint Domingue's hard-driven slave plantation economy, McClellan set out to examine the reasons for the colony's success and the role of science in that process. While most historical work has dealt with the way colonialism has affected science—for example, in the expansion

of botanical knowledge or celestial navigation—this book is concerned with the importance of science in colonialism. Just as priests once wielded their privileged knowledge of God’s mysteries to impress the parishioners, so in the eighteenth-century tropics a knowledge of plant breeding, the use of vaccine against smallpox, a way to measure longitude and make more accurate maps, or the importation of breadfruit from the distant Pacific—all these gave power and control to practical scientists in the service of empire. One of the nice ironies in McClellan’s fine study is that science in the most enlightened country in Europe helped maintain intact the most oppressive slave regime in the American tropics.

The first third of the book is an informed and useful historical sketch of colonial Haiti, a half-island to which masters and slaves, capital and machinery, and even the plants themselves—sugarcane, coffee, and indigo—were foreign. Even at the end of the colony, only a minority of the population was native-born. Some two-thirds of the slaves (who made up 90 percent of the total population) were African-born; three-quarters of the whites were from France. A thin layer of landowners ran the plantations, which yielded some 27 million *livres* of exports annually, mainly sugar. This means that some 600,000 enslaved Africans produced nearly as much in export value each year as did the 15 million inhabitants of the entire Spanish Empire in the Americas. And of course, this “world the slaveowners made” was utterly shattered in the massive revolt of 1792. McClellan rightly complains that Haiti is neglected in anglophone scholarship (more evidence of our incapacity with French), so his early chapters on “Population and Sociology,” “Industry and Economy,” and the “Urban Context” are especially welcome.

The richly detailed middle chapters reveal a French state keen to reduce slave mortality through vaccination against smallpox and, in general, to apply current medical knowledge to the colony. Unlike the case in neighboring Spanish slave societies, physicians apparently outnumbered priests; indeed, the church seems to have figured very little in Saint Domingue. At the same time, botanists worked to introduce and acclimatize new plants while others sought to bring the cochineal insect from Mexico to local *nopales* where, it was believed, slave labor would be cheaper than free workers in Oaxaca. The author emphasizes the practical nature of science in the colony as well as its state, rather than private, sponsorship. His chapters on “Medicine and Medical Administration” and “Economic Botany and Animal Economy” are filled with arcane and fascinating information.

Behind Professor McClellan’s sober prose one can occasionally glimpse a few of *les grands blancs* at play. By 1784 the Montgolfier brothers’ balloons had come to the colony, permitting a few daring members of the white elite to drift dreamily, if briefly, over the canebrakes. The mesmerist movement arrived the same year, promoting the loopy ideas of the Austrian physician F. A. Mesmer, who claimed to have discovered a universal, superfine fluid which, when mixed with iron filings in a tub laced with ropes and bars, cured a multitude of ailments. Mesmeric

tubs were seized upon by the ever cost-conscious slaveowners as a way of curing the infirm and boosting their output. There is one report of the mesmerizing en masse of a contingent of castoff slaves. One Mme. Millet, on the other hand, wrote to Parisian friends about an unanticipated feature of Dr. Mesmer's device. She was alarmed when, in a different tub, "a young lady, after having torn off all her clothes, amorously attacked a young man on the scene . . . and could be torn from his arms only after another dose of magnetism."

The final section is a rather conventional study of the *Circle des Philadelphes*, St. Domingue's formal scientific society, which obtained the royal blessing a few months before the storming of the Bastille. The *circle's* credo was to improve the lot of slaves "without harming the interests of the colonists." Professor McClellan concludes that science and colonialism fit hand in glove; "socially, economically, and politically, the Enlightenment and Rousseau were simply irrelevant in Saint Domingue" (p. 293). I have brutally summarized a reflective and subtle argument; I hope I have also indicated the value of this deeply researched and informative book.

ARNOLD J. BAUER, University of California, Davis

The Santiago Campaign of 1898: A Soldier's View of the Spanish-American War. By A. B. FEUER. Westport: Praeger, 1993. Photographs. Maps. Appendix. xv, 147 pp. Cloth. \$47.95.

As the centennial of the Spanish-American War of 1898 approaches, we can expect to see more attention devoted to the history of that conflict and the U.S. intervention in Cuba. A. B. Feuer's account of the Santiago campaign is an entertaining and informative look at the U.S. Army forces during that episode. Feuer bases his work on seven regimental histories published between 1898 and 1906, an unpublished diary of Edward L. Henry, the unpublished memoirs of Private George Von Kroner, some scrapbooks, and contemporary reports in the Boston *Herald*. From these sources he pieces together a narrative, mostly in the words of the soldiers themselves. Except for a list of sources at the end and an occasional reference in the text, however, this composite memoir does not provide specific citations.

The book, somewhat myopically, deals primarily with New York and Massachusetts troops in what one of their number called the "Yanko-Spanko war." It provides little explanation of that war beyond the Santiago campaign or even much description of other military units around Santiago, except for some insight about the Spanish forces, based on observations by their adversaries. The work does not pretend to assess the relative importance of the Cuban rebel forces or the U.S. troops. Nor does it analyze in any depth Admiral Pascual Cervera's decision to steam out of Santiago Bay toward certain destruction by the U.S. Navy. Once the