

depends to a large extent on the reader's background. Many of the general assertions will immediately appeal to nonprofessional historians, although some may provoke sharp differences of opinion.

This is especially true of the discussion of the Haitian Revolution, the strongest, most broadly persuasive, and most interesting part of the book. After suggesting that professional historians often do not influence public history, the book points out that the Haitian Revolution has not been widely accepted as one of the most significant revolutions in world history. Its probable importance has been overlooked or underestimated, or both. Its importance, the author points out, stems from the eclectic and pragmatic construction of an independent black state in a world where "only 5 percent of a world would have been considered 'free' by modern standards" (p. 88). He then observes that the same may be said of both the achievement of Christopher Columbus and the centuries-long discussion over the event itself and its consequences. This statement is followed by a tangential narrative of the author's first visit to Chichen Itza, and a concluding discussion relating to the ill-fated Disney proposal to build the entertainment theme park in northern Virginia. This section, in turn, forms the basis for a short query on the nature of authenticity, in which the author asserts, "authenticity cannot reside in attitudes toward a discrete past kept alive through narratives" (p. 150).

Throughout these logically unconnected discussions, Trouillot addresses the practice and nature of history and historicity. Nowhere, however, does he explicitly define what he means by "history"; nor does he make any critical examination of the historiography, if not going all the way back to Herodotus, then at least to the organizations of professional historians. Indeed, professional historians will be disappointed by the scant references to the terrain of their familiars: to models of professional historians, such as Garrett Mattingly, Lawrence Stone, William MacNeil, Jack Greene, or Philip Curtin; or even reflections on the practice, such as those offered by Gordon Childe, J. H. Hexter, or Robert Jones Shafer. To talk about motivation, production, and public is to become engaged in the many literatures of history, and that simply is not accomplished successfully in this small volume. The selectivity of Trouillot's sources and his narrow dependence on narrative history to represent the varied fields of historical production will leave many readers quite dismayed.

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Spain, Europe, and the Atlantic World: Essays in Honor of John H. Elliot. Edited by RICHARD L. KAGAN and GEOFFREY PARKER. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Graphs. Notes. Index. xv, 359 pp. Cloth. \$49.95.

It should be said at once that few of these essays bear directly on Hispanic America; only 4 out of 14, actually. In chapter 10, Geoffrey Parker uses the occasion of the coronation of Philip II at Tomar in 1581 to reflect on the perils inherent in imperial

expansion, concluding that “the empire on which the sun never set had become a target on which the sun never set,” with the consequences we all know.

This theme recurs in the later part of Peter Bakewell’s chapter on “conquest after the conquest,” which attempts again to explain how a very small number of Spaniards could not only conquer vast kingdoms, but also retain them. For Bakewell, what is important is not only the establishment of an elaborate administrative system—the well-known story of the audiencias, and so forth—but also the imposition of new and vastly more efficient techniques in economic life: paper and printing, wheeled carts and sailing ships, mills for grinding grain and pumping water. A fresh influx of Europeans came to operate these marvelous machines, confirming European headship of indigenous societies but also, eventually, giving rise to a creole sentiment that would expel the peninsular presence.

In his chapter on “Heeding Heraclides,” Anthony Pagden also tackles the problems of expansion. He shows that contemporary Spanish political commentators were well aware of what was going on and of how all empires pose a threat to the true nature of the parent country. As one writer put it, if the Romans had remained in Italy, their empire would have endured forever. The Castilians decidedly did not remain on the Iberian peninsula, and by the late eighteenth century could have retained their empire only through some form of extensive devolution of power, as imagined by Campomanes.

No Spanish government, however, could bring itself to accept such a devolution; the great provinces therefore seized independence in the early nineteenth century. As Josep Fradera shows in the final chapter, this left only the Philippines, Cuba, and Puerto Rico; and even they could not be brought under the “special laws” that might have retained their allegiance. The four “American” chapters in this book provoke the gloomy reflection that human societies often seem incapable of taking the measures that would allow them to survive, even when many thinkers in the society clearly see what needs to be done. It is refreshing to turn from these sad stories back to the book’s opening, where its editors offer us an affectionate and even informative account of Sir John Elliott’s life and work at his 65th birthday.

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Medinaceli y Colón: la otra alternativa del descubrimiento. By ANTONIO SÁNCHEZ GONZÁLEZ. Madrid: Fundación MAPFRE América, 1995. Photographs. Plates. Map. Appendixes. Bibliography. Indexes. 334 pp. Paper.

Published as part of Colecciones MAPFRE 1492, which is to consist of many, many volumes, this book is part of MAPFRE’s Colección Relaciones entre España y América. It is therefore another of those books that have emerged into print using the “hook” of 1492–1992, regardless of whatever may or may not have been honored, commemorated, or celebrated during 1992.

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