
Reviews of Books



ANTONELLA LIUZZO SCORPO, *Friendship in Medieval Iberia. Historical, Legal and Literary Perspectives*. Farnham: Ashgate. 2014. 248 pp. ISBN 9781472412027.

Friendship in Medieval Iberia focusses on the study of friendship as it is portrayed in three works written under the authorial auspices of King Alfonso X of Castile (1252–1284), known as *el Sabio* – a well-reputed author and literary patron. Those texts, the Galician–Portuguese songs of the *Cantigas de Santa María*, the monumental legal code, *Las Siete Partidas*, and the chronicle, *Estoria de España*, the latter two written in Castilian, are among the most canonical medieval Iberian texts. Liuzzo-Scorpo has mined these works looking to disentangle the meaning of friendship in that time period, to analyse how it functioned and its rules and types. The book is illustrated with many examples and excerpts (provided in the original and in English translation).

Citing Aristotle, Alfonso's *Siete Partidas* states that 'amistad' (*amicitia* in Latin) 'is a virtue which is intrinsically good in itself and profitable to human life and, properly speaking, it arises when one person who loves another is beloved by him, for, under other circumstances, true friendship could not exist; and therefore he stated that there is a great difference between friendship, love, benevolence and concord' (translation by Liuzzo Scorpo: 1). This definition also serves as the starting point for Liuzzo-Scorpo who sets out to dissect and explore it over the course of six chapters framed by a brief introduction and conclusion. The first chapter is a useful and concise overview of friendship in the Classical and medieval (mostly Pre-Alfonsine) eras. This is followed by an examination of friendship in the works of Alfonso X. Chapter three deals with spiritual and religious friendships: 'relationships forged within the ecclesiastical and monastic

communities and between the clergy and their believers' (88). The fourth chapter analyses political friendships that were tied to the need to provide mutual support. Other aspects of relationships, such as how loyalty and betrayal worked, the role of pragmatic and moral motivations, enmity and inequality (friendship among vassals and lords) are also discussed. The next chapter turns to inter-faith relationships and the types of friendships that were possible between Muslims, Jews and Christians. Among the examples considered is that of the friendship of the Cid – a central character in medieval Castilian history and literature – with Abengalvón, the Muslim governor of Molina, 'mio amigo es de paz' (155). The final chapter, which focuses on friendship, sex and gender relationships, begins with a study of the vocabulary of friendship and how the term *amigo/a* could be used to address lovers, paramours, or spouses. Next, it turns to the misogynistic tone that runs through the Alfonsine texts, which aside from rare exceptions describe women as either 'sinful and corrupted creatures, constantly tempting men's virtues' or as 'fragile individuals' (183).

In conclusion, *Friendship in Medieval Iberia* is a well thought-out and timely study that, as the author suggests: 'adds another piece to the reconstruction of the cultural and emotional landscape of medieval Iberia' (203). It provides a window into the Alfonsine cultural universe, while simultaneously providing a view of the history of emotions and human interaction in the Iberia of that era. This is precisely what makes the project relevant and provides a solid starting point to explore this subject further. It will be of use to a wide range of scholars working on history and literature, particularly those interested in medieval Iberia, but also for specialists on Europe and the western Mediterranean. In view of the wide range

of subjects it touches on, those working on emotions, friendship, ethnic minorities and gender relations will also find it of interest.

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SHIFRA ARMON, *Masculine Virtue in Early Modern Spain*. New York: Routledge. 2015. 156 pp. ISBN 978-1-472441898.

Shifra Armon's *Masculine Virtue in Early Modern Spain* is an engaging contribution to the scholarly understanding of how gender operated in early modern Spain. Taking as her subject the conduct literature produced with a male audience in mind, Armon explores and analyses the advice it proffered and how we might read that advice against the backdrop of the upheavals and challenges facing Spain in the sixteenth and especially the seventeenth centuries. Significantly, she offers a counter-analysis to those who have coupled the narrative of Spain's decline in this period with a crisis of masculinity.

Armon begins by grounding the conduct literature of the day in the political context of the court culture of Madrid. A royal court that had given up its peripatetic character and settled in Madrid to manage an empire necessitated new expectations for the behaviour of the courtier. Ultimately, 'through transculturation, the royal model of magnificence and refinement becomes the courtier's inspiration and ultimate *desideratum*' (22). In this vein she notes (as have others) that the behaviours associated with the medieval knight who fought on horseback had to be replaced by different distinguishing features that would separate the courtier from ordinary male citizens.

This assertion then leads Armon to identify three ideals or virtues that define this vein within the conduct literature: fame, dissimulation, and adaptability. Each of the next three chapters, then, takes up one of these ideals and analyses various iterations of it in a wide variety of sources including conduct literature, prose fiction, and emblem books. Armon has an impressive command of a vast range of literature and shrewdly draws on a variety of genres to trace the evolution of these concepts. In the case of fame she finds that it was an ideal that generated considerable anxiety. While men might seek

renown, their desire to do so could degenerate into vices like vanity and pridefulness. It was, then, in constant need of revalorization. Dissimulation was a similarly fraught ideal. Some early modern authors saw its value, particularly when interacting with the monarch. But others distrusted its 'ethical ambiguity' (92). Finally, the virtue of adaptability offered perhaps the best tonic against the vicissitudes of early modern Spanish politics and culture. The courtier who could embrace this ideal would be well served. And, indeed, it is Armon's careful examination of the literature upholding this ideal that makes the strongest case for her argument against the existence of a crisis in standards of masculinity.

Throughout her exploration of the models of behaviour held up by the conduct literature, Armon engages with Norbert Elias' theorization of the civilizing process. This is an apt choice given her subject matter, but she never adequately explains why she has chosen to test the relevance of the Spanish evidence for Elias' conclusions and not another theoretical model (Bourdieu, for example).

Armon's conclusions are persuasive, but incomplete. She does demonstrate a strain of thought within the conduct literature that sought to provide a viable and relevant model of masculine behaviour for courtiers of the seventeenth century, thereby allowing her to push back against the crisis of masculinity narrative. At the same time, however, the scope of her work is limited. She has focused on only three virtues and has not engaged with other currents within the conduct literature that evoked nostalgic ideals of rustic simplicity and critiqued court culture for its effeminacy and lack of productivity. She rightly notes the 'fractious exuberance' (124) of the conduct literature, but could do more to explore that complexity. Yet overall, Armon has written a very strong study that points scholars of early modern Spanish gender in new directions and invites new analyses of this literature.

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HARLEY ERDMAN AND SUSAN PAUN DE GARCÍA (eds). *Remaking the Comedia. Spanish Classical Theater in Adaptation*. Woodbridge: Tamesis. 2015. xix + 303 pp. ISBN 978 1 85566 292 6.

Harley Erdman and Susan Paun de García approach the topic of adaptation in both a textual and performance form. In their edited volume, scholarly work as well as performance as research are well represented in 26 essays by *Comedia* scholars, translators and theatre practitioners. This book is divided holistically in four parts, 'Theorizing', 'Surveying', 'Spotlighting', and 'Shifting'. Although this division is occasionally ambiguous and calls for a conceptualization in the preface, case studies featured in each chapter survey productive ways of adapting *Comedia* for current audiences.

Leading the first part of this book are two essays commissioned to Catherine Larson and Susan L. Fischer that provide a theoretical introduction to what entails remaking the *Comedia*. Larson proposes in her essay to overcome the tiresome discussion of authorial intention and directorial vision in light of adaptation theory, and eloquently asserts that the essays contained in this volume are a response to the complexity of the theatrical event. In a similar fashion, Fischer points to the role of the audience as a moving force that makes the remaking of the play necessary both on the page and on the stage. Alejandro González Puche and Laurence Boswell close this section with some thoughts based on their directorial experiences staging *Comedia* in Colombia, China, the UK and Spain. Their reflections on the challenges of cultural and linguistic specificity of their productions abound on the otherness of the texts. Boswell contends that his experience directing Lope de Vega's plays taught him to approach the staging as a remodel rather than a remake or a remix, for which he proposes a provocative training method that eventually could lead to the formation of a bilingual troupe in English and Spanish.

Performance tradition is a central point of Part two, in which Charles Victor Ganelin revisits nineteenth-century *refundiciones*, and Valerie Hegstrom and Amy Williamsen offer an informed survey of early modern 'dramaturgas' that reveal their scant presence on the stages of the US, the UK, Spain and Chile.

A fact that Jason Yancey corroborates when he notices in his review of Chamizal Siglo de Oro Festival that only plays by Sor Juana and María de Zayas have been featured in the 40 years of its existence. Duncan Wheeler unearths the professional activities of Pepe Estruch. An exile in England and Uruguay, where he collaborated frequently with Margarita Xirgu, upon his return to Madrid to teach at RESAD, Estruch was mentor of a generation of actors and directors that transformed the performance of *Comedia* in Spain. Robert E. Bayliss points out a fruitful line of inquiry considering the local, national and global performance context, a broad subject that would require a nuanced analysis of the negotiation of national identities within Spain, and a clearer distinction among Falangist and Francoist ideologies. Jonathan Thacker looks at genre and audience expectations as he studies Lope de Vega's success among contemporary English-speaking audiences.

Part three shows the involvement of translators and theatre practitioners in their creative processes. Among the ten pieces of this section are Amaya Curieses Iriarte's reflection on her staging of the metatheatrical recreation of Lorca's *El caballero de Olmedo*, which Bruce Burningham reads as a postmodern *auto sacramental* that glorifies the martyrdom of the poet. Contemporary expectations of audiences is a staging *Comedias*. David Johnston offers compelling examples of the 'point of encounter' between his translation of *El perro del hortelano* and US and UK audiences (116). At times, as Harley Erdman suggests, it is the task of those involved in the performance text to fill in the gaps that the playwright left in the play. Some scholars and practitioners put forward experiences of how contemporary stagings have used body language (Laura L. Vidler), cross-gender casting and performance (Gina Kaufmann, Barbara Mujica), and sexual fluidity (Karen Berman) to make *Comedias* relevant to English-speaking audiences in present times.

The final section of the book covers musical and intermedial remakings. Musical numbers helped Francisco García Vicente to adapt Agustín Moreto's *El desdén con el desdén* to its setting in the 1950s. *Comedia* provided the plot for some of the most famous zarzuelas, as Donald R. Larson outlines. Remaking Tirso's

Marta la piadosa as a musical was a successful experiment in Spain in the 1970s, as Felipe B. Pedraza notes in his article. This section also includes a study by Veronica Ryjik on the rarely known Soviet filmic adaptation of *El perro del hortelano*. The editors of this volume have put together a comprehensive survey of the stagings of *comedias* in recent times. Readers will benefit from the brevity of each text, which suggest important lines of inquiry for the study of the intermediations of the *Comedia* repertoire both in Spain and elsewhere. This book is a necessary examination of the field of adaptation in *Comedia* studies from unconventional perspectives that is a welcoming add on to the recent bibliography that reflects on the complexity of adapting these plays to contemporary audiences.

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JONATHAN SNYDER, *Poetics of Opposition in Contemporary Spain: Politics and the Work of Urban Culture*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2015. 248 pp. ISBN 978 1 137 53679 2.

The essays that comprise this ambitious study of Spanish urbanity explore the transformative potential of collective protest and alternative cultural production in contemporary Spain. At the same time, the author's multiple lines of enquiry theorize visible and invisible strategies of resistance that oppose the Spanish government's response to the recent economic and fiscal crisis. Snyder envisages urban artistic production and popular demonstrations and assemblies as dynamic sites of protest that, through critical readings of official government policies and rhetoric, imagine alternatives to the status quo that reshape the urban landscape. While his work dialogues intensely with complex theory, Snyder's cultural analysis departs from an acute understanding of the concrete political, economic and social realities confronted by Spain from 2007 to early 2014.

Every chapter follows a clear organizational structure that unifies what may also be read as individual essays on complementary themes. The first chapter outlines the causes and consequences of the Spanish financial crisis and theorizes the affective responses

of outraged citizens (*los indignadxs*) as a politicized response to coercive discourses of austerity. The acutely felt emotions shared by disparate individuals act as a catalyst for collective mobilizations such as the 15M demonstrations of 2011, the critical focus of Chapter two. The following chapter takes to task the mass propagation of the 'neoliberal myth' (125) within Spain by deciphering how neoliberalism perpetuates itself in the social imaginary. The final chapter examines the strategies implemented by the Partido Popular (PP) to mitigate the effects of the crisis following the 2012 general elections. By normalizing the adoption of 'exceptional' (163) laws and practices without the approval of the electorate, the PP's government conserves Spain's tradition of authoritarianism under the guise of representative democracy.

Snyder's nuanced interpretation of Spain's socio-political realities demonstrates his considerable command of a broad corpus of political and cultural theory. Nevertheless, his critical approach consistently foregrounds everyday practices and lived experiences; theory functions as a hermeneutic tool rather than as a totalizing discourse. For example, the author draws from Robert Chambers' theory of oppositional narrative to describe la Puerta del Sol's 15M encampment as a site of collective refusal, where protesters perform 'oppositional readings' (72) of official rhetoric surrounding the crisis. To illustrate his claim, however, Snyder provides concrete evidence of critical readings (and rewritings) by 15M participants, such as an advertisement for L'OREAL shampoo covering a scaffold in Sol that was altered to read 'REAL democracy now!' (77). These practices exemplify the ability of demonstrators to resignify the city through the production of urban spaces that imagine and even model alternative responses to the crisis. While the author privileges oppositional readings as a strategy of resistance throughout his book, he recognizes that they operate from within the discursive system they contest and resists exaggerating their liberatory potential.

In a parallel line of argumentation, Snyder demonstrates that cultural production 'of an alternative urban bent' (11) challenges mainstream responses to Spain's economic and political crisis while exploring possibilities

for social change and transformation. Each chapter concludes with a detailed analysis of an unconventional piece of contemporary art or literature: Gregorio Apesteguía's poetic fanzine *Explicaciones* (2013); a 2012 video performance staged by Santiago Sierra and Jorge Galindo in downtown Madrid; a series of photographs assembled by the Nophoto photography collective (2012); and two plays composed by Catalan dramatist Abel Zamora in 2013. The author's close readings masterfully illuminate meaning and metaphor in works that defy facile interpretation, revealing unexpected parallels between alternative spaces of collective protest and artistic creation. While Snyder recognizes that his work corresponds to a present historical moment sensed to be advancing quickly, in both methodology and content this work represents an exemplary contribution to the growing field of Spanish cultural studies.

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RHIANNON McGLADE, *Catalan Cartoons. A Cultural and Political History*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. 2016. 270 pp. ISBN 978-1-78316-804-0.

Como cualquier otro medio artístico, también los cómics sirven para conocer mejor la realidad sociopolítica de un país. Es más, su condición de medio de masas y, de resultas, el hecho de que sus destinatarios no sean las elites intelectuales, los convierte con frecuencia en un instrumento más fidedigno del contexto político, social y cultural de un territorio.

De esta circunstancia se percató en fechas tempranas la doctrina española, dedicada al análisis de la historia de los tebeos desde el primer gran trabajo, a finales de los años sesenta, a cargo de Luis Gasca (1969), al que seguirían en las dos décadas siguientes los enjundiosos estudios de Juan Antonio Ramírez (1975), Javier Coma (1977), Antonio Martín (1978) y Salvador Vázquez de Parga (1980). Este interés no ha hecho sino reavivarse en los años sucesivos, al punto de que hoy existe en España una amplísima bibliografía sobre el tema, al que se han dedicado números monográficos de revistas culturales (como *Arbor* o *Espacio, tiempo y forma*), pero que también ha dado lugar a revistas especializadas (*Historietas*

y *Tebeosfera*) y a editoriales consagradas casi de forma monográfica al tema (*Dolmen* y *ACT*). Con el nuevo siglo, los hispanistas franceses, quizás espoleados por la relevancia de las *bandes dessinées* en su propio país, empezaron a realizar algunas tímidas incursiones en este proceloso tema –Marie Franco, Viviane Alary– y, con casi medio siglo de retraso respecto a la doctrina española, finalmente también los hispanistas británicos se han percatado del interés de la materia, como evidencia el libro de Rhiannon McGlade, en el que busca demostrar hasta qué punto el humor gráfico y las historietas pueden reflejar las aspiraciones culturales y políticas de una determinado territorio de la plural España.

Para ello ha optado por analizar las sátiras e historietas en Cataluña, al entender que allí la ósmosis entre el humor gráfico y la realidad sociopolítica resultó más intensa que en otras regiones españolas. Sin embargo, convendría haber tenido presente que, en realidad, siendo Cataluña el principal núcleo (junto con Valencia y Madrid) de la producción de cómics a nivel nacional, muchas de las revistas allí producidas eran punto de encuentro de autores procedentes de otras regiones –y ajenos a una ‘tradición satírica catalana’– y, además, se hallaban orientadas a un público nacional, de modo que tampoco reflejaban en absoluto una realidad de aquel territorio distinta a la de otras regiones españolas, del mismo modo que la industria del cómic estadounidense se concentró en sus orígenes en New York y no por ello los autores eran sólo neoyorkinos ni reflejaban únicamente la realidad de aquella urbe. De hecho, algunos de los autores más sobresalientes de las editoriales catalanas (como Vázquez, uno de los más destacados autores de Bruguera) ni tan siquiera eran oriundos de Cataluña. Sorprendentemente, sin embargo, en la obra no se cita a uno de los más conocidos autores catalanes, Juan López Fernández (‘Jan’), hijo de un republicano que hubo de exiliarse a Cuba, y que, todavía en activo, cuenta con una amplísima obra en la que abundan constantes referencias sociopolíticas que en el libro no se han tenido presentes.

El recorrido que realiza la obra comienza con lo que la profesora McGlade denomina como época ‘dorada’ de las revistas satíricas (1898–1931), que surge de la mano del ‘regeneracionismo’. Un movimiento en realidad

extendido por toda España como respuesta a la caída del periclitado imperio tras la pérdida de Cuba y que fue especialmente intenso en el País Vasco, Galicia y Cataluña. Revistas como *Cu-Cut! L'Esquella* o *La Campana* mostraron con agudísima ironía la decadencia de España, convirtiéndose en incómodas tanto para el Gobierno central como para determinados estamentos, en particular el militar. Durante la Segunda República y la Guerra Civil (1931–1939), al que se dedica el segundo capítulo del libro, la autora desarrolla cómo las revistas satíricas fueron un cauce primordial para cuestionar el 'Estado integral' que diseñaba la Constitución de 1931, sirviendo como instrumento fundamental para exteriorizar las aspiraciones de autogobierno de Cataluña. A pesar de ello, el claro apoyo a la República de las principales revistas satíricas catalanas durante la Guerra Civil les acarreó su liquidación tras el triunfo de los sublevados (*L'Esquella* cerró sus puertas en 1939) y el exilio de muchos autores. La etapa de la Dictadura se trata en el libro en dos capítulos divididos cronológicamente por el ascenso de Manuel Fraga Iribarne al Ministerio de Información y Turismo, aspecto poco razonable para la periodización, ya que lo lógico hubiera sido tomar como referencia el año 1966, fecha en la que se aprueba la nueva Ley de Prensa – promovida, eso sí, por Fraga– que es la que realmente cambió el panorama del objeto de estudio. En este período, la severa censura impone que la sátira catalana quede reducida a los exiliados, en tanto que el producto nacional resulta monopolizado por las historietas infantiles, especialmente producidas por la editorial Bruguera, también objeto de una severa censura que ya no lograría recuperarse hasta la etapa de la transición, donde las particularidades del humor gráfico catalán no son en realidad tales.

Aunque no puede negarse el interés de la obra –principalmente para el lector no especializado, y más si no le resultan accesibles las obras en castellano y catalán–, se echa en falta en ella un mayor conocimiento del mundo de las historietas y de su régimen jurídico. Hubiera ayudado mucho la lectura de los estudios de los más destacados autores españoles actuales en esta disciplina, como Vicent Sanchís, Óscar Gual, Pedro Porcel, Manuel Barrero o Javier Alcázar, a los que no se cita, siendo desde hace tiempo referentes sobre la materia. Igual que habría sido de gran

ayuda la consulta de las numerosas publicaciones, informes y catálogos de la Asociación Cultural Tebeosfera, principal institución española dedicada al estudio teórico de la historieta. Ello habría permitido también conectar las historietas y el humorismo gráfico catalán con el del resto del país, en vez de considerarlo como un segmento aislado, ya que, al hacer esto último, se está obviando que en muchos aspectos poco distingue lo se publicaba en Cataluña de cuanto se elaboraba en otros territorios españoles.

Otro aspecto que se echa en falta es la consulta de fuentes directas: archivos de la Administración (tanto General como provincial), entrevistas y obras doctrinales de la época, así como la lectura de un mayor número de cómics. En el apartado dedicado a Bruguera, por ejemplo, la profesora McGlade sólo se detiene en dos personajes (Carpanta y Doña Urraca), por lo demás analizados ya hasta la extenuación por la doctrina española. La ausencia de fuentes directas resulta especialmente perceptible en las interpretaciones de la autora realiza tanto sobre los personajes de las historietas, como sobre los motivos de la Administración franquista para censurar algunas viñetas satíricas, que se reducen en ambos casos a meras elucubraciones personales, en ocasiones muy forzadas. A pesar de todo, la lectura del libro de la profesora McGlade resulta muy recomendable a modo de introducción en el interesante mundo del cómic y del humor gráfico en España y esperamos que sirva de vanguardia y promueva el interés entre los hispanistas por este campo que hasta ahora no han explorado.

IGNACIO FERNÁNDEZ SARASOLA

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KIMBERLY L. CLEVELAND, *Black Art in Brazil: Expressions of Identity*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida. 2013. 173 pp. ISBN 978-0-8130-4476-7.

In her book *Black Art in Brazil: Expressions of Identity*, Kimberly L. Cleveland demonstrates that 'Afro-Brazilian' can be a problematic term when it comes to the artwork of modern and contemporary Brazilian artists who explore blackness. She introduces her book by saying that the context of black art in Brazil is 'highly complex' and should be approached from a perspective that is

beyond 'a solely racially based discussion' (2). Acknowledging the importance of social, economic, political and historical factors in her analyses, the author goes on to contextualize the rise of black Brazilian art, which is understood in academia as a modern and contemporary phenomenon. From the adversity of producing sacred work within Afro-Brazilian religious communities suffering police repression to the astonishment of watching the Brazilian government appropriating the Afro-Brazilian heritage in order to improve its relations with African countries or promote tourism in Bahia, black Brazilian artists made their way as marginalized citizens in the twentieth century. Despite several political advances that resulted in greater recognition of the artistic production of people of African descent in Brazil in the twenty-first century, there is still a lot of work to be done to affirm the legitimacy of black Brazilian art.

If the study of black art in Brazil is a young field shifting from anthropology to art history, as Cleveland notes, her work itself is certainly part of the change. Recognizing that the existing scholarship did not focus on broad aspects of the context of black Brazilian art, she decides to view this body of work 'through the lens of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Brazilian art and culture' (18). What is intended is to grasp the way some modern and contemporary Brazilian artists articulate blackness through their own production. In so doing, she investigates how art is informed by developments in the discourse of race, assuming that art is nothing less than a product of one's environment.

Cleveland's work is the result of extensive research including years of fieldwork in Brazil, during which she interviewed artists, scholars, and curators. In particular, the conversations with the artists provided her with access to individual viewpoints on their art, as well as their opinions and experiences. As a result, not only does the book present critical commentary on the black artistic production of Afro-Brazilians but it also draws on the artists' views to better understand the complexity of their artworks. On their respective tendencies, Cleveland tells us there are 'broader differences between modern artists' greater association with cultural and social pasts, versus contemporary artists' focus

on the present' (19). In addition, the book is illustrated with 34 colourful plates and 6 black and white figures, which offer the reader the opportunity to visualize the works under discussion as if he/she were attending an exhibition under the guidance of an art historian.

Chapter one examines the discourse on race in Brazil and its implications for ethnic and artistic identities. The author points out that 'the Brazilian nation [has] perpetuated racial inequality at the same time that it [has] prided itself on its image as a country unified by racial mixture' (23). This is the consequence of the development of the so-called 'racial democracy', a national racial ideology which ultimately allowed whites to discriminate against non-whites, but also gave black people hope that they could experience equality some day. As racial identification is based on physical characteristics in Brazil, some mixed-race Brazilians with black blood tend to identify themselves with whiteness, as this may result in social advantages. In this respect, the Brazilian racial system differs from the 'one drop' principle in the United States, where racial classification is based on descent. However, Cleveland underlines that the resistance to strict racial categories in Brazil did not prevent some black Brazilians from acknowledging the notion of black ethnicity based on African cultural heritage. The association of Afro-Brazilian religion with African retention and blackness resulted in the assumption that black cultural production in Brazil is informed by religion, even though Cleveland argues that '[s]ome contemporary black artists are less concerned with aligning themselves and their work with their African heritage'. (39) Moreover, the author criticizes curators for arbitrarily attaching the Afro-Brazilian identity to artists who address black Brazilian subjects in their work. She concludes this chapter with a discussion on visual signs of blackness in Brazil and the variety of black Brazilian art's visual vocabulary.

The subsequent chapters are case studies of five artists who create black art in Brazil. Cleveland selects the artworks of representatives of modern and contemporary periods. Their production is diverse in terms of media and themes, covering both religious and secular production. The author is particularly interested in the different ways the

artists understand blackness and the extent to which it is a matter of concern to the formation of their artistic identities.

In Chapter two, the life and artistic production of the black activist and self-taught painter Abdias do Nascimento are subjected to scrutiny. Marrying art and activism, Nascimento's painting explores aspects of Candomblé, an Afro-Brazilian religion which suffered government and police repression until the 1970s. While his work is based on his first-hand observation and knowledge gained as a non-initiate from Afro-Brazilian communities in Rio de Janeiro, he understood his art as part of the larger African Diaspora, mixing 'Afro-Brazilian and African elements in his Pan-Africanist artistic approach toward a universal African cultural or symbol bank' (54f). On Nascimento's public, it is Cleveland's contention that his artworks were targeted at secular audiences, leading her to conclude that the core of black Brazilian art is 'multilayered and reveals itself to be more complex' than as defined by scholars 'when considering the relationship between art and religion beyond the religious sphere' (61). Additionally, during his exile in the United States, Nascimento used his artworks to reference African heritage in Brazil and express himself. For Cleveland, the enthusiastic reception of Nascimento's oeuvre by African-Americans due to its African influences contrasts with the lack of critical analysis in the United States, which eventually affected the way he was received in Brazil as well.

Chapter three is an appraisal of the artwork of the multimedia white artist Ronaldo Rego, who is also a priest of Umbanda, a Brazilian religion formed by the combination of African, Amerindian and European elements. Rego creates religious-themed works with strong African influences for sale and show in non-religious settings, but it is the authority of Umbanda priesthood that has secured him a place in the black arts category. His position as an Umbanda priest and his self-identification with black Brazilian culture allow Rego to manipulate the ephemeral forms of sacred works in order to turn them into commercial pieces. Cleveland shows how Rego's eager embrace of African traditions has given significant contribution to the establishment of black Brazilian art, a genre traditionally recognized by its black ethnic

influence. She also queries Rego's absence from the American studies on black art in Brazil, as religious Afro-Brazilian artwork usually attracts the attention of US scholars. What is more, the author understands that Rego indicates a new trend in black artistic production in Brazil as he has interpreted his own body of work and 'become a "voice" for African-influenced religious imagery' (88).

Chapter four discusses the art of the black self-taught photographer and chemist Eustáquio Neves. Using chemical manipulation and other techniques, Neves creates unique images that 'provide rare insight into regional and personal interpretations of the resonances of slavery among the African-descendant populations of his home state of Minas Gerais' (89). He is recognized as a creator of a new type of black Brazilian art for his innovation in terms of artistic forms and themes. His signature style of photomontage is a result of layers of various images as well as physical or chemical interference, which earned him recognition by the discourse on contemporary Brazilian photography. Neves's best-known work, *The Arturos*, juxtaposes sacred and secular elements to portray the present-day life of an Afro-Brazilian religious community avowing links to slaves. The combination of historic with contemporary and regional aspects in his creative process enables Neves to investigate the persistence of racial and economic inequality of Afro-Brazilians, finding its roots in the enslavement of Africans in the colonial Brazil. According to Cleveland, Neves's oeuvre is a veritable criticism of the marginalization of black Brazilians nowadays, 'mirroring how the systems of social inequality instituted during the era of slavery have carried over into neocolonialist practices in modern and contemporary Brazil' (109).

Chapter five relates to the work of Ayrson Heráclito, a multimedia artist from Bahia and practitioner of Candomblé. Drawing on gastronomic elements historically associated with black people in his home state such as sugar, palm oil and sun-dried beef, Heráclito creates performances and installations that tackle historical and social problems of Afro-Brazilians. Although he manipulates sacred materials informed by his faith, 'Heráclito strives to approximate art and religion by creating a new iconography as embodied in his production' (122), making use of a variety

of non-religious sources as well. However, Cleveland notes that the experience of Heráclito's secular audience may be limited if the viewer is not familiar with Candomblé. She also underscores that Heráclito's employment of Afro-Brazilian religious themes does not mean that the artist, who defines himself as a mixture, creates Afro-Brazilian art. For Cleveland, Heráclito's artwork should be understood as regional art, because the signifiers of blackness in his art not only are derived from Bahian culture and people but are also more likely to be noticed by locals.

Chapter six explores the work of the black multimedia artist Rosana Paulino. As a black woman who was raised in the lower-class part of São Paulo, the artist references the contemporary life of those people living on the margins of society when she creates prints, sculptures and installations which often carry autobiographical elements. Her artistic production includes experimentation with different media and has gained national and international attention. Paulino is particularly interested in the marginalized condition of black women in Brazil, but she rejects feminist or racial labels. Cleveland suggests that there is more resemblance between Paulino's work and that by black female artists from African Diaspora and national female artists than what is accepted as Afro-Brazilian art. That said, 'her work can be considered "political" because it reflects her choice to engage with complex and often sensitive questions of race and gender' (143). The artist also considers her use of sewing in her creative process as political, since her technique and materials derive from activities and objects associated with marginalized women in Brazil.

The epilogue contains a summary of Cleveland's most important conclusions. She contends that the criteria scholars and curators adopt to judge what comprises Afro-Brazilian art are not comprehensive enough to cover the variability of black art in Brazil. Describing a generational shift in terms of media, subject matter and intent between modern and contemporary artists, the author makes a case for an emerging black Brazilian art which has the distinction of conveying blackness in a more accessible way via quotidian references to black experience with a more regional focus, as well as being produced by artists who have better

access to artistic education and also resist the Afro-Brazilian art label for complex personal reasons. Nevertheless, Cleveland finds similarities between the five artists discussed in her book, namely the use of art as a site of resistance, the creation of political art for the general public, the manipulation of popular and erudite materials and practices, and the interest in the past. Even so, for Cleveland, what is specific to contemporary artists is the practice of conducting research for their artistic production and the insertion of their own bodies into their artwork.

Therefore, Cleveland's book is a critical investigation of the modern and contemporary history of black Brazilian art that greatly contributes to the studies on the artistic production of African descendants in the world. From an art historical angle, the book formulates a critique of the Afro-Brazilian art category not only to interrogate the limits of this artistic nomenclature but also to reconsider the art which conveys blackness in Brazil with proper contextualization. Furthermore, this work throws new light on the grey area of black people's expressions of identity in a country whose majority identify themselves as 'black' or 'brown', according to the last census, making it the current second largest population of people of African descent after Nigeria. In spite of a couple of ethnocentric terms such as 'syncretism' and 'animism' (51) and the controversial association of Esu with Satan (51, 77), Cleveland's analyses are careful and based on in-depth bibliographical research and solid fieldwork. However, if the methodology is innovative for giving voice to the artists, one could wonder why the corpus of interviews and personal correspondence is just indirectly available to the reader. This casebook could have gone beyond this indirect approach and published the conversations with the artists, as they reveal individual perspectives which support its thesis that black Brazilian art is more complex and diverse than what previous commentators presumed.

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DAVID M. K. SHEININ (ed.), *Sports Culture in Latin American History*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press. 2015. x + 236 pp. ISBN 978 0 922963370.

This excellent and provocative volume questions some of the tendencies that are already too common in the emerging field of sport studies. Indeed, David Sheinin and his collaborators challenge the very category of 'modern sport' by analysing an impressive range of physical activities in geographical and chronological contexts, many of which have received little scholarly attention and some of which fall outside conventional definitions of sporting practices. Some essays also make use of new types of sources – beyond media sources and ethnographies – while all move us beyond simple narratives of the importation of modern sports from Europe into Latin America. Often with a keen eye on transnational cultural currents, the authors provide a sophisticated Latin American perspective on the region's sports from the mid-nineteenth century and into the twenty-first.

Laura Podalsky sets up the collection effectively in her superb introduction. She not only makes a convincing case against linear and Eurocentric histories of Latin American sports but also lays out three themes that run through the book's essays. Without overstating the novelty of these methodological contributions, she nonetheless argues that they amount to 'a notable theoretical substrate'. Although the book falls short of the logical tightness of a monograph – inevitably so – it does achieve a greater unity than most such volumes. The essays do in fact address, in varying ways and to varying extents, the main topics that Podalsky identifies: namely, the complex relationships between sports and the nation-state, the cultural and political meanings that bodies take on in sporting contexts, and the ritualized performances that define the space of sports.

The other authors in the collection follow up on Podalsky's introduction in intriguing and often pioneering ways. Boxing appears as a focus for Michael Donoghue and David Sheinin. Donoghue examines the rise and fall of the great Panamanian fighter Roberto Durán, tracing the 'redemptive machismo' (38) he was invested with, by the dictator

Omar Torrijos and by the Panamanian public. Race factors in Sheinin as well as Donoghue shows how Durán became a symbol of resistance to US hegemony in the isthmus before his 'No más' submission to Sugar Ray Leonard in 1980. Sheinin looks even more intensely at racial identities in his fine essay on the construction of a *costeño* Colombian identity. The author moves fluidly here, though, within Colombia and the Colombia diaspora and into the global circuits of boxing, as he argues for the prevalence of a notion of 'African' blackness linked to the town of Palenque. Using not only interviews but also novels and other sources, he argues that notions of a *palenquero* identity built on refashioned memories of the region's history and the violent struggles against outside authorities. Moreover, he describes how fighters like Pambelé, associated with a 'golden era of *costeño* boxing', served as models for the globalized and commodified figures of black Colombian boxers beginning in the 1990s.

Three other essays provide intriguing views of urban and national spaces through sports. Ranaan Rein's analysis of Club Atlético Atlanta, a football club based in the Villa Crespo neighbourhood of Buenos Aires, addresses the complicated ways that such entities come to represent ethnic and in this case religious groups within the broader national population. Rein's sophisticated explanation of how Atlanta became known as a Jewish club, despite its relative paucity of Jewish players, fans and administrators, is a vital correction of depictions of Argentina's footballing identity as free of ethnic or racial divisions. More intriguingly still, the author uses Atlanta to show how various sorts of Jews in Buenos Aires – including those 'unaffiliated' with their ethno-religious community – expressed different visions of Jewishness, not only against discriminatory descriptions by outsiders but also in tension with notions of Argentine-ness, and did so across generations. The result is a rich community history, as well as a football case study.

Joshua Hotaka Roth also examines inter-generational ethnic identity as expressed in a sporting practice. His study of the relatively young game of gateball – invented in Japan in 1979 (84) – reveals the vigorous assertion of identity, primarily among elderly Brazilians

of Japanese descent in São Paulo. His chapter demonstrates that participants use the structured practice of their sport to fashion a sense of community within the megalopolis; through gateball these Japanese–Brazilians reaffirm a sense of their links to both Japan and prior generations of Japanese immigrants to Brazil. Like Rein, furthermore, Hotaka Roth goes beyond the local; the strongly segregated gateball leagues, he argues, suggest that the myth of Brazil as a mixed-race nation is inaccurate. Brazil, he concludes, remains more heterogeneous than this myth proclaims it to be. Ageeth Sluis makes vivid connections between sport and nation in post-Revolutionary Mexico City, with a powerful sense of the physicality of both participants in sports and the city in which they lived and played. She examines the imputation of modernity to athletic bodies from the late 1920s onward; a new type of body, the ‘Deco’ body (127), which was seen as incarnating the progress of the Mexican capital and linking Mexican women in particular to international trends. Although other scholars have analysed similar phenomena, Sluis links the emergence of Deco bodies to nudism, physical education, and, most intriguing, to a remade architectural context. Her reading of the ‘physical culture’ (135) of Mexico in these years is imaginative and suggestive.

The contributions of Carolyn Ryan Larson, Ken Lehman and Katya Wesolowski focus on activities not usually considered sports. Larson’s fascinating essay, for instance, looks at indigenous physicality in late nineteenth-century Argentines. Her reading of travel narratives, scientific texts and anthropological museum displays, and artistic works allows her to uncover the conflicts running through hegemonic depictions of indigenous horse riders and hunters. At a time when the national government was waging brutal war on indigenous groups, Argentines struggled to balance views of Indians as savages with celebrations of their ‘natural’ athleticism. Her work, with its dual focus on indigenous bodies and the uses made of them by experts of various sorts, thus shows the racialized tensions of nation-building that surfaced in a kind of internal Orientalism. Lehman’s chapter brings us much closer to the present and to an activity typically

treated as a caricature of sport, professional wrestling. By looking at the entrance of *cholas* – women from a notoriously unclear social and ethnic category (51–54) – into the male world of wrestling, he teases out the symbolic gestures of these performers. The wrestling *cholas* present themselves as decent and conventionally feminine while also acting in assertive, almost macho ways. At the same time, Lehman argues, these women are not only manipulating gender and ethnic norms but they also do so as part of a wider struggle against neoliberalism and its effects in Bolivia. Wesolowski, finally, traces the history of capoeira from its origins in nineteenth-century Brazil up to its popularization in the late twentieth century. As it spread from poor areas to health clubs, universities and other middle-class spaces, not only in Brazil but also abroad, capoeira remained a space and a practice in which many sought to pursue social justice. Wesolowski’s adept location of debates over capoeira within broader debates over citizenship in Brazil – to be precise, the uneven and incomplete nature of citizenship in the nation – provides not only insight into twentieth-century social conflicts but also a useful conclusion to the collection.

Bringing together studies of race, ethnicity, religion, aging and gender, this volume vividly illustrates the energy and the range of cutting-edge sport studies. The authors who Sheinin recruited propose exciting expansions of the field, in terms of chronology, sources, disciplinary approaches and objects of study. The book did leave me wanting a direct discussion of what precisely ‘sport’ might mean in light of the many practices analysed here; the question comes up, after all, in Wesolowski’s chapter. Nevertheless, this is a book that will prove useful to both students and scholars of Latin American history and of sport across the world. Its wonderfully rich cases inspire readers to think about the rituals and spaces of sport and, above all, to treat sports as embodied activities through which people create their own meanings and identities in Latin America.

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