

que figuraban en la construcción de la realidad por parte de las elites criollas yucatecas. En las cartas mayas se percibe la centralidad de la *milpa* (el término para denominar tanto la tierra cultivada como el sistema de cultivo) como posibilitador de libertad y de un futuro, en tanto su supervivencia aseguraba un porvenir en donde los mayas pudieran vivir libremente en coexistencia con el estado yucateco y las elites criollas.

En síntesis, este libro es ideal para cursos de postgrado sobre el siglo XIX en toda su amplitud, sobre América Latina, y sobre el Atlántico negro, tanto debido a su profundidad teórica y creatividad metodológica como a su (en el buen sentido) promiscuidad disciplinaria.

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JUAN PRO (ed.): *Utopias in Latin America: Past and Present*. Brighton and Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2018.

*Utopias in Latin America* displays a suggestive landscape of transatlantic utopian dynamics in Latin America, from colonial times to the present. The introduction offers an insightful overview of the field and a useful guide to the contents of the volume. However, it falls short of clarifying the exact conceptual framework that shapes the shift in utopian studies from traditional approaches that tend to define utopia as a genre broadly shaped by Thomas More's paradigm, to contemporary studies that focus on utopia as a dynamic, manifold phenomenon that cuts across discursive genres, collective experiences, literary productions, political formulations, and social experiments. Ernst Bloch would probably be the key figure at the source of such a reconceptualization of the field, but incorporating references to the theoretical work of Paul Ricoeur, Ruth Levitas, Louis Marin, and Frederic Jameson, just to name a few, would have greatly contributed to helping the reader gain a much clearer and more precise understanding of the object of utopian studies as it is being redefined today. This would also give a better idea of what follows in the book, and do justice to an excellent compilation of diverse and illuminating approaches to multiple aspects of utopian dynamics in Latin America, from the Spanish Conquest to the present-day contexts of Venezuela and Argentina.

The volume approaches utopian dynamics from widely different perspectives and examines them in their interaction with multiple frameworks. Marisa González de Oleaga reflects on the writing of history and the construction of historical memory when she contrasts the considerable utopian activity and the proliferation of utopian experiments in nineteenth- and twentieth-century

Paraguay with the obliteration of the utopian narratives that these experiments generated, as well as their erasure from historical writing and collective memory. González de Oleaga's discussion of Vasco de Quiroga's utopian communities—*the pueblos hospitales*—as a utopian project that closely followed More's paradigm, brings up an interesting comparison with the utopian ideas of Las Casas. This comparison would have been even stronger had it also considered the utopian drive that fueled Las Casas' own proposals of peaceful colonization between 1516 and 1525 before he turned to the law to bring about a radical transformation of the entire colonial system in the Americas. Carlos Berriel, on the other hand, proposes an interesting reframing of Campanella's utopian novel *The City of the Sun* (1602) as a different kind of utopia, where science and religion, natural philosophy and morality do not stand in opposition but in harmony, complementing each other. This harmonious coexistence is at the basis of a utopia shaped as the systematic inversion of the policies of the Inquisition and, equally important, as a radical critique of the Spanish Empire. Carlos Ferras's interesting discussion of José Joaquín Mora's work and multiple activities encompassing journalism, education, women's rights, festivals, and theatre, among others, is unfortunately considerably undermined by entire sections so full of generalities and oversimplified observations and opinions, that they read like a rehash of multiple sources, with little depth or originality. Horacio Tarcus draws a fascinating map of utopian dynamics in Argentina during the second half of the nineteenth century. The analysis moves seamlessly between Spain and Argentina, illuminating the incessant exchange of visions, ideas, and projects that drove the utopian imagination during the period. His discussion of the five titles published by La Librería Popular sets the stage for a discussion of Ceferino Tresserra and of the life and works of Bartolomé Victory y Suarez, a little-known utopian figure of the first magnitude, who, by the way, did not believe in utopias. Nere Besabe's discussion of the concept of Latin Race as utopia illuminates in a most interesting way the origins and development of the Latin Race, showing its close connections to the historical context in which they emerged and illuminating persuasively its immediate political implications. Besabe nevertheless fails to show convincingly that the Latin Race actually constituted a utopian construction. Carlos Illades's analysis of the life and activities of Rhodakanaty in Mexico complements nicely the Argentine utopian landscape drawn by Horacio Tarcus in chapter six. The figure of Rhodakanaty projects in Mexico an analogous alternative mapping to the historical map of a period marked by utopian dynamics. Rhodakanaty comes out in this essay as a compelling utopian player, at the crossroads of a wide network of philosophical paths and the Romantic imagination. Focusing in chapter nine on an actual utopic experiment, Laura Fernández Cordero analyses the Cecilia Colony, showing

its dual utopian function: on the one hand, as a social reinvention based on the new options for social regeneration and harmony offered by free love; and, on the other hand, as a vehicle for a radical critique of the monarchy, patriarchy, and the state. Ana Sabau's discussion of spiritualism is suggestive but, in the end, it completely blurs the distinction between utopia, fantasy, and escape. Andrew Ginger's insightful critical revisiting of Vasconcelos's *La raza cósmica* is both timely and illuminating for our own urgent current reflection on racial categories, and on the boundaries and constructs that mediate these categories. And, finally, both Dario Azzanelly and Marina Sitrin take us into the alternative realities created in response to the deep crisis of the capitalist liberal world order, of democracy and the state, that defines our own time. These alternative realities flip institutions and top-down organizations, as they shape utopian models based on *autogestión* and *horizontalidad* in Argentina, or, in Venezuela, on self-governing communities, councils, and communes that hark to pre-Hispanic or runaway-slave modes of communal organization.

Altogether, this volume charts a journey well worth taking. It sheds light on areas of knowledge and experience often sidestepped by more traditional disciplinary approaches and literary scholarship. It also demonstrates the extraordinary potential of utopian studies as a way to expand boundaries, explore alternative realities, and create interdisciplinary dialogues.

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ERIN GRAFF ZIVIN (ed.): *The Marrano Specter: Derrida and Hispanism*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

¿Cómo es leído Jacques Derrida por los hispanistas? Esa pregunta abre el libro y recorre las páginas de este gran trabajo editorial realizado por Erin Graff Zivin. ¿De qué manera el espectro, y especialmente la figura del marrano de Derrida, nos convoca a preguntarnos sobre nuestras identidades, nuestras filosofías y nuestra mirada del mundo?

Derrida es un fantasma, ni vivo ni muerto, es un espectro que nos atraviesa, que nos llama. Derrida se materializa en la idea del marrano, en aquel que convierte la ley en una paradoja. Como escribe Peggy Kamuf en sus palabras iniciales, a través de la figura del marrano, Derrida “pacientemente ejercita esta transposición de la experiencia singular en una descripción universal. En un punto, ubicándose él mismo en la figura del marrano, leyendo en voz alta su paradójica ley: ‘Mientras menos te muestres como judío, lo más y mejor judío serás. Mientras más radicalmente rompes con ciertos dogmatismos del lugar y

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