

hispanoamericano, y en este caso los autores abordan el rol de la Inquisición en la creación de sentidos de verdad y de duda en el ámbito epistemológico.

Si bien la corona y el archivo domaron las prácticas del trámite, la escritura radical no desapareció. Traigo como ejemplo a Jacinto Ventura de Molina (Río Grande, 1766-Montevideo, 1841), un letrado hijo de africanos esclavizados, que vivió en el Río de la Plata tardocolonial, durante la revolución y al inicio de la independencia. Este libro me hace reconsiderar profundamente a Molina, cuyos escritos autobiográficos he examinado durante los últimos 20 años. Molina tenía su archivo de manuscritos, y entre ellos se destacan los de *gracia* (para obtener mercedes para sí y para la comunidad negra), de *gobierno* (para recomendar reformas a los monarcas de España, Portugal y Brasil y, eventualmente, a las autoridades del Estado Oriental del Uruguay), y de *justicia* (defendiendo a individuos y a la comunidad negra). En su tiempo, Molina era objeto de burlas por parte de las élites letradas blancas, quienes, no obstante, contribuyeron a la supervivencia de sus manuscritos. Hasta este momento, me ha sido difícil describir a Molina como radical, pues era monarquista en tiempos revolucionarios. En verdad, Molina empleaba la tradición como forma de política radical para un sujeto subalterno, lo cual es imposible de conciliar con lecturas liberales o decoloniales del pasado hispanoamericano. Gracias a los autores de este libro por ayudarme a reconsiderar a Molina a la luz de esta nueva perspectiva. Los escritos de Molina muestran la vitalidad de esta tradición letrada ladina para proyectar futuros radicales, que ha perdurado hasta el presente.

Alex Borucki

University of California, Irvine

PAULA SEIGHER Y ALINA SILVEIRA (eds.). ***Argentina y Gran Bretaña: 200 años de historia (1825-2025)***. Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 2025.

This volume offers ten papers from a colloquium convened by the editors in 2023. They cover aspects of the relationship between Argentina and Great Britain from the perspective of several disciplines, including anthropology and archaeology as well as history, all written with a strong collective consciousness of recent tendencies in historiography. The study of state-building, the evolution of national economies and geopolitics have been complemented by enhanced attention to culture, gender and indigeneity. Matters once thought marginal or dismissed as mere detail have been reevaluated and rescued from the footnotes, not for the sake of it, but in order to better reveal the essence of period or place. In English history, the mid-twentieth century focus of Geoffrey Elton (1955) on constitution or of Christopher Hill (1961) on class reflected the preoccupations

of their generation as much as their individual lives as, respectively, Jewish refugee and English Marxist. So it is not surprising in an age of spectacle, populism and mass immigration that historians as different in style and period as Joanne Paul (2022), Helen Carr (2022) and Roger Knight (2018) should be more closely attuned than their forebears to dynasty, display and logistics. As taste changes the question always remains: does adjusting the lamp always illuminate new truths? Are we still projecting contemporary preoccupations onto the past, albeit no longer those of our parents?

Initially, taking the ten essays collected here in reverse order (my strong recommendation for any reviewer of an edited collection) reveals a mixed record. The archaeologist, Julieta Frère, has examined sites in Southern Argentina and Chile and reports findings of English crockery. Two of her three sites were in Southern Patagonia and had been occupied by Anglican missions. Thomas Bridges, visiting one of these at the turn of the twentieth century, had been impressed to find that some of the more prosperous Indigenous households had acquired a complete service of crockery, including teacups. Given that the consumption of tea was almost a fortieth article of the Church of England this must be accounted a great success for the missionaries, and it is no surprise that shards have survived. It is unsurprising to find that consumption of English crockery was not confined to major populations centers. The methodological delight here is that shards can be matched to a comprehensive database of crockery in British museums, offering a prospect of a more general history of global variations in taste. It is reminiscent of the discovery of the export records of British manufacturers of agricultural equipment in the 1970s which made it possible to trace the spread of specific types of farming across Australia by asking where necessary equipment was sent. Unlike Frère, Diego Daniel Aguirre and Gustavo David Candela write as anthropologists with an abiding interest in the Santa Catalina nature reserve, a patch of woodland about twenty miles from the center of Buenos Aires, now surrounded by suburbs. Their contribution deals with the brief period from 1825 to 1829 in which this was the site of a Scottish agricultural colony. William Parish Robertson set the colony up with a population of around five hundred, including skilled professionals and untrained servants. Its failure is a familiar story, most recently chronicled by David Rock and, here, in a chapter by Alina Silveira, who sets about rescuing the history of the colony from mere antiquarianism by examining the symbolic and material links formed by the colonists with Scotland. The brief duration of the experiment frustrates this ambition. Sharp class divisions, the depredations of armed bands, poor market research, general economic dislocation and—above all—the proximity of better opportunities in the nearby city all contributed to its rapid failure. Silveira shows very clearly how the more enterprising colonists peeled off to make successful livelihoods

by using the very same means employed by recent immigrants from Iberia and elsewhere, typically combining livestock and trade. This point about seizing local opportunities and identifying current models of successful adaptation is powerfully driven home by Gabriela Paula Lupiañez in her chapter on Thomas Elliot, sent to San San Miguel de Tucuman as a prisoner of war following the disastrous 1806 occupation of Buenos Aires by Brigadier-General William Carr Beresford. What would it be like if academics teaching International Relations opened their undergraduate offering with an introductory course on global lives, taking inspiration from the admittedly anglo-centric work of Miles Ogborn (2008). Elliot would surely merit a place. Treatment of PoWs varied from one provincial center to another, but in Tucuman it was clearly liberal. Elliot may not have explicitly understood how geopolitics had created a unique conjuncture in Tucuman as Bourbon constitutional reforms followed by naval British placed it at the center of a complex two-way flow of trade, no longer merely a stop on the road to Potosí for doomed mules. However, he clearly read the signs and realized that he could invent himself at a more elevated level, socially and economically, than awaited him as a private soldier returning to Ireland. Finding a literal and figurative godfather in Manuel Reborado, a Spanish importer settled in Tucuman since the 1770s, Elliot followed his patron into trade, survived the vicissitudes of occupation by Spanish forces, married and prospered. Even more than other chapters, this one shows how a global life peripheral to the relationship between Britain and Argentina may be central to a larger geopolitical narrative of shifting power and trade routes; the footnote opens a new volume.

Like some the contributions already reviewed, the chapter by Paula Seiguer is a by-product of a more ambitious and ongoing project on Protestant missions in South America. In 1970, when I told my mother I was going to Buenos Aires to study the history of British investment there, she immediately responded with two questions: “Is it in the mission fields?” and “What language do they speak?” before recalling her own mother’s warning, as she boarded the train from Liverpool to London to study in the capital: “If you feel a needle in your arm, scream as loud as you can or you’ll wake up in Buenos Aires.” Quite mistakenly, as it turns out, and still woefully ignorant of the dispersal of Staffordshire crockery, I assured her that Argentina was *not* in the mission fields. Seiguer’s project is a very much needed corrective to the collective memory of the British in Argentina as railway engineers, polo-playing *estancieros* and the like. The missionaries needed to fund their activities, and those working in South America were hard pressed to compete with those in sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and other locations at a time when prospective donors generally thought that poverty and desert correlated with skin color: the darker the better. Choosing to

concentrate in this essay on the narrative provided by images rather than words, Seiguer finds hard-working missionaries ministering to ill-clad Indigenous folk in rural settings, a broth liberally seasoned with images of Catholic superstition drawn from the Black Legend. She also exposes the carelessness with which publications of the missionaries and their societies freely plagiarized stock images. One wonders how far the readership for this stuff overlapped with the equally licentious literature aimed at prospective investors in mining and land companies. Seiguer's broad concern is less with Britain and Argentina than with Protestants, including those from continental Europe and North America, and South America in general. Similarly, Evangelina Mischelejis deals with press coverage of South America, not just the River Plate, but her focus is tightly drawn on the British press and the very brief period from 1805-1810. Noting authors' use of the standard late-eighteenth-century trope of imperial Spanish concealment of the supposed riches of the Indies to cover their poor research and hasty composition, Mischelejis explains that their principal driver was the strong appetite for knowledge created by Napoleon's Continental System, which excluded British exporters from traditional markets and sent them scampering across the ocean in hopes of recovering their fortunes.

The four remaining chapters of this book deal with a long twentieth century extending roughly from 1880 to the present. The most specific is the study of press coverage of Irish independence in two provincial newspapers by Jeremías Daniel Rodríguez. Material on Ireland in *El Diario* (Paraná) and the eponymous *Santa Fe* during the three months during which negotiations for the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty came to a head is slight and rather blurred. An article in *Santa Fe* seems to have condemned the intransigence of English opposition to full Irish independence without identifying the greater intransigence of Ulster. Another oddly backdates Ulster's self-government. It is hard to assess the yield of a project like this until the work has been done; mining the archives is a risky business. By contrast Florencia Rolla paints with a broader brush, examining the disproportionate role of the British in the creation of suburban culture and the centrality of sport in that process. Sports started early and gathered momentum as they were introduced into the curricula of the growing number of British schools in Argentina, as in Britain, and were moralized as character-building. With growing wealth the British community was able to acquire land, build club houses, grandstands and pavilions and to buy specialist equipment. Questions remain. Why did some sports transfer more readily than others to mainstream national culture: polo, but not real tennis; rugby, but not cricket? How open were the clubs to non-British talent? How important was class? New entrants to Britain's Royal Navy now train together whether destined for commissions or other ranks. Research has shown that naval crews with sports teams that

mix officers and ratings perform more efficiently in combat exercises. English cricket teams traditionally mixed “gentlemen and players.” Was the same true for football teams organized by the railway companies?

The two most contentious aspects of relations between Britain and Argentina have been the long-running dispute over the Malvinas and the shaping of the country’s economy and society by massive British investment before 1914. These are dealt with, respectively, by María Inés Tato and Pablo Volkind. Tato’s valuable contribution counterposes two narratives: the first, of diplomatic relations between successive British and Argentine governments and the second, of the rising tide of Argentine popular feeling against British occupation of the South Atlantic islands. The first story starts much earlier than the second, as Argentina lodged no fewer than nineteen claims to the islands between 1833 and 1945. The second, stoked by German propagandists during the first half of the twentieth century and the global wave of post-1945 decolonizations following the Second World War finally contributed to invasion in 1982 and a subsequent Argentine defeat, with profound consequences for both countries. Disposing of the islands figured in the list of “Bones of Contention” drawn up by Foreign Office officials as the Second World War drew to a close: diplomatic wrangles that needed to be resolved if Britain were to stand any chance of recapturing export markets lost to the United States during the war, but the right moment never came. Even more than Tato, Pablo Volkind faces the challenge of addressing the core relationship between Britain and Argentina in a volume primarily concerned with other aspects. His approach is to switch attention from the period before 1914 to the interwar years as the moment of maximum Argentine dependency in an essay that adopts a broadly Leninist periodization. Capitalism underwent a qualitative change at the turn of the twentieth century as expansion into fresh markets and territory gave way to zero-sum competition for market share and colonies. This transition was accompanied by a move from commercial to financial capitalism and a fusion of political and financial elites. Aspiration to complete occupation of Argentine national territory and the globalization of elements of the country’s bourgeoisie were aspects of the proto-imperialist phase. The negative consequences of British investment only became fully apparent after 1918, in the period of full-blooded imperialism, as the flow of new investment from Britain virtually ceased while the accumulated stock continued to grow through reinvested earnings and corporate growth while outflows of dividends and royalties began to place pressure on the Argentine balance of payments and currency reserves, restricting macroeconomic management options. Though it is seldom theorised in this way, the shift in Britain from loose commercial capitalism, socially remote from government, to corporate capitalism closely allied with government is evident in David Rock’s study of

the British in Argentina (2019), in the westward movement of corporate HQs from the City of London to Westminster and in the 1890s lurch in the client-list of once-Radical corporate lawyers Ashurst, Morris, Crisp from explicitly progressive Argentine urban development and transport to oil and armaments, the imperial core. As with the Islands, so with the economy, the mundane story of trade and investment is paralleled by a narrative of public engagement with its consequences. Economic nationalism, like irredentism, pretty much coincided with the move—if not to “monopoly” capitalism—then to its corporate and concentrated twentieth-century form.

Charles Jones

University of Cambridge

EZEQUIEL ADAMOVSKY. *A History of Argentina: From the Spanish Conquest to the Present*. Duke University Press, 2024.

La célebre secuencia inicial de *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), la película de Stanley Kubrick, sitúa el origen de la historia humana en un acto de violencia. Un homínido descubre que un hueso puede utilizarse como arma y el garrotazo inaugural abre paso, mediante una famosa elipsis, al mundo del futuro. *A History of Argentina* de Ezequiel Adamovsky, investigador del CONICET en la Universidad Nacional de San Martín, parece apoyarse en una lógica narrativa semejante. La primera frase del libro anuncia: “In the beginning, there was violence”. Antes que los incas y los conquistadores, las encomiendas, las revoluciones o la formación del Estado nacional, la violencia aparece como el punto de partida desde el cual se organiza la historia argentina.

El libro constituye una síntesis desde la conquista española hasta el presente. Publicado originalmente en castellano y traducido al inglés por Rebecca Wolpin para Duke University Press en el marco del Programa Sur del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, está dirigido a un público amplio y, en particular, a lectores no especializados interesados en las historias nacionales de Iberoamérica. La traducción pone a disposición del público angloparlante una de las historias generales más difundidas de la Argentina reciente. Incorpora muchos de los temas de la historiografía contemporánea: las relaciones entre clase, raza y género; la participación política de los sectores populares; los conflictos regionales; la construcción del Estado; la cultura política; y las desigualdades que marcaron la experiencia nacional. En este sentido, funciona como una alternativa a las síntesis centradas en las élites políticas.

Sin embargo, más que detenerse en la abundante información que la traducción de *Historia de la Argentina* ofrece, esta reseña reflexiona sobre dos decisiones