

Atlanta logró echar raíces, desde el préstamo de sus instalaciones a un colegio, hasta la organización de peñas y bailes. También, la construcción de un “capital social” y los contactos políticos que el club pudo movilizar en circunstancias clave. En este punto, el capítulo sobre el aprovechamiento de las oportunidades que ofrecía la política deportiva del peronismo es particularmente revelador. En fin, la de Atlanta es una historia a través de la cual se puede seguir la parábola de las iniciativas de la sociedad civil en Argentina: su nacimiento en la época del fervor asociacionista de comienzos del siglo, su crecimiento con apoyo estatal a mediados del mismo y su decadencia hacia el final, cuando la propia sociedad es la que sufre un proceso de “descolectivización” y las iniciativas barriales se debilitan frente a formas de consumo más familiares o individuales: la cancha de tenis, el gimnasio, etc. Atlanta es en estos años una gran metáfora del país: arruinado en los ochenta, gestionado por una empresa privada que luego se retira, quebrado y luego revivido con la energía de sus propios socios, que lo sostuvieron a pesar de todo.

Ezequiel Adamovsky

UBA/CONICET

FRÉDÉRIQUE LANGUE: *Rumores y sensibilidades en Venezuela colonial. Cuando de historia cultural se trata*. Caracas: Fundación Buría, 2010.

In *Rumores y sensibilidades en Venezuela colonial. Cuando de historia cultural se trata*, Frédérique Langue offers six essays exploring the methodology of cultural history, the role of rumor in elite society, and patrician anxieties regarding shifting race, class, and gender dynamics in late colonial Caracas. Broadly, the essays are a call to apply cultural history (or what Langue refers to more specifically as the *historia de mentalidades*) to a range of topics in Venezuelan history. Langue’s collection draws on a broad range of secondary sources and a few archival case studies of divorce suits, ecclesiastical sermons, and travelers’ observations. She argues that generations of Venezuelan political and economic historiography have obscured a fluid society where the exclusive and rigorously-planned rituals, marriages, civil statutes of the elite (*los mantuanos*) belied threats to their social control presented by an upwardly mobile mixed-race (*pardo*) population.

Rumores y sensibilidades begins with a brief foreword by Reinaldo Rojas, which situates the book’s dominant approach within the social context of late colonial Venezuela. After this introduction, Langue’s first essay constructs the methodological framework with which she will analyze the more intimate cultural aspects of Venezuelan daily life: the history of mentalities. She sees the history

of mentalities as a more inclusive form of cultural or intellectual history. It is driven by a desire to understand the rituals and everyday forms of sociability of disparate social classes. Like Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms*, the best works of this genre often rely on social transgressions that produced ecclesiastical and inquisitorial records.

A second essay traces the evolution of Venezuelan colonial historiography in order to support the assertion that deep cultural history is necessary for its further development. Langué emphasizes that the colony's region, which is divided between Caribbean, Andean, and interior plains, influences its identity. This extreme regionalism leads to a penchant among Venezuelan historians to write local, rather than national, histories. Authors who bucked this trend constructed hagiographies to great men or dry economic works. Langué asserts that these persistent historiographical tendencies have muted or ignored many of the fascinating complexities of Venezuelan daily life in the colonial period.

Langué's third and fourth essays examine the legal components of elite strategies for consolidating power and wealth through marriage. The third essay discusses elite fears surrounding *pardo* attempts to infiltrate Venezuelan high society through the purchase of whiteness (*gracias al sacar*). Not only did *pardos* aspire to join elite social strata in order to end discrimination against them, but they also conscientiously reproduced elite values of exclusivity once they succeeded in legally obtaining white status. Langué's fourth essay uses another important piece of late eighteenth-century legislation, the Royal Pragmatic of 1776, as a starting point to explore multi-class marriages, *mantuano* sexual impropriety, and scandal. This elite-inspired statute forbade marriages of unequal social standing without parental consent. According to Langué, it represented beleaguered *mantuano* efforts to add legal protections to an arsenal of strategies already in place to maintain control and secrecy over romantic relationships that might damage elite public credit.

The fifth essay in the collection shifts from legal actions to the everyday means by which *mantuanos* suppressed incessant rumors concerning extramarital affairs and domestic disputes. Langué observes that elite families' myriad informal means of concealing their members' undesirable sexual partnerships, sometimes with the help of the clergy, revealed a wide gulf between the social ideals of honor and what occurred in daily life. Likewise, rumor became a weapon wielded by the lower classes against immodest elites. Through an examination of the patriarchs' sexual escapades and their violent interactions with their wives, Langué draws the same conclusions as scholars like Ann Twinam that "el honor adquiere la doble cara de una necesidad privada y pública" (p. 118).

In the final essay of the book, Langué concentrates on both religious and profane festivals as sites for understanding intricate inversions of the dynamics

of socioeconomic class and gender. Elites designed the many festival days punctuating the Venezuelan calendar as moments of intentional social inversion that were supposed to reaffirm the dominant class hierarchy. Yet by the late eighteenth century, these ritualized inversions of rigid socioeconomic and gender divisions in the colony hit too close to home for elite white males beset by the increasing power and independence of *pardos* and women.

Rumores y sensibilidades en Venezuela colonial offers a compelling academic polemic. Langue should be commended for emphasizing an interesting body of literature and a methodology that Anglophone scholarship has embraced more fully than its hispanophone counterpart. Venezuela colonial history is fertile ground for this mode of cultural inquiry given its tightly knit *mantuano* clans and its large, legally-adroit, and upwardly mobile *pardo* population. Langue's diversified secondary sources and well placed case studies survey what has been written already about these groups and what future topics await study.

Several shortcomings make this collection uneven. It would have benefited from more careful editing. Although each essay works well as a stand-alone piece, when taken together they often repeat similar arguments or introduce the same historical actors in multiple instances as stand-ins for elite points of view. The essays also set up provocative questions, such as the conflict between peninsular and creole identities, which they do not fully explore. Finally, while it might be asking Langue to write another book, the *pardos* she so often portrays as foils to the *mantuanos* appear in her text mostly as a nameless, faceless group. Nonetheless, Frédérique Langue has written an intriguing collection of thoughtful pieces that pose the question of how to fit the later colonial Venezuelan elite into the historiographical currents of cultural history. The book will be of use to specialists of Venezuelan history and cultural historians alike.

Jesse Cromwell

University of Mississippi

LIZETTE JACINTO y EUGENIA SCARZANELLA (eds.): *Género y ciencia en América Latina: mujeres en la academia y en la clínica (siglos XIX-XXI)*. Madrid / Frankfurt: Iberoamericana - Vervuert (Colección Estudios AHILA): 2011.

Este libro colectivo es un aporte a la historiografía interesada en el problema de la incorporación directa de las mujeres en el campo científico. "Incorporación directa", porque proceden como actoras principales en la producción, circulación y apropiación de conocimientos, y ya no a la sombra de algún "hombre de ciencia". Estas investigaciones aportan a la riqueza de interacciones entre la historia de las mujeres, de la segregación en géneros y de la actividad científica.