with his legacy, "he would probably hunt us down and kill us" (xiii). Perhaps he would; but in one of his rare ill-tempered moments, he would surely also be deeply flattered by the intelligence and diligence that has gone into this edition.

Matthew Restall *Pennsylvania State University*

MARÍA ELENA MARTÍNEZ: ***Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico.*** Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.

In her book *Geneological Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico*, María Elena Martínez traces the ideological and legal history of purity of blood categories from their initial appearance in the kingdom of Castile in the mid-fifteenth century, to their transatlantic circulation to colonial Mexico, and their transformation there until the early nineteenth century. This important and meticulously researched work takes on the historiography that argues that the modern Western conception of race had its origins in nineteenth-century scientific constructions of race as a biological category. Martínez deftly and persuasively shows a much earlier and more complicated historical genesis, arguing for "no single, transhistorical racism but rather different types of *racisms* (her emphasis), each produced by specific and historical conditions" (11).

One of the many strengths of this work is that Martínez analyzes the historical development of Spanish American racial ideology by anchoring it in late medieval Iberia to make her case about its importance in colonial Mexico, documenting the central role that religion and gender played in its development. Martínez highlights how the formation ideas regarding gendered concepts of blood that transmitted religious and cultural "stains" to future generations helped frame purity debates in this historical context. The first section places the emergence of *limpieza* within the major waves of Jewish conversion in late medieval Spain, and its completion in the Reconquest of Granada and the subsequent absorption of Muslim peoples there. This style of militant Catholicism, grounded in conquest and conversion, as well as the centralizing policies of Castilian monarchs and increasing urbanization, created a changing social order accompanied by increasingly negative views towards Christian converts from the 1450s on. The first formal establishment of *limpieza* policies were enacted in Toledo in 1449, and from there spread across Spain from the mid-fifteenth century to the mid-seventeenth century. These legal statutes, in addition to Inquisition campaigns that focused on heresy, helped to create a "politics of blood," religious and legally informed boundaries between Old and New Christians in Castilian

society. These boundaries were designed, in part, to restrict the access of recent converts and their descendents to important political, religious, and economic positions and institutions.

The second section examines *limpieza*'s transatlantic peregrinations between early modern Castile and Central Mexico as *limpieza* statutes became hardened around gendered genealogies and assumptions about the links between kinship, blood, and religion. A central outcome in colonial Mexico was the way that the Spanish Crown utilized *limpieza* policies as one way to legally integrate native elites into colonial society by creating discourses and policies that emphasized and rewarded indigenous purity by providing access to Indian self-government and local political offices, what Martínez calls a "dual citizenship and purity regime." This dual citizenship and purity regime also helped to order Hispanic society, sowing seeds for the emergence of a unifying Creole historical consciousness among Spaniards living in Mexico that would come to have a profound influence on culture and politics in the eighteenth century.

The third and final section investigates the origins for colonial categories of racial and ethnic mixture of the *sistema de castas* and its link to purity discourses. It is Martínez's most creative section, especially in her use of visual and written sources including parish record books, *limpieza probanzas*, and the *casta* paintings, an artistic genre that emerged in eighteenth-century Mexico and circulated there and in Europe. From this she deftly pulls together evidence to show how discourses of purity had changed in Mexico as it became extended to all of society over the course of the colonial period; it had moved away from religious practice, became tied more strongly to economic status, and became increasingly visual, written on the physical body and on skin color. It might have been interesting to consider the possibility that pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican genealogical cultures of descent and its links to political-religious power and authority may have also influenced or helped reshape "genealogical fictions" in practice in colonial Mexico, rather than seeing this as primarily a crown-directed process, though to be sure Martínez persuasively shows that *limpieza* statutes and ideologies were transformed from their Iberian origins given the new imperial needs and historical realities that the Crown faced in colonial Mexico. This is an engaging and important work that is sure to attract the attention of historians and scholars from other fields working on issues of race, religion, gender, and colonial empires in Latin America, Europe, and the Atlantic World.

Martha Few *University of Arizona*