

conditions that the sources describe must have been the “true” motivation for the revolt. The other option –which is Young’s choice– is to assume that there is more to what actors are saying in the stories they told about themselves. In this case, the question is how do we know when to “read between the lines” and when not to. When Young asks why Garza chose to include in his autobiography stories about his relations with women and his brawls with men, and what this means, he has several possible answers. How do we know that “[Garza’s] stories, far from being random digressions, complemented his narration of ‘more interesting’ events by linking ideals of masculine honor to a nationalist, cultural, and racial struggle”? How do we know that “[...] dominating women’s bodies metaphorically expressed control over contested territory” (p. 47)? Maybe they were indeed “random digressions.” Young himself recognizes that in the printed exchange between English and Spanish-language border newspapers, there was “a dialogue made difficult by a gap between Spanish and English that allowed for mistranslations or misinterpretations” (p. 36). How can we assume, then, that there is not a cultural gap between Garza’s stories and what we make of them that allows for serious mistranslations or misinterpretations? As rationalists would say, the problem is not analyzing actions but trying to analyze motivations. When we analyze actions, we can make a series of assumptions about motivations: as long as they are useful to predict actions, it is not important what they are. But when we analyze motivations, we cannot make any assumptions; we have to rely on sources, and methodologically, there is as yet no systematic way of making cultural interpretations of sources.

Catarino Garza’s Revolution on the Texas-Mexico Border shows very convincingly that “Garza succeeded in mobilizing support because his rebellion made sense to a wider border community that felt alienated from both the U.S. and Mexican governments” (pp. 57-58), but it is not equally convincing when it tries to show how that *wider* border community made sense of what the revolt meant. It is a book definitely worth reading, even if it takes the theoretical and methodological debates for granted.

Luis Barrón

CIDE

PAUL J. VANDERWOOD: *Juan Soldado: Rapist, Murderer, Martyr, Saint*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

In 1938, eight-year-old Olga Camacho left her home in Tijuana for the corner store. She did not return. After a frenzied search of the neighborhood, her body was found. Olga had been raped, her throat slashed. A young soldier assigned

to Tijuana, Juan Castillo Morales, was soon arrested and accused of the crime. He supposedly confessed and, shortly thereafter, was publicly executed by the military: taken to a cemetery, surrounded by his fellow soldiers and an angry public, he was told to run, and then shot in the back. Within weeks of the execution, residents of Tijuana began to transform the accused murderer into a martyr, from Juan Castillo Morales to Juan Soldado. In *Juan Soldado*, Paul Vanderwood tells the wrenching story of two lives, two deaths, and a subsequent afterlife. How is it that a young man who purportedly confessed to a horrific crime came so quickly to be martyred and ultimately venerated as a popular saint? It is a riveting, painful story, told in understated prose, with passion and empathy, by Vanderwood.

The book is divided into three parts. In the first section, Vanderwood recounts the crime and its aftermath. He takes the reader through the frantic search for Camacho and the eventual arrest of Castillo Morales. In brisk prose, Vanderwood then draws a vivid narrative of the days that followed the arrest: the gathering of angry crowds outside the building where the presumed killer was held and the burning of the Municipal Palace; the speedy trial and court martial of Castillo Morales; and his subsequent public execution by the *ley fuga* —literally, the law of flight, in which the prisoner is told to run and then shot for supposedly attempting to escape. It is a powerful, transborder story populated by displaced workers, border crossing stenographers and cops, confused consular officials, nervous authorities, and grieving families.

In the second section, Vanderwood paints a comprehensive social and cultural history of Tijuana in the first three decades of the twentieth century. With the support of ex-President Plutarco Elías Calles and governor of Northern Baja California (and future president) Abelardo Rodríguez, Tijuana in the 1920s and early 1930s was at its zenith. Bars, casinos, and resorts flourished as Southern Californians and tourists from the East Coast visited, looking for fun, sun, and a stiff drink. With the backing of Calles, the Agua Caliente resort rose out of the desert, including a hotel, a spa, a casino, golf courses, horse tracks, and high-end restaurants where the likes of Clark Gable, Dolores del Río, Jean Harlow, and the Marx brothers dined, gambled, and cavorted. Thanks to the organizing efforts of the CROM, wages were high and tax revenues facilitated an array of public works projects. Still, as Vanderwood notes, there was a substantial gap between rich and poor. A higher cost of living and an economy built on tourist dollars and service industries left much of the populace in a precarious position. The Great Depression, and on its heels the repeal of Prohibition in the United States, brought harder times to many in Tijuana, but Vanderwood suggests that perhaps the most significant challenge confronted by the town's elites and work force was the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas. Cárdenas's moral campaign over-

saw the prohibition of gambling and, among other things, the repeated closure of the Agua Caliente resort. Determined to turn the former resort into a school, Cárdenas met with a delegation from the CROM and encouraged the resort's work force, which numbered in the hundreds, to turn to farming. This, combined with a ruling against severance pay for the workers, brought Tijuana's working class out onto the streets and led the CROM to occupy the municipal palace. It was February of 1938, only days before Olga Camacho's killing.

In the final section, Vanderwood explores "belief" and its role in the veneration of Castillo Morales/Juan Soldado. The intangible yet real issue of "belief" is clearly where Vanderwood's primary interests lie — indeed, this section makes up nearly half of the book. It is a powerful excursion into the world of religion practices, as much an ethnographic as a historical undertaking, in which Vanderwood draws on an array of comparative cases and examples — the worship of popular saints in Louisiana, Texas, Sinaloa, and Guatemala is invoked — as well as on oral interviews and surveys in order to approach the transcendental. In the process, Vanderwood connects Juan Soldado to a long-standing, nebulous, yet stubbornly persistent popular Catholicism with its own standards of justice, forgiveness, and tolerance, one often (if not always) at odds with the institutional church and with the state's notions of law and justice.

Vanderwood's approach comes at a cost: the geographical and comparative breadth means that the historical narrative itself begins to dissipate. The reader gets little sense of the process through which Juan Soldado becomes popularly canonized over time, from the aftermath of his execution to Vanderwood's attendance at San Juan Day in 2000. To be fair, Vanderwood himself notes the dearth of material available for such a reconstruction, and clearly his use of comparative material is meant, at least in part, to offset this deficiency. Yet at a certain point, the killing and subsequent veneration of Juan Soldado become lenses through which to examine broader issues of faith and belief rather than vice versa. This is reflective of Vanderwood's deep interest in spirituality more generally. In particular, he is keen not to reduce the mysteries of belief to issues accessible to the techniques of social science, at one point suggesting that "[i]nstead of only searching for a modern, social science explanation for devotion [. . .] one might better admit the presence of mystery, consider the power of faith, and wander down those corridors of spirituality long trod by believers and seekers." [222] Such a perspective is admirable in its appreciation of things not easily accessed, but is also frustrating, in part because up to that point Vanderwood's own research and analysis is so good. One could hardly imagine his own explanations of devotion to Juan Soldado being reductionist or not appreciative of the mysteries of the believers. Surely one can approach an understanding of how the corridors of spirituality were built, even while wan-

dering through them. Vanderwood's willingness to leave much to mystery and wonder is disappointing and paradoxically distancing. Even so, *Juan Soldado* is a remarkable book. Humane, thoughtful, and moving, it is a book worthy of the contemplation in which Vanderwood himself engages.

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JAMES E. SANDERS: *Contentious Republicans. Popular Politics, Race, and Class in Nineteenth-Century Colombia*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004.

Contentious Republicans constituye una sólida contribución a la ya vasta producción historiográfica sobre la participación política de los sectores populares en América Latina del siglo XIX. Sanders dialoga con sus predecesores y contemporáneos en este campo tan fructífero de la investigación histórica y de la reflexión teórica, ubicándose en una postura intermedia entre los aportes del marxismo cultural de inspiración gramsciana y la escuela de estudios de la subalternidad. Su objetivo es trazar la historia social de la convulsionada política colombiana en las décadas centrales del siglo XIX.

La historia que Sanders presenta puede leerse como la del ascenso, apogeo y caída del republicanismo popular en la región del Cauca (Colombia) entre comienzos de la década de 1850 y mediados de la de 1880. Hacia 1850, la movilización provocada por la guerra entre liberales y conservadores promovió la emergencia de la participación popular en la política colombiana. Mediante el establecimiento de Sociedades Democráticas, los liberales lograron movilizar a los sectores populares rurales y urbanos comprometiéndose a implementar importantes reformas, como la abolición de la esclavitud, la supresión de monopolios impopulares, rebajas de impuestos y una política de provisión de tierras.

La participación de las clases populares en la política se plasmó en lo que Sanders denomina "negociación republicana" (*republican bargaining*). Esta negociación constante entre sectores populares y una elite políticamente dividida reconocía indudables antecedentes coloniales, pero en el marco de la Colombia independiente sus rasgos distintivos habían cambiado: "era menos personalista, más pública, más programática y, lo más importante, republicana".(3) Desde el ascenso liberal en 1850, la negociación republicana se convirtió en el marco en el que elites y sectores populares entendían la política. Poco después, la Constitución de 1853 otorgaba la ciudadanía ampliada con sufragio masculino universal y organizaba la Guardia Civil en su defensa. El autor insiste en que "el