

subjectivity” that the author refers to as “peripheral vision” frequently engenders “feelings that one is neither from here nor from there, not at home anywhere.” In a few instances, however, it may allow some to feel “at home in more than one geographic location.” This seems to be the case, at least implicitly, for the three musical groups she focuses on in the final chapter. “With their transnational collaborations and imaginaries (these) cultural activists . . . negotiate social differences in ways that transcend national borders.” “Their work evokes powerful moments of identification, celebration, self-critique, reflection, and dialogue that create a sense of community, however momentary.” Zavella concludes that “though they have divergent aesthetic styles, these cultural activists’ respective visions of social justice help build an imagined community among displaced and resident Mexicans who cope with the realities of capitalism and state repression in their everyday lives.”

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LAURA GOTKOWITZ (ED.): *Histories of Race and Racism: The Andes and Mesoamerica from Colonial Times to the Present*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011.

Race and racism are two problematic categories that are used in this book to reflect on recent political events in Latin America – events that are historically rooted in deep and conflictive societal relationships. From the election of Evo Morales in Bolivia, to the use of archaeological ruins for the construction of a national narrative mixed with *Indigenismo* ideologies, *mestizaje* discourse and ideology, and the formation of indigenous movements, the book presents (I borrow the title of one of the chapters), “A Postcolonial Palimpsest: The Work Race Does in Latin America.” The chapters explore issues of class, gender, regionalism, nationality, and the idea of nation.

The idea of race has been explained in terms of cultural categories rather than biological ones. For example, the ethnographies of Peter Wade in Central America, and Marisol de la Cadena in Peru, among others, show the intricate relationships of race, ethnicity, and the new forms of being indigenous. Gotkowitz has brought together an important and representative group of scholars to historicize the idea of race in Latin America in order to understand new forms of racism and antiracism movements in the region. The contributors focus on the effects of the idea of race, rather than its meaning. In that sense, they follow an

important approach, which is racialization, already developed by Appelbaum, Macpherson and Roseblatt in *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America* (University of North Carolina Press, 2003). For Appelbaum, et al., racialization was suggested as a way to understand the articulations of the category of race since colonial times with present-day ideas of distinction, hierarchy, and difference. Instead Gotkowitz emphasizes the use of racialization as a way to understand “the construction of racial stereotypes via political discourse, cultural performance, social policy, censuses, physical or verbal violence, and other acts of marking. Racialization is not simply a discursive or cultural process. It goes hand in hand with the exercise of political and economic power. It is often accompanied by the exploitation of labor and the expropriation of land” (p. 11). Racialization is also explained in terms of processes of de-stigmatization that have been earlier explained by De la Cadena and, in this collection, by Maria Elena García’s article.

Four historical moments in the process of racialization are identified and explored throughout the volume, with particular cases from different Latin American contexts, in order to understand the present-day persistence of racial violence and racist discourse in the region. First, the Spanish domination of Latin America; second, the installation of the *mestizaje* discourse during the nineteenth century, and the transformation of land and labor systems in Latin America; third, the decades between 1920 and 1960, a critical time for nation-making processes, the modernization of State apparatuses and institutions, the spread of *Indigenismo* ideologies, migrations, and revolutionary movements in the region; and, fourth, present-day Latin America – centered on the period between 1970 and 1990. With examples from Peru and Guatemala, this final section shows the prevalence of a violent racial discourse. These four moments correspond to important historical periods that give content and structure to the idea of race, in which *mestizaje*, *Indigenismo* and the nation state appear as meta-narratives, discourses and images.

Using that context in mind, I would like to focus on three ideas that are worked throughout the edition. First, the construction of the idea of the Indian or the process of labeling “the other,” a depiction that provoked a series of images and discourses since Colonial times. What kind of labels are these, asks Kathryn Burns, a simple, but complex question, which is an invitation to think on the power of the colonizer to make distinctions and point out differences by naming the other. If the colonial period must be understood in terms of layers of power, conquest, segregation and colonization, the same goes for such ideas as race and Indian.

The idea of race and the Indian are relational categories that create a sense of belonging and identification that springs from a variety of contrasting forms.

But, segregation, distinction and difference did not stop with the advent of the nation states in the nineteenth century. On the contrary, new forms of control and disciplinary regulation were imposed in the bodies of the new citizens. These were created by the expansion of the state apparatus and with it, of classificatory repertoires put into action, such as the census, schools, judiciary system, hospitals, and the army with its obligatory military service. This bureaucracy expanded with ideas of progress and development that found their niches in the urban places.

Even when indigenous populations wanted to assimilate, as Arturo Taracena's essay shows, their work was hard to do. Some channels were privileged for social mobilization, such as education, for instance, and these channels became the expression for individual progress and gave the rural population a reason to emigrate to the cities and contributed to the social transformation of rural communities. In these chapters the idea of the Indian appears as an individual changing its form and making demands for recognition and citizenship, developing strategies for gaining a place and position in society. It is a category that is nourished and explained in its historical and geographical context, by status, and by the person's or group's position in society. The idea of race is neither an homogeneous category, nor an empty signifier that is filled in every now and then, its complexity is precisely its permanence in the political imaginary of the nation state, its multivocality and its polyphonic significance.

The second idea that runs through some of the articles is the idea of *mestizaje*, which appears as a perverse discourse in the nation-making ideologies, as it tends to create a sense of homogeneity shadowing ethnic and cultural differences. *Mestizaje* is treated in the second section along with the early twentieth-century political and intellectual (artistic) movement known as *Indigenismo*. The colonized population appears to have blood from many different races, thus there is the sense that the collectivity shares some sort of common origin — being *mestizo* becomes a homogenous concept and self-definition of identification reassuring the “nostalgic” longing of the idea of the nation. *Indigenismo* is not the same throughout the region. It is a contested terrain. In places like Bolivia it is the platform for developing an Indian-centered ideology, whereas as the essays show, in Mexico it is the ideology that helped explain the expansion of the state, its institutions and bureaucracy (see for instance, the essays by Deborah Poole, Claudio Lomnitz, and Seemin Qayum in sections 2 and 3).

Last but not least is the role of the state. The state appears as an active agent in the circulation of these racial ideologies and violence. It is the state policies and repression that promotes the de-subjectification of the subject as the ultimate form of violence. The 1970s and 1980s were decades of internal armed conflicts and civil wars in Latin America. The Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR) characterized the victim of the armed conflict as being a young

person between 16 and 49 years old, with an indigenous mother tongue, living in indigenous rural areas in the Andes or the central Amazon region. Naming the victim is neglecting the agency of the subject. It deprives the subject from participation in the political arena when these victims were able to build organizations and association that claimed justice, memory, and truth for the disappeared. They are the ones who actively and collectively claim for justice and truth, especially in the Peruvian and Guatemalan cases.

The collection of essays in this edition call attention to the fact that the persistence of the idea of race and racialization has strong historical structures that have taken different paths and development due to state apparatuses. But there is an image of the Indian that is still present today. The present is in part explained by the past. Today the topic may not be *Indigenismo* or *mestizaje*, but it is intercultural and multicultural state policies, neoliberal policies, and the formation of new indigenous movements with preoccupations for the environment or for their rights as cultural citizens.

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NICOLE M. GUIDOTTI-HERNÁNDEZ: *Unspeakable Violence: Remapping U.S. and Mexican National Imaginaries*. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2011.

La forma que emplearon los reinos de España e Inglaterra para colonizar América creó un puente insalvable entre ambos mundos. De este punto se ocupa la investigadora Nicole Guidotti-Hernández en su libro *Unspeakable Violence*. La tesis principal de este excelente trabajo es que la violencia corresponde a formas estereotipadas, las cuales ayudan a comprender los eventos pasados y que, de alguna u otra manera, le dan sentido a los estados nacionales.

En la lectura del presente trabajo pueden apreciarse seis términos para describir el complejo paisaje étnico de América. ‘Chicano’ se utiliza para referirse a aquellas personas de origen mexicano que, aun cuando han obtenido la ciudadanía estadounidense, luchan por los derechos políticos de otros inmigrantes. ‘Indio’ se prefiere para describir a los nativos de Norteamérica en forma general. Por su parte, es importante destacar que ‘aborigen’ e ‘indígena’ no son considerados en iguales condiciones. El primero hace énfasis en los indios mejicanos, mientras el segundo connota una idea general de aboriginalidad, de mayor alcance que Méjico. ‘Latino’ es una palabra reservada para referirse a las personas prove-