
independence, on the one hand, with Euro-centered female behavior aimed at preserving hierarchy and order. Wilson typified male attitudes as promoting “reputation” among other men, while he described female attitudes as being directed towards the attainment of “respectability.” Besson’s book gives example after example of the ways in which “women as well as men have been prominent in Caribbean culture-building and development since slavery days” (18).

Her book can be highly recommended as a unique contribution to Caribbean Studies, offering a most detailed and persuasive case for the process by which currents of Old World cultural elements became fused and transformed in a New World Context. At a time when creolization tends to be used in highly abstract ways, Besson’s portrait of the Jamaican hamlet of Martha Brae provides deep empirical content and historical context for an important but elusive process.

Robert Goddard

Emory University

STUART F. VOSS: *Latin America in the Middle Period, 1750-1929*.
Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2002.

Stuart Voss set himself an ambitious task in this book: to reconceptualize, in the vein of recent scholarship, the common binary periodization of Latin American history. Most textbooks and curricula divide the historical experience of Latin America at the Wars of Independence in the early nineteenth century. Along with Mark Szuchman and many others, Voss proposes instead a three-part periodization with a middle period that marks the transition from colonial to modern Latin America. Unlike most other scholars, whose middle period begins in the mid-1700s and ends in the mid-1800s, the author conceives of a “long nineteenth century” from circa 1750 to the Great Depression of 1929. In this middle period, Voss argues, “certain colonial developments came to fruition, principally the maturation of largely autonomous regional societies. At the same time, the possibilities for the formation of national modernizing societies were created...” (xi). Thus, the tripartite division of Latin American history rests on a spatial perspective in which historical periods are defined by degrees of regional, national, and global integration in cultural, economic, and political terms. The middle period can thus also be called the age of the region.

Written for undergraduate students and scholars alike, this book synthesizes an impressive array of recent historical writing on Latin America. Voss takes care to ensure geographical breadth of Latin America in his narrative, although Cuba and the rest of the Caribbean receive relatively short shrift. The book emphasizes five themes in order of importance: modernization (under which Voss includes commercialization, industrialization, and secularization), technological change, urbanization, social stratification, and culture. Although the undergraduate survey classroom is a primary target of this book, its highly conceptual nature and dense prose makes it more useful for advanced students, who will find it an excellent and original synthesis of recent scholarship. Conversely, the reader who seeks to find an “overview” of this period will be disappointed.

The volume is organized in three parts, in chronological order; each part contains three chapters, also in rough chronological order. Part I, “The Emergence of a New Society, 1750-1820,” discusses a period in which population growth, the beginning of industrialization in Europe, and economic liberalization under the Bourbon monarchs gradually undermined the colonial system. The ensuing Wars of Independence brought political sovereignty without sweeping cultural or economic changes. Part II, “The Uneasy Equilibrium, 1820-1880,” analyzes the road to the Latin American nation-state, a road that led from caudillo politics and economic collapse in the immediate aftermath of independence to the beginning of a national elite consensus. The struggles of the elites in this period to restore political order and create economic growth created spaces for Latin America’s subaltern majority. Finally, Part III, “Passage to the Modern World,” describes the transition from the middle period to modern Latin America. After the expansion of the Industrial Revolution to continental Europe and the United States, a process accompanied by revolutionary innovations, thrust Latin America into the world economy to an unprecedented degree, mass migration, the forging of unifying national discourses, and the havoc wrought by the Great Depression ushered in Latin America’s truly “national” period.

A small number of inaccuracies and misleading statements mar the value of this interesting study. The author uses the term *gente decente* to describe the lower (middle-class) subset of the *gente alta* (79), although *gente decente* was widely used to describe the middle- and upper classes as a group with largely European cultural practices. In addition, the supposedly “symbiotic relationship” of the Mexican CROM labor union with the “official ruling party” during the 1920s (261) was rather a clientelist alliance between CROM leader Luis Napoleón Morones and President Plutarco Elías Calles (1924-28), who dominated Mexican politics until 1935. The ruling party, the PNR (the forerunner of the present-day PRI) was not founded until 1929. Finally, there

are numerous misspellings: p. 51, for example, contains incorrect spellings for Ouro Prêto and *mestizaje*. These small shortcomings, however, do not take away from the usefulness of this valuable synthesis of a key period in Latin American history.

Jurgen Buchenau

University of North Carolina, Charlotte

NANCY PRISCILLA NARO (ed.): *Blacks, Coloureds and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*. London: ILAS, University of London, 2003.

During America's decisive "long nineteenth century" (1776 to 1914), race lost none of the salience it had accreted over the previous three centuries. Just as notions of physical, cultural and psychological difference colored encounter and exploitation throughout the hemisphere, they prejudiced the overthrow of slavery and colonialism and the making of nations across the New World. It is one thing, however, to acknowledge that in this supposed era of liberation racial ideology and practice remained pivotal; it is quite another to elucidate how people struggled with racialization. This is the task taken up in *Blacks, Coloureds and National Identity in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, an edited volume that focuses on the political experiences of non-whites in the "other" Americas.

For all its extended range, from Cuba down to Argentina, the collection coheres around two main contentions. First, the essays underline that colonialist precepts equating moral virtue and political competence with whiteness, and more narrowly with Europeanness, gravely haunted descendants of Africans. In an era when victorious American rebels redefined themselves as citizens rather than subjects, non-whites rarely got through the doors of citizenship. Even those black and mixed people who fought for the anticolonial cause faced this fate. As Carmen Bernand chronicles, despite the public lionizing of some Buenos Aires blacks for their honorable soldiering during the English invasion (1806-7), elites remained wedded to the legal enslavement of Afro-Argentines for the next four decades.

Up in the Caribbean, too, non-whites keenly felt the "constraints of race and color." According to Franklin Knight, citizenship was scarcely thinkable in the British territories, where white people constituted a tiny minority and carried around a "terrified consciousness." In the Spanish Caribbean, which boasted