HEMISPHERE

VISUAL CULTURES *of the* AMERICAS

SPECIAL EDITION ON NATIONALISM, TRANSNATIONALISM, AND POSTNATIONALISM

VOLUME IV, 2011

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Hemisphere is an annual, peer-reviewed publication produced by graduate students affiliated with the Department of Art and Art History at the University of New Mexico. *Hemisphere* provides a forum for graduate students to present scholarship and studio practice pertaining to all aspects and time periods of the visual and material cultures of North, Central, and South America, the Caribbean, and related world contexts. Through the production of *Hemisphere* students promote their educational and professional interests as they gain first-hand experience in academic publishing. The journal welcomes and will continue to accept submissions from authors at institutions in and outside of the United States. A call will be sent out each year to invite submissions for the next issue.

Subscriptions are not available at this time; however, we welcome donations to support the production of *Hemisphere.*

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDITION

Johanna Wild

Volume IV of *Hemisphere. Visual Cultures of the Americas* is the first edition of our journal to be centered around a theme. For this volume we gathered contributions that map the diverse ways in which visual cultures of the Americas have adhered to, addressed, criticized, or deconstructed the concepts of nationalism, transnationalism, and postnationalism.

While the label "postnational" is frequently applied to describe our current situation, it is rarely clearly defined. Therefore, we invited senior scholars to contribute their personal definitions of "postnationalism" in order to illuminate this elusive terminology.

We would like to thank Donald E. Pease (Professor for English at Dartmouth College), Ray Hernández-Durán (Associate Professor for Ibero-American Colonial Arts and Architecture at the University of New Mexico), and Tey Marianna Nunn (Director of the Museum and Visual Arts Program at the National Hispanic Cultural Center, Albuquerque, NM) for their insightful discussions and definitions of this term which serve as an introduction to the present issue.

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WHAT IS POSTNATIONALISM?

Tey Marianna Nunn

Postnational, as a theoretical construct, does not mean that nationalism has ended. On the contrary, postnational coexists with the national.They are inseparable. Postnational discourse takes culture, society, government, politics, and the economics of an individual nation and inserts these components into an increased regional, continental, hemispheric, and global perspective narrative. A postnational construct, while shared, is complex as it straddles, blurs, and shifts borders.

DR. TEY MARIANNA NUNN is the Director of the Museum and Visual Arts Program at the National Hispanic Cultural Center, Albuquerque, NM.

Donald E. Pease

Postnational iterations of the relations between peoples and the condition of belonging cannot be understood apart from the drastic changes in the geopolitical economy effected by globalization. After globalization disembedded social, economic, and political processes from their local contexts and facilitated their generalized extension across vast global expanses, the nation-state could no longer serve as an operative model either for the regulation or the disruption of these processes.

But the postnational does not operate on its own. It is a construction that is internally differentiated out of its intersection with other unfolding relations. When it is articulated to the conceptual needs of global relationships caused by shifts in the world economy, the term "postnational" describes the effect on the nation-state of the new global economic order which no longer finds in it a vehicle appropriate for the accumulation of capital or the regulation of labor.

Tropes of postnationalism inhabit the global imaginary constructed by the ideologues of global capital as well as the left political movements mounted in opposition to its spread; they inform the projects that would facilitate globalization from above and the grassroots organizations which would resist such incursions.

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The one model demonstrates how a single complex system tightens its grip on the most distant of global backwaters; the other model brings a more complex system into view that is at once decentered and interactive. The former depends on transnational capitalism and the global economy, the latter on peoplehood and imagined diasporic communities.

The difference between the "postnational" of the international left and the "postnational" of the international business class depends upon where the "post" in the postnational comes from and through which conceptual relays the postnational gets transmitted. Because globalization goes above the nation-state and goes below it at the same time, the postnational might be described at once as what has come after the national but also as what has established a kind of resistance nationalism. The temporal dimension of the postnational sits in uneasy tension with a critical dimension that would activate a process of disengagement from the whole nationalist syndrome. This latter aspect comes into existence through a critique of the nationalist hegemony.

The tension between its temporal and critical aspects results in ambivalent significations for the postnational that become discernible in the following series of questions: Does the post in the postnational describe a definitive epistemological rupture or does it indicate a chronological divergence? Is the concept intended to be critical of or complicitous with the consecration of the globalist hegemony? Is the postnational the time after nationalism or is it a different way of experiencing nationalism? And what are the implications of the postnational for contemporary geopolitics and the politics of subject formation?

Social theorists of the standing of Jürgen Habermas and Arjun Appadurai have underscored the importance of thinking postnationally at this historical moment. But it is difficult to square Habermas' belief that enlightenment universalisms can meet this challenge with Appadurai's commitment to diasporic pluralisms.

Promoting the value of what he terms constitutional patriotism, Habermas has described citizens with postnational identities as those who can critically reflect upon and thereby transcend their particular national traditions in favor of universal values.[1]

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But in elaborating the notion of constitutional patriotism, Habermas has failed to distinguish between an abstract idea of community in which adherence to the terms of the political constitution might comprise a sufficient bond of solidarity, and the actually existing diasporic communities whose members lack constitutional guarantees for their political and economic rights. The postnational identity Habermas recommends might have confronted few difficulties in a postwar Germany where the memory of the Holocaust elevated the need to question national traditions into a quasi-patriotic duty. But constitutional patriotism fails to exert imaginative purchase on the consciousness of the Haitian refugees in Miami or on that of the Nicaraguan laborers in Tucson for whom the collective experience of historical discontinuity continues to evoke traumatic memories.

Members of diasporic communities are not necessarily attached to any national territory but are part of a delocalized transnation composed of deterritorialized and extraterrritorial peoples who may (or may not) remain loyal to their nations of origin, but who are ambivalent about their loyalties to the United States. Arjun Appadurai has called for imaginative projects that would enable such groups to renegotiate their links to diasporic networks and which would enable them to replace patriotic loyalties—no matter whether to a nation or to a constitution—with loyalty to a nonterritorial transnation. The incapacity of deterritorialized groups to think their way out of the images which the nation-state has authorized might itself explain much global violence. If cultural nationalists have only created new versions of what they had resisted in many of the new postcolonial nation-states, this vicious circle can only be broken, as Arjun Appadurai has observed, "when a postnational imaginary is forged that proves capable of capturing these complex nonterritorial postnational forms of allegiance."[2]

DONALD E. PEASE is Professor of English, Director of the Futures of American Studies Institute at Dartmouth College, and author of *The New American Exceptionalism* (2009).

NOTES:

[1] Jürgen Habermas, "National Unification and Popular Sovereignty", *New Left Review* 219 (September/October 1994): 3-21.

[2] Arjun Appadurai, "Patriotism and Its Futures," in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 166. For an excellent discussion of globalization from below, see Arjun Appadurai, "Grassroots Globalization

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and the Research Imagination," *Public Culture* 12 (Winter 2000): 1-20. "But a series of social forms have emerged to contest, interrogate, and reverse these developments and to produce forms of knowledge transfer and social mobilization that proceed independently of the actions of corporate capital and the nation-state system (and its international affiliates and guarantors). These social forms rely on strategies, visions and horizons of globalization on behalf of the poor that can be characterized as 'grassroots globalization' or, put in a slightly different way, as globalization from below."

Ray Hernández-Durán

Recent definitions of postnationalism have centered on four variables seen as distinctive features of this phenomenon: one, economic practices, such as international trade and the internationalization of markets, e.g. NAFTA; two, the shifting of political agency from local or national to international entities, e.g. the United Nations, the European Union, etc.; three, the supranational circulation and influence of media through conduits such as news and social networking sites on the Internet; and four, mass immigration patterns from less developed world regions (e.g. Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia) to more technologically advanced, socially and economically prosperous countries (i.e. the U.S., Canada, and nations in Western Europe). In addition to being regarded as constitutive of postnationalist tendencies, these variables are also identified with recent world events. Pointing to the factors motivating the introduction of postnationalism as an idea into current thought, Stephen Shapiro stated, "The recent call for postnationalism responds to . . . key post-1989 developments,"[1] Although this observation may be valid, the actual phenomenon to which this term refers must be scrutinized with a broader temporal lens.

In relation to such analogues as globalization and transnationalism, postnationalism is both a process and a state depending on whether one adopts a diachronic or synchronic approach. From a deeper historical perspective, postnationalism can be viewed as a symptom or condition of larger globalizing patterns of development. As such, it is helpful to think of postnationalism not simply as a condition but as an extended process whose trajectory can be traced back to what has been framed as the early modern period and to Western European colonial expansion, beginning in the late fifteenth century following Columbus' arrival in the Caribbean. The subsequent integration of the Western Hemisphere into the incomplete, pre-existing world order challenged dominant epistemological frameworks with significant, long-lasting ramifications in the political and economic

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spheres of imperial domain. Throughout the long colonial process, starting with the four centuries of Spanish domination in the Americas followed by the gradual displacement of the latter as a global power by the British in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the establishment of transoceanic and transcontinental commercial networks and markets not only coexisted with but facilitated the rise and success of modern nation states.

A question that arises in terms of the seemingly antipodal designations, postnational and national, concerns the hypothetical end of nationalism as we understand it. Recent discussions suggest that although the two terms may be antithetical they are not polarities or antonyms. When examining modern nationalism as a political framework and localized form of consciousness in relation to processes of globalization, its utility to governments and capitalist corporate entities becomes clear as an apparatus that effectively regulates labor, the flow of capital, and market practices. We note the continued relevance of nationalist expressions on a popular, regional level while the postnational takes prominence in multi-national, corporate-governmental spheres. National and postnational are thus not entirely distinct but are interrelated resembling gradations on a scale in which globalization and nationalism are polar elements that simultaneously structure and delimit a coherent system. Confusion arises when one approaches national and postnational as states instead of as coeval tendencies in a larger historical process. Early modernity and modernity can be seen as Eurocentric historical-cultural markers identified with the advent of proto-national state formations and, most importantly, globalization via European exploration, conquest, and settlement, and the gradual consolidation of trade routes, refinements in labor organization and modes of production, and a more effective distribution of goods and capital. With the hegemonic dominance of certain European political centers, and eventually the U.S., over this global network and its movements, we observe the foundation for the gradual definition of the so-called "First World" nations in opposition to the "Third." This oppositional construct, imbalanced and hierarchical, continues to structure the discourse and practices of the current global order in spite of attempts to characterize it as a level playing field and claims of the random effects of capital by postcolonial theorists, such as Arjun Appadurai. Colonialism, as a process through which labor, resources, revenue, and goods are siphoned out of subjugated, allegedly marginal, world regions and channeled into foreign European economic and

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political circuits are a basis for the advent of modernity reflecting Walter Mignolo's astute proposition that colonialism and modernity are two sides of the same coin.

The relevance of early modernity, globalization, and (post/trans)nationalism as organizational-analytical categories to fields such as art history is found in the registered effects of such expansive and otherwise effusive phenomena in the material and visual cultures of populations across the globe. The politically and economically motivated translocation of peoples across vast geographic expanses; the transcultural effects on local cultural production of transposed ideas, practices, and forms; cosmopolitan developments in taste and consumerism across various social sectors; and the simultaneous distribution of locally produced materials to other world regions, among other things, exemplify this dynamic not only in the contemporary context, where it is decisively marked but, too, in the past where it is just as evident. Ibero-American colonial arts as, arguably, the earliest global art forms in the modern sense stand as formative material iterations indexing the interpolated nature of emergent nationalist frameworks and globalizing tendencies. With such a historical understanding, one is better equipped to recognize postnationalism not as an absolute, static category solely anchored to the present but as an element of recent manufacture, which is part of a protean dynamic that has been gradually shaping the world we inhabit and the manners in which we have been engaging it for at least the past five hundred years.

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NOTES:

[1] Stephen Shapiro, "Reconfiguring American Studies? The Paradoxes of Postnationalism," in *49th Parallel: An Interdisciplinary Journal of North American Studies*, ed. Department of American and Canadian Studies, University of Birmingham, UK, Issue 8: Dislocations: Transatlantic Perspectives on Postnational American Studies (Summer 2001).

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THE CEIBA TREE AS A MULTIVOCAL SIGNIFIER: Afro-Cuban Symbolism, Political Performance, and Urban Space in the Cuban Republic

Joseph Hartman, M.A. Student, Department of Art Education and Art History, University of North Texas

INTRODUCTION: AFRO-CUBAN SYMBOLISM, POLITICAL PERFORMANCE, AND URBAN SPACE

Ivor Miller's article "Religious Symbolism in Cuban Political Performance" brings to light an interesting phenomenon: twentieth-century Cuban politicians used symbols that were associated with Afro-Cuban religions to communicate multiple meanings in public rituals. Practitioners of Afro-Cuban religions brought most of these connections to Miller's attention during his anthropological fieldwork in Havana in the 1990s. Based on his own research and oral accounts gathered by other twentieth-century anthropologists, such as Lydia Cabrera and Rómulo Lachatañeré, Miller enumerated a list of Cuban politicians who used religious symbolism in political performance, including Gerardo Machado y Morales, Fulgencio Batista, and Fidel Castro. On January of 1959, for example, Fidel Castro gave a televised speech to inaugurate his regime. During his speech two white doves appeared and perched on his shoulder and rostrum. Despite the fact that Castro's emerging communist regime was far from religious, the dove was seen as a divine symbol, perhaps legitimating Castro's new government. For the Afro-Cuban religion Santería, a dove represents the divine spirit of Obatalá, an important *orisha*, or divinity, in the Afro-Cuban cosmos. For Catholics, the dove is a sign of the Holy Spirit. Castro never officially admitted to being a *santero/a*, a priest of Santería, but his political performance indicated an understanding of what Miller referred to as "conflicting mythologies that have found a way to coexist in Cuba."[1]

These "conflicting mythologies," which may be better stated as coexisting and sometimes comingling mythologies, are also evident in President Gerardo Machado's political performance at the 1928 inauguration ceremony for *El Parque de la Fraternidad Americana* [The Park of the American Brotherhood] (Figure 1). The park was dedicated, in part, to the Sixth Annual Pan-American Conference held on January 16, 1928, in Havana. On February 24, 1928, before a crowd of nearly ten thousand Cuban men and women of Spanish and African descent, President Machado and delegates

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from twenty other American nations, including the United States, sowed a transplanted ceiba tree that was as old as the Cuban Republic in the center of the *Parque*. It was called the *Árbol de la Fraternidad* [Tree of Brotherhood]. This newly constructed park featured a neoclassical axial design. In its Euclidean circular center, the ceiba was planted on the same transversal axis as the city's neoclassical *Capitolio* [Capitol Building]. The *Capitolio*, which resembles the Capitol building of Washington, D.C., marked the central hub of power in the emerging Republic of Cuba. Though reminiscent of French or American neoclassicism, the building's proximity to local flora and fauna such as the ceiba tree, helped to visually distinguish this structure as a Cuban national form.

FIGURE 1. Roberts & Co., *La Plaza de la Fraternidad*, 1930, postcard, Havana, Cuba. Verso of card reads: "The park built in 1928 has transformed one of the ugliest places in Havana into one of the beauty spots of the city. In the center is the Cuban Ceiba tree, which symbolizes Pan-American Fraternity." Courtesy of the University of Miami Libraries Cuban Heritage Collection, Coral Gables, Florida.

The centrality of the tree in *El Parque*, its spatial relation to the Cuban capitol, and the ceremony Machado performed underneath it at the 1928 inauguration could be viewed as a political performance similar to Fidel Castro's use of doves. It was a performance that acknowledged Cuba's conflicting, but often coexisting and comingling mythologies. The problem, as Miller's article indicates, is that Afro-Cuban religious symbolism in political performance is given little scholarly attention and, as a result,

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Afro-Cuban reception of national symbols is often overlooked. To address that issue, this essay engages current discourse by drawing connections between the ceiba as a sacred tree for Afro-Cuban religions and its role as a national signifier. This essay analyzes the tree's multiple meanings in Havana's urban spaces, particularly in *El Parque* and at a late colonial site known as *El Templete* [the Little Temple] (Figure 2). By revealing a link between Afro-Cuban symbolism, urban space, and President Machado's use of the ceiba tree in *El Parque*, I argue that the tree functioned as a multivocal sign intended to create an imagined community for multiple audiences in the Cuban Republic. The Machado administration used the multivocality of the tree, which is associated with Spanish civic traditions, Afro-Cuban cosmology, and national identity, in an attempt to construct a unifying signifier of the Cuban nation.[2]

Machado's performance at the 1928 inauguration of *El Parque* deeply affected the meaning and subjective experience of the surrounding urban space for multiple audiences. The 1928 ceremony was homegrown and deeply rooted in the cultural traditions of Cuba, especially Afro-Cuban culture, which was marginalized in the colonial and early national context. As scholar of Latin American performance Roselyn Costantino notes: "[P]erformance in its multiple styles and manifestations constitutes a fundamental articulation of realities and memories of communities not represented within official, constructed notions of nation."[3] In other words, Latin American performances like the 1928 inauguration often communicate subaltern meanings that are not part of the overt national narrative. These performances are also not objective, but act as a "story" created through popular, embodied discourse. Dwight Conquergood, a pioneer of performance study at New York University, articulates the importance of examining these performative "stories" in his article "Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research." Conquergood reminds us that modern culture, "marching under the banner of science and reason, […] had disqualified and repressed other ways of knowing that are rooted in embodied experience, orality, and local contingencies."[4]

Machado's performance was effective because it utilized "local contingencies" to communicate meaning to multiple identities in Cuba. In addition to the white majority, the ceremony held meaning for Cuba's "margins and minorities," especially for the island's vast Afro-Cuban

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populations.[5] The meaning of the *Parque* in Havana therefore emerges from a complex dialog between multiple audiences, whether black, white, local, or international. This dialogic space is conditioned by multiple voices, akin to Mikhail Bakhtin's literary theory of *heteroglossia*; multiple voices condition the meaning of a spatial utterance, such as the *Parque*, according to the particular circumstances of space and time.[6] The performative act of integrating the tree into Havana's urban space during the later 1920s communicated multiple interwoven messages that appealed to multiple subjectivities or states of 'being' in the early republican context. Those subjectivities were affected by various epistemologies, including Pan-Americanism, nationalism, and Afro-Cuban cosmological beliefs.

THE *PARQUE DE LA FRATERNIDAD AMERICANA*: INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL MEANINGS

In addition to Machado's 1928 performance, one should consider how the park's recently completed design by French architect Jean-Claude Forestier affected subjective experiences for international and local audiences in Havana. In 1926 President Machado and his Secretary of Works Carlos Miguel de Céspedes, commissioned the architect and a team of local and French engineers and designers to head a massive building campaign in Havana. The administration intended the campaign to transform Havana from a colonial city into a republican metropolis. The French Beaux-Arts and the American City Beautiful and Parks movements evidently influenced Forestier who was famous for fusing nature with architecture and elaborating neoclassical spatial programs. A profound consideration of local traditions affected his designs; Forestier stated that the following doctrine directed his work: "Imagining and inventing, but, in great moments, always obeying solemn tradition."[7] He used French and American styles to communicate progress to an international community, as a way to "imagine and invent" metropolitan Havana. Under Forestier's guidance a number of neoclassical urban spaces were created in the Cuban capital, such as the esplanade of the *Avenida de las Misiones,* the extension of the *Malecón*, the *Plaza del Maine*, the great staircase of the university, and *El Parque de la Fraternidad Americana*. Beyond the international connotation of neoclassicism, Forestier's locally influenced principle of "solemn tradition" becomes evident in the park's general form. Four pathways placed axially according to the cardinal directions define the interior of *El Parque*. Forestier appropriated this design from the square, colonial *Campo de Marté* [Field

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of Mars formerly known as the *Campo Militar*—Military Field] over which the park was built.[8] The paths oriented pedestrians to the center of the park where a great ceiba tree was planted. In addition to the "solemn traditions" of colonial Cuba evident in the square design of *El Parque*, the integration of the ceiba into the urban landscape continued a spatial tradition dating back to colonial Havana. The ceiba was a central subject of visual culture, especially in the colonial Roman Doric temple known as *El Templete*, which is discussed in more detail below. The tree in both locations acted as a multivocal signifier for multiple audiences in the Cuban capitol, including Havana's vast Afro-Cuban populations.

AFRO-CUBAN RELIGIONS AND THE CEIBA TREE: A TRANSCULTURAL STEW

Before examining Afro-Cuban reception of the ceiba tree in Havana's urban spaces and the 1928 political performance in depth, it is useful to review the Afro-Cuban religions themselves. It should be understood that Afro-Cuban religions are not simple belief systems. Anthropologist Melville Herskovits employed the term "syncretism" to define Afro-Cuban cosmology. "Syncretism" attempts to describe the reconciliation of two opposing cultures over time; in the Cuban context, those cultures stem primarily from European Catholicism and African cosmological beliefs. Herskovits, a pioneer of syncretism theory, used the term "acculturation" to describe the phenomenon that emerges when two distinct cultures are exposed to each other for long periods of time. The two cultures combine, although, in the same sense, they remain distinct. Such a viewpoint seems in line with Miller's notion of "conflicting mythologies." However, the idea that the two cultures can somehow remain distinct from one another is too narrow to encompass the complex nature of cultural formations in Cuba. Herskovits' notion of "acculturation" implies that the original European or African cultures remain unaltered. In reality, Afro-Cuban religious belief is an intricate web of interlocking meanings that are affected by both space and time. When looking at Cuban visual culture or Afro-Cuban religion, "African" or "European" elements cannot simply be separated out. According to Cuban ethnographer Fernando Ortiz, a more accurate syncretic model of cultures conflicting, coexisting, and comingling over time can be found in his definition of "transculturation."[9] Cultural transformation is not merely acquisition of culture, but also entails the loss and uprooting of culture and the formation of a new culture.

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Ortiz famously applied the metaphor of the traditional Cuban stew, *ajiaco*, to explain the notion that "transculturation" extends beyond Afro-Cuban religions to Cuban culture as a whole. Cuban culture, like the *ajiaco* stew, is comprised of multiple elements or ingredients that have fused together through years of conflict, coexistence, and comingling. While it may be true that certain fundamentals never fully "cooked out," as chicken bones at the bottom of the cauldron, Cuban culture largely results from an infusion of diverse ethnicities. These eventually form a new culture that is uniquely Cuban.[10] The visual and spatial use of the ceiba tree in Havana is therefore not rooted in Africa or Europe. Rather, it is a new cultural representation of *lo Cubano*, that which is Cuban. The fact that ceiba trees are venerated in all the Afro-Cuban religions and respected by a wide range of citizens on the island reinforces this notion.

The transcultural context in which symbols of the Afro-Cuban religions like the ceiba tree emerged was closely tied to the history of slavery and the sugar boom between 1790 and 1870. African culture, especially from the Congo and Yoruban West Africa, was introduced to Cuba through the slave trade. Despite the oppressive and brutal reality of colonial society, traditions and religions from particular regions in Africa were somewhat preserved throughout the colonial period. However, as the theory of "transculturation" would remind us, they were altered significantly under these circumstances. Many scholars have traced the emergence of Afro-Cuban religions to the colonial organization of diaspora communities into *cabildos de nación.*[11] *Cabildos* were government-sanctioned aid organizations in the colonial period that were divided according to the distinct African cultures that existed in Cuba's slave population. The *cabildos* were structured hierarchically, in a manner similar to a European monarchy. Each *cabildo* elected a king and two queens. In 1898, after the Spanish-American War, which is also referred to as the Cuban War for Independence, the *cabildo* system was brought to an end. Nonetheless, Afro-Cuban groups still organized themselves into *casas* [houses] or *casa-templos* [house-temples] during the republican era from 1902 to 1959. The "house temples," while perhaps still controversial among Cuba's whites, were places of worship for practitioners of Afro-Cuban religions in the early twentieth century. Within this context we can situate the emergence of what we identify as Afro-Cuban religions today.

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There are three main Afro-Cuban religious groups: Santería, Palo Monte/Mayombe, and Abakuá. Santería is the best known of these, though it is often conflated with the other two practices and with witchcraft, dark magic, or the occult. The tradition largely originates with the Yoruba people of West Africa. The practitioners of Santería believe in one Supreme Being or, more accurately, a Supreme Trinity which is often referred to as Olodumare. While not worshiped directly, this trinity is manifested in everything that holds *aché*, energy that flows through life. *Aché* is seen in or manipulated by the *orishas*, metaphysical beings that act as mediators between humans and the Supreme Trinity and that are often compared to deities in a pantheon. There are thousands of divinities known in Africa, but in Cuba eight predominate: Elegua, Changó, Obatalá, Oggún, Orula, Oshún, Oyá, and Yemayá. These *orishas* are believed to be capable of both good and evil and it is therefore important to appease them by making offerings or sacrifices known as *ebbó*. Sacrifices to the *orishas* may range from rum and coins to the blood of an animal and the ceiba tree is an important site for these *ebbós*. Evidence of *ebbós* and *bilongos* [spells], which are used to appease and evoke the power of the *orishas*, can often be found at the base of the ceiba tree.[12]

The ceiba tree has a variety of spiritual meanings for *santeros/as*—practitioners of Santería. According to contemporary anthropologist Migene Gonzáles-Wippler, *santeros/as* have identified six main uses for the ceiba: the trunk is often used to cast spells, particularly those with malevolent intent; the bark is used for tea and medicinal purposes; the shade attracts spirits and gives strength to spells; roots are used for offerings and blood sacrifice; the earth around the tree is used in "black" magic rituals; and the leaves of the tree are often used for medicinal and ceremonial purposes including love spells.[13]

The ceiba is also an important site for sacrifice and magic in Palo Monte/Mayombe, a religion that is believed to have originated via Congolese slaves of the Bantu language family in West Africa. To become a *palero/a*—a practitioner of Palo Monte—initiates must sleep under the ceiba tree for seven days. Palo Monte has two main tenets: the veneration of ancestors and belief in the powers of nature. Both of these tenets pertain to the ceiba tree, which is also considered a home to spirits and a great source of metaphysical power in nature. Palo Monte priests thus perform rituals around the ceiba to manifest its spiritual power.[14] These rituals are detailed in the following section.

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Finally, the tree is important for the Abakuá, a fraternity that likely originated from similar organizations in Nigeria. Practitioners of Abakuá, the *Ñañigos*, are often associated with violent rituals. *Ñañigos* are said to sacrifice animals, such as goats, in the shadow of the ceiba tree. They do this because they believe the tree to be a representation *del Omnipotente* [the omnipotent] or *de la Majestad Divina* [the divine majesty].[15] Though information on Abakuá is limited in comparison to Santería and Palo Monte, it is important to note that the ceiba tree carries meanings and uses for each of these traditions.

EL ÁRBOL SANTÍSMO:
ACCOUNTS OF THE CEIBA TREE IN THE AMERICAS AND CUBA

While the ceiba is a multivocal signifier that produces multiple interpretations for all three Afro-Cuban religions, *la ceiba* is symbolic in other parts of the Americas as well. The pre-Columbian meaning of the tree precedes its religious role in Afro-Cuban traditions. For example, in parts of Yucatan and Guatemala, the Maya consider the ceiba to be the Tree of Life. This mythic tree is a common subject in Mayan material culture. Early Spanish settlers were aware of the Native population's reverence for the tree in the Americas. As a result, they began using ceiba trees to mark colonial urban centers which can still be evidenced in colonial villages throughout Guatemala today.[16]

The tree is also directly associated with indigenous populations of the Caribbean. The pre-Columbian Taíno people, who occupied the archipelago prior to Spanish arrival, used the word "ceiba" as a title for the long canoes that they constructed from the tree. Dr. Peynado, a representative from the Dominican Republic who attended the 1928 inauguration, specifically associated Taíno identity to the ceiba in *El Parque*. He stated that upon contemplating the soil he brought from his fatherland to deposit at the foot of the *Árbol de la Fraternidad*, he "expected to discover in its molecules the soul of Hatuey."[17] Today Cubans still celebrate Hatuey, a Taíno Amerindian from Hispaniola (now Haiti and the Dominican Republic), for leading an attempted coup of the Spanish colonial government in the sixteenth century. The pre-Columbian meaning of the tree in Latin America and the Caribbean therefore also conditioned the 1928 inauguration of *El Parque* and its Pan-American connotation. At the Sixth Annual Pan-American conference, held in Havana a month before the inauguration ceremony, delegates from the

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Americas worked to settle contentious political issues. They addressed the unanimous respect of every nation's independence and the United States' financial support for the military occupation of Nicaragua. Considering the controversial foreign policy of the U.S., in this context, the tree might have acted as a symbol of Latin American unity, as it does not grow in the colder northern regions of North America.[18]

Though the ceiba carried meaning in Latin America and the Caribbean, Cuba's *ajiaco* culture uniquely conditioned its reception when it was planted in *El Parque*. Beginning in the 1930s, Cuban anthropologist Lydia Cabrera recorded Cuban reverence for the ceiba tree during her extensive field work with Afro-Cuban religious groups. In her 1954 text *El Monte*, she opens her chapter on the ceiba tree by pointing out the possible existence of a *culto a la ceiba*, a ceiba cult, which is not just African. She notes that both in the past and present, Catholic and African saints have gone to and lived in the ceiba tree with equal fervor. If you ask a *guajiro*—defined as a white, rural Cuban farm worker—about *la ceiba*, he will invariably say that it is blessed. It is the Virgin Mary's tree and it is the *árbol santísmo*, the holiest tree. He will also affirm that it does not abate, as hurricanes will not fell it and lightning will not burn it.[19]

Cabrera's Afro-Cuban "informants," mostly practitioners of Palo Monte and Santería, equally revere the tree. They associate a vast array of divinities with the ceiba. Iroko, a sacred tree and an *orisa*, an equivalent to an *orisha* in Yoruba-land, is most often linked with the ceiba in Cuba. Both trees have a similar buttressed trunk, which is likely why African descendents in Cuba have elevated the ceiba to a sacred status. Religious practitioners also associated the tree with a lead figure in the Afro-Cuban "pantheon": Changó, the *orisha* of lightning. According to folklore collected by anthropologist Rómulo Lachatañeré in the 1930s, Changó would frequently battle his nemesis Oggún, the *orisha* of war and iron, underneath a ceiba tree. In one of these episodes, Oyá, the *orisha* of hurricanes and the third wife of Changó, dresses Changó in her clothes to trick and defeat Oggún, her former lover. This transgender roleplay is not uncommon in Afro-Cuban mythology and iconography. Changó, for example, is normally represented with the Catholic icon Santa Bárbara. The use of Catholic symbols is a widespread transcultural feature of Afro-Cuban religions and may also relate to the dual nature of the *orishas*, who can often manifest as multiple

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genders. In addition to Changó or Santa Bárbara, ceiba folklore is connected to the father and mother of most *orishas*, Obatalá. S/he created a mythic *tablero*—a key implement in divination—from the wood of *la ceiba*. Some even call the base of the ceiba the trunk of Olofi, one form of the Supreme Trinity, which hierarchically stands above all *orishas*.[20]

Beyond its association with the Afro-Cuban "pantheon," the ceiba is also used medicinally. Many elements of the ceiba are combined with medicinal herbs to create radical cures for ailments ranging from mental illness to syphilis. The sweat of the ceiba, or the water deposited at the base of the tree, is thought to be curative. The roots and leaves of the tree are commonly used to treat venereal and urinary infection. The ceiba is further considered a source of fertility and fecundity. Any woman wishing to conceive would consult a *palero* and drink a decoction made from the trunk of a female ceiba for the next three moons; those not wishing to conceive would drink from a male ceiba instead.[21]

Like many objects and divinities in the religions of the African diaspora, the ceiba possesses a certain duality. Just as it has the power to grant life and protection, it may also cause death and destruction. The true destructive force of *la ceiba* is evoked when one cuts down or defiles the tree. The fear of destroying a ceiba tree is so great that one of Cabrera's "informants" admits that they would prefer to live a life of misery and leave their children to starve than cut down the tree. Another anecdote relates a tale of a man who felt his own limbs being cut as he cut into the ceiba. Others warn that ceiba trees revenge and never pardon those that cut them down; one who fells a ceiba will witness the deaths of his or her loved ones.[22] Cabrera's ethnographic data of the tree as a vengeful power among African descendents in the twentieth century is corroborated by travel accounts from nineteenth-century chroniclers such as James Macfayden. Relating to the perception of the ceiba tree in Jamaica, Macfayden observed that, "even the untutored children of Africa are so struck with the majesty of [the ceiba tree's] appearance that they designate it the *God-tree*, and account it sacrilege to injure it with the axe; so that not infrequently, not even fear of punishment will induce them to cut it down."[23]

Just as felling the tree will result in condemnation, planting the ceiba is a blessing. An analysis of the sanctimony associated with these planting rituals

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seems especially important within the current context, as this will inform our understanding of Machado's 1928 ceremony following the Sixth Annual Pan-American Conference and the tree's use as a central design element in the *Parque* conditioned by Afro-Cuban cosmology. In Palo Monte rituals, for example, the act of planting a ceiba tree is a sacrament.[24] For the ceremonial celebration of this sacrament, four friends of different genders have to bring soil from different territories that correspond to the cardinal directions. They baptize the tree with water and bless the soil with prayers, blood, and eggs. After the tree has been sanguinely planted in blessed earth, the event is then celebrated with drums and dancing.

Paleros/as treat the matured ceiba tree as an *axis mundi*, a world axis that is used to manifest spiritual power in the physical realm. In particular, the tree is a site for casting *ngangas*, spells frequently made in cauldrons and meant to violently harm an intended victim. During these rituals, *paleros/as* leave sacrificial rum and coins at the base of the tree. They then stab the ceiba on all its cardinal points and chant the victim's name three times for ritual efficacy, as this is an important numerological quantity in the Afro-Cuban cosmos.[25] For *paleros/as* the best day to plant these trees is November 16, the day of Aggayú, who is the *palero* father of Changó.[26] Interestingly, the day for planting the tree in Afro-Cuban tradition corresponds to the date that Cubans ritually circumambulate a famous ceiba tree in front of *El Templete*. Tradition prescribes that this tree be encircled counterclockwise three times while coins are thrown at its base in order to honor the founding of Havana. This act displays interesting cultural parallels that suggest a convergence of African and Spanish traditions in Cuban civic rituals. These parallels likewise inform the cultural practices of early republican Cuba, Machado's 1928 ceremony, and the design of *El Parque*.

LOCAL HISTORICISM FOR THE CEIBA IN HAVANA: *EL TEMPLETE*, RACE, AND URBAN RITUALS

Since *El Templete* and the civic rituals practiced at its site appear to have been an important model for the design of *El Parque* and Machado's inauguration ceremony, it seems advisable to analyze this colonial site. *El Templete* was constructed in 1828 to honor a ceiba tree located within the *Plaza de Armas*, or Arms Square, in colonial Havana (Figure 2). It was under this tree that the city was putatively founded on November 16, 1519. Moreover, the first mass and *cabildo*, or town council meeting, were allegedly held here as well.

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FIGURE 2. *Columbus Memorial Chapel- El Templete, Habana, Cuban Card Co. No. 28*, c.1930, postcard, Havana, Cuba. Building constructed 1828. Courtesy of the University of Miami Libraries Cuban Heritage Collection, Coral Gables, Florida.

Though the veracity of this origination myth is dubious, the tree in *La Plaza de Armas* was fashioned into a powerful symbol of the Cuban nation during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This process becomes evident in the neoclassical art and architecture created for *El Templete* during these periods. Jean Baptiste Vermay, a student of French neoclassical painter Jacques-Louis David and the first director of Cuba's Art Academy of San Alejandro, created three paintings between 1826 and 1828 that visualize the tree as a civic and religious symbol. Located along the three inner walls of the cella in *El Templete*, Vermay's neoclassical paintings reflect the importance of the ceiba tree in Havana's urban history. The two smaller paintings, entitled *La Primera Misa* (*The First Mass*) and *El Primer Cabildo* (*The First Cabildo*), feature the ceiba tree as a central design element. Both paintings represent European leaders positioned didactically over Cuba's now mostly extinct Native population. Scholar of Cuban visual culture Paul Barrett Niell has noted that the Spaniards in the paintings, including the conquistador Diego Velázquez, appear to be bringing civilization to the Native people of the Americas.[27] In Vermay's paintings, the ceiba tree is positioned as a civilizing meeting point for Havana's civic and sacred traditions, a place where the city and its social dynamics were conceived.

In the third painting entitled *La Fiesta de la Inauguración* (*The Inauguration Party*), the tree is not included in the composition. Instead, the inauguration of *El Templete* in 1828 is depicted. The building in the image is surrounded by a newly constructed iron fence that features rectangular stone pillars adorned with bronze pineapples that are symbolic of Caribbean abundance.

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The composition includes white slave owners, a black slave, a freed black man, and important Cuban officials such as Bishop Juan José Díaz de Espada, who influenced the site's design and the creation of similar neoclassical spaces throughout Havana. The painting therefore offers an account of social and racial dynamics during the nineteenth century. In dialog with Vermay's other paintings, which are displayed to the left and right of this work, colonial leaders of the nineteenth century appear to draw legitimacy from the early conquistadors. They civilize the non-white citizens and perfect nature, the ceiba tree, through art.

The only reference to the ceiba tree in the *Fiesta de la Inauguración* painting is a pillar commissioned in 1754 by then Governor Francisco Cagigal de la Vega. This pillar, which resembles a stylized ceiba, still stands in front of *El Templete* today. It was erected nearly one hundred years before El Templete to honor the original ceiba in *La Plaza de Armas* which has died and been replaced several times. A natural ceiba still grows at the site presently in honor of this long tradition.

Though social dynamics during the twentieth century changed dramatically, the motifs embedded in the visual culture surrounding *El Templete* could have provided a foundational narrative for the Machado regime. The planting of the tree in *El Parque* marked a shift of power away from the colonial government inside the old city walls [*intramuros*] where *El Templete* is located, to a new republican space outside the colonial city [*extramuros*] where the Cuban Capitol stands. The historic role of the ceiba tree as a national symbol explains its use as a signifier of shifting power dynamics in the later 1920s.

Sociologist Fernando Ortiz has suggested that the colonial tree in front of *El Templete* has a national connotation. I argue that this affected the tree's meaning in the republican *Parque*. When José Antonio Aguirre, the first Autonomous Community President of the Basque Country, saw the ceiba and *El Templete* in 1942, he noted a striking similarity to the Tree of Guernica and its accompanying architecture in Spain(Figure 3). Like the ceiba tree of Havana, the Tree of Guernica symbolized the foundation of civic history in the Basque region. Given this fact, Aguirre perceived the ceiba tree and *El Templete* as a symbol of and monument to Cuban independence in Havana. He drew a visual parallel to the Tree of Guernica and the neoclassical *Sala*

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FIGURE 3. Papamanilla, *Árbol de Gernika* [Tree of Guernica], 2009, photograph. Building constructed c. 1826, permission is granted to copy, distribute and/or modify this document under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License.

de Juntas [Meeting Room], a Doric temple built in the nineteenth century to honor the mythic Basque tree. Bishop Espada, who had initiated the construction of *El Templete*, was a Basque descendant. Therefore, it appears likely that he was playing a *jugarreta* [a dirty trick] on the captain generals of Cuba when he inaugurated the site in 1828: he was using the ceiba as a signifier whose meaning was attached to the Tree of Guernica and the liberty it represented.[28]

When the tree's nationalistic connotations are taken into consideration, it is not surprising that it was used as a central element within the design of *El Parque* and its inauguration ceremony in 1928. The architect of the *Parque*, Forestier, was highly aware of local traditions when he conceived of its arrangement. Forestier lived in Havana between 1925 and 1930 and must have become well acquainted with Havana's urban history, art, people, and culture in this period.[29] He likely would have witnessed the transcultural ritual of circumambulating the tree in front *El Templete*, a Cuban practice that evolved from African and European traditions to honor the origin of Havana. It is therefore probable that this local ritual affected the spatial organization of the twentieth-century *El Parque*.

The influence of this ritual is evident in the design of *El Parque*. The rectilinear stone pathways and the circular center of the park encourage pedestrians to move from one end of the space to the other in a straight line. Yet, in the center of *El Parque* one must, at least partially, circumambulate

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FIGURE 4. Secretaría de Obras Publicas, *Árbol de la Fraternidad dedicated 24 February 1928*, 1928, photograph, Havana, Cuba. Courtesy of the University of Miami Libraries Cuban Heritage Collection, Coral Gables, Florida.

the ceiba tree planted by Machado in 1928, which is positioned on a stone platform elevated by three steps and surrounded by a bronze palisade fence. The latter is reminiscent of a Spanish neoclassical palisade fence, similar to the one surrounding *El Templete*, and the tree's plinth is made of marble from *Isla de los Piños*, an isle south of Cuba's mainland (Figure 4). The bronze fence was designed by the architect Cesar E. Guerra and was cast by the American company Darden-Beller Bronziers. The emblems of twenty-one American nations were created to adorn the top of the fence and a quote from Cuban historian, poet, and independence hero José Martí was also etched around the upper edge of the fence's circumference.[30] The twenty-one emblems of the American nations and the entirety of José Martí's quote cannot be seen or read without circumambulating the tree on the central axis of the *Parque* counterclockwise. This design feature connotes the ritual, counterclockwise circumambulation of the ceiba tree in the *Plaza de Armas*. As social historian Eric Hobsbawm would suggest, the ceiba tree acted as an old form that was given a new purpose in the early Cuban Republic and it is therefore a living monument to Cuban national identity.[31] According to Ortiz's theory of "transculturation," identity in the Cuban Republic was based on multiple epistemologies, especially those from Africa, Europe, and America.

EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY CUBA AND AFRO-CUBAN SYMBOLISM IN NATIONAL DISCOURSE: REFORM AND REPRESSION

The ceiba tree's multifaceted historical significance for the Cuban population presumably affected President Machado's inauguration ceremony and I would suggest that the tree's Afro-Cuban connotations particularly informed the way Cubans of all backgrounds perceived it. Machado used the tree as a

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means to construct a national identity for Cuba, a desire for which emerged after the country had gained independence from Spain only decades earlier. In the early period of independence, the country suffered from corruption and economic and political turmoil, a situation that eventually required socio-political reform. During the presidential elections of 1924, the liberal candidate Machado ran on a platform of reform that appeared to be in touch with issues that also concerned artistic and intellectual movements of the time period, such as the Cuban Vanguard or the elite black social club Atenas.[32] The Cuban Vanguard, a modern group of primarily male painters and intellectuals that was active between 1927 and 1950, visually articulated a wide range of social and political concerns that had emerged in the 1920s, including: a recently gained national independence, the rejection of old colonial models, an affirmation of modernity, and an increased attention to neglected groups such as peasants and Afro-Cubans.[33] The use of Afro-Cuban cosmological symbols such as the ceiba tree resulted from the desire for an authentically Cuban culture that would express the national identity and the reform-minded attitude of the early Cuban Republic. In other American nations, like Mexico, the concept of the indigenous served as a symbol of the ancient past that legitimated the nascent republic. Unlike other American nations, however, most of Cuba's Taíno Amerindians had been killed by disease and forced labor during the Spanish occupation. In lieu of a living Native culture, black modes of expression became a vehicle to protest against colonial narratives and foreign domination in the early twentieth century. It is in this context that the global rise of the *afrocubano*, *negrismo*, and *negritúde* movements took place.[34] These movements affirmed African heritage despite the prejudice of many whites on the island who considered Afro-Cuban culture to be backwards.

Though Afro-Cuban symbolism was prevalent in the visual culture of the early twentieth century, it is important to note that, simultaneously, misgivings existed about Afro-Cuban influence in the socio-political sphere. Fear of Afro-Cubans was articulated in the criminological studies of Fernando Ortiz, who warned of the danger associated with Afro-Cuban influence in the political sphere. He specifically alluded to the power of "witchcraft" among rural populations that might be used for political ends. He acknowledged that *brujos*, or witches, had already infiltrated themselves in political contests, using their sway to win votes.[35]

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Ortiz voiced a concern held by many white elites. As a result of these fears, Afro-Cubans were deprived of a voice in Cuban politics during the early part of the twentieth century and political organizations such as the *Partido Independiente de Color* (PIC) were systematically repressed. The PIC had been formed in 1908 to address the gross underrepresentation of Afro-Cubans in Cuban politics. Despite having fought for the island's independence in large numbers, Afro-Cubans were for the most part denied political representation. There were attempts to outlaw the PIC because it was formed around racial lines, a fact that was deemed ideologically unacceptable in the early Republic. Political elites regarded acknowledging race, let alone racial inequality, as un-Cuban and itself an act of "racism." Thus Afro-Cuban political concerns were repressed during the twentieth century, despite organizations such as the PIC that protested this disenfranchisement. The intense repression of Afro-Cuban political influence culminated in the massacre of nearly three thousand protestors at a PIC-organized demonstration during the "race war" of 1912.[36]

The fear of Afro-Cuban influence in Cuban politics and culture is apparent in the urban history of the *Parque de la Fraternidad* as well. The *Parque*, formerly known as the *Campo de Marté*, was a historic gathering point for the working class in the late nineteenth century. Despite a lack of group organization and oppressive conditions in colonial society, Cuban workers gathered secretly in the *Campo* to celebrate the first *Día Internacional de los Trabajadores* [International Day of Workers or Labor Day] in 1890. A few years later, as separatist sentiments grew and eventually exploded into full-scale revolution, colonial authorities prohibited large gatherings throughout Havana. As a result, workers who had previously gathered in the *Campo* were forced to meet in secret locations. David H. Brown, a scholar of Afro-Cuban material culture, noted that during this period, the persecution of black social groups, especially those associated with the controversial Abakuá fraternity, was integral to "the state program of union busting and worker repression."[37] The greatest growth in non-black initiations into the Abakuá occurred during this early period and was apparently owed to the empowering function of the Abakuá lodges, which offered safe meeting places for the growing dock labor movement during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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As proletarianization intensified, Afro-Cubans and the labor movement found a common interest: protecting Cuban jobs from foreign workers. To address concerns voiced by sugar plantation owners about labor loss following the War for Independence, the Cuban government sought immigrant workers in order to avoid compromising the sugar harvests of 1900 and 1901. Two migration policies emerged as a result: the use of temporary black West Indian labor or the immigration of white families from Spain and the Canary Islands. The Cuban government sponsored the latter as a way to "whiten" the island. The use of white immigrants was seen as a solution to two separate, but intimately related "threats": those of blacks and labor. These two groups, consequently, shared a common interest that blurred racial boundaries in Cuba. Among the working class, the notion of "race" was often understood as a line that separated Cuban from foreign workers versus blacks from whites. Furthermore, given that Afro-Cubans dominated the city's skilled and semi-skilled jobs from the eighteenth century onward, it is logical that Afro-Cuban religious groups would share a concern for the Cuban labor market in the twentieth century.[38] The *Campo*/*Parque*, as the first gathering point for the labor movement of that time period, was strongly associated with labor reform and, in turn, Afro-Cuban identity.

Acknowledging this urban history, Machado's ceremony for the inauguration of the *Parque* in 1928 was intended to legitimate his apparently reform-minded government, not just for Cuba's whites, but for Afro-Cuban populations as well. Machado's evocation of tradition and authority through the ceiba tree was not solely reliant on Spanish Catholic and European visual signs. Rather, Machado was intimately aware of the island's diverse populations. Afro-Cuban traditions were very much a part of Cuban national identity and Machado used that fact to his advantage in the 1928 ceremony. It is not surprising that twentieth-century anthropological accounts, such as those by Lydia Cabrera, Rómulo Lachatañeré, and Ivor Miller, indicate that the ceiba tree in *El Parque*, its soil, and the architectural elements in the surrounding urban landscape design communicated meaning to the Afro-Cuban populations of Havana.

AND IT WILL COST A LOT OF BLOOD: THE 1928 INAUGURATION CEREMONY, AFRO-CUBAN RECEPTION, AND THE POLYSEMIC CITY

Let us return to the case of President Gerardo Machado and the ceiba tree

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in *El Parque de la Fraternidad Americana* to consider how his political performance at the 1928 inauguration was uniquely conditioned and received by Afro-Cuban audiences. Local newspapers visually and textually documented this political performance in the form of articles, collages, and photojournalism (Figure 4). The Cuban press affected the intended meaning for the park's inauguration by promoting the act visually. These images prove that one did not have to actually be on site to witness the ceremony. The visual nature of these images also indicates that the message was available to literate and illiterate audiences, thus affecting a wide array of Cuban citizens.

In addition to the public message presented in the press, anthropologists, such as Cabrera, Lachatañeré, and Miller recorded Afro-Cuban oral accounts of the performance. These oral histories reveal the embodied, popular discourse of *El Parque*, especially for Afro-Cuban audiences. First, it was observed that Machado was always dressed in white. While this is a common style in the Caribbean, it is worth noting that initiates of *Santería* must also dress in white clothes for one year. The reception of his costume is further significant according to early twentieth-century accounts of Rómulo Lachatañeré. Cuban *santeros* informed Lachatañeré that Machado was baptized as a son of Changó.[39] As an alleged son of Changó, symbols of that *orisha* appeared in the inauguration ceremony for *El Parque* and its landscape design. The green space of *El Parque* was lined with palm trees and ceiba trees, often associated with Changó. Also, on the day of the inauguration, Machado ceremonially sowed the transplanted *Árbol de la Fraternidad* in the center of the *Parque* with earth from the twenty-one republics present at the Sixth Annual Pan-American conference. The soil that the American delegates brought was taken from important places related to American independence, predominantly from places where battles had been fought. Therefore, the soil samples were essentially baptized with the blood of American revolutionaries. This gesture was effective as a symbol of Pan-American fraternity, but it also held metaphysical meaning for Havana's Afro-Cuban populations. For the latter, earth, and especially earth that has been blessed with a blood sacrifice, is full of mystical power. Moreover, as outlined above, soil presented by compatriots from different geographical regions is common practice in *palero* tree planting rituals.

In addition to these sacred connotations, the soil that was used to represent Cuba in the 1928 ceremony held civic implications for Afro-Cubans. The

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earth was reportedly taken from the base of the *Jagüey de Yara* tree, also known as *El Árbol de la Guerra* [Tree of War]. On October 10, 1868, Don Carlos Manuel de Céspedes uttered the first *grito* [cry] for independence underneath a jagüey tree in the region of Demajagua, after freeing his black slaves.[40] Therefore, the fistful of Cuban soil Machado kissed before depositing it at the foot of the ceiba evoked a complex of sacred and civic meanings for Afro-Cubans. In an anthropological study of these multifaceted significations, Lachatañeré asked *santeros/as* what they thought of the 1928 ceremony. Among those he consulted, the general conclusion was that Changó had ordered the president to perform the magic ritual in order to gain protection from his enemies.[41]

A *palera*, a female practitioner of Palo Monte, shared a more sinister interpretation of the 1928 ceremony with Lydia Cabrera. She claimed that the prominent officials at the *Parque* had entered *macutos* beneath the ceiba tree. *Macutos* refer to the sacks in which *paleros/as* store their sacrifices and religious implements. These sacks are used in many ceremonies, including exorcism, but are also seen in "dark" magic rituals. Twenty years after Machado's performance, the ceiba tree planting ritual continued to hold power over Cuba. The *palera* warned:

> There will be no tranquility or order in this country until they remove and dismantle the *nganga* [a spell and/or cauldron central in Palo rituals] that General Machado entered [into the earth] some twenty years ago. This *Prenda* [another word for *nganga*] is so strong, and it is so wounded that it has everything wrapped up [troubled] even though it doesn't look like it, and it will cost a lot of blood.[42]

Other "informants" assured Cabrera that the *prenda* or *nganga* would revenge its owner for the ingratitude of the Cuban population.

According to Cabrera's "informants" the entire 1928 ceremony had an air of magic and the urban design of *El Parque* displayed a wide range of Afro-Cuban religious significations. The arrows of the bronze palisade fence that surrounds the tree in the *Parque* are said to be those of the *orishas* Oggún, Eleggua, Ochosi, Allágguna, and Changó; they are also symbols of the *palo*, or stick, of Palo Monte's god Nkuyo—the deity of woods and roads. The

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twenty-one different soils and gold coins placed at the tree's base acted as signifiers of ceiba tree rituals in Afro-Cuban tradition. Also, Cabrera's sources noted the presence of a famous *palero* at the 1928 ceremony named Sotomayor, a friend to some influential politicians of that era. Historian Alina Helg has observed that the Machado regime was famous for "tokenism," using a few Afro-Cubans in highly visible positions in order to appear racially equal. All of these factors, Cabrera notes, are eloquent indications that Afro-Cuban symbolism was prevalent at the 1928 performance; there may be, as Cabrera's "informants" claimed, "una Mañunga muy fuerte" [a powerful spirit that resides there today].[43]

Following these findings, the 1928 ceremony and its attendant symbolism informed the multivocal signification of the ceiba tree in the urban landscape design of *El Parque*, especially as it relates to Afro-Cuban subjectivity. While it would be difficult to prove that Machado intentionally used Afro-Cuban symbolism, it cannot be denied that the inauguration ceremony, the design of *El Parque*, and the ceiba tree planted on its central axis, reveal the polysemic nature of the Cuban city. The tree, intended as a unifying symbol, brought different cultural threads in Havana together by communicating multiple meanings to multiple citizens. The Machado regime benefited from this powerful symbol and used it to construct a unified national identity in Havana.

CONCLUSION: THE *PARQUE* AS A DIALOGIC STEW

If we consider the meaning of an urban space to emerge from a complex, socially conditioned dialog, then the meaning of Havana's *Parque* becomes clearer when the various epistemological structures that affect the Cuban audience are taken into consideration. The production of meaning in Havana's urban spaces is not a binary relationship between black and white or local and international significations. Instead, it is a complex of interlocking meanings that are affected by both space and time. As Ortiz noted, Cuban society cannot be separated into distinct elements; it is an *ajiaco*, a stew. Cuban culture is enriched with time and transformed through the process of embodied discourse. What was once African or European has shifted to become Cuban. Considering Cuban visual and spatial evidence, Forestier and Machado were apparently aware of the tree's multivocal significations and its ability to affect Cuban subjectivity. For the architect Forestier, the tree was a symbol of "solemn tradition," which he could use

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to "imagine and invent" the new republican landscape. For the politician Machado, the tree functioned as a salient symbol of the diverse Cuban nation, rooted in Spanish civic traditions, Afro-Cuban cosmology, and, above all, national Cuban identity. The tree's religious and civic symbolism was used to convey multiple local and international messages in Machado's political performance; to create a "story" that would affect various audiences, including Afro-Cuban populations. Employed as part of a larger political strategy to reify national and civic solidarity, Machado's use of the ceiba tree should be seen as one element in a multivalent, visually textured ritual, reflecting the diverse audiences of modern Cuba.

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NOTES:

[1]Ivor L. Miller, "Religious Symbolism in Cuban Political Performance," *The Drama Review 44,* no.2 (2000): 30-55. His quote appears on page 32.

[2]According to Benedict Anderson's analysis of national anthems, the imagined traditions of the nation bring separate elements together in order to create a unified voice (unisonance) or, I might argue, a unified image (univalence). Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1983), 145; planting this symbolic tree in the park was well advertised in local newspapers of Havana. A synopsis is available online at Jorge Oller, "Grandes Momentos del Fotoreportaje Cubano: La inauguración de la Plaza de la Fraternidad Americana," available at http://www.cubaperiodistas.cu/fotorreportaje/26.html (accessed October 3, 2010). Newspaper articles that covered the 1928 event include *Diario de la Marina*, "Los Veinte Países se Asociaron Ayer al Homenaje de Nuestras Efemérides de Gloria," February 25, 1928; *El Heraldo de Cuba*, "Plantado El Árbol de Concordia," February 25, 1928.

[3]Roselyn Costantino, "Latin American Performance Studies: Random Acts or Critical Moves?" *Theatre Journal 56* (2004): 461.

[4]Dwight Conquergood, "Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research," *TDR 46* (2002): 146.

[5]See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 302-308. Bhabha describes the "margins and minorities" as the borders of the nation that circumscribe its formation.

[6]The city as a dialog emerges from the author's consideration of Roland Barthes' theory that the city is writing. Roland Barthes, "Semiology and the Urban," in *Reading Architecture:*

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A *Reader in Cultural Theory*, ed. Niel Leach (New York: Routledge, 1997), 146. The meaning of the city is conditioned by multiple "readers." One can nuance this textual metaphor with Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of *dialogism*. In his study of the novel, Bakhtin notes that the world is defined by multiple voices in dialog, a phenomenon he refers to as *heteroglossia*. Dialog, as a physical act, is a more comfortable metaphor when considering the performative nature of these spaces. See Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (University of Texas Press: Austin, 1994), 423-434.

[7]Forestier's role in transforming Havana is discussed in Jean-François Lejeune, "The City as Landscape: Jean Claude Nicholas Forestier and the Great Urban Works of Havana, 1925-1930," trans. John Beusterein and Narisco G. Menocal, *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 22 (1996): 150-184. The quote appears on page 153. An overview of Beaux-Arts and American City Beautiful influence in Havana is discussed in Rachel Carley, *Cuba: 400 Years of Architectural Heritage* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1997), 128-182.

[8]A review of this colonial space can be found in Joaquín E. Weiss, *La Arquitectura Colonial Cubana* (La Habana: Letras Cubanas, 1979), 205-208; the *Campo* is mentioned in relation to the *Parque*, which was also known as *La Plaza de la Fraternidad* in Yamira Rodríguez Marcano, "La Plaza de la Fraternidad Americana", available at http://www.somosjovenes.cu/index/semana20/vincammart.htm (accessed December 10, 2010). The *Campo* is also noted in George Ripley and Charles A. Dana, ed., *The New American Cyclopaedia: A Popular Dictionary of General Knowledge* (New York: Appleton, 1857), 519.

[9]Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco & Sugar* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1947), 97-103. Ortiz' theory of "transculturation" developed largely in opposition to Melville Herskovits' theory of "acculturation." See Melville Herskovits, *Myth of the Negro Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1941).

[10]Fernando Ortiz, "La Cubanidad y los Negros," *Estudio Afrocubanos* 3, no. 1 (1939): 4-5; also noted in Juan A. Martínez, *Cuban Art and National Identity: The Vanguardia Painters*, 1927-1950 (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994), 37.

[11]George Brandon, *Santería from Africa to the New World: The Dead Sell Memories* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), 52. The notion of Yoruban and Congo influence due to the slave trade is discussed by numerous authors. These Yoruban- and Congo-derived practices vary greatly in Cuba and accounts may differ. For more information consult Christina Ayorinde, "Santería in Cuba: Tradition and Transformation," in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 209-231; Miguel Barnet, Afro-Cuban Religions, trans. Christine Renata Ayorinde (Princeton: Markys Wiener, 2001); Judith Bettleheim, ed., *Cuban Festivals: A Century of Afro-Cuban Culture* (Kingston: Ian Randle and Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2001), 1-39; David H. Brown, *Santeria Enthroned: Art, Ritual, and Innovation in an Afro Cuban Religion* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003); Mary Ann Clark, *Santería: Correcting the Myths and Uncovering the Realities of a Growing Religion* (London and Westport, CT: Praeger, 2007), 31-44, 95-115; Mercedes Cros Sandoval, *Worldview, the Orishas, and Santería: Africa to Cuba and Beyond* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), 83-92; Arturo Lindsay, ed., *Santería Aesthetics in Contemporary Latin American Art in the Twentieth Century* (London: Phaidon, 1996), 120-135.

[12]Migene Gonzáles-Wippler, *Powers of the Orishas: Santería & the Worship of Saints* (New

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York: Original Publications, 1992); Migene Gonzáles-Wippler, *Santería: the Religion* (New York: Harmony Brooks, 1982), 145; I observed evidence of ebbó at the foot of the tree in *El Parque* while visiting Havana in November 2010. A similar observation is found in Miller, "Religious Symbolism," 34.

[13]Gonzalez-Wippler, *Santería: the Religion*, 135.

[14]These *palero* practices are described in Lydia Cabrera, *Reglas de Congo: Palo Monte, Palo Mayombe* (Miami, FL: Ediciones Universal, 1986), 1; and Gonzáles-Wippler, *Santería: the Religion*, 242.

[15]Lydia Cabrera, *El Monte: Igbo, Finda, Ewe Orisha, Vititi Nfinda: Notas Sobre las Religiones, la Magia, las Supersticiones y el Folklore de los Negros Criollos y el Pueblo de Cuba* (Miami, FL: Ediciones Universal, 1975), 205.

[16]Gregory Stephen Guest, "A Tree for All Reasons: the Maya and the 'Sacred' Ceiba" (master's thesis, University of Calgary, 1995); Katharine Anderson points out the use of the tree in colonial Guatemala in her work *Nature, Culture, and Big Old Trees: Live Oaks and Ceibas in the Landscapes of Louisiana and Guatemala* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003).

[17]Literally, *pretendía descubrir en sus moléculas el alma de Hatuey*. The entire speech is recorded in "Los Veinte Países se Associaron Ayer," *Diario de la Marina*, 10; for more on the origin of the word "ceiba" in terms of Cuba's Taíno Amerindians see Marshall Avery Howe, "Some Photographs of the Silk-Cotton Tree (Ceiba Pentandra), with Remarks on the Early Records of its Occurrence in America," *Torreya* 6 (November 26, 1906): 217-231.

[18]For more on the conference see Orestes Ferrara, *El Panamericanismo y la Opinión Europea* (Paris: Editorial Le "Livre libre,"1930); the author's observation comes from discussion at Florida State University's 28th Annual Graduate Student Symposium, September 2010.

[19]Cabrera, *El Monte*, 149. Even Chinese workers in colonial Cuba called the tree a throne of Sanfán Kón. Sanfán Kón is the equivalent to Santa Bárbara in China, a saint associated with the *orisha* Changó.

[20]Cabrera, *El Monte*, 150, 163; Romuló Lachatañeré and Christine Ayorinde, *Afro-Cuban Myths: Yemayá and Other Orishas* (Princeton, N.J.: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006), 35-41.

[21]Cabrera, *El Monte*, 177, 183-184; and Gonzáles-Wippler, *Santería: the Religion*, 135.

[22]Cabrera, *El Monte*, 192-193.

[23]James Macfadyen, *The Flora of Jamaica; A Description of the Plants of That Island, Arranged According to the Natural Orders* (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longman; [etc.], 1837), 92.

[24]Cabrera, *El Monte*, 179; the text literally reads: *se sacramenta con la ceiba*.

[25]Gonzáles-Wippler, *Santería: the Religion*, 246-248. In addition to this African derived practice, the tree as symbolic of an *axis mundi* has a long tradition in Europe. This dates back at least to the medieval period. The cross, or the *lignum vitae*, was considered akin to the Tree of Life. It was an interlocutor between this world and the next, including earth, the heavens, and the underworld. For more on tree semiotics during this time period and its formation in modern culture see Gerhart Ladner's influential article "Medieval and Modern Understanding of Symbolism: A Comparison," *Speculum* 54, no. 2 (1979): 223-256; and Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York, NY: Knopf, 1996), 214-240.

[26]Cabrera, *El Monte*, 179.

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[27]These paintings and the monuments surrounding the tree in *La Plaza de Armas* are discussed in depth by Paul Barrett Niell, "Bajo su sombra: The Narration and Reception of Colonial Urban Space in Early Nineteenth-Century Havana, Cuba" (Ph.D. diss. University of New Mexico, 2008); and Paul Barrett Niell, "The Emergence of the Ceiba Tree as a Symbol in the Cuban Cultural Landscape," *Cultural Landscapes* 1, no. 3 (2009): 100; the paintings are also described in Martha de Castro, *El Arte en Cuba* (Miami, Fl: Ediciones Universal, 1970), 41-43, 46; and Adelaida de Juan, *Pintura Cubana* (México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1980), 31-32, 43-45.

[28]The Basque President's observation is recorded in Cecilia Arrozarena, *El Roble y la Ceiba: Historia de los Vascos en Cuba* (Tafalla: Txalaparta, 2003), 151; for more on the Tree of Guernica and other trees with religious and civic meaning in the Basque region of Spain see Julio Caro Baroja, *Ritos y Mitos Equívocos* (Madrid: Ediciones Istmo, 1974), 339-393; for more on Bishop Espada see Cesar García Pons, *El Obispo Espada y su Influencia en la Cultura Cubana* (La Habana: Publicaciones del Ministerio de Educación, 1951); and Eduardo Torres-Cuevas, ed., *Opispo de Espada: Papeles* (La Habana: Imagen Contempoanea, 2002).

[29]Lejeune, "City as Landscape," 153. Forestier visited first from December 1925 to February 1926, then from August to December 1928, and finally January to March 1930.

[30]The provenance of the marble, the name of the architect, and the name of the American company is taken from Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, *Colleción facticia #18*: bustos (Biblioteca del Museo de la Ciudad de Havana, date unknown.) The Darden Bronzier's emblem is also etched into the side of the fence's gate. The Martí quote etched around the fence reads as follows: *Es la hora del recuento y de la marcha unida y hemos de andar en cuadro como la plata en los raíces de los Andes. Los pueblos no se unen sino con lazos de amistad, fraternidad, y amor.* (It is time to recount and walk united; we have to walk bound together like silver in the roots of the Andes. [For] the people will not unite unless there are bonds of friendship, brotherhood, and love.) Author's translation.

[31]Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terrance Ranger (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 5. I am not the first to compare the tree in *El Parque* to a monument. Art historians from France and Cuba have also concluded that the tree acts as a living civic monument in Havana. See Lejeune, "City as Landscape," 151; and Fernando Dávalos and Arnaldo Santos, *Mi Habana querida* ([La Habana, Cuba]: Editorial SI-MAR, 1999), 103.
I witnessed the importance of the ceiba as a transcultural symbol in Havana while participating in the ritual circumambulation of the tree near *El Templete* on November 15-16, 2010. The city-historian of Havana, the esteemed Dr. Eusebio Leal, gave a televised speech when the space was opened to the public on November 15, 2010. He noted that the civic ritual is not something that can be scientifically explained, but rather it is an aspect of Cuban culture connected to an unquantifiable notion of identity in Havana.

[32]A good synopsis of these historic events can be found in Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 97-237; for more on the Cuban Vanguard and Afro-Cuban influence see Martinez, *Cuban Art and National Identity*, 74 -92; for racial politics and the early Republic see Tomás Fernandez Robains, "Marcus Garvey in Cuba: Urrutia, Cubans, and Black Nationalism," in *Between Race and Empire: African-Americans and Cubans before the Cuban Revolution*, ed. Lisa Brock and Digna Castañeda Fuertes (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1998), 120-129;

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for reference to black social club Atenas and the role of Afro-Cuban intellectual groups in the early Republic see also Aline Helg, "Race and Politics in Cuba," in *Contemporary Caribbean Cultures and Societies in a Global Context*, ed. Franklin W. Knight and Teresita Martínez-Vergne (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 183-207; and Alejandro de la Fuente, *A Nation for All: Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

[33]Martinez, *Cuban Art and National Identity*, 10.

[34]Eugenio Matibag, *Afro-Cuban Religious Experience. Cultural Reflections in Narrative* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 86-119; it is possible that the international rise of African symbolism in modern art and culture in the later 1920s, also known as "negro fashion," affected Forestier as well. For more on "negro fashion" in France and its influence on Cuban Vanguard artists, such as Eduardo Abela, see Martinez, *Cuban Art and National Identity*, 85-87; an art historical analysis of the indigenous as a symbol of the nation is found in Stacie G. Widdifield, *The Embodiment of the National in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexican Painting* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), 78-122

[35]Fernando Ortiz, *Los Negros Brujos: Apuntes para un Estudio de Etnología Criminal* (Miami, FL: Ediciones Universal, 1973), 177-178.

[36]For a good synopsis see Fuente, *A Nation for All, 66-78;* and Pérez, Jr., *Between Reform and Revolution*, 166-168.

[37]Brown, Santería Enthroned, 59; Marcano, "La Plaza de la Fraternidad Americana," single page; Joan Casanovas, *Bread, or Bullets! Urban Labor and Spanish Colonialism in Cuba, 1850-1898* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998), 161, 184, 205, and 211.

[38]Brown, *Santería Enthroned*, 31; the association between Afro-Cuban groups and the labor movement is examined in depth by Fuente, *A Nation for All*, 99-105.

[39]Rómulo Lachatañeré, *El Sistema Religioso de los Afrocubanos* (Havana: Ciencias Sociales, 2004), 113-114.

[40]The soil of the jagüey tree is discussed in "Los Veinte Países se Asociaron," *Diario de la Marina*; it is also discussed in "Plantado El Árbol de Concordia," *El Heraldo de Cuba*; for the cultural and historic meaning of the *Jagüey de Yara* in Cuba see Alberto Boix, "Cuba y su Jagüey de Yara" from "Asi es Cuba" in *Cosas de mi Tierra* (1950), available at http://www.guije.com/cosas/cuba/yara.htm (accessed October 3, 2010).

[41]Lachatañeré, *El Sistema Religioso de los Afrocubanos*, 113-114.

[42]Cabrera, *El Monte*, 192-193. Author's Translation. The text reads as follows: *No habrá tranquilidad ni orden en este país hasta que no se saque de allí y se desmonte la nganga que el General Machado enterró hace unos veinte años. Está tan fuerte esta Prenda, y tan herida que todo lo tiene revuelto aunque no lo parezca, y costará mucha sangre.*

[43]Cabrera, *El Monte*, 192-193; for reference to "tokenism" see Helg, "Race and Politics in Cuba," 183-207.

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CONSTRUCTING A PICTURESQUE LANDSCAPE:
Picturing Sugar Plantations in the Eighteenth-Century British West Indies

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The importance of sugar to the establishment of the African slave trade in the British West Indies is an issue that has been acknowledged and discussed in great detail by scholars of various disciplines, historical periods, and regions of focus. It is an established fact that the transformation of the British Caribbean into a sugar monoculture was one of the driving forces behind the increased demands for labor by early British inhabitants which was filled by the forced transplantation of millions of African slaves. Sugar, in all aspects of its production, has played a critical role in shaping the imperial history of settlement, colonization, and economic development of the British West Indies. As a focus of academic scholarship, sugar goes back very far in history. It has not only been studied how the production of sugar affected the West Indian islands occupied by the British, but sugar has also been investigated in connection to the history of European development, commerce, and the rise of modern industrialization and urban growth. While sugar has had the attention of historians, scientists, and anthropologists, little scholarly work has focused on the visual representations of this valuable commodity. The present study engages visual representations of sugar plantations as a source of insight from which to consider how imperial ideologies worked to construct notions about West Indian agricultural production generally, sugar production specifically, and their relations to plantation slavery. As such, this essay aims to expand on existing scholarship on sugar by introducing an art historical perspective that will consider how visual representations of sugar production communicated specific notions about slavery and the African slave labor involved in the production of this valuable commodity.

This essay explores landscape images produced by British artists such as George Robertson and considers the artistic and aesthetic devices employed in the construction of the West Indian sugar plantation as a picturesque ideal. All landscape images, even those that stress truthfulness and documentation, remain representations of a place that encompass social, personal, and political dimensions. This paper focuses on the employment of one such approach to the representation of the natural world—the theory

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of the picturesque as applied to landscape images of the West Indies. The theory of the picturesque in relation to landscape was formally articulated during the eighteenth century in the writings of, among others, William Gilpin and Uvedale Price.[1] In their definition of the picturesque landscape, these authors placed a certain value on its roughness, irregularity, and variety. However, before these writers articulated the concept of the picturesque in their publications, the theory itself was already in place and frequently practiced, serving to materially transform and translate the colonial periphery for consumption by the British center. The picturesque focused on the representation of idealized and imaginary landscapes in which the artist, rather than striving for absolute accuracy, was inclined to select the more painterly aspects of a given view. By relying on his imagination, the artist then arranged them into aesthetically pleasing sketches and descriptive accounts. Through the promotion of the concept of variety of natural life, the West Indies were transformed into depictions of a picturesque landscape that suppressed the presence of the laboring African slave body under the hardships of the plantation system. This erasure of the black laboring body from landscape scenes of sugar plantations served both the imperial and personal agendas of those invested in the plantation system. An analysis of how the black slave body was marginalized in the picturesque West Indian landscape reveals how these images were used to support the position of those anti-abolitionists interested in the continuation of the slave trade and further development of sugar plantations.

PROMOTING VARIETY

The tradition of British writing and engraving that overtly addressed the slave body in the sugar plantation sought to construct the impression that sugar cane represented only a small fraction of the plants and natural life cultivated in and introduced to the West Indies. By emphasizing the variety of flora and fauna to be found in the Caribbean, the landscape of the sugar plantation became transformed into a paragon of managed diversification.[2] The species of natural life that are symbolically evocative of the Caribbean even today were in fact transplants from Europe, Asia, Africa, and the South Pacific. Plants such as the coconut palm, mango, breadfruit, and banana that are now almost exclusively associated with the West Indies were colonial transplants introduced to the region by the various colonial powers since the fifteenth century.

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Jill Casid notes that "the mythic image of the plantation landscape dominated by sugar cane as, instead, a prodigious variety of introduced flora held in place by an ordering system of careful segmentation spanned the century as a means to justify colonization."[3] The alleged diversity of nature was promoted in an effort to suppress sugar cane as the most important commodity of the British Empire in the eighteenth century. Diversity and variety played a significant role in the European conception of the West Indies. From the early modern period, the aesthetic principle of variety was widely understood as adding visual interest and value to land or a garden and, in fact, it was considered the requirement that transformed "land" into a "landscape."[4] Through the promotion of this concept of variety, West Indian plantations were transformed into "landscapes," in which the realities of the condition of slavery were suppressed.

Before looking at specific images that illustrate the promotion of variety in the West Indian landscape, the transformation of the West Indies into a varied landscape through introduction of foreign species shall be considered as a form of propaganda used to justify colonization. At the time of British colonial settlement in the West Indies, an agriculturalist argument based on Roman legal principle emerged in support of colonial settlement and rule. According to the Roman imperial legal principle of *res nullius*, "All empty things, which included unoccupied lands, remained the common property of all until they were put to some, generally agricultural use. The first person to use the land became its owner."[5] This Roman rule was broadly applied by British colonists and their champions from the 1620s onwards and worked in support of the system of plantation rule established in the West Indies.

The very use of the term "empty" is one that requires some consideration, as the concept of emptiness reflects a European understanding that is connected to ideas of development and progress. When Europeans first "discovered" the West Indian islands, they were inhabited by Natives that were most definitely using the land for shelter and daily sustenance. Because the Native inhabitants of the West Indies conducted their farming and extracting of natural resources in a sustainable fashion, the look of their habitation differed from that of European civilization. This difference in appearance between Native and European use of the land was exploited for the benefit of European colonization of the Caribbean.

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The construction of sugar plantations involved vast deforestation, the clearing of all undergrowth, and the burning of any remaining roots before the process of planting the sugar cane could proceed. This process of land preparation transformed a majority of the islands into the virtual *tabula rasa* required by the principle of *res nullius*. This concept of *tabula rasa* was also applied as a means of justifying the forced migration of thousands of African slaves to supply the labor for the sugar plantations. Ideologically and discursively then, as Jill Casid points out, the term "plantation" was often used as a synonym for "colony". The two terms were interchangeable "precisely because effective colonization with 'justification' depended on disindigenating, transplanting, and relandscaping the British West Indian island[s] such that the land was made empty and then (re)possessed by its ostentatious cultivation, its agriculture."[6] The main cash crops of the plantation systems that were used to justify colonial occupation of the West Indies were not only transplants from other parts of the world, but they also served to radically alter the landscape of the Caribbean. As such, the whole concept of "tropical landscape" can be viewed as both a material and aesthetic invention of colonization of the Caribbean that was put in practice by the Roman imperial law of *res nullius* and an idea of "enlightened scientific rationalism" based on political and economic considerations.[7]

Extending her analysis of how British imperial power was constructed, produced, and justified through the large-scale relandscaping of the British West Indian colonies, Jill Casid introduces the concept of the "picturesque intermixed landscape" as a device employed by writers and artists presenting the plantation system to West Indian, metropolitan, and international readers and viewers. According to Casid, the plantation was transformed into an intermixed colonial landscape in an attempt to articulate an imperial discourse of hybridization as a sign of the successful imposition of colonial power.[8] *The Oxford English Dictionary* claims that the term "hybrid" was used to describe experiments in crossbreeding of plants, which was a subject of fascination in the eighteenth century and a mark of seemingly progressive scientific rationalism and experimentation in the service of empire.

DEFLECTING BRITISH IMPERIAL EXPANSION

For the present consideration of how the bodies of both African slaves and white plantation owners were represented in relation to sugar production in the West Indies, Hans Sloane's lavishly illustrated two-volume set titled

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Voyage to the Islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers, and JAMAICA, with the Natural History of the Herbs and Trees, Four-footed Beasts, Fishes, Birds, Insects, Reptiles etc. of the last of those Islands (1710, 1725) provides a productive point of departure. This publication, commonly referred to in its short title form *Natural History of Jamaica*, was published in two folio-sized volumes with volume one published in 1707 and volume two in 1725. A British physician and naturalist, Sir Hans Sloane was offered the opportunity to travel to the West Indies by Governor of Jamaica Christopher Monck, the 2nd Duke of Albermarle. While in the West Indies, Sloane collected, observed, and illustrated the new and exotic natural life he encountered to later publish his observations in a two-volume illustrated text upon his return to England. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the West Indies were seen as a new and unexplored territory, filled with unusual and exotic natural life. This "exoticism" attracted many European travelers who were in search of adventure, wealth, and prestige. When first encountered by European travelers, these areas of imperial expansion were unknown, uncertain, and dangerous places where foreigners had to rely on local knowledge and contact with the Native inhabitants for survival.[9] Travelers frequently produced accounts of their journeys to these exotic islands that were then circulated in Europe. These accounts, guidebooks, and narratives relayed the experiences of a traveler and quickly became an integral part of European popular culture in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, serving as a form of entertainment and recreation. Publications such as Sloane's sold an idea of the Atlantic world that appealed to readers, viewers, and consumers across Europe, and this idea marketed a world that was identifiably "exotic."[10] The written and visual accounts produced by travelers to the West Indies provided accessible and plentiful models for those in the European center who wished to contemplate the exotic world. Sloane's *Natural History of Jamaica* is representative of this tradition of West Indian travel writing and, as Kay Dian Kriz has noted, his publication would have been consumed "by readers with widely different interests and capacities for engaging with the written and visual material on offer."[11]

Of interest for the current discussion is an engraving by Michael van der Gucht that appeared in volume two of Sloane's *Natural History of Jamaica* and depicts Natives harvesting cochineal beetles in Mexico. While the engraving in question does not deal specifically with the African slave body

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in the context of West Indian sugar plantations, it is nonetheless of interest because it engages with many issues regarding the portrayal of the "other" in the history of colonial rule. Moreover, it provides a framework from which the visual vocabulary employed by artists in the representation of African slaves and sugar cane can be considered. Sloane's two-volume publication on the West Indian islands does not include a single image or engraving of a West Indian sugar plantation, instead, the reader is presented with a view of Indians laboring in Mexico. In fact, depictions of African slaves at work on plantations in the West Indies were largely absent in other eighteenth-century publications as well, in spite of the overwhelming presence, in reality, of African slaves laboring on plantations throughout the Caribbean.

The engraving produced by Michael van der Gucht is located after the introduction of volume two and is entitled *The manner of propagating, gathering & curing the Grana or Cochineel, done by an Indian in the Bishoprick of Guaxaca in the Kingdom of Mexico in America* (1725) (Figure 1). It shows Indians in Oaxaca harvesting cochineal beetles from pear cactus plants to produce a rich scarlet dye, which was a very profitable and demanded commodity from the New World. The lucrative dye was made from the dried, pulverized bodies of the female cochineal beetle that is indigenous to Mexico and feeds parasitically on two genera of cacti—the nopal and the prickly pear.[12] This Mexican landscape depicts the relation of the Indians, who are shown as the producers of cochineal dye, and the Spanish, who oversaw this venture and were the direct recipients of the profit produced from Indian labor. Why would Sloane reproduce an image of Spanish colonial domination over the Indians in Mexico in a volume dedicated to the West Indies? Without a doubt, Sloane would have been surrounded by displays of British power over the African slaves who toiled on the Caribbean islands since the middle of the seventeenth century. Sloane's decision to commission an engraving in a Mexican setting cannot be dismissed without further investigation, especially when we consider the more accessible alternatives that surrounded him throughout his time in the West Indies.

The engraving of cochineal harvest and production combines various compositional techniques without a consistent type of perspective being maintained throughout. In the background of the engraving a classicized landscape is depicted, which, according to Kay Dian Kriz, "loosely follows

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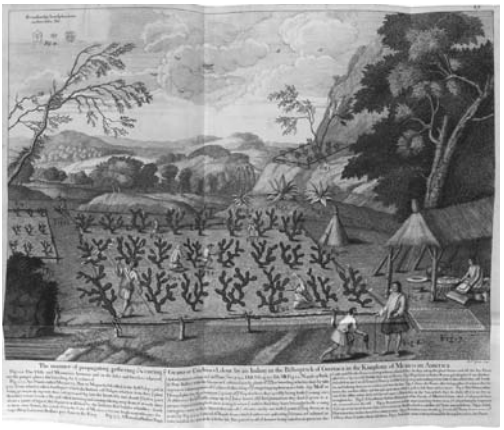

FIGURE 1. Michael van der Gucht, *The manner of propagating, gathering & curing the Grana or Cochineel, done by an Indian in the Bishoprick of Guaxaca in the Kingdom of Mexico in America*, 1725, engraving. From Hans Sloane, *Natural History of Jamaica*, vol. 2 (London, 1725). Courtesy of John Hay Library, Brown University.

European conventions, based on academic seventeenth-century Franco-Italianate painting, for rendering the landscape as a series of receding planes framed by side screens of tress and hills."[13] Placed before this classical backdrop is a spatial and temporal conflation of the stages required for the production of the beetle dye, a device that derives from a pictorial tradition for representing agricultural production.[14] In contrast to the traditional Albertian perspective of the background, the middle ground of the composition, which shows Natives gathering beetles from the cactus plants, is steeply tilted forward in an almost documentary manner, thereby allowing the viewer to observe the specific processes undertaken in the manufacture of the final product. Similar to the overall perspective of the engraving, the human figures represented are also depicted in an inconsistent manner as they undergo irregular variations in scale depending on their positions within the composition. The composition is labeled with numbered tags to identify each item represented and to describe the details of each process in the conversion of the raw product into the 'refined' dye. The varying scales of the human figures and the different perspectives and artistic traditions combined within the composition all work in support of Sloane's claim, which is noted at the bottom of the engraving along with the title of the image. According to Sloane, the engraving was based on a drawing "done by an Indian in the Bishoprick of Guaxaca in the Kingdom of Mexico in America" though, as he points out, the engraving was not made from the original, but from a copy that had been sent to the South Sea Company.

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While there is no way to know for certain if the engraving produced by van der Gucht was based on a drawing executed by a Native inhabitant of Mexico, the claim that Sloane makes serves to enhance the value of the image as a curiosity and an object of exotic appeal. The naming of Native as the original producer of the image can be seen as a device employed by Sloane to further distance himself, and the entire British Empire by extension, from the mistreatment of slaves practiced on plantations. The Native's adoption of Western artistic traditions in the original drawing not only suggests his colonization by European powers, but also demonstrates his ability to adapt under oppressive systems of rule. The Native of Mexico under Spanish rule, not the British plantation owner, is the person who originally documents the scene presented for the viewer. In fact, this is further highlighted by Sloane in one of the accompanying texts that comment on the identification tags dispersed throughout the composition. The description of the two men below the composition identifies them as "A Gentleman Indian Descendent of the Family of Montesuma called a Casique who beareth command over the rest" and "A common Indian man receiving Orders…[from the] Casique being his Superior." The common Indian is depicted removing his hat from his head as he bows before the *cacique* in a display of supplication toward the man who commands the other laborers.[15] This interesting inclusion of a display of power and control between the two Natives in the foreground overtly ignores the more oppressive control and exploitation that would have been experienced by the Native population overall, regardless of their internal ranking or lineage. The white body is not visualized as a powerful force of control and domination over the Native inhabitants of the West Indies and Mexico, and, even more accurately for the period, the African slaves who actually provided the majority of labor on plantations in the British Empire. Moreover, as noted previously, the only commodity depicted in its stages of growth, harvest, and production on a plantation was set in Mexico and was thus removed from the British colonial legacy to which Sloane belonged.

This act of deflecting the negative consequences of colonialism to the Spanish had a long tradition that predated Sloane's publication. The concept of the "Black Legend" was frequently invoked by other European countries in an attempt to avert negative attention and criticism in relation to their own colonization practices in the Caribbean. As the "discoverers" of the New World, the Spanish were implicated in all aspects of the conquest of the

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Caribbean, as well as the subsequent slave trade that was established. The "Black Legend" promoted the sixteenth-century narrative that the Spanish slaughtered most of the indigenous people on islands such as Jamaica and Mexico when they resisted attempts of enslavement.[16] Employing the concept of the "Black Legend," Spain's British, French, and Dutch rivals emphasized the differences between the Spanish militaristic style of conquering which brought about the overwork, disease, and ultimate death of the Native Caribbean populations, and their own style of settler colonialism that implied alteration of the land only through planting. While the British, Spanish, and French thus all conquered the West Indian islands, they employed different methods of extracting wealth which was the focus for defining differences among them. For instance, the Spanish usually prospected for semi-sacred precious metals which depleted the natural resources of the land while distributing overtly visible signs of wealth to those in control. As opposed to this, the British extracted wealth by directing efforts and labor toward the cultivation of plants such as sugar cane that could be traded and sold as a commodity. These differences contributed to the enemies of the Spanish referring to their colonies as 'kingdoms' which were ruled over and plundered for selfish gain.[17] While the act of conquering remained the same, the nature of the labor that resulted from colonization distinguished the European imperial powers. This attempt to conjure, in the minds of viewers of the engraving, an association between the Spanish and their role in the plantation system, forced labor, and the eventual demise of the Native population of the West Indies, demonstrates Sloane's attempt to suppress the realities of British colonization activities in the Caribbean. He explicitly calls attention to Spain's difference in colonization practices in relation to the British through his use of the word 'kingdom' in the title of the engraving. Other British writers also commonly used this strategy in an attempt to remove blame for the many deaths brought about by the colonial project from British hands. Sloane's attempt at suppressing the existence of plantations in British colonies effectively worked to distance the toiling African body from the British West Indian landscape. This absence of visual representations of sugar plantations and the African bodies that maintained them now provides a suitable backdrop from which to consider how sugar plantations were visually constructed by European artists and engravers.

PLANTATIONS OF THE BRITISH WEST INDIES

The majority of images of the West Indies produced during the seventeenth

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and eighteenth centuries were landscape images in the form of illustrations, engravings, and, in some instances, paintings. While these landscape views of the Caribbean islands were widely circulated throughout Europe and informed the European imagination about "exotic" islands, surprisingly few images exist that included the African slave body at work in the composition. The landscape reproduced in Sloane's book that is discussed above, chose to represent Natives in Mexico engaged in the production of a commodity that was significantly less labor intensive than sugar cultivation.

In fact, sugar proved to be an incredibly cumbersome incredibly cumbersome and labor-intensive staple and labor-intensive staple to cultivate, produce, and transport. Sugar cultivation in the West Indies served to transform this region of the world into a carefully regulated system in which wilderness was converted into agricultural land for the fruitful and profitable production of crops. As the economic importance of and demand for sugar increased, more and more West Indian land was transformed into a completely new agricultural face characterized by the orderly arrangements of man-made systems and acres of sugar cane.[18] The plantation was seen as a means of settlement, economic development, labor management, and political control. Within a short amount of time, it began to yield immense material returns from which not only European settlers, traders in the West Indies profited, but their backers at home and the governing circles in the European centers as well. The plantation system, however, required more labor than the indigenous populations and pioneering settlers could provide. When the West Indian islands were initially conquered, overwork and the diseases of the Europeans effectively destroyed the indigenous inhabitants. To make the cultivation of sugar possible, millions of African people were transported to the Caribbean to supply the ever-increasing labor demand. This vast and intricately designed institution was held in place by military power on both the sea-lanes and the islands. Sweetness, according to James Walvin, flowed from military and commercial strength.[19]

With an official lifespan of about four centuries, Caribbean slavery began around 1503 and ended in 1886. Historians and scholars have estimated that during the course of the slave trade about nine and a half million enslaved Africans reached the Americas.[20] The first enslaved Africans brought to the Caribbean region between 1503 and 1505 worked on sugar plantations, and the last enslaved Africans smuggled into Cuba in the 1860s or 1870s worked

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on sugar plantations as well—according to Sidney Mintz, a depressingly enduring continuity.[21] The life these transplanted Africans encountered on West Indian plantations was one of unending labor and great physical, emotional, and psychological hardship and trauma. As James Walvin notes,

> It [sugar] required labor which was itself shipped across the Atlantic (after having been kidnapped and herded together in Africa), labor which was alien, which did not (at first) speak the Europeans' languages, was unaccustomed to the stinging peculiarities of sugar's laboring system; it was a labor which died in horrifying numbers, which rebelled and resisted as a matter of course.[22]

Walvin's description succinctly captures the realities that the plantation slaves were forced to endure. In addition to the intensive manual labor associated with the planting, maintenance, and cultivation of sugar cane, the harvested product also had to be turned into a form that would allow transportation to Europe. After the canes were harvested, they were crushed in mills and the sugar was then boiled out of the cane in a series of open vats in a sugar house. Refining sugar was similar to refining oil, with the heavier and blacker fractions coming off first, followed by the whiter and finer ones. On West Indian sugar plantations, the heat of the process would have been fierce, since there was no means of cooling the sugar house. Temperatures of one hundred and forty degrees Fahrenheit were recorded and, even at night, temperatures near the vat would have reached over one hundred and twenty degrees.[23] Moreover, the humidity on the islands would have been very high as well, adding to the physical demands placed on plantation slaves and the extreme conditions they were forced to endure. Countless slaves died of overwork, exhaustion, and of various types of injuries, such as burns and loss of limbs, that were suffered as a result of the working conditions on the plantations. As such, the plantations required a large number of strong manual workers who could withstand a hot, humid climate and were not as easily affected by European diseases as the indigenous populations originally encountered in the West Indies.

According to Jill Casid, written and visual accounts produced about West Indian plantation culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,

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"acted primarily as vehicles for the dissemination and production of imperial power."[24] In addition to the promotion of an imperial agenda, they also reflected personal opinions about how West Indian plantation systems should be represented, since the majority of texts and illustrations were either completed by plantation owners or individuals invested in the plantation system. As seen in Sloane's *Natural History of Jamaica*, writers and artists were reluctant to promote the importance of sugar to the culture and fortunes of the West Indies. Those artists and writers who were commissioned to represent a specific location and were therefore not able to apply this technique of distancing, embraced other conventions to address the issue of the slave body in relation to the sugar cane plantation.

THE PICTURESQUE INTERMIXED WEST INDIAN LANDSCAPE

The British landscape painter George Robertson provides an informative case study for the complex relationships that emerged in the process of suppressing the realities of the monocultural plantation and the slave system in the West Indies. Under the patronage of William Beckford of Somerley, Robertson traveled to Jamaica in 1772 to produce paintings and drawings that were later displayed for a London audience upon his return in 1774. While in Jamaica, Robertson produced several landscape scenes of the country and, more specifically, scenes of the sugar plantations on the island that were owned by his patron. Thomas Vivares, J. Mason, and Daniel Lerpiniere are some of the engravers who later made reproductions of the drawings created by Robertson. George Robertson therefore stands as the central figure that links all the men who collectively constructed a view of Jamaica that was in keeping with the desires of the sugar plantation owner and patron, William Beckford of Somerley.

Beckford of Somerley was born in Jamaica in 1744 and was the son and heir of Richard Beckford and his common law wife Elizabeth Hay. It is known that he went to England sometime before 1762, because in that year he matriculated at Balliol College, Oxford and was designated a Master of Arts a few years later.[25] According to Beckford's own account, he and his wife returned to Jamaica in 1764 and spent a total of thirteen years there until returning to London in 1777. His long sojourn in Jamaica was brought about when he and his cousin William Beckford of Fonthill inherited twenty-two sugar plantations that he personally supervised and which generated income

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for both men. Upon his return to London in 1777, Beckford of Somerley was arrested and imprisoned for debt in Fleet prison. Beckford's imprisonment was a result of financial mismanagement and a devastating hurricane that destroyed most of his plantations in Jamaica.[26] The other inheritor of the Jamaican plantations, William Beckford of Fonthill, never even visited Jamaica and remained in England living a life of decadence and luxury, partially supplied by the wealth created on the Jamaican sugar plantations overseen by his cousin. In addition, Beckford of Fonthill was also the sole legitimate heir of Alderman William Beckford, the lord-mayor of London and thus inheritor of what was reputed to be the greatest single fortune to be extracted from the sugar plantations of the British West Indies.

The images commissioned by Beckford and produced by Robertson are exceptional for many reasons, most obviously for providing visual representations of plantation life on the British West Indies, which are rare. Geoff Quilley argues that the paucity of visual material on plantation culture in the Caribbean reflects the lack of artistic patronage by plantation owners and individuals with interests in West Indian crop cultivation. The absentee planter classes, of which William Beckford of Fonthill was a member, usually employed the fashionable artists of the European social scene to produce images of European history, allegory and portraiture, thus "dislocating their display of cultural refinement from the source of their prosperity."[27] On the other hand, the West Indian planters and slave traders who resided in the Caribbean were not usually concerned with issues of aesthetics and artistic pursuits and, as a result, very rarely commissioned artists to capture the environment in which they lived. In fact, many seventeenth- and eighteenth-century literary accounts of the Caribbean usually focused considerable time and detail on the excesses of the slave-owning English planters, noting their materialism, quarrelling, drinking, whoring, negligence, swearing, and deceptive business practices.[28] The planters were typically portrayed not only as greedy capitalists intent on getting rich quickly by exploiting their slaves and servants, but also as ill-mannered and immoral, lacking the culture and refinement that were required for an interest in the arts and a desire to become patrons of practicing artists. Beckford, however, is an exception in this regard, since he had a personal interest in presenting an image of Jamaica and the plantation culture that he inherited. In 1790 Beckford published a book on the West Indian island he had resided on

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for many years entitled *A Descriptive Account of the Island of Jamaica*. The book was written while Beckford was in confinement in Fleet Prison, which, based on several allusions made to personal financial insolvency and loss of freedom throughout the text, might have been one of his motivations for writing this text.

When we consider Beckford's text, the paintings and drawings produced by Robertson, and the subsequent reproductions made by the three engravers mentioned earlier, a complex relationship between written and visual representations of Jamaica emerges. Beckford's publication is a substantial work of over eight hundred pages that comprises two volumes. According to the title page of *Descriptive Account*, his volume features "[r]emarks upon the Cultivation of the Sugar-Cane…[and] Observations and Reflections upon what would probably be the Consequences of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and of the Emancipation of the Slaves." In essence, Beckford's publication is an anti-abolitionist text that seeks to promote the interests of those involved in the West Indian plantation system. Of most interest to the current discussion are the devices employed by Beckford to promote these agendas and the ways that these same devices are manifest in the views of Jamaica completed by Robertson. Beckford's application of aesthetic terms to celebrate colonial agricultural production is clearly evident in his pictorialized description of the sugar cane plant itself.

Following a discussion of how to cultivate sugar in his *Descriptive Account*, Beckford describes the sugar cane as "rich and singular[ly] exotic." He continues his description noting, "A field of canes, when standing, in the month of November, when it is in arrow (or full bloom), is one of the most beautiful productions that the pen and pencil can possibly describe."[29] This written description is accompanied by a reproduction of Thomas Vivares' engraving titled *View of Roaring River Estate, Westmoreland* (1778) (Figure 2).

None of Robertson's views were actually reprinted to accompany Beckford's publication. However, Robertson's original view of the Beckford estate of Roaring River was initially exhibited twelve years before the publication of *Descriptive Account*, and John Boydell had published two series of engravings of Robertson's views of Jamaica during the 1770s and 1780s.

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FIGURE 2. Thomas Vivares after George Robertson, *View of Roaring River Estate, Westmoreland*, 1778, engraving. Courtesy of National Library of Jamaica.

Beckford addresses this absence by relating his textual account of Jamaica to the previously released images in the introductory pages to *Descriptive Account*,

> It was my wish, as a confirmation of the fidelity of the scenes which I have attempted to delineate, to have introduced engravings from some particular views of the Island that were taken on the spot; and their accuracy cannot surely be doubted when I quote, as the artist, the respectable name of Mr. Robertson.

By referencing Robertson's views, Beckford connects the landscape views that had previously circulated in London to his textual account of the Jamaican landscape. Beckford also ensures the believability of Robertson's images by reminding the reader that they were "taken on the spot," thus confirming their accuracy as true representations of the Jamaican landscape. In fact, Beckford repeats his lament about the absence of Robertson's views at crucial junctures throughout his text, according to Casid, in an effort to conjure "an absent presence that might serve to verify the purported authenticity of Beckford's colonial relandscaping."[30] By continually referencing Robertson's images, Beckford employs the visual to confirm his claim about

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transplantation as resulting in a picturesque spectacle of overwhelming variety. According to Beckford, "[t]he variety and brilliancy of the verdure in Jamaica are particularly striking; and the trees and shrubs that adorn the face of the country are singular for their richness of tints, the depths of their shadows, and the picturesque appearance they make."[31] Beckford's text describes the Jamaican landscape as a perfect scene of art that is painted and planted with "tints" and "shadows," thus further solidifying the association with the visual traditions of the picturesque and its precondition, variety. This continually articulated fiction that both the artist and writer are simply producing faithful copies of what actually exists in nature acts to transform the colonial landscape into a painting or engraving. It is noteworthy that Beckford insisted upon the repetition of the term "picturesque" to situate his text and Robertson's images as authentic representations of the Jamaican landscape. With regard to the representation of picturesque spaces, it has been noted that, in essence, artists aimed to create a "specific but elevated landscape in which the essential character of the topography was retained, with subordinate and inconsequential parts modified or redistributed to meet the compositional requirements of the classical landscape and thereby assisting in the generation of mood."[32] Signifying that a select view was like a picture, the picturesque, by translating terrain into an established compositional type, was a way of seeing that served to transform land into landscape.[33] Beyond the definition of the concept of picturesque, the theory and practice of landscape aesthetics can also be linked to ideas concerning taste, which was a powerful discursive marker of both class and gender. Whether by birth or through education and opportunity, the man of taste possessed the qualities necessary to appreciate the beauty and sublimity of natural scenes. These qualities enabled access to the pleasures of the imagination, a necessary condition for capturing and appreciating the idealized picturesque landscape. Taste then, as Elizabeth Bohls notes, "both expressed and fostered the immense sense of entitlement that pervades eighteenth-century writings on aesthetics: a consciousness of distinction from the majority who lacked access to these rarefied sensations."[34] The aesthetics of land, and picturesque landscapes in particular, were infused with a proprietary tone which suggested that landownership could take on the symbolism of high culture as distinguished from the landless and thus tasteless and vulgar.

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The notion of taste as it relates to the picturesque also raises the issue of how wealthy landowners employed this aesthetic concept to deflect many of the problems that resulted from both the agricultural revolution and enclosure taking place in the eighteenth-century British countryside.[35] Enclosure entailed the fencing and redistribution of open portions of land in order to maximize agricultural productivity. Eighteenth-century British landscape paintings demonstrated anxiety about the management of the rural poor during a period in which, according to John Barrell, the basis of power and wealth was shifting toward industrial and commercial ventures.[36] Within the context of Britain, the picturesque landscape served to reassure the British landowning classes of the security of their position and property it can be read as "an attempt to wipe out the fact of enclosure and to minimize its consequences."[37] Just as the concept of the picturesque was applied to mitigate anxieties in the English countryside, it was also well suited to serve the political and imperial agendas of Jamaican plantation owners such as Beckford. By applying theories of the picturesque to his *Descriptive Account* and to the views he commissioned by Robertson, Beckford both presented and identified himself as a colonial gentleman planter while erasing traces of African slave labor from the represented Jamaican landscape in order to advance his pro-slavery agenda.

Robertson's composition *View of Roaring River Estate, Westmoreland* follows traditional conventions of picturesque composition that include contrasts between light and shade and winding paths that lead the eye from the foreground to the background of the composition. Depicted in the foreground of the engraving is a variety of carefully rendered vegetation with partial tree trunks inserted on the far corners of the composition that almost serve as a framing device for the entire image. In keeping with picturesque aesthetic conventions, a pathway runs across the foreground and wraps its way around a partial view of a mountain framing the composition on the left, thus serving to guide the viewer's eye toward the background. Adding to this guiding effect is a river that mimics the direction of the path and emerges directly in front of a small elevation that marks the transition to the composition's background. Situated on top of this elevated portion of land are the main plantation buildings, some of which are nestled behind even more varied vegetation, while others are exposed to full view. The buildings are comprised of a mill and a refinery with smoke billowing from its chimney stacks. To the right of the refinery, a black slave leads a group of oxen drawing

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a cart behind them in the direction of the river, perhaps to allow the animals to have a drink. There is the vague impression of slaves working in a cleared field between the buildings, but these bodies are dominated by signs of the fruits of their labor that are transported by the more visible oxcart to the right. Situated in an almost imperceptible distance, the slaves working in the clearing between the buildings are highly abstracted. In the middle of the composition, a seated black male slave, a horse, and a black female slave are positioned along the pathway. The woman is pointing to the left, guiding the viewer's eyes to another man further down the path, who is carrying a load on his back. A female slave with a child holding onto her skirt emerges from the hidden portion of the path behind the mountain and walks toward the load-bearing man and the two slaves at the center of the composition.

This image presents a very striking view of plantation life on Beckford's sugar estate and promotes carefully rendered fallacies of slave life and the slave body's relation to the land. Most striking is the notorious fiction highlighted in the scene placed at the center of the composition. The male slave is shown seated and at rest, while the woman beside him directs attention to other figures that are moving freely along the path. This constructed view promotes the belief that slave life was easy and not potentially fatal as a result of the demanding work requirements. The inclusion of the small child hanging on to the skirt of the female slave suggests that births among slaves outnumbered deaths. The demands of plantation life, it appears, did not impact the ability of slaves to procreate. The presence of the woman and child also evokes the fiction that harmonious family life among slaves was possible on West Indian sugar plantations. In Robertson's view of Beckford's sugar plantation at Roaring River Estate, not a single white body is represented in the entire composition. Instead, the landscape is limited to the depiction of black slaves that symbolically represent the stages of man—as the old man who carries a load on his shoulders walks along the path, another young black slave is born to take his place (as seen in the child holding onto the skirt of the female slave), thus maintaining the "natural" system of plantation culture. The "naturalness" of the mother-child relation pictured in the composition also works to disavow the endemic sexual violence and abuses that were commonly practiced against slave women, since they were considered the property of their owners and, as such, subject to their whims and desires.

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Jill Casid convincingly argues that, "the visual and textual discourse of the picturesque intermixed landscape distinguished by its purported variety and yet harmony attempted to naturalize slavery as part of a georgic plantation Eden of slave labor, 'peace and plenty.'"[38] Variety in the landscape is clearly evident throughout the composition, but interestingly, sugar cane, which would certainly have existed over vast acres of land, is not represented. The only potential evidence of sugar production and cultivation is the billowing smoke emanating from the refinery that suggests the processing of the harvested plant.

Engravings such as those produced by Thomas Vivares after George Robertson's views of Jamaica were circulated in Europe and served to present the lives of African slaves in the West Indies as one of happiness and contentment, thus obscuring the hardship, torture and never-ending labor which would have been closer to the reality of their existence on sugar plantations. Visual representations that refused to show slaves employed in the structured process of sugar cultivation and refinement in favor of depicting them at rest and during moments of leisure, acted to naturalize the African body in the West Indian landscape. Such images implied that the forced movement of slaves from Africa to the West Indies had enabled a better life for them, since a sense of their unity with the West Indian landscape is implied. Casid claims that through the concept of the picturesque, George Robertson "endeavored to produce and reproduce the sugar plantation colony as an intermixed garden with a diverse and extensive variety of vegetation from tropical, subtropical, and temperate climates around the globe, the emblematic sign of a colonial power rooted to its appropriated place now ostensibly improved."[39]

Another such image produced by Robertson and later engraved by Thomas Vivares is *A View in the Island of Jamaica of Fort Williams Estate with part of Roaring River belonging to William Beckford Esq* (1778) (Figure 3). The plantation buildings are shown nestled in the left part of the composition, with Beckford's grand white house set into the mountains at the center, in a customary position that ensured complete surveillance of the lands and people below. The mountains in the background are completely covered with dense vegetation, thereby representing an area that still remains to be cultivated and relandscaped. In the foreground of the composition, a river flows beneath a bridge over which slaves are walking or riding, engaged,

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it appears, in casual chatter. The slaves are shown traveling back and forth over the bridge and along the road to the plantation unrestrained, suggesting their freedom of movement. Similar to the other view produced by Robertson, gates, barricades or any sense of confinement is excluded from the composition, suggesting that the concept of controlled plantation life was not a reality of their existence in slavery.

Just below the center of the composition, two black males are standing on a rock formation by the river, surrounded by more carefully delineated vegetation. A basket of produce is balanced on the head of one of the men, while the other man is seated and reaching up to the basket of produce to partake of what was collected. Once again, leisure, freedom and relaxation of the black slave body are presented to the viewer, all the while serving to naturalize the presence of African slaves in the West Indian landscape. Also, white bodies are absent in the landscape, thus further supporting the notion that slaves harmoniously live unsupervised and are able to consume the varied produce of the plantation at any time and without consequences.

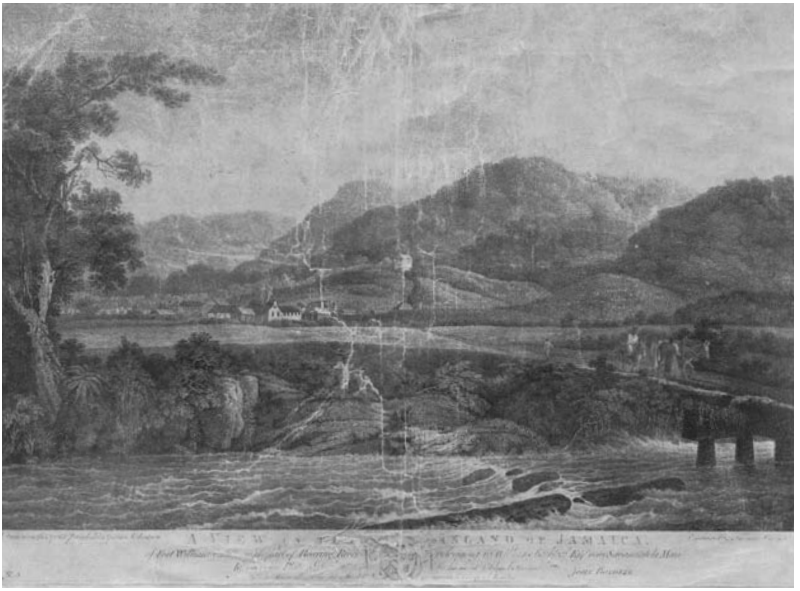

FIGURE 3. Thomas Vivares after George Robertson, *A View in the Island of Jamaica of Fort Williams Estate with part of Roaring River belonging to William Beckford Esq. Westmoreland*, 1778, engraving. Courtesy of National Library of Jamaica.

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The only reference to the white owner and master is the grand house that is depicted on the mountain in the background. While the land depicted in the middle ground between the river and the mountains is cleared, no effort is made to depict the type of plant that would very possibly have been cultivated on that very site. Instead, Robertson uses an abstract rendering of cleared land, making it impossible for the viewer to identify any specific plant or vegetation. However, painstaking detail is used to represent all the other elements of the composition, the varied natural life and the leisured and unrestricted activities of the slaves. Robertson's images of sugar plantations in Jamaica suppress the actual presence of the sugar cane plant in order to enable the patron to distance himself from his source of material wealth. In turn, this act of suppression also works to avoid representations of the laboring African body under the conditions of sugar production and refinement.

Upon reading Beckford's text in conjunction with the views of Jamaica produced by Robertson, it becomes evident that Beckford was attempting to present his account of the Jamaican landscape in a manner similar to an artist. Beckford's writings about Jamaica are not only reminiscent of paintings due to their continual reference to artistic terminology and concepts, but they also promote the colonial transformation of the landscape, which is then formulated as art.[40] Beckford takes artistic license to transform the Jamaica he describes into a hybrid land of varied places that becomes a condensed picture of imperial control. This strategy of conflation and condensation of various colonies into one unifying theme helped men like Beckford, and the planter classes more generally, to manage the image of their possessions in ways that would prove beneficial to their interests. Beckford stated:

> There are many parts of the country that are not much unlike to, nor less romantic than, the most wild and beautiful situations of the Frescati, Tivoli, and Albano; and the want of those picturesque and elegant ruins which so much ennoble the landscapes of Italy, are made some amends for, in the painter's eye, by the appearance, the variety, and the number of buildings.

Jamaica has become abstracted, anesthetized and transformed by Beckford into a colonial hybrid of Italy and the Caribbean in order to justify the colonial plantation system. These metaphors in Beckford's picturesque

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travel writing act to conflate one foreign place with another. The "beautiful situations" of the foreign Italian landscape become interchangeable with the views of Jamaica and thus the West Indian island becomes less unknown and more naturalized through metaphorical linking with Italy. The Italian landscape, while still foreign to a British audience, would have been far more familiar as a result of the tradition of the grand tour, a customary practice for the eighteenth-century British upper class. The metaphorical construction of a colonial hybrid of Jamaica and Italy was also extended to other colonial islands, serving to formulate a perfect and innocent Eden—a return to a prelapsarian state of being.

Many eighteenth-century writers, including Beckford, also turned to the South Sea Islands of Otaheite or Tahiti in order to graft an idea of island paradise onto an island like Jamaica. In one of his descriptions of a landscape view of Jamaica, Beckford stated he could "fancy an exact resemblance, as given us in the prints, of the Island of Otaheite." On Captain James Cook's third voyage of "discovery" around the Pacific in 1776, he took with him an officially appointed artist, John Webber, who provided upon their return arguably the most comprehensive visual record of any of Cook's voyages. These images by Webber, most notably those produced of Tahiti, were circulated throughout Europe and influenced many writers and artists who wanted to exploit the similarities in landscapes in promotion of pro-slavery ideologies. While George Robertson's views of Beckford's sugar plantations were published by John Boydell in 1778, just after Cook's third voyage and before the final publication of the illustrations produced by Webber, Beckford retrospectively overlays the views of Tahiti, which were available around 1790, onto Robertson's views of the Jamaican sugar plantations. The prints of the island of Otaheite to which Beckford refers were most likely Webber's since they were first published in 1784 and were reproduced quite frequently in the following years. Both sets of images share many similarities, most notably their focus on specific botanical specimens.[41]

The vegetation of both Jamaica and Tahiti was indeed very similar, since transplants to Jamaica, such as coconut trees, breadfruit, bamboo and plantain, were also found on the shores of Tahiti. By conjuring these similarities in vegetation with Tahiti in his writings about the Jamaican landscape, Beckford aimed to focus attention on the variety of his West Indian sugar plantations. The laboring African body, which was peculiar to

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Jamaica, was actively erased from the West Indian sugar plantations through Beckford's metaphorical linkage of the two tropical islands. In instances where slavery was not straight-out denied, its good intentions and positive effects were emphasized. The West Indies were often referred to as a tropical paradise and slavery as a vast civilizing mission through which Africans were offered a better life than they would have had in their homeland. As such, maintaining this concept of an island paradise through conflation with other similarly vegetated places like Tahiti, was a way of constructing a new Eden, where African slaves could live a life of happiness. According to this constructed theory, those who lived in the tropics had to do nothing more than gather nature's bounty that existed all around them. Tropes of Arcadia, Eden, Paradise and the Golden Age were used in the writings of natural and civil historians, as well as by travel writers and artists to describe the tropical islands of the Caribbean as a site of unlimited natural resources. In addition, the aesthetic rendering of cultivated landscapes and the slave body at rest, naturalized in a West Indian setting, obscured the unsettling economic relations of exploitation underlying such images.

This essay has explored the ways in which writers and artists employed the concept of variety and the transplantation of flora and fauna to transform the West Indian land into landscape. This transformation suppressed the picturing of the laboring slave body on sugar plantations in favor of images of leisure and happiness. It also worked to naturalize the African body within the landscape of the West Indies, thus projecting a sense of wellbeing and contentment with the new environment that these slaves now occupied.

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[2] Jill H. Casid, *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization* (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 8.

[3] Ibid., 4.

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[4] Ibid.
[5] Anthony Pagden, *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain, and France, c. 1500- c.1800* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 76.
[6] Casid, *Sowing Empire*, 7.
[7] Ibid., 8.
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[11] Kay Dian Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar, and the Culture of Refinement* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 11.
[12] Londa Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 39.
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[17] Anthony Pagden, *Lords of All the World*, 79.
[18] James Walvin, *Fruits of Empire: Exotic Produce and British Taste, 1660-1800* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 135-6.
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[25] Richard B. Sheridan, "Planter and Historian: The Career of William Beckford of Jamaica and England, 1744-1799," *Jamaican Historical Review* IV (1964): 42.
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[27] Quilley, *Pastoral Plantations*, 107.
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[29] William Beckford, *A Descriptive Account of the Island of Jamaica: with remarks upon the cultivation of the sugar-cane,...also observations and reflections upon what would probably be the consequences of an abolition of the slave-trade, and of the emancipation of the slaves*, vols. 1 and 2 (London: Printed for T. and J. Egerton, 1790), 50-51.
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[37] Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology*, 75. For more on the concept of the picturesque and its application to the representation of the British countryside in relation to the peasant classes, see also: Michael Rosenthal et al., ed., *Prospects for the Nation: Recent Essays in British Landscape, 1750-1880* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997).
[38] Casid, *Sowing Empire*, 13.
[39] Ibid., 207.
[40] Ibid., 60.
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TEXTBOOK DIPLOMACY:
The New World Neighbors series and Inter-American Education during World War II

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Between 1941 and 1944 the publishing firm D.C. Heath and Company produced a line of twenty social studies textbooks. The stated purpose of these volumes, titled The New World Neighbors series, was to introduce the "history and spirit" of Latin American cultures to United States schoolchildren.[1] Brief introductions provide a basic overview of the geography, climate, natural resources, industries, and indigenous populations of each country, while one or more short stories, based loosely on historical fact and local custom, aim to familiarize and endear young readers to their Latin American counterparts.

For example, *Along the Inca Highway* sent United States schoolchildren on a virtual journey to South America. Published in 1941 as one of the first eight volumes in The New World Neighbors series, the textbook contains three short stories drawn from Peruvian history. To aid readers in their imaginary travels through time and space, author Alida Malkus frames these stories with an airplane trip from Panama. Students learn about the flourishing precontact Inca Empire, the Spanish conquest led by the "ruthless conquistador" Francisco Pizarro, and the "deeds of the great Liberator" Simón Bolívar. Similar in tone and format to other books in the series, *Along the Inca Highway* celebrates indigenous cultural achievements, underscores the injustices of Spanish colonialism, and highlights Latin Americans' revolutionary actions and modern republican spirit. In so doing, the book assimilates Latin Americans to a United States ideal of American-ness and fosters a sense of unity across the American continents.

Richard Pattee, Assistant Chief in the Division of Cultural Relations at the U.S. Department of State, contributed the preface to *Along the Inca Highway*. "There has perhaps never been a time when it was more important for us in the United States to understand the background, history, and present state of the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking peoples to the south of us," he wrote solemnly. Pattee no doubt intended students to heed the urgency of his words and to dedicate themselves to diligent and rigorous

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study of Latin American history and culture. This striking collaboration and others like it in The New World Neighbors series reflects the important role that government and private institutions assigned to books in the years leading up to and during the Second World War. Mobilized as containers of inter-American political thought, The New Neighbors series sought to overturn negative stereotypes and establish hemispheric solidarity as a bulwark against European fascism. However, these textbooks replicate the conceptual limitations of these diplomatic efforts as well. Careful analysis of Latin American representations in the storylines and illustrations of these educational readers reveals both the professed pan-Americanism and latent racialism undergirding U.S. inter-American diplomacy under the Good Neighbor Policy.

BOOKS ARE WEAPONS

When D.C. Heath and Company launched the series in early 1941, the United States was a nation on the brink of war. For strategic planners and political leaders in the United States, Latin American nations appeared particularly vulnerable to Axis invasion by Germany, Italy and Japan. According to *Fortune* magazine, by August 1941 only a small fraction of the American public—fewer than 7 percent—believed that Hitler had no political designs on either North or South America. More than 72 percent, by contrast, were convinced that "Hitler won't be satisfied until he has tried to conquer everything including the Americas."[2] The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, brought concerns over foreign invasion into sharper relief.

Pan-American solidarity formed a major component of the U.S. government's plan for national security during World War II. In his inaugural address of March 4, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced the Good Neighbor Policy, under which the U.S. government would conduct itself as a nation "who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others."[3] The president had initially intended his foreign policy to apply to the entire world, but he soon reframed his concept of the "good neighbor" to apply specifically to Latin America. The following month Roosevelt appeared before the Pan-American Union and pledged his commitment to cooperation and open trade with the other American republics, stating:

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> The essential qualities of a true Pan-Americanism must be the same as those which constitute a good neighbor, namely, mutual understanding, and…a sympathetic appreciation of the other's point of view. It is only in this manner that we can hope to build a system of which confidence, friendship, and good-will are the cornerstones.

The U.S government sought through the Good Neighbor Policy to repair relations with Latin American nations, many of whom viewed the United States as an imperialist aggressor, and to secure their cooperation in building a hemispheric defense.[4]

To accomplish these goals, the Roosevelt administration set out to convince Americans at home and abroad of two related theses: first, that the American continents form a single geographical unit; and second, that the Western hemisphere stands politically and ideologically distinct from Europe. As part of these efforts, the government sponsored cultural activities ranging from fine arts exhibitions to Disney-animated films to advocate an interdependent confederacy of American nations. Between 1940 and 1945 the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OIAA) distributed films, news, radio programs, and advertisements in Latin America and the United States to offset anti-American propaganda from member nations of the Axis alliance. Additional federal support funded archaeological expeditions in Central and South America, artistic and educational exchanges, and exhibitions of pre-Columbian, colonial, and modern art from throughout the hemisphere. Government officials, scholars, and museum professionals heralded these activities for their educational value, believing that inter-American cultural programs would not only encourage domestic audiences to adopt a more sympathetic attitude toward neighboring nations, but would also reassure Latin Americans "as to the sincerity and reliability of our Pan American protestations during this world crisis."[5]

The New World Neighbors series worked in tandem with OIAA and non-government inter-American cultural programs to foster hemispheric unity; however, the status of these publications as *books* and their deployment in American classrooms endowed them with special significance in the psychological battle against European fascism. On May 10, 1933, German national student associations in Berlin staged an elaborate book burning

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ceremony to destroy the volumes they held responsible for their nation's economic and martial decline after World War I. This event incited international condemnation, especially in the United States where the book fires emerged as a cultural symbol denoting Nazi totalitarianism.[6] Many Americans perceived Nazi censorship and education as having an especially tragic effect upon schoolchildren.

In 1943, the Disney Studio released the educational short film *Education for Death*, an adaptation of Gregor Ziemer's bestselling novel of the same title. The animated film dramatizes the effects of Nazi indoctrination upon German youth by showing the harrowing transformation of a single boy, Hans, from innocent child to brainwashed Nazi soldier. Stephen Vincent Benét also warned of the potentially dire consequence of Nazi reeducation in his popular radio play *They Burned the Books* (1942). The plot follows the ideological struggle of Joe Barnes, a U.S. student, whose Nazi instruction subverts the fundamental tenets of democracy. The play thus imbued the foreign threat with immediacy and relevance by transplanting Nazism to American soil. For American audiences, many of which included school-age children, the stories in *Education for Death* and *They Burned the Books* made plain the formative influence that educators and textbooks had on young minds.

Many U.S. cultural leaders called for adjustments to American educational curricula in response. Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish, who contributed a preface for The New World Neighbors series, was an outspoken critic of the German book fires and demanded that his fellow American scholars and authors respond with "words as weapons" against this threat.[7] U.S. Commissioner of Education John W. Studebaker also advocated using books to counter Axis propaganda: "When people are burning books in other parts of the world, we ought to be distributing them with greater vigor; for books are among our best allies in the fight to make democracy work."[8] Among the books Studebaker promoted were texts on Latin American affairs, since he believed that intercultural understanding would strengthen hemispheric defense. Under his leadership, the U.S. Department of Education, the Division of Cultural Relations, and the OIAA collaborated in a nationwide effort to translate Roosevelt's foreign policy initiatives into a pattern of popular attitude and conduct regarding inter-American relations.[9]

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Domestic racism and discrimination posed a serious challenge to implementing the Good Neighbor Policy within the United States. Joshua Hochstein, the former chairman of the NEA Committee on Inter-American Relations, observed that "there are many who, born in this country, are technically Americans in our sense of the term. Factually, they are rarely so regarded."[10] He prescribed inter-American curricula for elementary and secondary public schools as a means of domestic social reform. This specialized focus on school-age youth reflects his belief that "beyond high-school age, people are too set in their ways to change."[11] A scarcity of unbiased writings on Latin American subjects made classroom instruction difficult, however. Textbooks and children's literature, like other forms of cultural production, inculcated United States readers with an Anglocentric sensibility of moral and intellectual superiority over Latin Americans, both ancient and modern. Latin Americans stereotypically embodied the worst traits of the Spanish and the Indian "races" and appeared in United States art and literature as primitive, lazy, exotic, brutal, and superstitious.[12]

The New World Neighbors series represents a concerted effort on behalf of D.C. Heath and Company to answer the government call for better quality textbooks dealing with the subject of Latin America.[13] During World War II, company president Dudley R. Cowles also served as president of the American Textbook Publishers Institute. Formed in 1942 and consisting of thirty-two textbook publishers, this organization collaborated with the American Council on Education in its evaluation of the inter-American textbook materials being taught in U.S. schools. Despite the limitations imposed on publishers by wartime rationing, D.C. Heath and Company expanded production of The New World Neighbors series from eight to twenty volumes and retained amenities such as colorful endpapers and illustrations. This expenditure reflects the profound influence the publisher believed textbooks could wield:

> More than all the newspapers, more than all the other books, more than the moving pictures and the radio, the text book is a constant and formative influence on the growing mind of youth from the kindergarten to the university…The ideals which control the publisher…are the ideals indelibly impressed on the public mind.[14]

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In April of 1943, Cowles composed a letter to Victor Borella, the director of the Division of Inter-American Activities in the United States, expressing satisfaction at seeing D.C. Heath and Company listed in the OIAA pamphlet *Guide to the Inter-American Cultural Program of Non-Governmental Agencies in the United States*.[15]

GOOD NEIGHBOR IDEOLOGY

Published in support of Roosevelt's foreign policy, The New World Neighbors series ostensibly imparts an antiracist ideology regarding Latin American populations. These textbooks allege authority and cultural authenticity through the extratextual circumstances of their publication. Supplementary information, including the educational focus of D.C. Heath and Company and the professional qualifications of individual authors, effectively assures readers that the educational content is reliable. In advertisements, D.C. Heath and Company publicized the fact that "educators, explorers, and specialists in inter-American relations" had authored the books.[16]

The linguistic discourse of the series further aligns its educational content with the political aims of the Good Neighbor Policy. An urgent desire to foster goodwill toward Latin America pervades the textual language of The New World Neighbors series, but it can most clearly be seen in the preface to each volume. The discursive language of these brief introductions describes Latin American countries as being "neighbors" and "friends" to the United States. Written by distinguished politicians or educators whose affiliation with the Pan-American Union, Department of State, or similar institution imbues the text with authority, the preface explicitly advocates inter-American unity as a desirable position for readers to adopt.[17]

Malbone Graham's preface to *Children of Mexico* is perhaps the most overtly partisan text in this regard. A professor of political science at the University of California, Graham avers: "It is important for us these days to understand better all our Latin American neighbors, and doubly important to come to know Mexico, right next door, so different in some ways and so like us in others." Expanding upon this claim, he continues:

> Through the stories in this little book we visit a friendly, Good Neighbor country and get acquainted with the children at their work and play. . . Speaking of our neighbors many years ago,

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> a great President of the United States, President Wilson, said: 'Comprehension must be the soil in which shall grow all the fruits of friendship'. . . The years since President Wilson spoke have shown that his words were wise and true. This little book about CHILDREN OF MEXICO opens a gate into your garden of friendship.

Graham's strategic use of the words "friend" and "neighbor" evokes common social relationships that argue for applying local behaviors to inter-American encounters as well.[18]

The storytelling, or narrative discourse, of The New World Neighbors series adopts a more covert strategy for conveying antiracist ideology. The message of pan-Americanism usually remains embedded in stories where the primary focus is on characters and events. The Latin American protagonists rarely address the issue of race directly. Instead, the reader must develop positive associations with characters through the plot. The authors of The New World Neighbors series attempt to accomplish this feat by basing their stories on a shared understanding of American identity, which then frames the tale of a specific Latin American boy or girl. At strategic points in the narrative, the text evokes core values like inventiveness and independence to demonstrate that Latin Americans possess these same traits, thereby revising the ideological schema of American-ness to include citizens of Central and South America as well. Abundant illustrations seek to strengthen this reconfiguration of Latin American populations. Ranging from marginalia to full-page illustrations, images appear on nearly every double-page spread in The New World Neighbors series. The careful attention to detail in these portrayals reflects a growing appreciation for visual aids in teaching during this period.[19] The placement of pictures corresponds to events in the text, and the layout of the pages often reinforces the interrelationship of word and image. Two half-page illustrations, sometimes oriented diagonally, cross the gutter to create a continuous image spanning both pages. In other instances, illustrations disrupt or distort the shape of a paragraph to propel the story forward. Ann Eshner's illustrations for *Around the Caribbean* bleed into the margins and jut into the text of Nora Burglon's short story about a budding Cuban entrepreneur named Diego. Positioned at opposite corners of the two-page spread, Eshner's images juxtapose two crucial moments in the plot. In the left scene, the reader sees a discouraged Diego leaving

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the market because no one wants to buy his clay pots. On his way home, he meets Franco, who tells him that "every difficulty has two doors," one that leads in and another that leads out. This exchange encourages Diego to consider a novel approach to selling his wares. At the lower right, Eshner depicts a triumphant Diego, smiling brightly as he displays merchandise for a customer. By converting his vessels into planting pots pre-filled with local flora like pineapple, Diego capitalizes on the tourist trade and sells all of his goods in less than half an hour. Eshner's before-and-after sequence neatly summarizes the narrative lesson, which teaches readers the importance of resilience and ingenuity and also argues for extending American identity to include the Cuban Diego for his possession of these desirable traits.

Pan-Americanism in The New World Neighbors series strove to supplant stereotypical portrayals in children's books such as *The Dark Star of Itza: The Story of a Pagan Princess* (1931). Artist Lowell Houser's illustrations for this juvenile novel underscore the uncivilized nature of indigenous Mexican characters by imitating the elaborate costumes, squat figural proportions and curvilinear style of ancient Mayan mural painting (Figure 1).[20] His contrived naïve style harkens to the modern primitivism adopted by European avant-garde artists like Pablo Picasso and Paul Gauguin, who borrowed non-European or prehistoric visual forms in their paintings for aesthetic and expressive effect. Working within the pictorial constraints of a monochromatic woodblock print, Houser depicts the chaotic siege on Chichén Itzá as a tightly composed tangle of contrast line drawings. Crisp geometric forms delineate the monumental temple at the center of the composition, orienting the viewer's perspective and providing a stark juxtaposition to the heavy plumes of smoke, roaring flames, and mass of enemy soldiers swarming its exterior. Chichén Itzán warriors, portrayed as white forms in black outline, attempt to defend their temple and their loved ones, but they are far outnumbered by the advancing Toltecs, whose black forms in white outline dominate the scene. Houser signals difference only through this use of color; the indigenous figures uniformly exhibit disproportionately large heads, hook noses, and exaggerated facial expressions. Flattened spatial perspective amplifies the pictorial distortion and contributes to an overall impression of native Mexicans belonging to an earlier, savage state.

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FIGURE 1. Lowell Houser, Illustration for *The Dark Star of Itza: The Story of a Pagan Princess* by Alida Sims Malkus, 1930, reproduced by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

Nevertheless, both text and image in The New World Neighbors series reveal lingering American prejudices. While the textbooks demonstrate an overt desire to portray Latin American populations as possessing shared "American" values and personality traits, they also preserve a subordinate tier for Latin Americans as citizens of the *other* American republics. This discursive ambivalence derived from prevailing theories of racialism, which drew a correlation between inherited racial traits and cultural advancement. In this anthropological paradigm, northern European and Anglo-American societies ranked at the top of the racial hierarchy for their perceived physical and intellectual superiority over Latin Americans and other non-white races.[21]

For example, Delia Goetz's *Letters from Guatemala* follows the adventures of Dick, an American schoolboy whose family is living in Guatemala for one year. Dick describes his international sojourn in a set of letters to his friend Billy in the United States. By using an epistolary format, Goetz mediates audience response to Latin American culture by putting forward Dick and his Guatemalan friends as models of desirable behavior and interpersonal relationships. Like other books in the series, *Letters from Guatemala* underscores the economic viability and natural resources of the region, celebrates indigenous cultural achievements, and highlights Latin Americans' revolutionary struggle and modern independence. Dick visits banana and coffee plantations and participates in special celebrations

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including his friend Arturo's birthday party. He also calls attention to the parallel past and present conditions of Guatemala and the United States when he observes that the Independence Day fireworks display in Guatemala looks "very much like those we have at home for the Fourth of July." At the end of the book, he reflects on all he has learned about Latin American boys and girls. "I am glad they are neighbors," he concludes, "because they are my friends."

Katherine Sturges Knight, a successful illustrator for ladies' fashion magazines and children's books, depicts Dick and his Latin American friend on equal terms in the cover illustration for *Letters from Guatemala* (Figure 2). By rendering indigenous and Latin American figures in the familiar pictorial language of commercial illustrations common to weekly magazines like *The Saturday Evening Post*, Knight and other illustrators of The New World Neighbors series help to normalize foreign subjects for American readers. Naturalistic line drawings in a restrained color palette avoid grotesque exaggerations common to visual expressions of stereotype. Instead, the illustrators rely on costume and skin tone to stand for a character's ethnicity and cultural affiliation. The boys mirror one another in posture and appearance. Although one is blonde and the other brunette, both wear formal dress clothes, knee-high socks, and a tie. In addition, both boys stand with straight backs, their legs symmetrically posed as they shake hands on the dock's descending stairs. Neither has an advantage over the other in climbing the steps; their left feet rest side-by-side, sharing the same stone tread. This egalitarian model of friendship captures the overarching lesson of Goetz's text; however, Knight does not maintain this level of cultural parity throughout the image. Tellingly, the background romantically pictures a tropical landscape and preindustrial, indigenous culture that separates Guatemala from the purportedly more advanced United States. Native Mayans in brightly colored indigenous garments populate a lush verdant landscape of flowering bushes. Their diminutive scale and exotic appearance distinguish them from the boys in the foreground. Foliage, reduced to a decorative, flattened description of interlocking forms and colors, partially obscures a stone house and thereby further aligns the distant figures more closely with nature than civilization. A woman in a multicolored dress and red-and-yellow striped *rebozo* or shawl balances a large ceramic water jug atop her head. On the opposite side of the composition a barefoot woman carries a swaddled infant on her back.

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The repeated red-and-yellow textile pattern of these garments creates visual balance and calls attention to Guatemalan handicraft, which American museums and fashion designers celebrated as a native folk art at this time. At the center of the composition, a kneeling woman, whose only visible physical attribute is her characteristically Mayan braided coiffure, works a loom surrounded by baskets of ripe fruit. Her bold blue dress guides the viewer's gaze back toward Dick and his Guatemalan friend, whose American-style clothing includes a cravat and dress shoes. The juxtaposition in this image of nature versus culture and exotic versus assimilated, typifies the ambivalent attitude that the United States maintained toward Latin America under the Good Neighbor Policy.

FIGURE 2. Katherine Sturges Knight, Cover Design for Delia Goetz's book *Letters of Guatemala*, 1941.

DISCURSIVE DUALITY

The twinned egalitarian and racial ideology of The New World Neighbors series mirrors the diplomatic stance of the U.S. government, which maintained a paternalistic attitude toward Latin American nations even while proclaiming the values of pan-Americanism. Although the authors and illustrators of these texts vary, the series maintains a remarkable consistency

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in both authorial tone and visual appearance. Following the rhetorical strategies of the U.S. government, the storylines featured in The New World Neighbors series typically celebrate pre-Columbian civilization as the basis of a modern, pan-hemispheric culture and represent contemporary Latin Americans as virtuous, hard-working people whose capitalist endeavors and republican spirit reveal them to be true "Americans"—that is, just like citizens in the United States. Henry E. Hein, Director of the Student League of Americas, adhered to this interpretation when he promised readers of *Riches of South America* that "[y]ou will like these neighbors more and more when you get to know them. They are really very much like you." Yet a careful reading of these volumes indicates that U.S. diplomatic promises of equality and altruism under the Good Neighbor Policy were never more than an illusory ideal.

ARGUMENT #1: ECONOMIC SECURITY

Nora Burglon's story about Diego in *Around the Caribbean* exemplifies a common narrative strategy of The New World Neighbors series. These textbooks routinely portray Latin American protagonists as desirable trade partners. This characterization corresponds to Good Neighbor Policy economic initiatives. The United States government hoped to enhance inter-American cooperation and trust through trade, as well as cultivate a self-sustaining hemisphere that would insulate the Americas from foreign instability and aggression. Investment and reciprocal trade agreements with Latin America were not philanthropic endeavors, however. The U.S. government and private corporations expected to reap substantial economic gains from Latin American trade. By substituting transatlantic trade with inter-American commerce, the United States hoped to facilitate its economic recovery from the Great Depression and consolidate its economic influence in the region.[22] Since the United States government had agreed to a policy of military nonintervention in Latin American countries under the Good Neighbor Policy, economic investment presented an alternative, yet equally persuasive means to exercise political influence in the affairs of the other American republics.

Public discourse frequently linked U.S.-Latin American trade to pan-Americanism and transnational security during this period. For example, the OIAA-sponsored Walt Disney Studio documentary *The Grain that Built a Hemisphere* (1943) instructs viewers on the importance of corn to the war

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effort. The narrator explains that "Corn is the symbol of a spirit that links the Americas in a common bond of union and solidarity."[23] This native crop held important meaning for the current world conflict in Europe, since it offered tangible evidence of a pan-hemispheric cultural base. The animated film promotes hemispheric unity by tracing the evolution of corn from the ancient Maya, Aztec, and Inca civilizations to the modern United States. Bound not only by proximity but by a shared culture of corn, the United States and Latin America formed natural allies in defeating the Axis threat. Moreover, the viewer learns in the final sequence of the film that corn, more than a mere foodstuff, has practical application in the manufacture of explosives, parachute fabrics, tanks and other essential war materials.

The New World Neighbors series likewise foregrounds the abundant natural resources in Latin America, whose trade will strengthen inter-American relations, enhance hemispheric self-sufficiency, and supply materials for ammunition and military equipment. Dick, the American boy living abroad in *Letters from Guatemala*, tours a coffee plantation, a shipping dock loading bananas, and a Guatemalan marketplace selling leather goods, baskets, blankets, and exotic plants. He stresses the importance of Latin American trade to daily life in the United States, when he asks his friend Billy (and by extension the reader): "Did you eat a banana on your cereal this morning? If it was a Guatemalan banana, maybe I saw it off on the boat." This rhetorical question not only highlights the immediate benefit of inter-American trade to the United States, but also outlines the uneven dynamic of hemispheric economic exchange. The dominant social structures and narrative conclusions grounding *Letters of Guatemala* and other stories in the series reveal an underlying ideology linking racial attributes to societal advancement. Latin American nations in The New World Neighbors series excel in preindustrial pursuits like agriculture, mineral extraction, and handicraft. Less developed than the United States, these countries primarily export raw materials to the United States, where American corporations manufacture finished commodities for commercial distribution.[24]

The New World Neighbors series justified the existing paradigm of U.S. economic dominance in the hemisphere by promoting an imagined ideal of benevolent U.S. American oversight and development in Latin American industry. Author Victor Wolfgang von Hagen dispenses economic advice, presumably for the benefit of Latin American nations,

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yet his recommendations uniformly advance United States economic and political aims. While perhaps more explicit than most of the volumes in The New World Neighbors series, *Riches of Central America* and *Riches of South America* nevertheless foreground the persuasive diplomatic aim common to all of these books. The importance of Latin American trade to U.S. national security is especially evident. Acknowledging that the United States "consumes more than half of the world's output of tin," von Hagen expresses a desire to remove Great Britain from the equation and to "make this continent self-sufficient." He proposes that the capacity of Bolivian mines be expanded "to meet both our industrial and military needs" and doles out additional instructions for South American chocolate, coffee, and balsa wood according to North American demands.

Illustrator Paul Kinnear's portrayal of cheerful, smiling Latin American laborers and author Victor Wolfgang von Hagen's narrative accounts have a strong resemblance to travel posters and advertisements, which represented Latin America as a tropical paradise populated with content workers. In his idealized depictions of U.S.-Latin American trade relations, von Hagen underlines his characters' behavior and aspirations, which instill in them a strong work ethic and a desire to fulfill United States' economic needs. The Venezuelan girl Elvia, for example, dislikes the bitter smell of cacao beans, but when told of the chocolate sweets enjoyed in the United States, she wonders if she might one day visit the "North" and sets to work "faster than ever." In the quarter-page banner illustration leading von Hagen's story on coffee, Kinnear uses a garland of coffee leaves and berries to frame an idyllic landscape of plowed fields and snow-capped mountains. An attractive Brazilian couple in the foreground flanks the pastoral scenery. They carry large baskets brimming with red coffee berries and smile radiantly at the viewer. Von Hagen's and Kinnear's portrayals of Latin Americans as loyal and happy laborers align with plantation stereotypes that had long been instrumental in maintaining racial inequality in economic affairs. Since Latin Americans presumably possessed a more limited intellectual capacity than Anglo-Americans, their racial constitution suited them to a life of physical labor in service to United States market desires and needs.

The narrative discourse of these volumes further advances the claim for Americans' superior insight into the local industries of Latin American countries. For instance, it is the United States businessman, not the venerable

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Don Juan, who possesses the knowledge, the money, and the motivation to establish a Costa Rican rubber trade in *Riches of Central America*. Attitudes of cultural paternalism emerge most overtly in Patricia Crew Fleming's book *Rico the Young Rancher*. This textbook follows the social maturation of Rico, a polite young man from Santiago who learns how to be the *patrón* or master of the family ranch. Underscoring the heavy responsibility of this role, Rico's uncle explains to him that the Native workers are "like children" and that he "must learn to look after [his] people." This message, while pertinent to the particularities of the plot, carries important diplomatic ramifications. Just as a racial-social hierarchy exists in Chilean culture between Latin Americans of European and Native descent, so too are inter-American relations structured on a scale of social dominance with the United States needing to guide its occasionally wayward neighbors to the south.

ARGUMENT #2: PAN-AMERICAN PATRIMONY

The New World Neighbors series often went beyond promoting bonds of inter-American friendship and economic prosperity to suggest a shared cultural lineage as well. Under the Good Neighbor Policy, the U.S. government celebrated pre-Columbian civilization as evidence of a great hemispheric heritage belonging also to United States citizens. For instance, the ambitious but never-realized OIAA exhibition *Our Common Culture* would have formed a curatorial complement to The New World Neighbors series. John Abbott, chairman of the OIAA Advisory Committee on Art, envisioned the project as a series of exhibitions running concurrently in each of the capital cities of the Western hemisphere, as well as in cities with populations of over five hundred thousand citizens. Variously titled *Our Common Culture*, *The Art of the Western Hemisphere*, *The Art of Our Hemisphere*, and *The Culture of Our Hemisphere*, the shows would have promoted the notion of a singular pan-American identity by detailing parallel developments in art and culture throughout the hemisphere.[25]

Several factors contributed to this reassessment of Latin American culture. Growing immigrant populations and renewed attention to the plight of North American Indians foregrounded the plurality of race and ethnicity among U.S. citizens, while the stock market crash and Great Depression ruptured American confidence in commerce and industry as markers of civilization. New Deal projects including the Index of American Design, the Federal Writer's Project, and the Indian Arts and Crafts Board searched

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for "authentic" expressions of American identity rooted in the New World. These programs introduced the notion of a unique and potentially unifying "folk art" that prepared American audiences for the extended application of this idea under the Good Neighbor Policy. In addition, archaeological discoveries, museum exhibitions, and the international success of Mexico's modern muralists inundated the American public with ample evidence regarding the rich artistic traditions of Latin America. Consequently, Latin American cultural production, along with U.S. regional folk art and Native North American arts and crafts, entered the United States national imaginary as genuine expressions of American identity.[26]

The portrayal of Latin American art and culture in The New World Neighbors series reflects this reconfiguration of American patrimony. Like contemporary museum exhibitions on pre-Columbian art that omitted objects related to ritual human sacrifice, The New World Neighbors textbooks avoid pejorative characterizations of Native populations.[27] Despite previous associations with violent acts, such as the Jivaro tradition of head-hunting in Ecuador, the textbooks represent Native communities as being cooperative, peaceful, and generous.[28] *Exploring the Jungle* author JoBesse McElveen Waldeck, who accompanied her husband on an expedition to British Guiana, tells readers that Arawak children gave her many gifts, including a handmade bow-and-arrow set and a talking parrot.

In addition to sanitizing gruesome aspects of pre-Columbian culture, The New World Neighbors series elides American-enacted atrocities against Native peoples. Spain was not immune to such aspersions, however. As Brooklyn Museum curator Herbert Spinden argued, the history of the Spanish conquest was critical to the educational development of contemporary American students, since "the partition of Africa in our own times is an indication that the European nations have not changed their basic idea that the world is their oyster."[29] Such condemnations of European colonialism conveniently neglected the historical record of the United States regarding African slavery, Native American genocide, and territorial expansion. Certainly, one of the primary advantages of turning to Latin American history in this diplomatic context was its geographic and temporal distance from the modern United States. Columbia University professor James T. Shotwell concurred with Spinden's assessment, cautioning that current trends toward pacifism did not guarantee that American students

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would reject Nazism, "already at our shores." School teachers could help by building up the nation's "intellectual defenses."[30] The New World Neighbors series offered a prescient warning to American schoolchildren about the dangers of foreign imperialism, since its stories perpetuate the "Black Legend" in order to condemn Spanish colonialism and to distinguish the New World from the Old.[31] *Along the Inca Highway*, for example, dramatizes the decisive confrontation of the Spaniard Francisco Pizarro and the Incas. Told from the perspective of Felipe, a young boy serving as an attendant to the Spanish leader, this story exposes "how two hundred Spaniards cruelly slaughtered the Inca's people."

Another discursive strategy authors espoused was to show that indigenous Latin Americans continue to uphold pre-contact beliefs and practices despite colonial oppression. By building narratives around traditional Native craft and farming techniques, the series effectively argues for indigenous strength of character and preservation of tradition. Ruth Cady Adams, author of the volume *Sky High in Bolivia*, relates the charming tale of Malku, a Native Bolivian who learns that the traditional manner of hunting *vicuña*—shearing the animals and releasing them afterwards—far exceeds the benefit of modern rifles. The inclusion of Tiwanaku stone carvings in the illustrations for this book enhances the notion of a seamless cultural heritage linking modern populations to their pre-Hispanic past. Pre-Columbian monuments and architectural sites appear in the books *Letters from Guatemala* and *Along the Inca Highway* as well. Next to labeled depictions of Machu Picchu and the Tiwanaku Gateway of the Sun, students learned that "although Leif Ericson or Columbus had not yet 'discovered' the Western Hemisphere, other people had…By the year 600 A.D., the Incas ruled great and wealthy cities…[of which] we can still see gigantic stones, beautifully carved, the ruins of ancient temples." Such statements signaled to readers the existence of New World accomplishments that rivaled the intellectual and cultural marvels of Europe. By providing a local, non-European tradition of which to be proud, pre-Columbian civilization helped to bind all Americans to a transnational community based on a singular, pan-American cultural base.

Notably, this emphasis on gentle disposition and continuing adherence to tradition also effectively traps pre-Columbian civilizations in a romanticized, timeless past. Both unchanging and unchangeable, Native populations remain frozen in a premodern state of societal development. Whether

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Arawak, Inca, Jivaro, Maya or Aymara, indigenous Latin Americans possess a strong work ethic, a deeply-felt spirituality, and handicraft skills. They exhibit an intimate knowledge of the jungles and the earth, and they possess no significant history outside the Spanish conquest. Such characterizations reinforce the stereotypical archetype of Native populations as "noble savages."

Author Alice Desmond identifies anti-industrialism and anti-colonialism as two defining characteristics of indigenous Latin Americans in *Boys of the Andes*. Her narrative introduces students to Huascar, a Native Peruvian whose father stubbornly refuses to accept new land or modern agricultural technologies. When Huascar challenges this traditional way of thinking by bringing home seeds, fertilizer, and a plow from the city, his father angrily exclaims: "I'll have none of these new ways of the white men. The tools of our ancestors, on the land they worked, will do for me. Nor will I plant the wheat that our enemies, the Spaniards, introduced into Peru!" The elder man explains that the Spaniards conquered the Incas, took all of the valley land, and left them with "only the rocky hillside." Huascar defiantly cultivates the wheat on the mountainside and, due to his hard work, produces a perfect specimen of wheat that wins a competition. Through this success the young boy comes to share his father's pride in maintaining Inca tradition. When offered a plot of land in the valley, Huascar firmly declines, stating that "the land that was good enough for our ancestors is good enough for us."

Frank Dobias delineated a naturalistic and respectful image of Huascar to accompany Desmond's story (Figure 3). Although Dobias had previously created racially stereotyped depictions for a foreign edition of *Little Black Sambo*, he adhered to a more conservative illustrating style for *Boys of the Andes*. One half-page color image depicts the slender young man leaning forward to turn the soil with a simple farming implement. Scrub grass and steep mountain peaks fill the lower half of the composition, while two abstract, scribbled clouds frame the boy's torso and head. Huascar wears fitted knee-length trousers, a red striped top, and a yellow tunic slung over one shoulder, presumably to facilitate his agricultural pursuit. A wide-brimmed hat sits neatly atop his head, accentuating his straight posture and chiseled, stoic visage.

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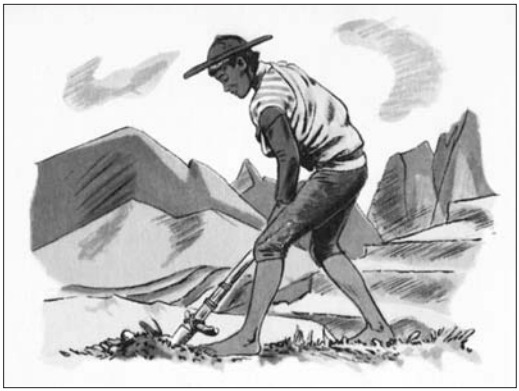

FIGURE 3. Frank Dobias, Illustration of Huascar for Alice Desmond's book *Boys of the Andes*, 1941.

Yet both text and image of *Boys of the Andes* reinforce the romanticized stereotype of the "good Indian," fixed permanently in a preindustrial, pastoral state. Not only does Huascar reject modern farming methods at the conclusion of Desmond's story, but he also appears barefoot and blends harmoniously with his natural surroundings in Dobias' illustration. Katherine G. Pollock imparts an analogous lesson about Latin American character in *The Gaucho's Daughter*. Charqui, the daughter of a former Argentine cowboy, watches her father struggle to adapt to an urban lifestyle and secures a job for him as a ranch hand. Although Charqui exhibits social flexibility and entrepreneurial spirit that equip her for upward mobility, Pollock delimits the reader's overall impression of Latin Americans by basing her plot on the unwavering assumption that Charqui's father is ill-suited to modernity in the city. The narrative resolution underscores this point, since the old cowboy is unable to change and so must return to nature.

ARGUMENT #3: LOVE FOR LIBERTY

The scathing words of Huascar's father against the Spanish conquest not only seeks to rehabilitate racist views of indigenous Latin Americans but also sets the stage for the revolutionary struggle common to all Americans. Because the U.S. government justified American entry into the Second World War as a fight for democracy, the American Revolution appeared in propaganda posters and other materials supporting the war. Bernard Perlan's poster *1778-1943. Americans Will Always Fight for Liberty*, created under the auspices of the U.S. Office of War Information, juxtaposes soldiers from the American Revolutionary War and World War II to assert a continuity of democratic ideology from this colonial struggle to the present

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conflict. Similar ideals applied to Latin Americans, since they too had fought European tyranny to obtain their national independence.

Leon Helguera's 1943 poster *Americans All*, exemplifies the diplomatic aims of this discourse. The picture shows two arms, one holding Uncle Sam's top hat and one holding a traditional Mexican sombrero, extended side-by-side in a friendly salute. The red, white, and blue suit jacket and top hat of Uncle Sam form a sharp contrast to the earthy brown leather coat and hat of the Mexican cowboy, yet remarkably, the poster proclaims both to be legitimate examples of American-ness for their shared love of freedom. The bilingual inscription in English and Spanish reads: "Americans All! Let's Fight for Victory!" The New World Neighbors series employed parallel rhetorical devices to endear Latin Americans to U.S. citizens. Dramatic storylines in the series retell Latin American revolutionary struggles to remind readers that threats against liberty, democracy, and free trade historically came from sources outside the hemisphere and that Americans, both north and south, share a commitment to preserving these ideals.

Muna Lee's book *Pioneers of Puerto Rico* recounts a dramatic encounter during the American Revolution to demonstrate the inherent patriotism of Latin Americans in this future U.S. territory. When an American vessel under British threat arrives in San Juan, the Puerto Rican colonists respond enthusiastically to the American rebels' request for refuge. The clever colonial governor of Puerto Rico, which at that time was the possession of Spain, sends a local boy named Paquito to fetch a Spanish flag. Paquito heroically rides away in Paul Revere-fashion to retrieve the flag, which is then installed on the American boat. This act saves the American privateer from the British fleet. When the English arrive in port and order the governor to surrender the boat, he firmly denies their request. He explains that, so long as the boat flies the Spanish flag, his colonial government will interpret any aggression as an act of war against Spain, not the nascent United States.

Katharine Sturges Knight's busy composition corresponds nicely to the excitement and adventure of this story (Figure 4). Occupying a full page, the two-tone illustration features two uniformed American soldiers amid a cheering crowd of sympathetic Puerto Rican colonists. The central figure tilts his face upward and raises his arm in a salutary gesture; a hint of a smile suggests a kind demeanor that subdues his martial appearance. The

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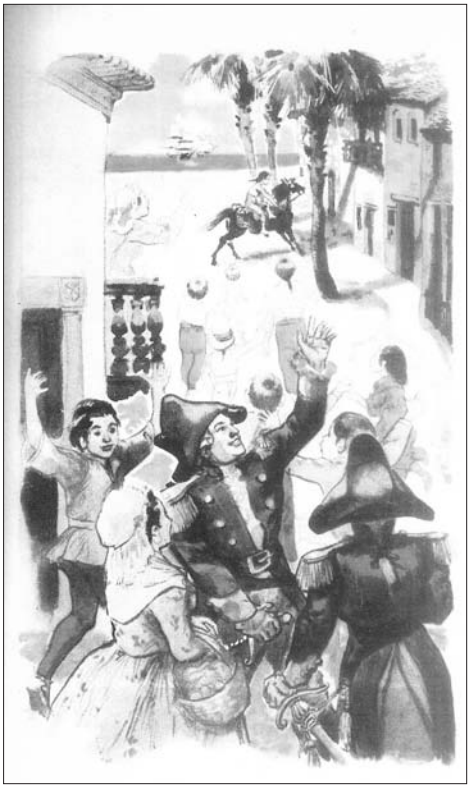

FIGURE 4. Katharine Sturges Knight, Illustration for Muna Lee's *Pioneers of Puerto Rico*, 1944.

second soldier, seen from behind, directs the viewer's gaze to a distant figure on horseback. Dressed in a simple white tunic and sporting the ponytail typical of colonial coiffures, Paquito rides confidently on his small steed whose extended hooves and whipping tail suggest the great speed at which he travels. Only palm trees and a sliver of coastline reveal that this bustling urban scene takes place in a tropical climate, far from the continental United States.

The New World Neighbors series proclaims the natural alliance between the United States and Latin American countries by calling attention to parallel colonial histories and modern political beliefs; yet the storylines consistently underscore the benefits of U.S. leadership. While Lee's narrative proposes an essential Creole sensibility that unites Latin Americans and United States citizens in political ideology, it also provides justification for the American invasion and acquisition of Puerto Rico from Spain in 1898. Another story

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in *Pioneers of Puerto Rico* strengthens this pro-American interpretation, since Lee reports an improved standard of living in Puerto Rico under the United States government. She even makes explicit reference to President Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" speech and the famous Norman Rockwell illustrations on that theme, when she relates the widowed Ana's delighted response to land redistribution under the U.S. government's 1941 Land Law: "Don't you see, that is what we have now, all those four freedoms on this little plot of ground that is our very own forever!"[32] In this and similar stories, The New World Neighbors series replicates the strategies of United States war propaganda distributed abroad. Historian Monica Rankin has shown in her analysis of OIAA Mexican propaganda that the federal agency advocated hemispheric cooperation abroad not by portraying American and Mexican soldiers on equal terms, but rather by showcasing U.S. modernity and military strength to convince them to join "the winning side."[33] By flexing United States military and economic muscle, The New World Neighbors series likewise makes an appeal for hemispheric solidarity within an existing paradigm of American hegemony. This implicit denial of Latin American military strength undermines the fundamental premise of hemispheric defense under the Good Neighbor Policy. If the United States believed that Latin American nations possessed the conviction and the capacity to ward off European fascism, an inter-American alliance would be unnecessary for preserving hemispheric security.

A LESSON TO TAKE AWAY

The authors and illustrators of The New World Neighbors series consciously attempted to transform discriminatory attitudes regarding Latin Americans; however, their efforts remained grounded in contemporary ethnocentric assumptions about race and society. While narrative depictions of Latin Americans as childlike or innately natural may seem relatively obvious and offensive to the modern eye, the implicit ideology of these volumes was entirely unremarkable to period readers, who instead focused on their explicit claim of pan-American unity and solidarity. For their professed adherence to the Good Neighbor Policy, The New World Neighbors series provided a salient teaching aid to United States educators seeking to improve students' "intellectual defenses" through greater awareness and understanding of Latin American cultures. State Department official J. Manuel Espinosa heralded Muna Lee's *Pioneers of Puerto Rico* as "a model of its kind." He praised the author's attention to historical accuracy and "true understanding" of Puerto Rican culture, as well as her decision to highlight

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"experiences common to the whole hemisphere." "These are truly American stories," he proclaimed.[34]

Such critical oversight suggests the implicit ideology of The New World Neighbors series corresponded to prevailing American attitudes and beliefs about Latin Americans. When narratives and images reproduce values that the author and the reader both share, these ideas function as accepted truths. As scholars Robyn McCallum and John Stephens have perceptively noted in their analysis of children's books:

> Ideologies can…function most powerfully in books which reproduce beliefs and assumptions of which authors and readers are largely unaware. Such texts render ideology invisible and hence invest implicit ideological positions with legitimacy by naturalizing them.[35]

Although these textbook portrayals of Latin Americans strove to produce social change by adopting the discursive strategies of the Good Neighbor Policy, The New World Neighbors series unconsciously reinforced prevailing American prejudices of U.S. racial superiority and social dominance as well. These conflicting intercultural visions necessarily restricted the transformative social effect these volumes could engender. As current political debates again raise questions about the accuracy, relevancy, and ideological weight of Latin American studies in U.S. classrooms, it is important for us to consider the historical example of The New World Neighbors series. Only by undertaking an equally thorough analysis of modern textbooks, films, exhibitions, and other visual media can we gain better intercultural insight into our existing ideals, aspirations, and biases, both implicitly and explicitly defined.

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[1]The twenty titles in this series include: Nora Burglon, Thelma Glazer, and E. Mark Phillips, *Around the Caribbean* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1941); Alice Desmond, Alida Malkus, and Ednah Wood, *Boys of the Andes* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1941); Delia Goetz, *Letters from Guatemala* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1941); Alida Malkus, *Along the Inca Highway* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1941); Katherine G. Pollock, *The Gaucho's Daughter* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1941); V. Wolfgang Von Hagen, *Riches of South America* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1941); JoBesse McElveen Waldeck, *Exploring the Jungle* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1941); Henry Lionel Williams, *Kimbi: Indian of the Jungle* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1941); Ruth Cady Adams, *Sky High in Bolivia* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1942); Helen Dickson, *Up Canada Way* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1942); Patricia Crew Fleming, *Rico the Young Rancher* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1942); Dorothy Childs Hogner, *Children of Mexico* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1942); Vera Kelsey, *Six Great Men of Brazil* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1942); Marie Ahnighito Peary, *Ootah and His Puppy* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1942); V. Wolfgang Von Hagen, *Riches of Central America* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1942); Elizabeth Yates, *Around the Year in Iceland* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1942); Arsenio B. Acacio, Ricardo C. Galang, Alvaro L. Martinez, A.B. Makiling, and Bienvenido N. Santos, *Work and Play in the Philippines* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1944); Muna Lee, *Pioneers of Puerto Rico* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1944); Li Ling-Ai, *Children of the Sun in Hawaii* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1944); Alma Savage, *Holiday in Alaska* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1944). Unless otherwise noted, all quotations come from these volumes.

[2]"The Fortune Survey: XXXIX," *Fortune Magazine*, August 1941, 75-76.

[3]Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (New York: Random House, 1938), 14.

[4]Ibid., 130.

[5]Hochstein stated: "Knowing the power of our public schools in shaping our people's ideology and sentiment, Latin Americans will definitely be reassured as to the sincerity and reliability of our Pan American protestations during this world crisis only if they see public education in this country enlisted and dedicated to the cause of hemispheric solidarity." Joshua Hochstein, "Educational Implementation of the Good Neighbor Policy," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 16, no. 3, Inter-American Relationships in Education (November 1942): 176. For more on the activities of the OIAA, see Gisela Cramer and Ursula Prutsch,

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"Nelson A. Rockefeller's Office of Inter-American Affairs (1940-1946) and Record Group 229," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 86, no. 4 (November 2006): 785-808.

[6]Book burning came to be mobilized as a political tool in American wartime propaganda. Matthew Fishburn provides an excellent analysis of the American use of books in wartime propaganda in his essay "Books Are Weapons: Wartime Responses to the Nazi Bookfires of 1933," *Book History* 10 (2007): 223-251.

[7]Archibald MacLeish wrote several essays and speeches on this subject. See Archibald MacLeish, *The Irresponsibles* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1940); Archibald MacLeish, "A Free Man's Books," in *Britain Needs Books*, ed. John Brody (London: National Book Council, November 1942), 67; and Archibald MacLeish, "The Power of the Book," in *A Time to Act: Selected Addresses* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943), 146-55.

[8]Fishburn, "Books Are Weapons," 234. Fishburn notes that this quotation followed every editorial in *Library Journal* between October 1940 and June 1942.

[9]The U.S. government sponsored curriculum workshops, university professor and student exchange programs, and meetings for county superintendents to discuss inter-American affairs and the implementation of the Good Neighbor Policy in public school curriculum. These educational initiatives gained a greater sense of urgency after the United States entered World War II. John C. Patterson, "Activities of the United States Office of Education in the Inter-American Field," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 16, no. 3 (November 1942): 131-134.

[10]Hochstein, "Educational Implementation," 183.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Fredrick B. Pike, *The United States and Latin America: Myths and Stereotypes of Civilization and Nature* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1992).

[13]As early as 1936, U.S. delegates to the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace pledged to eliminate negative portrayals of neighboring American republics from school textbooks. Row, Peterson & Company issued a competing line of elementary social studies textbooks called the Good Neighbor series in 1942. High school textbooks included James E. Downes, Nathaniel H. Singer, and Donald Baker, *Latin America and Hemisphere Solidarity* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1943); Harriet McCune Brown and Helen M. Bailey, *Our Latin American Neighbors* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1944); Prudence Cutright, W.W. Charters, and George I. Sanchez, *Latin America: Twenty Friendly Nations* (New York: Macmillian Company, 1944), to name a few.

[14]The Boston-based firm offered textbooks covering a range of subject matter and grade levels, from kindergarten to university. By 1925, the company had opened offices in Chicago, New York, San Francisco, Atlanta, Dallas, and London and could claim that "of the more than one hundred million persons in the United States above six years of age, one-half of those born in this country have used schoolbooks with the name of D.C. Heath and Company on the title-page." William Edmond Pulsifer, ed., *Forty Years of Service, Published in Commemoration of the Fortieth Anniversary of D.C. Heath and Company* (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1925), 13, 60.

[15]Dudley R. Cowles to Victor Borella, letter dated April 26, 1943. Record Group 229, Entry 156, Box 1718, National Archives, College Park, MD.

[16]*The Southwest Historical Quarterly* 45, no. 2 (October 1941). Writers included Muna Lee, the Puerto Rican founder of the Inter-American Commission of Woman and inter-American cultural affairs specialist for the U.S. State Department; Victor Wolfgang Von

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Hagen, an American explorer; and JoBesse Waldeck, the wife of anthropologist Theodore Waldeck, among others.

[17]Such collaborations in The New World Neighbors series reflect U.S. scholars' and government officials' belief that textbooks could build popular consensus for Roosevelt's foreign policy. Contributors came from a variety of institutions and organizations, including the Institute of Inter-American Affairs; National Institute of Educational Studies, Brazil; Pan American Union; University of California; Students League of the Americas; Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America; Library of Congress; Foreign Policy Association; Department of Education, Puerto Rico; Department of State; American Geographical Society; Brooklyn Public Library; and public schools.

[18]Franklin D. Roosevelt also quoted the former president's speech in order to frame his goals for U.S.-Latin American relations. Edgar B. Nixon, ed., *Franklin Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1969), 560.

[19]Virgil E. Herrick, "Educational News and Editorial Comment," *The Elementary School Journal* 44, no. 3 (November 1943): 134-135; Paul Witty, "Children's Interest in Reading Comic Books," *The Journal of Experimental Education* 10, no. 2, Child Development (December 1941): 100-104.

[20]This novel, written by Alida Malkus, relates the harrowing tale of a seventeen-year-old Mayan girl, who volunteers to be the human sacrifice that will save Chichén Itzá after the city has fallen to the Toltecs.

[21]Influential American proponents of racialism during the Interwar Period included eugenicists Charles Benedict Davenport, Harry H. Laughlin, Madison Grant, Lothrop Stoddard, and Carleton S. Coon.

[22]Strong trade relationships with Germany and sizeable German immigrant populations in Latin American countries seemed to pose a very real danger of Nazism infiltrating the New World. Max Paul Friedman, *Nazis and Good Neighbors: The United States Campaign against the Germans of Latin America in World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 4.

[23]Steven Watts, *The Magic Kingdom: Walt Disney and the American Way of Life* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri, 1997), 230.

[24]Contemporary museum exhibitions approached native and Latin American culture with similar ideological ambivalence. In her analysis of the Museum of Modern Art's 1940 exhibition "Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art," art historian Holly Barnet-Sanchez argues that curatorial decisions undercut the avowed diplomatic aim of this show by accentuating rather than ameliorating "essential" cultural differences. Holly Barnet-Sanchez, "The Necessity of Pre-Columbian Art: U.S. Museums and the Role of Foreign Policy in the Appropriation and Transformation of Mexican Heritage, 1933-1944" (PhD diss., University of California, 1993), 110-146.

[25]Barnet-Sanchez, "Necessity of Pre-Columbian Art," 34, 162-163. Delays, logistical complications and budgetary concerns ultimately caused the project's cancellation.

[26]This was not the only or even the first time that the United States had interpreted pre-Columbian artifacts as part of a national patrimony. See Angela George, "The Old New World: Unearthing Mesoamerican Antiquity in the Art and Culture of the United States, 1839-1893" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2011); Jennifer McLerran, *A New Deal for Native Art: Indian Arts and Federal Policy, 1933-1943* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009); and R. Tripp Evans, *Romancing the Maya: Mexican Antiquity in the American*

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Imagination, 1820-1915 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004).

[27]Barnet-Sanchez, "Necessity of Pre-Columbian Art," 168-173. The OIAA developed a program of small traveling exhibitions of pre-Columbian, colonial and modern Latin American art demonstrative of a shared pan-American past. Curator Natalie Zimmern deliberately selected benign artworks to avoid perpetuating negative stereotypes related to Aztec ritual human sacrifice.

[28]For example, the popular scientific magazine *National Geographic* published an article reporting that "Ecuador Jivaro are Head-Hunting Indians" and that "to the average Ecuadorean the word Jivaro is synonymous with violent death and all manner of disagreeable things." H.E. Anthony, "Over Trail and Through Jungle in Ecuador," *National Geographic* (October 1921): 328-333.

[29]*New York Times*, "Study of Indians Urged on Teachers," April 29, 1934.

[30]Ibid.

[31]The "Black Legend" refers to the unfavorable image of Spanish colonial rule prevalent in historical accounts published between the sixteenth- and twentieth-centuries. Many non-Spanish and Protestant historians demonized the Spanish Empire by exaggerating the cruelty and religious intolerance leveled against indigenous American populations. Recent scholarship has adopted a more neutral stance that acknowledges the atrocities of colonialism without indicting the Spanish Empire as being worse than other colonial powers in the treatment of its subjects.

[32]In his State of the Union address on January 6, 1941, President Roosevelt articulated the necessity of war in order to secure the American ideal of individual liberties for people throughout the world. He identified four essential human freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. Illustrator Norman Rockwell's paintings celebrating these abstract ideals circulated widely in *The Saturday Evening Post* and later as promotional imagery for a U.S. war bond drive.

[33]Monica Rankin, *¡México, la patria!: Propaganda and Production during World War II* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 159-206.

[34]J. Manuel Espinosa, "Review," *The Americas* 1, no. 4 (April 1945): 518-520.

[35]Robyn McCallum and John Stephens, "Ideology and Children's Books," in *Handbook of Research on Children's and Young Adult Literature*, ed. Shelby A. Wolf, Karen Coats, Patricia Enciso, and Christine A. Jenkins (New York: Routledge, 2011), 360.

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ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF PEACE:
Memory and Rhetoric on the United States/ Canadian Border, 1920-1933

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In the fall of 2010, artists Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo of the Seattle-based Lead Pencil Studio installed their newest sculpture adjacent to the border crossing station located at Blaine, Washington and Surrey, British Columbia on the U.S./Canadian border. Funded by the U.S. General Services Administration's Art in Architecture program as part of its renovation of the border crossing station, Han and Mihalyo's *Non-Sign II* consists of a large rectangular absence created by an intricate web of stainless steel rods (Figure 1). The sculpture evokes the many billboards that dot the highway near the border, yet this "permanent aperture between nations," as Mihalyo refers to it, frames only empty space. According to Mihalyo, the sculpture plays on the idea of a billboard in order to "reinforce your attention back to the landscape and the atmosphere, the thing that the two nations share in common."[1]

Though it may or may not have been their intention, the artists of *Non-Sign II* placed the work in a location where it is easily juxtaposed with a border monument from a different era—a concrete archway situated on the boundary between the United States and Canada. Designed by prominent road-builder and Pacific Highway Association President Samuel Hill, the Peace Arch was formally dedicated at a grand ceremony held on September 6, 1921, to celebrate over one hundred years of peace between the United States, Great Britain and Canada since the 1814 Treaty of Ghent (Figure 2). While the neighboring structures each embody their own layers of meaning relative to the time of their creation, the Peace Arch, like *Non-Sign II* built ninety years later, uses the border as a site to call attention to the commonalities between the two nations. In roughly the next decade after the dedication of the Peace Arch, several similar sites emerged at different locales across the U.S./Canadian border. Among these were the Peace Bridge in 1927, Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial in 1931, the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park in 1932, and the International Peace Garden in 1932. Public and private sponsors, inspired by the centennial of the Treaty of Ghent in 1914, envisioned the border

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as a commemorative space, but the arrival of the First World War delayed their plans.[2] In each case, the site or monument itself and the rhetoric that surrounded its dedication made manifest the notion of peaceful relations that had existed for a century between the United States and Great Britain initially, and the United States and Canada after Canadian confederation in 1867.

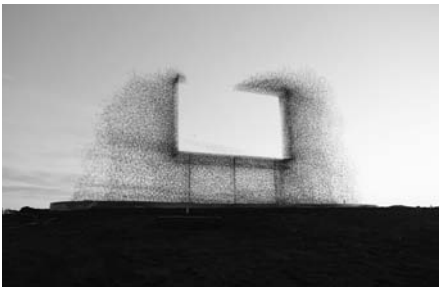

FIGURE 1. Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo, *Non-Sign II*, 2010. Image courtesy of the artists.

Today, the study of the U.S./Canadian borderlands is rapidly expanding as scholars look to revise the historiographical traditions of each country that have so often been limited to the boundaries of the nation-state. Scholars from several disciplines, seeing cross-border historical connections and understanding the borderlands as a region in itself, are exploring various qualities of this seemingly unique international border. For example, in a 2006 collection of essays about the Western borderlands edited by Sterling Evans, John Herd Thompson makes a distinction between three borderlands approaches that is useful in understanding the historiography of the U.S./Canadian borderlands as a whole. First, some scholars have envisioned the borderlands approach as an effort in regionalism meant to break down traditional notions of the border as divider. These scholars have identified particular historical moments during which regions like the Rocky Mountain West or the Great Lakes were ecologically, economically, and culturally coherent to the point of making the border virtually insignificant. In contrast, others who take a transnational approach have discussed the meaning of the border for various groups and border-crossers. Though the border has historically been quite permeable, crossing it was often a significant experience for immigrants, indigenous peoples, blacks, Mormons, and many others who used it as a transformative space or as a shield against unfriendly federal policies on one side or the other. And finally, Thompson identifies a third approach that is comparative, in which

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FIGURE 2. Peace Arch between Blaine, Washington and Surrey, British Columbia dedicated in 1921. Image Courtesy of University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, WAS0708.

scholars examine similarities and differences on either side of the border. Among other conclusions, such studies have shown the border to be integral to the process of national identity formation; some scholars have suggested that Canada in particular has at times defined itself in opposition to the United States.[3]

These various approaches to the borderlands and the scholars who have implemented them in unique ways have demonstrated the historical complexities of the U.S./Canadian borderlands. Still, the ways in which the border itself has served as a space for the assertion of a shared U.S./Canadian history and identity have, to this point, gone uninvestigated. The series of monuments constructed on the U.S./Canadian border during the interwar period and the rhetoric that accompanied their unveilings expressed a shared identity based upon the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race and the natural friendship between the two nations. As symbols, the monuments convey a desire that the border between the United States and Canada be open, permeable, and little more than an imaginary line between brethren. These sites and spaces both reflect and helped to create a "deep, horizontal comradeship" along the lines of Benedict Anderson's imagined community.[4] However, while Anderson's imagined community is the nation as delimited by political boundaries, the monuments to peace on the U.S./Canadian border speak to a single, *transnational* imagined community. Newspaper articles covering the monument's dedications, the speeches and visual symbols that made up the dedication ceremonies, and the monuments themselves, enshrined the border as a symbol of the incomparable relationship these two nations shared. Viewing the U.S./Canadian border through these commemorative spaces adds a new dimension to the meaning

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of borders and complicates the notion of communal identities as limited by national boundaries.

MONUMENTS TO PEACE ON THE U.S./CANADIAN BORDER

The concept of the Peace Arch, also called the Peace Portal, originated with road-builder and Pacific Highway Association President Samuel Hill. During a July 4, 1915, centennial celebration of the Treaty of Ghent, Hill voiced the idea that a marble arch be placed on the border between Surrey, British Columbia and Blaine, Washington as a monument to one hundred years of peace between the United States and Great Britain and Canada. Though delayed by the First World War, Hill and the Pacific Highway Association sponsored the construction of the Peace Arch, designed as a classical Doric-order archway of steel and concrete to link the U.S. and Canadian nations. An estimated ten thousand people came to Blaine and Surrey for the dedication, which was held September 6, 1921. The ceremony consisted of a flag-raising of the British Union Jack and the U.S. Stars and Stripes, a performance of the national anthems of Great Britain and the United States, poetry recitations, and speeches by prominent officials of British Columbia and the Pacific coast states, as well as Samuel Hill.[5] The flag-raising, along with other ceremonies at the Peace Arch and elsewhere, indicated the extent to which Canada, well after confederation, still associated its national identity with that of Great Britain through symbols like the Union Jack.

Six years later, a significantly larger crowd estimated at one hundred thousand, witnessed the dedication of the Peace Bridge spanning the Niagara River between Buffalo, New York and Fort Erie, Ontario. A project long thought necessary, the Peace Bridge finally came to fruition through local efforts that led to legislation from Canada and New York and permitted its construction. After deferring the bridge's creation due to lack of funds during the First World War, builders broke ground in August, 1925 and opened the completed bridge for vehicular travel on June 1, 1927. The bridge company, consisting of local residents of both countries, decided to call it "Peace Bridge" and planned a ceremony to commemorate the century of peace since the War of 1812. The August 7, 1927 dedication was a grand affair that featured speeches by Premier Baldwin of Great Britain, the Prince of Wales, Vice President of the United States Charles Dawes, Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, and others. In addition to the crowd in attendance, millions more around the world heard

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the events described by National Broadcasting Company announcers over the radio. During the ceremony, the Canadian and British representatives met the American delegation at the middle of the bridge, where Dawes and the Prince of Wales shook hands over a white ribbon that was then cut to represent the linking of the two countries.[6]

Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial contained the most overt reference to the War of 1812 (Figure 3). A memorial commission of representatives from the Great Lakes states conceived of the monument as a "triple memorial" to celebrate U.S. Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's victory over the British fleet on Lake Erie, U.S. General Harrison's Northwest campaign, and the consequent years of peace that followed. Built on South Bass Island in Lake Erie, just off the U.S./Canadian border, the 352-foot granite column originally opened in 1915, though it was not formally dedicated until July 31, 1931. Ohio Governor George White and Illinois Governor Louis Lincoln Emmerson led the dedication with speeches and the reading of a message from President Hoover. Dedicators unveiled four bronze tablets in the monument's rotunda, one a recreation of the Rush-Bagot Treaty of 1817 that had laid the groundwork for a demilitarized border.[7]

FIGURE 3. Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial. Image courtesy of National Parks Service, available at www.nps.gov/pevi, (accessed December 1, 2010).

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Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park grew out of the collective idea of the Rotary chapters of Alberta and Montana. The organizations agreed that Canada's Waterton Lakes National Park, founded in 1895, and the United States' Glacier National Park, established in 1910, should be joined due to the similarity of their landscapes and the insignificance of the border within the boundaries of the two parks. The groups saw the fusing of the parks as a symbol of the long friendship between the nations and as an opportunity to promote continued peaceful relations. On June 18, 1932, the United States Congress and the Canadian Parliament responded to the Rotary clubs' efforts by establishing the joint park. Canadian Bill 97 specifically noted the park's establishment "for the purpose of permanently commemorating the long existing relationship of peace and good will between the peoples and governments of the United States of America and the Dominion of Canada."[9]

Like Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, the International Peace Garden was meant to celebrate and encourage sustained peaceful relations across the border. The idea for the garden arose out of a Canadian proposal and plans outlined by Donald McKenzie, Canadian Minister of Mines and Natural Resources. An international committee carried out the project, building a three thousand acre space that covered parts of North Dakota and Manitoba. The planting of the garden began with the placing of a dedicatory cairn inscribed, "To God in His glory we two nations dedicate and pledge ourselves that, so long as men shall live, we will not take up arms against each other." The ceremony, held on July 14, 1932, featured an international hymn composed for the occasion, the raising of the flags of the United States and Great Britain, and sporting events like an international "tug of peace." The dedication was filmed and broadcast around the world.[10]

These five sites, spanning almost the entire length of the U.S./Canadian border, represent a range of approaches to commemoration. The Peace Arch and Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial are obviously the two most consciously symbolic of the various monuments. Both are physical structures that clearly follow particular monumental traditions and that are designed specifically on the impulse to celebrate one hundred years of peace between the two peoples, though Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, an American project, also specifically recalled an American victory over the British. The Peace Arch, in both its form and celebratory function, is reminiscent of the European triumphal arch tradition. Perry's

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Memorial takes the common form of the victory column, the most famous being Trajan's Column, completed in 113 C.E. in Rome. Unlike an arch or a bridge, which both represent connection, the iconography of the victory column serves a more heroic, celebratory purpose that reflects the intention to memorialize Perry's victory over the British. This also makes the column an interesting choice for representing peace.

The International Peace Garden, though a designed space rather than a physical monument, also grew directly from the commemorative impulse. Conversely, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park was first and foremost a practical union of two spaces with shared natural wonders and a linked administrative history, and the Peace Bridge was essentially just a private and later a governmental effort to facilitate border traffic. These two sites, originally intended for purely functional purposes, only took on symbolic meaning later through the narratives attached to them.

Each of these sites, therefore, reflected a distinct mode of commemoration. At the same time, all five can be understood as symbolic monuments with much in common. The creators of Waterton-Glacier and the Peace Bridge, by associating their endeavors with the centennial of the Treaty of Ghent, ascribed symbolic meaning to otherwise purely functional projects. By envisioning these sites as commemorative spaces, the creators and the journalists and speakers who articulated their significance transformed the Peace Park and the Peace Bridge into figurative monuments that spoke to transnational peace and friendship and a shared history between the United States and Canada. The dedication ceremonies held at each of the five sites and later ceremonies and representations continually reaffirmed the symbolic qualities of the monuments and imbued each with particular meaning. Thus, a jointly-operated park became an international symbol of peace and a bridge for vehicular travel became a figurative bridge between nations.

Several of the sites also have strikingly similar visual and spatial effects. The Peace Arch, while serving a commemorative function common to triumphal arches, does not, like many others, serve as an actual passageway for travel. Without this functional purpose, the arch becomes a purely symbolic portal connecting nations. Instead of bridging a roadway, the arch simply creates an empty space, much like *Non-Sign II*. This opening becomes a shared,

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perhaps even apolitical, space of peace between Canada and the United States. Though it is more apparent on a map than on the ground, the Peace Garden and Peace Park likewise frame shared, bounded spaces between nations that paradoxically mark the border with their very placement but also emphasize its ideological absence. Between the spatial interplay of the sites with the border and the narratives attached to them through the rhetoric and symbolism of their dedications, these disparate monuments became visual representations of the two peoples' natural affinity and the apparent insignificance of the political boundary between the U.S. and Canada.

ANGLO-SAXONISM, PROGRESS, AND THE BORDER AS A MODEL: THE RHETORIC OF COMMEMORATION

The rhetoric that surrounded each of these commemorative moments espoused the idea that due to their common racial make-up, Canada and the United States were natural friends and allies. This sentiment is illustrated in the Peace Arch itself through the words engraved on its concrete exterior. The southern, or U.S. side, reads the words "Children Of A Common Mother," while the northern, or Canadian side, reads "Brethren Dwelling Together In Unity." Visually, the symmetrical design of the archway echoes the inscriptions, portraying two peoples united by a shared British ancestry. Indeed, many of the speakers at the dedication ceremony emphasized the common language and Anglo-Saxon racial heritage as reasons for the peace between the two neighbors. Speakers like Oswald West, former governor of Oregon, and R. Rowe Holland, Vancouver barrister and president of the International Peace Memorial Association, suggested that the arch symbolized the Anglo-Saxon bond between the United States and Canada and their common mission to defend peace and liberty. Samuel Hill claimed that the portal marked "the recognition of the oneness of the English-speaking race, and its friendship, not alone for the white race, but its earnest desire to be at peace with all the world."[11] These remarks served to reinforce the Peace Arch's visual symbolism of unity, connection, and strength, though they also erased the presence of non-Anglo-Saxon cultures in both the United States and in Canada.

The newspaper articles about the Peace Bridge and the speeches given at its dedication revealed similar sentiments. In the August 8, 1927 issue of the *New York Times*, writers emphasized the linguistic ties between the two

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nations and noted that the ceremony was broadcast over radio to English-speaking peoples across the globe. According to Vice President Charles Dawes, the link between the two nations was not just linguistic but also ideological, as they shared "the same ideals of citizenship" and "a common principle in government of individual liberty under law." U.S. Secretary of State Frank Kellogg spoke of the bond as one not hampered by racial tension, implying a contrast with various other international relationships. The *Times* writer reporting on the ceremony framed the meeting of the Canadian statesmen and their American counterparts in familial terms, the Canadians being the "younger brothers." The descriptions and symbols of both the Peace Arch and Peace Bridge events reflected the view that a shared language, cultural values, and ancestral heritage made the United States and Canada ideal partners in peace.

This notion that the Americans and the British (or those in their dominion) were natural allies and partners in foreign policy due to a common racial heritage was certainly not new. Thomas Gossett traces bits of this history back to as early as 1839, when Thomas Carlyle suggested that the United States and Great Britain should schedule annual meetings of "All-Saxondom." In his pivotal 1981 book *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*, Reginald Horsman traces the development of Anglo-Saxonism and its relationship to American imperialism.[13] European notions of Anglo-Saxon superiority, emerging alongside the scientific differentiation of race and a Romantic interest in the uniqueness of peoples, cultures, and nations, blossomed in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. These ideas, often integral to U.S. foreign and domestic policy, also took hold of the public imagination in both England and the United States. In a poem titled "A Word to the Yankees" from 1850, the English writer Martin Tupper addressed the United States by saying, "There's nothing foreign in your face/Nor strange upon your tongue;/You come not from another race/From baser lineage sprung." As Tupper's lines imply, the tradition of Anglo-Saxon friendship was tinged with a sense of superiority over those of any other origin. The poem also suggests both a racial and linguistic link, reflecting a new conception of Anglo-Saxonism that, as both Horsman and Anna Maria Martellone argue, crystallized in the 1890s. Whereas before the umbrella of Anglo-Saxonism included all those of Nordic stock, by the 1890s the definition had been narrowed to a racial and linguistic Anglo-Saxonism limited to the English, the Americans, and other English-speaking peoples

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around the world. In the context of a growing influx of immigrants from Latin and Slavic countries on United States soil and, later, the emergence of Germany as a potential common enemy for Britain and the United States, both countries increasingly adhered to this racialized notion of a natural bond between the two countries, and by extension, the U.S. and Canada. In the public mind, Anglo-Saxonism embodied a shared ideology that was superior to and could be instructive for the rest of the world.[14]

In addition, after World War I and the Treaty of Versailles, American voters elected a "return to normalcy" with Warren Harding and his isolationist, "America First" platform. The United States' noninterventionist policy that dominated in the Republican years from 1921 to 1933 was in itself wrapped up in American exceptionalism and Anglo-Saxon racial supremacy. American isolationist doctrine centered on the belief that the United States had little to gain from contact with foreign powers usually deemed inferior. Out of this grew restrictionist immigration quotas that implicitly suggested that non-whites were either harmful to or incompatible with the core values of American society.[15] It was in this milieu that the commemorations of peace along the U.S./Canadian border took form. The combination of a wartime alliance with the British, a refined definition of Anglo-Saxonism, and a post-World War I isolationist political context saturated with notions of racial order made the U.S./Canadian border of the interwar period a zone ripe for the celebration of the peaceful relations between international neighbors.

Further propagating the idea of Anglo-Saxon superiority, various speakers and writers put forth the idea that the peaceful border between the peoples of the United States and Canada could serve as a model for the rest of the world. In a letter written to Samuel Hill and read at the Peace Arch dedication ceremony, President Harding praised the creators of the portal for providing the world with a "symbolic shrine to international peace."[16] Harding wrote that the century and more of peace between the United States and the British Empire and the friendship between the two peoples separated by the world's longest unfortified border signified "that the world grows wiser and better." According to Harding, all of humankind could look to the U.S./Canadian border as a model for peace and as a sign of global progress. Harding's sentiments suggested that the peaceful bond shared by the United States and Canada was a unique one with instructive value for the rest of the world.

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In a lengthy article publicizing the creation of the International Peace Garden on June 26, 1932, *The Los Angeles Times* echoed and expanded on this idea.[17] The article cited a plea from *La Bulgaria*, a newspaper published in Sofia, in which the Bulgarian writer extolled the extraordinary accomplishment of one hundred years of peace between the United States and Canada and asked why the two countries did not "hold conferences throughout the world, explaining the case and teaching to other peoples the art of living without killing one another." The *Times* writer explained to readers the history of the Balkan states and its people, who had for centuries witnessed almost constant warfare and invasion. Considering this history, the *Times* writer said, it was no surprise that the Balkan peoples sought instruction in the ways of peace. The article proceeded to lay out what was necessary for the Balkan states and other areas of the world to achieve such a peace. The security of the U.S./Canadian border, the writer argued, was based on "mutual good will." The writer also advised that others study the federal system and the American Constitution, which had prevented the appearance of "barbed-wire entanglements" like those in the Balkans separating state from state.

Using a supposed cry for assistance from a Bulgarian newspaper reporter that had heard about the International Peace Garden, the *Los Angeles Times* article created an arena in which to express the opinion that the peaceful border between the United States and Canada should be held up as an educational example to the rest of the world. The article cast the Balkan peoples as weak and oppressed and in need of guidance from more powerful nations. In contrast to the Balkan situation, the writer put forth both the American federation of states and the relationship between the United States and Canada as appropriate examples. In doing so, the article, along with those covering other commemorative events, proclaimed American exceptionalism and, in a broader sense, the superiority of an Anglo-Saxon race that could teach the rest of the world how to live in a peaceful fashion.

Many of the commemorative events on the border emphasized that the rest of the world could learn from the U.S. policies concerning disarmament. Disarmament became a significant issue in the interwar isolationist environment as the United States and other nations looked to counter an arms race that many had seen as a cause of the First World War. At the time of the Peace Arch dedication in 1921, postwar sentiments advocating

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disarmament policies pervaded commemorative discourse at the border. Six years later at the Peace Bridge, disarmament again became a central theme when U.S. Vice President Dawes used his speech to criticize the delegations to the Geneva Naval Conference which had been held earlier that year. Dawes attributed the failure of the delegations to agree on naval disarmament to each nation's preoccupation with its own needs. British Premier Baldwin later played down Dawes' comments, emphasizing the resilience of the partnership between the United States and Great Britain even through moments of difference. *The Observer* of London also framed the discussion of the Peace Bridge in the context of the Geneva Conference. Calling the bridge "a happily-chosen and a timely symbol," the writer argued that such cooperation between nations would be required to bridge the "Geneva gap."[18] In these instances, commemorative spaces served as venues to reference the international political situation and reinforce the notion that disarmament was the best policy in achieving a worldwide peace comparable to that evident on the U.S./Canadian border.

References to foreign policy and disarmament were even more direct at the dedication of the Perry Memorial, where the stated theme was explicitly about arbitration and disarmament. A message from President Hoover read at the ceremony directly linked the dedication of the Perry Memorial to the Rush-Bagot Treaty as a first step in disarmament, echoing the symbolic placement of a replica of the treaty at the site. "It is particularly appropriate that a tablet reproducing the Rush-Bagot agreement should be unveiled at the dedication," wrote Hoover, as "it comes at a time when the nations of the world are seeking solution of their common problems through cooperation and disarmament."[19] Hoover and others cast the Rush-Bagot treaty as the earliest example of disarmament and envisioned the century of peace along the U.S./Canadian border as demonstrative of the United States' unique ability to make peace with its foreign neighbors.

As part of the self-congratulatory rhetoric so pervasive in these dedications, speakers and the press created a narrative of the two countries' progress toward their present state of peace. Speaking at the Peace Bridge, U.S. Secretary of State Kellogg argued that there was no equal in world history to the development that had occurred in the previous sixty years and that Canada had exemplified that progress. Harding had written in his message for the Peace Arch that the U.S./Canadian border was evidence of the

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movement toward a "wiser and better" world. At the Peace Bridge ceremony in particular, this narrative took symbolic form. Many newspaper reports on the project noted the fact that, in order to construct the bridge terminals, builders had to destroy Fort Erie on the Canadian side and Fort Porter on the American side, both significant defensive posts in the War of 1812. Speeches given during the ceremony alluded to the fact that where hostile forts had once stood now rested a symbol of friendship. Such statements further transformed the functional bridge into a visual sign of the progress the two countries had made.

Once again portraying U.S./Canadian relations as a model for the world, writers and speakers voiced the hope that the story of progress represented at this border would continue around the globe. Harding's message at the Peace Arch dedication looked forward to a potential millennium of peace. Extending the Peace Bridge's visual symbolism, Premier Baldwin compared the statesman to the bridge builder and the nation to the bridge, saying that it was now the obligation of all statesmen to "build an enduring structure worthy of its foundations."[20] Each of these statements reflected the notion that these monuments to peace were testimony to the moral advancement of the United States and Canada which, it was hoped, would be perpetuated around the world.

The monuments to peace erected on the U.S./Canadian border not only celebrated the moral and political progress of the two nations, but also their advancement into modernity through technological and scientific achievement. In September of 1921, alongside the dedication of the Peace Arch, visitors celebrated a modern triumph of road-building and formally dedicated the Pacific Highway running from Vancouver to Tijuana. The Pacific Highway Association and Samuel Hill had sponsored the construction of the arch and linked the two projects. Upon the Peace Arch's completion, newspapers described for readers the impressive steel and cement construction and speakers noted the physical linking of the two nations. Descriptions of the arch accentuated its physical presence and its modern construction. They cast the arch itself and its dedication as a literal bridging of the forty-ninth parallel with a steel arch and a modern highway. Six years later, the crowd in Buffalo witnessed the dedication of yet another "band of steel." In a February 13, 1927, article entitled "Niagara Spanned By Peace Bridge," Kathleen Woodward of the *New York Times* called it as

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noteworthy for its engineering as for its powerful symbolism. Reflecting on her experience of the view from the Peace Bridge, Woodward wrote:

> One had the sense of triumph over the sound and fury below—the desperate, headlong current, together with the knowledge that, even the crest of its fury over the falls was harnessed by the white man to turn the wheels of factories, to convey light, heat and power to cities miles from its shores. It would be difficult to tell whether the awe engendered in the bosom of the Indian by the natural spectacle of the river and the falls is greater than the awe inspired by the knowledge of the human agency that now assumes to control its power and volume, and does actually wrest from it, in abundance, the comforts of modern life.

In the story Woodward told, the white race and its modern capabilities had conquered the wilderness, here symbolized by the Indian. Woodward conceptualized the bridge as a symbol of the success of Anglo-Saxon agency in exploiting the natural world for its own uses.

Yet the bridge itself was not the only modern feat celebrated by followers of the dedication. In its coverage of the Peace Bridge dedication ceremony, the National Broadcasting Company aired a live feed of the dignitaries' speeches, including that of the Prince of Wales, to an audience across the country and around the globe. An August 8, 1927 *New York Times* article lauded the fact that millions of people in England, Honolulu, Cape Town, and Australia had listened to the radio broadcast. Though the ceremony had been held in Buffalo, the writer noted, "by the marvel of twentieth century science" people miles away had heard the event's proceedings "as distinctly as if they had been standing on the bridge itself."[21] Radio broadcasting and the bridge's design and construction made the Peace Bridge dedication ceremony a celebration of not just a century of peace but also of the pinnacle of modernity reached by the American nation. Newspapers proclaimed that the United States' successes, both in exhibiting modern technology and providing a model of peaceful foreign relations, reinforced the country's and, by extension, the Anglo-Saxon race's superior place in the world order.

The commemorative discourse along the border also reinforced both a sense of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority and the natural connection between the

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United States and Canada through references to each nation's historical past. Not by coincidence, the date of the Peace Arch dedication fell on September 6, the same day that the *Mayflower* had departed from Plymouth, England in 1620. A major feature of the ceremonial performance consisted of the placing of a small piece of wood, supposedly from the *Mayflower*, within the American "leg" of the arch. As a parallel, a piece of wood taken from the *Beaver*, a famous ship of the Hudson's Bay Trading Company, was placed in the Canadian side. In a poem written for the arch's dedication, British Columbia resident Justin Wilson spoke of the American past. Wilson wrote, "Risking the peril of a savage foe,/ Men on the Mayflower sailed from Plymouth town/ To make a race that should the world subdue/Yet using not harsh terms nor angry frown,/ To win men's hearts, the conquest held in view."[22] The rhetoric and symbolism of the Peace Arch dedication referenced a glorious American nation-building story, and in doing so underscored the exceptionalist sentiment expressed through the language surrounding each of these commemorative episodes.

The celebrations also linked the American national narrative with that of Canada, reinforcing the idea that there existed a shared history and an inherent connection between the two countries. University of Washington professor Edmund S. Meany wrote the official dedicatory poem read at the Peace Arch ceremony, a four-stanza ode to the peace and friendship represented by the great arch. Meany wrote, "They faced the hill and plain,/ No fear of savage shock/ Nor thrust of hostile hand/ Could swerve their onward way… While Britannia's sons were marching/From sea to beck'ning sea."[23] Speaking from the stage at the Peace Bridge, U.S. Secretary of State Frank Kellogg referred to himself as one who had known the "unsettled wilderness reaching from Ontario to the Pacific" and who, upon revisiting it, marveled at the modern transformation.[24] Kellogg's speech highlighted the common trajectory into modernity that had created two countries with such similar ideals. In both locations, writers and speakers alluded to a nation-building myth of westward-moving whites who settled the land from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Their words not only celebrated the greatness of the American past, but they also linked that past with a parallel story on the other side of the border that made the United States and Canada natural allies.

Of course, the glorifying discourse of these commemorative moments

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was limited to Anglo-Saxons, and Anglo-Saxons in the modern sense—white, English-speaking people. Many of the speeches and press reports surrounding the events mentioned those who had "opposed" the two nations' westward movement. Wilson's and Meany's poems referred to a "savage foe" not feared by the advancing whites, and Woodward's thoughts from the Peace Bridge in her *New York Times* article contrasted the Indians' awe over the sublime beauty of the river with the white man's incredible mastery of its power. In the parallel nation-building stories depicted at the Peace Portal and Peace Bridge, indigenous peoples were cast as an obstacle, a noble but inferior race, or more often, as in the case of Kellogg's "unsettled wilderness," they were simply forgotten entirely. Native peoples had little to do with the popular conception of the unity of the Anglo-Saxon-dominated Canadian and American societies. In a distinct but related fashion, references to the common language on either side of the border excluded French-Canadians. Samuel Hill briefly noted in his speech that the French and the English lived together peacefully in Canada and, during the Peace Arch ceremony, a French flag was raised to represent that large portion of Canada's population.[25] Otherwise, in each of these commemorative moments, French-speakers residing in Canada received little attention. In the discursive spaces of these dedications, the labels of Anglo-Saxon, English-speaker, and white were used interchangeably, signifying the narrow, racialized manner in which many imagined the transborder community.

THE BORDER IN THE PUBLIC IMAGINATION

In the various commemorative moments that emerged along the U.S./Canadian border between 1920 and 1933, the popular conception of the border was of an imaginary line separating natural brethren. Writers and speakers reflecting on these commemorations of peace looked toward a future where the border remained peaceful and open. Many saw the creation of these monuments as participating in this movement toward sustained peace. On the inside of the Peace Arch, two inscriptions looked at the past and the future of the border. The first reads, "Open For One Hundred Years" and the other, "May These Doors Never Be Closed." Such sentiments hopefully eyed a continued peaceful transborder relationship.

In many ways, the monuments themselves served as visual embodiments of the perception that the borderline separating the United States and Canada was unimportant and easily bridged. The Peace Arch and Peace Bridge each

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physically spanned the border, literally and figuratively connecting the two sides. In the cases of the International Peace Garden and Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, governments in both countries recognized spaces whose boundaries were delineated by existing parks and ecological regions rather than national borders. Staff members of both parks had long held a close working relationship across the border, cooperating on conservation and maintenance efforts. Other than a six meter wide swath directly on the line, the international boundary was hardly apparent in the Rocky Mountain wilderness.[26] The border had proven invisible and inconsequential, and thus joining the parks was a natural decision. In each case, the construction of a borderland monument, whether by public or private means, suggested a popular perception that the political line dividing the United States from Canada lacked any real significance.

Beyond the rhetoric of peace and the symbolism of connection was also the practical desire for a border marked by growing infrastructure for communication, travel, and commerce. In an article of October 10, 1926, titled "Peace Bridge Will Link Nations" in the *New York Times*, chief engineer Edward Lupfer noted that the area extending from the Niagara River frontier to Quebec and the Gulf of St. Lawrence was a popular recreational destination for Americans. Buffalo, he said, would now serve as the gateway for Americans just beginning to realize Canada's recreational and historic value. Lupfer estimated that five million people would use the bridge in the first year. In the imagination of the American public, the northern border was a permeable space of interaction rather than a barrier that could prevent commercial exchange or keep out eager tourists.

Of course, this perception of a permeable border centered on the popular sentiment of amity and goodwill toward a neighbor portrayed as a family member and natural friend primarily due to the similarity of its racial make-up to that of the dominant sector of the American populace. As one would expect, the United States' southern border took on a very different meaning during the interwar period. Under the 1921 Quota Act, immigrants from the Western Hemisphere remained free from national quotas. Yet with later legislation, intense debates surfaced over Mexican immigration while the Canadian exemption went unchallenged. The Immigration Restriction League echoed a segment of the American population's beliefs when it claimed that "with Canada, the case is different," because "immigrants from

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Canada are of racial origins similar to our own." Conversely, they argued that for Latin American countries "whose population is not predominantly of the white race," quotas were necessary.[27] Like the rhetoric surrounding commemorative moments of peace between the United States and Canada, immigration debates in the 1920s underscored the sense of Anglo-Saxon superiority that shaped the distinct representations and perceptions of the United States southern and northern borders.

With such contrasting public visions of the United States' two land-borders, commemorative monuments like those that blossomed on the U.S./Canadian border never materialized along the Mexican frontier. The peace park concept serves as a microcosm of the different roles that each border played in the American imagination. Particularly after the creation of Waterton-Glacier, it seemed natural to some that a similar park should exist on the United States' other border. In fact, since the 1930s, several public and private efforts on both sides of the border have advocated the creation of a similar transborder protected park in such areas as Big Bend National Park on the Texas/Mexico line. Nevertheless, such a park has to this day never come to fruition due to, in some scholars' estimation, "different governmental priorities, political contretemps, and cultural missteps."[24] In one instance in 1934, representatives of the United States government approached newly elected Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas with the idea of creating an international park that would have embodied both Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy and Cárdenas' natural resource conservation agenda. At the time, however, the idea was not received favorably by a Cárdenas regime focused on domestic affairs. Even if the plan had been carried out, it is unlikely that the resulting park, or any later U.S./Mexican borderlands park, would have been framed in the rhetoric of peaceful relations and an instinctive international partnership. The foundation of the imagined transnational community between the United States and Canada was a racially-charged ideology of Anglo-Saxon superiority that made any such community impossible on the United States' southern border.

Over the course of nearly another century, this shared identity and bond of friendship of Americans and Canadians has been continually reinscribed on these five sites and on the border as a whole. The meanings of these monuments have continually served as a foundation for further considerations of nationalism, government policy, and transborder relations.

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In 1952 American singer Paul Robeson performed a protest concert to an audience of forty thousand on the Peace Arch grounds. Denied a passport by the U.S. State Department based on his views on civil rights, Robeson capitalized on the layered meaning of the Peace Arch to emphasize his fight for peace and civil rights. To celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Peace Arch in 1995, Christina Alexander founded the nonprofit United States/Canada Peace Anniversary Association as an additional monument to peaceful relations between the two countries. Part of the Association's stated mission is "the promotion of visual and performing arts, bringing together peoples sharing ideals of world harmony exemplified by the seamless border between the U.S. and Canada."[29] This goal has led to the sponsorship of an annual sculpture exhibition that attempts to bring artists from both countries together.

The Peace Bridge became the subject of commemorative stamps issued in 1977 on the fiftieth anniversary of the bridge's dedication. A rare joint-issue stamp, the Canadian version illustrates one pier with the flags of the United States and Canada flying above, while the American stamp combines an illustration of the bridge with an image of a dove. Following the rhetoric of the speakers at the 1927 dedication, such images continued the symbolic role of the Peace Bridge. The International Peace Garden, on the other hand, has become the home to other physical monuments and memorials. The 1983 installation of the Peace Tower, a four-columned, 120-foot tall structure that straddles the boundary line was designed to represent "people coming from the four corners of the world to form two similar, but distinct nations with a common base of democracy."[30] In 2002, the Garden received ten girders from the World Trade Center wreckage and created a 9/11 Memorial on the grounds. Visitors to the site are now confronted with various layers of meaning built on the foundational ideals put forth at the garden's creation. Finally, at Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, Rotary chapters are engaged in efforts to stop the clearing of the six meter swath along the border for both ecological and symbolic reasons. Within the park, the boundary remains insignificant in the public mind.

Beyond these particular sites, the border has continually proven a space of commemoration and creative contemplation. In 1976 the Canadian National Film Board produced a book of photographs to highlight the natural beauty and communities along the span of the border. Titled *Between Friends/*

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Entre Amis, the Film Board presented the book as a gift to representatives of the United States government on the occasion of the U.S. bicentennial. In the foreword to the book, Prime Minister of Canada Pierre Elliott Trudeau asserted that despite occasional differences, the two nations "have a vitally important lesson to teach other members of the community of nations."[31] More recently, artists have used the border in innovative ways to highlight a variety of issues. In 1992 artist Gregor Turk walked the portion of the border marked by the forty-ninth parallel as he filmed a video and took photographs. Since then, Turk has produced a variety of artwork looking to "question the artificial and seemingly arbitrary aspects of this particular border, the metaphorical qualities of borders in general, and the reliance placed on maps to convey, constrain, and/or alter our sense of place."[32] And in 2010, Mihalyo and Han commented on commercialism, the environment, and transnational borders with their installation *Non-Sign II*. Though they reflect other issues as well, many of the contemporary works suggest the permeability and the imagined insignificance of the U.S./Canadian boundary. The commemorative monuments that emerged previously during the interwar period grew out of an environment in which government policy and public opinion imagined a natural unity of the American and Canadian national communities. While later considerations on the meaning of the border have avoided the racialized undercurrents common to earlier monumental spaces, their continued presence suggests the unique place America's northern border still holds in the public imagination.

In the post-World War I context, Americans and Canadians witnessed the creation of a series of symbolic monuments to commemorate a century of peaceful relations along the U.S./Canadian border. Analyzing the language and symbols used to describe these events, one finds several common threads. Newspapers, dedication speakers, and commemorative ceremonies cast these monuments as visual symbols of two peoples bonded by a common language and racial heritage and linked by parallel histories. The advancement of both countries into modernity and their friendly relationship along the border were held up as markers of racial superiority and instructive examples for the world to follow. These notions of a shared transnational identity made the U.S./Canadian border unique in the public imagination. To borrow a distinction made by Dominique Bregent-Heald, monuments and the public discourse of commemoration represented and fashioned the border between the United States and Canada as a *borderland*,

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an apolitical space marked by "inter-American cooperation", rather than a boundary that might require forceful policing.[33] With such a 'natural' friend on the other side, Americans envisioned this borderland as an open zone of peaceful contact, exchange, and pan-American unity, and as something worthy of tribute.

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NOTES:

[1] Daniel Mihalyo quoted in Marsha Lederman, "A spot of art while we check your passport?" *The Globe and Mail*, October 29, 2010, available at http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/british-columbia/a-spot-of-art-while-we-check-your-passport/article1778078/, (accessed November 1, 2010).

[2] The Treaty of Ghent, signed in December of 1814 between the United States and the United Kingdom, officially ended the War of 1812, though news of the treaty did not reach the United States until after the Battle of New Orleans. Various scholars have identified the years between the two world wars as a significant moment for commemorative activity and considerations of national identity. In regards to the U.S. and Canada, see Beth Ladow, *The Medicine Line: Life and Death on a North American Borderland* (New York: Routledge, 2002) and Shannon Ricketts, "Cultural Selection and National Identity: Establishing Historic Sites in a National Framework, 1920-1939," *The Public Historian* 18, no. 3 (Summer 1996): 23-41.

[3] For a more extended discussion of the historiography of the western U.S./Canadian borderlands, see the foreword and introduction to Part 1 in Sterling Evans, ed., *The Borderlands of the American and Canadian Wests* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006). For regional approaches to the U.S./Canadian borderlands, see John Bukowczyk et al., *Permeable Border: The Great Lakes Basin as Transnational Region, 1650-1990* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005); Ladow, *The Medicine Line*; Sheila McManus, *The Line Which Separates: Race, Gender, and the Making of the Alberta-Montana Borderlands* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005). Studies that focus on the border's significance and occasional usefulness to various groups include David G. McCrady, *Living With Strangers: The Nineteenth-Century Sioux and the Canadian-American Borderlands* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006); Harvey Amani Whitfield, *Blacks on the Border: The Black Refugees in British North America, 1815-1860* (Burlington: University of Vermont Press, 2006). For discussions of Canadian identity in relation to the United States, see Robert Earle and John Wirth, *Identities in North America:*

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The Search for Community (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995); Allan Smith, ed., *Canada, An American Nation?: Essays on Continentalism, Identity, and the Canadian Frame of Mind* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994); Randy William Widdis, *With Scarcely a Ripple: Anglo-Canadian Migration into the United States and Western Canada, 1880-1920* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998).

[4] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), 6-7. Benedict Anderson defines the nation as "an imagined political community" that is *imagined* as "inherently limited." "It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members… yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" and it is imagined as limited "because even the largest of them… has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations."

[5] *The Washington Post*, "Monument to Long Peace Between Canada and U.S," September 6, 1921; *The Hartford Courant*, "U.S.-Canada Peace Portal Dedicated," September 7, 1921; Richard E. Clark, *Sam Hill's Peace Arch: Remembrance of Dreams Past* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2006), 62-63.

[6] Edward P. Lupfer, "Peace Bridge Will Link Nations: Great Span Over Niagara River Is Now Approaching Completion," *The New York Times*, October 10, 1926; Kathleen Woodward, "Niagara Spanned By Peace Bridge: New Steel Link Between Canada and United States Notable as a Memorial and an Engineering Triumph," *The New York Times*, February 13, 1927; *The New York Times*, "Open Peace Bridge Over the Niagara: Throngs Pass Over Span Linking Buffalo to Fort Erie, Ontario—To Be Dedicated This Fall," June 2, 1927; *The New York Times*, "Prince of Wales to Speak Over Radio: Address From Peace Bridge at Border Will Be Widely Broadcast," August 4, 1927.

[7] Negotiated by U.S. Secretary of State Richard Rush and British Minister to Washington Sir Charles Bagot, the Rush-Bagot Treaty provided for disarmament of the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain. *The New York Times*, "To Dedicate Perry Shaft: American and Canadian Groups Will Attend Ceremony Today," July 31, 1931; *The New York Times*, "Dedicate Memorial to Perry's Victory: Americans and Canadians Unite in Ceremony at 352-Foot Shaft in Lake Erie," August 1, 1931.

[8] *The New York Times*, "Rotarians To Dedicate Peace Park on Border: Ceremony For the Canadian-American Project Will Be Held in Montana June 18," June 11, 1932.

[9] For more information on the history of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park and its component national parks see Randy Tanner, et al., "The Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park: Conservation amid Border Security," in *Peace Parks: Conservation and Conflict Resolution*, ed. Saleem H. Ali (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007) and Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands, "'The Geology Recognizes No Boundaries': Shifting Borders in Waterton Lakes National Park," in *The Borderlands of the American and Canadian Wests*, ed. Sterling Evans (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006); *The New York Times*, "Rotarians To Dedicate Peace Park on Border: Ceremony For the Canadian-American Project Will Be Held in Montana June 18," June 11, 1932; Tanner et al., "The Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park," 185; Sandilands, "The Geology Recognizes No Boundaries," 318.

[10] *The Los Angeles Times*, "Canada Proposes Park as Peace Monument," April 20, 1932; *The New York Times*, "Garden to Be Sown As Symbol of Peace: Canadians and Americans Will Renew Pledges of Amity at Ceremony Tomorrow," July 13, 1932.

[11] Clark, *Sam Hill's Peace Arch*, 69; Samuel Hill quoted in *Hartford Courant*, "U.S.-Canada Peace Portal Dedicated," September 7, 1921.

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[12] *The New York Times*, "Dawes Criticizes Failure of Geneva Naval Parley in Peace Bridge Speech: Address Causes Stir," August 8, 1927.
[13] Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).
[14] Anna Maria Martellone, "In the Name of Anglo-Saxondom, For Empire and For Democracy: The Anglo-American Discourse, 1880-1920," in *Reflections on American Exceptionalism*, ed. David K. Adams and Cornelis A. van Minnen (Staffordshire: Keele University Press, 1994), 83-92.
[15] Daniel J. Tichenor, *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 143; Daniela Rossini, "Isolationism and Internationalism in Perspective: Myths and Reality in American Foreign Policy," in *From Theodore Roosevelt to FDR: Internationalism and Isolationism in American Foreign Policy*, ed. Daniela Rossini (Staffordshire: Keele University Press, 1995), 13; Martellone, "In the Name of Anglo-Saxondom", 92.
[16] *Washington Post*, "President Praises Portal of Peace," September 4, 1921.
[17] *Los Angeles Times*, "Where Peace Endures," June 26, 1932.
[18] *New York Times*, "Dawes," August 8, 1927; *The Observer* (*London*), "On the Bridge: A Symbol and A Contrast," August 7, 1927.
[19] *New York Times*, "Dedicate Memorial to Perry's Victory," August 1, 1931.
[20] *New York Times*, "Dedicate Memorial," August 1, 1931; *New York Times*, "Dawes," August 8, 1927.
[21] *New York Times*, "Peace Bridge Radio Reaches Millions," August 8, 1927.
[22] Clark, *Sam Hill's Peace Arch*, 63, 393; *Washington Post*, "Monument to Long Peace," September 6, 1921;
[23] Clark, *Sam Hill's Peace Arch*, 388-390.
[24] *New York Times*, "Dawes," August 8, 1927.
[25] Clark, *Sam Hill's Peace Arch*, 69; *Washington Post*, "Monument to Long Peace," September 6, 1921.
[26] Tanner et al., "The Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park," 185; Evans, *The Borderlands*, 309.
[27] Tichenor, *Dividing Lines*, 170.
[28] Belinda Sifford and Charles Chester, "Bridging Conservation across *La Frontera*: An Unfinished Agenda for Peace Parks along the US-Mexico Divide," in *Peace Parks: Conservation and Conflict Resolution*, ed. Saleem H. Ali (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007), 206- 207.
[29] "Peace Arch Park", website of United States Canada Peace Anniversary Association, available at http://www.peacearchpark.org/projects.htm. (accessed November 1, 2010).
[30] "Untitled" Peace Tower, 1983, International Peace Garden, available at http://www.peacegarden.com/allpdf/peace%20tower%20info.pdf (accessed November 1, 2010); Evans, *The Borderlands*, 309.
[31] National Film Board of Canada, *Between Friends/Entre Amis* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976).
[32] Gregor Turk, "The 49th Parallel Project," available at http://www.gregorturk.com/49thparallelproject.htm, (accessed September 28, 2010).
[33] Dominique Bregent-Heald, "The Tourism of Titillation: Film and Cross-Border Tourism in Niagara Falls and Tijuana," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, no. 17 (2006): 200.

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Artist Spotlight:

PAINTINGS OF SELF AND COMMUNITY:
Challenging Perceptions through Experience & Representations

Luanne Redeye, M.F.A.

I often struggle with the perception that my artwork does not look Native American, that I do not look Native American, or that the individuals that I am depicting do not look Native American. Throughout history representations of Native Americans that have been produced have created assumptions of a universal Indian stuck in a timeless past. As a result, contemporary Native Americans face the challenge of defending their identity against stereotypes that intersect race, gender, and sexuality. In my art I reference those stereotypes indirectly, allowing the viewer to approach the paintings with his or her own perceptions or assumptions of what they think a Native American is.

Since I moved away from my home reservation, I have spent years trying to understand who I am, defending my identity and trying to express that through my paintings. As an undergraduate student, my relationships with friends were only understood through funny stereotypes. I often used those stereotypes in my art, taking images of myself and others to make fun of them and to show that I was not alone in the struggle against outside perceptions.

Nutty Mad Indian, finished in 2008, was the first painting in which I began exploring the idea of Native American culture as invisible (Plate 1). Often forgotten or overlooked, the challenge of making it visible was not realized until later. It was during my time in graduate school that I became more aware of what my work can achieve. I came to realize that, no matter what, viewers will always approach a work of art with preconceived assumptions and, instead of attempting to directly portray stereotypes, I could challenge them by showing the diversity of people's lives.

My current paintings are much more personal than I will let on. I am not just painting people from my community, but people that I am extremely close to. I know their reality and their personal stories, which I would usually not

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reveal. Part of my process includes following people around with my camera and taking snapshots of them in isolation, as they interact with me, with others, or with their belongings. I do not want anyone to pose, but want to capture people as they go about their day.

I photographed *Tommy* (2011) in his home (Plate 2). The house he lives in is full of his mother's religious icons and lacks evidence of his existence until you step into his room. His personal space is never visible to anyone outside of his family. I know Tommy and how he has lived. The struggles he has endured as a disabled man can be seen in his face and in the patched holes in the walls of his room. He may never live on his own or leave the reservation, so his only sense of the outside world is through the television—this thing that he has come to rely on, is the same thing that has created so many false representations of Native Americans.

The harsh reality of Tommy's life and future are never reflected on the TV screen. He does not recognize his large body, dark sunken eyes, and buzzed haircut in the movies that star tall, slender Indians. My painting of Tommy does not include any myths about the Indian. Tommy is sitting in a space that reflects his interests—music, games, and movies. The faint image on the TV screen cannot be made out clearly and the viewer is left in the dark whether what he/she sees is a reflection of Tommy or a movie scene. No stereotypes are embraced and the assumptions viewers have about Native Americans are confronted by Tommy's turned back.

The relationship between stereotype, perception, and experience is something I encounter daily. By painting self-portraits I try to make sense of my life, my experiences, and what I see. When I returned home last summer for a visit, I was confronted with judgments by some in my community. I have been away from my reservation for years now and my absence has led others to question my identity as a Seneca and my place within the community. Because I follow my interests outside of the reservation, I am perceived as no longer belonging. I returned to school determined to disprove those assumptions. My self-portrait *Ageswë'gaiyo'* (2010-11), in which I depict my tattooed, bare back, reflects the way I perceive myself as well as a personal realization that my relationship with my culture is my own and should not be influenced by other people's perceptions (Plate 3).

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Before I began *Ageswë'gaiyo'*, I was looking at a photograph by Catherine Opie titled *Self-Portrait*. Inspired by her work, I tried to take a similar approach in my self-portrait while also bringing in my artistic individuality. I like the idea of the back being turned to the viewer and the use of skin as a screen. I chose not to represent my back turned completely in this painting, because this reflects how I feel, as if I am stuck between two worlds—my home, which is my past, and New Mexico, which is part of my future. I have a foot on both sides and it is the dynamic between these two aspects of me that determines who I am. I am not turning my back on the people from my community, but on the idea that I am not Seneca anymore.

More recently, I have turned to abstraction in my work. When I first began incorporating Haudenosauneee beadwork designs into my work, I used a masking technique of layering color. In the earlier panels, I would cut out forms to create a positive or negative shape of a design. I stayed close to the floral and linear patterns I would see on beaded garments and, as a result, the paintings were often described as "pretty" or "decorative", which was not what I intended. In the beginning, I held on to the idea that the designs had to be treated a certain way, which was traditionally.

I became tired of that and realized that I could engage in my own dialog with the designs; what resulted was the painting *Large Abstraction No. 1* (2010) (Plate 4). I am not denying my heritage and identity by not following tradition. I do not see the designs as decorative, but I recognize the potential for reinterpretation within them. I expanded the size of my canvasses and began to morph the signs to the point where they become unrecognizable. Through this process I started to challenge the notion that the designs must be fixed. I know that the designs are important to my history, but I do not see them as static, but as evolving, like my identity and my interests.

A combination of hope and loss has been a continuing source of inspiration throughout my work. This dialog might not be evident in my painting, but it was something I was constantly thinking about. The evolution of my work reveals both the loss I feel as my connection to home weakens, and my hope of returning one day. It also reflects a concern with an overall loss of culture that all Native American communities face and, simultaneously, the hope that it will survive. I materialized this idea into a painting titled *What I Was Thinking* (2011) after I attended a Pueblo's dances on Christmas

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Day. The feeling of inclusion and strength that the dances expressed was almost foreign to me. It seemed as if the whole community was there, no one was excluded, and I could feel what a tremendous task it is to keep the dances and language intact. I came to realize that I had never experienced anything like it on my own reservation where the customs and religions are no longer practiced by the community as a whole. Only about fifty people know the language fluently. I was intrigued by the stark contrast between that community and my own. It allows a small glimpse at how each tribe has been affected and how each is tackling issues of hope and loss of culture.

I know I do not embody stereotype. I understand the power it has to shape perceptions and the ability I have to challenge perceptions through my own representations. I am painting people to show the diversity of Native Americans as a whole, from community to community, and down to the individual.

LUANNE REDEYE, M.F.A., Painting and Drawing, University of New Mexico.

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PLATE 1. Luanne Redeye, *Nutty Mad Indian*, 2008, oil on canvas, 35" x 30".

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PLATE 2. Luanne Redeye, *Tommy*, 2011, oil on panel, 18" x 24".

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PLATE 3. Luanne Redeye, *Ageswë'gaiyo'*, 2010-2011, oil on panel, 30" x 24".

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PLATE 4. Luanne Redeye, *Large Abstraction No.1*, 2010, acrylic on canvas, 71" x 91".

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PLATE 5. Installation View. *Nueva York (1613-1945)*. On view at el museo del barrio from September 17, 2010 – January 9, 2011. Photo Courtesy of el museo del barrio, NY. Photo by Jason Mandella.

PLATE 6. Installation View. *Nueva York (1613-1945)*. On view at el museo del barrio from September 17, 2010 – January 9, 2011. Photo Courtesy of el museo del barrio, NY. Photo by Jason Mandella.

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PLATE 7. Installation View. *Nueva York (1613-1945)*. On view at el museo del barrio from September 17, 2010 – January 9, 2011. Photo Courtesy of el museo del barrio, NY. Photo by Jason Mandella.

PLATE 8. Installation View. *Nueva York (1613-1945)*. On view at el museo del barrio from September 17, 2010 – January 9, 2011. Photo Courtesy of el museo del barrio, NY. Photo by Jason Mandella.

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PLATE 9. Darvin Rodríguez, *Camuflaje (Si no le gusta póngale flores)*, 2010, óleo, pintura mural sobre pared, 136" x 252".

PLATE 10. Darvin Rodríguez, *Camuflaje*, (detalle).

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PLATE 11. Adán Vallecillo, *La fisiología del gusto*, 2010, teeth, stainless steel tray, 10"x15".

PLATE 12. Lucy Argueta, *Post-curtición*, 2010, vestidos intervenidos, instalación, dimensiones variables.

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Exhibition Review:

NUEVA YORK: 1613-1945,
EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO IN COLLABORATION WITH THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Susanna Temkin, Ph.D. Student, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University

In the fall of 2009, el museo del barrio inaugurated its recently renovated galleries with the critically praised exhibition *Nexus New York*. A year later, the Manhattan museum plays host to *Nueva York: 1613-1945*, a show that in both its title and geographical focus recalls the earlier exhibition. Indeed, to a certain extent, the 2010 show might be considered a prequel of sorts, for whereas *Nexus New York* specifically focused on the significant dialog which took place in the city between Latin American and U.S. artists from 1900 to 1945, *Nueva York* steps back in time to examine the broader history that made such cultural interchanges possible.

Seeking to illuminate the city's deep roots with the Spanish-speaking world, *Nueva York: 1613-1945* considers an expansive date range in its exploration of the historical, political, economic, and cultural connections linking New York, Latin America, and Spain. Curated by New York Historical Society guest-curator Marci Reaven (managing director of the educationally-driven organization City Lore), along with chief historical consultant Mike Wallace [professor at City University of New York and author of the best-selling history book *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (1998)], the show is the result of a collaboration between el museo del barrio and its neighbor across Central Park, the New York Historical Society. Stretching from the city's colonial past until the end of World War II, *Nueva York* is organized both chronologically and thematically and addresses the lives and economic interests of the city's earliest colonists, trade networks with Spanish-America, cultural encounters during the nineteenth century, political interests in various Latin American and Caribbean independence movements, and artistic exchanges during the first half of the twentieth century. Although the galleries are somewhat crowded, filled as they are with paintings, manuscripts, numerous multimedia features, hands-on displays, and explanatory text, this at times overwhelming display is nevertheless successful in conveying New York's long-standing engagement with its

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Spanish, Latin American, and Caribbean neighbors, visitors, business partners, and, of course, population.

Overturning the commonly held assumption that New York's growing community of Latin American immigrants is a recent, twentieth-century phenomenon, the exhibition officially "starts" in the year 1613. This seemingly peculiar date was selected to commemorate the arrival of the first documented nonnative Spanish-speaking immigrant, who, according to a manuscript on view in the show's first gallery, was an Afro-Caribbean man from Santo Domingo named Jan Rodrigues. Touted as the first Latino "New Yorker," such a title is somewhat inaccurate, since his arrival in fact preceded the establishment of New York. However, with his fate lost to history, whether or not Jan lived to see the transformation of the city from Dutch-controlled New Amsterdam to British New York in 1664 remains unknown. Nevertheless, what is certain is the fact that Jan's pioneering path was followed by scores of other Spanish-speaking individuals throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. In fact, it is currently projected that New York's Hispanic residents will soon represent one-third of the city's total population.

While Jan Rodrigues' arrival marks the chronological start of *Nueva York*, visitors to the exhibition are first greeted by a portrait of a more famous historical personage—King Philip IV of Spain. The work of the Spanish master and court painter Diego Velázquez, this portrait of the Hapsburg king (on loan from the Meadows Museum in Dallas) hangs in a privileged position at the very entrance to the gallery (Plate 5). As the ruler in power during much of Spain's Thirty Years' War, Philip IV was hated by the Dutch who then brought their anti-Spanish bias to New Amsterdam. This stigma —commonly referred to as the "Black Legend"—continued in New York following the colony's acquisition by the British. In contrast to this regal, if somber, image of the king, just inside the gallery is a portrait of the Basque Don Diego Maria de Gardoquí, who lived in New York and assisted the colony on behalf of Spain during the War of Independence. Gardoquí subsequently became Spain's first minister to the newly established United States. Created by an unknown artist, the painting is at once striking and bizarre and presents a somewhat primitively rendered image of the Spanish official against a lurid, green background. Executed in entirely different

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manners, the portraits of Philip IV and Gardoquí in the show's first gallery not only introduce New York's Spanish legacy, but also speak to the shifting attitudes toward the Spanish who were alternately vilified and romanticized at different moments throughout the history recounted in the exhibition. In fact, in the case of Philip IV, the monarch's presence throughout *Nueva York* is physically manifest through stickers affixed to the floor, symbols for the exhibition's extensive audio tour. Although somewhat oddly cued by the king's visage, this audio component enables visitors to listen to discussions, memories, and even songs related to the objects on view and often provides a contemporary perspective of the history presented in *Nueva York*.

Although *Nueva York* addresses the existence of both legal and pirated trade during the colonial period, issues related to commerce between the United States and the Spanish-speaking Americas are brought to the fore in the show's second gallery. Covering the period between 1825 and 1900, this space is dominated by a large-scale wooden replica of a boat owned by the Howland company that represents the primary mode for the transportation of goods during this period (elsewhere in the show, visitors learn that many of these boats originally used for shipping were later used to transport people between the continents, for both immigration and vacation purposes) (Plate 6). Perhaps the most economically significant product ferried by such boats was sugar, the product that led to the rise of a number of sugar baron families both in the United States as well as in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Yet, as *Nueva York* reveals, not all imports were so sweet, and among the other goods to enter the United States through the ports of Brooklyn was bird guano. A series of photographs on view in the gallery depicts workers before literal mountains of waste.

The introductory text to the exhibition's third gallery explains that, as business boomed in the second half of the nineteenth century, "commercial and political connections fostered cultural encounters as well." Inspired by the experience of Washington Irving, whose *Tales of the Alhambra* was published in 1832, a number of nineteenth-century artists followed the writer's footsteps through travel to Spain. Among these artists was the painter and art teacher William Merritt Chase, who outfitted his New York studio to reflect his passion for the Spanish Golden Age. In search of the exotic, others, including Frederick Edwin Church, travelled to Latin

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America. Although Church's imagined landscapes of South America are familiar to those with knowledge of Latin American art, *Nueva York* features an enlightening miniature of his most famous work *Heart of the Andes* (1859), as originally presented to the U.S. public. Set in a grandiose wooden frame, the painting is presented as if looking at a view through a window, thereby heightening the supposed veracity of Church's depiction of the Latin American landscape. On view to a paying New York audience in 1859, Church's painting captured the imagination of the U.S. public and exemplifies the increasing commodification of the Latin American landscape. This vogue even impacted the high fashion industry, as illustrated in the exhibition's display of preserved beetle jewelry and a beautiful, if somewhat disturbing, hat made from the body of the quetzal, a vibrantly feathered bird native to Mexico.

These *couture* pieces are exhibited in a corner of *Nueva York's* third gallery that also presents the influence of Latino baseball players and architects. Nearby, still another section of this eclectic gallery is dedicated to the numerous Spanish and Latin American authors, publishers, and translators who worked in New York. Published in both Spanish and English, quotations from these authors' poems, historical accounts, and stories run along the length of the gallery's walls. Among these lines is an excerpt from the 1878 book *Viaje a los Estados Unidos* [Travel to the United States] by the Mexican travel writer Guillermo Prieto. Describing the author's experiences in New York, Prieto's words comically recall his surprise when he encountered a number of businesses with signs declaring "Spanish Spoken Here," thus referencing the overall theme of *Nueva York*. Yet, while excerpts like Prieto's are individually interesting, the density of the quotes in this section of the gallery is somewhat disorienting. Indeed, presented alongside a folder containing the biographies of the authors as well as a slide show that is strangely projected onto a tabletop near the middle of the gallery, the quotes create a dizzying effect and it seems that the text-heavy display would benefit from a certain amount of editing.

Among the authors presented in *Nueva York* is the revered Cuban hero José Martí, who had an office at 120 Front Street where he provided translation services. However, better known for his role in promoting Cuban independence, Martí's history, as well as the history of other Latin American

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political activists, is the focus of the exhibition's fourth gallery. Specifically, the independence movements in Cuba and Puerto Rico are addressed, as rising violence on these islands led increasing numbers of Latin Americans to seek exile in New York. From this safe base, activists, many of whom were women, were able to funnel arms and financial resources to those who remained on the islands fighting the Spanish. These activists also used their location in New York to muster U.S. support for Cuban and Puerto Rican independence. Since these independence movements date back to the 1840s and 1850s and thus predate the American Civil War, *Nueva York* addresses how racial issues formed an intriguing component of the rhetoric used to appeal to the U.S. public. Indeed, both pro- and antislavery advocates cited independence from Spain as important to their individual causes. However, although the Spanish were ultimately overthrown from the islands in 1898, both Cuba and Puerto Rico found themselves subject to a new government—the United States. Ephemeral materials ranging from board games to political cartoons reveal the contrasting attitudes toward this new development from both U.S. and Caribbean perspectives. For example, a drawing from a cigar box in which the U.S. eagle is shown hovering over her chicks labeled Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam (all of which came under U.S. control following the Spanish-American War) presents the tensions brought about by this shift in imperial power.

Although artworks are integrated throughout *Nueva York*, the exhibition's early galleries reveal the imprint of the New York Historical Society, reading more like historical displays than typical art museum fare. Featuring a selection of paintings, prints, and graphic artworks by twentieth-century Spanish and Latin American artists, the show's final gallery is more akin to the kind of show usually presented at el museo (Plate 7). In fact, a number of the Latin American artists whose work had been featured in the 2009 show *Nexus New York*, are again represented in *Nueva York*, including Diego Rivera, Joaquín Torres-García, and Rufino Tamayo. While the presence of these artists in New York is well known by Latin American art historians, perhaps less familiar is the New York sojourn of Cuban artist Amelia Peláez, who briefly studied at the Art Students League in 1924. Although documentation about this experience was included in the *Nexus New York* show, Peláez had not been represented by any actual works. However, executed in rich shades of reds and oranges, her 1938 *Still Life in Red* is

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included in the *Nueva York* exhibition. Notably, this work does not date to the artist's New York period, but is instead a stunning example of her later developed style of depicting tropical fruit in fragmented, interior spaces. Nevertheless, *Still Life in Red* is an appropriate painting for the current exhibition, because it represents one of the works that was exhibited and later acquired by the Museum of Modern Art as part of its 1943 *Modern Cuban Painters* show, which introduced modern Cuban art to the United States public.

Works by Spanish artists are also on view in this final gallery, including a striking gouache by the Spaniard Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida. Entitled *Grand Army Plaza, New York, Seen from a Window of the Savoy Hotel* (1911) and executed in a quasi-Impressionist style, the piece depicts the hustle and bustle of the streets of early twentieth-century New York as viewed from the artist's hotel room. Although Sorolla only visited New York twice, in 1909 and 1911, the artist was closely linked to the city through the Hispanic Society, which held a major retrospective of Sorolla's works. Organized in 1909, this show proved to be the most attended exhibition in New York at this time. Intriguing, more contemporary works by Spanish artists living in New York during the Spanish Civil War and General Franco's subsequent dictatorship are also featured, including Julio de Diego's haunting painting *They Rushed Heading into the Sea* (c. 1941). In addition to such impressive examples of visual art, this gallery also features a "juke-box"-like machine, where visitors can listen to the musical contributions of Spanish and Latin American artists in *Nueva York*.

The exhibition concludes with a site-specific installation by the Puerto Rican artist Antonio Martorell. Entitled *De aqui pa'llá* (*From Here to There*), the piece was inspired by Puerto Rican author Luis Rafael Sánchez's book *La guagua aerea* and takes the form of an airplane, whose walls are decorated to resemble the postcards and letters sent by Latino immigrants to their families back home (Plate 8). Commissioned specifically for *Nueva York*, the work serves as a screening room for a documentary film by Ric Burns, which was also created for the exhibition. Propelling the show past 1945, Burns' film reflects on the changing demographics of New York's Latin American populations from the early twentieth century to today. In particular, the piece addresses the history of New York's Puerto Rican population, in

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homage to el museo's history as a cultural exhibition established by Puerto Rican activists and cultural promoters in 1969.

Accompanying the presentation of *Nueva York* is an exhibition catalog edited by the distinguished Latin American art historian Edward Sullivan (professor at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University). The catalog features eleven contributions by New York area scholars on topics ranging from baseball to music in Nueva York which expand on much of what is presented in the museum display. Many of these diverse and intriguing texts point to possibilities for further research and are thus valuable resources for scholars interested in the historical and cultural convergences between the United States, Spain, and Latin America. In addition to its texts, the exhibition catalog also features a large number of color illustrations, many of which supplement the works on view at the show. One drawback to the catalog is the lack of Spanish translations, a typical hallmark of el museo publications, although, admittedly, the catalog seems to have been published by the New York Historical Society alone. Since Spanish translations are provided on both the exhibition's signage and in the show's accompanying audio tour, it is unfortunate that the exhibition catalog may not be able to reach a segment of the *Nueva York* audience.

Interestingly, *Nueva York* is not the first time that el museo has opened its doors to partner with another cultural organization. In 2004, el museo hosted the show *MoMA at el museo*, which featured the Museum of Modern Art's vast, but largely unexhibited holdings of Latin American art. Organized in collaboration with the New York Historical Society, *Nueva York* exhibits equally unfamiliar material, but contextualizes it within a historical framework. Indeed, a number of the artworks included in the show's final gallery are on loan from the Museum of Modern Art's collection. Although scheduled during times when the New York Historical Society and the Museum of Modern Art were under renovation, the presentation of shows like *Nueva York* and *MoMA at el museo* outside of their home institutions raises questions about whether such exhibitions would ever have been shown if the galleries had been opened. For example, what does the tendency to display Latin American art and cultural exhibitions in small, "niche" institutions like el museo imply? While such issues merit continued debate, for now, el museo should be recognized for its willingness to collaborate

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with institutional peers in order to fulfill its mission of "present[ing] and preserv[ing] the art and culture of Puerto Ricans and all Latin Americans in the United States." Indeed, it is precisely this willingness which makes el museo perhaps the ideal location for a show like *Nueva York*, which aims to divulge the myriad relationships, collaborations, and networks shared by the intermingled histories of New York, Latin America, and Spain.

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Interview:

ENTREVISTA CON GUSTAVO LARACH, CURADOR GENERAL DE LA TERCERA BIENAL DE HONDURAS

Emmanuel Ortega, Ph.D. Student, Department of Art and Art History, University of New Mexico

La Tercera Bienal de Artes Visuales de Honduras se celebró en agosto del 2010 a solo poco más de un año del golpe de estado que cambió el panorama político del país. El golpe terminó con la presidencia constitucional de Manuel Zelaya mientras que la derecha, ayudada por las fuerzas militares, impusieron como mandatario interino a Roberto Micheletti. Bajo este clima político, se desarrolló esta importante bienal que indiscutiblemente responde en varios niveles a la situación política de Honduras. Gustavo Larach, como curador general, responde aquí a un breve cuestionario sobre la relación que existió entre artistas, coordinadores y espectadores de la bienal hondureña, no solo durante los meses de su apertura al público, sino también durante el proceso de organización e instalación.

Emmanuel Ortega: *¿En esta tercera bienal, como se desarrollaron las tendencias de resistencia de los artistas participantes sin haber comprometido el futuro de esta importante bienal, sobre todo teniendo en cuenta la proximidad de los estragos políticos del verano de 2009?*

Gustavo Larach: La pregunta es interesante porque la gran mayoría de los artistas que participaron en la bienal forman parte del colectivo llamado Artistas en Resistencia (AenR). En él convergen no solo artistas visuales sino también poetas, narradores, teatristas, y músicos, significativamente la banda Café Guancasco, cuyos conciertos han sido clausurados violentamente por la policía. La bienal, sin embargo, no es financiada por el estado hondureño, sino por una fundación extranjera. Además, los directivos de la instancia organizadora de la bienal, Muejres en las Artes (MUA), nos cedieron totalmente la responsabilidad a los curadores de seleccionar a los artistas y obras con los cuales habíamos de configurar la exhibición. Una decisión por parte de los organizadores de la bienal fue no instalar la bienal en el museo para la identidad nacional, que es un espacio que opera discursivamente dentro de los parámetros oficiales de la cultura hondureña. Instalamos la

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bienal más bien en la Galería Nacional de Arte (GNA), que tiene su sede en un edificio histórico, justo en el centro de Tegucigalpa, contiguo al congreso nacional. La GNA nos permitía superponer al arte contemporáneo exhibido en la bienal sobre los valores históricos inherentes al sitio. Por ejemplo, el Taller de la Merced, colectivo artístico que operó durante la década del setenta y fue uno de los primeros grupos en buscar pluralidad en la producción artística de honduras, además de buscar la forma de referenciar la problemática social en su trabajo, se desarrolló en el llamado Paraninfo situado frente a la Plaza de la Merced, que a partir de mediados de los noventa se convirtió en la GNA. De hecho, meses antes de inaugurar la bienal, la Plaza de la Merced fue el sitio de intensas confrontaciones entre los ciudadanos que que protestaban contra el golpe y la policía represiva.

En el contexto de la BAVH, el artista Walter Suazo, para el caso, aprovechó el sitio en beneficio de las cualidades discursivas de su obra *Piedad*, que consistió en una instalación sonora en la sala que exhibe la platería eclesiástica colonial en la GNA. Los registros de audio, grabaciones de sermones dictados por autoridades eclesiásticas que apoyaron el golpe de estado, estimulaban al público a evaluar críticamente el papel hegemónico que la Iglesia Católica ha jugado en la política hondureña, y a captar la continuidad histórica de esa condición que se proyecta hasta el presente.

EO: *Considerando la libertad otorgada a los curadores por parte de los organizadores a explorar temas políticos recientes como los del golpe de estado, ¿cual crees tú que fue la recepción general de la bienal? En otras palabras, y dentro de tus observaciones, ¿cuál fue la reacción del público hacia el arte con referencias obvias al golpe, como la pieza de Darvin Rodríguez titulada Camuflaje?*

GL: *Camuflaje* (Plate 9) es un buen punto de partida para elaborar sobre el entusiasmo en torno a las piezas con referencias políticas. La pieza en sí consistía en un tanque de guerra pintado a escala mayor a la natural en una pared de más de 6 por 4 metros. La pieza incorporaba la participación del público, para quien el artista facilitó estampas con formas de cartucho blancos que este aplicaba sobre el tanque durante las semanas que estuvo abierta la exhibición. La misma noche de la inauguración un gran número de personas se dispusieron en fila para participar y cubrir de blanco el tanque, siendo la primera de estas personas la directora de la GNA. El estampado de

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motivos florales blancos sobre el tanque excedió las expectativas de Darvin, pues la gente empezó a usar sus propias manos para estamparlas sobre el mural. De hecho, el público usó las galletas de jengibre en forma de niños y niñas que eran parte de la instalación titulada *Necrófago*, de Fernando Cortés, para aplicar pintura blanca sobre el mural.

EO: *Entonces, en parte, las reacciones a la pieza se vuelven un acto de sublimación en relación a la exclusión y represión política que viven la mayoría de los hondureños.*

GL: Sí, y de hecho, esta participación desbordaba del público demuestra no solo la simpatía de la gente por los significados y estrategias estéticas de los artistas, sino que también demuestra su interés de involucrarse en la producción y la reproducción de dicho significados y actitudes (Plate 10).

EO: *Continuando con las acciones del público, como ves tú el contraste entre la participación del espectador en la pieza de Darvin y el grafiti en los carteles de la entrada del GNA.*

GL: Los grafitis en la fachada de la GNA, en los muros del congreso y en tantos espacios urbanos de Tegucigalpa, constituyen un discurso gráfico de oposición que pernea todas las aéreas de la capital, señalando a los agentes de distintas instituciones sociales que ejecutaron y perpetuaron el golpe de estado y la crisis institucional hondureña. Este discurso, que combina texto con otros elementos visuales, se produce como una transgresión contra una pretendida funcionalidad social. La pieza *Corrección Idiomática*, de Darwin Rodríguez, asimiló el discurso transgresor de los grafiti al espacio legitimado de la galería mediante su intervención en el espacio urbano en la que corrige un texto de repudio al dictador Micheletti, cuyo el registro fotográfico es posteriormente incluido en la exhibición. Del lado del artistas, esto demuestra cierta continuidad con y empatía hacia el discurso perseguido del grafiti. Ahora, el contraste entre una pieza como *Camuflaje* y el grafiti consiste en que si bien el grafiti es un discurso frontal que encara directamente a las instituciones sociales dominantes y sus agentes, el mural opera conceptualmente mediante la complicidad del artista y el público, y de esa manera acarrea un intercambio dialógico. Además, los elementos de la significación son visuales, gestuales, y performáticos y crean por tanto un discurso que puede incorporar una gama más amplia de significados.

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EO: *Continuando con el tema de significaciones relacionadas con el golpe de estado, ¿cómo es que contribuyen al diálogo político las piezas de otros artistas como Adán Vallecillo, Jorge Oquelí y Lucy Argueta?*

GL: El trabajo de Adán confronta al público con situaciones y realidades socio-económicas que la gente tiende a relegar a su inconsciente. Una conciencia más amplia sobre tales realidades como la pobreza extrema y la carencia de asistencia social, y una actitud socialmente más responsable, haría de Honduras un país más estable política e institucionalmente. El trabajo *La fisiología del gusto* (Plate 11) consiste en centenares de dientes humanos extraídos por misiones extranjeras en las áreas rurales más pobres del país. Los dientes son presentados en una bandeja de acero inoxidable y colocados sobre un pedestal negro. El hecho de que sean misiones humanitarias extranjeras las que hayan realizado el servicio odontológico, mas el estado muy deteriorado de muchos de los dientes, habla de la precaria situación del bienestar social en Honduras. La extracción de la mayoría de esos dientes pudo haberse evitado si las instituciones de bienestar social funcionaran adecuadamente. La disfuncionalidad de tales instituciones tiene que ver con la corrupción, mediocridad, y ambición personal de los oficiales involucrados en ellas. La yuxtaposición con la elegante bandeja dentro de la exhibición constituye una operación conceptual mediante la cual el artista teje un discurso que cuestiona la irresponsabilidad y falta de conciencia social de los oficiales involucrados en dichas instituciones: los centenares de dientes nos refieren al inmenso costo social del enriquecimiento ilícito de quienes deberían de ser agentes del cambio social.

En el caso de Lucy Argueta, su trabajo nos refiere a la supresión de los mecanismos de inserción social de la mujer. La pieza que Lucy expone en la bienal, titulada *Post-curtición* (Plate 12), presenta un vestido que remite al espectador a un momento pasado. El vestido ha sido cortado vertical y longitudinalmente por detrás, rigidizado mediante el tratamiento químico de la tela y suspendido mediante un sistema de cables y tensores. La prenda, en su momento instrumento de inserción social, significante de una serie de connotaciones que habrían permitido a quien lo vestía participar de muchos procesos sociales, es ahora exhibido como objeto de contemplación estética. Esta irónica operación conceptual nos hace pensar en la mutilación sufrida por el sujeto femenino que una vez pudo participar en la sociedad.

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La mutilación y abuso de mujeres es una realidad constante en Honduras, exacerbada en el contexto del golpe de estado que el gobierno forzosamente prolonga mediante una brutal represión militar. Parte de esta terrible represión fue la violación de mujeres que se manifestaban en contra del golpe y que fueron ultrajadas sexualmente por los militares.

EO: *Como responderías a las posibles críticas de que el arte hondureño contemporáneo, más que un arte que responde a una tradición artística local, se desarrolla dentro de una estética conceptual más internacional.*

GL: Aunque no lo haya verificado, es posible intuir en el arte contemporáneo de Honduras influencias que viene de distintas geografías, como podrían ser Cildo Meireles y León Ferrari entre otros. Sin embargo, quiero agregar por lo menos dos puntos. Uno, la estética conceptualista, que ahora es parte de la escena mundial del arte, puede facilitar la lectura de esta producción artística hondureña y por tanto, permitir la circulación de los significados inscritos en las obras en un contexto global. Dos, si en las estrategias estéticas implementadas por los artistas se pueden intuir ecos de la producción artística de otras geografías, es el contexto social, económico y político particular de honduras lo que acentúa la intensidad discursiva de los trabajos artísticos incluidos en la bienal. Por tanto se puede decir que la fuerza retórica de dicha producción reside en la forma específica en que las propuestas estéticas se desarrollan en dialogo con el contexto social de Honduras, con las específicas condiciones de producción artística en el país, las diversas instancias o agentes que inciden en esta producción y el público local.

EO: *Teniendo estos elementos específicos en mente, y pensando en la influencia de bienales como las de La Habana y São Paulo, ¿cuál crees tú que es, o será, el rol de la bienal hondureña en el panorama de arte contemporáneo latinoamericano en la esfera internacional?*

GL: La Bienal de Honduras funciona como una instancia de profesionalización y formalización (en el sentido de formas de exhibición) de la producción de artistas hondureños contemporáneos, y busca establecer un dialogo con el público local a manera de avanzar la agencia del arte hondureño en la percepción y conceptualización de aspectos y problemas de mucho importe social dentro de la nación. Además, la bienal es parte de un circuito

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de exhibiciones. Por ejemplo, algunos de los artistas seleccionados para la Bienal de Honduras pasan a formar parte de la Bienal de Artes Visuales del Istmo Centroamericano (BAVIC), la cual es visitada por curadores internacionales interesados en la producción artística centroamericana y del Caribe. Esto se refleja en el hecho de que muchos de los artistas que llegan a formar parte de la iBenal de Honduras eventualmente son incorporados a bienales como la de La Habana o Venecia. Una dificultad en el proceso de incorporar la producción artística hondureña a la escena global ha sido la escasez de textos críticos, o bien, estructurados desde la perspectiva de la historia del arte, que operen y circulen como un sustancial correlato textual que acompañe al arte hondureño en su inserción en los espacios internacionales de producción y exhibición artística.

EO: *Hace poco leí un artículo en la revista Art Nexus donde el autor, Carlos Jiménez, explica la popularidad del formato de la bienal y su función como importante vehículo de exposición de arte contemporáneo. A su vez, Jiménez menciona como la bienalización del arte contemporáneo está en peligro de morir, precisamente como víctima de su propia fama. Para concluir esta entrevista, me gustaría que respondieras a la posibilidad de tal suceso y como la desbienalización del mundo podría afectar al desarrollo de comunidades artísticas que hoy florecen en lugares como el Caribe, Honduras, y Centro América en general.*

GL: Leí el artículo que mencionas y pienso que en él se arrojan palabras como "bienalización" o "desbienalización" como si todos estuviéramos de acuerdo en torno al significado de éstas—yo no tengo muy claro a qué se refieren. La popularidad que las bienales han alcanzado en los últimos 20 ó 30 años, así como el financiamiento que ha permitido su producción, es en realidad algo sin precedentes. Para comprender bien el fenómeno, hace falta estudiar de cerca, y para cada caso, los factores geopolíticos y económicos que las motivan. Julian Stallabrass ha escrito una discusión muy interesante sobre el tema.

[1]En el caso de la América Central, resulta muy interesante que las distintas bienales nacionales son financiadas por entes privados. En este respecto todo lo que te puedo decir es que nos queda esperar que esta disponibilidad por parte de los patrocinadores continúe, pues en el Istmo las bienales

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han contribuido a la circulación del arte centroamericano en el ámbito internacional. El formato de cada bienal se revisa con cada nueva edición, y ahora de hecho estamos replanteando el proceso de producción para la cuarta Bienal de Honduras, programada para 2012. La palabra bienal en sí no implica ningún formato específico; es una de esas palabras que abarcan mucho y dicen poco o nada: gran extensión, intensión casi nula. No indica nada más allá de algo que ocurre cada dos años, y su uso de hecho se genera en el latín medieval: se refiere a oficios religiosos realizados cada dos años, misas ofrecidas periódicamente por un fallecido.[2] ¿Será por eso que Jiménez identifica las bienales con un proceso fúnebre?

En nuestro contexto regional, pareciera que se usa la palabra bienal para denotar un evento artístico bianual que constituye algo más complejo que una exhibición: foros, programas educativos, visitas guiadas, publicaciones, estrategias artísticas que buscan exceder la estética del "cubo blanco"... Lo importante sigue siendo estudiar la producción artística y su contexto, buscar formas de involucrar al público, de poner dicha producción en diálogo con la comunidad, ya que sólo mediante dicha dialéctica se pueden ir generando las condiciones para que el arte opere como la base de un intercambio entre subjetividades diversas u opuestas. No espero menos del arte. Si las bienales desaparecen, habrá que pensar en otro modelo en el que puedan converger los diversos agentes del arte. La implementación de un nuevo modelo puede ser algo muy interesante, aunque dudo mucho que ello implique la clausura de instituciones con grandes poderes de legitimación, como la Bienal de Venecia. Tú conoces muy bien lo que nos enseña Michel Foucault, cambia el discurso pero no las relaciones de poder. En este sentido las especulaciones de Carlos Jiménez y Cuauhtémoc Medina resultan muy falaces.

Los mercados buscan estabilizar el valor económico del trabajo artístico, lo que no se puede lograr si no dogmatizas o fijas canónicamente el valor artístico de una pieza. Pero debe ser precisamente ese valor, en términos discursivos y no económicos, lo que debe estar en constante flujo, ya que acarrea la posibilidad de un intercambio subjetivo que elude cualquier empotramiento en un marco conceptual fijo. El reto consiste en concebir un proceso de producción artística donde convergen no solo artistas y público, sino todos los agentes del arte, como críticos, curadores, historiadores, periodistas culturales, etc., y estructurarlo de manera que la libertad en la

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producción, diseminación e intercambio de significados no se vea coartada en ningún momento. Por tanto, dicho proceso debe siempre pensarse y repensarse a cada paso, en cada nuevo proyecto.

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NOTES:

[1]Julian Stallabrass, *Art Incorporated: The Story of Contemporary Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 29-72; passim.

[2]"† biennal, n." *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (Oxford University Press: March 2011 http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/18778?redirectedFrom=biennal (accessed April 21, 2011).

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- In addition to English, we also accept essays or reviews in Spanish.
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- Use the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition
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- References to centuries: as adjectives = nineteenth-century; as noun = nineteenth century

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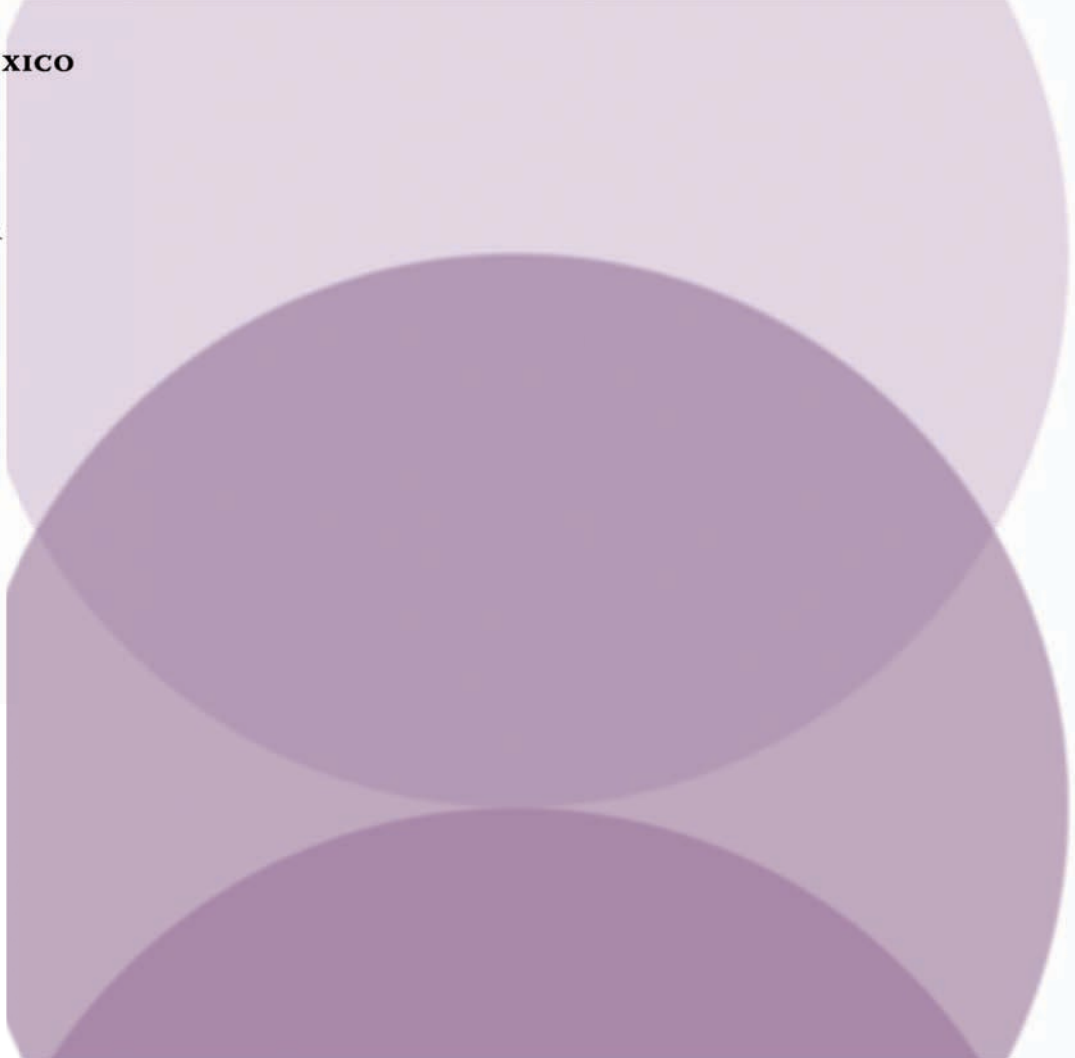
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