

JORGE CAÑIZARES ESGUERRA, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700*, Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 2006, 327 páginas.

This elegantly written, well-documented book provides an in-depth coverage of the commonalities in the narratives of colonization in the Americas from 1550 to 1700. The author's major argument is that the historiography of colonization in the New World has suffered from a sort of balkanization that, persisting to this day, insists on viewing British and Iberian colonization as two entirely different processes. In spite of the recent emphasis on "Atlantic history," Cañizares argues, the national model prevails, especially in the United States. North American scholarship has neglected, for reasons that will be discussed below, much literature on and from the Ibero-American region, to shed light on what is indeed a shared historical experience.

Cañizares is quite emphatic in defining the main commonality in the Americas, north and south: "that colonization was perceived as an ongoing epic struggle against a stubbornly resistant Satan; and that the New World was imagined either as a false paradise or as a wilderness that needed to be transformed into a garden by Christian heroes" (5). What had often been viewed as the feverish fanatical Catholic crusade against the devil, the author contends, is at the center of the British (and other European powers) colonial experience in North America as well. For this purpose, Cañizares examines a wide range of sources, including a variety of images (book frontpieces, churches), that present the colonization of the continent as an effort to stamp out evil and cultivate the land as a pristine spiritual garden. The Protestant demonization of Indians, long viewed as an Iberian specialty, has some historical basis in the massacre of settlers in Virginia (1622) and in the Pequot War of 1636-37. But as the author demonstrates, it was well established before those events and was in fact rooted in a long Christian tradition of the struggle against Satan. "By the mid seventeenth century," the author asserts, "colonists of European descent were absolutely certain of the overwhelming presence of demons in the New World" (12). Such conviction went hand in hand with the justification for colonial expansion, as "an act foreordained by God, prefigured in the trials of the Israelites in Canaan" (14).

To illustrate his points, Cañizares examines a variety of epics of colonization, north, south, and across the Atlantic. He concludes that they had a strong theological thrust, with a heavy emphasis on the struggle against the devil. Even *La Araucana*, long seen as primarily an imperial poem, has unmistakable elements of a standard Satanic epic. He also sees it in the Elizabethan epics of Charles FitzGeffrey George Chapman, Edmund Spenser, and Robert Johnson, although some of them had the sole intention of demonizing Spain, a less than theological subject. Of course, Spain was synonymous with Catholicism, and for many Protestants Catholicism, equated with "popery," was the personification of the antichrist.

But it was Satan that obsessed the chroniclers of the time, be they Puritan, Anglican, or Catholic. They saw his work behind cannibalism, which they described in excruciating detail; they saw it behind the storms that impeded conquests.

dors and settlers to arrive at their destinations; they saw it at work in Indian practices, in the properties of plants, and in the shapes and behavior of animal species (they are often described as monsters). Nature itself appeared to them to be under the command of the devil, which, as Cañizares points out, provided a convenient justification for its exploitation and transformation. “The New World,” the author states, “was often interpreted as an emasculating space swarming with demonic temptations, so it was easy for Europeans to imagine that this false paradise could justifiably be destroyed while being saved” (176). The establishment of Puritan “plantations,” the author argues, has often been misunderstood as containing purely commercial connotations, when it more often means colonization as a form of “spiritual gardening.”

There are some interesting twists and differences between and within the two colonizing experiences, however, and Cañizares illustrates them well. That is, for North American settlers, it was Spain and the Spanish conquistadors who were the personifications of the devil. This antichrist, ironically, had been manufactured by none other than Bartolomé de las Casas, who identified both the conquistadors and the *encomienda* system as the devil incarnate in Spanish America. North Americans—and Europeans—were happy to oblige, and thus we see the emergence of the *Leyenda negra*. Yet another twist is that Las Casas’ view provided the ideological foundations of Creole patriotism within Spanish America. As the author puts it, “It might seem paradoxical, but ‘Creole’ patriotism in Spanish America was largely responsible for spreading the discourse of the colonial regime as demonic” (75). Another important insight, based on close textual analysis, is that the Iberian satanic epics had a large influence indeed: they “colored Italian, Flemish, and Dutch perceptions of colonization. More important, it helped frame English interpretations as well” (81). Cañizares’s ability to navigate sources bodes well for what he calls “the transnational circulation of ideas” (82). His book is as clear a demonstration of such circulation as this reviewer has seen.

And yet, little of this kind of novel research has influenced U.S. scholarship. The reasons for the unfortunate “blind spot,” as the author views it, go back at least to historian William H. Prescott, who in the nineteenth century insisted on the radical difference between the colonization approaches of Anglo and Hispanic America. Hence, there was little to learn from the latter, except in terms of sharp and primarily negative contrasts. From there, all sorts of theories have emerged trying to explain the successful experience of the United States vis-à-vis that of the benighted Latin America. Cañizares shows no patience for this Manichean interpretation. In fact, he states that his emphasis on the commonalities of both colonization experiences is precisely to counter that view. U.S. scholars have been at best complacent about viewing their history as divorced from a larger Atlantic and transatlantic context. The recent emphasis on Atlantic history, lead by Bernard Bailyn, has been a positive step. But as Cañizares points out, “for the Atlantic paradigm to be truly hemispheric, the generous spatial-historical perspective of today needs to evolve into awareness that alternative historiographies have been circulating around the Atlantic for centuries. A pan-American Atlantic history of ideas is therefore of the essence” (227).

The reasons for the neglect of ideas in U.S. and international scholarship are many, but the best way to confront them is by advancing this type of nuanced, erudite, and at the same time stimulating research. The emerging field of Atlantic history owes much to Cañizares for his clear-eyed analysis of an impressively rich array of sources, and for a compelling narrative that builds bridges across boundaries and fields.

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TOMÁS CORNEJO C., y CAROLINA GONZÁLEZ U., editores, *Justicia, poder y sociedad en Chile: recorridos históricos*, Santiago, Ediciones Universidad Diego Portales, 2007, 266 páginas.

Para quienes tuvimos la oportunidad de asistir a las conferencias reunidas en *Justicia, poder y sociedad en Chile*, las cuales formaron parte de un coloquio coordinado por la Escuela de Historia de la Universidad Diego Portales, la publicación de los artículos que allí se expusieron es, sin duda, una excelente noticia editorial para el mundo académico chileno. Y, a la vez, es una muestra concreta de la viabilidad de realizar actividades académicas con la participación de investigadores nacionales y extranjeros en un marco de problemáticas historiográficas comunes relacionadas, en este caso, con la necesidad de reflexionar en torno al sistema judicial chileno y la construcción de narrativas sobre, desde y a partir de los archivos judiciales en sus múltiples expresiones y soportes. La edición de este texto es, además, una expresión concreta de que junto a lo anterior, también es posible que la misma institución organizadora publique el resultado de dichas investigaciones, lo cual constituye un doble mérito, considerando el escaso interés de los centros universitarios para publicar este tipo de trabajos académicos por su supuesta falta de relevancia en la agenda pública. Nada más erróneo que aquello, más aún si, como recalcan los editores del libro, los historiadores Tomás Cornejo y Carolina González, Chile ha requerido más que nunca, especialmente durante los últimos años, a través de la implementación de la reforma procesal penal durante el gobierno de Ricardo Lagos, de la necesidad de reflexionar en torno a las prácticas históricas de la justicia y los aparatos de administración judicial.

Bajo estas premisas debemos considerar el libro que ahora comentamos como una instancia de estímulo para el debate de un tema de interés nacional, no solo desde la disciplina historiográfica, sino además desde la jurisprudencia y el Derecho, que afecta a la totalidad de la población chilena, desde ricos a pobres, capitalinos o provincianos, en tanto es un asunto que traspasa a las clases sociales –con ellas, no al margen de ellas– y se instala de manera transversal en el escenario de la coyuntura política y en la agenda gubernamental, que afecta directamente a los individuos que la conforman. Desde esta perspectiva, el siste-