

presents a historical tracing of Portuguese empire and notes, with an emphasis on colonialism in Africa, “in Cape Verde creoleness has come to be ... not part of a positively valued project of hybridization. This is the result of the work of the elites that built a “regional” identity within the colonial empire, using the resource of their special status as nonindigenous colonials” (129). Likewise, Joyce E. Chaplin emphasizes how the term “creole” was never embraced by colonial whites in pre-revolutionary British America. Their rejection of the term was a way to retain their English sensibilities while distinguishing themselves from the Spanish empire and indigenous populations.

The conclusions suggested here are numerous. One unifying issue involves how a description of creolization has limited as well as become a central problematic in New World area and (post)colonial studies. Yet, readers may still wonder: why reimagine creolization now? On this question, the volume does not answer. And it is perhaps on this note that the volume could have responded by taking heed of its own intervention. But for future studies on creolization, this book will be one contribution in an attempt at a response.

**Coloniality at Large: Latin America and the Postcolonial Debate.** *Mabel Moraña, Enrique Dussel, and Carlos A. Jáuregui, eds.*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2008. 628 pp.

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This ambitious volume, which brings together 23 of Latin American studies’ most

important thinkers, takes as its point of departure an apparently shared frustration with postcolonial studies. Judging from the collected essays, the organizing principle is a critique of Latin America’s all but total relegation to the margins of the field, one dominated geographically by attention to Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and the Caribbean. While the editors insist they are not attempting to “force an entrance for Latin America in central debates,” they do intend to “draw attention to some of the philosophical and ideological blindspots of postcolonial theories” (3). The essays selected—some original and some reprinted—are not without shortcomings, but taken as a whole they succeed in showing not just gaps in an old debate but, more importantly, the contributions attention to Latin America can yield.

While a brief review cannot do justice to each of the collected essays, several chapters stand out for what they tell us about how Latin America differs from the regions that have dominated the concerns of postcolonial theorists. Many of the best essays reveal the extent to which Latin American writers, who have shown an awareness of their own coloniality since the 16th century, occupy a unique subject position. The colonial authors cited in this volume continuously blur the line between the categories of colonizer and colonized, providing vivid examples of what José Rabasa calls “cross-cultural intersubjectivity” (44). José Antonio Mazzoti explains that “[a]s early as the 1970s, [it was] argued that the literature produced in the Spanish New World was nurtured by, and in dialogue with, a dense sea of voices and collective memories, and that “colonial” literature was often a direct result of, or manipulation of, the indigenous or other

dominated voices” (95). Similarly, Sara Castro-Klaren, in her outstanding essay “Posting Letters: Writing in the Andes and the Paradoxes of the Postcolonial Debate,” gives us the “bicultural colonial subject,” epitomized by the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega (1539–1616). She describes Garcilaso and his contemporary, Guamán Poma de Ayala—each of whom spoke both Quechua and Spanish—as using the “Andean concept of doubling and multiplying cultural competencies” (156). This collection thus reminds readers repeatedly how consideration of a multi-vocal, cross-cultural subject position unique to work from and about Latin America, can enrich colonial and postcolonial literature and theory.

The other essays are, by and large, excellent and stand on their own; only a few require the scaffolding provided by the editors and accompanying pieces. But the problems that emerge when we consider *Coloniality at Large* as a unified text are presaged by the editors’ introductory chapter, which threatens to undermine both the coherence and the seriousness of the volume. Even their title, “Colonialism and its Replicants,” works against them. Their use of a term peculiar to the Sci-Fi cult classic *Blade Runner* seems a gesture toward both the hip and the futuristic, but in choosing a nearly 30-year-old reference as a touchstone, the authors manage to make it musty. Nor are they helped by borrowing from the movie for an epigraph. What follows is a misguided attempt to make the subsequent 22 essays conform to a metaphor of a fictional future coloniality. The problem with invoking *Blade Runner* here is not only that the film has little to nothing to do with the substance of the collection, but that it brings attention to one of the volume’s

primary shortcomings, namely, a failure by almost all the contributors to bring the postcolonial debate into the present, much less the future.

As the authors note repeatedly, major contributions to postcolonial theory were made in the 1980s and 1990s and very few concerned Latin America. Nonetheless, too much attention is given to Asia and the Middle East in this volume on Latin America. Edward Said’s definitive study, *Orientalism*, appears again and again as an example of postcolonialism’s preferred subject—specifically, anywhere *not* Latin America. And Subaltern Studies, either in its original South Asian form or as the Latin American derivative, is discussed in 10 of the book’s 23 chapters. While there is no denying the importance of these works to the field of postcolonial studies, they are discussed in such a way as to suggest that they represent the last word. The essays in this volume make an excellent case for the inclusion of Latin America in what the editors call “the postcolonial debate,” but the time-capsule quality of many of these pieces threatens to render them irrelevant. Contributors to this volume such as Arturo Arias and Mary Louise Pratt admirably attempt to bring postcolonial studies into the post-9/11 world, but they are the exception. Overwhelmingly, the essays here fail to directly acknowledge or even implicitly reflect the world as it now is.

At its best, there are moments when this volume feels classic. At its worst, it comes across as dated and out of touch. Had the editors heeded Mary-Louise Pratt’s call for “a subject newly capacitated to read the present in light of a broadened, more discerning reading of the past,” we might have had a collection that is, as Pratt

says of her ideal postcolonial subject, “oriented not toward a future frozen in a post-progress eternity but toward a renewed anti-imperial decolonizing practice.” Readers who share her belief that the “decolonization of knowledge is ... one of the most important intellectual challenges of our time” (460), will find much to meet that challenge in *Coloniality at Large*, just not perhaps as much as they might like.

**Highland Indians and the State in Modern Ecuador.** A. Kim Clark and Marc Becker eds., Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007. 348 pp.

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This volume samples recent work by 13 mostly North American-based anthropologists and historians on state formation and indigenous people in highland Ecuador. Extending from the 1820s to 2006, it demonstrates the historical depth of Indians’ engagement with the state. The authors treat the state as a fragmented, internally contradictory structure and as a source and referent of discourse.

The book documents the state’s shifting discourses on Indians and citizenship, from the early republican ambivalence about whether Indians were citizens or protected minors (Sattar), through mid- and late-19th century transformations in state protectionism (Williams, Baud), to contemporary pluriculturalism and Indian struggles for “equality in difference” (Pallares). Patriarchal models of the nation as a family have often imbued these discourses, with Garcia Moreno in the 1860–

1870s and the late-20th century military each playing “father” to their Indian children (O’Connor, Selmeski).

Indians (and their scribes and lawyers) have strategically used and “stretched” such discourses while maneuvering between competing authorities. In their thoughtful introduction, Clark and Becker suggest that the predominance of haciendas and the central state’s relative absence from local conflicts set the stage for Indians to call in the central state for help against local enemies. We see this dynamic at work, for example, in struggles against abusive tithe collectors and landowners in the 1830–1840s (Sattar). Clark shows that Indian protests led the post-1895 revolutionary liberal state to insist that local authorities implement laws ending forced labor in public works. She follows Indians’ appeals to state paternalism through the 1930s and 1940s, with a fascinating account of how laborers on a state-owned hacienda played off President Velasco Ibarra and various agencies against each other and the hacienda renters as they sought better working conditions and community facilities.

The last four chapters take an explicitly comparative approach, with insights into the role of Ecuador’s particular political geography (Erazo, Lucero) and its relatively weak government-sponsored corporatism (Mattiace, Lucero) in shaping the contemporary indigenous movement. Lucero and García critique the common contrast between Ecuador’s CONAIE as the model indigenous movement and Peru’s supposed lack of an indigenous movement. They conclude with a call for “richer ethnographic explorations” that attend to “the diversity of indigenous mobilizing” (247).