

Coloniality at Large: Latin America and the Postcolonial Debate. Edited by Mabel Moraña, Enrique Dussel and Carlos C. Jauregui. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008. Pp. ix, 628. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Contributors. Index. \$99.95 cloth; \$34.95 paper.

This extensive book is a commendable enterprise that brings together leading intellectuals of Latin America, Europe, and the United States who are engaged in thinking about Latin America from a critical perspective. The compilation both situates the reader in the field of postcolonial theory as applied to Latin American studies and examines the main concepts that emerged from the postcolonial Latin American debate within the larger context of postcolonial and postmodern debates around the world. The book investigates the regional roots of critical thinking in Latin America and offers acute critiques to the applicability of postcolonial theory in the subcontinent, with articles from sociology, literary criticism, philosophy, and history (although the latter is underrepresented).

While the book presents 22 articles organized into six parts, the authors still manage to engage in intense dialogue with each other. Part 1 deals with the postcolonial approach to concepts such as the encounter, decolonization, and cultural agency, emphasizing the indigenous perspective and advocating a nondualistic approach. Part 2 investigates the importance of Latin Americans rewriting their history and the colonial difference intrinsic to peripheral regions. The authors emphasize both the need to break with Eurocentric approaches and the ambiguous role of creoles and their refusal to accept binary analyses; thus, it offers a sophisticated review of current literature. Part 3 is devoted to a philosophical and epistemological outline of postcolonial theory in Latin America. Precious postcolonial concepts, such as coloniality, colonial difference, occidentalism, and dependency are defined and analyzed in relation to modernity, postmodernism, and globalization. This part also very didactically situates Latin America within European and Asian postmodern and postcolonial scholarship. Part 4 focuses on religiosity in Latin America, liberation theology and its enduring social effects, and offers a powerful criticism to secularism as a Eurocentric category. Part 5 presents an explicit comparative approach to Latin American colonial experiences and colonialism elsewhere. The authors present a strong critique of discourses of Latin American exceptionalism and advocate the importance of integrating the analysis of Asia, Africa, and Latin America without losing sight of their specificities, particularly the different phases and types of colonialism these regions have experienced. Finally, Part 6 delves into ethnic identities and social movements in the present, considering the possibilities and limitations of postcolonial theory to inform and reflect grassroots movements in today's globalized world.

Despite the authors' diverse positions, the book presents consensus about the importance of postcolonial theory in the Latin American debate. The authors also agree that Latin Americans produced autonomous theories to interpret colonialism—for example, the works of José Carlos Mariátegui, Ángel Rama, Darcy Ribeiro, and Raúl Prebisch, among others—and were not confined within ongoing currents of thought developed elsewhere. The importance of colonial agency, the multiplicity of narratives, and the rejection to binary approaches is present in almost all texts. In all sections there are articles that seek

to trace the Latin American roots and genealogies of autonomous criticism to the colonial condition as well as articles defining concepts and relating their main critiques. As a result, the volume does a commendable job in introducing and problematizing the main concepts associated with considering Latin America beyond Eurocentric perspectives.

The volume's editors emphasize the interdisciplinary character of postcolonial analysis and the necessity of breaking with binary approaches as part of the postcolonial endeavor in the Latin American field. Nevertheless, there is a paucity of historians participating in this debate in which sociologists, philosophers, and literary critics draw heavily on historical arguments. This constitutes the main pitfall of the volume, occasioning an oversimplification of historical arguments about the Latin American past, which at times undermines subsequent arguments and concepts. In overlooking current historical research on ethnohistory, agrarian history, slavery, the Atlantic world, and colonial identity, binary categories and dual approaches can reappear. Some contributors, for example, Elzbieta Sklodowska, José Antonio Mazzotti, Gordon Brotherston, José Rabasa, Santiago Castro-Klarén, and Fernando Coronil, are keenly aware of this problem and the challenges involved in overcoming "binary options," especially in dealing with Latin American creoles. The critique of the self-referentiality of some postcolonial authors is also present. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that although Brazilian intellectuals are often cited, Lusophone America is the focal point of just one article, by Russell G. Hamilton. These exclusions demonstrate the need for scholars to keep striving to overcome academic divisions and linguistic barriers.

In spite of neglecting historical works, the book is one of the first projects to bring together scholars from different regions and academic systems of the Atlantic. As a result, this compilation offers wide-ranging perspectives and critiques associated with the challenge of discussing Latin America with critical viewpoints in language that is not overly cryptic. This volume is bound to become a referential work for scholars in the field of Latin American Studies and a useful teaching tool for graduate-level courses.

Roosevelt University
Chicago, Illinois

FABRÍCIO PRADO

Mainland Passage: The Cultural Anomaly of Puerto Rico. By Ramón E. Soto-Crespo. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009. Pp. xxiv, 171. Illustrations. Notes. Works Cited. Index. \$22.50 paper.

Puerto Rico is "anomalous" within Latin America and the Caribbean because it remains an "unincorporated territory" of the United States. In 1952, the island became a U.S. Commonwealth (or *Estado Libre Asociado*, in Spanish), with some political and cultural autonomy. In this book, Ramón E. Soto-Crespo argues that Commonwealth status created a "borderland state," whose influence extends to the continental United States through the "mainland passage," the massive Puerto Rican exodus after World War II. The author rejects standard nationalist views of the island's current political status and proposes that it represents a viable alternative to independence or annexation to the American union.