

SEA AND BEACH IN RIO DE JANEIRO

From Sea-Bathing to Beach-Going. A Social History of the Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. By B. J. Barickman. Edited by Hendrik Kraay & Bryan McCann. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2022. Pp. 287. \$95.00 cloth; \$29.95 paper; \$95.00 e-book.
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Bert J. Barickman died prematurely in 2016, leaving an unfinished manuscript on the social history of sea-bathing and beach-going in Rio de Janeiro during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Thanks to the editing efforts of Hendrik Kraay and Bryan McCann, the manuscript was not lost, and it is now available in this new book.

As Kraay explains in the preface, both editors are aware that this is not the book that Barickman had intended to write, and we can only imagine the wonderful book that he would have written if he had lived longer. The editors were careful in remaining true to the original author's distinctive voice, which occasionally sounds almost poetic, as at the beginning of Chapter 1: "It is December, or it could be February or any month in the hot season . . . a careful observer, still awake, would see sleepy denizens walking down these shadowy city streets. . . . All make their way to the shores of Guanabara Bay, where they will bathe in its salty waters" (1). Following these beautiful sentences are pages of precise facts and clear analyses, helping the reader to learn about the history of the city in an innovative and charming manner.

As the book clearly shows, the choice of early morning hours for sea-bathing in Rio de Janeiro from the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries was a consequence of the habits of Cariocas, as well as the therapeutic approach of the time to sea-bathing, considering it to be more effective in the cool hours of the morning. Yet, it was also the result of racism, since no one wanted to be associated with slaves (or former slaves) by appearing dark-skinned. It would be only later, in the first half of the twentieth century, that a tanned skin began to be considered positive. Even then, it was important for white Brazilians to appear tanned rather than racially mixed.

It was at this time that the habit of sea-bathing for therapeutic reasons was replaced with beach-going. Barickman analyzes urban development and its relation to this cultural practice, showing that with the development of public transportation and the opening of tunnels, the southern part of the city became the favorite place for elites to socialize by the ocean. In 1923, with the opening of the Copacabana Palace Hotel, Copacabana became the elegant destination for wealthy beachgoers, followed in later years by Ipanema and Leblon. Unlike many other seaside cities in the world, Rio never became an international attraction—it was the local population that shaped Rio's beach-going culture. With the construction of luxury bathing establishments like the Copacabana Palace, beach-going became a symbol of 'civilization,' one that contributed to the Europeanization process taking place in Brazil at the time.

A recurrent issue in the book is the concern with morality, especially with how women would dress for the beach. Clearly, these concerns were associated with the Roman Catholic Church's conservative ideas and patriarchal attitudes. Nonetheless, these concerns were mostly directed to upper- and upper middle-class women. Thus, by looking at the culture of beachgoing, we can better understand how the city became increasingly stratified: how the south zone (*Zona Sul*) became the focus of attention, with little concern to spare for how women dressed (or behaved) at the downtown "poor" beaches. Hence, the author's innovative perspective leads the reader to draw conclusions about larger issues such as class, race, gender, and social exclusion.

Although this may not have been the book that Barickman wanted to write—and it may seem, at times, unfinished—it is a major contribution to Rio's historiography and one that has not been lost, thanks to the dedication of the editors.

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US SETTLEMENT IN COSTA RICA

Cold War Paradise: Settlement, Culture, and Identity-Making among U.S. Americans in Costa Rica, 1945–1980. By Atalia Shragai. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2022. Pp. 338. \$99.00 cloth; \$30.00 paper; e-book \$30.00.
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Studies on migration in Central America pay special attention to two processes: the movements of Nicaraguans to Costa Rica and the movements of Central Americans to the United States. Atalia Shragai innovates in this field by considering a phenomenon only sporadically addressed previously: the settlement of US citizens in Costa Rica from 1945 to 1980. Based on interviews with 40 women and 25 men and a detailed review of other sources (such as the *Tico Times*), Shragai examines the ethnic, generational, and geographic background of this population flow, including its class and gender dimensions. Furthermore, she places the experiences of these immigrants in the context of the Cold War.

In the book's lengthy introduction, Shragai summarizes the main contextual issues, compares the United States to Costa Rica, and discusses why this Central American country has become an attractive destination for generations of US immigrants. Based on the 1950, 1963, and 1973 censuses, she estimates the number of people from the United States who settled on Costa Rican soil and then contrasts that figure with the number of other foreigners, particularly Europeans and Nicaraguans. Finally, she explains how diverse the community made up of US citizens was, why their origin assured them a privileged status, and the identities they built, not as immigrants, but as expatriates or guests.