

less stable in Paraguay, most likely because of continued contact between outsiders and natives as a result of trade, which brought exposure to disease via the river highways. The populations of the Chiquitos missions, on the other hand, were more isolated from the human carriers who brought disease to missions.

Most interesting, however, is the inclusion of material about climate's effects on the mission population of northern Mexico, where weather cycles could bring rapid demographic shifts because of famine and heightened susceptibility to disease. Regrettably, he does not likewise consider how the El Niño and La Niña climatic patterns affected the Southern Hemisphere, although it is well known that El Niño brings heavy rains to Paraguay and drought to the Andes, which can leave rivers in the Chiquitos region low. Such questions about the relationship between periodic climatic shifts and mortality rates in South America could have easily added depth to the analysis, particularly because of the growing interest in environmental history.

The book, however, does draw some interesting conclusions about life in missions of both the North and South American frontier regions because of Jackson's profound knowledge of missions in Mexico. As a result of this knowledge, and relying on artistic evidence from Mexican missions, the author is able to make some suggestions about what Jesuit missions in South America may have looked like. Even though these observations are a bit speculative in nature, they contribute to a more complete understanding of the missions generally and add a dimension to the study beyond population statistics. The text will be of great use to scholars of not only the Jesuit missions but also other orders who worked among the native populations throughout the Americas. As a result of Jackson's meticulous study of Jesuit records, those interested in the history of medicine, environment, and social conditions in the missions will find in this book a great deal to enjoy.

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DOI 10.1215/00182168-3727599

Distance and Documents at the Spanish Empire's Periphery. By SYLVIA SELLERS-GARCÍA. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014. Maps. Figures. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xiii, 257 pp. Cloth, \$60.00.

In recent years, two important trends have permeated studies of Europe's overseas empires. Scholars such as Ann Laura Stoler and Kathryn Burns have illustrated the historical production of imperial archives and archival collections, while Lauren Benton, Tamar Herzog, and others have articulated the archipelagic and polycentric geographies of early modern monarchies. Sylvia Sellers-García brings together these historical sensibilities to examine a quotidian yet fascinating element of overseas imperial administration: the creation, movement, and storage of documents.

Drawing upon research in Guatemala, Spain, and the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, Sellers-García asks how inhabitants of colonial and nineteenth-century Guatemala imagined distance and how these perceptions shaped the

content and form of the textual sources they produced. She argues that up through the eighteenth century, distance preoccupied imperial and ecclesiastical authorities, who measured it not by geographical proximity but by time traveled from an administrative center to a subordinate site. Administrators generally conceived of distance as an obstacle to be overcome: high-ranking officials in Spain saw it as an impediment to their ability to monitor vassals in the Americas, church authorities in Guatemala considered it a spiritual hindrance, and mail carriers envisioned it through a complex financial calculus as they traversed the region. Their efforts to reduce distance generated common patterns of document circulation, which both reflected officials' spatial perceptions and dictated an official document's form. Colonial texts were composite documents, penned by many authors as they traveled along preset routes and periodically alighted in administrative archives. Reading the annotations in the margins of manuscripts, Sellers-García contends that these itinerant practices and composite documents were uniquely colonial. Thus, as imperial administration gave way to republican governments in the nineteenth century the circulation, form, and storage of documents transformed accordingly.

This overarching narrative plays out in three distinct thematic sections, each comprised of two chapters. Part 1 traces the travels of itinerant administrators, both imperial and ecclesiastical, and the itinerant documents that often heralded their journeys. The geographical perceptions evident in these textual sources provide a useful counterpoint, though not an alternative, to recent visual studies by historians of cartography and art historians. Part 2 follows the systemization of official mail service in Guatemala in the eighteenth century and its subsequent transformation during the first half of the nineteenth century. It is here that two of the author's main arguments come through most clearly. The increased efficiency and frequency of mail service was perhaps the most salient example of administrators overcoming distance, while the increasingly local and irregular mail cycles of the tumultuous nineteenth century produced documents with fewer layers of authorship. Part 3 compares the indexing and storage of documents from the late colonial period to the early nineteenth century, making it one of the few studies of archives to transcend this temporal divide. Although colonial and nineteenth-century archives were both organized geographically, the former reflected the nodal settlements and itinerant pathways that structured imperial administration, while the latter reflected the bounded, coterminous territories of republican states.

Sellers-García's attention to shifting geographical imaginations is a welcome contribution to the study of colonial Latin America, reminding us that space is much more than a stage for historical action. Her focus on itinerant *letrados* and mobile documents adds depth to place-based studies, demonstrating that one way of reading through archives is to understand how documents moved across them. Still, greater attention to Guatemala's human and physical geography would have added further depth to her analyses of the administrative geographies of the lettered city. As Spanish settlements overlapped with "the preexisting Indian pattern of settlement," one wonders whether a broader indigenous world shaped colonial routes and distances (p. 8). Similarly, the author's core-periphery formulation provides a vivid framework for imagining administrative hierarchies yet neglects relationships between peripheral settlements. Some of

the most engaging portions of this work are when it looks past administrative visions to highlight indigenous knowledge (p. 18), autonomous native communities (p. 52), unofficial pathways (p. 63), and local guides (p. 112). These themes, despite appearing only intermittently in this work, lay a foundation for future scholarship on the region.

As Sellers-García shows, rethinking early modern geographies entails the rethinking of knowledge production. Perhaps more significantly, this work contributes to a growing body of scholarship on the spatial transformations that undergirded late colonial and early republican administrative efforts. Subsequent comparisons of Guatemala to other regions where borders preceded independence will enable us to determine whether the changes that Sellers-García notes—from settlements along routes to enclosed administrative units and from composite to local documents—were more a product of changing geographical imaginations or transitions from colonial to republican governance. This work will thus be of interest to not only specialists in Guatemala but also all scholars interested in the relationship between geography and knowledge production in the colonial and postcolonial contexts.

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DOI 10.1215/00182168-3727611

The Bishop's Utopia: Envisioning Improvement in Colonial Peru. By EMILY BERQUIST SOULE. The Early Modern Americas. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014. Plates. Maps. Appendixes. Notes. Index. 287 pp. Cloth, \$45.00.

Emily Berquist Soule's study of eighteenth-century Peru centers on the labors of Baltasar Jaime Martínez Compañón, a Spaniard assigned to the bishopric of Trujillo in 1778. The bishop's appointment inspired an ambitious undertaking: a "paper museum" of nine volumes, titled *Trujillo del Perú*, depicting the human and natural landscapes of his region. While Berquist Soule's book considers the bishop biographically, the Bourbon reforms contextually, and eighteenth-century Peru socioculturally, the heart of the project lies in analyzing the bishop's paper museum. This is not to say that the book is an annotated *Trujillo del Perú*; rather, the author examines the bishop, the reforms, and Peru through the lens of Martínez Compañón's work.

The driving conviction of Berquist Soule's book is that Martínez Compañón envisioned a utopian Trujillo. He understood that Trujillo had a long way to go, but he thought that with the right reforms and the right guidance, a utopian place would emerge. Berquist Soule gives us the intellectual context for this vision, considering both what was in the air during the bishop's time and what, more concretely, he had in his library. He was interested in science, society, economy, and governance. He was, necessarily, drawn into debates about geographic determinism and Indian nature. Believing firmly in reform, he also believed passionately in Americans: "His reform agenda and his natural history research were intricate variations on the classic eighteenth-century defenses of the New World and its peoples" (p. 30). Indeed "intricate variations" seems a neat way to describe much of what the bishop was doing in Trujillo. Never wholly