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Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra. *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. xviii + 450 pp. \$60.00 (Hard) ISBN: 0804740844

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not see this as a necessary inclusion because as he points out, the book focuses on domestic affairs during the first thirty years of Louis XIV's personal rule "because that is where we can best analyze the workings of the system" (219). On the whole, however, William Beik's *Louis XIV and Absolutism* is a well-written, informative, and highly recommendable book, with an outstanding selection of documents.

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Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra. *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. xviii + 450 pp. \$60.00 (Hard) ISBN: 0804740844

In his fascinating work, the Ecuadorian scholar Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra returns our attention to a well-known but little-debated curiosity in colonial Latin American historiography. In 1768, steeped in the logic of one current of Enlightenment thought, the Dutch cleric Cornelius DePauw declared that the American continent and all who lived on it were fundamentally weak, "effeminate," backward, and incapable of advanced civilization. Even those Europeans who migrated to America were doomed to watch their descendants gradually degenerate to the squalid level of existence of America's indigenous population. Other European historians followed DePauw, rewriting the history of the New World to reflect these new "scientific" insights; one consequence of the "degeneracy theory" was a new set of epistemological criteria for writing history – one that automatically discredited historiography from previous centuries that, in the new intellectual climate of the Enlightenment, suddenly seemed quaint and absurd. However, this step towards modernity also stripped the inhabitants of America (even those of European heritage) of control over what they thought of as their own history – being "American," they were deemed incapable of contributing valid insights to the discourse. Instead, insisted the new paradigm, only "philosophical travelers" and their enlightened brethren in northern Europe had the intellectual faculties and sober, dispassionate disinterest required to truly grasp the mysteries of the American continent. Inevitably,

many “patriots” angrily responded (including, notably, Thomas Jefferson), seeking to strike down the notion of American degeneracy and retake control of their history.

Thus was born the “polemic” that Antonello Gerbi chronicled in his classic 1955 tome, *The Dispute of the New World*.¹ According to Gerbi, the polemic lasted for several decades, until the new scientific paradigm articulated by Romantic-era thinkers such as von Humboldt and Hegel altered the fundamental terms of the debate. In later European discourse, then, inhabitants of America were no longer “degenerate” – instead, they became “orientalized:” humans with the full potential for civilization but captive to a stifling despotism that muted freedom and creativity. Thus, with the appearance in the early nineteenth century of this new conceptualization of America, Gerbi’s story ends.

Fast-forward two centuries to Cañizares-Esguerra’s lucid and original study, *How to Write the History of the New World*, in which the author both builds upon and challenges Gerbi’s findings, eventually questioning whether or not the academy has truly purged itself of the chauvinism that marked eighteenth-century studies of America (at least its Latin half). Focusing on Gerbi’s eighteenth-century polemic, but from different angles, Cañizares-Esguerra demonstrates that, while Gerbi was certainly unsympathetic to the prejudices of the degeneracy theory, he inadvertently “reproduced many in his own writings.” (347) He does this mainly by either ignoring much of the eighteenth-century scholarship coming out of Spain and Spanish America, or else denying the originality of its insights, dismissing it as “belligerent, angry, and resentful,” but void of “any organic corpus of argument and factual data” opposing the degeneracy theory.² As a result, his history unfortunately echoes the conceit of the degeneracy theorists by failing to recognize the scientific and epistemological novelty achieved by some Spanish American intellectuals, thereby perpetuating the notion of Latin American backwardness and incapacity for homegrown modernity.

One of Cañizares-Esguerra’s central theses, then, is that the Enlightenment did not skip over Spain and Spanish America – it simply took different forms there. The prevailing notion of Enlightenment in today’s North American and European universities, like Gerbi’s, is far too narrow, a falsely universalized

¹ Antonello Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World: The History of a Polemic, 1750 - 1900*. Jeremy Moyle, trans. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973).

² Gerbi, *Dispute*, p. 289

concept that necessarily limits the definition of genuine Enlightenment to a small number of northern Europeans, blinding us to the very creative manifestations of modernity in the "peripheries" of intellectual history like Mexico and Spain. The result is a losing situation for Spanish American intellectuals: those who uncritically accept European modernism are seen as unoriginal and derivative, whereas those who articulated alternative epistemologies are interpreted as backwards reactionaries stubbornly resisting progress.

However, the traditional notion that the Enlightenment spawned from the pens of a handful of great thinkers in northern Europe engaging in creative and detached philosophical contemplation has been challenged in recent scholarship, which decentralizes its genesis and diffuses it into a less elite and esoteric public sphere – a realm of particular, mundane, and (most importantly) *local* political and social concerns. If this is true, then anywhere there are debates and controversies (that is, everywhere), new languages of epistemological legitimation are bound to arise – meaning that we might speak of various autochthonous "*enlightenments*" rather than "*the Enlightenment*" – and not be surprised when the intellectual and political concerns of Spanish Americans inevitably differ from those of northern European elites. In this sense, then, to fault the Mexican responses to DePauw, as Gerbi does, for not adhering to the same epistemological principles as conceived in Paris, Edinburgh, and Berlin, is akin to chastising a Brazilian for not speaking Chinese.

Accordingly, Canizares-Esguerra's work supplements Gerbi's chronicle with a well-researched exposition of some of the many important-yet-forgotten academic debates in both Spain and its colonies from the eighteenth century that, according to the author, share in the fundamental principles of modernity, such as skepticism and empiricism, yet have not been considered as such because of how they differ superficially and thematically from contemporaneous debates in northern Europe. His discussion of the intellectual climate of eighteenth-century Spanish America is broad and diverse, touching upon Creole "indigenists" such as Juan José de Eguiara y Eguren, Jesuit historians-in-exile such as Francisco Xavier Clavigero, and Mexican patriots such as Fray Servando Teresa de Mier, all of whom, in one way or another, offered modern ("enlightened") opposition to the degeneracy theory of the European conjectural historians (though some even preceded the "polemic," further highlighting their autonomous

epistemological creativity). Most importantly, the author identifies a commonality informing the works of these thinkers: a new set of criteria for writing legitimate history that returned control of the historiography of the New World to its inhabitants. This he names “the discourse of patriotic epistemology,” which, in its essence, denied that anyone without long-term experience in America could truly understand it. Cañizares-Esguerra’s brilliant deconstruction of “patriotic epistemology” demonstrates that, far from being a baroque or derivative enterprise, it belongs to modernity every bit as much as the Eurocentric discourse it opposed – indeed, he argues, its insistence on the importance of immediate experience within a culture for the historian and ethnographer “foreshadowed many of our contemporary postcolonial insights.” (206)

How to Write the History of the New World opens many doors for future scholarship. In terms of Latin American intellectual history, Cañizares-Esguerra’s model that locates original epistemological and philosophical insight in terms of purely Latin American concerns – as in, for example, the debates over the solar stone in Mexico City or the ruins at Palenque in Guatemala – can be a means for historians to glean information that does not depend on theories steeped in the provincial experience of Europe. Comparisons can be useful, but all too often they implicitly but misleadingly follow the model of a scientific experiment, in which the test specimen is measured against the “normative” (read: European) case. These insights are being applied and refined successfully in ethnography and cultural history; however, Latin American intellectual history lags far behind. Cañizares-Esguerra hints this is perhaps due to the “narrative conceit” in today’s academy – the stubborn remnants of Gerbi’s polemic – that demands that students interpret Latin American history as a “non-Western” experience, unworthy of intellectual historians, and “where only stories of strife and exploitation are worth chronicling.” (10) Inasmuch as the polemic survives, Cañizares-Esguerra (quite self-consciously, if not explicitly) frames himself as the heir to the discourse of patriotic epistemology, continuing in the tradition of defending the intellectual contributions of Latin American civilization against what he perceives as a narrow and limited north Atlantic conception of progress and modernity. He explains, “as long as students in the United States are only offered stories of violence, resistance to exploitation, instability, and corruption in Latin America..., there are going to be storytellers like myself to recreate alternative worlds.” (348) To follow

Cañizares-Esguerra's vision is to approach Latin American intellectual history on its own terms, rejecting conceptual and thematic categories forged in provincial European experience, and aiming to recognize true intellectual creativity wherever it may have lain hidden – long overlooked by historians seeking Parisian salons in American forests.

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Esteban Buch. *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History.* Translated by Richard Miller. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 2003. 327 pp. \$27.50 (Hard). ISBN: 0226078124

Ludwig van Beethoven's (1770-1827) Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 is one of the most powerful symbols of Western classical music. The Ninth Symphony's status as an icon of Western classical music is unquestionable, but since its premiere in Vienna on 7 May 1824, it has been subject to many complex and contradictory uses and abuses. While it is viewed by many as a symbol of universal brotherhood and freedom, it has also been used by nationalists to enforce their nation's supremacy and power. French republicans, German nationalists, and many others have, in the course of its history, embraced the piece. It was performed at a concert to celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall, it was used as Rhodesia's national anthem, Hitler celebrated his birthdays with it, it was embraced by the French who equated it with the ideals of the French Revolution, it is played at the Olympic games and other sporting events, and it is the official anthem of the European Union. How can it be both nationalist and universalist? How is it possible for a single piece of music to generate such divergent interpretations and appropriations?

These issues are central to Esteban Buch's book, originally published in 1999 as *La Neuvième de Beethoven: Une histoire politique* and made available to the English-speaking world through Richard Miller's excellent translation. Buch traces the political and cultural history of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony since its premiere nearly two centuries ago. The book is divided into two parts, the first of which is dedicated to "The Birth of Modern Political Music." These first five chapters set the stage for