

discusses late seventeenth-century Novatores and early eighteenth-century writings by Torres Villarroel, Martínez, and Boix y Moliner; part II, “Political Reform and the Order of Nature,” takes readers through late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century thinking about nature, the body, and the self; and part III, “From Neo-Hippocratism to the Avant-Garde,” covers texts by Mata y Fontanet, Sanz del Río, Unamuno, Baroja, and Gómez de la Serna. Along the way, numerous theories and concepts are probed, including Cartesianism, vitalism, the sublime, Romanticism, materialism, positivism, Krausism, and Nietzsche’s “will to power.” The overall argument is couched chronologically, in part because the author wants to persuade the reader of the persistent importance of “vital force” within Spanish intellectual and scientific cultures. But, as Fernández-Medina points out, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century medical and chemical discoveries advanced an “epistemological enterprise” that undergirded, yet proved insufficient to satisfy, early twentieth-century writers’, artists’, and philosophers’ searches for “a solution to the problem of modern existence,” which seemed to require “a profound, intuitive understanding of how the lived body (and not just the mind) served as the medium through which the world was known” (302). The reader comes to understand connections defying boundaries of periodization: challenges to “established distinctions between pathology and environment, body and soul, self and society, individual and nature, and life and death” (151) build, are reworked, and diverge across centuries, as eighteenth-century theories of life force shape nineteenth-century spiritualist notions, which in turn feed into twentieth-century thought on embodiment and the meaning of life.

One of this monograph’s best features is rhetorical: Fernández-Medina’s voice is full of energy, and his discussion keenly sensitive and probing; his argumentation is enhanced by clear, jargon-free writing that is a pleasure to read. There are gaps and exclusions, particularly as concern women’s contributions to the debates under discussion; Fernández-Medina does acknowledge “the underrepresentation of women in this book” (xx). Taking that into account, this book should nonetheless be required reading for anyone who wants to understand the importance of ideas about bodies, nature, and life in Spanish modernity.

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RICHARD L. KAGAN. *The Spanish Craze: America’s Fascination with the Hispanic World, 1779–1939*. U of Nebraska P, 2019, 640 pp.

Richard Kagan has contributed a lifetime of scholarship on Spain and its cultural and institutional ties with the United States. In this impressive volume, Kagan shows that the influence of Spain on American history and culture was recognized by Walt Whitman when he authored his 1883 essay on “The Spanish Element in our Nationality.” Spain had become far more than an “element” in the United States: it had become a “craze” permeating all aspects of culture, from literature and art, to architecture and life-styles. Although at times this “craze” had the characteristics of a “fever,” it was not the kind that kills people. It was rather more of an urgency to explore the commonalities between Spain and the

United States, ultimately for the benefit of the latter. “From this perspective,” Kagan states, “the Spanish craze was not so much the United States’ discovery of Spain but America’s discovery of itself” (132).

It was not always so. The Black Legend inherited from Great Britain influenced the new nation’s negative view of Spain. Writers in the early and not so early Republic regarded Spain as the home of bigotry and despotism, a country of corrupt monarchical institutions and perennial instability. It was only in the 1820s that a new generation of scholars and writers relaxed the generally accepted dark view of Spain to include a more positive outlook on the country’s history and culture. The most prominent of these was Washington Irving, who inspired and guided other Hispanists such as Henry W. Longfellow and George Ticknor. Not coincidentally, all three visited Spain and conveyed first-hand knowledge, however filtered by some deeply held religious and cultural prejudices, of a country that was far more complex than portrayed by the Black Legend. Richard Kagan covers this period thoroughly, and lays the foundations for his main focus on the period from the 1870s to the early 1930s, the time when the Spanish “craze” reached the highest level in America, only to subside like most non-lethal fevers.

Kagan concentrates on the two main views of Spain prevailing from the Gilded Age to the Great Depression, which he describes as the “sturdy” and the “sunny” strands. What they have in common is the effort to supersede the Black Legend, although they differ in many other ways. The first, or “sturdy,” attempted to link the histories of Spain and the United States by eliding the most negative aspects of the Spanish past. It emphasized, for example, its “civilizing” mission to provide a broader context for the history of the United States, and especially those regions with a Spanish colonial background, such as Florida, New Mexico, and California. Writers like Joseph Scott, Thomas Buckingham Smith, and Charles F. Lummis produced histories that were designed to link their respective regions to the history of Spain. A case in point is the story of the Mallorcan-born Franciscan friar Junípero Serra, credited by his secular hagiographers with bringing Christianity (pointedly underplaying Catholicism) and civilization to California. That is how the state got its—now most contested—founding father.

The view of “sunny” Spain, most effectively promoted by Washington Irving, coincided with the Romantic era in Europe, where the native New Yorker resided in the 1810s and 1820s. He spent much of his stay in Spain writing his epoch-making biography of Christopher Columbus (1828). This was the Spain of “romance,” the Spain of flamenco, the Alhambra, the land of *mañana* and the *siesta*. As Kagan notes, this is the view that empowered many American writers to avoid controversial political topics and focus instead on quaint folkloric aspects of life in the country. Never mind that some US travelers like Alexander Slidell Mackenzie or Severn Teackle Wallis questioned such a rosy picture. Not even the Spanish-American War of 1898 stood in the way of the survival, and indeed the increasing intensity, of the romantic image of Spain. The power of this paradigm was strong enough to last well into the twentieth century, when the cruelties of the Spanish Civil War shattered that benign image. Gertrude Stein, John Dos Passos, and Waldo Frank (and to a lesser extent Ernest Hemingway) were all heirs to the “sunny” tradition, which emphasized the popular, or even “primitive,”

quality of Spanish culture. As Kagan explains, writers of this generation looked on Spain as an antidote to the bemoaned crass materialism of American life. They shared the anti-modernism of Henry Adams, though not to the point of viewing Spain as the “natural enemy” of the United States; Spain, on the contrary, was an inspiration, a beacon, a place Americans must get to know.

At the very center of this era was Archer Milton Huntington, who as a young man had been admonished by the banker and philanthropist Morris Ketchum Jesup not to waste any time on a “dead and gone civilization.” Huntington not only went ahead to visit and study Spain but also to become the founder of the Hispanic Society of America in New York (1908), to this day the major collection of Hispanic materials in the United States. In addition, he endowed the Hispanic Division of the Library of Congress (1927), a treasure most researchers value for its splendid collection of manuscripts and rare books. Huntington was a good example of the “sturdy” view of Spain, seeing continuities from the medieval to the contemporary eras. He strongly identified with the view that the “heart of the Spaniard” resided in rural Spain, although he did not fail to highlight the sophisticated literature he saw as representative of the Spanish “national character.” None of this prevented him from becoming a voracious collector who bought as many pieces of art and rare printed materials as he could lay his hands on, causing a Spanish uproar in the process that led to stringent yet easily avoidable laws to prevent further loss of valuable collections.

Huntington was not alone, as others joined or decidedly competed with him to build their own collections. They included Isabella Stewart Gardner, Charles Deering, and J. P. Morgan. Perhaps the most notorious of them was William Randolph Hearst, who rationalized his “incontinent collectionism” as a means to preserve the treasures that old Europe was incompetent to protect. That is how the master paintings of Murillo, Velázquez, and others eventually found their way into the United States.

America’s Spanish craze was not confined to literature and art: it extended to architecture as well. Replicas of Spanish buildings appeared in several major cities in the United States, eventually developing into a “Spanish” or “mission” style that was most visible in California in the beginning but soon spread to other states in the form of government buildings, hotels and resorts, and private homes. What Kagan points out as particularly noteworthy is that this second-hand copy was seen as an autochthonous *American* architectural style. Even Spain succumbed to it when it developed themed facilities (*hospederías*) to attract American tourists. Kagan quotes the architectural critic Antonio Méndez Casal, who in 1930 called the style “de ida y vuelta,” meaning “the style of architecture that originated in Spain, moved to California, and then returned, cleaned up and modernized, to the place it began” (453). Music, films, and other media were also a part of the Spanish “craze” until the 1930s, when a combination of Pan-Americanism, FDR’s Good Neighbor policy, and the appalling dictatorship of Francisco Franco turned American attention away from Spain to include Mexico and other countries in Latin America. Not for long, as it turned out, as Spanish (and Spanish American) cultural expressions became more than sporadic fevers to assume a resilient and constantly renewing component of life in the United States.

Kagan's book insightfully captures and narrates the historical ambivalence of American attitudes toward "the Spanish element in our nationality." It makes a major contribution to the growing literature on Spain in America, on American engagement with the Hispanic world, and on the current challenges, in Whitman's words, of truly appreciating "the sterling value" of the contributions of Spanish and indigenous peoples to America's "composite identity of the future."

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FERNANDO DEGIOVANNI. *Vernacular Latin Americanisms: War, the Market, and the Making of a Discipline*. U of Pittsburgh P, 2018, 248 pp.

Within the fields that renegotiate the borders of Hispanic studies, alongside a true explosion of scholarship on Latinx studies, recent years have witnessed a renewed interest in redefining the limits and the scope of Latin America and Latin Americanism. Books such as Mariano Siskind's *Cosmopolitan Desires* (2014), Nathalie Bouzaglio's *Ficción adulterada* (2016), and Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo's *Latin America: The Allure and Power of an Idea* (2017) have all advanced new readings of canonical works of literature, while questioning to different extents the need to sustain a geopolitical entity that is seen as both artificial and too constraining—that is, Latin America itself. Among these interventions, Fernando Degiovanni's *Vernacular Latin Americanisms: War, the Market, and the Making of a Discipline* seeks to debunk altogether the very foundational narrative behind the emergence of Latin Americanism in the early twentieth century.

Degiovanni argues that Latin Americanism did not come out of the tradition of essay writing on continental identity by key figures such as José Martí, Rubén Darío, and José Enrique Rodó, but rather out of the construction of Latin American literature as a specialized field of knowledge first in American universities and then also in Latin American countries from 1900 to 1960. Instead of highlighting the region as a privileged place of enunciation (a tradition that can be traced from Rodó to Nelly Richard and Hugo Achúgar), he claims that the emergence of Latin Americanism is to be found in institutional initiatives and academic discourses that sought to shape the continent as a territory of peace against the backdrop of a series of armed conflicts, from the Spanish-American War in 1898 to the Cold War.

In doing so, Degiovanni boldly opposes the famous works of Martí and Rodó to the more anonymous efforts of American university professors and high school teachers who promoted the study of Spanish and Latin American literature in the United States during the early twentieth century, as well as to the continental endeavors of somewhat forgotten cultural figures active in Latin America roughly at the same time. This polemic twist gives way to what is perhaps Degiovanni's most provoking hypothesis: that while it is generally accepted that there is no Latin Americanism without Latin America, it is no less true that there is no Latin America without Latin Americanism. In other words, Degiovanni's approach to Latin Americanism (as well as those of the foundational figures he analyzes)