

Appropriately rounding off the book, Dolven ends with the chapter "Continuing," a cyclical loop back to the first chapter, asking the reader to, again, remain with poetry or possibly that these texts and styles remain with us in literature and aesthetics by inviting sympathy: "To see something in terms of its style, then, is to see it with sympathy—in a strong sense, feeling-with, a sympathy for how it was made and for the world of things made that way" (180). Dolven, again, loops back to poetry as world building by shifting his discussion toward affective evocations of poetics. Through a complexly conversational style, the book crafts an argument that is both erudite and productively unconventional in its own style, showing us poetic form allows further access into learning more about the world around us, evoking the Renaissance fascination with the micro and the macro—how our own close reading practices are still alive and animate everything.



The Two Taríacuris and the Early Colonial and Prehispanic Past of Michoacán. David L. Haskell.

Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2018. 264 pp. \$31.95.

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Although a wealth of indigenous language sources exists for the Nahuas, Mayas, and Zapotecs, the corpus for the P'urhépecha (or Tarascans) of Michoacán is much less extensive. This lack of materials, when compared to other areas of Mesoamerica, has forced scholars to rely heavily upon the *Relación de Michoacán* for knowledge about the prehispanic past and the early colonial period in West-Central Mexico. *The Two Taríacuris* is a welcomed addition to a growing scholarship that challenges the idea the P'urhépecha lacked literary traditions of their own (whether written or painted). Drawing upon anthropological theory and theoretical literature on historicity, Haskell offers an analysis of P'urhépecha kingship and politics in the narrative logic of the *Relación de Michoacán*. His work highlights how members of the royal dynasty (Uacúsecha) in the second most powerful kingdom of Mesoamerica responded to Spanish invasion by reformulating the past to serve their needs in a challenging colonial situation.

The *Relación de Michoacán* is a hybrid text of painted images and alphabetic writing produced between 1538 and 1541 by an anonymous friar (whom many believe is the Franciscan Jerónimo de Alcalá) and a team of native aids, scribes, and artists. The text is divided into three general sections: a description of the gods (which is lost except for one folio), a narrative of how the ancestors of P'urhépecha kings came to the basin of Pátzcuaro and conquered it, and ethnographic details on the P'urhépecha together with an overview of Spanish conquest until their last king in 1530. Unlike other recent studies of the *Relación de Michoacán*, *The Two Taríacuris* is primarily concerned with the second part, which is commonly known as the "chief priest's narrative." Haskell justifies this

level of hermeneutical concentration by arguing that the “legendary history of the Tarascan royal dynasty ... has not been analyzed in a way that fully problematizes how and why it represented the past as it does” (5).

Haskell organizes his study into six chapters, which can be roughly divided into three parts. The first part (chaps. 1–2) reviews the contents of the *Relación de Michoacán* and the historical context in which the manuscript was produced. Here Haskell stresses that the chief priest’s narrative is “an act of covert resistance” (19), a call for Don Francisco Taríacuri, the son of the last P’urhépecha king, to be given a significant role in the newly forming colonial government in Michoacán. The second part (chaps. 3–4) provides a detailed analysis of the chief priest’s narrative. Haskell explains the concept of historicity before offering an exegetical reading of the text, which moves back and forth between a review of its contents (that appears in italics) and his own interpretations. In the final part (chaps. 5–6), the historical consciousness of the P’urhépecha is examined in greater detail. Haskell is careful to make clear distinctions between native ways of approaching the past and Western forms of history. He also places P’urhépecha historicity within a larger comparative framework by highlighting some of the similarities and differences with other ethnic groups across Mesoamerica.

A major contribution of *The Two Taríacuris* is its discussion of the traditional dichotomy between myth and history. By way of source criticism and textual comparison, many scholars have neatly and misleadingly dissected native sources into “historical” and “mythic” parts without due consideration to their own unique ways of approaching the past. Haskell firmly rejects literalist interpretations of the *Relación de Michoacán* that simply treat it as a narrative of the past according to Western views of history, arguing that this does a “disservice to the creative products of highly skilled indigenous scholars” (24). Although he does not deny that the chief priest’s narrative was a combination of real and fabricated events, he places his emphasis on the political and practical uses of the past as they are embedded within the narrative structure. In Haskell’s assessment, it is highly probable that the chief priest’s narrative was a deliberate attempt to craft a convincing account of the Uacúsecha dynasty for uses in the Spanish legal system. Other scholars have drawn similar conclusions for indigenous texts from various other regions across Spanish America, highlighting the ways in which natives used both literacy and the courts to navigate the colonial bureaucracy for their own advantage.

The Two Taríacuris is also an important study because it highlights the distinctive cultural elements of the P’urhépecha within Mesoamerican studies. Scholars have found several parallels between the chief priest’s narrative and other narratives from Central Mexico, specifically a common migration history and the presence of the Chichimecas. Instead of treating these stories as being essentially all the same, Haskell strongly favors the close textual analysis of individual narratives to discover the “salient differences” (203) within them. Overall, he challenges readers to move beyond the “Popol Vuh syndrome” (220), the

strong tendency to interpret all aspects of Mesoamerican iconography through the lens of the *Popol Vuh*. Haskell still encourages comparative studies, but he believes that holding up one text as the interpretive standard for the rest places cultures like the P'urhépecha on the margins of historical inquiry.

The Two Tariacuris provides useful maps charting the extent of the P'urhépecha kingdom and the locations mentioned in the chief priest's narrative. Given the comparisons Haskell makes with other regions in Central Mexico, a larger map of Mesoamerica would have been an extremely helpful addition. Although a few of the painted images from the *Relación de Michoacán* are included as figures, half of them are line drawings instead of original reproductions. Haskell offers detailed explanatory descriptions of the images he selected, but overall his analysis of the chief priest's narrative is primarily concerned with textual as opposed to visual evidence. Given that *The Two Tariacuris* is a theoretically dense reading, Haskell's diagrams detailing rhetorical aspects of the chief priest's narrative nicely illustrate the arguments he is making in his study. But despite the presence of these handy aids, this work is not designed for adaptation at the undergraduate level. *The Two Tariacuris* is more appropriate for graduate students and scholars interested both in the P'urhépecha of Michoacán and the blurring lines between history and myth in Mesoamerica.



A Poetry Precise and Free: Selected Madrigals of Guarini. Nicholas R. Jones.

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To convey their programs to astute audiences, singers must comprehend not only their notes but also the words and dramatic situations of their texts. An enthusiastic singer of Renaissance music, Oberlin College English Professor Emeritus Nicholas R. Jones provides fellow performers, directors, and potential audiences of Renaissance vocal music with modern English translations and critical interpretations of some of the most frequently employed secular poems they may perform or hear. For this book, he chooses 150 poems by a single Italian poet, Giovanni Battista Guarini (1538–1612), whose individual works received musical settings by as many as thirty-five composers, including Claudio Monteverdi, Philippe de Monte, and the notorious Carlo Gesualdo da Venosa, and which thus appear repeatedly in concerts of early modern music. His book represents the first comprehensive collection of Guarini's madrigals in English translation.

Writing lyrics chiefly for the very popular court entertainments of late sixteenth century Ferrara, Mantua, and Florence, Guarini supplied musical composers with hundreds of amorous little poems expressing the fantasies and frustrations of intense but essentially unequal romantic love. These irregular, artful verses generated madrigals, unaccompanied part songs for three or more voices