ejercicios" for women and children who had to be isolated (again from the state's perspective) from the potential contagion of dissenting behavior or thinking (p. 174).

The final chapter then shifts our attention to the question of what changed with the consolidation of Chile's political independence. Here the argument is no longer focused on the efforts of government officials to police dissent. Instead, Bowen's concern is to show how the "legitimate expression of dissent" came to be accepted by the republican state (p. 189). He traces this process of acceptance through the debates over the meaning of sedition that arose with the various constitutional projects of the era. While his analysis of the debates over sedition did not consider the role of press law and press trials by jury (*juicios de imprenta*) in those debates, it is nonetheless insightful and makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of what independence meant for all sorts of Chileans.

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*Staging Christ's Passion in Eighteenth-Century Nahua Mexico*. By LOUISE M. BURKHART. Institute for Mesoamerican Studies Monograph Series. Denver: University Press of Colorado, 2023. Map. Figures. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xiv, 320 pp. Paper, $38.95.

In *Staging Christ's Passion in Eighteenth-Century Nahua Mexico*, renowned scholar of Nahuatl Louise Burkhart explores the ways that Nahua scriptwriters, performers, and villagers adapted the story of Christ's crucifixion to their own cultural lens. Her research mines a rich yet relatively unstudied source base: six Nahuatl-language Passion play manuscripts dating from the early eighteenth century, which Burkhart explains likely all drew from the same original source. Burkhart argues that the scripts "lay a strong Indigenous claim to Christianity's core narrative" and thus can be understood as an expression of Nahua agency (p. 6).

The book contains five main chapters, organized thematically, that are relatively independent from each other. In the first chapter, Burkhart traces the ways in which the performance of the Passion in Nahua communities was often questioned or suppressed by Spanish officials. Although she cites Ann Laura Stoler's argument that archival records of attempted colonial control belie the more complicated daily reality, Burkhart also notes that the Passion did, in many ways, test colonial authority. By embodying the person of Christ in the Passion, a Nahua man could challenge "the priesthood's monopoly on the Christian sacred" (p. 32).

Chapter 2 focuses on the pragmatic elements of these sacred performances, including staging and props. Burkhart's careful attention to the Nahuatl language here leads to crucial insights: for example, she highlights the fact that in the script, the apostle Peter carries a *tepozmacuahuitl* (metal handstick), while the soldiers who arrest Jesus carry *lanzas*. The use of a Nahuatl word for Peter's weapon while a Spanish loanword is used to describe the Roman soldiers' weapon clarifies the anticolonial rhetoric embedded in the Passion play.

Chapters 3 and 5 identify ways in which the Nahua Passion plays depart from European plays: in their depictions of gender roles and violence. In the Nahua Passion,

women are more prominent than in traditional European scripts; the overall effect is to create an image of Christ "who is centered in a circle of female kin and friends as well as the circle of his male students" (p. 119). Similarly, chapter 5 points out that the Nahua Passion is much less violent than typical European Passions, again underscoring the scripts' compliance with Nahua cultural norms.

Burkhart draws attention to the staging of the Last Supper, which contained two controversial elements, in chapter 4. First, she analyzes how the scriptwriters navigated the scene in which Christ institutes the Eucharist, changing bread and wine into his body and blood for the first time. Catholic leadership, she notes, was particularly worried that this scene would lead to confusion or even idolatry, leading the audience to worship the unsanctified bread on the stage thinking that it had really become the Eucharist. The Nahua Passion, in response, gives careful explanation on how to avoid this confusion, even specifying which songs could be sung at this point without echoing traditionally Eucharistic hymns. Secondly, Burkhart argues that Judas's suicide after the Last Supper is given an especially Nahua flavor: he is given the opportunity to make a speech, and through his ranting he "provides an object lesson in what happens when someone puts their own welfare above that of their social unit"—a lesson that turns Judas's sin into a crime against Nahua corporate identity (p. 143).

The last 80 pages of the book offer a composite translation (into English) of the six Passion manuscripts. Burkhart compiled the elements of the various scripts into a single comprehensive version in this appendix, offering a clear glimpse of Nahua understandings of this central story of Christianity. The original Nahuatl scripts and more information about the translation are available at the companion website (https://passionplaysofeighteenthcenturymexico.omeka.net). The published translation, therefore, serves primarily to make Nahuatl literature more accessible to English-speaking readers.

Burkhart is eminently comfortable with her source material and brings in connections with European Passion traditions and other socioreligious contexts with ease. (For the reader, a table listing the six manuscripts would have been useful; Burkhart gives them all nicknames based on their current archival location—e.g., "the Princeton Passion play"—but it is easy to lose the details of each script's original context within the larger analysis.) One notable element of the book is how Burkhart's argument is in conversation with Indigenous scholars from across the Americas, bridging an oft-lamented gap between scholarship on Mexico and the United States. For example, she cites Anishinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor's theory of survivance as a way to describe how Nahua worldviews could be expressed through a colonial genre (p. 5). As she concludes, "Nahua *pasioneros* laid fair claim to their own forms of the Christian story, adopted from European models and adapted to the circumstances of their own lives as *macehualtin* in corporate communities—surviving in straitened circumstances under foreign occupation" (p. 179). Burkhart's careful translation and analysis illuminates the ways that Nahua writers and performers made the Passion plays their own.

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*Re-imagining Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1780–1870*. Edited by EDUARDO POSADA-CARBÓ, JOANNA INNES, and MARK PHILP. New York: Oxford University Press, 2023. Maps. Figures. Notes. Bibliographic essay. Index. xxv, 420 pp. Cloth, $110.00.

*Re-imagining Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean* is part of a multivolume project that seeks to understand how democracy was conceived, adapted, and employed during the long Age of Revolution. This is the third volume in the series, focusing on Latin America and the Caribbean, after previous books on the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean. The stated intent is not so much to explore the practices of democracy but to investigate the use of the word itself, why its meaning changed over time, and what purpose the word served for political actors. Instead of debating what democracy really was, the contributors mostly focus on what historical actors thought it meant or should mean. After two general introductions, the volume explores the use of the word *democracy*, and its context, in eight thematic chapters (on the Iberian colonial legacy, political culture in the British and French Caribbean, the independence era, caste and race, constitutionalism, urban political culture, education, and how Latin American democracy was understood in Europe and the United States), followed by six geographically focused essays (on Hispaniola, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, New Granada, and Chile, respectively). The individual essays are uniformly strong.

This volume builds on the work of the *Iberconceptos* project led by Javier Fernández Sebastián, which has sought to deeply explore the meanings of key terms in the Spanish and Portuguese worlds, especially volume 2, *Democracia*, edited by Gerardo Caetano. Eduardo Posada-Carbó explains that *Re-imagining Democracy* will expand on this previous work, especially by incorporating the non-Spanish Caribbean, paying more attention to the period between independence and the 1850s (when the use of the term *democracy* became widespread), and focusing not only on the word itself but on "the institutional, social, and cultural environments in which the term was taken up," in order to understand how the word was employed in the political realm (p. 25). The work also follows a large literature that has reconsidered democracy, nation, and popular politics in Latin America. Whereas in previous scholarship democracy was seen as essentially alien to Latin America, its political system understood as dominated by fraud, corruption, and caudillos, with the poor serving only as cannon fodder, a new historiography focuses on the region's productive experimentation with republicanism and democracy and the engagement of the popular classes in nation and state formation. This book agrees with the first argument on experimentation (p. 9) but largely does not engage the literature on the second point concerning popular politics.

The volume's overarching argument is that Latin America and the Caribbean were major participants in "re-imagining the ancient concept of democracy for use in the modern world" (p. 38). The project succeeds in demonstrating this, especially in carefully detailing all the uses, often contradictory, to which *democracy* was employed. At the risk of oversimplifying this complexity, in broad strokes (following Juan Luis Ossa's excellent entry on Chile, which notes that in spite of Chilean exceptionalism, the general regional

pattern held there), the word tended to have negative connotations of excess and anarchy during and immediately after independence, then was often synonymous with representative government in the early republican decades, and finally suggested the greater participation of a wider scope of the *pueblo* beginning in the 1840s, especially in regard to equality. However, the word always had fractures, taking on a plethora of connotations that varied from place to place and were employed for partisan gains and justifications, if especially embraced by liberals (but sometimes used by conservatives as meaning the rule of law and order).

Yet the lack of engagement with popular politics reveals two limitations to the volume. The focus on the use of the word *democracy* instead of on the broader meanings and practices of democracy (as understood at the time) seems overly restrictive. Indeed, several authors stray from the mission to fruitfully cast a wider net. The fascinating chapters by Nancy Appelbaum (on race and caste) and Luis Daniel Perrone (on Venezuela) instead focus more on equality and its relation with democracy. This strategy is necessary to approach popular conceptions, as for many in the plebeian classes it would have been impossible to disentangle democracy, citizenship, republicanism, equality, and popular sovereignty. All were entwined with the sense that the poor should have a place at the table of the nation, should have their voice heard by the state. Only exploring the use of the word *democracy*, or the lack thereof, will miss the popular role.

That leads to the second critique. Even if the choice is made to only focus on the use of the word *democracy*, more consideration is needed as to what the word meant to popular actors. Workers of African descent, Indigenous villagers, and other members of the rural poor did use the word in petitions in Colombia and Mexico (and I am sure elsewhere), but these voices do not appear in this volume. To be fair, the editors themselves recognize that more work is needed on the "popular sectors" (p. 37). Nonetheless, these essays are a valuable addition to the ongoing reconsideration of Latin America's role in democracy's global history.

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*From Conquest to Colony: Empire, Wealth, and Difference in Eighteenth-Century Brazil.* By KIRSTEN SCHULTZ. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2023. Maps. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Index. ix, 335 pp. Cloth, $65.00.

This original and challenging book seeks to reexamine Brazil's colonial status in the eighteenth century by studying the changing governmental policies and the intellectual analyses and project proposals that accompanied or promoted those changes. This is a theme that since the 1960s has generated a rich historiography, but Kirsten Schultz, having kept abreast of the more recent debates about the nature of "negotiated empires" of local interests and powers versus the idea of centrally directed imperial authority, provides a new reading and interpretation. Her study is based principally on the developing statecraft and mercantilism that emerged during Brazil's age of gold and continued