

achievement, for the book also seeks to engage conceptual issues that have animated recent works in comparative frontier history. Indeed, Langer has long contributed to ‘the new mission history’ that examines native and European cultures and institutions coming into contact and transforming each other. In this book, Langer analyses how a particular combination of physical, cultural and institutional environments shaped and ultimately doomed the missionary enterprise. Confronting a resilient indigenous population never bowed by the Incas or Spaniards, and in the absence of a coercive state apparatus, the Franciscans were thrown into the bush on their own and forced to improvise, adapt and accommodate local conditions as they tried to carve proto-industrial Christian utopias out of the jungle.

In the area of historical legacies, Langer’s conclusions are ambiguous – perhaps because the missionaries themselves were only partially successful in achieving their goals (and in any case, the friars were profoundly ambivalent about the republican ideal of converting ‘savages’ into citizens). Rhetorically wedded to the moral uplift and political integration of their Indian charges, the missionaries ‘failed to inculcate the idea of Bolivian citizenship’ and aimed solely at remaking Indians into a subaltern labouring class on the frontier. In this sense it might be argued that the missionaries actually served the interests of Bolivia’s political elite, which had little interest in bringing Indians into the nation-state as political subjects and citizens until well into the twentieth century.

*Stony Brook University*

BROOKE LARSON

*J. Lat. Amer. Stud.* 42 (2010). doi:10.1017/S0022216X10000544

Leslie Bethell and José Murilo de Carvalho (eds.), *Joaquim Nabuco, British Abolitionists and the End of Slavery in Brazil: Correspondence 1880–1905* (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas, University of London, 2009), pp. vii + 187, £20.00, pb.

Contemporaries saw in Joaquim Nabuco (1849–1910) the leader of the movement that ended Brazilian slavery in 1888. He is still perceived as such by most Brazilians, despite academic trends that have drawn our attention elsewhere – to subaltern agency or larger social and economic forces, or more local or more circumscribed aspects of the movement.

Nabuco’s maternal family was one of the oldest planter clans of Brazil. He was also the political heir to one of the monarchy’s noted statesmen, José Tomás Nabuco de Araújo. An uncommonly gifted orator, accomplished writer and exemplar of the high society of the time, Nabuco was blessed with striking good looks, great social charm and the burnish of tours abroad. In 1879 he committed himself to abolition, using his unique position in parliament, the press and Europe to that end while working with more radical figures to begin and sustain an urban movement of unprecedented success (1888). With the 1889 collapse of the monarchy, Nabuco retreated from politics, only to re-emerge as a key diplomat as Brazil undertook a more assertive role after the political and financial difficulties of the 1890s. He died Brazil’s first ambassador to the United States.

The editors of this volume contribute to new interest in the man associated in part with the centenary of his death. They grace the collection with a brief but well-informed introduction and, throughout the correspondence that follows, very useful notes. They are successful in their intent, which is to recover the nature of Nabuco’s

successful attempts to secure British support for Brazil's Abolitionists and to provide his views during the struggle's course. Highlights include Nabuco's views on comparative race relations and his very acute assessment of the parliamentary politics of the era. Aside from the correspondence itself, the editors both indicate their sources and suggest direction through a succinct bibliography of the major periodicals of the era, other published primary sources and a select list from among the most significant secondary works. Whatever warmth they might feel towards Nabuco is offset by the occasional reference to contradictions in Nabuco's commitments and allusions to his reputation as an aristocratic dilettante.

There are inevitably aspects of the introduction that a specialist might dispute. Moreover, the editors, pre-eminent historians of the period, may be assuming too much on the part of the reader. The significance of the Christie Affair in the origins of the Law of the Free Womb (1871) goes unmentioned – why the Conservative Viscount de Itaboraí would oppose such a law and the Conservative Viscount do Rio Branco would support it begs an explanation. The nature and significance of the 1880 electoral reform warrants note, as does the rise of urban radicalism and Nabuco's relationship to it (and to such men as José do Patrocínio). However, as a 22-page introduction to Nabuco, to abolition in both Britain and Brazil, and to the relationship between Nabuco and his British colleagues, the authors' work is exemplary. There is much more to admire in such masterful synthesis than to criticise.

The collection's contribution is more important than its modest size might suggest. Two volumes of Nabuco's correspondence were selected by Nabuco's daughter and biographer, Carolina, and one son, José Tomás, selected another. While connoisseurs might enjoy these, such pleasures are ignored by most and are something of an acquired taste – one has to know much about the milieu to see the point. Hence, our debt here is to the editors for their introduction and well-informed notes. More interestingly, this is a rediscovery of the relatively small amount of Nabuco that is available in English. Indeed, if the editors' work inspires translations of Nabuco from his own language, we would be all the richer. Those who read French can sample his literary, religious and philosophical work, and his erudite diplomatic defence of Brazil's rights in Amazonia, but Nabuco's great works – the three-volume biography of his father, the unique autobiographical essays comprising *Minha formação*, and the speeches in and out of parliament – live only in Portuguese. This is a very great pity. Nabuco was one of the greatest orators of his era, in which rhetoric was a politically critical, cultivated art. *Minha formação* remains unique among the era's memoirs, savoury nourishment for those curious about Brazilian elite society, politics and literature c. 1870–1900. As for his father's biography, *Um estadista do império*, it remains the indispensable introduction to the monarchy's history.

Nonetheless, one is grateful for what one has here. The letters give us the times, recover Abolitionist strategy and provide insight into the perspective of key actors. In this collection, the complicated politics of the movement and the charm and commitment of its champion are manifest. More important, the letters provide the indispensable source for Nabuco's determination to secure British abolitionist support, a significant aspect of Brazil's Abolitionist movement. The correspondence and the editors discuss the Brazilian impact of British public support, the editors arguing that it had particular importance for the political elite, if not the planters. One might find this problematic; after all, public British condemnation of slavery

was as old as the century, yet, deep into the 1880s, slavery continued to enjoy general support among both the planters and their representatives, comprising the majority of both parties. Slavery was perceived as irreplaceable in terms of private fortunes and plantation labour – thus, one might suggest instead that the importance of British abolitionist support for the movement may have lain with impact on the movement itself. The leaders of the movement successfully sought to recruit from the urban middle class and masses; a central part of the abolitionist argument to them, as both the introduction and the correspondence here make clear, was that slavery undercut Brazil's claims to, or potential for, civilisation. Britain, as one of the great exemplars of civilisation, provided an opinion that mattered. Support for Brazil's Abolitionists in the London *Times* doubtless provided the invaluable impression that their movement had the blessing of the civilised world. These letters are the invaluable record of how that opinion was shaped and transmitted.

*University of Florida, Gainesville*

JEFFREY D. NEEDELL

*J. Lat. Amer. Stud.* 42 (2010). doi:10.1017/S0022216X10000556

Donna J. Guy, *Women Build the Welfare State: Performing Charity and Creating Rights in Argentina, 1880–1955* (Durham NC and London: Duke University Press, 2009), pp. xi + 252, £59.00, £14.99 pb.

In this book, Donna J. Guy analyses the role played by female philanthropic groups and feminists in the development of the Argentinian welfare state between 1880 and 1955. Focusing on the activities of these two different groups of women in the field of child welfare programmes and family reform, she argues for the importance of adopting a gendered perspective in the ongoing debates about the historical development of social policy, both in Argentina and in Latin America in general. In addition, she claims that in order to understand the historical process of welfare state formation in Argentina, it is essential to look beyond national policies and to include the local (municipal and provincial) levels of the state.

Guy's book is based on previously inaccessible archival records of the *Consejo Nacional de Niñez, Adolescencia y la Familia* (National Council for Childhood, Adolescence and the Family, CNAF) and therefore brings to light previously unknown primary source material concerning various child welfare institutions, including the better-studied Society of Beneficence, as well as copious information on children who entered state institutions. With access to a wide range of letters, including correspondence between parents and children, social workers' reports and letters concerning the role of philanthropic women and their social workers in general, this book manages to render a particularly vivid account of the human aspect of institutions.

Although the book's stated intention is to examine 'the complex interrelationships between female philanthropic groups and feminists in their advocacy of child welfare programmes and family reforms in Argentina in the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth' (p. 1), the author devotes considerably more attention to the female philanthropic groups than to the feminists. Indeed, the author's juxtaposition of feminists with female philanthropists in the development of child welfare is not persuasive. While it is true that feminists did advocate family reform by way of demanding stronger legal rights for mothers over their biological