

contexts associated with the burgeoning number and geographical dispersal of salsa dance studios and international salsa congresses, now lucrative commercial enterprises. Several authors describe the patrons of the latter as cosmopolitan, a term that suggests that these salsa dancers, Latino and non-Latino alike, are (or imagine themselves) as sophisticated and worldly, in contrast to immigrant or working-class dancers whose salsa dancing takes place in very different social settings and for different cultural reasons.

Initially, Latin/o American dancers enjoyed the advantages of being considered more authentic because their techniques had been “culturally inherited” rather than schooled. As salsa dancing became more widely popular, some skilled ethnic/working class dancers were able to leverage their cultural capital into new avenues of economic and social mobility. But over time, as dancers from more socioeconomically diverse racial, ethnic, and national backgrounds began teaching, producing, and promoting salsa dance events, Latinos lost their competitive edge. As the essays on Paris and Champaign-Urbana demonstrate, Latinos have sometimes been displaced altogether by those with more economic and social capital.

The essays also address various constructions and reconstructions of gender roles on dance floors: for example, how dancing conventions such as man leads/woman follows have been challenged (or not) in various locations; the relative importance of appearance and dress, especially in studio or competitive dance contexts (in contrast to social dancing scenes); or the ways gay dancers have destabilized the relationship between male bodily display and machismo. Other essays comment on the gendered organization of the salsa dance industry, in which, as on the dance floor, men have traditionally taken the lead—although it is clear from the essays that women have also been active as teachers and organizers of dances.

In summary, this highly recommended anthology illuminates how salsa dancing styles and distinctly local salsa scenes have evolved in multiple locations, but it also offers fascinating insights into the complex interplay between dance and culturally constructed ideas about race, class, ethnic, gender, tradition and modernity, migration, globalization, and national and local identity formation.

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*Language and Ethnicity among the K'ichee' Maya.* By Sergio Romero. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2015. Pp. 179. Illustrations. Maps. \$50.00 cloth.  
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The K'ichee' language is best known to the world as the original language of the *Popol Vuh*. Romero's book is an historical ethnography of K'ichee', a Guatemalan

Mayan language with over one million speakers. It represents an especially complex linguistic situation in that K'ichee' has multiple dialects (including one, Achi, that is considered by its speakers to be a distinct language, and another, the Cunén variety, that is considered by one linguist to be a separate language), ethnic identifications, speech genres, and registers, and has been in long-term contact with Spanish as a resisted but dominant colonial language. Dialects differ enough to cause difficulties in the effort toward standardization of the language. Thus, Romero's book is not an ethnography of speaking in the sense of Hymes (1974, *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*), although many of the same factors, such as speech community and norms, are considered.

Studies of K'ichee' have been plagued historically by the conflation of ethnonym, or name of an ethnic group, and glottonym, the name of a language. Throughout, Romero uses the concept of "boundary work" put forth by Andreas Wimmer (*Ethnic Boundary Making*, 2013) to distinguish different linguistic and social/ethnic groupings and associated practices at different time periods. He recognizes that "learning K'ichee' involves the acquisition of at least one set of socio-indexical rules embedded in a specific regional deictic space" (p. 57). Throughout, but especially in chapter three, the speech of the community of Santa María Chiquimula is presented as a mini-case study, contrasting its distinctive phonology, lexicon, syntax, discourse practices, pragmatic norms, and linguistic ideology with those of other regions and dialects.

The linguistic and sociolinguistic detail Romero presents is sensitive and highly informative, especially with regard to influences from Spanish and honorific forms and their use. However, it would have been helpful to have not just a partial view of the K'ichee' sound system, as seen in various tables, but a full phonological inventory, perhaps annotated for the dialect differences noted. On the lexical level, it is surprising that important cultural terms such as named ritual roles and categories of people go unremarked as having been borrowed from Spanish, for example, *prinsipalib'* for "elder" (p. 6) and *naturalilb'* for "indigenous" (p. 5). In terms of orthography, the author takes the trouble to mention (p. xv) that he uses the historically introduced grapheme "4" for the glottalized [k'], but apparently does so only when referencing historical texts that used that convention.

Romero takes K'ichee' from the earliest written forms used by the colonial Church through its transformation by linguistically trained Protestant evangelists (especially the Summer Institute of Linguistics) in the 1930s to governmental use of the Protestant version of the language in translating the constitution (1985), to the creation of the Academy of the Mayan Languages of Guatemala (1986) and its struggles in developing the unified orthography, and up to more recent difficulties in the efforts to standardize the language, paying continual attention to the use of neologisms and linguistic purism. The author finds the modern pan-Mayan movement's concentration on language to have deep roots, in that "the secular tension over the form and content of writing in Mayan languages [in early colonial times] explains the centrality of pan-Mayan demands

for institutionalized indigenous control over writing norms in pan-Mayan struggles in the 1980s and 1990s” (p. 14). Romero identifies K’iche’ as emblematically formative of the pan-Mayan movement, and presents a unique view of that movement through examination of the work of two K’ichee’ authors: Adrián Inés Chávez’s idiosyncratic translation of the *Popol Vuh* has been taken up as scripture by many pan-Mayanists, while Humberto Akabal’s poetry demonstrates the ongoing creativity in the use of the K’ichee’ language.

The book’s presentation is lovely, with helpful maps and evocative photographs. Romero has demonstrated that “colonialism is not just a political system or a state of mind but also a hybrid semiotic regime, a tense exchange of signs and ideologies that certain individuals, veritable cultural prophets, constantly recreate” (p. 105).

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*The Untranslatable Image: A Mestizo History of the Arts in New Spain, 1500–1600.* By Alessandra Russo. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014. Pp. xiii, 357. Note on translations. Acknowledgments. Prologue. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$60.00. doi:[10.1017/tam.2016.47](https://doi.org/10.1017/tam.2016.47)

Russo’s provocative book, first published in French in 2013, focuses on three corpuses—feather paintings or mosaics, maps, and graffiti—created in New Spain in the century after the conquest. Rather than presenting a survey of these very different media, the book offers an analysis of the creative process, as artists, most of them indigenous, grappled with ideas and images of both local and distant origins. In Russo’s view, the work of art that results “constitutes a means of thinking about, and then transforming, reality,” and thus “the ongoing process of *making* images” offers a unique perspective onto the tumultuous period (pp. 4, 5).

Conventional histories of art of the period once focused heavily on style and iconography, particularly the absorption of European imagery (as native artists looked at European books and prints and drew on them for inspiration) and were once guided by tropes of decadence (as native artists “lost” their distinctive styles) or acculturation (as “native” art became visually indistinguishable from European). Instead, Russo emphasizes the creative capacity of artists in New Spain to “reorder” their perceived reality, working outward from both European and Mesoamerican canons (p. 6). To escape the straightjacket of convention, Russo invites the reader to “start from zero,” in considering the art of the sixteenth century, that is, “forget irrevocable classifications; disciplinary separations; the frontiers between popular and cult art, between artisan and artist, between ‘native’ and Western” (p. 13).