

changes induced by Darwin's ideas, their approach to the reality of the species, and the corrections made by Ernst Haeckel's reintroduction of romantic idealism. In this context, it is surprising that Tony Bennett's *Past Beyond Memory: Evolution, Museums and Colonialism* (2004) is not used as a reference to clarify this precise point, since its content is so close to Andermann's own interests.

On another note, the pairing of the visual depiction of the desert campaign in Argentina in the 1880s with the work of Deleuze and Guattari contains some confusing affirmations that muddle what is otherwise a compelling argument. A reader might wonder, for example, about the precise meaning of the following sentence: 'The violence of the state always presents itself as preaccomplished, in the same way as it is the state that constitutes the exteriority of the outside onto which it deploys its repressive action' (p. 171). In the same context, a few paragraphs later, it is mentioned that the capture of the indigenous communities meant the creation of a cheap workforce, and that the Church was 'entrusted with the task of producing civil subjects (subjects with a proper name and a "soul")' (p. 172), a curious affirmation when the state was in the process of removing the Church from such functions at the national level. An explanation about the origin of this contradiction could have been very helpful.

The previous criticism does not diminish at all the merits of this book. In fact, Andermann makes way for new questions and possibilities. It is in this respect that the book is an important contribution to those interested in the cultural manifestations of the late nineteenth century. It will certainly remain fundamental reading for those concerned with the relationship between visibility and power in Argentina and Brazil.

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William F. Sater, *Andean Tragedy: Fighting the War of the Pacific, 1879–1884* (Lincoln NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), pp. ix + 442, \$60.00, \$29.95 pb; £46.00, hb.

The opera *Sateriana* centres on the history of the Southern Cone of South America, with specific focus on Chile, and this book is better understood when placed within the general context of all previous work by the author, particularly his *Chile and the War of the Pacific* (1985). The book is also a self-contained volume insofar as it does not indulge in lengthy analysis of the antebellum or the postbellum but instead centres fundamentally on the *bellum* itself – the tragic business of human beings killing one another. The contemporary military state of the art in 1879 is used to assess the warring performance of the three belligerents: the Peruvian–Bolivian alliance on the one hand, and Chile on the other. This war was a comprehensive synthesis of errors committed in previous conflicts compounded by the utter inefficiency of all three combatants, to the extent that battles at times were won not by the best fighters but by the party that made fewer mistakes.

Courage was not the only ingredient necessary for triumph. Telegraph systems, railways, coal supplies and an overall modern infrastructure were fundamental, as much as access to breech-loading rifles, armoured warships, torpedoes, minefields and modern artillery, all present in this war but not always compatible with the limited skills of the combatants (as shown by the tragicomic incident of the *Huáscar*

mishandling the firing of a torpedo so that the projectile changed its course and almost caused the sinking of the *Huáscar* itself). The war also stimulated a domestic war industry – for example, Peruvians successfully modified French Chassepots rifles to suit the Belgian Comblain cartridges, and local foundries manufactured over a million units of cartridges and Minié balls plus 60 pieces of artillery made from fused railway track. The most amazing technological development was Peru's construction of a 15-metre-long submarine, which the Peruvians were forced to destroy when the Chileans took over Lima.

Sater displays the craft of the historian at its best when he performs a healthy desacralisation of the war by looking into the past with the intention of showing what really happened, aloof from the constraints of national historians compelled at times to write an official version of events. A careful examination of the references used denotes the author's critical evaluation of his sources. Thus, for example, the allegation of cowardice on the part of Chilean admiral Juan Williams Rebolledo derives from the testimony of another Chilean officer, the instances of desertion by Chilean forces – 674 during the dirty war – are related by cold Chilean war reports, the clumsiness of Peruvian commanders is attested to by sources from that very nation, and the absurd trek of Chilean forces across the arid lands of southern Peru, which led men to commit suicide in substantial numbers, is documented by a Chilean testimony. On the other hand, the exemplary conduct of Chilean captain Prat and Peruvian admiral Grau is acknowledged by their respective enemies.

Forgotten human actors in the war are brought to prominence. The ubiquitous women were fundamental in all three armies as *rabonas*, *vivanderas*, *cantineras*, nurses, wives, mistresses, prostitutes and even fellow warriors. Sater provides moving references to Peruvian, Bolivian and Chilean female combatants. The logistics of the Bolivian army were fundamentally a female affair. Prostitutes and the concomitant infections created havoc among the invading Chilean forces. 'Damned whores are infecting soldiers, including the officers in good measure', wrote a Chilean officer. Sater also refers to the fate of the coolies, the indentured Chinese labour in Peru that seized the opportunity to free themselves by joining the invading Chilean forces.

The war provoked a brisk upsurge in arms sales to the belligerents. The declared neutrality of all powers was not a hindrance for this boom and it was Chile, with better control over international routes, that benefited the most from the vast supplies that European manufacturers made available, although American arms dealers always found ways to smuggle supplies for the Peruvian army.

Sater rightly labels the conflict a tragedy; the atrocities committed justify the label. The incongruence between the tiny number of wounded and the large number of dead finds an answer in the 'cold-blooded butchery practiced among the wounded on the battlefield' by Chilean soldiers and their *corvo* knives. In most cases Chileans justified this brutal behaviour as retaliation for Peru's use of mines. On the other hand, Peruvian troops in the Highlands 'liked cutting off the heads of Chilean soldiers ... to decorate the entrance to their villages' and 'mutilat[ing] sexually the Chilean wounded and dead'. In the Chilean defeat at La Concepción, besides exterminating all soldiers, Peruvian troops stripped and cut to pieces the Chilean *cantineras* in the main square of the village. The event was followed by brutal Chilean retaliation in the surrounding Indian villages.

Although there is evidence of admirable courage on the part of indigenous recruits – Bolivian Indians fighting with daring gallantry at Campo de Alianza, for

instance – there are also clear signs of the resentment and aversion of Quechuas and Aymaras to fighting a war that was not their own. In most cases they had been drafted by force, tied in gangs and dragged onto the battlefield. Most Indians could not communicate in Spanish, and their training was almost nonexistent. It is no wonder that they dropped their arms and went home at the first opportunity. Was this failure due to a lack of patriotic sentiments? Sater does not address the issue specifically, but he skilfully provides sufficient elements for historical judgement. The notion of *patria* in indigenous communities is not correlated to the state in which they live but to the community of which they form a part. Thus, when Chile took the war to the Indian communities in the Peruvian sierra and altiplano, there were abundant instances of the fierce courage shown by Quechuas when they found themselves immersed not in a war between Peru and Chile but in one between Chile and their land, their villages, their cattle, their potatoes and maize, and, fundamentally, their communities. At this point they naturally became the owners of the war and fully committed themselves, with General Cáceres, himself a Quechua speaker, to defending not an abstraction of ‘Peruvianness’ but the survival of their own wretched and humble communities. Sater provides the evidence for this in his superb final chapter.

In the end, concludes Sater, Chile won the war ‘thanks to its geographical location, its superior civilian infrastructure as well as its political institutions’. Hundreds of soldiers were killed in battle and thousands more died from their injuries, disease, thirst and starvation. Humankind, so capable of accomplishing achievements of amazing beauty, can also craft the most horrendous deeds with increasing and detestable efficiency. Let us hope that works like Sater’s get read by Bolivians, Peruvians and Chileans, to foster a future in which war will never again be on an Andean agenda.

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Alejandro San Francisco, *La guerra civil de 1891: Chile, un país, dos ejércitos, miles de muertos*, vol. 2 (Santiago de Chile: Centro de Estudios Bicentenario, 2008), pp. 396, hb.

Alejandro San Francisco’s second volume on the 1891 Revolution is an extremely welcome sequel to his earlier work. For decades Balmaceda and his fall from power has attracted scholars, yet few have approached the topic with such skill and wisdom as this author. While the second volume concentrates on the military aspect of the war, it is not just another account of the various battles; the author also describes how civilian politicians became divided over the issues raised by Balmaceda. When it became clear that the legislators could not resolve their differences, they went beyond the halls of the congress to the army’s barracks and the fleet’s wardrooms to find new allies. In the process, the armed forces became politicised and the politics of Chile became militarised.

As we know, Balmaceda not only insisted that the budget authorised for 1890 could be used for the year 1891, he also set the manpower levels of the army and navy, thereby allowing both to exist. Normally, the legislature had to approve these measures. Balmaceda, however, refused to call the congress into session, fearing that it would hold both bills hostage until he acknowledged that Chile had evolved into a