One might expect that the Catholic Church would be unified in the face of conflicts that might affect it, but a closer examination of the era's sermons, newspapers and correspondence demonstrates that the lower clergy often supported the peasants while the hierarchy had a different sense of institutional interests. By considering the roles of the lower clergy during regional, national and international conflicts, *For God and Revolution* contributes to a more dynamic understanding of the Catholic Church. During the war against the United States, for example, the hierarchy directed the lower clergy to resist the federal government's war efforts because they were to be funded by forced loans from the Church. Directly contradicting these orders, the local clergy issued nationalistic proclamations and used sermons to show their support for patriotism, which appealed to the Huastecos (27). Actions like this, according to Saka, were a factor in making the Huastecan peasants a receptive audience for Padre Mauricio Zavala's anarcho-agrarian ideology later in the century.

The final chapters of the book analyse the ideology of Padre Mauricio Zavala and the peasant revolt of 1879-1884. Zavala's prolific writings—including sermons, newspapers and books—gave Saka insight on the development of the priest's thinking on a wide range of topics. He was concerned not only with anarchism and rural life but also with the importance of indigenous languages, girls' access to resources and the benefits and pitfalls of both colonial government and post-independence Liberal and Conservative politics. While it might be easy to see him as an ideological outlier, Saka's skilful narrative analysis in previous chapters provides the reader with enough context to understand the origins of Zavala's anarcho-agrarian political philosophy and the peasants' acceptance of his leadership in the Mexican anarchist tradition and in peasant experiences of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, Zavala's ecclesiastical training and his relationship with other members of the lower clergy or with the hierarchy are less clear, whether because they distracted from the main narrative or because sources are unavailable. The book's other weakness is that the maps are difficult to interpret for readers unfamiliar with the details of Mexican geography. For example, Saka notes that the Huasteca region crosses state boundaries but there is no map showing that clearly. Some of the maps show small areas within the region without providing a sense of scale or the areas' relationship to other centres of peasant revolt.

Overall, however, this compact book makes important contributions to Latin American and world history, including the integration of peripheral areas into global economic processes, the development of socialism and peasant activism. It will be useful to students and scholars alike.

doi:10.1017/S0165115315000583 Lisa M. Edwards, *University of Massachusetts Lowell*

Shirley Cushing Flint, *No Mere Shadows: Faces of Widowhood in Early Colonial Mexico*. Albuquerque, N.M.: The University of New Mexico Press, 2013. 361 pp. ISBN 9780826353115. $55.00.

In *No Mere Shadows*, Shirley Cushing Flint dynamically reconstructs the lives of five elite Estrada widows who migrated from Spain to New Spain (Mexico) in the early 1500s. Descended from an elite Jewish family who converted to Christianity in the mid 1400s to avoid the purges in Spain, Dona Maria Gutierrez Flores de la Caballeria migrated with her husband to

New Spain at a time when social norms were in flux and became widowed in the New World. Contending that gender roles in Spain and New Spain, particularly for widows, were more fluid than the stereotypical assumption of a universal patriarchal norm, the bird's eye view of the Estrada widows by the author reveals the cunning and shrewd strategies deployed by these women to remain widowed rather than succumbing to suitors so as to preserve family resources and retain power. Appreciably, Cushing Flint does not presume to provide a general statement on gender roles or widowhood globally but specific contends that the norms of Southern Europe for women were different than in the global south. Postulating that "history is not just a tally of grand moments … it consists of each moment lived by ordinary people in ordinary ways" (xiv), Cushing Flint forgets that the women of in her book were far from ordinary: cut from the cloth of wealthy Spanish and, later, colonial Mexican elite, they were merchants, landowners and exploiters of aboriginal peoples. In Cushing Flint's own words, they were people who "blazed a career into the northern frontier of Spain" (xiv) and were members of the "protected and powerful class" (16).

The Estrada widows' wealth was built on the colonisation of the New World, the usurpation of aboriginal land, the extraction of labour, crops and precious metals and their strategic role in converting indigenous women to Spanish cultural norms. Cushing Flint reports this in a rather matter of fact manner and weaves praise for the seemingly flexible gender roles of Spanish aristocrats with sympathy for the Estradas: "It cannot be stressed enough that the conditions in Mexico City under which the conquerors and early settlers existed were harsh" (23). With empathy, the author describes how the widows seemingly lacked female companionship from among their class: she states that Dona Marina Gutierrez de la Caballeria, who solely bore the "burden of establishing a female Spanish presence among the native women" (27) and that the women, by replacing the former Iberian model of society with Spanish ones, were integral to the process of " 'civilize' and 'Hispanicize' the native populations" (29). Cushing Flint writes that civilizing meant teaching good Christian morals such as "writing, sewing, and other feminine skills" (17). The book also presents potent historical evidence about how gender can be a social modelling tool (i.e., gender mainstreaming in today's terms) as the Spanish view was that female colonists were important tools in religious and cultural conversion as well as for the supplanting of indigenous norms with European norms. Interestingly, these roles did not confirm to the Estrada women's lives as cunning powerbrokers.

The extent of the Estrada family reach as a colonial family of administrators was tremendous and not only included Mexico but Peru and the Indies. Cushing Flint would have helped the reader by including a map of the entire geographic range of this reach which should have included information about property gains and losses, dates and ranges of interests through time and space instead of single map that documents how the widows extracted resources built on the blood, sweat and tears of Indian labour. Investigating and documenting the statistics and loss of indigenous life through this brutal encomienda system would have been, even if only rudimentary, worth including. Ironically, Cushing Flint laments that, "Conquerors were rising from the rubble but at the expense of the native population … famine and pestilence plagued the city while more and more people flocked there in the hope of finding work and food, placing an even greater strain on its resources" (23). The disenfranchised indigenous people, the "straining the resources", and their juxtaposition against the activities of a "responsible widow", all illustrate the Estrada women as economically diversified long before the rest of the economy caught up with them through maintaining property, asserting guardianships, expanding the economic purview to money lending, slave owning, real estate and

liquor sales, sugar refineries, farmland, flour mills and livestock raising (64). The widows also perpetuated the brutal encomienda system at a time when the Crown was trying it ban it due to its exorbitant cost in indigenous life (39). The book is a potent and important reminder that the category of "woman" is meaningless in the context of conquest and the ruthless pursuit of wealth, which, in this case, was part and parcel of the primitive accumulation of new world resources to enrich Spain.

Cushing Flint also reveals how wider social and political changes between and among Spain and Mexico impacted the Estrada women. One of the Estrada women, for example, was widowed when her husband was beheaded for political subversion. Subsequently, she spent her widowhood as a *beata,* a fascinating category of female Christian mystics whose knowledge and metaphysical techniques popularly challenged the power of the church. At first, Spain encouraged the actions of *beatas* as a tool of conversion but later discouraged it due to the fact that many indigenous women became *beatas* and their power and expertise challenged church doctrine and threatened to the colonial social hierarchy.

A great strength of this book is that it graphically shows how marriage has long been about consolidating economic arrangements within wide kinship networks and is a series of long drawn out processes instead of an event. Cushing Flint also nicely shows the double standard and historical amnesia of Europe (and, by extension, in other western colonies) regarding notions of age appropriate marriage by illustrating that the consummation norm for girls was around 12 years of age for girls and 14 years for boys (74).

Cushing Flint also shows the salience of the state and laws in creating the context for the realisation of the Estradas' right to be and to remain widows. She notes that society viewed these women as upholders of family honour, a form symbolic state integrity that is largely invested in female sexuality (and hence the salience of chastity vows). Cushing Flint stresses the conditions of the early to mid-1500s as in flux since laws, norms and institutions were in rapid modification due to the high degree of class mobility of many ordinary Spaniards who raised to the status of "don" through their conquest activities (25). The laws and norms of Old World as well as its privileges (i.e., propertied women being allowed to act as witnesses and express views at elections and public meetings) did not automatically transfer to colonial Mexico (27) and the Estrada widows had to fight for the realisation of their legal rights. Although Cushing Flint does allude to the generational aspect of power transfers and Estrada women learning from the acts of one another, it would have also been very helpful for her to include the dates of birth for each woman below her name at the start of each chapter. This would help the reader to understand their temporal location vis-à-vis one another and make this fact a more explicit theme.

Another aspect that this book neglects is the potential fact that these women may have had non-marital relationships or the possibility of same sex and other types of sexualised relationships. The assumption of heterosexuality as the social norm and that these women remained celibate or "chaste" is not discussed. Instead, Cushing Flint depicts them as "following the rules" of widowhood and being "non-sexual" through their chastity offerings (34). Yet, if these women were as manipulative, cunning and self-servicing as the author portrays, they may have been equally so in regard to their sexuality. While this aspect might have been very difficult to explore, it would have added texture and nuance to the book's gender analysis, which tends to assume a heterosexual and monogamous social norm.

Overall, *No Mere Shadows* is an extremely valuable historical reconstruction. It eloquently demonstrates that the textures of socio-cultural life can be reconstructed through rigorous archival research. Cushing Flint's book also reinforces the fact that gender is not a homogenous

norm but has a multitude of nuances tied to the control of economic resources and the law. We also learn that patriarchy is not a universal norm in European colonies. Cushing Flint additionally shows, perhaps most importantly, that gender mainstreaming has a long and sordid history. Above all, the author clearly portrays that the category of "woman" as meaningless in the context of conquest and economic pursuit. Finally, while Cushing Flint does, undoubtedly, bring Spanish colonial widows out of the shadows and into the light she also, unfortunately, relegates indigenous people back into shadow.

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OCEANIA

Bronwen Douglas, *Science, Voyages and Encounters in Oceania, 1511-1850*. Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 361 pp. ISBN 9781137305886. $110.00.

Although the title of this book might suggest that it is a new overview of the exploration history of Oceania, it is something else altogether. While the book does cover almost three-and-a-half centuries of Oceanian-European interaction, it addresses two very specific things.

First, it is a lexico-semantic history of the terminology that visitors to Oceania (as well as metropolitan authors) used to make sense of the variety of people they encountered in Oceania. Douglas writes it with the aim of showing how racial thinking, so often anachronistically read back into sources going as far back as the sixteenth century, only arrived late onto the Oceanic scene. She argues that metropolitan savants only developed a racial understanding of humanity around the turn of the nineteenth century and only in its wake did racial thinking slowly filter through to the perceptions and writings of visitors to Oceania. The book takes an approach toward racial thinking similar by Roxann Wheeler but applies it to the specific context of Oceania.[1]

Second, the book looks for signs of "indigenous presence" in the writings of European visitors to Oceania. Douglas makes use of an extensive methodology that draws on Subaltern Studies and works from the assumption that indigenous presence/agency surfaces in these European writings by looking for what she calls "indigenous countersigns". She complicates her picture of Oceania by suggesting that, until much of the region was fully under the influence of European imperialism (which, for the most part, did not happen until after her period of study), Europeans did not necessarily have the upper hand in these encounters. Indigenous peoples were not helpless victims (i.e., not necessarily "subaltern" at all) and certainly not already on a way to their inevitable subjugation or destruction by Europeans. Douglas' book not only includes the imagery that was the product of these voyages (e.g., drawings and prints) but also plaster casts of people in her analysis. This leads to a richly illustrated book in which the illustrations form parts of the author's arguments.

[1] Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).