

significant way to the knowledge of colonial religiosity and politics. It should encourage new research on a subject little known and accepted in Hispanic American history, in spite of the fact that Arabic culture is one of the most important components of Hispanic American societies and cultures. Above all, research is needed for the Bourbon period that is not covered by Cook and that could be a quite different time when the religious and political Moorish problem “disappears.” *Ojalá* إن شاء الله

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INTERETHNIC RELATIONS IN COLONIAL PARAGUAY

Colonial Kinship: Guaraní, Spaniards, and Africans in Paraguay. By Shawn Michael Austin. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 2020. Pp. 382. \$85.00 cloth; \$85.00 paper; \$85.00 e-book.
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Shawn Michael Austin’s book poses an important challenge: to rescue the cultural presence of the Guaraní in the process of building Paraguayan colonial society, with a special focus on Asunción. The research seeks to show how the Guaraní way of relating and establishing alliances through the constitution of kinship relations, the *tovajá*, permeated interethnic relations beginning with the first encounters with the Spanish and Africans. In a very didactic way, the author explains the colonial adoption of a practice, now known as *cuñadasgo*, that accepted native women for the personal service of the Spaniards in exchange for goods, mainly tools. The practice had important consequences in the development of basic institutions of colonial society such as the *encomienda* and slavery.

The book is divided into three parts. The first lays the necessary foundations for understanding the complexities that the author proposes in the following parts. Thus, it shows the genesis, development, and changes that took place within the establishment of relations between the Guaraní and the Spaniards. He exposes the *cuñadasgo* as a key factor in the establishment of alliances and social hierarchies between colonizers and colonized prior to the establishment of the *encomiendas*, leading to the formation of a layer of polygamous conquistadors. With the establishment of the system of *encomiendas* and *reducciones de indios*, the *cuñadasgo* acquired an institutional character that favored the sustainability of the *encomiendas* over time. Then, the author reviews the conflicts of the colonial actors as they attempted to establish control over the native population on the frontiers with the Portuguese colonizers.

The second and third parts are divided between questioning and tensions within colonialism. In this way, the author reviews the uprisings of Juan Cuaꝛaꝛi and the

Reducción of Areca'yá in the seventeenth century and the appearance of Guaraní militias to defend themselves against the Guaigurú in the Chaco region. The third part begins by explaining the functioning of the economy in the secular and Franciscan reducciones near Asunción and offering a perspective of Asunción as a rural rather than an urban space. Next, the author proposes to demonstrate the image of colonial society as more complex by analyzing the relations between natives and Afro-descendants.

This last chapter is a contribution in two ways. First, it provides a local example of the integration and conflict that arose with the arrival of the Afro-descendant population in the conquered territories. Second, it shows the flexibility of the institutions, or legal categories, at the local level, showing how the intertwining of *cuñadasgo* with slavery blurred to some extent the boundary between taxation and slave labor. The author gives as an example a case of slaves counting as part of an *encomienda*.

The sources employed in the research deserve a separate comment. Although the use of different types of sources from local archives is noteworthy, the most important and innovative aspect of this book is the use of a large number of litigation cases. This is appropriate because through the study of conflicts it is possible to obtain a clear picture of the performance of institutions and to highlight the nuances of their operation in each local context, as is the case in this book.

In general review, this book proposes a fluid perspective on race by not taking racial categories as static. Instead, they are revealed as constructed in practice, through negotiations and disputes. Likewise, it does not consider that the social groups of *conquistadors* and conquered should be treated as estates, but as dynamic given the weak structure of Spanish domination. This book transcends the narrative that places the natives as passive recipients of Spanish culture. On the contrary, it marks the way in which Guaraní kinship changed colonial institutions and the conquistadors themselves.

With a view to future research, an interesting contribution from a gender perspective is how the author highlights the position of native women within the establishment of early colonial power relations. The dual situation of native women who arrived in the conquerors' homesteads as servants, or means of exchange, and as symbols of political alliance is made very clear. This point deserves a more in-depth study, which is yet to come.

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