

Rubén Nazario Velasco, *La historia de los derrotados: americanización y romanticismo en Puerto Rico, 1898-1917*. San Juan, Puerto Rico: Ediciones Laberinto, 2019. Pp. 295. \$20.85 paper (ISBN 9781950414024). doi:10.1017/S0738248020000395

Rubén Nazario Velasco's "history of the defeated" (*La historia de los derrotados*) uncovers the early twentieth-century roots of Puerto Rico's cultural nationalism. The Spanish-language book's legal-historical argument rests on what Nazario describes as foundational and incompatible United States citizenship myths. The "liberal myth" (*mito liberal*, 276) recounts free and equal United States citizens united by common commitments to democratic governance. The "nativist myth" (*mito nativista*, 276) depicts a white nation defined by racial exclusions.

La historia de los derrotados is a history of rupture. On one side lies the dozen-plus years after the 1899 United States annexation of Puerto Rico when leading islanders focused on the liberal myth of United States citizenship. They argued that Puerto Ricans deserved political power as Americans, regardless of their race or ethnicity. As they did so, Supreme Court decisions and federal policies consistent with the nativist myth accumulated. Eventually, key Puerto Ricans broke with liberalism to argue that Puerto Ricans so differed from other Americans that Puerto Rico should be independent. Modern Puerto Rican nationalism was born.

The book's broader method might be termed legal-political history and literature. It finds fertile ground in Puerto Rico, where law, politics, and literature have long intermixed. Nazario lucidly synthesizes extant scholarship on the legal-political history of annexation and its aftermath. His footnotes are a veritable guidebook to histories of early twentieth-century Puerto Rico. Through close, subtle readings, he then reveals how legal-political history shaped and was shaped by literary production. Wordsmiths' pens were cause and consequence of law and politics.

Nazario's account begins during nineteenth-century Spanish rule with Puerto Rican liberals. Like many elites in settler colonies, they aspired to lead their homeland through a transformation toward civilization and modernity. They sought to educate workers, institute liberal democracy, and modernize their economy. Doing so would cast off their island's distinctive manifestations of backwardness and underachievement. They were "optimistic" (*optimista*, 87) that United States annexation had brought them a powerful partner in the North. They were also wrong. United States judges, lawmakers, presidents, and bureaucrats instead denied Puerto Ricans liberal citizenship and its trappings.

Leading islanders responded to United States illiberalism in ways that became building blocks of Puerto Rican nationalism. Island politicians who despaired of achieving statehood or self-government within United States

sovereignty pressed for independence, either as an acceptable or preferred alternative to home rule within U.S. sovereignty. They still employed liberal cadences of politics and economy; the more nativist language of customs and racial character lay in the future. Conversely, professional islanders emphasized Puerto Rican distinctiveness in seeking to monopolize teaching, law, and government service against mainland incursion. The aim was “employment protection” (*protección del empleo*, 175), not a cultural stand. But the logic was nationalistic: Spanish and knowledge of the island’s unique laws and legal culture were job qualifications. Influential Puerto Rican writers made sense of United States dominance through engagement with influential early twentieth-century Spanish and Latin American literary schools. These artistic movements resisted United States dominance by depicting a praiseworthy yet politically defeated Latin race that was culturally incompatible with United States mores.

A catalyst for Puerto Rican nationalism came in 1913 after Democrats took control of Washington for the first time since Puerto Rico’s annexation. They continued their predecessors’ colonial policies, revealing that the Supreme Court and both United States political parties supported governing Puerto Rico consistent with the nativist approach to United States citizenship. An influential minority of island intellectuals then rejected liberal strategies and embraced romantic, pro-independence accounts of Puerto Rico’s distinct history, customs, language, and racial character. The island’s masses transformed from being a problem to be solved into the “image of an authentic and ideal Puerto Ricanness” rooted in “utopian accounts of peasant life” (*imagen de un puertorriqueño auténtico e ideal; versiones utópicas de la sociedad campesina*, 217). The invention of this heroic Puerto Rican past recast United States annexation as defeat, while claiming island distinctiveness as an immutable and natural fact supporting independence.

For Nazario, this origin story has a moral: by claiming to be defeated, nationalists became (and remain) too defeatist. A framework in which all power is “attributed to the Yankee” (*se atribuyen al yanqui*, 271) renders any island politics a fool’s errand. Nazario sees greater possibilities. Globalization and migration have shattered any monopoly colonialism once held over historical and cultural change, and Puerto Ricans have won political gains. Spanish is their language of public life. They enjoy self-government, perhaps more than was sought by turn-of-the-last-century elites. Nazario may go too far in suggesting that colonialism is mere historical “foam,” “alibi,” and “incantation” (*espuma; coartada; conjuro*, 274, 277, 277). But the volume’s final line nonetheless bears emphasis: Puerto Rico “is no defeated country” (*no es un país derrotado*, 280).

Indeed, this volume exemplifies Puerto Rican resilience. Prior to Hurricane María and the fiscal crisis, the University of Puerto Rico’s press regularly issued first-rate, locally produced historical monographs. They are doing this

no longer. Too much of such work now goes unpublished. Fortunately, smaller independent island presses sometimes step forward, as Ediciones Laberinto has done here with commendable art. The result is this handsome, well-produced contribution to our understanding of Puerto Ricans' responses to the law and politics of United States empire.

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Joan Sangster, *One Hundred Years of Struggle: The History of Women and the Vote in Canada*. Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press, 2018. Pp. 322 + vi. \$27.95 CAN hardcover (ISBN 9780774835336); \$22.95 CAN paper (ISBN 9780774835343); \$27.95 CAN ebook (ISBN 9780774835367). doi:10.1017/S0738248020000413

Joan Sangster's *One Hundred Years of Struggle: The History of Women and the Vote in Canada* is the first volume in the growing UBC Press series "Women's Suffrage and the Struggle for Democracy." Edited by Veronica Strong-Boag, the series aims to bring the complex history of women's suffrage to a broader audience. Sangster's contribution sets out the big picture, while other volumes in the series have a provincial or regional focus (e.g., *We Shall Persist: Women and the Vote in Atlantic Canada* by Heidi MacDonald) or take a more particular perspective (e.g., *Working Tirelessly for Change: Indigenous Women and the Vote in Canada* by Lianne Leddy). There are volumes on women and the vote in Ontario, British Columbia, the Prairie Provinces, and Quebec.

Sangster introduces us to several generations of women who played an important role in the struggle for suffrage, beginning with Rosalie Papineau, who, being propertied, voted in Lower Canada in 1809, before voting's incompatibility with a Quebec Catholic woman's proper role as a wife and mother took over the political imagination. Recognizing race as politically foundational, Sangster moves next to Black activist Mary Ann Shadd, who moved to Canada West in 1851, established a newspaper, and worked hard for education and political rights for African Canadians. While relating the contributions of a multiplicity of people—not only suffragists but also their opponents (male and female)—Sangster demonstrates the operation of conditions that have qualified and disqualified voters: religion (in early days), lack of sufficient property or income, affiliation with troops overseas, skin color and