

McCann's *Soldiers of the Pátria* (Stanford, 2004), and Shawn Smallman's *Fear and Memory in the Brazilian Army and Society, 1889–1954* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2002). Each of these works examines the relationship between the nation and either the overall institution of the army, or the regional importance of this institution. What sets Diacon's book apart is that *Stringing Together a Nation* is not a history of the Brazilian army; instead it focuses on the beliefs and policies of one officer who used the force of the national institution of the Brazilian army during the early republic to further his own goals of nation building. His book allows the reader to see beyond interactions between the army and the regional elite in the Northwest (though that topic is certainly well documented), and see the impact of one powerful army officer who uses his military commission to further his personal agenda of bringing indigenous communities into the Brazilian citizenship.

This is quite a concise book, and one could criticise Diacon for failing to produce a sufficiently exhaustive study of any one of the important areas he examines; Rondon's biography, positivism, technology or Indian affairs. However, it is the combination of these themes into a coherent whole that provides such a valuable insight into Brazil's growth as a modern nation. Diacon's success stems from his selective examination of these various themes in such a way as to produce a work in which the sum of the book far outweighs its individual parts. In the end, Diacon convincingly argues that it is only through a subtle understanding of both sides of Rondon's legacy that we can hope to analyse his life's work, and its impact on Brazil. This publication goes a long way towards presenting the English-language reader with that narrative. It will appeal to a broad audience of readers, and is a valuable addition in both undergraduate and graduate teaching.

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Dominique Soucy, *Masonería y nación: Redes masónicas y políticas en la construcción identitaria cubana (1811–1902)* (Santa Cruz de Tenerife: Ediciones Idea, 2006), pp. 392, pb.

An interesting debate among specialists in Cuban history centres on the role played by freemasonry in the development of politics, institutions, civil society and Creole identity. Despite recent important contributions on the subject, the question of whether masonic associations had a leading influence in the struggle for independence and the evolution of liberal republican ideas during the nineteenth century remains unsettled.

Setting aside obvious contradictions between the masonic principle of universal fraternity and partisan patriotism, nationalist historians such as Antonio Irazoz, Francisco Ponte Domínguez, and more recently Eduardo Torres-Cuevas, have argued that there is undeniable historical evidence linking masons, such as separatist leaders Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and José Martí, and their lodges to the separatist insurrections. Conversely, institutional historians of masonic lodges in Cuba, Joaquín Nicolás Aramburu, Aurelio Miranda Álvarez and, particularly, José Castellano Gil – while admitting anti-masonic persecution as well as social and political compromise among individual masons – doubt a direct involvement of masonic fraternities in favour of independence, and criticise the scant factual evidence provided by the nationalist argument. The institutional historians actually

underscore the conciliatory and philanthropic role of freemasonry after the 1880s, citing the efforts of creoles and Iberians alike, including Saturnino Martínez, Antonio Govín and Rafael Montoro, coincidentally also liberal-reformist political leaders.

Dominique Soucy sides squarely with those who emphasise a decisive influence of masons and their organisations and ideals in the building of Cuban identity, insurrectionist conspiracies, and republican constitutional bases. In her fresh and important book, based on a well researched and highly qualified doctoral dissertation, Soucy centres on the analysis of what she terms 'liberal-Masonic thought'. Pointing to the centrality of the ideas of liberty, fraternity and equality for Cuban freemasonry, especially among French-inspired masonic orients, Soucy follows Martí's definition of freemasonry as an active form of the liberal thought, an idea also highlighted by the distinguished historian, Paul Estrade.

Soucy contributes to filling an important gap in our historical knowledge of the complex history of freemasonry in Cuba. She provides documentary information, obtained from French archives holding the correspondence of the Grand Orient de France, on Cuban masonic affairs. This effort clarifies further the multiple outside influences, including British, North American and Spanish grand lodges and orients, in the ultimate formation of a single Gran Logia de la Isla de Cuba, after 1891. Apart from some helpful but partial statistical information on the age and profession of the members of two French lodges in Havana and Santiago in the early 1820s, no further comprehensive statistical analysis on lodges and their membership is attempted, despite the important contributions in this regard by Castellano Gil. The least researched aspect of freemasonry in Cuba is the key connection with grand lodges in the United States: primary documentary evidence from US and Cuban masonic archives has not been analysed systematically by specialised historians.

Beyond her ideological analysis, Soucy provides an overall history of Cuban freemasonry by incorporating and modifying chronological schemes developed by Torres-Cuevas and Castellano Gil. Her comprehensive historical survey starts with the modest origins of the lodges established by temporary British and French (from Saint Domingue) immigrants in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. She then proceeds to consider the North American- and French-inspired lodges and orients in the mid-nineteenth century, the persecution and repression of masons during the early phase of the Ten Years War, and the jurisdictional disputes between lodges and orients following either Cuban or Spanish organisational allegiances in the latter part of the century.

Emphasis on the links between liberal political thought and masonic credos leads *Masonería y nación* to identify secret or patriotic societies and their conspiracies as part of masonic ideological influence. Thus, the political conspiracies of the Sociedad de Soles y Rayos de Bolívar, Gran Legión del Águila Negra, and even the Annexationist movement (clearly distinguished as non-masonic by Torres-Cuevas) fall within Soucy's category of the 'political manifestations' of the liberal-masonic thought. Likewise, the republican-constitutional principles, spread from revolutions in North America, France and Spain, are associated in the book with the masonic ideological influence in Cuba that culminated in the constitution of 1901. These assertions are polemical, as they exaggerate the ideological and political reach of freemasonry on the basis of abstract notions insufficiently sustained by direct evidence.

In the analysis of non-governmental and non-political associations, freemasonry offers a fascinating, albeit highly debated, case study. Part of the problem in understanding its wide impact has been the prevalence of biased anti-masonic or pro-masonic historical perspectives which are often misinformed and inaccurate in the absence of systematic archival research. Soucy's study overcomes such limitations and advances considerably the renewed historical interest in the impact of freemasonry in society. Like other associations active in civil society, masonic lodges were affected by the political events in Cuba linked to the struggle for independence during the nineteenth century. To argue, however, that a principal effect of masonic fraternities in Cuba was political-ideological is to neglect the more pervasive and common masonic notions of human progress, rational-spirituality, anti-clericalism, and, above all, philanthropic actions. These principles were at the centre of the masonic associational by-laws, rites and everyday activities. The notions of 'freedom, equality and fraternity' among most masons did not have the narrow political connotations and definitions used by radical leaders. By emphasising the rather indirect political aspects of freemasonry, *Masonería y nación* contributes to a general history of political ideology in Cuba, but avoids a deeper analysis of the multiple and far-reaching non-political contributions of masonic associational life.

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Astrid Cubano Iguina, *Rituals of Violence in Nineteenth-Century Puerto Rico: Individual Conflict, Gender and the Law* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2006), pp. x + 199, \$59.95, hb.

Through the meticulous examination and analysis of the court records of the district of Arecibo in north-central Puerto Rico, Astrid Cubano Iguina brings fresh insight to the study of the island's history. Cubano Iguina's focus is on cases that dealt with violence: who reported violent action to the law, how the law responded, and how the ensuing dialogue among accused, accusers and judges played an active part in altering the population's relationship to the law and, over time, the law's to the population.

The district of Arecibo underwent significant change in the years under study, 1867–87. In its earliest years it was based on an economy rooted in sugar production and slave labour; by the 1880s a more urban population had emerged, with artisans, journalists, teachers, workers' associations, in addition to local elites, landholders and a mobile rural workforce. Cubano Iguina's study of the ways in which these changes were manifest in the legal records dealing with gender and violence demonstrates the value of a closely focused historical inquiry. She shows how the legal system itself was shaped by the ways in which people used it, and how in the years under study, the system changed from being part of the apparatus of colonial rule to being understood as part of the modern state wherein recourse to the law was the right of a citizen.

Within her argument she makes visible the meanings of gender, understood in the sense that many of the practices of violence arise from beliefs about ancient concepts of male honour as well as beliefs about male-female relationships. The great majority of cases brought before the law involved male-on-male violence, but the