

There is much more in this book that will be of interest to historians, scientists and other readers. Chile's contribution to science in general is one important aspect; the networks, friendships and quarrels among scientists constitute another. But above all, the most important contribution of this book is that it demonstrates beyond any doubt the significance of science to the building of a new nation in Latin America, a finding perhaps applicable within and well beyond the region. Despite all the pressing political and economic problems which most historians usually emphasise, and rightly so, the author demonstrates that there are other significant angles for understanding post-independence issues in nineteenth-century Latin American history. The world of science is one of them.

The caveats about this volume are few. The study is firmly based on a wide range of primary sources located in archives in Chile and the United Kingdom, but it would have been desirable to update the bibliography of published primary and secondary sources. For instance, since 2007 the Cámara Chilena de la Construcción, in association with the National Library and the Catholic University of Chile, has republished the 30 volumes of Gay's *Historia física y política de Chile*, all prefaced by leading scholars in the various fields on which he wrote. The same collection has also published relevant volumes by Rodolfo Philippi (*Viaje al desierto de Atacama*, 2008) and Ignacio Domeyko (*La Araucanía y sus habitantes*, 2010), which contain substantive introductory studies by Chilean scholars. An article on Claude Gay from 2002–3 by a leading historian of science, Rafael Sagredo, is cited in the bibliography, but Sagredo has published many relevant studies in the decade since. Simon Collier's *Chile: The Making of a Republic, 1830–1865* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), an extraordinary synthesis of the period covered by this book, is missing from the bibliography. Perhaps readers will be curious to consult these sources after perusing *The Sociable Sciences*. This book certainly provides a most motivating start.

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Joy Logan, *Aconcagua: The Invention of Mountaineering on America's Highest Peak* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2011), pp. x + 251, \$35.00, pb.

This is an original and well-crafted book that fits poorly into received categories, yet offers compelling insights for a wide range of fields. Joy Logan is a professor of literature, and her earlier teaching and publications focused largely on familiar themes of identity, gender and race in Southern Cone narratives. Yet she was led from the flats of western Argentina, from close readings of well-known texts by Sarmiento, up into the mountains towering above. Working from an eclectic disciplinary toolkit that combines textual analysis with ethnographic fieldwork, and cultural history with environmental studies, she has produced the first book-length scholarly account of mountaineering in Argentina, or indeed the Andes as a whole.

The careful reader will note that neither the province, nor the country, nor the mountain range in which Aconcagua is located appear in the title. This is likely the product of a calculated effort by the press (and perhaps the author) to reach the broader international audience reading a growing body of works on mountaineering, from non-fiction thrillers to scholarship from the likes of Sherry Ortner, Kerwin Klein, Tait Keller or Mark Carey. The title thus echoes the transformation of Aconcagua itself, over the last three decades, into a globe-trotting mountaineer

destination, one of the 'Seven Summits'. But if this global positioning wins the book a larger audience, it also obscures much of what is most original and compelling about Logan's work: its grounding in the specific cultural and political geography of Argentina, and especially of the province of Mendoza. No matter – just as the adventure tourists drawn to Aconcagua discover its larger Argentine setting, so the reader will find herself drawn into a complex analysis of the uses of the mountain for fashioning personal, regional, national and ultimately global identities.

Thinking creatively, Logan has 'structured this book according to the framework of the mountaineering experience' (p. 14), with technical briefings first, the actual climb later, and debriefs and asides throughout. The first five chapters explore the history of Andes mountaineering, offering close readings of everything from key texts to contemporary promotional materials. These comprise an interrogation of mountaineering as a practice of European (and imperial) modernity (chapter 1), an examination of how San Martín's heroic military expedition made the Andes a national memory space (chapter 2), a survey of the long-hidden and now consciously highlighted indigenous history of the region (chapter 3), a penetrating analysis of how Aconcagua entered international circuits (chapter 4), and finally a persuasive account of how mountaineering became a source of regional pride and global connection in the 1980s (chapter 5). The last three chapters, in turn, follow expeditions up the mountain, paying close ethnographic attention to the self-fashioning of local guides; the performance of gender and adventure; and the interplay of identities and narratives up at base camp.

While humans have been climbing and inhabiting the Andes for thousands of years, the modern history of 'mountaineering' on Aconcagua began when a European, Paul Güssfeldt, first neared the summit in 1883. Most accounts of this pioneer ignore the Chilean *arriero* who accompanied him, Gilberto Salazar, and some even call Güssfeldt the 'discoverer' of a mountain whose indigenous name would suggest that it had drawn attention before (p. 26). Logan is excellent on this imperial and modernist imaginary of early mountaineering, from the English and German fin-de-siècle pioneers to the 1934 Polish expedition who absurdly refused to speak to the local press and stated 'that all data about the route and their ascent would be sent back to Europe' (p. 115). These narratives provided the basic structure for all future narratives about mountaineering in the Andes, whether from soldiers, local pioneers or adventure tourists.

Paradoxically, European narratives of the mountain were largely ignored at the height of European influence in Mendoza. Instead, for two generations, Mendoza's attentions were largely focused on the oasis below, where wineries grew rapidly thanks to land grants, expanding irrigation, booming European immigration and national railways. Argentine mountaineering only started in the late 1920s when, inspired by training in Italy, Major Edelmiro Farrell transformed the local military garrison into a mountain force. By 1935, a civilian Club Andinista Mendoza was founded, with military officers prominent among its leadership. There followed two decades of prodigious achievements culminating with an Argentine ascent in the Himalayas during the presidency of Farrell's former protégé, Juan Domingo Perón, one year after Hillary climbed Everest. In this era of mandatory military service, mountaineering had established its nationalist credibility.

But the heart of Logan's book is found after these militarised heroics. She shows how, after the end of the 1976–83 military dictatorship, a new group of young Mendoza climbers began to explore the mountains aggressively, agitate for park

protection and promote the sport. This 'Generation of the 80s' became provincial heroes, founded a public school for mountain guides and helped forge a new, more globalised identity for Mendoza. Logan demonstrates their central role in bringing Mendoza into the Seven Summits circuit, modelling (and professionalising) climbing and remaking the local tourist economy.

Outsiders play key catalysing roles in Andean mountaineering throughout the book, and in the final ethnographic chapters Logan offers a rich exploration of the rough, competitive, masculinist and thoroughly polyglot spaces of mountain climbing. Along the way, the book offers wonderful snapshots, from intense cultural and political debates over the fate of an indigenous mummy from the high sierra to a Catalan (and nationalist) TV reality show about climbing Aconcagua.

Logan's tone is analytical throughout, and will undoubtedly satisfy followers of Mary Louise Pratt more than fans of Jon Krakauer. The book might have benefited by engaging with works on the territorial dimensions of Argentine identity construction, such as those by Oscar Chamosa or Graciela Silvestri. But this was a risky book to write and, minor infelicities aside, there is no doubt that the wager has paid off handsomely.

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Natalia Milanesio, *Workers Go Shopping in Argentina: The Rise of Popular Consumer Culture* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2013), pp. xi + 307, \$55.00; £44.50, hb.

In *Workers Go Shopping in Argentina*, Natalia Milanesio has produced a vivid and imaginatively researched portrait of popular consumer culture in mid-twentieth-century Argentina. Offering a fresh contribution to the recent 'cultural turn' in studies of Peronism, this work examines the social and cultural transformations that followed when millions of Argentines found themselves suddenly able to buy consumer goods and participate in commercial leisure activities on a mass scale during the populist government of Juan Domingo Perón. Unlike other scholars like Mariano Plotkin and Eduardo Elena who have brought a cultural reading to official Peronist rhetoric and policy, Milanesio emphasises the ways in which a variety of non-state actors also contributed to this new mass consumer culture. She convincingly portrays the period between 1946 and 1955 as a watershed moment in Argentine culture and, in the process, both illuminates and challenges some of the most resilient clichés about what Peronism meant to working people.

Milanesio's analysis focuses on the cultural dimensions of consumption, rather than on the political economy of import substitution industrialisation. Though she provides sufficient economic data to illustrate the expansion of purchasing power under Perón, she draws on cultural theory, gender analysis and material history to explore the changing social behaviours and debates that accompanied mass consumption. As she demonstrates, working-class people engaged in a whole new set of cultural practices when they suddenly found themselves with the means to buy household appliances, follow fashion trends and enjoy commercial amusements like the cinema. In so doing, they captured the attention of advertisers, industrialists, policy-makers and middle- and upper-class observers. New social tensions and stereotypes emerged as working people became more visible in once exclusive public