

because he demonstrates how the experiences of Galileo (and others) can stand in for their less-illustrious counterparts. Instead, Marr's new monograph should be celebrated for what it is: a much-needed study of the material, textual and artistic world of the sixteenth-century mathematician.

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DANIELA BLEICHMAR and PETER C. MANCALL (eds.), *Collecting across Cultures: Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011. Pp. xvi + 361. ISBN 978-0-8122-4305-5. £32.50 (hardback).
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The title of *Collecting across Cultures: Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World* hints at – but ultimately understates – the ambitions of an edited collection whose focus stretches from sixteenth-century Europe to nineteenth-century Mexico, with brief stopovers in Java, Siam, the Pacific Northwest and Peru squeezed in along the way. This collection brings together fourteen interdisciplinary essays written by an equally diverse group of scholars; represented in its four sections are historians, archaeologists, anthropologists, curators and art historians. If, as a collective, they are subject to many of the same methodological and classificatory challenges as the early modern collections they describe, the essays in this collection are nonetheless sure to be of great interest not only to historians of early modern science but to scholars of empire, globalization and cultural contact in the early modern world more broadly.

The essays in *Collecting across Cultures* offer a fascinating new perspective on Europe's encounters with an ethnically and culturally diverse early modern world, analysing how a varied cast of (mostly) Europeans collected experiences, representations and artefacts and mobilized them to make sense of the world beyond Europe's shores. The collection opens with Daniela Bleichmar's insightful analysis of the seventeenth-century collection of Aragonese nobleman Vincencio Juan de Lastanosa, yet few other essays so clearly focus on individual collections. Others most often cast their net more widely, considering types and methods of collecting, or they proceed more narrowly, situating the histories of specific objects in European collections such as Javanese palm manuscripts and Native American skulls within Europe's expansion into the early modern world. These objects and collections prove incredibly rich sources but, more importantly, the authors of *Collecting across Cultures* are able to use them to ground discussions of often abstract concepts such as contact or imperialism in histories of informal and idiosyncratic exchanges at the margins of empire or in the experiences of individual collectors grasping to understand new worlds and cultures. Collections and the objects within them are thus themselves imaginatively reconceptualized as sites of encounter and exchange.

Readers are consistently presented with glimpses of objects in motion, circulating both around the globe and through multiple registers, genres and media. Whether it be the cold and increasingly careful arithmetic with which slaves were categorized in eighteenth-century Jamaica, the transition from collecting living Native Americans to visual and textual representations of them, or the evolving appreciation of Mexican regalia in Habsburg Europe, these essays highlight the instability of collections and the multiplicity of meanings assigned to them. Among the most innovative essays are those that have, to quote Benjamin Schmidt's contribution, 'allowed media to mingle' (p. 38). Over the course of the collection, discussions of objects are paired with discussions of manuscripts and printed texts, but many essays individually deal with the impact of genres and formats on how knowledge was collected, constructed and represented. Schmidt's chapter, for example, discusses the changing meanings of exotic icons such as parasols as they were translated from physical objects into abstract representations of foreign cultures and places. Cécile Fromont's excellent essay similarly discusses the interplay between visual and textual representations of

Capuchin experiences of African cultures and environments. With a capacious definition of collecting and collections, *Collecting across Cultures* is therefore able to reframe discussions of the display and study of exotic artefacts within an innovative media history of cross-cultural contact.

Yet often these reconstructions of the trajectories and histories of collections also signal the limits of European understandings of the cultures from which objects and information were plucked. This is articulated most clearly in the chapter by Paz Cabello Carro that describes frequent and informal exchanges between Spanish explorers and native peoples of the Pacific Northwest and the various archival misclassifications that, in one case, attributed a Peruvian origin to Nuu-chah-nulth artefacts. Rather than simply mediating the encounter with new worlds, then, many of these essays therefore suggest that these objects became under- or undetermined raw materials with which European collectors assembled a vision of the wider world. As Bleichmar reminds us in her contribution, judging the veracity of early modern collectors is not the goal of these essays. Yet with a few noticeable exceptions – Peter Mancall’s discussion of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) or Lisa Trever and Joanne Pillsbury’s essay on a Peruvian bishop whose ordering of American plants and animals was heavily influenced by local indigenous cultures, for example – these collected essays shy away from discussions of how these objects (or the peoples they came from) influenced European conceptions of the non-European world and seem pessimistic about the possibility of recovering the alternative forms of knowledge embedded within them.

If the title of this text ultimately undersells the geographic and temporal diversity of these essays, it may therefore nonetheless oversell the extent to which it actually discusses *Collecting across Cultures*. In spite of confident assertions about the collections of Iroquoian peoples and African princes in the introduction, for example, it is only in Sarah Benson’s attempt to re-create Siamese collections of French objects that the other side of early modern encounters is probed in any real depth. While Trever and Pillsbury’s chapter discusses a specific colonial collection, the focus otherwise remains trained on Europe and on European collectors who, wherever they travelled, ultimately assembled their collections there. This is likely a product of the archives on which these essays draw – surviving collections of artefacts still housed throughout Europe – but there seems to be little explicit recognition of these limitations or any sustained discussion of how they might be overcome.

While the same centripetal and centrifugal forces at work in any edited collection – a tension between providing an introduction to a diverse and sophisticated field and providing evidence of a coherent vision or theme – can be noticed here, this is an excellent and much-needed book. In tracing out the Atlantic and global histories of collections and cabinets of curiosity, *Collecting across Cultures* offers a sophisticated new approach to revisit and enrich histories of how Europe encountered and ultimately came to understand the wider world.

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PETER R. ANSTEY, *John Locke and Natural Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xii + 252. ISBN 978-0-19-958977-7. £35.00 (hardback).
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While Locke’s relationship to the natural-philosophical endeavours of his time has previously been subject to academic scrutiny, it arguably has never received such a painstaking and well-structured examination as in Peter Anstey’s masterful *John Locke and Natural Philosophy*. In fact, what makes this such an excellent study is Anstey’s exacting attention to the details of Locke’s writings, including the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and his medical and chymical works. Having spent quite a number of years co-editing Locke’s writings on natural