

in chap. 8, one could also add, for example, López Albújar's book, *Los caballeros del delito* (1936).

Some of the chapters demonstrate what Aguirre calls 'the disregard for the lives of those who fell into the clutches of the state legal system' (p. 23). However, as becomes evident in other parts of the book, and in line with new legal history, law was also an arena of struggle and negotiation in which subaltern groups sometimes turned to state justice, seeking its legal protection in an attempt to curb the power of the dominant elites. In chap. 10, in which Aguirre calls for a re-examination of the traditional division between the history of crime and the history of labour in Latin America, he also stresses that throughout the history of this continent widespread use of legal litigation was made by slaves and Indians, by urban and rural workers, in order to claim some of their rights and to improve their conditions of life and work. Legal litigation was one of the strategies of resistance available to Peruvian slaves, and according to Aguirre (chap. 3) it played an important role in the struggle to abolish slavery in Peru. He also mentions that protective legislation and the work of legal defenders of slaves contributed to making this strategy possible. A similar argument might have been extended to the later legal struggles of both Indians and *indigenistas*, whose ideas were reflected in Peruvian legislation after the 1920s.

This indicates that the legal system, and especially the judicial arena, played an intricate role in the reproduction and reshaping of power relations, in making distinctions between the use and abuse of power, in reflecting authoritarian perceptions and, at the same time, creating a culture of litigation. Thus our understanding of what Aguirre calls 'the mechanisms of power and transgression' deployed throughout the history of republican Peru (p. 23) could be enhanced by directing further scholarly attention to the ways in which the Peruvian legal system exercised those roles. Indeed, as many of the articles in this book convincingly show, legal files are important sources for illuminating the history of subaltern groups – but they can be further explored to shed light on other actors and institutions in the legal arena, including courts, judges, attorneys and defenders, allowing for a better understanding of these players' specific contributions to the patterns and practices of power relations and acts of transgression elaborated in this book.

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Sol Serrano, *¿Qué hacer con Dios en la República? Política y secularización en Chile, 1845–1885* (Santiago: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2008), pp. 375, \$13.20, pb.

Sol Serrano's latest book will have a profound impact on Chilean and Latin American historiography. It demonstrates the significance of religion and the Catholic Church for understanding the transition from monarchical to republican rule in nineteenth-century Chile. Serrano poses the series of questions that guided her research in various national and international archives, and in the Chilean press and congressional debates. Is it possible to write a history of secularisation? Is it possible to study religion from a standpoint that is neither liberal nor conservative, neither anti-clerical nor ultramontane? Is it possible to study secularisation as a process and not as progress, as liberals would have it? Is it possible to study secularisation, from a religious standpoint, no longer as a disaster but simply as historical change? These are all pertinent questions, especially considering the partisan nature of the historiography on the subject.

To answer these questions, Serrano examines religious practices in nineteenth-century Chile in order to determine the impact of republican nation building on the long-lived compact between Church and state. It will not be entirely surprising that Catholic practices changed in fundamental ways, but rarely has anyone compiled such a rich list of illustrative examples based on primary research, informed by comparative perspectives and conveyed in a compelling narrative. Drawing from the distinction between the private and public spheres, Serrano determines that the struggle over the definition of the religious and the secular was not the product of Catholic resistance to liberal advances, but rather the product of changes within Chilean Catholicism itself. By examining the pronouncements of the clergy, Serrano finds that many of their disputes did not so much concern the anti-clerical nature of ascendant liberalism, as they did the lingering regalism – meaning the supremacy of the sovereign over ecclesiastical matters – of important segments of the Chilean Church.

Secularisation, then, is neither an automatic nor an inevitable phenomenon that occurs when a country becomes ‘modern’ and liberalism prevails. ‘It is no longer enough’, Serrano states, ‘to study secularisation as a mechanical or linear process whereby religion dissipates along with tradition’ (p. 168). Secularisation, instead, takes place in a parallel movement whereby both Church and state redefine their spheres of activity and interaction, and Catholicism competes with the secularising state in the public sphere. In this process, the Chilean Catholic Church established firm roots in civil society, extending, organising and rationalising its relationship to the population in the new republican context. Chileans, Serrano asserts, did not abandon their predominant creed, but rather adapted to the realities generated by the new political environment.

¿Qué hacer con Dios en la República? studies Chilean Catholicism beyond, although without neglecting, the institutional Church. It is a social and cultural history of religious practices that delves into a wide array of popular activities, in the countryside and in remote cities as well as in Santiago – something that is extremely important for a Chilean historiography dominated by the capital. Readers who are perhaps more familiar with the political history of Chile will be particularly interested in, and certainly not disappointed by, Serrano’s rendition and interpretation of the major events surrounding the rocky relationship between Church and state in the nineteenth century: the so-called ‘Affair of the Sacristan’ (1857), which represents the first serious clash between Church and state over the boundaries of their respective jurisdictions, and which is at the basis of the formation of the Chilean party system; the heated press and congressional debates over Article 5 of the 1833 Constitution, which declared Catholicism the official religion of the state; and the appointment of a successor for the combative Archbishop Rafael Valentín Valdivieso after his death in 1878 following 30 years in the position, which was the prelude to the extensive secularising reforms of the 1880s.

Chilean nineteenth-century liberalism was not a monolithic force. Liberals held different views regarding the status of the Church in the political system of the country, but by and large they wanted religion to be confined to the private sphere. Catholics, for their part, responded by entering the public realm to advance their own agenda for political development. The Church itself adapted to the new means available to convey its message, like the printing press, which had been used for predominantly secular purposes. The *Revista Católica*, founded in 1843, is a prime example of the Catholic journalism that opened the way for such polemical papers

as *El Independiente*, *El Estandarte Católico* and a multiplicity of provincial papers. Through action in a variety of venues, including voluntary associations and Congress, Catholicism ‘evolved from being the official religion of the state, to becoming one of the most organised forces of civil society, competing for predominance in a plural society’ (p. 174).

Sol Serrano demonstrates that in contrast to other countries in the region and in Europe, Chilean Catholics were decidedly republican, in the sense of accepting the values of constitutional rule, separation of powers and political competition. Such laws as the secularisation of cemeteries introduced enormous strains between Catholic and republican views, however, though never to the point of precipitating a complete break between the two, as in France. In this sense, the nature of Chilean liberalism helps to explain the compatibility: by the time of the administration of José Joaquín Pérez (1861–71), the Chilean government was less concerned about control of the Church than separation from it. This, in turn, allowed the Church and its representatives in civil society to develop their own venues of opinion and representation, forming some of the oldest and strongest Catholic political parties in the region.

¿Qué hacer con Dios en la República? provides a plethora of empirical information regarding the structure of Catholic organisations, the internal administration and financing of the Chilean Catholic Church, and the territorial expansion of the institution in the nineteenth century. It is also a methodologically sophisticated, massively documented and at the same time highly readable book. It will no doubt enrich the debates on the role of religion and the Catholic Church in nineteenth-century Latin America.

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Bárbara Díaz, *La diplomacia española en Uruguay en el siglo XIX: Génesis del Tratado de Paz de 1870* (Montevideo: Comisión Sectorial de Investigación Científica y Biblioteca Plural de la Universidad de la República, 2008), pp. 406, pb.

The consolidation of the history of international relations as a scientific discipline has reflected its shift from a perception of the world based on relations among states towards a more complex vision centred on relations among peoples. The polysemous character of the term ‘relations’ itself enunciates the multifaceted nature of this historical discipline.

The history of relations between Spain and the new nations that emerged in the aftermath of the disintegration of the Spanish colonial empire must be framed in this context, but this entails superseding the state-centred paradigm, which posits the state as the vertebral column of all such relations, and the gradual integration of new analytical perspectives. This is especially important when we discover that such visions are fundamental to the understanding of an international scenario that became more and more complex as the nineteenth century wore on, due, among other factors, to the multiplication of actors whose interactions determined, in the final analysis, the functioning of the system itself.

Relations between Spain and the emerging Spanish American republics in the nineteenth century reproduced the complexities that accompanied the separation of two territories which had been united for several centuries by links that continued to exist well beyond the disappearance of their colonial ties. I have pointed out