

women) and nearly 15 per cent of the population above the age of 60. Furthermore, all of this has occurred despite the high levels of young Nicaraguans migrating to Costa Rica from the neighbouring republic in the last 40 years. And since the young do not share their parents' and grandparents' enthusiasm for rural life, coffee growing has begun to look like a very old-fashioned activity.

This is not, of course, how the government would like to see it and when President Xi of China in 2013 asked to visit a 'typical' Costa Rican family, he was taken to a small-scale coffee farm owned by an elderly grower with strong links to a cooperative. Yet today a 'typical' Costa Rican is more likely to be working for a software company in the capital San José or a tourist business on the Pacific coast. Coffee, it would seem, has passed into the mythology of Costa Rican history in the same way as small-scale farming in the United States or sugarcane production in much of the Caribbean.

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Sarah Walsh, *The Religion of Life: Eugenics, Race, and Catholicism in Chile*

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Marcelo Sánchez Delgado

Universidad de Chile

The Religion of Life by Sarah Walsh is part of a broad and rich historiographical field that looks at the development of eugenics beyond the Anglo-Saxon world. The pioneering works of some historians in the 1990s, such as those of Mark Adams, Nancy Stepan, Anne Carol and Raquel Álvarez Peláez, among others, opened the perspective on eugenics to a global dimension outside the classical epicentre of its development, in Germany, the United States, England and some Nordic countries. This comparative stimulus and historical research in diverse national contexts was followed in the 2000s by Latin American authors who began to study eugenics in this region. The works of Marisa Miranda, Gustavo Vallejo, Andrés Reggiani, Héctor Palma, Ricardo Augusto Dos Santos, Luis Ferla, Ana María Talak and Sandra Caponi, among others, followed this path.

In the Chilean case, the decisive impulse for studies on eugenics in the country unfolded in the 2010s, during which a well-nourished field of studies was consolidated by articles, monographs, research projects, university courses and a handful of books on the subject. Here it is fair to mention works such as those of Bernardo Subercaseaux, César Leyton, Cristián Palacios, Javiera Letelier, Gabriel Cid, María Josefina Cabrera and the author of this review, among others.

Walsh knows this field well, and through this book she has managed to solidly inscribe herself in it, delving into a barely outlined topic in the work of local

historians, such as the relationship between eugenics, racism and Catholicism in the first half of the twentieth century in Chile. Some monographic articles (such as Marcelo Sánchez Delgado, 'Eugenesia: Ciencia y religión. Una aproximación al caso chileno', *Revista de Historia Social y de las Mentalidades*, 18: 1 (2014), pp. 59–83) proposed this line of inquiry but did not reach a systematic and in-depth treatment that a book such as the one by Walsh can address.

Walsh's book is elegantly organised into two parts, seven chapters in all. The first part reviews how Catholic thought and eugenics were related in the local context, while the second part addresses the arguments with which Chilean eugenicists, Catholic or otherwise, assumed the task of supporting the idea that there was a homogeneous, unique and particular 'Chilean race', stable and recognisable both in its external appearance and in its spiritual and psychic values.

One of the great achievements of Walsh's work is having managed to give recognisable and very well-founded contours to the birth, development and projection of an elusive and confusing category in the sources: the Chilean race. As the reader will be able to follow in detail in Walsh's book, the idea of a 'Chilean race' arises in the work of a doctor inspired by nationalism and scientific racism at the end of the nineteenth century, Nicolás Palacios (1855–1911), who describes it in general terms as a homogeneous and stable race, consolidated at the beginning of the independence of Chile or before (1810), whose roots would be in the encounter between two patriarchal and warrior races: that of the Spanish conqueror, characterised as 'godo', that is to say, of Germanic roots, and that of the Araucanians. Although Palacios and his 1904 work are well known and assiduously studied in the local context, the demonstration of the consolidation of an entity such as the Chilean race in the Chilean eugenic, medical and racial thought is an achievement of Walsh's work and a contribution to the field. In addition, Walsh's text clearly demonstrates how the supposed Chilean race conveys content typical of White supremacism and the erasure of Indigenous peoples.

Another notable achievement of this work is the productive and very well-justified way of the gender approach, by demonstrating how secular and Catholic writers fluently agreed that eugenics should modernise and reaffirm the traditional gender roles of patriarchy. As an example, Walsh's book delves into the way in which the sexual question was treated for men and women in the eugenic context. For some, an attempt was made to inculcate sexual education, moral reform and containment of an instinct for men, while for women a passive role and basic instruction in reproductive health and childcare were assigned.

Another highly positive aspect of this book is the approach to the visual culture involved in the transmission and reaffirmation of the so-called Chilean race. Here, Walsh's work manages to display the strong class component associated with Chilean racial thought, with its ideal and abnormal models strongly related to skin colour, and the adaptation (or lack) of a Chilean race associated with the White element.

It should also be noted that Walsh bases her study on documentary material that is almost always new and without previous treatment in local historiography. In addition, there are some definitions of this approach that are interesting, such as the proposal that this is not a story of passive reception of ideas from the Global North, but rather a story of the avant-garde and local creativity, directly

related to the debates and scientific enigmas of the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth.

On the other hand, I consider that the title of the book is not very accurate since it induces a friendly and positive bias towards a religion that was also responsible, in the same Chilean context and timeframe covered by the book, for forms of passive genocide as it occurred with the reduced Indigenous southern populations under Catholic guardianship. Another aspect in which I suggest some nuance is the reference to the use of the categories of Catholic and secular, since the book deals with a moment in Chilean history in which the weight of the Catholic religion was decisive in all aspects of social life. The values that we could call secular used to be dominated by a very special type of secularism, strongly related to Freemasonry, especially in the medical and educational fields. In addition, there were notable differences between what we might call secular and secular thinkers, whether, during the 1930s, they were materialists akin to Marxism or materialists akin to fascism.

In a general panorama, there is no doubt that Walsh's book is a big contribution and its publication is fully justified since it fills a gap in Chilean historiography and opens spaces for future research. For those interested in Chilean history, inside and outside the country, this is a text that makes a valuable contribution to the history of Chile in the twentieth century.

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David M. Gitlitz, *Living in Silverado: Secret Jews in the Silver Mining Towns of Colonial Mexico*

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Ana E. Schaposchnik

DePaul University

David M. Gitlitz's *Living in Silverado: Secret Jews in the Silver Mining Towns of Colonial Mexico* is an in-depth study of three extended families of New Christians and crypto-Jews who lived between the Iberian Peninsula and the Viceroyalty of New Spain (spread over Mexico City and the silver mining towns of Pachuca, Tlalpujahuá and Taxco).

The overarching story is intertwined with the major events that affected the history of Jews in the Ibero-American world, a history that became very complex during the 1400s and 1500s. It starts in 1492 in Galicia, in Northern Spain, more precisely in a port city named A Coruña, when Lorenzo de Castellanos and his wife Blanca Lorenza, a young Jewish couple, crossed the border to Portugal following the Royal Edict of Expulsion of Jews from Spain. The story continues in Bragança, in the Northwest of Portugal, more precisely in a town named Freixo