English plans. In the end, Edward VI's handlers, who initially had attempted to continue Henry's efforts to secure the colony, simply sold it back to the French in 1550.

Beyond chronicling the colonial venture itself, Murphy advances several arguments regarding its significance. He uses evidence from his research, as well as scholarship on the Hundred Years' War and border conflicts with Scotland, to demonstrate that English soldiers had always treated foreigners brutally and had often engaged in what would now be termed ethnic cleansing. Here he challenges those who present Tudor colonial policy in Ireland, which was equally brutal, as something new, and something that would later be transferred to the Americas. Murphy notes that many of the soldiers and noblemen who led the Irish expeditions had previously served at Boulogne, and simply repeated in Ireland what they had done elsewhere. He also presents the Boulogne expedition and the Irish ventures as being the last English efforts to use Crown resources to build colonies, which would give way to chartering private groups to establish colonies in the Americas. Murphy develops and supports his arguments thoroughly and carefully, and presents them in an accessible fashion that will make his work valuable to researchers and accessible to undergraduates.

James R. Smither, *Grand Valley State University*
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American Baroque: Pearls and the Nature of Empire, 1492–1700.
Molly A. Warsh.
Williamsburg, VA: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018. xviii + 276 pp. $39.95.

In 1550 there was a mountain as big and as rich as Potosi in the Caribbean. It was a mountain made of pearls and empty oyster shells. In a beautifully crafted book, Molly Warsh describes the spectacular production of pearls in three tiny sixteenth-century areas of Venezuela: Cubagua, Margarita, and the Pearl Coast. Every year throughout the century, the Spanish Crown received an average of 1,000 pounds of pearls as tax, corresponding to the monarch's *quinto*, a fifth of all production (90). Yet Crown accountants never registered 80 percent of the pearls actually produced (53). Smugglers transported them in the seams of sleeves and coats or swallowed them. The tiny islands off the coast of Venezuela could just as well have been silver mountains, like Potosi. Drawing heavily on the monumental scholarship of Enrique Otte (who reconstructed every detail of this pearl economy) and using pearls as both case study and metaphor, Warsh explores the very nature of the early modern imperial state. Her argument: the monarchy helplessly sought to regulate production, value, and circulation of pearls, but was outmaneuvered at every turn by slaves, towns, merchants, pirates, and its own bureaucracies.

Like Potosi, Cubagua and Margarita quickly became violently cosmopolitan. By the time a tsunami wiped out the island, in 1541, Cubagua had thousands of Amerindian slaves from every region of the Indies working as divers and servants of pearl crews; there were also hundreds of Africans, *moriscos*, and Greek slaves (47). The traffic of Amerindian slaves in the early Caribbean provided labor for gold mines and sugar plantations; it also fed the growing demand for pearl divers. The Bahamas were not only hit by hurricanes: 30,000 sixteenth-century Lucayos were captured and moved to places like the Pearl Coast (39).

Yet these slaves were not hapless. Many swallowed the pearls and freed themselves through self-purchase after recovering them in their own shit. Spanish grandees in European courts trafficked pearls that were worth 30 ducados (12,000 maravedies) each (120), a fortune about the value of one enslaved African woman and her son (49). The most valuable pearls received the name of *caconas*, a name whose significance entirely escapes Warsh. The best pearls came from the shit (*caca*) of slaves.

To standardize value on mountains of pearls was simply impossible, for pearls were not stamped by machines but were the unique products of living organisms. Warsh describes crown efforts to standardize pearl types to regulate the *quinto*, assigning fixed value through taxonomy and nomenclature. There were pearls that fit a type and could be gathered in groups of standardized valuation (*elencos*) and those that could not (*berruecas*) (129). Warsh draws on the names of the latter to define the early modern state as a Baroque mismatch of failed top-down efforts to regulate bottom-up individual initiatives. The state sought to transform individuals into *elencos*, yet individuals remained stubbornly *berruecos*. Pirates, smugglers, and slaves took pearls to gain upward mobility. Elite courtiers themselves trafficked pearls outside the supervision of Crown bureaucracies.

Warsh argues that the tension between top-down rules and bottom-up vernacular actions manifested repeatedly in debates over ecological exhaustion of oyster beds. The Crown sought larger loads of pearl collection (and, thus, revenue) by favoring European entrepreneurs who patented dredges (66). Warsh maintains that locals resisted because they understood that the overharvesting of oyster reefs with dredges would destroy oyster fisheries. Local towns aggressively lobbied to block Crown initiatives to introduce new European technologies.

For all the brilliance in the writing and analysis, Warsh's model of top-down imperial imposition and bottom-up vernacular resistance has deep flaws. The Crown responded to petitions of abolitionist friars, favoring dredges to limit slavery. Friars also wrestled from the Crown dozens of new laws to regulate captivity. Yet the Crown also responded to the petitions of locals who favored slavery. The vernacular-imperial split is a fiction. Locals pursued new legislation through petitioning with as much success as did the Fugger and the Welser. The pull and push of petitioning produced legislation. Otte compiled hundreds, if not thousands, of pearl-fishery-related royal decrees. Why are there so many, enough to occupy two thick volumes for Cubagua and another for Margarita—two tiny islands?

Take, for example, the case of Margarita's coat of arms, whose origin Warsh misinterprets. It has three Afro-Indian divers paddling on a canoe flanked by two saints; a queen's crown stands on top with a hanging pearl (a reference to the Virgin Mary). Warsh argues that the design came top-down, reflecting the crown's desire to hover over the divers (102). This is wrong: thousands of petitions for coats of arms survive in archives. The Crown almost never modified the designs. The so-called imperial edicts actually reflect local vernacular voices. The state was indeed Baroque, but largely because each edict was unique and unclassifiable. The law was a result of idiosyncratic pleading and lobbying, a negotiation of sorts.

Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *University of Texas at Austin*
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Apostles of Empire: The Jesuits and New France. Bronwen McShea.
France Overseas: Studies in Empire and Decolonization. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019. xxx + 332 pp. $60.

Familiar to anyone with even a casual understanding of the seventeenth-century Jesuit mission to New France are the prevailing notions of the missionaries as diligent harvesters of souls, proto-ethnographers, or would-be martyrs yearning for a holy death at the hands of indigenous groups hostile to the faith. In this fine new book, Bronwen McShea tells a different story, that of the Jesuits' role as "enthusiastic, enterprising empire builders for the Bourbon State" (xvi) from the earliest decades of the 1600s through the following century.

The book is divided into two parts, consisting of four chapters each. Part 1, "Foundations and the Era of the Parisian *Relations*," focuses on the decades in which the missionaries' famous reports of their activities were published annually in France. McShea traces how the Jesuits on the ground in New France collaborated with French political authorities and commercial powers to further the cause of empire. Their connections to indigenous groups proved useful in cementing trading and political ties with French partners. And their partnerships with French elites led to the importation to New France of Old World charitable ministries and medical services, French ideas of civility, and military practices to create secure and productive trading networks. Part 2, "A Long Durée of War and Metropolitan Neglect," traces the mission's history after it had begun to pass from fashion in France, and as factors like the cessation of the publication of the *Relations* and shifting priorities among lay and Jesuit authorities forced supporters of the New France mission to scale back their dreams of a French Catholic empire.