

Reviews

Caribbean, as in Morejón's *Cuadernos de Grenada/Grenada Notebook*. The study further analyzes links to Africa in this poetics and places them alongside strategies that challenge hierarchical discourses of race, gender and the nation. Ultimately, Duke's articulation of Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian women poets' shared strategies of empowerment, voice and subjectivity in dialogue with specific social, political and historical discourses contributes significantly to the understanding of Afro-Latin American women's literary production, contestation of literary silencing, and navigation of the personal and political dimensions of art.

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***Women in the Portuguese Colonial Empire: The Theatre of Shadows.* Ed. Clara Sarmiento. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008.**

This collection of essays provides a useful multidisciplinary approach to the retrieval of women's voices and experiences in the history of Portuguese colonialism. The analysis of women's life histories and cultural interventions remains an ongoing priority for the study of Portugal's empire and this volume is certainly a welcome contribution to the field. Its methodological approaches cover social and cultural history, literary studies, law and anthropology. The majority of essays deal with Brazil, but there are also pieces on Portugal, Mozambique, Angola, Macau, East Timor and Goa. The book is subdivided into three discipline-based sections.

Part One, covering "Female Slavery," is the strongest and most cogent. These authors have drawn, in the main, on original archive-based research to bring new data to light and conduct insightful analyses which will facilitate further scholarship. Maria Ângela de Faria Grillo explores the Pernambucan press to render a moving account of female slave trading and maltreatment in the late nineteenth century. Daniela Buono Calainho uses Portuguese Inquisition records to review the practices and uses of witchcraft among black

slave women in Portugal from the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries. Eugénia Rodrigues discusses female slavery and the domestic economy in the *prazo* system of the Zambezi valley in eighteenth-century Mozambique. Leny Caselli Anzai makes a good case for the *Anais de Vila Bela* for the years 1734 to 1789 affording valuable data on slave practices and *quilombos* in Mato Grosso. Margarida Seixas reviews the legal conditions that governed slave women's children from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Selma Pantoja's article tellingly compares travellers' textual accounts with photographic representations to analyse the conflicting, "idyllic, exotic, primitive or disdained" (92) images of female African street vendors in late nineteenth-century Luandan markets. Zélia Bora concludes Part One with a subtle, complex reading of the roles played by food, culinary practices and religious tradition in the cultural memory, identity and resistance of nineteenth-century African Brazilian women.

Part Two, "Literature and Female Voices," unfortunately lacks the thematic cohesion of Part One. Of the eight articles here, three and a half cover male writers representing women, a decision which requires justification given the volume's stated aim "to reinstate women to their true dimension in History ... to restore to them their voice" (xx). The cases in point are: Dalila Silva Lopes's piece on António Lobo Antunes's *Esplendor de Portugal*; Luisa Langford Correia dos Santos's chapter on "Settlers and Slavery in Brazil," which relies mainly on male-voiced accounts of Portuguese migration to Brazil; Clara Sarmiento's work on Saint Francis Xavier; and Betina Ruiz's analysis of the seventeenth-century *Love Letters of a Portuguese Nun* (*Letras portuguesas*), where the disputed sex of the original author, now widely thought to have been Gabriel-Joseph Lavergne de Guilleragues rather than Mariana Alcoforado, is central to the modern reworking of the text in *Novas Cartas Portuguesas*.

Of the remaining four pieces, two deal with women writing in Portuguese. The articles by Cristina Pinto da Silva and Monica Rector provide welcome new resources on

lesser-known works: in the former case, the diary of Graciete Nogueira Batalha, a Portuguese language teacher in twentieth-century Macau; in the latter, Guiomar Torresão's play *O Fraco da Baronesa*, a nineteenth-century proto-feminist work of social satire. The two most thought-provoking analyses in the "Literature" section are Sarmiento's interpretation of gender representation in the sixteenth-century writings of St. Francis Xavier and Maria Helena Guimarães's comparison of *Ibicaba*, a twentieth-century German novel by Eveline Hasler about Swiss immigrant oppression in Brazil, with the novel's source text, Thomas Davatz's *As Memórias de um Colono no Brasil*, to show Hasler expanding the female perspective. The articles by Ruiz, on *Lettres portugaises* and its reworkings, and by Teresinha Gema Lins Brandão Chaves, on nineteenth-century women travellers to Brazil, are both rather schematic, having chosen subjects too large for in-depth discussion in these short pieces.

Four of the six contributions in Part Three, "Cultural Behaviour," focus on women's identities in religion and charitable work. Célia Maia Borges and Leonor Seabra render informative accounts of, respectively, the role of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Iberian religious orders and mysticism in affording symbolic spaces for female affirmation, and the recourse of abandoned girls and orphans to the Macau Holy House of Mercy from the sixteenth century onwards. Charitable foundations similarly inspire Larissa Patron Chaves, who discusses the roles played by elite Portuguese immigrant women in nineteenth-century Brazilian Benevolent Societies, and Maria de Deus Beites Manso, who uses an individual case history of incarceration to explore women's shelters in eighteenth-century colonial Bahia. The two remaining articles turn to Asia: Isabel Pinto gives a brief overview of Portuguese marriages to native Asian women from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, while Daniel Schroeter Simão offers an excellent reading of the legal and social construction of female authority in East Timor.

The volume is certainly a treasure trove of new archival work and valuable data in specific historical fields, most

notably female slavery in Brazil. However, its desired scope as a statement on “Women in the Portuguese Colonial Empire” is over-ambitious. The representation of regions, time periods and specific phases of empire is very uneven, bringing a corresponding looseness of focus to the geographical and historical vectors that structure the book as a whole. Conspicuous by their almost total absence are the former Portuguese colonies in Africa during the Estado Novo, despite the enormous weight this history carries (including, increasingly, work by and about women) in contemporary Portuguese postcolonial discussion of empire. In this context, reducing twentieth-century female experience of colonial Africa to a single piece, however good, on António Lobo Antunes cannot be other than problematic. More specifically, direct engagement with previous work on gender and postcolonial theory, as well as women’s history, both in English and Portuguese, would have been helpful here. While it is undoubtedly an important and lasting contribution, Sarmiento’s book also testifies to the urgency of feminist and postcolonial researchers in Lusophone Studies overcoming historical isolation to create the institutional, textual and virtual settings from which more integrated, systematic approaches can emerge.

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Moutinho, Isabel. *The Colonial Wars in Contemporary Portuguese Fiction*. Woodbridge, UK: Tamesis, 2008.

When I read the table of contents of Isabel Moutinho’s *The Colonial Wars in Contemporary Portuguese Fiction*, my first thought was what is this book going to add to the field that other scholars, and particularly Margarida Calafate Ribeiro in her now seminal *Uma História de Regressos*, have not already covered extensively? The theme of a traumatic memory of the colonial war experience, and the authors and texts studied (particularly Lobo Antunes’s *Os Cus de Judas*, Lídia Jorge’s *A Costa dos Murmúrios*, João de