

that Brazil's unusual lack of a large nineteenth-century migration from China was a result of a political bureaucracy that frustrated private companies seeking new migrant streams.

Part 4, the final section of the book, "Peopling the Country of the Future," includes a chapter and the conclusion, both showing how immigration became integrated into broader state policies as varied as nineteenth-century abolition and twentieth-century Amazonian colonization. I particularly appreciated that Pérez Meléndez concludes by arguing that the "afterlives of a colonization paradigm" (332) are present in the contemporary cultural sphere, including in museums and other forms of "ethnic-oriented performances" (335).

Peopling for Profit is an important contribution to studies of the nineteenth century, in Brazil and globally. Pérez Meléndez's nuanced analysis of colonization within the context of commerce helps to expand scholarly understandings of the peopling of Brazil, the transition from empire to republic, and the connection of both to the building of wealth.

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José Antonio Piqueras. *Derecho antiguo y esclavitud moderna: Los esclavos, la ley y la justicia entre Europa y el imperio español de América*. Marcial Pons, 2024. Pp. 354. Cloth €32.00.

José Antonio Piqueras skillfully captures the reader's attention with the title *Derecho antiguo y esclavitud moderna*. With polished precision, he formulates the subtitle: *Los esclavos, la ley y la justicia entre Europa y el imperio español de América*. This work can be viewed as a continuation of his book *La esclavitud en las Españas: Un lazo transatlántico* (2011); inter-related, both aim to reveal the reality of slavery in Spanish America, which sharply contradicts and disproves the official narrative. In *Derecho antiguo y esclavitud moderna*, the author expands his analysis to include the experiences of Indigenous people, who, while being protected as subjects of the Crown in discourse, were also subjected to slavery in practice. He also addresses the official disregard for the transatlantic slave trade that continued until the nineteenth century.

Piqueras presents the ancient phenomenon of slavery in its entirety and temporality as the first form of appropriation of the labor capacity of others through the appropriation of the person, approaching the history of slavery not as a continuous narrative but rather as a fabric that undergoes continuous moments, ruptures, jumps, and recoveries, where slavery experiences phases of revitalization following phases of

decline. He highlights that in the former phase, history was utilized to legitimize the new forms of domination, while in the latter, abolitionists believed slavery had ceased to correspond to the changing spirit of the age.

The work begins with an intriguing temporal delimitation, designating as ancient law the regulations in force in the peninsular kingdoms, which originated from the late Greco-Roman and high medieval traditions up to the fifteenth century. Law evolved within slave-owning societies. The focus is on examining how this legislation governed modern slavery, established after the arrival of the Spaniards in the New World and continuing through the four centuries of its existence. The central aim is to ascertain how much of Spanish America's slavery included peninsular elements and how much reflected aspects of the new reality, always considering the characteristics, contexts, and practices of the various societies in Spanish America to avoid the assumption of a single legal regime.

Before analyzing slavery in the peninsular kingdoms, as regulated in *Las Siete Partidas* de Alfonso el Sabio, the author makes a necessary conceptual delineation that highlights the trajectory of slavery, beginning as an act of force that disrupts the natural freedom of individuals and evolving into a legal condition and a historically determined social relationship. However, his perspective is limited to viewing slavery as an act of subjection to the dominion, possession, and ownership of a free man, overlooking the fact that, in ancient Rome, the slave's fate, by law, was to serve permanently. This fate defined their status, and the author omits any reference to *servus sine domino*. An essential point is that the slave was never denied his *humanitas* and natural state of freedom as regulated by the *ius gentium*. Nevertheless, there is no mention of the underlying philosophy—namely, Stoic ideas inherited in the Christian tradition.

Following Charles Verlinden (1955 and 1977)—the medievalist precursor of Atlantic history, which encompasses the ideas of slavery, colonization of America, and social diversity during this period—he argues that the new forms of vassalage maintained the continuity of slavery, particularly in the Iberian Peninsula and certain parts of Italy. This is because, under the new working conditions, vassals lacked personal freedom; remained bound to the land; and were legally dependent on their lords, even when they did not own their vassals. Moreover, he notes that the slave market thrived at the end of the fifteenth century and that the continuity of slavery was transferred from the Mediterranean to America through a denationalized colonial development and flourishing commercial activity.

To move on to the examination of slavery in *Las Siete Partidas*, the author explores the Gothic normative tradition, Roman law articulated in Justinian's

compilations, and the realities of medieval Europe. He employs various methods to assess the presence of slavery in the codes, primarily in the *Fuero Juzgo* and the *Fuero Real*. He also notes the persistence of Roman nomenclatures (*servus*, *ancilla*, *mancipia*) throughout the Middle Ages, leading up to Roman Hispania, where there were variations in the meaning of *servus*, evolving to include not only subjects of slavery but also subjects of feudal or lordly servitude, with the term “slave” being introduced only in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The author presents essential information on slavery in *Las Siete Partidas* to help readers understand its importance, the sociohistorical context of the ordinance, and its configuration.

The second part contains three chapters that condense a significant amount of content. It begins with an exposition detailing how law and justice in colonial America were structured around slavery, revealing the falsehood of an institutional narrative that overlooks the colonization of Spanish America. This part also describes how new forms of slavery emerged regarding the Indians and, in the final section, regarding Black individuals.

In summary, the author’s dedication to creating a comprehensive work covering a broad historical period deserves recognition. However, it contains a notable inaccuracy. For example, when discussing Roman law, he states that primacy is given to the *Digest* of Gaius, rather than emphasizing the laws in the selection of rules and rulings (sic. 112). This statement is not only misleading but also incorrect. He seems to use the term “Code of Justinian” (Justinian’s Code in the *Digest*, see 37, 116) to refer to the entire compilation (*Corpus*), which is confusing because just one of its parts is the Code (*Codex*).

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Andrés I. Prieto. *The Theologian and the Empire: A Biography of José de Acosta (1540–1600)*. Brill, 2024. Pp. 412. Cloth \$195.00.

There is no need to repeat that José de Acosta (1540–1600) was one of the pioneering Jesuits who established the general missionary policy in colonial Spanish America during the second half of the sixteenth century, a policy that continued until the end of the eighteenth century. His “religious and intellectual

significance is comparable only to that of the Dominican friar Bartolomé de Las Casas (1484–1566)” (1). He is also world renowned as a protoanthropologist and naturalist, primarily because of his publication *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590). However, *The Theologian and the Empire* written by Andrés I. Prieto focuses on a different aspect: Acosta’s role as a “colonial” or “imperial agent” (1, 5). In reality, “Acosta focused on the necessity to create and maintain an adequate colonial superstructure supported by native labor that would allow for a robust colonial church to emerge” (7). In other words, Prieto’s book is highly valuable for shedding light on Acosta’s political activism, particularly focusing on his other famous soteriological treatise on the Indigenous people of the Americas, *De procuranda Indorum salute* (1588). As Prieto notes in his book, the discussion in *De procuranda* was adopted beyond the Americas, in regions such as South Asia and Africa (1).

Acosta, who was born in the middle of the sixteenth century, was undoubtedly strongly influenced by contemporary Christian humanism. Although many European humanists were deeply interested in the thorough study of languages such as Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, Acosta “never learned Quechua or Aymara,” the main Indigenous languages in the Andean regions. He also “never got personally involved in the nitty-gritty of missionary work” (Andrés I. Prieto, “The Perils of Accommodation: Jesuit Missionary Strategies in the Early Modern World,” *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 4, no. 3 [2017]: 395–414, here 403). In this sense, Prieto’s perspective differs significantly from that of Jesuit scholar León Lopetegui (1904–81), another biographer of José de Acosta, who published *El Padre José de Acosta, S. I., y las misiones* (1942). Instead, as Jesuit scholar Manuel Marzal (1931–2005) has suggested, Acosta’s missiology was deeply intertwined with political actions and ethics (Joanne Pillsbury, ed., *Guide to Documentary Sources for Andean Studies, 1530–1900*, vol. 2 [2008], 12). He was “fundamentally a prominent political operator” and “was always close to those in power” (2). In his book, Prieto emphasizes Acosta’s “participation in colonial and imperial politics” over “his involvement in preaching the Gospel to native peoples or in studying the nature of the Americas” (2), and calls attention to the importance of “taking into account the political actions, negotiations, struggles, and surrenders that shaped” Acosta’s thought (2).

Spain in the second half of the sixteenth century corresponds to the reign of Philip II (1556–98), who claimed “a universal monarchy that required the leadership of the Spanish monarch to spread Catholicism through the world and to defend it in Europe” (10). The centralizing impetus accelerated by this king was a direct challenge to the traditional and persistent model of composite monarchy in early modern Europe