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## Joanne Rappaport, The disappearing mestizo: configuring difference in the colonial New Kingdom of Granada

Jason Dyck

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uniformados aceptarían más su gobierno en la medida en que la economía progresaba, ya que ello les daría más recursos para cumplir su misión profesional (p. 118). En cambio, es más que cuestionable el juicio que emite sobre el golpe de estado de 1973, atribuyendo la responsabilidad principal a Estados Unidos, ya que, afirma, sin ese apoyo la derecha chilena no hubiera podido derribar a Allende, y sin esa intervención la Democracia Cristiana hubiera “probablemente” aliado a la Unidad Popular (pp. 144–145). Ambas hipótesis son difíciles sino imposibles de probar, especialmente la primera. La derecha contaba con medios económicos, ideológicos e institucionales suficientes para hacer la vida imposible a Allende, con o sin el apoyo de Washington.

El libro se completa con dos breves capítulos sobre el Chile post-golpe, uno de ellos sobre la época de la dictadura y los años de la Concertación, y otro donde el autor intenta resumir el significado de la obra y el legado político de Allende. Su idea central es que el presidente socialista no fue ni un reformista ni un socialdemócrata, sino un revolucionario *sui generis*, que propiciaba un “socialismo no dogmático”, y que no quiso construir sobre las ruinas, sino sobre los “sólidos cimientos del pasado” (p. 141). Es muy posible que tal haya sido la intención de Allende, pero como el autor lo explica, el presidente nunca pudo convencer a todos los partidos que lo apoyaban de la justeza de su estrategia y la Democracia Cristiana no vaciló en aceptar la destrucción del sistema democrático a fin de contribuir a derribarlo, todo lo cual hace concluir, hoy en día, que su proyecto estaba condenado al fracaso. Figueroa Clark pisa terreno más sólido al completar su análisis, cuando afirma que las experiencias de gobiernos opuestos al neoliberalismo al comenzar el nuevo milenio como los de Correa, Chávez, y Morales, así como las recientes movilizaciones sociales en Chile a favor de reformas sociales muestran que las ideas de Allende no han quedado en el olvido.

José del Pozo  
*Université du Québec à Montréal*  
[del\\_pozo.jose@uqam.ca](mailto:del_pozo.jose@uqam.ca)

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**The disappearing mestizo: configuring difference in the colonial New Kingdom of Granada**, by Joanne Rappaport, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2014, xvi + 352 pp., \$29.95 (paperback), ISBN 978-0-8223-5636-3

By the early twentieth century, several Latin American countries transformed *mestizos* into patriotic symbols as a way of combating scientific racism and developing national identities. In the face of great ethnic diversity, *mestizaje* became a desirable goal, but mestizofilia tended to project simplistic views of *mestizos* (Indian + Spaniard = *mestizo*) into colonial times, when the category was far more fluid and complex. In *The Disappearing Mestizo*, Joanne Rappaport seeks to disentangle the multiple meanings of *mestizo*, both between modern and colonial uses of the term and the ways colonial observers and those of mixed-racial ancestry applied the label. She argues that *mestizo* was a “disappearing category”, because the offspring of multiracial unions moved in and out of this racial designation according to their historical situations. The term, Rappaport insists, was not a fixed marker of identity or significant beyond legal and administrative contexts. To be a *mestizo* was never an “essential and enduring quality” (p. 4), but rather a

“strategy of identification” (p. 232) that was far more circumstantial than the official images of *mestizo* nations would have us believe.

To follow *mestizo* strategies, Rappaport turns her attention away from the viceregal centers of Mexico City and Lima to the colonial backwater of the Nuevo Reino de Granada (Nueva Granada after 1717), specifically Santafé (today Bogotá) and Tunja. She takes an ethnographic approach to her paper trail, concerning herself with a smaller set of individual cases than with a massive unit of social data. This approach allows her to imagine her legal records as spaces to practice participant observation; each document becomes an “ethnographic scenario” (p. 22) in which she is able to have “dialogues with the dead” (p. 23). By reconstructing networks of social relations in the Nuevo Reino, Rappaport moves beyond official definitions of *mestizos* to the ways in which *mestizos* defined themselves, both those of lower standing and others with connections to the colonial elite. To guide the reader through this narrative approach, she provides a “cast of characters” as an appendix to keep track of the major historical actors who come to life in the archives of Spain, Italy, and Colombia.

Even though Rappaport concentrates on the colonial periphery, her conclusions illuminate *mestizo* processes across Spanish America. *The Disappearing Mestizo* provides four important reminders about people of mixed racial descent, the first (Chapters 1–2) being that *mestizos* did not constitute a social group. *Mestizos* did not pay taxes as an established unit, they were not subject to tribute as Indians were, and they were not slaves as many sub-Saharan Africans were. They did not have any obligations as a collectivity and they were not assigned special privileges as Spaniards and indigenous people were. Race in colonial times, as Rappaport reminds the reader, was inherited through the blood, based upon lineage, and informed by one’s *calidad* (quality); phenotype, as a result, did not distinguish *mestizos* from the larger population. In fact, many *mestizos* were “invisible” because they “lived as affiliates of those groups that were proximate to them, not as members of a mestizo community” (p. 72). Rappaport stresses that there was not a “single type of mestizo” (p. 92) or a “single mestizo narrative” (p. 93) in the Nuevo Reino, which is applicable to other regions in both New Spain and Peru.

The second reminder (Chapter 3) is that not all *mestizos* were men. One needs to take into consideration gender to understand how people of mixed racial ancestry navigated their social worlds in both the Nuevo Reino and the rest of Spanish America. By analyzing marriage strategies, Rappaport demonstrates that it was far easier for elite *mestizas* to “assume an unmarked socioracial status” (p. 98) than it was for their brothers. *Mestizas* often Hispanized through betrothal, but *mestizos* – as the male heads of their families – found it difficult to erase their mixed descent, given that honor and reputation were determined by lineage. Beyond gender, it is also important to remember that not all people of dual birth were the same as El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, often seen as the colonial *mestizo par excellence*. This third reminder (Chapter 4) is highlighted in Rappaport’s study of two *mestizo caciques*: Alonso de Silva and Diego de Torres. Both men “straddled multiple and conflicting identities” (p. 168), as Garcilaso did, but they were not afforded the luxury of doing so across the Atlantic. The late sixteenth century was politically charged for elite *mestizos* in America because of their bilingualism and literacy, and Silva and Torres had to defend their parentage from those who viewed them as dangerous intermediaries with the potential to bring about a larger *mestizo*–Indian alliance against colonial authority.

Rappaport’s final reminder (Chapters 5–6) is that *mestizos* were not easily identifiable by a clear set of physical characteristics within an overarching caste system applicable to

all parts of Spanish America. The socioracial hierarchy of New Spain, with its plethora of classifications, for example, is often seen as a guiding pattern for all viceregal societies. But according to Rappaport's research, Nueva Granada did not experience the same hardening of racial categories during the eighteenth century as was the case in New Spain. Not only this, but there is no visual record in Nueva Granada akin to *casta* paintings, classificatory terminology was not as developed, and the term *casta* was far more fluid and generally confined to administrative documents. Rappaport's call to leave behind a "one-size fits all model" (p. 224) of caste when approaching the archival record in Spanish America is one that should not be ignored. All too often the region – in both colonial and modern times – is approached as a unit without due consideration to its heterogeneity.

*The Disappearing Mestizo* moves beyond standard images of *mestizos* as historians of the pre-Hispanic past or as depraved and illegitimate outsiders staged to subvert the colonial order. Instead, Rappaport provides a more intimate picture of unknown *mestizos* and *mestizas* working out their identities on the edges of empire, and in so doing challenges her reader to shed prefabricated frameworks to study ideas of race in the early modern Spanish world.

Jason Dyck

University of Toronto

[jason.dyck@utoronto.ca](mailto:jason.dyck@utoronto.ca)

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**Latin America's radical Left: Challenges and complexities of political power in the twenty-first century**, edited by Steve Ellner, Lanham, MD, Rowman & Littlefield, 2014, xiv + 291 pp., US\$29.95 (paperback), ISBN 978-1-44-222949-5

Like many of the recent edited volumes on Leftist parties, movements, and governments in Latin America, Steve Ellner's collection takes issue with the widely disseminated idea from Jorge Castañeda that one should divide the Left into two: a good Left and a bad Left. This collection's most distinctive feature is its focus on the so-called bad Left governments in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela, which Ellner labels the twenty-first-century Latin American radical Left, or 21LRL. While each of the book's 13 chapters makes individual claims, the larger argument is that, against Castañeda's notion that the "bad Left" is simply a repeat of traditional populism or neo-conservative fears of the return of a Castro-communist threat, "the obstacles and complexities arising from the experience of the [...] 21LRL are quantitatively and qualitatively different from twentieth-century cases of leftist rule throughout the world" (p. 271). Collectively, the chapters do an excellent job of explaining the dilemmas and challenges facing the 21LRL, including the combination of representative and radical democracy, the difficulties of synthesizing pragmatic, economically efficient policies with popular mobilization and progressive social programs, the embrace of multiple social groups rather than prioritizing specific class actors, and the corresponding need to manage often severe internal differences.

The various authors propose at least two, somewhat contrasting, interpretive lenses for understanding the complexities of the 21LRL. On one hand, Marcel Nelson, Federico Fuentes, and Steve Ellner focus on the diverse classes supporting the 21LRL governments