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# Review of: Rethinking Community from Peru: The Political Philosophy of José María Arguedas by Irina Alexandra Feldman

Blanca Aranda Gómez García Ph.D

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the seventeenth centuries” (137), thereby compelling the audience to reconsider the canonical history they have been taught. With her article “Parejas Mixtas: African-Spanish Couples in Cyberspace,” Kathleen Honora Connolly proposes the digital realm as a discursive space that provides for the destabilization of essentialist ideologies about race, sex, and the nation.

With Mahan L. Ellison’s “*Oikos* and the ‘Other’: Humanizing the Immigrant in Donato Ndongo’s *El metro*” and Benita Sampedro Vizcaya’s “*Ekomo*’s Interventions,” we see the examination of two works by writers of Equatorial Guinea, who lend their own distinct reflections on Spain as a colonial power. While Ellison puts forth that Ndongo’s novel effectively confronts stereotypes of the “Other” by constructing a protagonist who begins to prosper in Spain only to have his life cut short at the hands of neo-Nazis, Vizcaya argues for an awareness of the colonialist impulse in the editing and subsequent reissues of María Nsue Angüe’s novel, the first by a Equatorial Guinean woman. In “Unveiling Spain: Representation of the Female Body as a Metaphor for Contesting Orientalist Ideology,” David N. Coury and Cristina Ortiz Ceberio look at the representation of the female bodies in the works of Moroccan-born Laila Lalami and Larbi El-Harti, claiming that both create characters who endeavor for their own sense of agency in the face of restrictive nationalist discourses in both Morocco and Spain.

In Brian Bobbitt’s “Grave Politics: Fighting Ventriloquism in the Maghreb,” the author notes the trend of Spanish authors creating African characters in their works, in an act of what critic Susan Martin-Márquez labels “ventriloquism” (207), and examines Ahmed Daoudi’s *El diablo de Yudis* (1994) as a novel that reverses this act by having Moroccan characters simulate their Spanish counterparts. With Debra Faszter-McMahon’s “African Poetics in Spain: *Um Draiga* and the Voices of Contemporary Saharawi Poetry,” we return to the cultural production of the peoples of Western Sahara, and in the final essay of the collection, “Abderrahman El Fathí: An Averroist Perspective of His Poetry,” Cristián H. Ricci analyzes the verse of Moroccan-Andalusian El Fathí, who recalls with melancholy the glory of Al-Andalus while juxtaposing it with current events of war and destruction in Palestine and Iraq.

At the end of the text, Faszter-McMahon and Ketz include a helpful appendix listing all of the titles discussed in the essays, thereby providing the reader with an easily accessible bibliography, a feature that we as editors of collections of essays would do well to emulate. *African Immigrants in Contemporary Spanish Texts* is an incredibly useful study: as a whole, the essays are well-balanced, and should lead to possible collaborations with scholars of French, Arabic, and English who also study Maghrebi literatures. It is also valuable for African Diaspora scholars wishing to expand their offerings of African literatures to include the works of writers of Spanish from Equatorial Guinea, Morocco, and Western Sahara, who are woefully understudied. This analysis is one that succeeds in attempting to correct this erasure.

**Vanessa Valdés**

*The City College of New York*

**Feldman, Irina Alexandra.** *Rethinking Community from Peru: The Political Philosophy of José María Arguedas.* Pittsburg: U of Pittsburg P, 2014. Pp. 182. ISBN 978-0-822-96307-3.

Este libro parte del presupuesto de que, en la novela *Todas las sangres* de José María Arguedas, existe un diálogo fluido entre las herramientas narrativas, propias a un género literario, y las estrategias discursivas, propias al pensamiento político. A partir del análisis de varios de los personajes y acciones de la novela, Irina Alexandra Feldman nos invita a reformular los conceptos de comunidad, subjetividad política, soberanía, norma jurídica y cambio revolucionario en el contexto de los Andes. La convergencia entre la realidad histórica y la ficción narrativa, no solo nos ayuda a considerar la “Mesa redonda sobre *Todas las sangres*”, de 1965, desde una perspectiva novedosa, sino que además nos devuelve la figura de Arguedas, escritor-etnógrafo, como un investigador interesado en el estudio de la identidad.

Cuando Feldman retoma, en la introducción a *Rethinking Community from Peru. The Political Philosophy of José María Arguedas*, la polémica entorno a la “Mesa redonda sobre *Todas las sangres*”, propone que el desencuentro entre el escritor y los científicos sociales resulta de que mientras Arguedas veía a la gente que habitaba la sierra como indígenas con recursos para resistir, privilegiando el criterio de etnia, los sociólogos, en especial Quijano y Favre, la veía como campesinos sujetos a ser explotados, privilegiando el criterio de clase. El camino que veían los sociólogos era la homogeneización de la sociedad, mientras que Arguedas veía un proyecto en el cual la nación debía articular y reconocer la existencia de comunidades autónomas representadas por los *ayllus*. En este contexto, se entiende que el proyecto de Arguedas se viera como un peligro, puesto que de no contar con un estado suficientemente representado no solo no se podría luchar contra la invasión de las empresas transnacionales, sino que además se mantendría a los indígenas al margen del proyecto nacional que, en teoría, debía tener como uno de sus resultados positivos la inclusión de los mismos en el proyecto nacional.

Más adelante, a través de una comparación entre la historia política de Perú y Bolivia, Feldman expone que aquello que se viera como contradicción solo probable en la ficción de Arguedas durante los años sesenta, época en la que se llevara adelante la mesa redonda, se hace realidad el año 2007 en Bolivia. La redefinición del estado boliviano, que desde entonces se autodenomina como “plurinacional”, hace posible la existencia de un estado soberano que reconoce la autonomía de los pueblos aymara, quechua y guaraní. La introducción se cierra con una reflexión sobre la asociación que todavía hoy se establece entre la izquierda política peruana y la extrema violencia de Sendero Luminoso, concluyendo que dicha violencia sustenta la dificultad de ver un proceso de cambio parecido al del nuevo Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia en la República del Perú.

Dividido en cuatro capítulos, el libro explora en el capítulo 1 la relación entre los conceptos de autoridad y soberanía, partiendo del presupuesto de que el fracaso de contar con un estado soberano en el Perú se debe a la convivencia de múltiples soberanías. El capítulo 2 analiza el concepto de comunidad a partir de la ficción de Arguedas y la propuesta filosófica de Jean-Luc Nancy, revelando diferentes proyectos y distintos niveles de comunidad. El capítulo 3 explora los conceptos de violencia, ley y justicia, analizándolos a partir de una lectura detenida de *Todas las sangres*. Para concluir, en el capítulo 4, Feldman nos invita a reconstruir los momentos de revolución en las obras de Arguedas en busca de una nueva comprensión del concepto de transformación cultural.

El acierto con el que Irina Alexandra Feldman relaciona las ideas filosóficas y políticas de Arguedas, expresadas en su novela *Todas las sangres*, con la teoría política propuesta por pensadores como Álvaro García Linera, politólogo y actual vicepresidente del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, nos invita a profundizar las bases filosóficas sobre las que los teóricos actuales sostienen sus propuestas. Igualmente, nos alienta a seguir los cambios implementados por las autoridades de gobierno, como es el caso de Evo Morales Ayma, presidente de Bolivia. En un intento por analizar la manera en la que los indígenas se relacionan con la nación, este estudio propone una nueva lectura sobre el trabajo creativo de Arguedas, analiza cómo se genera el pensamiento teórico y define conceptos propios de la teoría filosófica y política en el contexto de los Andes.

Este libro logra el objetivo de darnos una mirada nueva sobre la narrativa de Arguedas; dicho esto, al tratarse de una propuesta respecto del pensamiento filosófico y político del autor, hubiera sido interesante destinar más espacio a su trabajo etnográfico. Un análisis de su estudio sobre el valle de Mantaro por ejemplo, *Cuentos mágico-realistas y canciones de fiestas tradicionales*, nos dejaría ver la narrativa del etnógrafo. Una lectura de la obra de Arguedas en su conjunto desarrollaría su pensamiento político y filosófico, al mismo tiempo que nos invitaría a valorar las estrategias poético-narrativas con las que el escritor peruano redactaba su trabajo en el área de las ciencias sociales.

Agudo en la reflexión y riguroso en la selección de herramientas teóricas, este libro es sin lugar a dudas un aporte a los estudios sobre el pensamiento de Arguedas, en particular, y sobre

conceptos político-filosóficos en la región andina, en general. Una nutrida bibliografía hace de este trabajo una referencia para futuros estudios sobre la obra de José María Arguedas y sobre las nuevas corrientes filosóficas que actualmente generan políticas de estado en la región andina.

**Blanca Aranda Gómez García**

*Western Washington University*

**Fountain, Anne.** *José Martí, the United States, and Race*. Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2014. Pp. 162. ISBN 978-0-8130-4974-8.

José Martí spent the last fifteen years of his life living in the United States, writing and organizing the struggle for Cuban independence. Combining liberally his own observation and information culled from diverse sources, he wrote poetry, chronicles and articles for different newspapers in Latin America. In *José Martí, the United States and Race*, Anne Fountain, who has written extensively about José Martí's familiarity with American authors, some of whom influenced him, provides a cogent and well-researched argument that Martí's contact with the diverse nationalities and groups in the United States was pivotal in the development of his ideas on race and his vision of Cuba's future. His experiences helped him to expand his notion of race, amplify his awareness of the dangers of racial intolerance and of the need to form a unifying national identity, which he called "cubanidad."

Fountain is methodical and comprehensive in her nonpartisan presentation. She begins by outlining significant events of Martí's life: his childhood knowledge of the abject condition of slavery, his academic brilliance, his dislike for and entanglement with Spanish colonial authorities, his work as a teacher, his repeated imprisonment and exile, and his spending most of the latter part of his life in the United States. She convincingly indicates the consistency of his ideas. For example, the universalism or racial inclusiveness of *Mi Raza* is already suggested in his youthful allegorical play on Cuban independence, *Abdala*, in which the protagonist is, suggestively, a Nubian slave.

Fountain's exposition is occasionally dense as she outlines succinctly the interconnecting political and social threads from which Martí's ideas arose. Martí connected emancipation and Cuban independence. After giving summaries of essays such as *Mi Raza* and *Nuestra América*, she comments on the portrayal of Martí's attitude to race as depicted in films and provides a thorough review of commentators on Martí, both sympathetic and critical. She forcefully responds to critical comments by Lilian Guerra.

Subsequent chapters offer a meticulous and well-balanced description of Martí's interaction with or writing about different groups: Black Cubans in the United States, African Americans, the Abolitionists, Native Americans and immigrants. Martí was not familiar with the writings of Cuban antislavery writers but, in his political activity, he befriended and worked with Cubans of all races. His newspaper *Patria* featured images of prominent Afro-Cubans. As with the Indians in Central America, Martí was initially influenced by the ideas of his time, and stereotypes about Afro-Americans were present in his writing. He was initially condescending to the latter in early articles, but later his opinions changed when writing about many examples of vicious racism, such as the Texarkana killings. Initially he criticized the Indians for their lack of initiative, but later emphasized their subjugation and oppression. Indeed, it is in the United States that his knowledge of the indigenous past of the Aztecs or Incas increased significantly. Afterwards he showed more respect, advocated education but not the need to "civilize" or imitate foreign models. He showed empathy for the immigrants also, about their misery, insalubrious housing and lack of skills and felt that the state needs to be inclusive and citizens had to adapt.

Fountain's well-organized chapter on the writings and life of Americans who supported emancipation is informative and gripping. She not only comments on the lives and works of people like John Brown but also writes perceptively on their influence on Martí's development. Unlike them, he chose to deemphasize sexual abuse when writing about slavery. He was