

families. Creole governments signaled their paternal responsibility by giving generous pensions to widows, and they extended pensions to broader categories of soldiers, eventually granting benefits even to families of Spanish soldiers who died before independence. The use of pensions to stimulate reconciliation later proved useful in the aftermath of the 1829 civil war, when the triumphant Conservative government bestowed pensions on the family members of certain soldiers from the opposing camp.

In a final chapter that dialogs with the scholarship on inheritance and legitimacy, Chambers argues that, by upholding familial obligations, the state sought “to build national unity on a foundation of domestic order” (p. 185)—the same domestic order the state itself instantiated in apportioning sequestered property and pensions. Like other countries in Latin America, Chile was governed until 1857 by the *Siete Partidas*, a legal code in which proof of paternity was not essential and in which courts frequently required fathers to support natural and illegitimate children. Because fathers did not have *patria potestad* over natural children, mothers frequently won custody battles. The state nonetheless reaffirmed patriarchal control within families, solidifying it by passing a new Civil Code.

Overall, Chambers’s book broadens our understanding of how states addressed family by looking at law suits regarding military pensions and sequestration as well as support of kin. The state regulated family relations, Chambers argues, so as to further specific political aims. Reconciliation functioned to cement familial ties and buttress familial fortunes. At the same time, opposing factions of the ruling class were often linked through ties of kinship that facilitated unity. The professed desire of patriarchs and a paternal state to provide for women and children was an opening wedge into broader forms of forgiveness and social harmony that also cemented the authority of individual patriarchs and a paternal state.

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ALEX BORUCKI: *From Shipmates to Soldiers: Emerging Black Identities in the Río de la Plata*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2015.

This is a gem of a book. *From Shipmates to Soldiers* is a wide-ranging exploration of Africans and their descendants in the Río de la Plata from the late colonial through the early national periods. It incorporates the important role of Rio de Janeiro and Salvador as the Brazilian Atlantic ports that supplied the bulk of slaves to the La Plata region, and also explores the significant but smaller flow of slaves who arrived directly from East, West, and Central Africa. As Borucki

emphasizes, the movement of slaves and freedmen among these Atlantic ports laid the foundation for the formation of families, ethnic identities, institutions, and social networks that gave meaning and shape the region's emerging black identities. This broad focus reveals the interregional and international contexts that shaped commonalities and distinctions among black communities in the South Atlantic. The bulk of Borucki's research focuses on Uruguay, Montevideo in particular, but the author's ability to incorporate archival evidence and secondary research from across the territories that became the nations of Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Paraguay, while simultaneously intervening in historiographic debates north of the equator, is impressive.

To accomplish this ambitious project, Borucki brings a layered thematic approach to text-smithing that roughly follows a chronological progression, and though there is some inevitable narrative overlap, the author manages it well. Borucki begins with an extensive analysis of the slave trade to the Río de la Plata followed by an examination of the importance of shipmate relationships formed during the middle passage and the subsequent voyages of slaves and freedmen in the South Atlantic. In both chapters, he thoughtfully weighs the significance of the ethnonyms and geographic identifications used by outsiders to identify slaves. He makes especially creative use of marriage records to examine how slaves identified themselves as grooms, brides, and witnesses from the documentation that the Catholic Church required to permit nuptials. He adroitly examines how these records reveal how slaves recreated bonds of friendship, family, and community in the New World. He follows this with an analysis of leadership and networks in black militias, confraternities, and *tambos* (funeral rituals that originated in Portuguese Angola). He effectively demonstrates how slave and freedman social climbers used leadership in confraternities to become militia officers in black military units that participated in the struggles against British invasions and subsequent Wars of Independence. He then shows how black militia officers and soldiers had "plans of their own" and were consequential mediators in shaping the politics and outcomes of post-Independence struggles among the La Plata's caudillo leaders. Borucki also explores the fascinating origins of African-based associations, the proliferation of Uruguayan Candombe musical organizations, and Day of the Kings celebrations.

Borucki's final chapter is a biography of Jacinto Ventura de Molina (1766-1841), a member of Uruguay's black men of letters, whose published and unpublished papers Uruguay's National Library fortuitously preserved. Molina's life effectively illuminates how an individual lived the big changes explored in previous chapters. He was born in Rio Grande, a city which later became part of Brazil's southern-most state; but in 1766, it formed part of a disputed borderland between the Spanish and Portuguese colonial empires. Molina's father, Ventura,

hailed from Dahomey, and he became the property of the Spanish Captain José Molina who was sent to the La Plata region during the Seven Years War. Ventura had saved his master's life, and was subsequently freed out of gratitude. Jacinto was born free, but he and his father remained in the household of Captain Molina who provided Jacinto a superior education. Like so many slaves and freedmen in this period, Jacinto traveled, first with Captain Molina from Rio Grande to Montevideo and Colonia, and later he established himself as a master cobbler in Buenos Aires. He parlayed patronage networks developed through Captain Molina and his literacy to become an officer of a black militia unit, and later worked for the Brazilian headquarters printing press in Guadalupe, Uruguay. Jacinto also served as a sacristan for Montevideo's Hospital de la Caridad whose press printed most of his surviving publications. He wrote petitions for black soldiers in trouble with the law, and manuscripts in favor of the Afro-Uruguayan St. Benedict Confraternity and the Congo Association. His autobiographical writings idealized his patron Captain Molina, and revealed Jacinto to be a conservative Catholic monarchist, despite the Republican ideals that hastened the military struggles that led to the emergence of South America's new nations. Despite his education and military service, white officials belittled and mocked Jacinto's literary and career pretensions. As Borucki perceptively points out, this was in part due to racism but also because Jacinto's ideas became out of step with the times, especially after the emergence of the Uruguayan Republic in 1828.

In many respects, Jacinto's biography and literary production strongly resembles that of Cândido da Fonseca Galvão (aka Dom Obá II) who became a well-known figure in Rio de Janeiro after the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870). Even though Jacinto and Cândido lived in different eras, a dialogue with Eduardo Silva's *Prince of the People: The Life and Times of a Brazilian Free Man of Colour* (London: Verso, 1993) might have provided a deeper comparative reflection on how some Afro-South Americans fused African, European, military, religious, monarchical, and conservative traditions to forge their identities in relation to broader institutions and communities of color and whiteness. This missed opportunity is heightened by the book's conclusion where Borucki examines the political and military careers of exceptional Afro-Uruguayan officers who, like Cândido, fought in the War of the Triple Alliance. Perhaps Borucki's exploration of Jacinto's biography will inspire a *candombe* group to honor him just as Silva's book inspired the Mangueira samba school to honor Dom Obá II. In the end, this is a minor quibble with an exceptionally strong piece of scholarship. *From Shipmates to Soldiers* constitutes a major contribution to Atlantic history because it significantly broadens the heretofore shallow reach of this subfield south of the equator, a weakness that has long undercut the geographic pretensions of this subfield's nomenclature. Borucki's work has gone

a long way to help us do what I once referred to as “re-Capricorning” Atlantic history or more fully incorporating the history of the Tropic of Capricorn into this important subfield’s debates.

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CECILIA MÉNDEZ, *La república plebeya. Huanta y la formación del Estado peruano, 1820-1850*. LIMA: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2014.

La edición castellana de la obra publicada en inglés el 2005 es, a juicio de la misma autora, la definitiva, y debe reemplazar todos sus trabajos anteriores sobre el tema, especialmente los más tempranos publicados a inicio de los 90, cuando se encontraba aún realizando la investigación para su tesis doctoral. Durante los últimos veinte años, Cecilia Méndez ha estudiado los levantamientos que se produjeron a favor del rey en la provincia de Huanta en Ayacucho después de la independencia, así como el rol que jugaron sus protagonistas en el proceso de construcción del estado peruano. Se ha enfocado en cuáles fueron sus motivaciones y quiénes fueron sus líderes, así como su participación en una serie de conflictos en la primera mitad del siglo XIX principalmente del lado de los liberales.

La historiadora limeña cuenta en el prólogo cómo su interés comenzó en los años de violencia senderista y creció durante su estadía en Ayacucho entre 1986 y 1987. Fue su necesidad de entender la realidad histórica del campesinado de la localidad de Uchuraccay, donde en 1983 tuvo lugar la matanza de ocho periodistas, la que guió su investigación del levantamiento monárquico que se dio en el mismo lugar por parte de los llamados Iquichanos entre 1826 y 1828. Méndez observa cómo, además de haber sucedido en un mismo espacio geográfico, las explicaciones que brindaron en su momento las autoridades respecto de los motivos del mismo fueron muy similares a las que presentó la Comisión Vargas Llosa en los 80 y se centraban en la idea de que los habitantes de la Sierra Andina eran atrasados.

Méndez rechaza esta idea y en esta versión en castellano de su libro busca hacer aún más claro que “el llamado ‘atraso’ con que se suele asociar a la sierra rural no es ni ‘natural’ ni intrínseco a la historia republicana ni a la geografía andina” (p. 21), ya que los caudillos y primeros presidentes peruanos no vieron a las poblaciones de la sierra como un obstáculo sino más bien como la base de su poder. Es por ello que postula que estas comunidades andinas estuvieron en constante interacción con el Estado peruano y contribuyeron a forjarlo. El