

fit in the American box. They do not fit the American PC mold, because they have nothing to do with race or white supremacy. The core problem of race in the US, the legacy of the plantation economy, is a fundamental American problem (hence the electoral college, the Senate, the filibuster rule, the Supreme Court, states' rights, gun rights, self-defense, stand your ground, mandatory sentencing laws, and other bedrocks of conservatism), but it is *not* a world problem. Plantations were often a part of colonies, of course, but these plantation economies were not *part* of a lasting settler colonial society. The US's special case cannot serve as a portal through which to understand global relations. This book situates the global problematic in North–South relations, but with the rise of Asia (“The Future is Asian”) the world increasingly hinges on East–South relations, which does not appear in this tableau. The book follows the modeling of *The Pentagon's New Map* (2003), but in the post-American world of vanity wars and the 2008 crisis this tour guide is well past its sell-by date. The world integrative force is no longer the United States but greater Asia, hence American shadows are not global ghosts.

White supremacy as the cause and rationale of the tightening of borders is upheld until close to the end of the book when two quite different reasons for hardening borders pop up: Islamophobia and securitization (p. 119). Which is plausible, yet as the horizon widens it also narrows: Islamophobia is rebaptized as a form of racism (what else could it be) and securitization is recast as part of a security-industrial complex and “security imperialism”, i.e. both are translated into American lexicon. “Muslim” is presented already earlier as “a racialized category” (p. 13). Can white supremacy, part of aggressive American inward-looking provincialism, serve as the guide to problems of borders worldwide and as a beacon of global understanding? This is a monocentric reading of a multicentric world. It replaces twentieth-century convergence on an American dream with twenty-first-century convergence on an American curse. I would not recommend the book as a useful guide to understand the historical theoretical roots of apartheid or racism, at the most as a telling example of American Political Correctness.

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BIGELOW, ALLISON MARGARET. *Mining Language. Racial Thinking, Indigenous Knowledge, and Colonial Metallurgy in the Early Modern Iberian World.* Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg (VA) 2020. xix, 354 pp. Ill. Maps. \$39.95. (E-book: \$29.99.)

To assess the merits of a book that seeks to understand lexicon as an “abstract marker” of race is a daunting task for political economists such as the author of this review. On the one hand, we political economists are suspicious of the ways in which the field of critical studies has descended upon our foundational questions, acting as *force majeure* that keeps shifting scholarly attention to the study of race at the expense of Marxist inquiries on capital accumulation. On the other hand, we are

aware that the foundations of political economy were carved from the so-called Western canons of philosophy, geography, law, literature, and even theology. Smith borrowed from Ulloa's writings much about the geography of the Spanish colonies, which he used in his rent-of-mines argument. Marx refashioned a fair share of Jesuitic myths about Amerindians that he read from the texts of French utopian socialist writers. And so did many others, hinting at the need political economists have to go beyond the horizon of historical materialism and acquire the sensibility needed to understand the role of ideologies in mining history. This is exactly what the book *Mining Language* proposes to political economists concerned with the history of mining. The book presents an opportunity to see mining from a literary-historical perspective, with the intent of discovering the dynamic "linguistic footprint" that subaltern peoples imprinted upon Iberian, Renaissance, and modern mining language.

The main protagonist of the book is the mining lexicon built into the extensive corpus of Iberian colonial literature. This corpus begins with the *Testimonio* written by Columbus in 1493 and covers conquistadors' chronicles and letters, missionaries' *coloquios*, imperial geographic surveys, translations of these works, and drawings depicting mining scenes. No text is exempted from Professor Bigelow's scrupulous "comparative literary" and "historical linguistic" analysis. Her extensive knowledge of printed books and archival manuscripts compels the reader to enter the vast Iberian mining archive that emerges from her book. Texts written in Castilian, Portuguese, Italian, French, German, Latin, English, and Aimara and Quechua languages come to life in this book, inviting one to read "across linguistic, protonational, and cultural traditions" to discover the "alternative forms of knowing" silenced by Iberian mining language.

The central argument of the book is that Iberian mining language was born in the "epistemological categories" of European superiority created by colonial writers. These categories were aimed at exploiting while rejecting indigenous and African metal "epistemes". Sixteenth-century Iberian writers built a *racialized mining language* in which the non-European lexicographic world was suddenly "without history". "Texture, odor and color vocabularies" of Quechua, Aimara, Algonquin, Taíno, and other Amerindian peoples were subdued in intricate linguistic exchanges that legitimized Iberian mining colonization. The result was not just the forced Hispanization, but also the disappearance of non-European mining knowledge.

The first three chapters argue that gold symbolizes "a more nuanced story of colonial power", characterized by the destruction of pre-Columbian "golden cosmologies". They discuss how Taíno and African "metallic cosmologies" decisively influenced Iberian understanding of gold mining and metallurgy. The author describes the "lexicographic instruments" with which Spanish writers "repurposed" Taíno and African gold-refining techniques with the goal of increasing revenues. The next two chapters study different "iron ideologies" that emerged from the dialogues written by Nicolás Monardes and García d'Orta, which refined much of the European "language and discourse" about iron. These dialogues challenged the old Latin, Western "iron ideology", rooted in warfare development, by introducing new "iron ideologies" that emphasized humanist aesthetics even when justifying Iberian expansion. These new ideologies crafted a scientific culture in which "a range of European

actors read the presence or absence of iron as an index of human development, social sophistication, and colonial racial categories”.

Exploring what the author calls “the imaginative archive of colonial copper”, Chapters six and seven argue that Iberian colonization progressed by exploiting Amerindian copper “symbols and rituals”. The author analyzed Hernando De Soto’s text about his Florida expedition, Richard Hakluyt’s book refashioning De Soto’s tale, and Gaytán de Torres’s proposal for a slave-based mining community in Cocorote, Venezuela. She argues that these testimonies built “copper fictions” that moved across the Atlantic in a “moment of imperial reimagining”. The outcome was a new “copper image” or “copper projecting” of the Iberian goals of “reduction, purification and refining” of conquered lands and peoples. The last three chapters of the book study the vocabulary about silver mining mainly in Barba’s *El arte de las metals* and Capoche’s *Relación de la Villa Imperial*. The author argues that “specialized Andean mining knowledges were transmuted into a racialized colonial scientific vocabulary”. “Metallic castas” emerged, which legitimized the social division of labor that sustained silver production in Potosí. European translations of these texts reproduced images of “metallic castas” as “scientific and social descriptors” of mining labor.

The book concludes that Iberian mining language was the outcome of confrontation and conquest of non-European “mining cosmologies” and languages that thus disappeared from Renaissance and “modern” mining sciences. This conclusion is by no means obvious. It required years of diligent and painstaking library and archival research, as Bigelow describes in her preface. The bird’s-eye view of three centuries of European scientific mining canon that the book offers Makes of *Mining Language* a novel contribution to the social history of mining. Books addressing any aspect of the social history of mining fulfill two goals: first, they present facts that “illuminate the present through the long history that has preceded it”, borrowing the phrase of Pierre Vilar;⁶ and, second, they do so preceded by a theoretical formulation of the mining problem at stake. *Mining Language* vigorously fulfills the first goal. Its pages contain fascinating details about mining in the *cacicazgos* in La Hispaniola, Massachusetts during the times of John Elliot, Western Africa, Portuguese Goa, Chowanoke lands in the Carolinas, Cuba, Potosí, and other places. One reads about the copper mines owned by the family of Simón Bolívar, the “negras sin nombre”, the female African slaves who worked the copper mines of Cuba, and other facts that suddenly raise intriguing questions about land, capital, and labor in colonial mines.

The book, however, falls short of fulfilling the second goal because it lacks a theoretical formulation of the mining problem at stake. Such a formulation should have answered the question that needs to be answered: did Iberian mining language create value and capital accumulation? The question permits only one answer. Iberian mining language did not create any of the material conditions needed for capital accumulation to take place in mining. “Racialized languages”, as deplorable as they are, do not create value – only labor does. From the *mitayos* of the Andes, brutally exploited by Spanish *encomenderos*, to African slaves in La Hispaniola and Cuba, mining labor formed the basis of capital accumulation. Mining production was never determined

⁶Pierre Vilar, *A History of Gold and Money, 1450 to 1920* (London, 1976), p. 22.

by symbols, rituals, or lexicon, but by specific historical conditions under which capital ploughed itself into ore-yielding lands. Failure to understand this historical condition is a serious shortcoming of the book. This shortcoming is more troublesome when one considers that the long sixteenth century (1450–1650) was a transformative period for mining and agrarian capital on a world scale. This was a period in which mining property rights, monopolies of mine incomes, supply of mining labor, and matters pertaining to mine rents were contested everywhere, from colonial Mexico to Ming China.

A related problem of the book is the implicit idea that the world of high finance had nothing to do with the making of Iberian mining language. The European capitalists that profited from colonial mining, with little affinity to Iberian claims of superiority, had their own “mining language” in which racial categories were meaningless unless tied to what one may call the “language of capital”, that is, debt and profit. These capitalists belonged not to a self-contained “Iberian world” but to an Afro-Eurasian world economy in which metal trade and exchanges flourished in all geographic directions, with high silver demand coming from China. Iberian empires enjoyed balances of trade only in their metal exchanges with their Atlantic colonies; they suffered trade disadvantages in the Indian Ocean littoral world system and especially China.

Moreover, Afro-Eurasia had what I have called elsewhere “world mining frontiers” that drew available capital in the form of money, credit, and techniques as well as labor.⁷ These frontiers included the gold and copper mining regions of Central Africa and Western Arabia, the iron mining region of northeast China, and the silver mines of the Balkans. Some world mining frontiers were never fully displaced by the rise of colonial mining in the Americas. These frontiers yielded gold, copper, iron, and silver, and formed regional circuits of metal trade that attracted all sorts of commercial activity and merchants, even after the discovery of Potosí. It is thus puzzling that none of the rich gold-trading towns that encircled the Sahara, such as Sijilmasa, Tuat, Wargla, Marrakesh, Fez, Cairo, which linked gold mines in the hinterlands of Africa to Mediterranean ports, appear in the book. Gold miners of the Shashe-Limpopo region of southern Africa, which Portugal tried to colonize but failed, are also absent from the book. Gold mined in the more than 200 mines of the Hijaz and West Central Najd in Arabia, and which found its way to Mediterranean and Iberian cities, is nowhere to be found in the book. African copper, mined in Angola, Namibia, and Congo, joined metal-trade circuits of Mediterranean and Indian Ocean economies. Along with Chinese copper, which was traded in Central Asia and Pacific markets, African copper fulfilled monetary functions for the various commercial elites that monopolized the trading business. Chinese iron is another significant absentee in the book. Cast-iron objects produced in China travelled to Western Europe via Central Asia and the Indian Ocean centuries before Iberian maritime expansion. Objects included cast-iron bells, utensils, swords, and knives, which travelled regularly along the many silk trade routes. These commodities were the outcome of remarkable developments in iron smelting and fabrication methods that contributed to make China the industrial superpower of the world economy. The learned elite of Western Europe were familiar with the chronicles of Giovanni da

⁷Jeannette Graulau, *The Underground Wealth of Nations: On the Capitalist Origins of Silver Mining, A.D. 1150–1450* (New Haven, CT, 2019).

Pian del Carpine, Odoric De Pordenone, and Ibn Battuta, which described Chinese iron and other metal achievements of Asian empires. Lastly, the silver mines of the Balkans, a major source of revenues that allowed the Ottoman Empire to absorb the costs of military campaigns against the Spanish Empire in the Mediterranean, seem to have had no influence upon Iberian mining language.

In the task of bringing back to life the mining languages of non-European conquered peoples, the book neglects the mining languages of the Afro-Eurasian regions that challenged Iberian imperial aspirations. This central problem of the book stems from its lack of a world-history perspective that the study of mining demands. This perspective is the safest path to our building a history and theory of mining capable of explaining the mining evolution of non-European lands into colonial, dependent, capitalist peripheries of the world economy. Understanding economic change in the mining peripheries of the world continues to be one the greatest challenges of social scientific inquiry. Addressing this challenge certainly requires sensibility and awareness of how European “learned and scientific” mining language was and remains a contested territory. But it also demands greater scrutiny of the historically limited nature of explanations based upon “race” and “racialized languages”. Perhaps Bigelow, who demonstrates knowledge of the vast Iberian literary canon on colonial mining, will pursue some of the inquiries mentioned above, abandoning the Iberian focus for a world-history perspective. I hope her future work sheds light upon the material basis of mining languages beyond Iberian empires and in relation to capital accumulation on a world scale.

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HYNSON, RACHEL. *Laboring for the State. Women, Family, and Work in Revolutionary Cuba, 1959–1971*. [Cambridge Latin American Studies, Vol. 117.] Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2019. xvii, 314 pp. Ill. £29.99. (E-book: \$32.00.)

Hynson’s work focuses on the attempts of post-revolutionary Cuban governments to design a project of social engineering in various areas related to women, motherhood, and the family between 1959 and 1971. These projects did not overlook attempts to impose a “respectable” morality that often contradicted the speeches, manifestos, and dictates drawn up by these same authorities, in which they declared the transformation of the bourgeois models that had prevailed in Cuban society before the revolution.

We could situate this work in a line of studies promoted by authors such as Lillian Guerra (*Visions of Power in Cuba: Revolution, Redemption, and Resistance, 1959–1971* (2012)), Michelle Chase (*Revolution Within the Revolution: Women and Gender Politics in Cuba, 1952–1962* (2015)), and Elise Andaya (*Conceiving Cuba: Reproduction, Women, and the State in the Post-Soviet Era* (2014)). These works mix analytical perspectives – to varying degrees – from various social sciences, from anthropology to history.