Bethany Aram and Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla, eds.

Global Goods and the Spanish Empire, 1492–1824: Circulation, Resistance and Diversity. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. Pp. vii + 322. Hb, \$105.

In *Global Goods and the Spanish Empire*, Bethany Aram and Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla present an eclectic assortment of essays on Atlantic goods in the Spanish empire, most of them focusing on the European appropriation of goods from the New World (4). Though the collection does not attempt a comprehensive treatment of the title's subject, it nevertheless fulfills its central objectives. It complements more "total" histories of Spain's global empire with fascinating and illuminating case studies of commodities, and in the process also challenges several unexamined assumptions about Spanish imperial expansion in the first global age.

One of the book's most notable features is that its essays are written by European scholars whose work has been translated with funds from either the Spanish Ministry of Economics and Competitiveness or the Junta of Andalusia. This European origin makes the collection a valuable bridge across geographic and linguistic divides in scholarship. It is, however, two other important distinctions that separate *Global Goods* from more traditional accounts of the early relationship between Europe and the Americas. First, instead of highlighting European domination, the essays foreground the "conquest" of Europe by American goods," which the editors suggest was "just as negotiated, selective and varied as that of America by European soldiers, settlers and missionaries" (5). And second, the broad range of methodologies applied by the contributors demonstrate several valuable ways to approach the study of global commodities.

The collection is divided into three thematic parts. In Part One, "Cultural and Intellectual Constraints," the essays challenge common economic narratives of exchange by focusing on the gradual, selective adoption and adaptation of New World goods into European communities. Traditional accounts frequently place scarcity and the costs of production at the crux of global supply and demand. Part One, however, asserts that changing European perceptions were as responsible for determining which products would transfer east across the Atlantic as were scarcity or the costs of production. This section also innovatively groups together ideas and foods. Its essays, for instance, include an overview of edible exchanges across the Atlantic, an in-depth look at the New World goods and ideas spreading into Europe at the time of Columbus, descriptions of academic reconceptualizations of the world in the wake of "discovery," and the situationally dependent import substitution of maize into the Italian countryside. Collectively, these first essays affirm

the gradual nature of the Columbian exchange, which they also show to have been as much a cultural phenomenon as it was an environmental or economic one.

In Part Two, "The Social Use of Things," the authors examine the agency that influential consumers had on various consumption patterns. Specifically, they describe how the "aura" of scarce spices and sugar was first used by Spanish monarchs to display their authority; how early modern peoples understood the relationship between food, race, and bodies; how silk from China was used differently in New Spain and Europe; and how merchant families in Tuscany bartered using exotica and information from the Americas. In each case, commodities defined hierarchical social relationships and perceptions. Kings asserted their superiority through the conspicuous consumption of spices and sugar, and when these became common, royal consumption habits were redirected toward jewels and fragrances as markers of difference. Europeans applied humoral theory to the consumption of foods from various regions in order to explain sickness and to maintain bodily differences between themselves and Amerindian others. Spaniards in New Spain dressed in more colorful Chinese cloths while their counterparts in Europe preferred darker and more traditional fabrics from Italy. Though the idea that consumption patterns create social differences is nothing new, these essays nevertheless exercise novel vocabularies to describe these patterns, and they also emphasize the importance of goods that have heretofore been largely overlooked.

Part Three, "Connected and Contrasting Societies," completes the series with essays on the Mexican cochineal trade, Santo Domingo's turn to tobacco production, comparisons between the French and Spanish halves of Hispaniola, and the global commodification of chocolate. With a slight redirection of emphasis, this last part uses commodities to describe the links between societies on both sides of the Atlantic. Here the contributors describe royal regulations on cochineal alongside the indigenous societies of Oaxaca that produced it; the political tensions and economic organization that divided Hispaniola; and the development and spread of chocolate into Europe through Spain. Collectively, these highlight the influence of political conflicts, sumptuary laws, and contraband on the construction of connected societies in the Atlantic world.

As with any book, this one has its limitations. Its title, for example, suggests a much broader geographic focus than it contains. Despite its token references to Asian products and to Spaniards beyond the peninsula, the studies are largely confined to Europe. This is, as the editors suggest, part of what makes the collection valuable: it helpfully rebalances Atlantic studies away from the Americas. But European consumption represents only a very

small fraction of the remarkable diversity involved in the Spanish Empire's relationship to global goods. The differences between the collection's three sections are, furthermore, often hard to identify, which compounds the difficulty of bringing so many disparate topics into meaningful dialogue with one another.

Still, the collection's diversity also means that there is something here for everyone. Those who specialize in Jesuit studies, for example, will gain much from Antonella Romano's essay, "Accommodating America: Renaissance Missionaries between the Ancient and the New World." In this essay, Romano foregrounds the importance of "missionary knowledge networks" by examining the work of the well-known Jesuit, José de Acosta, in connection with Jesuits in Asia, Europe, and the New World. Readers of *Journal of Jesuit Studies* will also value *Global Goods* for its unique insights on the assimilation of Europeans into the emerging global market.

In the end, *Global Goods* presents us with a fascinating array of case studies that add valuable details and perspectives to our understanding of Spain's involvement in the first global age. More than spreading European influence into other continents, the collection shows that the Spanish empire also acted as a funnel channeling American products and ideas back into Europe. Chocolate, cochineal, maize, tobacco, Chinese silks, perceptions of the 'noble savage,' and so on, were all sifted into Europe from the Americas through Spanish tastes, networks, and initiatives. *Global Goods*, in other words, does more than just rehash Spain's involvement in early globalization, it also helps to explain often forgotten aspects of how, why, and to what effect that involvement occurred.

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