Ida Altman & David Wheat (eds.), *The Spanish Caribbean and the Atlantic World in the Long Sixteenth Century*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019. xxv + 301 pp. (Paper US\$40.00)

The sixteenth-century Spanish Caribbean has long suffered from scholarly neglect in part because of the attention the conquest and settlement of mainland garners. Ida Altman and David Wheat convincingly argue that far from being a backwater, the region was “foundational and central rather than preliminary or marginal” (p. xxi) to the emergence of Spanish American society. This book’s essays address Indians, Europeans, and Africans as well as environmental and health concerns and international trade networks.

Lauren Macdonald examines how indigenous and European settlers understood foreign religiosity in the context of familiar frameworks. Indigenous leaders selectively used Christianity to bolster their authority or sought to blend the familiar with the unfamiliar in a cultural synthesis. Expressions of religiosity were transformed following the importation of Africans who brought their own religious beliefs and practices. Cacey Farnsworth discusses how the revolt led by Agüeybaná II in Puerto Rico in 1510 was significant for the evolution of Spanish policy toward natives in the Caribbean. Indigenous allies played key roles on both sides of the conflict. Following the revolt, the Spanish Crown used the participation of the Island Caribs to justify the enslavement of other indigenous people on nearby islands. Erin Stone argues that the history of indigenous groups in the Spanish Caribbean is more complex than the narrative that they died of disease. Conquistadors regularly used the pretext of searching for fabled wealth to make incursions into interior regions and take indigenous people with them as slaves. Stone shows that Indian slavery persisted even after the introduction of enslaved Africans.

Ida Altman presents the life of Vasco Porcallo de Figueroa as an example of how difficult it was for office holders to balance defending royal authority and addressing local grievances. In forging a new society, local officials used negotiation and violence to undercut colonists’ aspirations for autonomy and terrorize indigenous people into submission. Shannon Lalor highlights the role elite women (*doñas*) played in early Caribbean society, showing that households played a significant role in structuring colonial society and that *doñas* forged familial patronage networks that were central in the expansion of a transoceanic empire. Brian Hamm debunks the claim that Spaniards’ contempt for the Portuguese derives from anti-Semitism and a conflation of Portuguese nationality with Jewish ancestry. He argues instead that the anti-Portuguese attitudes of sixteenth-century Spaniards in the Caribbean were economic and military in nature, not religious. This changed when Spaniards equated fears

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that members of the Jewish community were helping to fund Dutch activities with a belief that both groups were plotting to undermine the Spanish empire.

Marc Eagle reviews the contours of Spanish America's participation in the slave trade before 1580, comparing departure and arrival records in a nuanced understanding of the trade's mechanisms and volume in that period. This early stage established patterns for the Portuguese merchants who later dominated the trade in Africans. David Wheat uses parish records to explore how Biafadas (Upper Guineans) interacted with Iberians, Afro-Creoles, and West Central Africans in Havana in the late sixteenth century. Biafadas exhibited a strong preference for selecting traditional trade partners in marriage and as godparents. Although they may have lived and worked with former enemies, they avoided forming social relationships with them. J.M.H. Clark examines how the city of Veracruz was relocated three times during the sixteenth century, showing that colonialists prioritized large-scale political and economic goals over environmental concerns. He notes that the city's final location and Atlantic orientation meant that it resembled its Caribbean counterparts more than the interior of Mexico.

Pablo E. Gómez offers insights into the relationship between the Spanish State and public health in the Caribbean in the sixteenth century. When the demand for health services overwhelmed the ability of cities to cope with the sick, colonialists introduced strategies for containing contagious diseases and expanded hospitals. These practices served as a model for colonialists' dealings with later health crises. Spencer Tyce argues that the story of much of early Latin America is not about successful campaigns against indigenous societies that resulted in economic and political prosperity. Rich German merchant families received the right to colonize Venezuela. The search for mineral wealth took precedence over colonization and they were unable to replicate their prior success in Santo Domingo. Gabriel de Avilez Rocha considers the movement of people and goods from the Caribbean that passed through the Azores, examining patterns of trade, slaving, and piracy in the Azores and demonstrating how these resembled patterns observed for the Iberian colonization in the circum-Caribbean.

These essays form a valuable resource for anyone interested in learning more about the Spanish Caribbean in the making of the modern Atlantic world.

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