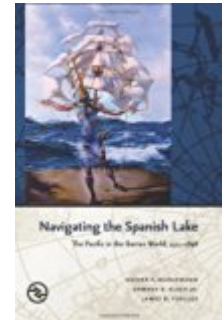


Rainer F. Buschmann, Edward R. Slack, James B. Tueller. *Navigating the Spanish Lake: The Pacific in the Iberian World, 1521-1898.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014. xii + 182 pp. \$47.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-8248-3824-9.



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Navigating the Spanish Lake's three authors both challenge conventional commonplaces regarding just how to conceptualize Spain's activities in the Pacific Ocean and break new scholarly ground concerning those activities. Chapters 1 and 2 ("The Lake Before the Nineteenth Century" and "Defending the Lake," respectively) overlap a bit in their coverage, but survey the history of the years 1521-1898 to examine the extent to which the literal and conceptual notions of the Pacific Ocean as a "Spanish Lake" withstand a closer examination. Chapters 3 and 4 ("Arming Chinese Mestizos in Manila" and "Colonizing the Marianas") look with some detail into two episodes of Spain's history in the Pacific that have not received much scholarly attention, which also serve as support for the authors' alternate understanding of the Spanish presence in the Pacific, what they call "archipelagic Hispanization" (p. 13). At just under two hundred pages in all, their book is lean but on the whole efficient in accomplishing its tasks.

The authors take issue with the term "Spanish Lake" as an accurate descriptor of Spain's control over the Pacific Ocean from the sixteenth through the early nineteenth century. As John R. Gillis notes in his foreword to the book, the authors argue that that image is an illusory one: "Readers here will discover that the Pacific was neither a lake nor Spanish" (p. xi). The authors persuasively make the case that the Pacific, from the various rationales the Crown used for its exploration and colonizing to its administering and its military protection, was more an extension of New Spain and its particular advantages and interests than it was of Spain itself.

The chief proof of the Lake-as-misnomer, according to the authors, is one of the most familiar of Spain's activities in the Pacific. The Manila Galleon's route from Manila to Acapulco and back, though almost completely uninterrupted by other powers for two centuries (this fact helping to give rise to the image of the Spanish Lake), was nevertheless the sole portion of the Pacific over which Spain had firm, almost unchallenged con-

trol during all of that time (from the late 1500s to the wars for independence that ended Spanish control of the Americas). As for whatever other claims Spain had on other regions of the Pacific, those were derived from the fact that Spanish explorers beginning with Magellan had seen and in some cases named the islands they found but, finding them lacking economically, rarely established any sort of permanent or even long-term presence on them. Indeed, with few exceptions, these earlier explorers spent very little time even describing the people they found on these islands, much less their flora and fauna. Spain's lack of a substantive paper record regarding what its explorers saw in the southern Pacific would prove to be problematic as it sought to assert its claims to islands being visited by the British and French beginning in the eighteenth century, and led to both a flurry of new Spanish expeditions to the Pacific and the establishment of Jesuit missions in the Marianas.

The rest of the book is taken up with demonstrating that the Pacific was less Spanish in its administration and character than it was New-Spanish. As I noted earlier, the book demonstrates that most bureaucratic matters involving the Crown's holdings in the Pacific were decided not in Seville but in Mexico City. However, the book is at its strongest—and most noteworthy, given that much of the archival material it draws on has not been written about before—in showing how the Spanish possessions' societies and cultures were also shaped by lessons learned from the mestizo worlds developing in the Americas. Spain never sent native-born *peninsulares* to the Pacific in large enough numbers to completely dominate the daily life of the islands. Instead, the few that were there intermingled with natives or with immigrants from other countries (China most notably); or, they brought mestizos from New Spain to garrison military installations or run government offices, and those new arrivals would intermingle with indigenous people or other immigrants on the islands. Not all these things hap-

pened on every Spanish possession but, rather, as circumstances (or, as the case may be, happenstances) arose. The authors call this process "archipelagic Hispanization" as a way of conveying that diversity of approaches to asserting Spanish (but really New Spanish) control over these islands.

Chapters 3 and 4 provide two examples of archipelagic Hispanization. Chapter 3 recounts the previously unexamined history of militias of Chinese mestizos, a community of Chinese, indigenous, and Spaniards (or mestizos from New Spain) in Manila. These militias aided in the defense of Manila throughout the eighteenth century and acquitted themselves far more readily than even the members of the official Spanish army garrisoned there. Their loyalty earned them and their families a more equitable political and economic footing in Manila, which also, ironically, aided in the gradual cultural displacement of the very government whose interests they had so ably defended. Chapter 4, meanwhile, recounts the history of Jesuit evangelizing on the Marianas Islands, in particular Guam, and the subsequent Hispanization of the Chamorro people there. Though Magellan discovered Guam in 1521 and it would serve as a waystation for the Magellan Galleon, it would not be until 1668 that Spain established a mission there. The rest of the chapter provides census data and descriptions of political and social life on Guam that reveal a society similar in its nature to the mestizo cultures of the Americas, and whose traces remain to this day: "It is the compromises in Guam's history that preserve the continuities with its precontact past and link to the minimal history we have of the crucial 1700s in the Marianas" (p. 117).

Much of *Navigating the Spanish Lake's* material was brand new to me, and so I found myself an engaged reader and not merely a curious one asked to review it. That said, though, this book is not without its stylistic faults. The introduction offers no discussion of which author might be re-

sponsible for which material in the book, though the acknowledgements note that this book had its genesis as three AHA conference papers. However, the reader has to read the footnotes in order to learn that chapter 2 is a much-condensed version of Ranier F. Buschmann's 2014 book *Defending the Spanish Lake: Iberian Visions and Pacific Exploration, 1507-1899*. Thus, the book appears to want to convey the sense that its authors are speaking with a single voice, which is fine; but the impression I get is that it unintentionally appears cagey about its multivoicedness. A single paragraph in the acknowledgements that speaks to the authors' division of labor would be very helpful, I think.

In the end, though, this book has much to recommend it. The archival material discussed in the last two chapters either has never been examined before or has received little attention; those facts alone make this book worth reading. It is also invaluable as a survey of prior scholarship on the region and so serves as a compact and useful introduction to the period. I would also recommend it to people interested in the Spanish colonial era in the Americas; they will almost certainly note the parallels between the social histories of those colonies and the ones written of in this book, and learn as well that those colonies' influence did not stop at their western coastlines.

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