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Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century (review)

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and discovery, while the second is one of consolidation of empire and the transformation of knowledge during the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment. These 15 essays span four centuries and even more continents. They are the collective work of a group of international scholars who are rethinking the history of science and technology by decentering the traditional narratives about the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment. In particular, the volume convincingly demonstrates the need to pay closer attention to the long-neglected Iberian empires in traditional narratives, and the importance of local forms of knowledge and practices in the creation of modern science. Largely a group of younger scholars, I hope we will continue to profit further from their research in the coming years as they continue to produce more transformative work.

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ATLANTIC WORLD

Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century. By Alejandro de la Fuente. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008. Pp. xiii, 287. Illustrations. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$40.00 cloth.

The title of this book evokes Pierre and Huguette Chaunu's classic, multi-volume *Seville et L'Atlantique* (1955-1959), but *Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century* situates itself squarely in the recent historiography of the Atlantic world. It is, above all, the painstakingly empirical story of the transformation of this Cuban port from a tiny outpost, showing signs of stagnation and decline by the 1530s, into the ninth largest urban Spanish center in the Americas, with some 1,200 vecinos, not to mention an expanding slave population, by 1620. Aside from the usual transatlantic manuscript depositories (such as the Archivo General de Indias), Alejandro de la Fuente, with the acknowledged and extensive collaboration of César García del Pino and Bernardo Iglesias Delgado, mined a wealth of notarial records, town council records, parish registries, and treasury accounts in Cuban archives to construct the detailed local perspectives that drive the analysis.

The narrative begins at a dramatic and decisive moment. On July 10, 1555, the French corsair Jacques de Sorés attacked the town, which lacked the fortifications and demographic resources to protect itself. If Cuba "seemed to have lacked a purpose in the larger scheme of the emerging empire" (p. 3), this destruction of Havana set in motion several processes that transformed the port into a strategic and commercial nexus. Individual chapters treat shipping and trade, the fleets and the service economy, urban growth, production, slavery and the making of a racial order, and the people of the land. Havana emerged as a regional trading center that specialized in the reexportation of colonial commodities, connecting transoceanic, intra-Caribbean, and intercolonial shipping, particularly between Cuba and Mexico. Bullion, specie, and food products entered Havana, which soon serviced 1,000-2,000 seamen who arrived with the fleets during the peak season in the summer. On occasion, as in 1594-1595, more than 100 ships wintered in the

port as well, thus providing even greater commercial and service opportunities for its non-transitory inhabitants.

Following Sir Francis Drake's expedition in 1586, a sizeable and permanent garrison was established in Havana. Moreover, in ways very similar to the expansion of the labor force that Evelyn Powell Jennings describes in her work for the years after 1763, both the Crown as well as residents imported African slaves to fortify the town. In fact, the Crown became the largest slave owner in the city, with 150 slaves in 1604; still it had to rent 106 additional laborers from local slaveholders to finish the construction of El Morro. By the early seventeenth century, Havana's population growth was the fastest in the Americas. Most of the free population came from Andalucia, Castile, and the Canary Islands, with some Portuguese merchants migrating as well. By 1610, there were some 7,000-10,000 residents, with slaves representing nearly half the total. The hinterland expanded, as servicing the fleets facilitated land allocation. At the same time, Havana's shipyard became the most important in the New World, and one of the largest in all the Atlantic, thanks in part to the high quality of Cuban hardwoods. The last two chapters offer the type of detailed elaboration of family, religious, and political networks that is the staple of modern social history and, in this case, indispensable to understanding the fundamental contours of pre-plantation Cuban society. A wealth of detail is provided to elucidate the experiences not merely of the white elites, but also of less prominent whites, mulattoes, free blacks, and slaves. De la Fuente points to the "erosion of traditional boundaries in a port city" (pp. 186-187), insisting that "there was much in the Spanish Atlantic that was not Spanish—including human, material and spiritual elements" (p. 227).

Havana and the Atlantic ventures only into the first decade of the seventeenth century, so the middle century of Cuba's urban development awaits further attention, hopefully from Professor de la Fuente. In the meantime, for those specializing in a later, perhaps more familiar era, this book functions as a wonderful complement to Sherry Johnson's excellent study, *The Social Transformation of Eighteenth-Century Cuba* (2001). Finally, for the new breed of Atlanticists, whom the author characterizes in his epilogue as Eurocentric and Anglocentric, it serves as an urgent call to broaden our collective intellectual horizons.

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Sovereignty and Revolution in the Iberian Atlantic. By Jeremy Adelman. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006. Pp. x, 409. Illustration. Maps. Table. Notes. Index. \$39.95 cloth; \$29.95 paper.

With the growing interest in the forthcoming bicentennials of the Latin American independence epoch, Jeremy Adelman selected an excellent topic to study: the disintegration of the Iberian empires. Based upon secondary sources and primary archival research, this book examines the period of the later eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century reforms and the international wars for Atlantic domination. Adelman develops themes in Atlantic history that analyze the experiences of the two Iberian metropolises and their trans-