

The possibilities for achieving freedom and for legally marrying across racial lines explain the considerably larger community of free people in Havana—and this is the third element contributing to difference among the racial regimes—by the end of the eighteenth century.

These three communities of free Afro-descendants played very different roles in supporting enslaved people's actions for freedom, but during the Age of Revolutions, from US independence to the 1830s, the lives of people living in the three jurisdictions became more similar. As discussed in chapter 3, enslaved individuals saw new opportunities for emancipation, taking advantage of revolutionary ideologies and social unrest to make legal claims for freedom. But if the Age of Revolutions created windows of possibility for enslaved individuals, it also created anxiety among slaveholders, augmented by the Haitian Revolution and its echoes in the hemisphere. Throughout the nineteenth century, as described in chapter 4, fear of revolts led slaveholding elites to try to restrict manumission, increase control over slave populations, and diminish the rights (and, in Louisiana and Virginia, even the presence) of free people of color. This was not possible in Cuba, where the community of free people of color was quite large; but in Virginia and Louisiana, anxiety led to racial justifications for slavery and to harsher attempts to regulate and control the lives of free people of color (as discussed in chapter 5). Because of this, Afro-Cubans were not as degraded and their institutions were not attacked in the same way as were free people of color in Virginia and Louisiana in the 1860s.

*Becoming Free, Becoming Black* is a beautifully written manuscript based on both archival research and extensive bibliographic discussion. As with any ambitious book, certain questions remain unanswered. What was the impact of slavery's abolition on postemancipation race relations (another of Tannenbaum's crucial questions)? If legal regimes of race during the time of slavery became important templates for postemancipation societies, what were the actions of Afro-descendants in shaping those societies? A second volume exploring those issues would be a fine addition to the historiography.

KEILA GRINBERG, Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro  
DOI 10.1215/00182168-8796649

*Violence and the Caste War of Yucatán.* By WOLFGANG GABBERT. Cambridge Latin American Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Photographs. Map. Figures. Tables. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xi, 346 pp. Cloth, \$120.00.

It is puzzling that so little scholarship on the nineteenth-century conflict conventionally called the Caste War of Yucatan (1847–1901) addresses the war through the analytic of political violence. Too often, popular and scholarly discourses reduce the conflict to a primeval race war whereby Maya rebels supposedly aimed to “exterminate the white race” in Yucatan (p. 252). Wolfgang Gabbert's reframing complicates these stereotypical and propaganda-based portrayals of the war that continue to permeate the literature. For this reason alone, *Violence and the Caste War of Yucatán* is a most welcome addition.

Gabbert situates his arguments in the broader context of rural revolts and secessionist insurrections that occurred in the wake of independence from Spain across Latin America. He contends that the Caste War is unique within this sphere because of its duration, magnitude, and establishment of an independent insurrectionist polity, one that controlled the southeastern portions of the peninsula for a half century. Mobilizing frameworks derived from anthropology and sociology, he uses historical data to orient Caste War studies away from what he sees as the reductionist issues of race, class, and religious fundamentalism and toward an analysis of civil war and *caudillaje*—that is, armed patron-client polities that achieve dominance through displays of violence, charismatic rule, and loyalty.

Unlike other well-known books about the war, Gabbert's does not proceed chronologically. Rather, he traces patterns of violence as an operative force, allowing the reader to grasp a singular issue and how it changed as the war prolonged. Gabbert organizes the book into 21 chapters (supported by extensive footnotes), a brief contextual introduction, and 3 empirically rich appendixes. However, the stark differences in chapter lengths can be jarring (the shortest is 3 pages, the longest 40). I suspect that this range reflects the variability in available archival and secondary sources.

For anyone new to the study of the Caste War, parts 2, 3, and 6 present solid contextual orientations and syntheses of the author's key contributions. Part 1 offers a theoretical framework that shifts focus from the victims of violence toward the motivations behind and constraints on the enactment of violence under specific circumstances. This move allows Gabbert to give more attention to how violence permeated daily life in Yucatecan society as well as to the question of gender and violence—sorely underdeveloped topics in Caste War studies. Parts 4 and 5 do the heavy lifting. There, Gabbert interrogates the homogeneity of insurrectionist and military forces, the characterization of rebels as disproportionately ruthless, the capitalist engagements of the war's leaders, and the lifestyles and social organization of the southern rebel-held territories versus daily life in the other regions of Yucatan. In so doing, he convincingly represents the militarized syncretic religious movement that emerged at the insurrectionist stronghold, Chan Santa Cruz, as an archetype of rural folk religious practices across the peninsula rather than an atavistic revivalism of precolonial indigenous religious practices.

Gabbert's take on the racial politics of the war, however, is less convincing. The war was wedded to the racism that fashioned it. Gabbert attends to how violence permeated daily life, but, because he sides with scholars who analytically divide the processes of political violence from those of structural violence, his assessment downplays the link between the war and the oppressive, racialized society within which it emerged (p. 15). His refusal to evoke "macro-cleavages such as race, ethnicity or class" to explain the war's origins and persistence is an admirable reaction against extremist depictions of the rebels as genocidal racists (p. 250). Yet when he highlights that "rebels rarely employed terms referring to skin color to designate their adversaries," Gabbert's astute attention to the discourse used during the war comes at the cost of overlooking whether employing such terms would have provided the rebels a legitimate means of securing their goals in a

society fraught with the angst of settler racial politics. This is partly because he, like many other recent scholars of the war, views the struggle as “post-colonial” rather than anti-settler colonial, as suggested by Maya insurrectionists’ regular references to Spanish creole Yucatecans as *ts’ulo’b* (foreigners). Gabbert effectively illustrates the fluidity and unpredictability with which individuals who would have been racialized as Indian could be found fighting and dying on either side of the war. But in doing so, he treats nonrebel Indians’ participation in the war as more voluntary than compulsory. It’s not clear that such an interpretation would hold given that, as Gabbert points out, “Indian and peon [we]re used interchangeably in numerous contemporary statements” and “the lower classes,” who were the majority of those drafted, “bore the brunt of active service” (pp. 41, 107).

Still, the book is a meticulously researched aggregation of archival data that rearticulates the war in a way that destabilizes its exceptionalism and complicates the essentialism of prevailing narratives. Any scholar of the *longue durée* of political violence will likely find the book deeply engaging.

TIFFANY C. FRYER, Princeton University

DOI 10.1215/00182168-8796660

*Soberanías fronterizas: Estados y capital en la colonización de Patagonia (Argentina y Chile, 1830–1922)*. By ALBERTO HARAMBOUR. Colección Austral Universitaria de Ciencias Sociales, Artes y Humanidades. Valdivia: Ediciones Universidad Austral de Chile, 2019. Photographs. Maps. Figures. Bibliography. Index. 328 pp. Paper, CLP\$14,000.

Alberto Harambour is a central figure in the growing scholarship from the humanities and social sciences on Patagonia. Whereas the region has attracted the insightful work of literary scholars who deconstructed the writings of travelers in this still-mythic land, others have recently sought to engage the history of state formation, economic and political development, and the often-violent means used to incorporate Patagonia into the Argentine and Chilean nation-states. Some of these scholars have focused on environmental and animal studies, two fields that underlie but do not figure prominently in Harambour’s analysis. Rather, he deconstructs the rise of a transregional oligarchy rooted in the wool industry as the operative political and economic force in the Patagonian frontier at the turn of the century. In particular, the book focuses on southern Patagonia’s steppe, including the broader Magallanes region, Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego, and contemporary Chile’s southernmost provinces.

*Soberanías fronterizas* contains an expansive introduction, four chapters, and a short epilogue that tackle Patagonia, from a theoretical and mainly materialist historical lens, as a multiple frontier. Harambour begins with a summary of the region’s political history, including well-known border treaties and early military and prison outposts that brought an armed state presence into the region. But rather than merely rehashing these better-known events, Harambour examines how best to conceptualize the process by which