

## Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos

FERNANDO DEGIOVANNI. Vernacular Latin Americanisms: War, the Market, and the Making of a Discipline. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 2018. 238 pp.

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Volume 44, Number 3, Spring 2020

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1089823ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18192/rceh.v44i3.6384>

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### Publisher(s)

Asociación Canadiense de Hispanistas

### ISSN

0384-8167 (print)

2564-1662 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

### Cite this review

Fischer, C. (2020). Review of [FERNANDO DEGIOVANNI. Vernacular Latin Americanisms: War, the Market, and the Making of a Discipline. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 2018. 238 pp.] *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos*, 44(3), 787–789. <https://doi.org/10.18192/rceh.v44i3.6384>

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thoughtful volume provides important new insights into Góngora, Camargo and Sor Juana.

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FERNANDO DEGIOVANNI. *Vernacular Latin Americanisms: War, the Market, and the Making of a Discipline*. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 2018. 238 pp.

Fernando Degiovanni's engaging study follows seven of the key forefathers of Latin American literary studies between 1900 and 1960, whose formation of the field took place alongside their negotiation of the major geopolitical and economic events of their time: the Spanish-American War, both World Wars, the Spanish Civil War, the Cold War, and the Cuban Revolution. Hailing from Spain, Latin America, and the US, each one mediated the competing cultural, political, and economic interests of their countries of origin – and their adopted countries – as they laid out their respective canonical approaches to the burgeoning discipline.

In his study, Degiovanni brilliantly challenges several commonly accepted truths of Latin American literary studies. He shows that far from being an *Arielista* discourse espousing “uncontaminated spiritual values opposed to utilitarian and materialist United States” (1), it is inseparable from the realities of communication, transport technologies, and markets (7). Degiovanni even uncovers the rather authoritarian leanings of some of the field's main proponents: Pedro Henríquez Ureña worked for Rafael Trujillo's dictatorship (150); Américo Castro justified the Spanish conquest of the Americas (96); and Alfred Coester spied on Latin American countries for the US government. Degiovanni exposes the conservatism at the heart of the discipline, formed as it was – primarily by men – around the study of a white, *criollo* elite (144).

The most chilling evidence of this conservatism lies in the racist leanings of many of the field's central early players. Coester's presentation of Latin American elites as white and “therefore free from crime-inducing ‘racial defects’” (57) and Federico de Onís's obstinately naive rendering of Jim Crow-era US as a “country without prejudice” and therefore ripe for Spain's cultural expansion (64) are just two examples of the evidently endemic racism in our field. Degiovanni's investigation into this left me wishing that he had expanded even further on its implications, particularly as the discipline continues to reckon with this legacy of willful colorblindness today.

The glue that binds the study together is the titular notion of the “vernacular”: the process through which the terms of the discipline came to acquire agreed-upon, common meanings. Degiovanni thus focuses on the local and contingent interventions that these men made as they delineated the boundaries of the field: lectures (and their performative implications), epistolary exchanges (in this sense, his archival work is outstanding), travel, and – the bulk of his corpus – anthologies that established the boundaries of the literary canons that would best represent each man’s vision of Latin American literature.

The study follows a chronological path. Chapters one and two focus on Jeremiah Ford and his disciple Coester, two US-born academics who promoted what Degiovanni calls a “Pan-Americanist” cultural agenda in the early twentieth century, incubating US commercial and imperial hegemony in the region following the opening of the Panama Canal, the US victory in the Spanish-American War, and Roosevelt’s Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. Their ideal canon of Latin American literature – the more mimetic, the better – rendered it a “professional-managerial” discourse (50) that could inform students about the region’s cultural mores, making them more sophisticated interlocutors to their trading partners to the south.

Chapters three and four examine two Spanish-born professors, Onís and Castro, whose time working in the US academy during the first half of the twentieth century (bridging WWI, the Spanish Civil War, and WWII) was dedicated to contesting the aforementioned Pan-Americanist approach with a “Hispanic Studies” model (64) that sought to make Spain central to Latin American literary studies. This led, as Degiovanni points out, to contradictions in their disciplinary and political positions: their defense of Spain’s imperial legacy in the Americas, as evidenced in their emphasis on a canon of colonial literature, figured the country as a “modern” paradigm that could teach US citizens how to render their country an adequate successor to Spain as a global imperial power.

Degiovanni then turns to Latin American figures who shaped the field. Chapter five considers Luis Alberto Sánchez, whose Marxist-inflected canon of “socioliterature” served as a critique of authoritarianism, economic inequality, the bureaucratic opacity of the Spanish language, and even fascism (110-5). Influenced by the University Reform movement, Sánchez felt that socioliterature could effect cultural democratization through accessible texts and lectures: a vernacular critique of Yankee imperialism that could, paradoxically, reach fruition when marketed to the region’s expanding urban middle classes within a capitalistic framework.

The final two chapters discuss Henríquez Ureña and his doctoral student, Enrique Anderson Imbert, pointing us to another field-defining student-mentor relationship. Degiovanni notes that Henríquez wrote his

famous text *Literary Currents in Hispanic America* to figure Latin America's elite, lettered tradition as proof of its cultural authority to guarantee stable Pan-American economic relations and capital expansion (150-54). Anderson's approach to the discipline, meanwhile, valued a more direct literary style, accessible to the reader (171) and less elitist, yet still offering an autonomous creative space far from any totalitarian (read: Peronist) attempts to impose a cultural agenda (173).

At every turn, Degiovanni's incisive and absorbing analysis shows how the institutional and ideological frameworks of the first half of the twentieth century illuminate how we study Latin American literature today. His account of the refusals by Onís and Castro to advocate for the republican cause in the Spanish Civil War, based on the rationale that focusing on the country's internal divisions would reduce its symbolic credibility as a cultural hegemon (82), foreshadows the complicit silences that many in our field maintain today vis-à-vis pressing political matters. Meanwhile, his fascinating approach to the anthologies and textbooks his subjects wrote – aimed at teaching language and literature together – prefigures the often-fraught linkage between the teaching of Latin American literature and the teaching of the Spanish language that many of us currently deal with. Finally, his epilogue focuses on the still-ambivalent position of the discipline – which figures the region's literature alternately as a force of political radicalization and one that maintains existing hierarchies of lettered power across the Americas – amidst the resurgence of the anti-US, Latin Americanist discourses of Chavismo and Kirchnerismo.

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JO LABANYI. *Spanish Culture from Romanticism to the Present. Structures of Feeling*. Cambridge: Legenda. Selected Essays II. Modern Humanities Research Association, 2019. 349 pp.

El volumen que aquí reseño está integrado por veinticuatro artículos publicados por la hispanista británica Jo Labanyi entre la década de los noventa del pasado siglo y nuestros días más una breve introducción. Compone, de este modo, una especie de antología de una autora que, haciendo uso de un impresionante aparato teórico basado, fundamental pero no exclusivamente, en el materialismo cultural, el psicoanálisis y el feminismo, ha trabajado un extraordinario abanico de *textos* producidos por la cultura española desde el siglo XIX hasta la actualidad. Este extenso arco de análisis que incluye teatro, novela, ensayo, pintura, fotografía y cine