

For all but the musicologically inclined some phrases will sound incomprehensible. For example, Stras discusses the differences in vocal performances and uses musical scores to elucidate musical qualities associated with the singing. The second issue, in a way, ties directly into the first. Having a companion CD would enhance the experience of the reader, not only to follow along with the songs presented, but also to make the whole project *more* fun, rather than having to resort to finding the songs on the internet or hidden away on old albums.

These two minor critiques do not take away from the extraordinary work *She's So Fine* accomplishes. It skilfully lays down the groundwork for a new field of inquiry, and it manages to touch upon issues of femininity, class and adolescence, whilst the racial aspects could fill volumes. In her introduction, Stras points the way to future research, but the list is (sadly) incomplete. There is still much to discuss, not only in more depth on the singers raised in *She's So Fine*, but also other aspects of female musicianship. The book challenges the prevailing myths of a 1960s feminine ideal (especially in music) and provides the first step towards what will hopefully become a wider discourse on the subject.

**Sean F. McEnroe, *From Colony to Nationhood in Mexico: Laying the Foundations, 1560-1840* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).  
x+252 pp.  
ISBN 9781107006300.**

Charles Angelo\*

From the time frame of this study alone, one can discern Sean McEnroe's 'primordialist' approach to the question of nationalism in

his intriguing work on the Mexican northeast.<sup>1</sup> McEnroe does not portray the emergence of a Mexican nation as a fundamentally modern act of creation, but rather a gradual course of development which stemmed from the start of the Tlaxcalan-Spanish alliance during the conquest. *From Colony to Nationhood in Mexico* investigates the colonial processes by which diverse ethnic and cultural groups (the northern Chichimecs, the Tlaxcalans, and the Spanish) were integrated into a larger network of citizenship, processes which made Mexico a plausible political unit by the early nineteenth century. McEnroe concludes that the Mexican national story is one of continuity, rather than a sharp break with the past: indeed, ‘...the new nation of Mexico was as much a fulfilment of colonial ambitions as a repudiation of them’ (220). This surprisingly ambitious conclusion is reached through a rigorous historical grounding in the local experience of state formation in Nuevo León.

From Bernal Diaz onwards, historians have emphasised the essential contribution of native groups to the conquest and colonization of the Americas. The attempt to create settlements north of the former Aztec Empire required a Tlaxcalan colonising effort, which worked independently and alongside the Spanish one. McEnroe devotes the first two-thirds of his book to an analysis of the ‘Tlaxcalan model’ for establishing societies in and around Nuevo León from the 1590s onwards. These communities, or *pueblos de indios*, were organised voluntarily (with encouragement from the viceregal authorities), and acted on the one hand as a font of Tlaxcalan political power, and on the other as a site of ‘settlement and acculturation for Chichimecs’, a broadly-named group of unsettled Indians in the north (37-49, quote 43). Indians outside the colonial structure were a pressing and violent problem, looting and impeding the development of towns on the frontier of New Spain. Through a series of negotiations and military

---

\* Charles Angelo completed an MA in History at the University of Warwick in 2013. He can be contacted at [c\\_angelo@btinternet.com](mailto:c_angelo@btinternet.com)

<sup>1</sup> This is meant in a more nuanced sense than the suggestion of a simple search for what one could label proto-national identity at some point in the early-modern period (or before). For a useful background to the study of Mexican nationalism and nation-building see Knight, Alan, ‘Peasants into Patriots: Thoughts on the Making of the Mexican Nation’, *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, Vol. 10, No. 1, (Winter, 1994), pp. 135-161, and for the ‘primordialist’ vs. ‘instrumentalist’ debate see pp. 139-149 specifically. See also Jacobson, Stephen, ‘The Head and the Heart of Spain’: New Perspectives on Nationalism and Nationhood’, *Social History*, Vol. 29, No. 3, (Aug., 2004), 393-407.

efforts (81-83), these Chichimecs increasingly settled in *pueblos de indios*, where they would be baptised, given plots of land, and taught farming and labouring methods by Tlaxcalans.

More than agricultural skills however, Indians developed an (imperial) cultural and political awareness in these *pueblos*. Chichimecs aped Tlaxcalan methods of representing themselves to the authorities, in order to gain some (or indeed, all) of the same political weight in the structures of the colony. In one of the best chapters of this work, McEnroe outlines this practice of 'Becoming Tlaxcalan' by examining lexicons of citizenship in official reports, correspondence and court records. The terms of settlement in Tlaxcalan-Chichimec towns were continually shifting as different groups of Indians sought to improve their land and water rights, as well as their taxation and political status. To do this, as Tlaxcalans had before them (33-55), more recent settlers articulated their value as faithful subjects (or vassals) to the Spanish crown. Indians utilised 'Tlaxcalan political practices and legal discourse' (116) to describe themselves in disputes over rights, emphasising their possession of desirable colonial traits and/or history of co-operation with the colonising mission. For instance, we learn that in 1750 when a group of Alasapas used litigation to defend a part of their estate, their testimony highlighted 'the literacy of its leaders, the antiquity of its land claims, the religious orthodoxy of its population, and the military service of its men' (100). From numerous testimonials like this, McEnroe argues that the long-term result of the *pueblos de indios* system was an increasing multi-ethnic participation in a common *civic* identity, based on shared interests (within local communities) in the formation of a colonial state.

That, in Nuevo León, state-formation was hindered by conditions of 'near-continuous warfare' (92) gave great significance to the issue of defence. The responsibility for securing the frontier fell primarily on the independent local militias that both Spanish towns and *pueblos de indios* could raise. McEnroe posits this military participation as one of the most important cultural features of colonial citizenship: not only did Chichimecs appeal to it in further differentiating themselves from the violent exterior (112-116), but service in the militias incorporated *both* the Spanish and Indian citizenry into organisations for a common civic cause. Militias grew along with the frontier towns, and their size and number increased rapidly during the period of the Bourbon reforms. As these organisations incorporated more and more people from wider

regions, individuals gained an awareness of themselves as part of a large community of citizen-soldiers. It is this consciousness, we are told, that helped pave the way for the imagined community of the Mexican nation.

However, McEnroe's chapter devoted to militias is a little unsatisfying in places. One desires more on exactly *how* membership of a militia shaped the subjectivities of the participants. An investigation into the day-to-day lives of these militiamen would make clearer the role their military service played in forging the identities and imagined communities that McEnroe convincingly demonstrates were created. Furthermore, it would have been interesting to see the author link his work to earlier studies of militias in nineteenth century Mexico, which highlight the struggles between the central and local authorities over the maintenance of an armed public force and what kind of shape it should take.<sup>2</sup>

This issue aside, the core of McEnroe's structural story of the 'Tlaxcalan model' of settlement with economic, political and military participation is a persuasive one. In spite of its name, the 'Tlaxcalan model' is presented as a *civic* system rather than an *ethnic* one, taking account of the cultural diversity which still existed in Mexican society in the 1800s, and still exists today. While groups of Chichimecs wanted to take up Tlaxcalan responsibilities and enjoy their privileges, they maintained their own ethnic identity within *pueblo de indios* to a large degree (108-111). This system thus transcended the Tlaxcalans themselves, first creating colonial identities, which later came to be expressed as Mexican ones. This is also an explanation of Mexican national development from the bottom-up, even though the *pueblo de indios* model was the type of settlement championed by the viceregal authorities (over the Spanish colonists' preferred *encomienda*-style *congregacion*, a form of pseudo-slavery). McEnroe interprets the efforts of central-government reformers like Francisco Barbardillo (86-87) as a process of recognition and codification of a system which had already been produced and re-produced, of its own volition, at the local level.

---

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Santoni, Pedro, 'A Fear of the People: the Civic Militia of Mexico in 1845', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 68, No. 2, (May, 1988), pp. 269-288 and Thomson, Guy P. C., 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism: The National Guard, Philharmonic Corps and Patriotic Juntas in Mexico, 1847-88', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1, (Feb., 1990), pp. 31-68.

This work is an excellent contribution to both the fields of Mexican history and, more broadly, studies of nationalism. McEnroe paints a detailed, vivid picture of the early-modern, colonial imagined community as an antecedent of, and a foundation to, the modern nation.

**Geof Rayner and Tim Lang,  
*Ecological Public Health: Reshaping  
the conditions for good health,*  
(Abingdon and New York: Routledge,  
2012). 432 pp.  
ISBN 9781844078325.**

Sophie A. Greenway\*

Interdisciplinarity in academia can be fraught, often richer in claim than substance. Having recently reviewed work by historians on communicating with public health practitioners, I was interested to note the extent to which history has been deployed by two social scientists in setting out their understanding of ecological public health. This award winning volume raises important questions for historians on the nature of interdisciplinary exchange and the extent of involvement in policy.<sup>1</sup> This review will concentrate on Rayner and Lang's handling of history. Their treatment of current political issues and alternative ecological systems of public health are the subject of reviews of a related essay by the same authors in the B.M.J.<sup>2</sup>

---

\* Sophie A. Greenway is completing an MA in The History of Medicine at the University of Warwick. She can be contacted at [S.A.Greenway@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:S.A.Greenway@warwick.ac.uk)

<sup>1</sup> BMA Medical Book and Patient Information Awards 2013, Highly Commended in Public Health Category.

<sup>2</sup> Simon A. Reid, 'Re Ecological Public Health: The 21<sup>st</sup> Century's Big Idea?' *BMJ* 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012, Justin Varney, 'Re Ecological Public Health: The 21<sup>st</sup>