

José R. Jouve Martín, *The Black Doctors of Colonial Lima: Science, Race, and Writing in Colonial and Early Republican Peru* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014). 244 pp. \$55.00 Paperback.

In this study, José Jouve Martín explores the social and political causes of the exceptional large number of surgeons and doctors of African descent in the city of Lima in the decades that preceded the wars of independence in Peru. The lives and fortunes of these doctors radically question many existing assumptions about the relationship between race, science, and politics in the cities of colonial and early republican Latin America. One of the most representative characteristics of the colonial system in Latin America was the rigid caste system that was the basis for the organization of society during the nearly three centuries of Spanish domination. Without ignoring the lack of social mobility that Afro-descendants faced at the time, Jouve Martín presents in this book the little-known story of three Afro-Peruvian surgeons and doctors in the late colonial period and the first years of the republic. José Manuel Valdés, José Manuel Dávalos, and José Pastor de Larrinaga were three of the most distinguished among this group of medical practitioners of African origin in Lima, whose careers began in the late 1780s. Valdés' career continued until 1830 when the government named him to head the *Protomedicato General*, the top medical position in Peru in the early years of the Republic. In the case of Dávalos and Larrinaga, their careers lasted until their deaths in 1821. Valdés, Dávila, and Larrinaga were not the only black doctors in the city. Contemporary observers such as the British physician Archibald Smith and the Swiss naturalist Johan Jakob von Tschudi wrote about the predominance of black or mulatto doctors in Lima in the years of independence. However, according to Jouve Martín, specific and detailed information about the activities of Afro-Peruvian surgeons and doctors is scarce.

Legal and social restrictions in Spanish America prevented racialized peoples from being considered for academic positions or responsibilities relating to public health. They were also prohibited from writing about medical issues or participate in scientific and political debates that usually involved Spanish descendants. Nevertheless, Valdés, Dávila, and Larrinaga did so, demonstrating the important and exceptional nature of the medical profession in Lima. Jouve Martín argues that the racial demographics in the city, the lack of qualified doctors and surgeons, and the contradictory stance that Spanish authorities took in regards to the participation of blacks in higher education explains the remarkable presence of African-Peruvians in the medical profession. These arguments suggest that the caste system in colonial Lima was relatively flexible, which allowed these doctors to take part in the scientific revolution that overtook the medical profession in Peru in the second half of the eighteenth century.

African-Peruvian physicians actively joined the reform efforts of influential figures of the Peruvian Enlightenment such as the creole Hipólito Unanue, who is considered as the Founding Father of Peruvian medicine. The special place that Valdés, Dávalos, and Larrinaga occupied in Peruvian medicine is largely due to their close relationship with Unanue, who opened the predominantly white intellectual circles of Lima to them. Their participation in Unanue's medical reform plan in Peru and their success in the scientific world of Lima gave them a degree of authority that allowed them to address contemporary social, political, and philosophical issues.

They perceived science and writing not just as a medium to convey their ideas but also as part of a process of differentiation that allowed them to take distance "from other 'darker' and less cultivated Afro-Peruvians." (xviii) Lima's black community was fractured along legal, ethnic, professional, and even gender divisions, which allowed for a wide variety of identities within the black community. Valdés, Dávalos, and Larrinaga claimed to be free *pardos* or individuals of African descent considered to be genealogically and racially whiter than mulattoes, and therefore, closer to Spaniards. As such, they were interested in advancing the social status of those who shared their racial, legal, and professional identity. While they did not renounce their racial identity, they tried to minimize it, emphasizing instead their professional identity. (136) They adapted to the rapidly changing scientific and political environment in which they lived, and their ability to compromise with the established order allowed them to negotiate their position within the hierarchical world of Peruvian medicine and to enjoy a significant degree of social and professional success. Valdés' role as a *Protomédico General* is evidence that he was the most successful in crossing these murky fields of race, science, and politics.

Dávalos also learned to avoid the restrictions of the colonial caste system. As a mulatto, he could not enrol at the prestigious University of San Marcos in Lima, but he went to France to study botany, chemistry, and anatomy at the University of Montpellier (1784-1788), where he received his doctorate. In his thesis, he exalted the importance and originality of Peruvian science and attacked the views of the Dutch intellectual Cornelius de Pauw about the inferiority of the American environment. While Dávalos published his dissertation in Montpellier, Unanue gave Valdés and Larrinaga the chance of writing in the *Mercurio Peruano*, one of the most important venues for the dissemination of the scientific revolution in South America.

Martin's work offers a more nuanced view of the race, ethnicity, and class differentiation in the Viceroyalty of Peru. His novel analysis is an encouragement for new research that looks for similar cases in other regions in colonial Latin American. Probably the lack of similar studies for other regions is the reason why the author does not offer a comparative perspective that could have strengthened the central argument of the uniqueness of Lima's medical world. Despite the lack of a comparative perspective, the evidence provided by the author suggests that the pres-

ence of black doctors in Lima was more widespread than one might think, which questions the rigidity of the caste system in America, an idea quite consolidated in the historiography. The contribution of Jouve Martín, thus, goes beyond the borders of intellectual history and history of medical practices and invites to revisit the hypothesis of the inflexibility of racial and class categories in Latin America.

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Maria Holt and Haifaa Jawad, *Women, Islam, and Resistance in the Arab World* (Boulder: CO, Lynne Rienner Press, 2013). 211 pp. \$26.50 Hardcover.

In *Women, Islam, and Resistance in the Arab World*, Maria Holt and Haifaa Jawad interrogate the role of women in Islamic resistance movements, which appear in Western media to be the domain of men, in Lebanon, Iraq, and Palestine. The authors challenge the prevailing assumption of Arab women as powerless victims, and through their case studies explore the ways that “Islamic activism enables women to play constructive roles in violent conflict.” (3) The case studies selected all emphasize “resistance against perceived external enemies by Muslim communities who choose to organize their struggles within an Islamic framework.” (4) This specific focus provides a clear rationale for case selection and narrows the scope of the book, but it also limits the potential applicability of the findings to other situations of conflict in the Arab and Islamic world, where Islamists are fighting secular Arabs or other sects of Islam within the same country, or where conflict is motivated more by tribal affiliation than by religion. No book could adequately cover all the ways that Islam is mobilized in the Arab world; however, additional studies are needed on the role of women in a wide range of internal and external conflicts, many of which include an element of politicized Islam.

The book is based on interviews and questionnaires carried out with women of all ages and social classes in Lebanon, the West Bank, Syria, Jordan and Yemen in 2002-2003, 2006-2007, and 2010-2011. The authors use a critical, post-colonial framework to explore questions of power and resistance, how researchers construct knowledge, and how to define feminism in the Arab Muslim context. Holt and Jawad assert that their aim is “to link the discourse on gender and national identity with discussions of women’s role in national liberation and Islamic resistance movements,” seeking to decolonize feminism and emphasize Arab women’s own agency and the role of Islam as a faith and tradition in insecure situations of violent conflict. (8) Indeed, the book centres on the narratives of the women interviewed; although the book engages to a certain degree with religious texts and teachings, it does not prioritize interpretations of *shari’a* used by women activists or by the religious scholars in their various contexts. Rather than an accounting of theology, the book is an accounting of lived experiences.