

BOOK REVIEW ESSAYS

## New (and a Few Old) Directions in Latin American Visual Cultural Studies

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This essay reviews the following works:

**María Izquierdo and Frida Kahlo: Challenging Visions in Modern Mexican Art.** By Nancy Deffebach. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015. Pp. vii + 225. \$60.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9780292772427.

**Cosmopolitanism in Mexican Visual Culture.** By María Fernández. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014. Pp. x + 438. \$60.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9780292745353.

**The Mobility of Modernism: Art and Criticism in 1920s Latin America.** By Harper Montgomery. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2017. Pp. xi + 319. \$29.95 paperback. ISBN: 9781477312544.

**At the Crossroads: Diego Rivera and His Patrons at MoMA, Rockefeller Center, and the Palace of Fine Arts.** By Catha Paquette. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2017. Pp. xix + 324. \$29.95 paperback. ISBN: 9781477311004.

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As with other historical disciplines, art history has witnessed a shift from objectivist approaches to the past toward ones that treat not only historical objects, but also terms like “objectivity” itself, as discursively produced via articulations of knowledge and power that do not uncover or restore Truth, but rather produce truths. Historiography increasingly traces the discursive production of these disciplines with an emphasis on the imbrication of historical truth claims within systems of oppression, such as colonialism, racial and gender formations, or the forces of global capitalism, to name only a few. And while exemplary works in this vein do not dispense with truth claims about the past, they are circumspect with respect to the production of those claims.

In art historical studies of visual culture in Latin America this has prompted more thematic studies that situate works of art within a rich nexus of period art criticism, political and economic policy, institutional formation, and popular uptakes in other forms of media, such as newspapers, journals, films, or activism. Rather than treating works of art and visual culture as either representations of these discursive formations—whether understood as overdetermined by them or as overdetermining of them—these authors treat objects as sites through which competing discourses about femininity, nationality, racial identity, modernization, or history, and so on are articulated, negotiated, and contested. This discursive turn can also be considered a generational shift that marks the advances of the subfield within the larger discipline. Current scholars are building upon a foundational generation’s work of recovery and canon formation while also attempting to revise, complicate, and unpack those canons and the assumptions on which they were built.

The four books under review provide a sense of the current state of art historical studies of Latin American visual culture. Nancy Deffebach’s and Catha Paquette’s books are emblematic of well-established iconographic and social art historical paradigms, respectively. Harper Montgomery’s and María Fernández’s books reflect the visual cultural turn and its emphasis on discursivity. Accordingly, they seek to make interventions in the broader fields of modernism and architectural history.

In *María Izquierdo and Frida Kahlo*, Deffebach offers a comparison of works by these two important female artists. However, her narrative does not have the conceptual nuance, historical complexity, or archival depth

that we find in the arguments put forth by the other three authors. Where her study does excel is in its conventional practice of iconographic art history as she provides generative identifications for the many cultural symbols that populate the paintings of Kahlo and Izquierdo. This approach is most conducive to Kahlo's detailed paintings; it can leave the analysis of Izquierdo's more formally experimental aesthetic wanting.

Deffebach justifies her comparative exercise via a somewhat simplistic feminist critique of the masculinist orientation of the Mexican art world and the dominance of monumental, public mural art. And while she acknowledges the many women who contributed to the postrevolutionary avant-garde, she insists that Kahlo and Izquierdo were the most successful, in large part because they asserted "the political nature of women's private individualized expression" at a moment when political art was defined in exactly opposite terms (3). Deffebach here quotes from Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen's landmark exhibition on Kahlo and Tina Modotti, but her arguments are more indebted to second-wave feminist art history, with its emphasis on the "personal" and its critique of male artists and institutions as patriarchal, than it is to their Marxist and psychoanalytic feminism.<sup>1</sup> And despite the importance of the term "gender" in her study, there is not a whiff of poststructural gender studies or transnational feminism in her analysis, which is unfortunate given how important an intersectional approach to ethnic and class privilege is to any assessment of these artists' advantages or disadvantages as women. Finally, I would have preferred to see some of the nuance that Harper Montgomery brings to her discussion of the ways that Latin American modernists deployed primitivism and the feminine, for both of these artists were self-conscious primitivists in ways that are intriguing and troubling. Deffebach is, however, circumspect when attempting to argue for a conscious feminist praxis, dedicating an entire chapter to both artists' ambivalent relationships to the struggle for women's rights in Mexico.

The book is divided into five parts, with part 1 devoted to how Kahlo and Izquierdo critiqued the "male hero" that predominates in Mexican muralism. Here she focuses in on Izquierdo's paintings of female circus performers and Kahlo's appropriations of religious iconography in her self-portraits. Neither of these chapters breaks much new ground as these genres predominate within the extant literature. Deffebach's approach does not depart much from Hayden Herrera's salutary but often critiqued *Frida Kahlo: The Paintings* from 1991, despite her claim to eschew Herrera's biographical reductionism.<sup>2</sup> And it does not have the intersectional sophistication of Sarah Lowe's less well-known work on Kahlo (published in the same year as Herrera's), or Adriana Zavala's more recent scholarship on Kahlo and Izquierdo, despite being indebted to both.<sup>3</sup>

Part 2, however, has more to offer with three chapters dedicated to how each artist engaged tradition. In the first two, she discusses Kahlo's painting, focusing on her references to West Mexican antiquities from her husband's collection in one, and on the rarely discussed painting, *La niña, la luna y el sol* of 1942 in the other. In both, Deffebach situates Kahlo's iconography with respect to that of Rivera, showing how deftly Kahlo engaged pre-Columbian objects and mythology to "recount her personal story and project her intellectual and political ideas," which often included subtle critiques of his partisan vision (85). In the third, she considers Izquierdo's images of rural gardens with *coscomates* (granaries), a fascinating topic that allows for rich comparisons between her eroticized renderings of this traditional vernacular architecture and those that appear in the ethnographic photography, mural art, and lithography of her male peers. She links this icon to the state of Morelos and Emiliano Zapata's call for agrarian reform, thereby drawing connections between the land and gender that move beyond the more familiar trope of the female nude.

In Part 3 Deffebach turns her attention to the much discussed controversy over Izquierdo's scuttled mural commission, arguing that it was not her incompetence as a public artist or her status as a woman per se (after all a few other women had successfully completed murals in Mexico), but rather her gendered vision of labor that ultimately threatened her critics. In Part 4, the author focuses on the still lifes that predominate in both artists' work. Izquierdo's paintings of popular altars have suffered by comparison with Kahlo's still lifes, judged by many scholars to have been a capitulation to the market for touristic painting. Deffebach mounts a defense of these paintings as celebrations of Izquierdo's *patria chico*—the state of Jalisco—as well as subject matter that "pointedly stressed women" (160).

<sup>1</sup> Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen, "Frida Kahlo and Tina Modotti," *Frida Kahlo and Tina Modotti* (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 1982), 7–27.

<sup>2</sup> Hayden Herrera, *Frida Kahlo: The Paintings* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991).

<sup>3</sup> Sarah M. Lowe, *Frida Kahlo* (New York: Universe, 1991), and Adriana Zavala, *Becoming Modern, Becoming Tradition: Women, Gender, and Representation in Mexican Art* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 2010).

Finally, Part 5 situates the foregoing chapters with respect to the political struggle for women's rights, demonstrating that neither artist was actively engaged in this cause, while also suggesting that Izquierdo, at least, demonstrated solidarity with her female colleagues through her art criticism for journals and newspapers. While it is still unclear how best to theorize the relationship between female avant-gardists like Kahlo and Izquierdo and the burgeoning feminist movement in Mexico, Deffebach's final chapter makes a welcome contribution to the growing literature on the development of feminist art in Latin America from the 1960s to the present.<sup>4</sup> The historical connections between the interwar period and the 1960s are still poorly understood, in part because of the ways that "personal" concerns with regard to sexuality, domestic labor, and maternity were constituted as "bourgeois" within a political cultural sphere that privileged a Marxist concern with the (male) working class, whether conceived of as proletarian or peasant. In this sense, Deffebach's feminist critique of the Mexican avant-garde and her discussion of women's rights are valuable even if she falls short with respect to intersectionality.

Like Deffebach, Catha Paquette centers her project on a canonical artist—Diego Rivera—and one of the most famous episodes in Mexican muralism, his commission by John D. Rockefeller Jr. to paint a mural in the RCA tower at Rockefeller Center in midtown Manhattan. The strength of Paquette's *At the Crossroads*, however, is less her iconographic analysis of Rivera's mural (which is deft), and more her deep dive into a singular cultural moment in the art of the Americas: the controversy over Rivera's inclusion of a portrait of Communist leader Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and the mural's subsequent destruction as a consequence of his refusal to remove it. As I argued in my press review of the manuscript, despite the numerous publications about the commissioning and censorship of Rivera by the Rockefellers, the story is too often reduced to a simplistic conception of good socialist artist versus bad capitalist patron. By broadening the circle of actors considered, situating the controversy within a transnational framework, and exploring a number of institutional and discursive contexts, Paquette takes what she calls a "multiperspectival approach," emphasizing the struggle over meaning, the strategic deployment of "clarity and ambiguity" by many (not just Rivera), and the dynamic nature of a moment when "capitalism was in crisis, communism and socialism constituted promises as well as threats, and the US and Mexican government implemented radically new public policies and programs" (18–25).

Paquette divides her argument into three parts that span the period from 1931 through 1934. She attends to the ways that the meaning of Rivera's mural program was positioned in discrete contexts of display (something Montgomery also does), revealing not only the malleability of the artist's strategic "ambiguity and clarity" across geographical, institutional, and political borders, but also the extent to which its political effects were produced by a transnational field of actors and interests concerned not only with "political and economic policies but also the visual and textual terms by which diverse constituencies advocated them" (25). Accordingly, each part focuses on a particular venue at a single moment in historical time.

Part 1 is sited at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in Manhattan in 1931 and explores the cultural relations between Mexico, the US, and the Soviet Union to better understand why a retrospective of Rivera's work was useful as cultural diplomacy and thus set the stage for his commission at Rockefeller Center. In this chapter, Paquette helps today's reader understand the more nuanced relationship between US capitalists and the socialism being popularized by artists working in the Americas and laboring under the influence of the Soviet Comintern. Not only did the Rockefellers promote Rivera's work at MoMA and in their speculative real estate project, but one of his portable murals on display at MoMA, *Frozen Assets* (1931), was reproduced in full color and lauded in the pages of *Fortune Magazine*.

Part 2, the heart of the book, comprises three chapters that treat the commissioning, execution, and destruction of Rivera's mural at Rockefeller Center between 1932 and 1933. Of particular interest is Paquette's detailed exposition of the planning documents for the integrated arts program. Working with John Jr.'s PR manager Merle Crowell's "New Frontiers" document, Paquette convincingly argues that Rivera was selected, in part, because of his patron's desire to promote a "new understanding" between capital and labor that resonated with the so-called "Rockefeller Plan" during one of the most intense periods of debate over unionization (102–103). The fate of Rockefeller's corporate holdings as well as his development project depended upon resolving the issue in favor of "company unions" (103). Thus much of the arts program was geared toward promoting "principles of Brotherhood" whereby structural exploitation was reconceived as an interpersonal relationship between capitalists and workers (105). Rivera, as a Mexican, a communist, and one of labor's greatest envoys in the arts, was ideal for demonstrating John Jr.'s brotherly impulse in the political, geographic, and managerial sense.

<sup>4</sup> See Cecilia Fajardo-Hill and Andrea Giunta, eds., *Radical Women: Latin American Art, 1960–1985* (New York: Prestel, 2017).

The following chapter seeks to explain why Rivera's composition shifted from one that emphasized a vaguely socialist vision of labor and collaboration to one that explicitly endorsed communism. It was at this point that the portrait of Lenin emerged along with other iconographic changes that not only subtly caricatured members of the Rockefeller family but also attacked the violent suppression of labor in ways that recalled the infamous Ludlow Massacre (a painful blight on the family's reputation and a chief impetus for the "Rockefeller Plan"). Rivera also converted scenes of healthy social cooperation into an obvious depiction of May Day celebrations in Moscow's Red Square. These changes reveal that Rivera's insertion of Lenin was a response to internecine battles on the Left between Stalinists, Trotskyites, and Lovestonites within the American Communist Party over labor and unionization, including the conditions of cultural work. Paquette shows that Rivera was under pressure from his peers, most notably David Alfaro Siqueiros, for being a "painter to millionaires." Thus in his attempts to curry favor with the Left, he pushed his mural program away from the strategic ambiguity that had up until that point served his patron, making what Renato González Mello calls the "esoteric" messages of his mural "exoteric."<sup>5</sup> In the final chapter of Part 2, Paquette follows the failed attempt on the part of Abby and Nelson Rockefeller to transfer the mural to MoMA, which she situates with respect to internal dynamics at the museum as well as external conditions, particularly the escalation of labor unrest after the passage of the National Industrial Relations Act and Rivera's unceasing attacks on the family and its corporate ties within the press while the mural's fate was in the balance.

Part 3 brings the discussion to the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City, reframing the mural within the internecine struggles for power within the Maximato in 1934 just as Lázaro Cárdenas was coming to power. Here, Paquette looks to the policy discourse of the National Revolutionary Party's Six-Year Plan and argues that the mural's focus on labor and its endorsement of socialism resonated with the governing party's emphasis on "revolutionary" principles despite its opposition to the Communist Party (225). Rivera once again modified the mural's program, bringing to the fore his support for Trotsky's Fourth International, and thereby alienating both his Callista government patrons and the Stalinist Left. As a consequence, a mural initially commissioned to articulate an accommodationist vision of hemispheric cooperation between capitalists and labor ended up serving the more radical agenda and foreign policy of the nascent Cárdenas administration.

Paquette's tight focus constructs a richly archival social history of one of the most famous works of Mexican art executed by one of its most canonical artists. Montgomery's and Fernández's books make broader theoretical interventions in the fields of Latin American and Mexican art history and thereby open these subfields up to the concerns of discipline writ large. In *The Mobility of Modernism* Harper Montgomery explores Latin American avant-gardes during the years between 1919 and 1929, a period of cultural production that is extremely eclectic and often evokes defensive assessments because its "chronological disjunctions" are viewed variously as belated, esoteric, or derivative via comparisons with European precedents.<sup>6</sup> Figures such as the Argentine Xul Solar (1887–1963) or the Peruvian José Carlos Mariátegui (1894–1930) are well situated within the canons of national and regional art history. Others, such as the Guatemalan Carlos Mérida (1891–1985) or Jorge Luis Borges' sister, Norah Borges (1901–1998), have been harder to place given the itinerancy of the former and the latter's preferred medium in a field that overwhelmingly privileges painting. Eschewing attempts to unify this period stylistically, politically, or thematically, Montgomery emphasizes mobility, which she defines as the circulation of artists and works of art within a regional network of critics, journals, and urban centers of production. This mobility, she insists, is the very condition of modernism in Latin America (and possibly elsewhere if we heed her argument). Rather than privilege relays between regional actors and European metropolitans, however, Montgomery highlights the networks that connected key nodes of production within Latin America, such as Mexico City and Buenos Aires, with centers of information circulation, like Havana and Lima, home to the highly influential journals *Revista de Avance* and *Amauta*.

Her approach is thereby episodic, with chapters that focus on Mariátegui's attempts to codify "American" art in the pages of *Amauta* between 1926 and 1929; Carlos Mérida's move to Mexico City in 1919, wherein he encountered local Indigenist discourses that allowed him to elude touristic representations of his Indigenous heritage; Emilio Pettoruti (1892–1971) and Xul Solar's return to Buenos Aires in 1924, wherein Montgomery argues that the latter's formulation of Neocreole culture provided the context for both the production and reception of Pettoruti's cubist-inflected painting; the circulation of woodcut prints in magazines and newspapers throughout the region; the promotion of Norah Borges's line drawings as feminine and

<sup>5</sup> Renato González Mello, *La máquina de pintar* (Mexico City: UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 2008), 15.

<sup>6</sup> Jacqueline Barnitz, *Twentieth Century Art of Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 14.

thereby more in touch with an alterity essential to the anticolonialism of Latin American *modernismo*; and the reproduction and circulation of children's art produced in Mexico under the auspices of the postrevolutionary government's public education initiatives in avant-garde journals in Argentina and Peru. Montgomery takes as a given that all of the work she discusses is modernist, thereby dismissing hegemonic definitions of modernism that focus on specific media and formal innovation. Latin American modernists did indeed engage European modernism, but found in its "direct, emotional, and antihistorical veins of aesthetic experience" a way to distinguish their efforts from that of their academic predecessors, which in their contexts meant articulating an avant-garde project that was understood to be both anticolonial and authentically national (2–3). Montgomery acknowledges that they frequently called on "its most politically suspect tendencies: its fascination with the primitive, premodern, or female" (216). Nonetheless, she insists that we understand their crossing of European avant-gardism with indigenous cultures as presentations of "subaltern subjectivities" that "in the best case scenarios, [sought to] reorder hierarchies of race and class" (217). In this respect, her scholarship is aligned with and builds upon Vicki Unruh's work on Latin American literary vanguards and Esther Gabara's on modernist photography in Mexico and Brazil.<sup>7</sup> It is this aspect of Montgomery's analysis that is missing in Deffebach's treatment of Kahlo and Izquierdo.

While Montgomery treats artists and media that are well known among scholars alongside others that are not, the real contribution of her study lies in how she teases out the discrete ways that the meaning of the same artist's work or a common medium was constituted in different metropolitan contexts, to articulate not a unified regional aesthetic but rather modalities of "American" art that were articulated to specific national cultures (in this respect, her approach is similar to Paquette's emphasis on the articulation of meaning at discrete venues). For example, in one of the strongest chapters, Montgomery traces the renaissance in woodcut printmaking, an old medium that was appreciated anew for its ability to convey expressive novelty while also "adapting itself to modernity by circulating through the expanding press and in exhibitions" (114). She tracks the circulation of specific prints as they appeared in mainstream newspapers as well as avant-garde journals, demonstrating how, in Mexico, on the pages of *Universal* and *Forma*, for instance, the medium was articulated to vernacular culture via the aesthetics of direct carving, while in Lima, these same qualities were featured in the socialist defense of indigenous labor that Mariátegui propounded through *Amauta*, and in Havana, they signified a psychological interiority that artists sought in the "antirational," a quality they associated with Afro-Cubans. While the subject matter of these prints varies widely, it was the expressive immediacy of their facture that allowed the same image to connote so many different things as it circulated throughout a region where artists and intellectuals were attempting to define both unique national identities and a shared desire to articulate an "American" modernism.

Whereas Montgomery takes a syncretic approach, drawing together modernist tendencies in Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, and Peru within a single decade, María Fernández explores the dialectic between national and transnational concerns diachronically in Mexico, through cases that span the seventeenth through the twenty-first centuries. *Cosmopolitanism in Mexican Visual Culture* is largely focused on architecture, with chapters that feature major monuments, such as Sigüenza y Góngora's *Teatro de virtudes políticas* (one of the first attempts to integrate pre-Hispanic antiquity into a public monument), the Baroque Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City's Zócalo, Mexico's neo-Aztec pavilion at the 1899 Universal Exposition in Paris, the "eclectic" Palace of Fine Arts, the National Anthropology Museum, the restoration of the pyramids of the Sun and Moon at Teotihuacan, and the replication of the Templo Mayor of Tenochtitlan. Several of these chapters center discussions of these buildings within theoretical explorations of the racial discourses that underpin analogies between the classical body and architectural form, the "monstrous" bodies of colonial *castas* and the New World Baroque (68–102), or the stylistic aspersion of "eclecticism" often leveled at nineteenth-century Mexican architecture (173–193). A few chapters move beyond bodies and buildings to consider other media, such as the futurist prints of Estridentismo or Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's interactive digital projections, which he terms "relational architecture."

Fernández approaches these topics from the standpoint of "cosmopolitanism," which she defines as "an evolving complex of power relations with material, social, ideational, and affective manifestations, which unite the local and the global, the national and the international, the universal and the particular" (1). She is particularly attentive to the way that political, economic, and racial hierarchies subtend the values ascribed to architecture, emphasizing throughout that these discursive frameworks have exacerbated the

<sup>7</sup> Vicki Unruh, *Latin American Vanguards: The Art of Contentious Encounters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); and Esther Gabara, *Errant Modernism: The Ethos of Photography in Mexico and Brazil* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

violence of colonization well into the modern period. The sweep of her study is ambitious, and her ability to navigate discourses and archival materials from so many periods and in several languages is impressive. However, the book is also somewhat uneven, with some chapters—such as her detailed sourcing and critique of Ignacio Marquina's reconstruction of the Templo Mayor (the model prominently displayed at the National Anthropology Museum and used by many to visualize the Aztec's ritual precinct)—clocking in at over fifty pages, while others are half that long. This discrepancy seems to derive from the fact that the book is more a collection of essays, research presentations, and dissertation and thesis chapters grouped together retrospectively under the loose rubric of cosmopolitanism (broadly defined) than a tightly conceived monograph with a consistent through line. In fact, in some chapters the term barely figures, and some discussions seem tacked on rather than central to the argument.

Nonetheless, some of the slighter chapters are the most compelling. Her discussion of Estridentismo, for example, convincingly argues that the movement's utopian celebration of communication and transportation media should not be assessed as a description of the modernization then under way in Mexico, something critics of the movement tend to debate. Rather, it should be appreciated as a utopian gesture that "captured ... the affective and relational *potential*" these technologies of "global extension" embodied (202). She goes on to link this claim to the fetishization of technology in the mural art of Rivera and Siqueiros in the 1930s, and ultimately, it lays the foundation for her discussion of Lozano-Hemmer's use of digital platforms to reconceive architecture from a brick-and-mortar object to a relational experience that is fundamentally dematerialized but no less utopian than postrevolutionary murals in its aspiration to activate and collectivize the twenty-first-century citizen-consumer.

As with Montgomery's suggestion that mobility may be the enabling condition of all modernisms, Fernández's study has broader implications for art and architectural history. Her intervention into theorizations of style is particularly salutary. Any scholar who introduces students to the classical orders in survey courses or who reviews "style art history" in seminars on historiography will benefit from considering her arguments about how disdain for the hybrid and racialized bodies of colonial subjects subtends the scholarly assessment of the Baroque. Likewise, her in-depth analysis of the reconstruction of the Templo Mayor should be required reading for anyone endeavoring to visualize buildings or urban precincts that survive in ruins or not at all. She carefully demonstrates that period ideals, such as the "orderly principles of Beaux-Arts design" or the desire to make pre-Hispanic antiquity palatable to middle-class Mexicans, rather than a faithful dedication to the past, informed Marquina's model (268–273). This example offers an instructive and even cautionary tale for those of us who use Marquina's model in our teaching as well as for our peers who are engaged in digital reconstructions of everything from Pompeii to Palmyra.

The discursive turn in Latin American art history that the books by Montgomery and Fernández exemplify reflects a tendency among US-trained art historians to engage more deeply with Latin American archives and scholars. At the same time, it marks the ongoing reconsideration of nationalist art histories from Latin America in dialog with the English-language academy. This intellectual cross-fertilization is evident to some extent in all of the scholarship under review, as each author attempts to situate visual culture in Latin America within complex discursive frameworks that emphasize race, anticolonial politics, and nationalism, while also demonstrating the transnational dimensions of these frameworks. They seek to embrace complexity and contradiction, directing scholarly discourse away from objectivist claims (To what extent was Estridentismo truly avant-garde? Did Diego Rivera intend to deceive his patron?), toward an assessment of the ways artists from the region negotiated their relationship to both national and transnational concerns regarding modernism, modernization, feminism, or progress, and to how their work was positioned or leveraged by a diverse array of interested parties over time.

Given my emphasis on discursivity and the visual cultural turn, Deffebach's more traditional methodological orientation suffers by comparison with the other three texts. Her narrative does not have the conceptual nuance, historical complexity, or archival depth that we find in the arguments put forth by the other three authors. Deffebach's book is hagiographic where the others are judicious; she is concerned with the identification of symbolic motifs within a nationalized mestizo culture, whereas the others seek to demonstrate how visual cultural objects aid in the production of truth claims about said national culture. Both approaches have their strengths. Deffebach's attention to the object is enhanced by her book's lavish production values and copious illustrations. Her book will serve undergraduate teaching well. The greater emphasis on discursivity in the other three requires a sophisticated reader and can at times leave her wanting more detailed visual analysis and better illustrations. Nonetheless, their books are more likely to excite field specialists and to spur new directions in visual cultural studies.

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**How to cite this article:** Coffey, Mary K. 2019. New (and a Few Old) Directions in Latin American Visual Cultural Studies. *Latin American Research Review* 54(1), pp. 255–261. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25222/larr.381>

**Submitted:** 15 September 2017

**Accepted:** 06 November 2017

**Published:** 10 April 2019

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