



Beyond Imagined Communities: Reading and Writing the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America (Woodrow Wilson Center Press)

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How did the nationalisms of Latin America's many countries -- elaborated in everything from history and fiction to cookery -- arise from their common backgrounds in the Spanish and Portuguese empires and their similar populations of mixed European, native, and African origins? *Beyond Imagined Communities: Reading and Writing the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, discards one answer and provides a rich collection of others.

These essays began as a critique of the argument by Benedict Anderson's highly influential book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Anderson traces Latin American nationalisms to local circulation of colonial newspapers and tours of duty of colonial administrators, but this book shows the limited validity of these arguments.

Instead, *Beyond Imagined Communities* shows how more diverse cultural influences shaped Latin American nationalisms. Four historians examine social situations: François-Xavier Guerra studies various forms of political communication; Tulio Halperín Donghi, political parties; Sarah C. Chambers, the feminine world of salons; and Andrew Kirkendall, the institutions of higher education that trained the new administrators. Next, four critics examine production of cultural objects: Fernando Unzueta investigates novels; Sara Castro-Klarén, archeology and folklore; Gustavo Verdesio, suppression of unwanted archeological evidence; and Beatriz González Stephan, national literary histories and international expositions.

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