
BOOK REVIEW

Audible geographies in Latin America: sounds of race and place, by Dylon Robbins, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, 272 pp., 69.99€ (Hardcover), ISBN: 978-3-0301-05570

Beyond sight: engaging the senses in Iberian literatures and cultures, 1200–1750, edited by Steven Wagschal and Ryan Giles, Toronto, ON, University of Toronto, 2018, 360 pp., \$56.25 (Cloth), ISBN: 978-1-4875-0003-0

The senses of democracy: perception, politics, and culture in Latin America, by Francine Masiello, Austin, TX, University of Texas, 2018, 325 pp., \$29.95 (Paperback), ISBN: 978-1-4773-1504-0

As the focus on North/South binaries regarding academic understandings of corporeality in Francine Masiello's *Senses of Democracy: Perception, Politics, and Culture in Latin America* portrays, historical scholarship within Latin America has fixated often upon sensory languages, phenomenological methods, and the cultural construction of sensation. The three works under review continue this concentration on diverse sensory worlds through defining how populations within Latin American history have particularly understood categories of God, Gender, and Race through the sensorium. Whether accepting the supposed and often prejudicial connection between different Hispanic populations and embodiment or working to critique the idea that Latin American epistemologies are more sensually involved as an aspect of othering within Anglo-Atlantic teleologies, these three works under review all provide intensive theoretical readings for different sensations within assorted histories of South America, Central America, and the Caribbean.

Scholars of the indigenous Americas and later Latin American historical spaces have often engaged with questions of sensation, especially within studies of literacy, language, and colonialism (Lockhart 1992; Bauer 2014; Brokaw 2014; Rasmussen 2014). Ethnographies of Latin America often involve attention to these colonized histories through applying anthropologies of the senses that frequently question meanings of nature and culture for diverse Hispanic societies in the New World (Urban 1996; Laplantine 2015). Many scholars of Latin American historical developments have also recently created important connections regarding sensory colonialism and categories of taste, food, and nationalism (Norton 2008; Brown 2011; McLachlan 2011; Earle 2014; Perez 2016). As well, sound has become an important analytic for fields of media studies and embodiment for assorted historical descriptions of Latin America (Tomlinson 2009; Bronfman and Wood 2012; Fernández l'Hoeste and Vila 2018).

Smell, always analyzed less within cultural studies, has also provided some fascinating work for Latin American spaces, especially concerning indigenous worlding (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1985; Classen 1990; Ramos 2016). Touch, commonly explored within sensory studies of Europe, is relatively less widespread within Latin American Studies, although many recent scholars have engaged diverse topics of the tactile in fields of sexuality and aesthetic (Maurette 2015; Ezcurra 2019). As well, visual studies of Latin America are quite common, especially regarding artwork from throughout the Spanish Empire, although these aspects of aesthetic are often less explicitly defined through the methodologies of Sensory Studies (Bleichmar 2012; Evans 2017).

Following a chronological progression, this review begins within late medieval and early modern Iberia through an examination of *Beyond Sight: Engaging the Senses in Iberian Literatures and Cultures, 1200–1750*, an interdisciplinary and multisensory edition from Steven Wagschal and Ryan Giles. Their collection consistently searches literatures of the Early Modern Era and prior to explore the roots of sensation for Iberian cultures and the role of sensation within early colonial advancements in the New World. Desiring to expose an inordinate scholarly focus on hearing and seeing, the collection aims at filling sensorial gaps through analyses of touch, taste, and smell for literary studies of Iberian sensation. Focusing on late medieval and early modern Iberia turns much of the work onto Catholic sensibilities as part of emotional and sensory communities, as derived from the work of Barbara Rosenwein (Rosenwein 2007). Following these links between affect, community development, and sensation, the anthology focuses much on ideas of disgust and corruption, as the Church proposed many narratives of the other as an invasion upon faithfulness.

The first part of the compilation focuses directly upon these questions of religion, categories of the other, and the senses. Giles starts the section with work on the breath of Lazarus, and the bad odors associated with both leprosy and devotion during the Medieval Era. Giles focuses his essay on a prequel to *Cantar de mio Cid* entitled *Mocedades de Rodrigo*, wherein bad odor signified the presence of Lazarus within the body of a leper. Through this meeting, Cid signified embodied faithfulness in recognizing the bad odor of leprosy not as sin, but as a space for inner truth, empathy, and caretaking. The second chapter, from Victor Rodriguez-Pereira, focuses on similarly faithful sensory cultures regarding Marian worship within poetry of the late Medieval Era. Especially in the works of Gonzalo de Berceo, Mary's body included a sweet odor that signified her purity as ephemeral intermediary between believers and God, setting a precedent for odors of sanctity as essential for sainthood.

Beyond Sight follows with a section on cognition and sensation, with emphases on the meanings of the internal senses, often defined in different variations through categories of common sense, imagination, estimation, and memory. Julia Domínguez starts with a chapter on *Don Quixote* (1615) and the contemporary understanding of the internal senses within medical literatures that focused upon humoral traditions regarding melancholy and the alterations that may have led to the types of insanity faced by the errant knight. Robert Fritz continues through scanning for taste and cognition within the works of Mateo Alemán. This analysis reads ideas of structure, flavor, and the education of human cognition. Applying much from George Lakoff and Mark Johnson on the cultural influence of embodied metaphors, the essay explores how Alemán used taste to show evil tendencies of specific characters, linking a preference for specifically corruptive flavors to a propensity for criminal actions (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). The section continues with a chapter from Wagschal on the aesthetic of disgust through an analysis of the writings of María de Zayas and Cervantes, exploring notions of odor through recent works from Carolyn Korsmeyer and Daniel Kelly and within narrative trends of the time (Korsmeyer 2011; Kelly 2014).

The external perceptions, rather than internal, take up the third section of *Beyond Sight*. E. Michael Gerli begins with a reading of a late medieval manuscript that includes carnal acts of copulation with animals through theories of modernist literature, technological change, and sensations elicited through the act of reading. *Cancionero de Palacio* is interpreted through sensory theories from Jerome McGann, and as exemplifying early modern attention to the role of images near text, to be sensed alongside the written word (McGann 1991). Carolyn Nadeau follows historiography on disability studies to focus the next chapter on the treatment of sensory ailments like deafness, blindness, and the loss of sensory acuities within domestic literature, looking directly at gender and medical professionalization within sixteenth-century Spain (Antebi 2008; Solomon 2010). Charles Victor Ganelin continues by looking again at

Cervantes, searching *La Española Inglesa* (1613) for understandings of family and touch. These discourses on language and the tactile express ideas of clothing, class, and courtliness through gender to argue the exemplary sensorium of Cervantes engaged a thick language of the skin that explored both the codes of courtly behavior and tactility employed to transgress structures of authority.

Beyond Sight continues with a fourth section on how Iberians came to understand the sensations of empire. Emily Francomano starts with a chapter on the scents of Babylon regarding synaesthesia in the poetry of the *Libro de Alexandre*. These uses of ekphrasis upon empire worked to engage discourses on worldliness and wealth, but also explored Alexander the Great as a figure existing unredeemed before the life and death of Christ. Josiah Blackmore next looks upon scents in Portuguese scenes of empire. Reading poetry of the maritime, Blackmore explores verses that describe female sensuality concerning absence when longing for sailors to return home within *cantigas de amigo*. This discussion turns to Portuguese understandings of the New World through indigenous music and the eroticization of colonization.

Henry Berlin continues through offering changing sensations within Eucharistic thought and practice in Portugal from the early sixteenth century until the middle of the seventeenth century. This essay examines how different politically active authors, from Amadeus da Silva to António Vieira, linked prophecy, the Eucharist, and the senses within narratives of imperial longing and ideas of Christian conquest and beliefs pertaining to the coming apocalypse. Lisa Voight ends the section with a reading of soundscapes in the Spanish Empire. At both Minas Gerais, with African populations and their discordant harmonies, and at Potosí amongst indigenous laborers, Voight discovers a dialectic between resistance and enculturation within the aural sphere. This analysis starts with the reading of festive cultures regarding indigenous encounters with the drums of Columbus and delivers fresh ideas of creolization within festival soundscapes that combined Incan traditions, African survivals, and Spanish introductions.

The final section of *Beyond Sight* engages how urban worlds were sensed in Iberia of the Early Modern Era. Frederick De Armas looks upon celestial visions and demonic touch, defining how Iberian playwrights presaged a tactile modernity through new stage materials that signified invention, courtliness, and manliness, especially through the humoral aspects of Don García within Ruiz de Alarcón's *La Verdad Sospechosa* (1609). The collection ends with an essay on sensory worlds of motherhood from Enrique García Santo-Tomás, which relays sensations of birth within early modern Iberian literatures through a reading of midwives, labor, and child-rearing as saturated with sensory bombardment. These narratives often defined different class values, which frequently involved the role of the breast as a signifier for status.

Moving the cultural construction of sensation into a study that begins during the Age of Revolutions, Masiello's *Senses of Democracy* explores Latin America through how sensations were cultivated within discourses on nationalism from the era of the Early Republic and Latin American revolutions to modern ideas of resistance. Masiello outlines the goals of her work in an introduction that defines "sense work" as occurring within different precarious fields of power related to nationalism, race, religion, and gender in Latin America. Akin to the focus on discourse, narrative, and cultural education in *Beyond Sight*, Masiello defines that sense work denotes sensory skills as educated within cultures that also includes confines around the allowances for sensation. This interdisciplinary analysis of power and agency in *Senses of Democracy* places great emphasis on academic divides between understandings of the Global North and the Global South. Focusing on embodiment, temporality, and phenomenology, Masiello frequently also questions whether modern scholarship is ready to face a new sense work that is increasingly being defined without the body in the capitalist and statist motifs of a coming singularity.

The first chapter discusses North/South divides regarding discursive impetus upon the Cartesian break between body and mind. Focusing on William Henry Hudson's travels in Argentina, Masiello discusses differences between the university systems in Latin America and the United States during the early nineteenth century, converging much on sensory differentiations regarding the educational influence of French theorists like Étienne Bonnot de Condillac. Also, reading how Argentine poet Esteban Echeverría and writer Domingo Faustino Sarmiento engaged French theories of sensation enters Masiello into a discussion of how the North/South academic break expanded binaries of both civilization/barbarism and rationalism/sensationalism within discourse and semiotic influences upon different cultures.

Concentrating on theoretical ideas of narrative development and temporality, Masiello's second chapter looks at gendered bodily resistance that situated the novel as a form of early feminist sense work. Specifically eyeing the transnational cultural work done by Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), Masiello defines the reception of the book based upon ideals of sensation surrounding multivalent male/female and North/South binaries of the nineteenth century. As new industrial technologies like photography and stereoscopy entered domestic spaces, narratives of masculinity and femininity developed to alter the appetite of the senses. The use of literary narratives regarding the power of touch, through Stowe and the likes of Juana Manuela Gorriti, Clorindo Matto de Turner, and Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, provided fresh understandings of freedom apart from these patriarchal controls over female labor.

Much Latin American scholarship has focused on the power of the state to impose diverse sensory worlds upon social, cultural, and academic spaces (Barrán 1994; Andermann 2007; Eiff 2011). Redefining synaesthesia for cultural studies of sensation beyond disability studies, the third chapter expresses new aspects of relationality and these concepts of power over the masses to look at how modernist writers of the 1920s in Latin America defined senses of temporality and affect to engage modern technologies like the phonograph. Often blending new ideas of spirituality with industrial advancement to create forms of collective synaesthesia, these modernist writers defined innovative fields of art and comedy through mixing sensations, spiritualism, and technological change against terrorizing forms of sensation descending from the state, as in the works of novelist Roberto Arlt, Peruvian poet César Vallejo, and Argentine performance artist Xul Solar.

The fourth chapter of *Senses of Democracy* gazes directly upon dictatorial discipline and embodied resistance. Reading sensory worlds through the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and how his work was accepted within Latin American academic circles, especially through the Argentinian journal *Contorno*, turns to a discussion of how touching was portrayed through manipulations of state power and the excluded spaces of the other. This interpretation focuses much on the market philosophies of León Rozitchner and Oscar Masotta. Specifically concentrating on the literary and illustrated expressions of pain under dictatorships leads Masiello to propose multisensory understandings of agony that can possibly foment rhizomatic resistance, as within the work of Argentinian writer Juan José Saer and Chilean poet Raúl Zurita.

Senses of Democracy ends with consistently foregrounded discussions on technology, capitalism, and the senses. Reading the continuing power of the state and capital to erase empathetic sensory connections between society and the victim, Masiello articulates the important labor of Brazilian artist Nuno Ramos and Chilean academic Diamela Eltit through a positive rendering of how coming to read the senses of the other can lead to changes in body/object relationships necessary for greater forms of cultural resistance (Taylor 1997). This conclusion participates with work on Latin American sensory worlds from Davide Panagia, which frequently defines sensation through politically active terms that merge affect theory with cultural construction (Panagia 2010).

Following Masiello upon similar pathways regarding the technologization of sensory worlds through the work of Walter Benjamin and the Frankfurt School, Dylan Robbins' *Audible Geographies in Latin America: Sounds of Race and Place* begins with interpreting a symphony from Louis Moreau Gottschalk in Brazil of 1869 through fields of masculinity, nationalism, and warfare (Benjamin 2018 [1935]). Gottschalk was from Louisiana, and used many different Africanisms in his symphonies, although in Brazil those forms seem to have went unnoticed. This aspect of the overlooked focuses Robbins' study through the racialization of soundscapes and a significant debate in Latin American Studies that asserts the centrality of the "lettered city" and the written word at the expense of other sensory worlds like the aural (Ochoa Gautier 2014). These relationships between print and sound relocate media analysis of Latin America through the senses, a methodology also recently found within examinations of radio from Alejandra Bronfman and Tom McEnaney (Bronfman 2016; McEnaney 2017).

Looking at sound, place, media, and racialization initially through Gottschalk, Robbins also engages work by Joseph Roach and Diana Taylor on corporeality and the archive in the Atlantic World (Roach 1996; Taylor 2003). Searching a sonic range within Gottschalk that exists beyond the reach of music as part of broader African diasporic sound, Robbins initially centers upon media technologies to explore how historical and prejudicial concepts of noise were tied to the meanings of the slave as both an objectified machine and as a worker in the field. This work on commodification also binds inherently to Rachel Price's analysis of the performativity of the industrial slave body as marked by mechanization (Price 2014).

Because of these categories of slavery, sensation, and modernity, Robbins enters similar discussions as Masiello regarding different Latin American dialectics of civilization and barbarism. Applying a varied and nuanced critique of capitalism, Robbins reads the commodity fetish into meanings of racialized soundscapes. Although Marxist structuralism often seems methodologically opposed to theories regarding the cultural construction of sensation, because one field regularly deals with universals and the other mostly with textual particulars, Robbins weaves his coalescing analysis brilliantly through aesthetic interpretations from cultural Marxism and poststructural fields informed by meanings of relationality within Foucauldian biopolitics and the Bordieuan habitus. This critical execution asserts the object of the telegraph into the corporeal economy of race and the soundscape through critical theory that has previously centered within Latin American historiography on the senses throughout Michael Taussig's work on commodity fetishism, technological intrusion, and religious spectacle (Taussig 1992).

Much sensorially driven work has been accomplished for Latin American spaces regarding questions of race, nationalism, and the politics of sounding (Bigenho 2002; Kahn 2007; Hertzman 2013; Chude-Sokei 2015; Camal 2019). Chapter two of *Audible Geographies* follows these forceful tones through listening to sound as a more amorphous form of oppressive gazing than vision. These readings, through the locale of Salvador de Bahia and anti-African medical and legal discourses, focus upon the introduction of Thomas Edison's phonograph through the evaluation of different meanings of resonance. Thinking of machines and slaves through the idea of resonating bodies, Robbins explores the functions of the ear and mouth within machines through the concept of "surrogation," a term denoting more about Freudian displacement from the body than the idea of prosthesis or addition to the body. Defining this concept through spirit mediums and the phonograph, Robbins looks at politics to show how Don Pedro I expanded his personal body by placing himself within scientific spaces like lectures. Similarly, the Republican establishment after Don Pedro I linked to an embodiment that resonated the body politic beyond the physical through the phonograph as a marker of nationalism, remaking the head of state from the Emperor to the Republic through reproductions of an echoing aural framework.

Especially following in the substantial wake of Taussig's works on color, drugs, technology, and the religioeconomic meanings of the fetish, Latin American scholarship has often engaged questions of technological integration within different sensory worlds (Sarlo 1992; Taussig 2011). To further define power and othering in fields of technology studies, Robbins accesses the work of criminologist Raimundo Nina Rodrigues. Specifically reading Rodrigues' studies on criminality and dancing manias of the 1880s through ideas of clinical listening, Robbins identifies new discourses on consciousness upon a nineteenth century French tradition that used sound for diagnosing and treating hysteria. Listening to noises that induced dancing, Robbins shows how race and racket linked within an othered discourse against Africans in Brazil. This reading directly engages a specific incident when Rodrigues attempted to hypnotize Fausta, an Afro-Brazilian woman. Looking at the social construction of hysteria, which involved dancing in many different historical iterations, Robbins indicates how some Brazilians tried to define their own European modernity through linking Africanisms to a supposedly atavistic, discordant, and cacophonous past of feminized dance.

Race is often central to sensory analyses of Latin American historical spaces (Poole 1997; Hazel 2014; Patton 2016). In chapter three, Robbins investigates Juan Miguel Dihigo Mestre and other historical philologists within the Caribbean to further explore forms of racialization for the body, language production, and the soundscape. Akin to Lorenzo Dow Turner's studies of the Gullah, Dihigo researched African inflections within creolized languages (Turner 1949). Rather than search these inflections for positive influences, Dihigo explored how the languages of African slaves negatively altered Cuban speech patterns. Resistance to these linguistic changes became mechanized, as Dihigo used the phonograph and depressive oral devices to search out African sounds to cleanse Spanish language. Robbins reads this mechanical patterning through how technology was used to gaze upon speech as a form of philological Scientific Racism.

Robbins looks at the literary avant-garde of Cuba and the field of Brazilian music in chapter four. Reading ideas of race, diaspora, and survivals within postcolonial theory from Robert Stam and Ella Shohat, Robbins searches the biography of Brazilian polymath, poet, and musician Mário de Andrade, who specifically studied and resisted African influences on Brazilian music (Stam and Shohat 2012). Robbins specifically analyzes how Andrade read the works of Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier through annotation marks that relayed feelings of nationalism and cultural resonance between Brazil and Cuba regarding goals of racelessness. Following these objectives during the 1920s and 1930s, Andrade sorted rhythms he heard within Brazil and what he read of Cuban Africanisms within the works of Carpentier. Using these scientific and technosocial gazes upon sound, Robbins ties racialization directly to the constructions of the nation-state regarding how discourse separated what was considered primitive and what could be considered civilized. Looking explicitly upon Andrade's novel *Macunaíma* (1928), Robbins ends the chapter considering again ideas of race, noise, and entrancement.

The final chapter of *Audible Geographies* considers filmscapes in Cuba of the later twentieth century. Accessing a different media ecology, Robbins reads festivals of sound within discourses on savagery and civilization through different meanings of revolution. Looking at the archives of the Grupo de Experimentación Sonora, an organization that worked to create a specific identity for Cuban cinema, Robbins articulates negotiations among leaders in film about how much to use the conga as a marker of national identity, as it signified possibly primitive musical traditions. These discussions were complex in the 1960s and 1970s, as the transgressive importance of sound was considered crucial to carnivalesque aspects of triggered revolution.

These discourses were portrayed within Cuban film, which offered different representations of noise, conga, and carnival that centered upon what should be considered monstrous and what was to be considered revolutionarily legitimate. Robbins looks directly upon the documentaries of Nicolás Guillén Landrián to explore these spaces of critique through both the transgressive sounds of revolution and echoes of institutional control emerging from the radio. Through these analyses of film technology and the integration of handheld cameras with sound recording, Robbins looks at how noise and image interacted for new epistemologies within the Global South. Specifically focusing on Brazilian director Glauber Rocha's *Der Leone Have Sept Cabeças* (1970), the epilogue of *Audible Geographies* reads through a later epistolary culture of Latin American intellectuals that discussed similar discourses of race, sound, and nation.

The three works under assessment show the vibrance of Latin American Sensory Studies as an interdisciplinary and critical subfield that centers upon meanings of God, Gender, and Race in Latin America and cultural antecedents from Africa, Europe, and the indigenous Americas. The field remains grounded within Marxist theories common throughout the academies of South America, Central America, and the Caribbean. However, even with this important subaltern revisionism of the colonized archive, there has been relatively little explicit work done regarding the sensory worlds of slavery in Latin America, despite recent publications within proximate analyses on ecology, spiritualism, and colonialism (Jaudon 2012; Allewaert 2013; Gómez 2017; Raapke 2017). While studies of historical sensations among indigenous populations have been consistent concerning these geographical spaces, as within the sensory anthropology of Constance Classen and works on Central American sensory worlds from Stephen Houston, David Stuart, and Karl Taube, there has to this day still been relatively little work done on the sensory worlds of slaves and the sounds, tastes, pains, and smells of slavery in Latin American historical spaces (Classen 1993; Houston, Stuart, and Taube 2006).

Often studying the importance of technological introductions to changing meanings of sensations in Latin America, the three stellar works under review define the social construction of sensation from Iberian literary roots, within nationalist rhetoric, and as a part of modern sounding within diverse media ecologies. While *Beyond Sight* explores many engaging topics for literary studies of sensation, and *Audible Geographies* takes the most in-depth look at critical theory and the sensorium within Latin American Studies since *Mimesis and Alterity* (1992), Masiello's *Senses in Democracy* stands out as a clear and pivotal treatment that will become an essential metahistorical reading for all sensory historians.

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