

Wednesday, 8 January / Miércoles 8 de enero

16:00-17:30: Salón Rubí

Historical Geography / Geografía Histórica

Chair: Heidi Scott

Rails to Revolution: Preliminary Findings on Railroads, Railroad Workers and the Geographies of the Mexican Revolution of 1910

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In this paper I review the literature relating to the expansion of railroads in Mexico at the turn of the twentieth century and the role of railroads and railroad workers in the production of geographies of the Mexican Revolution of 1910. I analyze the expansion of transportation infrastructures under the Porfiriato through a lens of uneven development (Smith, 1980) focusing on the Juárez-Torreón line of the Ferrocarriles Nacionales de México. Through preliminary findings in military reports, archival documents and oral histories, I analyze working conditions, worker's grievances and labor activism throughout railroad lines in northern Mexico. Then I turn towards the explosion of the Mexican Revolution and the role of the railroad workers, the conditions for political activism and the decisive role of railroad infrastructures in the first phase of the conflict. Finally, I outline the possibilities for research by outlining new geographies of the Mexican Revolution.

Keywords: railroads, workers, geographies, Mexican Revolution

Amber Arthun Warburton and the Discovery of Hispanic Child Labor in Agriculture in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Texas

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A life-geography approach is used to analyze the production of social science knowledge regarding Mexican-origin child agricultural workers in south Texas during the early 1940s. The protagonist in this paper, Amber Arthun Warburton, worked for the US Children's Bureau during the early 1940s. She was the first social scientist to gather data relating to exploitative labor relations that had developed in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas with particular attention to work, health, and school attendance of Mexican-origin children. Warburton's unpublished texts aimed to explain child labor in terms of Marx's reserve army of labor. Her motivations for selecting the site for the study of child labor probably relate to experiences as a mother who learned of a horrific truck-train accident while conducting preliminary research on a different topic.

Keywords: labor, agriculture, children, Children's Bureau, Lower Rio Grande Valley

La territorialidad perdida del Perú del siglo XIX: la Propuesta de Demarcación Territorial de Mariano Felipe Paz Soldán

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El trabajo de investigación es la sobre Mariano F. Paz Soldán quien en 1878 presenta una memoria - informe al Congreso de la República del Perú como presidente de la Comisión de Demarcación Política, Judicial y Eclesiástica que se le había encargado en un decreto del gobierno el 28 de febrero de 1877, presenta en su proyecto de Demarcación Territorial cuatro puntos capitales en su informe al Congreso: geográficos, demográficos, políticos y económico-sociales; así como también propone que cada departamento debería de tener parte de costa y sierra para que cuenten con las riquezas de los tres reinos naturales (vegetal, animal y mineral). La metodología que se uso fue la búsqueda bibliográfica de fuentes secundarias en archivos específicos donde se encontraron varios documentos de mucha utilidad, lo que nos interesa mostrar es la propuesta de las regiones transversales del siglo XX tiene una influencia de Mariano F. Paz Soldán y parten del siglo XIX.

Palabras clave: Paz Soldán, pensamiento geográfico, Perú, siglo XIX, demarcación territorial

A Gringo in Panama: Harry Franck's use of humor in Zone Policeman 88

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Harry Alverson Franck was the most prolific American travel writer in the first half of the twentieth century. Of his 28 travel books, *Zone Policeman 88* was the certified bestseller, in 1913. In this paper, I discuss how he left teaching foreign languages to become a travel writer, why in 1911 he ventured south into Latin America, and how he used humor to enliven geography. I refer to his unpublished autobiography and other unpublished manuscripts to elucidate his philosophy on humor and geography; then, I discuss his use of humor in *Zone Policeman 88*. In the Canal Zone, he worked first as a census taker and then as a policeman. In writing this book, Franck binds together serious reflections with humorous interludes, including funny dialogues with Zonians and ridicule of American (paid in) gold workers. A socialist in his earlier years, Franck nevertheless shares humorous tales of how socialism's application in the Zone often was not different from wily ways of capitalism. His account is historically important and geographically helps connect the American-ruled Canal Zone to Panama and the rest of the world.

Keywords: Harry Franck, Panama, Panama Canal, Panama Canal Zone, 1912 Census of Canal Zone, Isthmian Canal Commission

Taking the tropics underground: New World nature and the subterranean in Juan de Cárdenas's Problemas, y secretos maravillosos de las Indias

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At the heart of the Iberian encounter with America was an encounter with the tropics. Varied and conflicting ideas about the ‘torrid zone’ shaped the earliest transatlantic voyages (Wey-Gómez, 2008) and these ideas were in turn reformulated as Iberian colonization unfolded. For many colonial observers, New World ‘tropical difference’ was not restricted to surface environments but extended below ground. The presence of abundant precious metals, for example, was commonly interpreted as a product of latitude and the potency of the tropical sun. The Spanish doctor Juan de Cárdenas, however, took the tropics underground more extensively than most. In describing the New World’s geological structures and processes, Cárdenas identified them as unique on a global scale. Based on an in-depth reading of his *Problemas, y secretos maravillosos de las Indias*(1591), this paper argues that he also viewed America’s subsurface structures as key to the creation of a distinctive New World tropicality.

Keywords: Cárdenas, nature, tropics, geology, metals