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Antonio Duplá Ansuategui, Eleonara Dell' Elicine, Jonatan Pérez Mostazo (ed.), *Antigüedad clásica y nociones modernas en el Viejo y el Nuevo Mundo*. Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2018. Pp. 368. ISBN 9788416335473. €25.00.

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Antonio Duplá, Eleonara Dell' Elicine, and Jonatan Pérez present this unusual volume about the influence of antiquity on the structure of modern nations, in both the Old and the New World. Within this broad scope, the book gives us an overview of what seems to be a complex and widespread phenomenon. As stated by the editors (p. 11), members of every community use various episodes, characters or events from their past as essential points of reference. As a continuation of Benedict Anderson's idea of "imagined communities", the authors argue that while political and cultural constructs are a product of modernity, they are themselves based in part on elements and references from antiquity. Indeed, antiquity offers prestigious examples on which to build a foundation of history, and thus provides a modern nation with a sense of historical continuity. This book, taking the form of a collection of proceedings from an international conference at Vitoria-Gasteiz in 2015, describes the use of various new historiographical approaches for the purpose of studying this phenomenon. The project

was made possible by a Spanish Government Program — HAR 2012-3176: Antiquity, Nationalisms and Complex Identities in the Western Historiography (1700- 1900), so while some of its contributors are from Argentina, Colombia, the United Kingdom and Germany, the majority are connected to leading Spanish universities.

In addition to an introduction and prologue (a full table of contents is included at the end of this review) the book consists of thirteen individual papers, each reflecting on specific aspects or interpretations related to the application of antiquity to nation-building in the modern era. While the main focus is on the nineteenth century, the eighteenth and twentieth centuries are also represented. Similarly, nine of the thirteen papers deal with the Old World, while the remaining four address topics related to the New World. As is usual with such edited volumes, the papers differ both in relative length and in the subjects of their analysis.

The prologue, written by José Álvarez Junco (Universidad Complutense de Madrid), appropriately deals with the study of nationalism. He notes its importance, particularly during the period following the Second World War. His approach to this topic is quite useful, as he links past troubles to the present day and warns us of possible futures ahead: “lo que podemos aventurar hoy es que el fin de la formula nacional, por mucho que lo consideremos deseable, no parece inminente” (p. 27). Directly following the prologue is a section of papers examining the importance of antiquity in Spain, starting with an article written by Antonio Duplá (Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea). He studies the antiquarian interests of members of La Bascongada, a society founded during the mid-eighteenth century for the purpose of encouraging cultural development in the Basque Country. In his paper, he notes the contradiction between their modern methodological approaches and their simultaneous dependence on tradition, far removed from Enlightenment thinkers such as Robertson, Hume or Gibbon. The second article, a contribution by Jordi Cortadella (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), seeks to show, by means of a diachronic approach, the role of antiquity in shaping Catalanian nationalism. A third paper by Gloria Mora (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid) similarly analyzes the role of archaeology as a driving force behind the development of Spanish identity. Among other conclusions, she notes the differences between historical representation in monuments and in official speeches, mostly from the nineteenth century. The article that follows, written by Pilar Iguácel and Pepa Castillo (Universidad de La Rioja), employs a diachronic analysis to investigate how the exemplum of Viriathus was used within the Congress of Deputies (the lower house of Spain's legislative branch) during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They note, for example, the political use of this historical character: “fue utilizado tanto por liberales como por conservadores, adaptándolo, claro está, a la conveniencia de cada uno” (p. 120). Finally, Ignacio Peiró (Universidad de Zaragoza) seeks to show the keen use of antiquity by the regime of Franco, leading to a stimulating paper that gives us a better understanding of those difficult times.

The subsequent section examines unusual subjects from other notable places. First, Grégore Reimond (Universidad Toulouse) analyzes the French perspective by using Pierre Paris' reflections as a case study, and shows the impact of his approach to Greek sculpture. The author argues that it is possible to interpret Pierre Paris as: "el pionero de la historia del arte griego" (p. 178). Martin Linder (Georg-August- Universität Göttingen) then examines German board and card games from the nineteenth century. He provides extensive explanations of the games, their rules, as well as many other features. He does state his reluctance "to interpret those games as primarily nationalistic" (p. 206), arguing that these board and card games are mostly just "playful classics". Richard Hingley's paper (Durham University) studies the use of classical Rome in the United Kingdom between 1880 and 1930. He illustrates the mutability and potential contradictions inherent in Roman images, as seen in Britain during this time of imperial stress. Moreover, I must highlight the unusual but accomplished approach taken by Marta García Morcillo (University of Roehampton) in her paper on Liebig Trading Cards, in which she focuses not only on the modern nation idea but also on various other social aspects, such as education, nutrition and printed advertising.

The articles in the final section deal with topics from the New World. Clelia Martínez (Universidad de Málaga) contributes an article on the use of antiquity in the American Senate, in which she sheds light on the influence of Polybius' paradigm on the American system of balanced powers. José M. Portillo (Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea) studies how antiquity was used by the new Latin American elite during the late eighteenth century. Two more articles bring this last section to a close; Ricardo del Molino (Universidad Externado de Colombia) provides us with a diachronic analysis of the Viceroyalty of New Granada, and Eleonora Dell' Elicine (Universidad Nacional del General Sarmiento) sheds light on the application of antiquity with regard to modern nation-building in Argentina (1837-1852).

It should be noted that the book does not present the reader with any kind of generalized conclusion. I think that the sheer diversity of issues and scenarios discussed makes it quite difficult for any such conclusions to be drawn, as illustrated by the absence of a final section. Furthermore, this has resulted in a publication that is somewhat dense and hard to work through. Indeed, the problem is even pointed out by the editors (p. 16), who argue that in spite of this, the publication remains very useful for the purpose of configuring new fields of research. In my view, this book does not innately provide an argumentation for reading it as a whole, largely owing to its artificial nature as a collection of proceedings from a heterogeneous conference. I consider this publication to be more a reference work for those who wish to learn specifically about the use of ancient themes within the context of modern nation-building. I do not see it as an essential step for researchers, particularly those in the field of antiquity. In that sense, apart from being of interest to social scientists and members of the general public, it lends itself more to those studying periods other than

the classical. I should mention that many of the contributing authors are indeed experts in historical and contemporary studies. However, I must recognize the ambition of a project that manages to go beyond the usual field of study by using novel approaches, such as the idea of "historical culture" (an area of study that incorporates all facets of issues involving antiquity), and delving into the heterogeneity of the appropriation of antiquity in a manner not limited to modern states or the elites.

It is important to emphasize that this book is about pursuing what may be one of the ultimate goals for historians, to come to a better understanding of our present. While that may be the book's greatest strength, it is perhaps also the reason for its being difficult to read as a cohesive whole. In the end, I have learned a great deal from these stimulating papers, acquiring from them some new ideas for a better understanding of our present context. While most of what it has to offer cannot be applied directly to the study of antiquity, with the majority of its papers focusing more directly on the modern context, it does still offer insights into some unique and useful methodological approaches. In short, A. Duplá, E. Dell' Elicine, and J. Pérez present us with a book of interest, even if it is not convenient for the purpose of conducting research on antiquity, at least from the usual perspective.

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