transformations produced by the massive arrival of Andean migrants. This 'Andeanization' of the capital is also observed in popular culture: while *Huaynos* and *Chichas* are replacing traditional Creole dances, migrant experiences are becoming the main inspiration of movie makers, novelists and painters. Anxieties of local elites over this 'invasion' of subaltern peoples are evoked by poet Antonio Cisneros: 'On the sandy hills barbarians from the south and east have built a camp that's bigger than the whole city, and they have other gods' (p. 217). Indeed, the influence of Andean culture is observed as well in the religious sphere. The cult of Sarita Colonia (a folk saint not recognised by the Catholic establishment) has been taken up by Andean migrants outnumbering the cult of Creole or Afro-Peruvian saints such as Santa Rosa de Lima or San Martín de Porres. Higgins' book is essential reading for anyone interested in the cultural history of Lima.

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Carlos Aguirre, *The Criminals of Lima and Their Worlds: The Prison Experience, 1850–1935* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2005), pp. xi + 310, £60.00, £14.95 pb.

Carlos Aguirre has already helped to transform historians' understanding of an institution that profoundly shaped Peruvian history: slavery. In a pioneering study, Aguirre showed that the emphasis in the historical literature on President Ramón Castilla's magnanimity in decreeing the abolition of slavery in 1854, and explanations that emphasised the supposed incompatibility between slavery and economic 'modernisation' overshadowed the fact that slaves in Peru were 'agents of their own freedom'. Drawing on the approaches to the history of slavery in the Americas developed by Rebecca Scott and others, Aguirre's study helped to establish a new focus in Peruvian history on subaltern strategies of resistance by homing in on what anthropologist James C. Scott famously called the 'weapons of the weak' and, specifically, their deployment by Lima's slaves as elements in the process of abolition. In this book, an equally important contribution to Peruvian and Latin American history, Aguirre turns his attention to another key institution: the prison. He is interested in bringing to light the agency of the prisoners of Lima's institutions of confinement and in showing how prison life was shaped by the negotiations that took place at the limits of criminal law and the customary order in the prison. But this is only one dimension of a broad ranging and highly rewarding study of how criminality was understood and addressed in Lima between 1850 and 1935, in which Aguirre uses his analysis of penal confinement to make a series of broader points about the character of Peruvian society in the period under review.

The book is divided into three parts, each of which links the specific issues examined to broader themes in early twentieth-century Peruvian history, such as racialisation, class formation, and state-formation. The first part looks at the process whereby certain sectors of the population were criminalised in the nineteenth century; a process in which elite ideas about the racial inferiority of the majority of the Peruvian population played a fundamental role. The adoption of European criminological 'science' by the medico–legal elite at the end of the century transformed local ideas about criminality, but also helped to confirm the earlier racialised criminalisation of Lima's urban poor. Aguirre notes that in contrast to other

experiences, the criminalisation of the urban poor in Lima did not extend to the working class, who were seen by the elite, and who came to see themselves, as different from the criminal element. Aguirre also explores the role played by the police, which, on the whole, reproduced the elite's racialised criminalisation of the urban poor by targeting specific groups.

Part two focuses on the different penal institutions in Lima and their male inmates. Aguirre shows that in spite of the supposedly humanitarian goals of Peru's prison reformers, prison life emphasised punishment above redemption and re-incorporation into society. In similar vein, in an overview of the different groups that peopled Lima's prisons, such as *faites*, *rateros* and political prisoners, Aguirre points to how the social hierarchies that existed outside the prison were often reproduced within it by the prison authorities and by the prisoners themselves (treatment, particularly when it involved physical punishment, could on occasions be meted out 'democratically'). The final part explores life inside the prison. Aguirre points to the tensions that existed between the regime that the authorities sought to impose on the prison and the customary order that was a consequence of the limits of state capacity (i.e. the lack of funds as well as the lack of will to carry out reforms) as well as prisoners' own agency. Within these tensions emerged what Aguirre calls prison 'subcultures', the different ways in which inmates sought to express and defend themselves and make their prison lives more tolerable. The examination of these 'subcultures' gives the reader a sense of how prisoners coped with (accommodated to and resisted) the prison regime (by developing forms of identity such as tattoos and prison slang, by establishing both violent and affectionate relationships with each other, by attempting to escape) and how they sought to influence it (with some prisoners going as far as drafting a proposal for penal reform).

Rejecting oversimplified Foucauldian approaches to the study of places of confinement, Aguirre clearly is interested in highlighting how agency is always at work even in an institution like the prison. In contrast to naïve and celebratory accounts of subaltern agency, *The Criminals of Lima and Their Worlds* places the prisoners' agency in its rightful place. Aguirre's deft used of the documentation of the archive of the Dirección General de Prisiones, along with a number of other sources (including a prisoner's sketch book) allows him to bring to life the prison experience and to show that prisoners were capable of fashioning a tolerable existence within the prison to the extent that some felt safer inside than out. But, to his credit, Aguirre never loses sight of the fact that Lima's prisons were also nasty, violent and dehumanising places: 'even though prisoners (…) were not always passive or acquiescent victims, the overall picture is one in which they suffered from the state's and society's indifference and malice, if not open brutality' (p. 13). Prisons, and the more general issue of male criminality, therefore, emerge in this book as reflections of broader Peruvian society; they 'reveal the exclusionary character of Peruvian society and the marginalisation of subaltern groups imposed and strengthened by the state' (p. 221). In that sense, this book, like Aguirre's earlier work on slavery, helps to pave the way for a new history of, in this case, Peru's 'modern' period; a history that seeks to uncover how exclusion and marginalisation (often mediated by racism) – features that, as the report of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission confirmed, are deeply embedded in Peruvian society – were reproduced and reaffirmed. For this reason, I would have welcomed a projection of Aguirre's argument beyond the mid-1930s; the end date of the study seems arbitrary and is largely unexplained. But this should not detract from the fact that this book is

not only a superb social and cultural history of Lima's prisons, but also a brilliant and challenging example of how some of the key issues in Peruvian history can be addressed.

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Arlene J. Díaz, *Female Citizens, Patriarchs, and the Law in Venezuela, 1786–1904* (Lincoln, NE, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), pp. xii + 335, £29.95, pb.

This book examines Venezuela's nineteenth-century nation building by focusing on the competing constructions of femininity and masculinity in the laws, the courts and households in a time period when liberalism was the dominant ideology. Historian Arlene Díaz is interested in understanding the dynamics of official culture and ordinary people's beliefs during Venezuela's transition from Spanish colonialism to independence and the regime of order and progress of the 1880s, a process characterised by ambiguous political change. Indeed, Venezuela's first constitution in 1811, pioneering a trend repeated by several other newly independent Spanish American nations, included ideas of liberty, equality, individuality and citizenship, but reserved the full rights of citizenship to a mostly white creole elite of educated and propertied males. At the same time independent Venezuela maintained many Spanish legal codes, such as the thirteenth-century *Siete Partidas* that supported a hierarchical society and granted male heads of households (*padres de familia*) almost absolute power over their wives, children and dependents.

The book, thus, deals with these contradictory dynamics of change and continuity, when an already economically entrenched elite rose to political power and attempted to preserve Venezuela's hierarchical socioracial and gender relations. More specifically, it explores the contradictory ways in which Venezuelan women of different social and racial origins employed the republican principles of individual liberty and equality together with the paternalistic protection of the colonial and Catholic codes to improve their daily lives and their relationships with their male partners.

Díaz adopts a *longue-durée* approach to investigate the impact of liberalism in Caracas society from colonial to republican times: from 1786 to 1880 (or 1888). Thus, the book's title, which announces a study of the whole country from 1786 to 1904, is somewhat overdrawn. The study's main source is a large sample of court records, or *expedientes*, pertaining to Caracas. A total of 578 judicial cases is examined: 139 from 1786–1790, 240 from 1835–1840, and 199 from 1875–80. A source already valuably used by other historians of gender relations, these court records provide important insights into many aspects of the lives of ordinary women and men as well as into their interaction with the state. Not oblivious of the limitations of her selection of *expedientes*, Díaz complements them with legal codes, newspaper articles, speeches, and treatises on law.

The book is divided into three parts, each comprising a five-year period: the late colonial (1786–1790); the liberal (1835–40); and the Antonio Guzmán Blanco (1875–80) eras. For each chronological period three chapters focus on similar themes. A preliminary chapter discusses 'masculine struggles for hegemony at the government level that informed the legal and administrative reforms'. A second