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Gretchen Murphy. *Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. xi + 195 pp. $21.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8223-3496-5; $74.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8223-3484-2.

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Monroe, Hawthorne, and a Diplomatic-Cultural Symbiosis: How Strong the Connection?

To paraphrase Dickens, these are not "the best of times" for diplomatic historians. Increasingly marginalized by their academic colleagues oriented towards social history, they struggle to maintain a voice within their departments and the profession in spite of dramatic shifts in their research focus and topic. This exclusion is particularly nettlesome and unfortunate since the Bush administration has moved foreign affairs to center stage, as the world role of the United States appears more uncertain, and the challenges of empire even more formidable. Now those same historians find their turf contested from outside the discipline by scholars in English, American Studies, and Cultural Studies.

Gretchen Murphy, an English professor at the University of Minnesota-Morris, throws down the gauntlet by declaring that diplomatic historians have deliberately excluded culture from their debate and view it as "an unwelcome and irrational intrusion" (p. 17). She boldly launches such an incursion in her work entitled *Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire*. Murphy is not intellectually shy. By linking the iconic doctrine with national identity upon a fulcrum of American literature and entertainment, she seeks to demonstrate that culture should share center stage with politics in the making of foreign affairs. The author contends that literature not only *reflected* the ideological struggles and changes of the nineteenth century, but also helped *shape* and modify those struggles for policy makers and in the popular mind. Many scholars will quickly recognize the intellectual debt that Murphy owes–a debt which she acknowledges–to Amy Kaplan for her study, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (2002). Kaplan focuses upon the Spanish-American War era and utilizes sources such as Sarah Josepha Hale, Mark Twain, and W. E. B. DuBois and the themes of imperialism, race, and gender. Murphy adopts a comparable strategy for her study of the Monroe Doctrine incorporating the works of Lydia Maria Child, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Richard Harding Davis.

The author emphasizes that the Monroe Doctrine has been, and remains, a "flexible" policy adaptable to generation and situation. Reflecting both nationalism and imperialism for a nation emerging from the War of 1812 and seeking to find its Manifest Destiny in the new cen-

tury, the doctrine could be widely interpreted as continental, hemispheric, and global in scope. Murphy contends that not only expansion, but cultural phenomena such as domesticity, Indian removal, and slavery can be linked to the doctrine. In turn, Americans continually redefined their national identity within the framework of both domestic cultural institutions and the country's place in the hemisphere. To demonstrate her thesis, the author pairs contemporary political statements with romantic novels. Paralleling a John Quincy Adams Independence Day speech in 1821 with Lydia Maria Child's *Hobomok*, she attempts to link common notions in each about national identity–such as the feminization of the United States ("woman-as-nation" metaphor) and the infusion of American destiny with domestic virtue. Adams delivered his speech, emphasizing anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism, fully two years before the doctrine was declared by James Monroe and Childs' romantic triangle (Puritan-Anglican-Indian) was written soon thereafter in 1824. The author admits, however, that there is no concrete evidence to prove that either Adams or Monroe influenced Childs, but ultimately, it makes no difference since "her novel contributed to the refinement contestation, and authorization of the ideas with which Adams and Monroe were also working" (p. 59).

The succeeding chapter focuses upon William Seward's commercial vision in the Pacific, and Murphy compares Frances Lister Hawks's little-read *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan* (1856) with Hawthorne's celebrated *House of the Seven Gables* (1851). Hawks emphasized Matthew Perry's efforts at a formalized (rather than democratic) expression of U.S. technology and military power to impress the Japanese. American culture represented itself through popular minstrel shows produced by black sailors or sailors in blackface. This choice of entertainment revealed the complicated values and relations in the racially charged 1850s, but its appeal seemed "irresistible." In terms of securing America's place in the Pacific, "the minstrel show not only accompanies colonization, it becomes a site of bloodless and landless victory" (p. 80). Minstrelry and a legacy of colonialism also appear in Hawthorne's work. Issues of mobility, domestic space, community, and paternalism play themselves out in a world threatened by expansion, modernity, and "progress." Like the families in the *Seven Gables*, who wisely turned inward and focused upon domestic institutions, the United States would do well to preserve its exceptionalist identity–threatened by such "forced progress"–by turning its attentions to national and continental matters.

Murphy shifts the emphasis to Latin America by comparing the 1890s writings of Jose Marti with those of novelists Maria Ampara Ruiz de Burton, *Who Would Have Thought It?* (1871) and Lew Wallace, *The Fair God; or "The Last of the 'Tzins": A Tale of the Conquest of Mexico* (1872). Marti's works provide both a cautionary warning about the dangers of U.S. imperialism and a rallying cry for Latin American regeneration, unity, and separation from both Europe and North America. Burton would agree about the danger from the north, but since she possesses more elitist racial and class views than Marti, her characters find a likely escape from American domination of Mexico not in the mestizos of Benito Juarez but in the monarchy of Maximilian of Austria. Wallace promotes the Monroe Doctrine by creating an "American brotherhood" in which the Aztecs, by battling the Spanish, pioneered a hemispheric resistance to European rule. As the executors of that order, the United States now must assume the task of spreading Anglo-American culture.

Finally, Richard Harding Davis fills a dual role with his article in *Harper's* on the Venezuelan boundary dispute of 1895 and his novel *Soldiers of Fortune* (1897). Davis feared a British presence in South America and called for the imposition of the Monroe Doctrine. In his bestselling book, Davis reiterates the theme of American intervention as his mining engineer hero, the cleverly named "Henry Clay," struggles to balance symbolic "mines" (class, capital, civilization, masculinity) and "statues" (Monroe Doctrine/democracy).

Professor Murphy smoothly moves her scenarios through space and time from North America to Japan and back across the Pacific to Latin America through the nineteenth century. Certainly, each is linked to some aspect of U.S. territorial, commercial, and/or cultural expansion. The extent to which the author successfully ties the political statements to the romantic novels as an expression of the Monroe Doctrine, however, will no doubt be adjudged differently by each reader. Such bonds seem more comfortably drawn when dealing with an avowed expansionist like Richard Harding Davis, while linking domestic diva Lydia Maria Childs may pose a reach. And while a few bold thinkers may have posited a more sweeping redefinition of the doctrine prior to the Civil War, notions of possible territorial empire beyond the hemisphere (Hawaii or Taiwan) were never seriously considered. Murphy is not an historian so while she demonstrates a reasonable knowledge of the topic and the literature, experts in the field will likely note short-

comings, omissions, and viewpoints open to challenge and interpretation. Some historians undoubtedly would take exception to the statement "few scholars seek to explore U.S. expansion in terms of 'empire' before 1898" (p. 18) or that culture has not been addressed by historians (Emily Rosenberg, for example). Others might argue that the feminization of nation (Brittania/Mother Russia) is not unique to the United States. A few may be annoyed at the non-historical approach of placing many references within the body of the text, abbreviating the endnotes, and crafting an indiscriminate bibliography, or will perhaps cringe at language that includes "received notion" or "embattled dialectics."

Historians, however, have traveled with an intellectual "big tent." Reaching out to and into our sister disciplines, such as English, anthropology, philosophy, government, and sociology, followers of Clio have eagerly embraced inclusivity. In turn, we should not wince–and most of us do not–at the notion of non-historians venturing onto "our turf." Sometimes there is a bridge too far. It is incumbent upon scholars to firmly root their premise (linguistic, scientific, literary, etc.) in fertile historical soil if they wish to enlarge and enhance the debate. Professor Murphy's provocative work meets that criteria. While diplomatic history has been open to notions of "culture" as a force in foreign affairs, the new scholarship introduces cultural criteria as a manifestation of (and impact upon) the formulation of policy and concepts of national identity in the seats of power and in the public mind. While we may debate the applicability of particular cultural works or phenomena to historical concepts or episodes, the dialogue should continue. And perhaps diplomatic historians and their field will be energized by the contest.

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