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# Insatiable Appetites: Imperial Encounters with Cannibals in the North Atlantic World by Kelly L. Watson (review)

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watches, proliferating public clocks, and clearly delineated (and contested) working hours” (49). Second, Ogle does not adequately acknowledge the research findings and conceptual innovations of other scholars. For instance, Ogle’s description of time and time zones as “abstract conventions” invokes Galison’s “convention of simultaneity” without attribution (36).<sup>2</sup> Ogle’s argument that Arabs in Beirut may have been more aware of multiple times than European and American contemporaries does not refer to the rich and important scholarship about the history of multiple temporalities (122).<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, original research and synthesis also characterize Ogle’s intervention in global history. Hopefully, global historians and scholars of globalization will be gracious enough to acknowledge its contributions to the field.

Alexis McCrossen  
Southern Methodist University

*Insatiable Appetites: Imperial Encounters with Cannibals in the North Atlantic World.* By Kelly L. Watson (New York, New York University Press, 2015) 288 pp. \$40.00

Watson has written a carefully argued book that explores how accusations of indigenous cannibalism were essential to the justifications of conquest embedded in the process of European colonialism from its earliest moments to the middle of the eighteenth century. The book’s first chapter examines the place of cannibals in the intellectual history of Europe. Watson describes how, long before Europeans interacted with peoples of the Americas, “new lands and strange peoples were quite often already believed to be savage and cannibalistic” (48). Central to Watson’s analysis is her assertion that a binary that opposed “civilization” to “savagery” was at the core of European thought and action. Europeans clearly considered themselves to be firmly civilized, while placing the indigenous peoples whom they encountered on a sliding scale on the “savagery” side of the ledger.

In order to “uncover the imperial context . . . [and how it] affected the discourse of cannibalism . . . as well as ways discourse . . . changed the dynamics of imperial power,” Watson’s book is expansive in its chronological as well as its geographical scope (2). The text covers the period from 1492 to c.1800 (which might be termed the first age of empires), placing North America in the frame together with the Caribbean and Central

2 Peter Galison, *Einstein’s Clocks, Poincaré’s Maps: Empires of Time* (New York, 2003), 34.

3 Michael O’Malley, *Keeping Watch: A History of American Time* (Washington, D.C., 1990); Mark M. Smith, *Mastered by the Clock: Time, Slavery, and Freedom in the American South* (Chapel Hill, 1997); Thomas Allen, *A Republic in Time: Temporality and Social Imagination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill, 2008); Paul Glennie and Nigel Thrift, *Shaping the Day: A History of Timekeeping in England and Wales 1300–1800* (New York, 2009).

and South America, the more typical loci of interest for books about this topic.

Watson focuses on the importance of local social and historical circumstances to explore the particular manner in which indigenous behavior was interpreted as savage by Europeans. The images of indigenous cannibalism, however, underwent a necessary transformation when the Spaniards spread from the Caribbean to the mainland of Central and South America, conquering Nahua and Maya peoples whose customs and politics differed from those of the Caribbean. This insight serves as a structuring element for the book. The text's broadened chronology and comparative frame allow Watson to analyze how those Europeans who competed with the Spaniards for empire in the Americas refined the Spanish images of indigenous cannibalism according to the distinct circumstances that they confronted outside the core zones of the Spanish system. For example, the savagery that they ascribed to their indigenous partners in trade was different from the savagery that they ascribed to their indigenous allies in warfare.

Watson brings a nuanced gender analysis to bear upon the topic, exploring how European (mis)perceptions of marital relations and gendered labor practices contributed to negative judgments regarding Amerindian societies. Europeans coded entire peoples as "feminine" (and therefore as inferior) because of what they deemed to be "unnatural" marital or sexual practices. Moreover, in their forced and consensual sex with indigenous women, "the body became a permeable border through which an early form of biopower was enacted" (7).

*Insatiable Appetites* provides an engaging comparative study of how a complex, long-standing trope, emerging out of the earliest encounters between Europeans and Amerindians, became a mainstay of European imperial thought for hundreds of years.

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*Revolutions without Borders: The Call To Liberty In The Atlantic World.* By Janet Polasky (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2015) 371 pp. \$35 cloth.

The new century has wrought a major shift in the historiography of revolution as national studies favoring America or France cede to the triangulation that embraces Haiti and broader Atlantic projects that challenge proprietary claims to "liberty." Polasky's riveting new book gives a quantum leap to the Atlantic imperative as it tracks the movements of people and texts across four continents. She builds her history literally from the ground up, tracing revolutionary circulation to and from countries as far-flung as Poland, Guadeloupe, and Sierra Leone, without selecting for the success of a revolutionary project or favoring a specific ideology. By placing "calls to liberty" on a single plane, Polasky gives voice to the myriad