

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank our talented group of editors for investing their time and attention into each piece. Without them, this publication would not have been possible. We would also like to thank our contributing authors, who worked closely with the *Américas* staff over a period of several weeks to ensure their work was of the highest caliber. We would like to thank them especially for remaining committed and responsive during these extraordinary times of the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, thank you to the Johns Hopkins Program in Latin American Studies for its financial and programmatic support during the publication process.

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Alfredo Ramos Martínez, *Zapatistas*
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Letter from the Editor in Chief

Dear Readers,

This year, I am proud to present you the eighth volume of *Américas: The Johns Hopkins Journal of Latin American Studies*. Our mission has always been to provide a multi-disciplinary forum for articles pertaining to Latin America, its issues, and its diaspora. Together with my editorial team, we have chosen a unique set of pieces on a diverse range of topics. From the 1989 U.S. Invasion of Panama to the exploration of Afro-Latinidad in hip-hop, our pieces examine important issues facing Latin America.

The five pieces we have selected explore the formation of identity—national, political, economic, and cultural. We begin with a piece by Daniel Sullivan on the 1989 U.S. Invasion of Panama. Sullivan explores Panamanian national identity and the cognitive dissonance in the Panamanian response to the U.S. invasion. From foreign intervention in Panama, we move to foreign intervention in Guatemala. Sabrina Rainsbury explores humanitarian interventions in Guatemala through the Responsibility to Protect doctrine, arguing that Guatemala’s engagement with the doctrine has positioned it to become an international leader of humanitarianism. Alexandra Ciullo provides an opposing viewpoint on Guatemala in her piece on the country’s maquila industry and the many human rights violations it has perpetuated. From the maquila industry, we shift to the soybean industry in Elizabeth Tian’s piece on agricultural technology in Brazil. Like Ciullo, Tian explores pressing economic issues in the Latin American export economy. Through a case-study of the soybean, she argues that Brazil is poised to become a major agricultural superpower but has important issues it must first address. In our last piece, we move to a new industry altogether. In “Cuando eres ni de aquí ni allá: Exploring Diasporic Afro-Latinidad through Hip-Hop,” Isabella Lajara explores the creation of Afro-Latinx identity in the music of Nitty Scott, Princess Nokia, Maluca, and Ibeyi.

This edition of *Américas* is about tension and ambiguity—in history, international relations, technology, and cultural identity. Our authors discuss and debate the disjunctive Panamanian response to the 1989 U.S. invasion; the complexities of Guatemala as a nation rebuilding after decades of war; the innovative potentials and environmental consequences of the Brazilian agricultural economy; and the unique struggles of living in the Afro-Latinx diaspora. These issues

are critical to Latin America, and yet often under-addressed. We are proud to present them here, in such interesting and timely pieces.

This journal would not have been possible without the generous time and dedication of our editors. I am so grateful to have worked with and alongside each of them. Many thanks also to our contributors, who worked diligently with us throughout the editorial process. This year, we publish work by dedicated young scholars from Columbia University, the Johns Hopkins University, Princeton University, and the University of Pennsylvania. We hope you enjoy reading their work as much as we did.

Best,

Kiana Boroumand

Editor in Chief

May 2019