It is generally the norm for academic edited volumes to be uneven in quality and only loosely cumulative. This one is an exception. It has an unusual and usefully repetitive structure that allows it to combine what might be three overlapping books into one original work, with each part speaking to the others in useful ways. The subject, the propaganda work of the United States—what is called “cultural diplomacy”—in the early years of the Cold War, lends itself to this kind of treatment because the topic is so vast that no single scholar could master every dimension of the relevant programs. Thus the book comes in three parts, each consisting of three chapters. The first group of chapters describes the general institutional structure of U.S. cultural diplomacy programs; the second group looks at their articulation in Spain; and the final group looks at Latin America.

The first, most general part, is the least original of the three. Its chapters are from Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, Nicholas J. Cull, and Giles Scott-Smith, who are all eminent scholars of cultural diplomacy. But their essays here all duplicate material that they have already published elsewhere. Cull’s chapter is a condensed version of his book, The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), while Giles Scott-Smith’s draws from his Networks of Empire: The U.S. State Department’s Foreign Leader Program in the Netherlands, France, and Britain, 1950-1970 (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2008). The United States Information Agency was created in 1953 and was the U.S. government’s primary organization for overt propaganda, while the less-known Foreign Leader Program, which still exists under a different name, brought elites from around the world for short visits with the goal of cultivating a better (and more sympathetic) understanding of U.S. society. Gienow-Hecht’s essay is the most tailored to the volume, but it too reproduces analysis she has done elsewhere, doing the valuable work of setting U.S. cultural diplomacy in context: the U.S. was neither the first state, nor the most successful, in taking on such tasks. The chief value of this section of the book is to provide shortened and translated versions of this scholarship in Spanish, as well as to establish the structure of the organizations whose local implementations are explored in the next two sections.
The middle section, which consists of a trio of chapters about American propaganda in Franco’s Spain, is the most original part of the book. Undoubtedly, the place where U.S. cultural diplomacy has been most thoroughly studied is Western Europe, but Spain is typically excluded from the analysis, so these studies fill an important gap. In the Western European democracies, the U.S. set about combatting messages spread by Soviet propaganda: that the U.S. was culturally barbaric, imperialistic, and bellicose. The U.S. tried to sway Western European societies away from Cold War neutrality and toward a positive view of the United States and its leadership. But in Spain, as the essays in this section illustrate, the dictatorship of Francisco Franco was solidly anti-Communist, and there was no real Communist propaganda to combat. And, at the same time, U.S. messages about the value of a democratic society could hardly be used, given the nature of the dictatorship. Some of the same themes were still employed: Spain’s Catholic hierarchy, like Communists elsewhere, tended to view the U.S. as culturally sterile and immoral, and the U.S. wanted to present a different picture. The U.S. wanted its leadership to be seen as desirable. But after signing the deal to establish U.S. military bases in 1953, U.S. propaganda largely abandoned the theme of the defense of democracy to focus instead on trying to produce harmonious relations between local populations and U.S. troops. U.S. cultural diplomacy tried to avoid endorsing Franco’s dictatorship and at the same time avoid the appearance of interfering in internal affairs by criticizing it.

The idea of the impropriety of meddling in internal affairs has never held particular sway in U.S. dealings in Latin America, the subject of the final section of the book. As with the other sections, there is one general essay and two that delve deeper: in this case one on Mexico and one on Brazil. José Antonio Montero’s excellent essay on Mexico extends the analysis of U.S. propaganda efforts up to before World War II. The U.S. first employed cultural diplomacy techniques in Latin America in the 1920s and 1930s, though by the Cold War the region was not a major target for overt propaganda.

There are a few limitations to this valuable collection. With the exception of Hugo Sappo’s article about Brazil, the focus is almost exclusively on overt, rather than covert, programs. These are much easier to document, and they are important to know about. They are something like the rational ego of the U.S. propaganda apparatus. They existed, of course, alongside the more irrational id of covert programs, frequently financed through the CIA. The CIA-financed Congress for Cultural Freedom is mentioned throughout the text, but not really explored. Antonio Niño’s essay on Spain notes the displeasure that displaced Spanish Republicans felt for the military deals between the U.S. and Spain, as well as the lack of U.S. money for the Spanish intelligentsia that remained. It is interesting to note, then, that the Congress for Cultural Freedom relied for
its Spanish and Latin American operations on Republicans in exile. Interested readers would gain a fuller picture of U.S. cultural diplomacy in Spain and Latin America by pairing this book with Olga Glondys’s *La Guerra Fría Cultural y el exilio español: Cuadernos del Congreso por la Libertad de la Cultura (1953-1965)*, (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2012).

Most of the essays in this book draw primarily, or exclusively, from U.S. government documents to make their case. As the authors are aware, judging program effectiveness from internal memos is not reliable. What is obtained is a valuable view of what propagandists thought they were doing. The authors are appropriately skeptical that their work achieved its intended aims: Gienow-Hecht, for example, notes the persistence of anti-American views, while Niño notes that what the U.S. *did*—in cooperating with Franco—did more to shape views than what it *said* in its propaganda. The volume concludes with an essay by Richard Arndt, who left academia in 1961 for a long career in cultural diplomacy. He ends with the diplomat’s idealism that mutual understanding can lead to better relations. Perhaps it can. But the articles gathered here also suggest that it is not simply misunderstanding, but rather the exercise of power, that creates tension and conflict.

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Investigador dedicado desde hace años al estudio de la inmigración gallega en Argentina, Xosé Manoel Núñez Seixas nos había ofrecido ya algunos meritorios trabajos sobre el tema. Especialmente relevante en su momento fue *O inmigrante imaginario* que, publicado en 2002, abrió una perspectiva novedosa en la historiografía de la migración de los gallegos al Río de la Plata. Allí el autor centró su mirada, más que en los aspectos demográficos, en los imaginarios sociales y en la dinámica intercultural, para tratar de reconstruir la formación de la identidad étnica de la colectividad gallega establecida en territorio argentino.

Aquella obra viene a ser el antecedente directo de la que es objeto de esta reseña. Así, en *Icônes littéraires et stéréotypes sociaux* Núñez Seixas profundiza aun más el análisis del proceso de construcción social de las distintas imágenes de los inmigrantes oriundos de Galicia, analizando tanto los prejuicios y estereotipos presentes en la sociedad argentina como la autorepresentación construida por la propia comunidad inmigrante.