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# **Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers**

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**Nos. 75-76, 1992**

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### Special Edition: Culture, Identity, and Empire in the Americas, 1492-1992

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## Preface

*Rebecca Dobkins and Matthew C. Gutmann*

12 October 1992 marks the quincentennial of Columbus's arrival in what are today known as the Americas. Contributors to this volume recognize the need to explore and analyze the consequences of the past 500 years. In addition to sharing a central concern with sociocultural anthropology and the western Hemisphere and with issues of culture, identity and empire brought to the fore by the Columbian Quincentenary, many of the contributions critique past anthropological categories and assumptions, providing fresh insights into sacred subjects.

The first five articles in this special issue of the Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers were presented in shortened form in two panels on "Identity in Latin America 500 Years After the Invasion" at the Southwestern Anthropological Association Meeting, 9-11 April 1992, Berkeley, California. We are delighted to present these timely essays, along with an additional contribution dealing with Native North America, to a broader audience through the Kroeber Papers.

The first essay by Macklin focuses on one marginalized population in the region, the Garifuna of Belize, and shows how an analysis of Afro-Indians such as these should be more central to studies of race, culture, nationality, and language in the region. Gelles next traces the development of ethnicity in Peru, examining colonial and cultural constructions of communal and ethnic identities in the highland peasant community of Cabanaconde. Nationalism in Venezuela and Mexico is a central theme in the papers of Ferrandiz and Gutmann respectively, the former an examination of the spirit possession cult of Maria Lionza and the latter an exegesis of writings concerning "lo mexicano." Though the authors approach the subject of cultural identity quite differently, the influence of recent theoretical work on cultural identity and hegemonic domination will be evident in each essay. Next, Lizarralde deals with the workings of eco-colonialism in the control of biodiversity and rainforest protection among indigenous Venezuelans, exploring how western environmentalists' perspectives on conservation of tropical areas clash with indigenous views. In the final article, about the repatriation of Native American cultural materials, Dobkins explores current issues of representation surrounding the Omaha collection made by Francis La Flesche for the Hearst Museum in the early twentieth century when Alfred L. Kroeber was building anthropology at Berkeley.

We would like to thank all the contributors for their patience in meeting our requests for revisions. We gratefully acknowledge Justin Hyland and Margot Winer for providing us with a ready-made format program for this issue of the Kroeber Papers, Manuel Lizarralde for his invaluable skill and tireless efforts in the technical production of this volume, and Takeyuki Tsuda for his assistance in proofreading and distribution.