

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN MAP LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES
BULLETIN

Book Reviews

Compiled by: Paul Pival
Research Librarian, University of Calgary

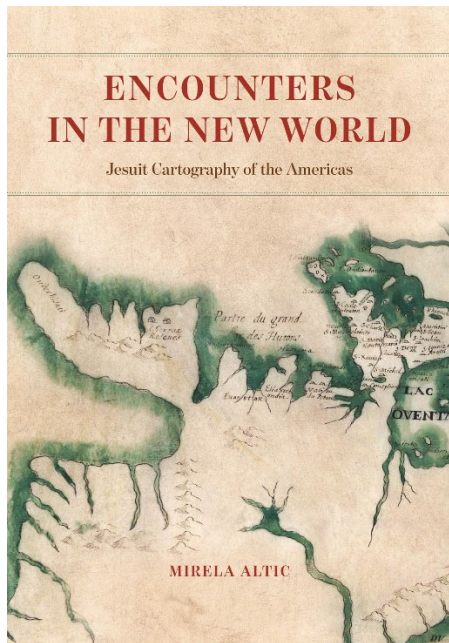
Books reviewed in this issue:

- *Encounters in the New World: Jesuit Cartography of the Americas*, By Mirela Altic
 Reviewed by Martin Chandler, Cape Breton University

***Encounters in the New World: Jesuit Cartography of the Americas*, By Mirela Altic**

Reviewed by Martin Chandler, Cape Breton University

Review



Altic, Mirela. *Encounters in the New World: Jesuit Cartography of the Americas*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2022. 504p. \$75.00 US. ISBN 9780226791050.

Mirela Altic's *Encounters in the New World* offers a grand synthesis of Jesuit cartography, spanning elements of cartographic design, geopolitical history, theology, and, most importantly, beautiful and interesting maps. In her conclusion, Altic describes this book as a "first attempt" (p. 325), a somewhat humble descriptor for the research presented. A great deal is to be found in this collection of early colonial mappings of the American continents.

The intended audience for this text is varied, from historians of cartography or Jesuit work to political scientists to individuals concerned with ideas of persuasion and design. Maps are discussed as tools of colonial control of space, as reflections of evangelization, and as modes of intercultural exchange. Readers can find much about early European exploration, with the book divided into sections on Spanish, Portuguese, and French colonies; conversely, much can be read about the various tools of colonization and subjugation and the role that maps and the Jesuit order played in this.

Many of the maps are reproduced in greyscale, with two sections of colour-printed maps on glossy paper. The book itself is hefty and well-made. The layout is not overly cramped or cluttered, and the maps are given enough space, as well as in-depth information on locations for finding the originals.

While primarily written from a more academic standpoint, the writing style is accessible to many readers. Altic's passion for historical maps and mapping shines through, and her interest in this topic makes for an engaging read. Much of the discussion of Indigenous/colonial relations is well-handled, with particular note to the discussion of what is and is not stated in the colonial iconography. While moments of the Western colonial mindset do appear, given the nature of the subject matter, this would be difficult to avoid.

Altic herself comes to this with excellent credentials as a professor of the history of cartography with an interest in missionary cartography. She is involved with the International Cartographic Association Commission and has served as president of the Society for the History of Discoveries. She works at the University of Zagreb, specializing in the social history of maps, among other topics.

There are other texts related to Jesuit mapping, as well as more general texts on the history of Jesuits that devote some space to maps. However, this appears to be the first book dedicated to an in-depth study of Jesuit mapping in the Americas. It pulls together many of the existing disparate maps from Toronto, Madrid, Buenos Aires, Budapest, and beyond. Along with the maps, the text also brings together a wealth of source material on the history of colonization.

Ultimately, *Encounters in the New World* offers an engaging subject matter and a wealth of interesting and beautifully re-created cartographic materials. It would serve many libraries well and is a truly fine "first attempt".

[Image from: <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/E/bo95833620.html>]