

Contributors

Ligia S. Aldana is an Associate Professor of Spanish, Latin American, and Caribbean literatures and cultural studies at SUNY New Paltz. She received her Ph.D. in Romance Studies and History of Slavery in the Americas from the University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL. Her articles have appeared in the *Afro-Hispanic Review*, *The International Journal of Cultural Policy*, *Callaloo*, *Revista de estudios colombianos*, *Publications of the Afro Latin American Research Association*, and *Revista UNICARTA*, among others. Her current work derives from fieldwork under a Fulbright Research Grant that examines Afro Diasporic testimonios by Afrodescendant women victims of war in Montes de María, Colombia in a forthcoming anthology. She is also working on two book manuscripts, *Chambacú, negritud y modernidad en el Caribe colombiano* and *Champeta, Négritude and National Belonging in the Colombian Caribbean*.

Brandon Blakeslee received his BA from Calvin University where he doubled majored in History and Spanish. He also has a MA in Transatlantic History from the University of Texas at Arlington and is currently a PhD candidate at the same University. He has an interest in Latin America and the state creation efforts that gripped the region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. His dissertation is tentatively titled “Football! Turning Colombian boys into Patriotic men: How Sport and Education Developed early Twentieth-Century Colombian Nationalism.”

Yvonne Captain is a lifelong student of the works of Manuel Zapata Olivella. In addition to her 1993 study, *The Culture of Fiction in the Works of Manuel Zapata Olivella*, she continues her analysis of his works and importance through numerous publications and talks. She is also a specialist in Afro-Latin America as well as south-south relationships between the whole of Latin America and Africa.”

Darrelstan Fitzwarren Ferguson will be a second-year graduate student of Spanish at the University of Pittsburgh this August (2019). Darrelstan graduated from The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus in 2018 with an M.Phil. in Spanish. His aim is to become a professor of Spanish language and literatures.

Tyra Lewis (Managing Editor) began her educational journey at Boston College where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English literature and a minor in Black Studies. Looking to further her education, she began taking Spanish literature classes when she became fascinated with Afro-Hispanic literature. Wanting to learn more, her passion grew and led her to the University of Missouri – Columbia. While working towards her Master of Arts in Spanish and Spanish American literature, Tyra became actively involved with the Afro-Latin/American Research Association. After graduation,

Tyra moved back to her home state of Connecticut. Heading the call for a new adventure, she then made the decision to move to Texas. There, she sought out other interests which included teaching introductory college level Spanish grammar and working with a local migrant worker program. Although she enjoyed her time in Texas, Tyra moved back to Connecticut where she pursued a Master of Arts in International Studies with a focus in Latin America at the University of Connecticut. During this time, she helped to create and establish Afro-Latino week, a celebration of Afro-Latino culture which included inviting leaders in the field to present, connecting with various agencies on and off campus and marketing the event. Tyra Lewis is currently serving as the Assistant Director for Academic Advising at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. She is also teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages and working on various projects related to her research.

William Mina Aragón, filósofo de la Universidad del Valle, Doctor en Sociología y ciencia política de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid, profesor titular de la Universidad del Cauca, Facultad de Derecho, Ciencias Políticas y Sociales. Ha entrevistado a personalidades como Fernando Savater, Edgar Morín, Alain Touraine y Cornelius Castoriadis. Ha escrito en revistas como la *Afro American Review* y *Palara*; además cuenta con una extensa lista de publicaciones con respecto al tema afrodiaspórico, con libros como: “Historia, política y sociedad” (1997); “Poesía y filosofía política” (1999); “El pensamiento Afro - Más allá de Oriente y Occidente” (2003), “Afrocolombianidad: ensayo sobre arte, cultura y política” (2008), “Derechos humanos afrocaucanos” (2009), “Las gestas del afro por la libertad” (2010), “Manuel Zapata Olivella: un humanista afrodiaspórico” (2014), “La imaginación creadora afrodiaspórica” (2014), “Un legado intercultural” (coautor y editor, 2016), “Novela, sociedad y cultura” (2017) y “El escritor y la política” (2019).

George Palacios is an Associate Professor of Spanish at Clemson University. His broad research and teaching interests encompass the literatures, cultures, philosophy and political thought related to the African diaspora in the Americas. He is particularly interested in the relations between Afro-Hispanic (i.e., Colombia, Central America, and the Caribbean islands), Afro-Brazilian and African-American literatures and cultures (i.e., the Harlem Renaissance). He is the author of *Manuel Zapata Olivella (1920-2004): pensador político, radical y hereje de la diáspora africana en las Americas* (Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana).

Paulette Ramsay's research into the little known, but significant literature and culture of Afro-Hispanic societies in general, and Afro-Mexico in particular, has made an

important contribution to the overall debunking of myths about race and class in Latin America, to bring the Afro-Latin American experience to the fore and to expand the debate about issues of migration, ethnicity, identity, nation, belonging, agency and self-definition in Latin America and the hispanophone Caribbean. As an award-winning writer of fiction, Professor Ramsay's novel *Aunt Jen* can be found on international literature syllabuses, having been translated to German and Italian. She currently teaches Spanish Literature in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at the University of the West Indies, Mona.

Antonio D. Tillis, Ph.D. is Interim President of the University of Houston-Downtown. Dr. Tillis is an internationally acclaimed scholar and author with specializations in Latin American, Afro-Latin American and African Diaspora literature. He is the author, editor, and co-editor of the following: *The Afro-Hispanic Reader and Anthology* (with Paulette Ramsay, Ian Randal, 2018), *The Trayvon Martin in 'US': An American Tragedy* (with Emmanuel Harris, Peter Lang, 2015), *Critical Perspectives on Afro-Latin American Literature* (Routledge, 2012, paperback 2013), *Manuel Zapata Olivella e o escurecimento da literatura latino-americana* (State University of Rio de Janeiro Press, 2013), *(Re)Considering Blackness in Contemporary Afro-Brazilian (Con)Texts: A Cultural Studies Reader* (Peter Lang, 2011); *Caribbean-African Upon Awakening: Poetry by Blas Jiménez* (Mango Publishing 2010); and *Manuel Zapata Olivella and the "Darkening" of Latin American Literature* (Missouri 2005). Dr. Tillis' work has been

featured in top journals, including *Callaloo*, *Hispanic Journal*, *Mosaic*, *CLA Journal*, and *Transit Circle*.

Manuel Zapata Olivella (1920-2004) nació en Lórica, Colombia en 1920. Es autor de cerca de ocho novelas, entre ellas *Corral de negros* (1963), *En Chimá nace un santo* (1963), y *Changó, el gran putas* (1983). Escribió así mismo obras de teatro, colecciones de ensayos y libros de viajes, la mayoría los cuales estaban relacionados con sus estudios etnológicos sobre el folclore africano. Zapata Olivella recibió el Premio Casa de las Américas, el Primer Premio Nacional de Teatro de *Espiral*, junto con el Primer y Segundo Premio Nacional de Novela de la Academia Colombiana de la Lengua. A la par de su carrera literaria, trabajó también como médico y psiquiatra. Enseñó y dictó conferencias en varias universidades, entre ellas Howard University, Kansas University, y la Universidad de Toronto. También fundó la revista literaria *Letras Nacionales*. Zapata Olivella murió en Bogotá, Colombia en 2004. <https://www.loc.gov/item/n86845576/manuel-zapata-olivella-colombia-1920-2004/>

Miguel A. Valerio is an Assistant Professor of Spanish at Washington University in St. Louis. His research has appeared in *Afro-Hispanic Review*, *Confraternitas*, *Slavery and Abolition* and is forthcoming in *Colonial Latin American Review* and the *Journal of Festive Studies*.

Elizabeth Vargas Holguin is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Cambridge. Her dissertation explores the writings by Afro-Pacific authors Alfredo Vanín, Gregorio Martínez and Antonio Preciado.