

THE *Current*

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Four UC Santa Barbara Historians Publish New Books

Four UC Santa Barbara historians have published new books on topics that range from the titillating "flash" newspapers of the 1840's to how memories of the past continue to influence Japan's relationships with its neighbors. The books include "The Flash Press: Sporting Male Weeklies in 1840s New York"; "The Comanche Empire"; "Mexican American Religions: Spirituality, Activism, and Culture"; and "East Asia's Haunted Present: Historical Memories and the Resurgence of Nationalism."

In "The Flash Press: Sporting Male Weeklies in 1840s New York" (The University of Chicago Press, 2008), Patricia Cline Cohen, a professor of history at UCSB, takes a look at the short-lived tabloid magazines that were must-reads for literate sporting men in New York City. With titles such as *The Rake*, *The Flash*, *The Whip* and *The Libertine*, the weekly publications covered and publicized New York City's extensive sexual underworld and featured gossip about boxing, dog fighting, and the theater scene.

"The Flash Press" was written with Timothy J. Gilfoyle, professor of history at Loyola University in Chicago; and Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, professor of American studies and history at Smith College.

In "Mexican American Religions: Spirituality, Activism, and Culture" (Duke University Press, 2008), Mario T. García, a professor of history and Chicano studies at UCSB, and Gastón Espinosa, an associate professor of religious studies at Claremont

McKenna College and Claremont Graduate University, offer a multidisciplinary inquiry into the role of religion in the Mexican American community.

Edited by García and Espinosa, the collection of essays written by scholars such as María Herrera-Sobek, professor of Chicana and Chicano Studies at UCSB, analyzes the influence of religion on Mexican American literature, art, theater, activism, healing, and popular culture. It includes the history and interpretation of Mexican American religions as well as Mexican American mystics and prophets.

In his book "The Comanche Empire" (Yale University Press, 2008), Pekka Hämäläinen, a professor of history at UCSB, uncovers the lost story of the Comanche Indians, who built a powerful empire that dominated the fiercely contested lands of the American Southwest, the southern Great Plains, and northern Mexico. The empire eclipsed its various European rivals in military prowess, political prestige, economic power, commercial reach, and cultural influence.

Hämäläinen offers two intertwined stories in "The Comanche Empire." The first examines cross-cultural relations in the region from the perspective of the Comanches, exploring how this nation rose to dominance and constantly reinvented itself in order to preserve and expand its reach. The second looks at the events from the perspective of the Spaniards, Mexicans, Apaches, and others who variously competed and cooperated with the Comanches but ultimately lost out in the Comanche-controlled world. Both stories are woven into a single narrative thread within the context of the broader framework of Europe's overseas expansion.

In a collection of essays, titled "East Asia's Haunted Present: Historical Memories and the Resurgence of Nationalism" (Praeger Security International, 2008), Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, professor of history and former co-director of UCSB's Center for Cold War Studies, and Kazuhiko Togo, visiting professor of international affairs at Seoul National University and the public policymaker-in-residence at UCSB in 2007, explore the bitter historical memories that have resurfaced in recent years and have led to contentious issues between Japan and its neighbors.

While East Asia has established itself as one of the most vibrant economic regions of the world, the strident nationalisms that have emerged there in the post-Cold War period have exacerbated historical grievances and heightened the international tensions that separate Japan from China and South Korea. One of the greatest challenges currently facing the region is the growing animosity between Japan and

its neighbors -- particularly China and South Korea -- over their respective and collective memories of Japan's pre-1945 militaristic aggression, oppression, and atrocities.

Written by leading scholars from Japan, China, South Korea, and the United States, the essays examine ways in which these modern nations might manage the wrongs of the past in an effort to check the dangerous growth of nationalist resentments.

[\[RETURN TO TOP\]](#)

† Top photo: "The Flash Press: Sporting Male Weeklies in 1840's New York"

"Mexican American Religions: Spirituality, Activism, and Culture"

†† Bottom photo: "The Comanche Empire"

"East Asia's Haunted Present: Historical Memories and the Resurgence of Nationalism"

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.