



Simón Bolívar: Travels and Transformations of a Cultural Icon

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“Shows us how and why Simón Bolívar is still a major icon in Latin American culture. Cinema, politics, painting, literature, religion, and opera are all touched and marked by ‘El Libertador’ who is still very much an active force in Latin America.”—Efraín Barradas, author of *Mente, Mirada, Mano: Visiones y Revisiones de La Obra de Lorenzo Homar*

“An indispensable resource for anyone interested in the myth and memory of Simón Bolívar.”—Sibylle Fischer, author of *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*

One of Latin America’s most famous historical figures, Simón Bolívar has become a mythic symbol for many nations, empires, and revolutions used to support wildly diverse—sometimes opposite—ideas. From colonial Cuba to Nazi-occupied France to Cold War–era Slovenia, the image of “El Libertador” has variously signified loyalty, national unity, liberation, freedom, and revolt.

In this volume, an array of international and interdisciplinary scholars shows the ways Bolívar has appeared over the last two centuries in painting, fiction, poetry, music, film, festival, dance, city planning, and even reliquary adoration. They illustrate how Bolívar’s body has been exalted, reimagined, or fragmented in different contexts, taking on a range of meanings to represent the politics and poetics of today’s national bodies.

By critically analyzing many examples of cultural Bolivarianisms, or cults of Bolívar, this collection demonstrates the capacity of the arts and humanities to challenge and reinvent hegemonic icons and narratives and, therefore, to be vital to democracy.

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