

## Agrarian Puerto Rico

Fundamental tenets of colonial historiography are challenged by showing that US capital investment in this colony did not lead to the disappearance of the small farmer. Contrary to well-established narratives, quantitative data show that the increasing integration of rural producers within the US market led to differential outcomes, depending on preexisting land tenure structures, capital requirements to initiate production, and demographics. These new data suggest that the colonial economy was not polarized into landless Puerto Rican rural workers on one side and corporate US capitalists on the other. The persistence of Puerto Rican small farmers in some regions and the expansion of local property ownership and production disprove this socioeconomic model. Other aspects of extant Puerto Rican historiography are confronted in order to make room for thorough analyses and new conclusions on the economy of colonial Puerto Rico during the early twentieth century.

César J. Ayala is a professor of sociology at the University of California–Los Angeles. He is the author of *American Sugar Kingdom: The Plantation Economy of the Spanish Caribbean, 1898–1934* (1999) and a coauthor of *Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History since 1898* (2007).

Laird W. Bergad is Distinguished Professor of Latin American and Caribbean History at Lehman College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He is the author of *The Demographic and Economic History of Slavery in Minas Gerais, Brazil, 1720–1888* (1999) and a coauthor of *Hispanics in the United States: A Demographic, Social, and Economic History 1980–2005* (2010) and four other books on Latin American and Caribbean history.

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César J. Ayala , Laird W. Bergad  
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# Agrarian Puerto Rico

*Reconsidering Rural Economy and Society,  
1899–1940*

CÉSAR J. AYALA

*University of California–Los Angeles*

LAIRD W. BERGAD

*Lehman College, City University of New York*



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*Laird: For my three grandchildren, Rafael Joshua Goldstein,  
Leia Brooke Goldstein, and Lily Elisa Bergad*  
*César: For my two children, Michael Thomas Grady and Diego  
Clemente Ayala*

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