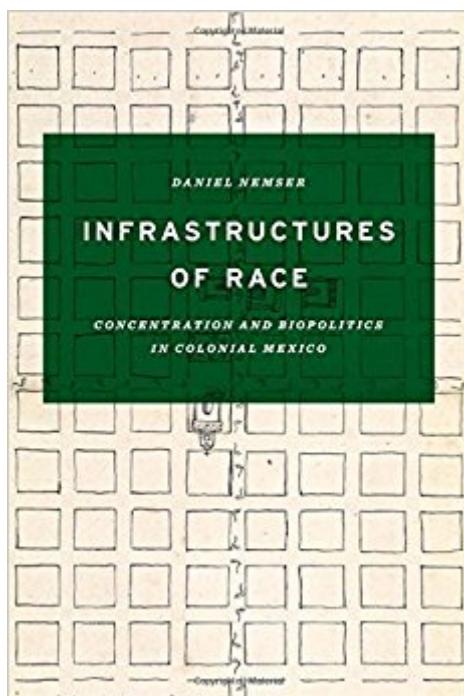


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# Infrastructures Of Race: Concentration And Biopolitics In Colonial Mexico (Border Hispanisms)



## Synopsis

Many scholars believe that the modern concentration camp was born during the Cuban war for independence when Spanish authorities ordered civilians living in rural areas to report to the nearest city with a garrison of Spanish troops. But the practice of spatial concentration—gathering people and things in specific ways, at specific places, and for specific purposes—has a history in Latin America that reaches back to the conquest. In this paradigm-setting book, Daniel Nemser argues that concentration projects, often tied to urbanization, laid an enduring, material groundwork, or infrastructure, for the emergence and consolidation of new forms of racial identity and theories of race. *Infrastructures of Race* traces the use of concentration as a technique for colonial governance by examining four case studies from Mexico under Spanish rule: centralized towns, disciplinary institutions, segregated neighborhoods, and general collections. Nemser shows how the colonial state used concentration in its attempts to build a new spatial and social order, and he explains why the technique flourished in the colonies. Although the designs for concentration were sometimes contested and short-lived, Nemser demonstrates that they provided a material foundation for ongoing processes of racialization. This finding, which challenges conventional histories of race and mestizaje (racial mixing), promises to deepen our understanding of the way race emerges from spatial politics and techniques of population management.

## Book Information

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"A rich history of how race was conceptualized and materially inscribed in colonial Mexico— and a pleasure to read. The book's contributions are manifold, and it will be in conversation with other books in the field, while expanding the discussions with which the colonial period can engage." (Ivonne del Valle, University of California, Berkeley)"Nemser's work will be widely read and discussed both within and outside Latin American history and cultural studies. It combines meticulous research, erudition, theoretical dexterity, and a formal elegance that allows readers to enter and engage directly with the colonial genealogy of modern biopolitics." (John D. Blanco, University of California, San Diego, author of *Frontier Constitutions: Christianity and Colonial Empire in the Nineteenth-Century Philippines*)

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