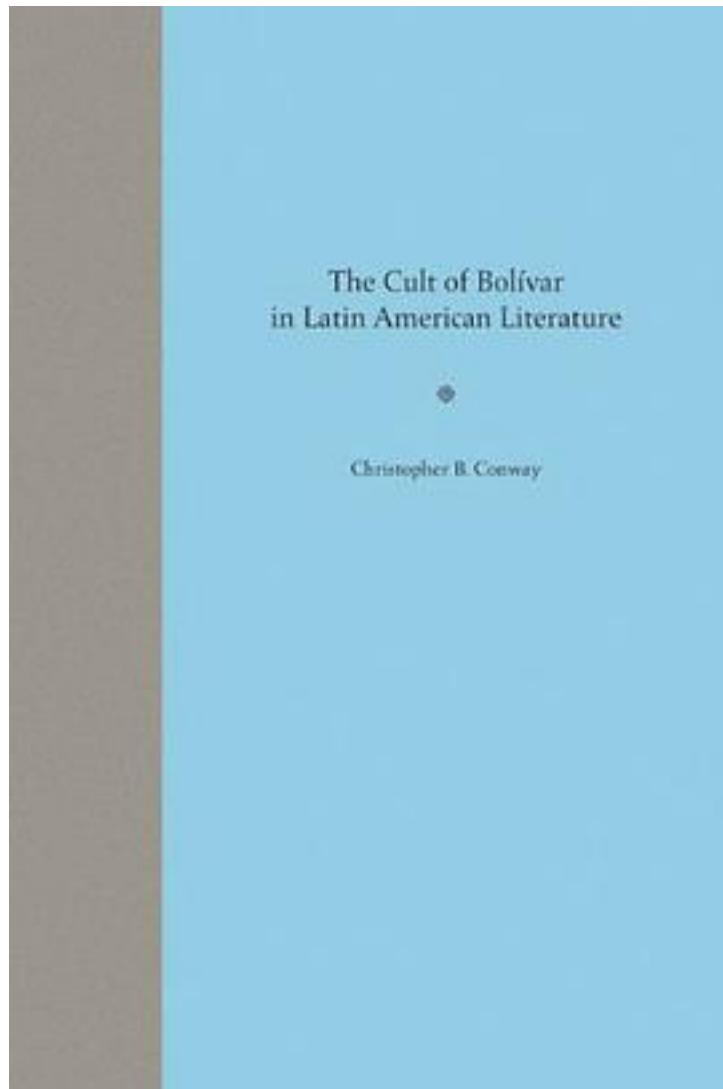


The Cult of Bolívar in Latin American Literature



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The Cult of Bolivar explores the Latin American cult of Simon Bolivar in modern literature through a broad array of texts that include fiction, children's literature, poetry, journalism, and presidential speeches. The image of Simon Bolivar (1783-1830) has been central to debates about Latin American identity since the 19th century and has been continually readapted to address current problems. This study examines the interplay of myth and disillusionment in modern representations of Bolivar. After outlining the emergence of the Cult of Bolivar during the Wars of Independence and the early national period, Christopher Conway uses novels to frame in-depth discussions of issues central to Bolivarian nationalism: the deification of the hero, monuments and iconoclasm, fatherhood and sexuality, and the promise and failure of modernity. This interdisciplinary study argues that representations of Bolivar trace the difficult and often contradictory processes by which nationalism imagines its past, present, and future. In addition to original archival research about the rise of Bolivarian nationalism in the 19th century and literary analyses of key novels such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *The General in His Labyrinth*, Conway includes discussions of contemporary Latin American art and presidential politics. He utilizes gender studies and a broad spectrum of Bolivariana to frame our understanding of different aspects of hero worship. Also covered are controversial representations of Bolivar that resulted in public outcries in Latin America, such as Juan Davila's hermaphroditic painting of Simon Bolivar and Denzil Romero's pornographic novel about Bolivar's mistress, Manuela Saenz.

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