



MEET THE AUTHOR TAMAR HERZOG

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***Frontiers of Possession. Spain and Portugal in Europe and the Americas* (Cambridge, USA: Harvard University Press, 2015)**

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Vortragssaal, 16.00-18.00

Frontiers of Possession asks how territorial borders were established in Europe and the Americas during the early modern period and challenges the standard view that national boundaries are largely determined by military conflicts and treaties. Focusing on Spanish and Portuguese claims in the New and Old Worlds, Tamar Herzog reconstructs the different ways land rights were negotiated and enforced, sometimes violently, among people who remembered old possessions or envisioned new ones: farmers and nobles, clergymen and missionaries, settlers and indigenous peoples.

Questioning the habitual narrative that sees the Americas as a logical extension of the Old World, Herzog portrays Spain and Portugal on both sides of the Atlantic as one unified imperial space. She begins in the Americas, where Iberian conquerors had to decide who could settle the land, who could harvest fruit and cut timber, and who had river rights for travel and trade. The presence of indigenous peoples as enemies to vanquish or allies to befriend, along with the vastness of the land, complicated the picture, as did the promise of unlimited wealth. In Europe, meanwhile, the formation and re-formation of boundaries could last centuries, as ancient entitlements clashed with evolving economic conditions and changing political views and juridical doctrines regarding how land could be acquired and maintained. Herzog demonstrates that the same fundamental questions had to be addressed in Europe and in the Americas. Territorial control was always subject to negotiation, as neighbors and outsiders, in their quotidian interactions, carved out and defended new frontiers of possession.

Tamar Herzog is Monroe Gutman Professor of Latin American Affairs and Radcliffe Alumnae Professor in the History Department at Harvard University, and Affiliated Faculty Member at Harvard Law School. A legal scholar and historian by training, her work engages with early modern European history, colonial Latin American history, imperial history, Atlantic history, and Legal history.

She is the author of multiple articles and books, including *La administración como un fenómeno social: la justicia penal penal de la ciudad de Quito (1650-1750)* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1995); *Defining Nations: Immigrants and Citizens in Early Modern Spain and Spanish America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); and *A Short History of European Law: The Last Two and a Half Millennia* (Harvard University Press, January 2018, forthcoming).

