

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 39 (2007). doi:10.1017/S0022216X06242342

Kenneth J. Andrien (ed.), *The Human Tradition in Colonial Latin America*, Wilmington, DE.: Scholarly Resources, 2002, pp. xviii + 321, \$72.00, \$24.95 pb.

Telling the stories of individual lives has always been an important way of illuminating the past. As journalists know, 'human interest stories' invariably hook the reader's attention, largely because they fulfil a desire to know about the lives of others, to see something of the range of experience in the society around us, and to identify ourselves against that experience. Historians are sometimes sceptical about the value of such stories, suspecting that, if divorced from a broader knowledge of the cultures from which they are drawn, they encourage readers simply to respond emotionally to individuals without reference to the peculiarities of the societies in which they lived. This book shows, however, that stories of individual experience can advance historical understanding because, by setting individuals firmly in their contexts, they help the reader to form a clearer sense of how people in the past may have thought and acted as they did, as well as illuminating the values and attitudes of the societies in which they lived.

The central aim of the book is to illustrate key aspects of the development of Iberian American societies across the whole colonial period by focusing on the experiences of individuals who lived in regions of colonial Mexico, the Andes and Brazil. The editor has drawn on experienced historians, experts in their fields, and the collection accordingly reflects some of the most interesting recent research into colonial Iberian America. Their essays concentrate on the experience of subaltern peoples rather than settler elites, and aim to illuminate the ways in which the social mores, religious beliefs, and political institutions imported from Spain and Portugal affected people who were, by reason of race or gender, outside the dominant groups. They also reflect the burgeoning interest among historians of Latin America in the formation of new identities under colonialism, and the ways in which indigenous people, people of mixed race, and slaves negotiated and sometimes reshaped the social rules, prejudices and hierarchies brought from Europe. A key theme is, then, the ways in which subaltern groups responded to colonial rule, whether through co-option, adaptation or resistance.

The five short histories in Part I are chosen to illustrate the construction of the Latin American colonial order, and they successfully convey a strong sense of the variety and complexity of social interaction during the formative years. Three essays focus on the experience and behaviour of Indians of prominent social rank: Matthew Restall on a Maya noble who collaborated with the Spaniards; Susan Ramírez on an Andean ethnic leader who sought to reconcile traditional duties to the community with Spanish settler demands, and Ana María Presta on a propertied Indian couple who used Castilian law to adjudicate the distribution of their assets. The other essays reach into the sharper side of social hybridity: Alida Metcalf on the experience of a Brazilian mestizo who successfully moved between white and Indian societies by simply switching pragmatically between their codes as circumstances required; and, even more complicated, the position, analysed by David Cook, of a servant girl whose identity shifted, even in her own mind, between Indian and Spaniard.

The five essays of Part II traverse similar sociological territory during the 'long seventeenth century', when the hierarchies and routines of the colonial order became more settled, though not necessarily less challenged. Two themes stand out. First, religion: Nancy van Deusen addresses religious behaviour and experience, as

reflected in the life of an African woman slave who became a nun and famous mystic, while Kenneth Mills focuses on a Peruvian friar who helped disseminate popular devotion to the Virgin. A second major theme is that of adaptation and resistance, evidenced in the struggles of Indians and blacks to defend and improve their standing. Rolena Adorno explores Guaman Poma's litigation with rival Andeans over land to show how Indian nobles fought to defend family interests; Grant Jones recounts the efforts of the Maya lord AhChan to create an independent kingdom beyond the reach of the Spanish, thereby demonstrating continuing native determination to defend cultural and political autonomy; Mary Karasch focuses on the Afro-Brazilian slave leader Zumbi, and his organisation of runaway slave communities at Palmares, to show the struggle of slaves who sought to elude servitude.

Part Three covers the final period of Spanish rule, during the years in which reforming monarchs, and after 1808 their opponents, did much to transform the political and social landscape. The themes of race, gender and resistance remain prominent, informing a group of essays which evoke the influence of race and gender in the lives of individuals, and show responses to the new values and opportunities of changing times. In Ann Twinam's essay on a wealthy mulatto's attempt to buy 'whiteness' by legal means, and Christiana Borchart's on a Quito woman's efforts to become and remain a merchant, we see the complex settings in which men and women sought to negotiate the boundaries of race and gender and to defend their personal positions. Muriel Nazzari's essay on the life of a Brazilian provincial landowner and patriarch shows how sexual contacts between white males and female slaves allowed some social mobility while doing nothing to loosen the grip of white dominance, patriarchy and slavery. Other essays focus on the more overt forms of conflict in colonial societies during the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. Ward Stavig provides a perspective on the revolt of Túpac Amaru by telling the story of an ethnic leader who refused to join the pan-Andean rebellion; Lyman Johnson shows the panic which seized Spanish authorities at the time of the French Revolution, with an essay on slave conspiracy and scapegoating in Buenos Aires; Peter Blanchard throws new light on the dangers and disappointments of slaves who sought to fight for their freedom in the wars of independence; Camilla Townsend further illustrates slave awareness of the chances for freedom brought by the wars of independence in her essay on a slave woman who directly demanded her political rights from Bolívar.

This is not, perhaps, a book which most readers will read from cover to cover. Its purpose is pedagogic and its target audience is university students, many of whom will read one or two of the articles assigned to illustrate a particular issue or problem. This does not, however, reduce its value. The collection is rich and varied, showcasing some of the most interesting recent work in Spanish and Portuguese American history. Anyone interested in these histories will find illuminating vignettes and images here, and the high quality of the essays makes one hope that readers will read the whole volume. The editor, Kenneth Andrien, has done an excellent job in bringing these original pieces together and, in his introductions to the sections and essays, helpfully contextualises their contribution to the history and historiography of colonial Latin America. These essays will provide a valuable underpinning for any general course on Latin American colonial history, and a timely update for anyone interested in significant recent work in the social history of colonial Spanish and Portuguese America.

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