

baptized without much indoctrination. Such baptisms Monteiro traces through parochial registries. He also focuses on their indigenous ethnicities and changing identities, and the difficulties of their lives after arrival in São Paulo that led to resistance and flights. The impact of smallpox and measles, as well as malnutrition, was often responsible not only for such flights but also for high mortality.

In the last chapter, Monteiro challenges yet another myth about the bandeira leaders and their descendants. As he demonstrates, frontier bandeiras did not lead to an egalitarian society; instead, what emerged in São Paulo was great social inequality with an acute division of wealth, even within the free population, which led to rural poverty by the end of the seventeenth century. Thus, this book is more than just an ethnohistory; it is also notable for the breadth and depth of its sources and socioeconomic analysis. For readers of the Portuguese edition, this translation will be a welcome addition to an understanding of Monteiro's classic, since the translator-editors incorporate material from his dissertation and add biographical insights. The index is also quite useful. Highly recommended for classroom use due to its readability, it is also a scholarly comparative analysis of slave societies and the formation of colonial Brazil.

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MINING CITY: POTOSÍ

Potosí: The Silver City That Changed the World. By Kris Lane. Oakland: University of California Press, 2019. Pp. 272. Illustrations. Maps. Appendix. Glossary. Notes. Bibliographical essay. Select bibliography. Index. \$32.95 cloth.
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Since the early 1970s, the silver mining city of Potosí has often been associated with the murderous exploitation of Indians as well as with the ecological degradation of the Andes. Eurocentric historians have emphasized that Potosí silver underpinned the Spanish Empire. Other recent scholars have analyzed Potosí as a major contributor to global trade. The Cerro Rico (Rich Hill) of Potosí was so blessed with silver deposits that it was able to satisfy the huge demand for silver in China and South Asia for several centuries.

However, as Kris Lane argues in his fascinating study of Potosí from the pre-conquest era to the early nineteenth century, the silver city was not just a place of “environmental disaster and a moral tar-pit” (xvi); it was above all a unique urban center that “cast into sharp relief many of the paradoxes of global modernity” (182). Even though Potosí certainly embodied greed and exploitation, the city was also the scene of economic opportunity for a varied assortment of indigenous, Spanish, and African men and women. Similarly, while silver was mined in primitive ways, technological innovations

such as ore-crushing mills and the use of highly toxic mercury also made Potosí resemble a modern industrial city.

In eight short chapters and a brief epilogue, Lane discusses the history of the silver city. The book is based on secondary sources and a wealth of primary sources, including notarial records from Bolivian archives. Each chapter is enlivened with illustrations and maps as well as colorful and revealing anecdotes from contemporaries. The first two chapters present the Spanish discovery of the silver mountain in 1545 and the early development of Potosí. Within three decades of its founding, Potosí's population rose to 50,000. From the onset, the city was segregated between a Spanish district at lower altitude and Indian neighborhoods at higher elevation. During the first three decades of operation, indigenous miners worked mostly as independent workers. In the 1570s, the viceroy Francisco de Toledo implemented the *mita*, a harsh labor system in which indigenous peasants from across the Andes were required to serve as mine workers through a rotating system. Although the *mita* was subject to much criticism from clergy and royal officials, the clearly lucrative labor system continued until Simón Bolívar abolished it in 1825.

The greatest strength of the book is that it vividly presents Potosí as a complex and heterogeneous society. Even as many indigenous men toiled in the dangerous mines and mills, other Indians were free workers or *kajchas* (ore thieves) who scavenged the mines for silver after all other workers had left. In addition, indigenous women played an essential role by selling clothes, food, and *chicha* (maize beer) at open-air markets. Similarly, Spanish-born women often became wealthy by outliving their husbands and inheriting their wealth. The city was also a great mixture of piety and vice. Befitting a mining town with a surplus of young men, Potosí had many taverns and cardplayers, and it was the site of serious violence between Basques and Andalusians in the 1620s. At the same time, the city also housed many churches and staged many religious processions.

Another strength of the book is that it examines the long and often neglected period of decline and rebirth after a major scandal involving miners and Royal Mint officials plunged Potosí into an economic crisis during the 1640s. Silver production eventually recovered and the city continued to host elaborate processions and public celebrations throughout the eighteenth century. One small weakness is that Lane is sometimes forced to cover too many issues too briefly in a text of fewer than 200 pages. However, as a succinct overview of the history of the legendary silver city this book is excellent. It is not only valuable for specialized scholars, but will also be accessible for undergraduate students in courses on Latin American and global history.

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