

Mexico City with great honour and acclaim. What makes don Francisco unique, however, is that he commissioned his own personal account of the war which Altman has employed to great effect. In a later chapter, Bret Blosser picks up later events in Nueva Galicia with his analysis of *flechero* (archer) service provided by the Mexica, Tarascans, Otomí and Huichol.

John Chuchiak provides a detailed study of Indian conquistadors in the Montejo expeditions of 1526 to 1550 in Honduras and Yucatán. Chuchiak points out that historians have all but ignored the indigenous participation in the Montejo campaigns, and he demonstrates through impressive archival documentation that their involvement was absolutely crucial. Without them, the conquest of Yucatán by the Montejos would have been impossible. These allied forces numbered in the thousands; Chuchiak estimates approximately 4,000 active combatants and as many as 9,000 serving as porters, servants and slaves. They were probably the most ethnically diverse of all the native allied armies in the wars of conquest in Mesoamerica. They were pressed into service from central Mexico (especially Xochimilco and Atzacapotzalco), the Gulf Coast region, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guatemala and El Salvador. Note the absence of troops from Tlaxcallan. This seems to be the only major war of conquest in Mesoamerica that did not involve Tlaxcalteca forces.

Matthew and Oudijk state in their conclusion to the volume that a major goal is 'to complicate the term "Indian conquistador". The Tlaxcalteca are without a doubt the most famous Mesoamerican allies of the Spanish' (p. 319). This book sets a new standard in making it absolutely clear that many other (shall we say, most if not all?) Mesoamerican groups voluntarily allied with the Spaniards at different times and places for their own purposes. Others were pressed into service against their will. If the editors and authors of this volume sought complication, they have achieved their goal. Many questions and issues remain, and this book charts many possible routes in the future historiography of the 'conquest of Mexico', a term that now seems too inclusive or altogether inaccurate when one takes the Indian conquistadors and their actions into full account.

The contributors to this book would agree that their recent research represents the beginning, not the culmination, of the historiographic trend to pay more attention to the Indian conquistadors. One important way to advance further will be to integrate the historical and archaeological data regarding contacts between Spanish and Indian conquistadors, a task not attempted or intended in the present work, but one that is clearly feasible.

*Vanderbilt University*

WILLIAM R. FOWLER

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Nora E. Jaffary, *Gender, Race and Religion in the Colonization of the Americas* (Aldershot, Hampshire, UK: Ashgate, 2007), pp. xii + 206, £55.00 hb.

A contribution to the rapidly expanding field of Atlantic studies, this collection of essays focuses on how women responded to and participated in the colonial experience, whether at the center or the periphery of empires. The editor's aim is to add a cultural, and more particularly, gendered dimension to the existing body of work on economic, political and demographic trends in the region. According to Jaffary, what the women examined in the volume have in common is that they were directly exposed to strategies employed by European powers to dominate their colonies. At that point their experiences diverge: some participated actively in the

colonisation project while others found themselves at the other end of the bargain, i.e. forced to respond.

The volume is organised into four sub-categories: frontiers, female religious, race mixing, and networks. In the part on frontiers, Metcalf deals with women as go-betweens in sixteenth century Brazil, finding such roles for women an 'exception, not the norm' (p. 28), while Erickson examines violence against European, Indian and mixed-race women on the frontier of New Spain. What stands out here is Ben Marsh's contribution on Georgian women in the early eighteenth century. It provides an excellent view of the 'elasticity' (p. 53) of women's experience on the frontier, or in other words how it could go both ways.

In the second part, on female religious, Broomhall details first how nuns in the Benedictine convent of Beaumont les-Tours took in a métis woman from Acadia, and eventually gave her the habit, their attitudes changing from calling her a 'savage' to accepting her as a nun of equal status. In the second essay, Bristol focuses on a woman from Guinea-Bissau who worked as a servant in a convent in Puebla, to be given the habit on her deathbed. While she was revered by local society for her piety, the author stresses that her *vida* only served to reinforce existing views on gender and *calidad*, by emphasising that she was unique amongst people of her rank. The final contribution, by Kathryn Burns, details how propertied, upwardly mobile Andeans who did not belong to the Inca lineage or the aristocracy in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, made a bid for 'decency' (p. 82) by founding and sending their daughters to *beaterios*, thus assuring a respectable reputation in colonial society.

In the third part, Jaffary shows how church authorities in Mexico shied from upholding Trent's regulations on consanguine marriage in a nod to the particular nature of the colonial situation, while Fabella explores the image of mulatto women in colonial Saint Domingue, using a proposal for social reforms published in 1776. She shows how the *mulâtresse*, a free woman of mixed background and uncertain rank, was considered a potential threat to the stability of colonial society. And Fleming provides a fascinating account of the fluid lives of métis women on Mackinac Island in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries whose practice of marrying incoming French, British and American men created a mixed antebellum society in which these women often found space to assert themselves while retaining their native traditions in dress and daily activities.

The final category on female networks contains two contributions: Van Deusen shows how spiritually inclined women in seventeenth century Lima established connections regardless of race or class, thus challenging modern notions of 'place and space as sources of belonging' (p. 150). And Rupert does much the same in her exploration of women's participation in inter-imperial trade networks between Curaçao and mainland Spanish America.

Patricia Seed draws together the book's various themes into a synthesis on women on the Atlantic, contrasting the acceptance of the mixed-race offspring of colonisation in Brazil and the French colonies with higher barriers in Spanish America, and virtual rejection in Anglo-American society. She also contrasts the opportunities for laywomen of European and mixed ancestry to participate in trade with greater restrictions on mixed native-European women to advance socially within Iberian convents.

Seed's key word for women in the Atlantic world is 'disjointed' (p. 171) which indeed might, in spite of this collection's many strengths, be used to describe this

volume. Only three of eleven contributions deal with North America or Europe leaving the reader with a bland image of the 'Atlantic World.' And while the book's undoubted value lies in how many of the essays examine individual cases – all fascinating – thus pulling the reader in close to local realities, the authors' treatment is often rather heavy, and focuses on bringing the stories of individuals in line with current views on gender and ethnicity in the colonies. When, for example, the nuns of Puebla admit that their 'nature' led them to mistreat a black servant famed for holiness, the author prefers to conclude that rigid attitudes prevailed with regard to the 'impossibility of black piety' (p. 79). Given the evidence set forth by these essays, the reader might emerge with stronger impressions if the editor and many of the contributors had been more forthcoming with regard to what Marsh terms the 'elasticity' of colonial society. It is a given that colonial societies would be obsessed with reinforcing rigid hierarchies of race, class and gender. What took place beneath that shell is the interesting part. Nevertheless, this is a strong book in that it draws together stories of women's lives in different corners of the European empires. It should be of great value to both students and scholars of the Atlantic world alike.

*Brooklyn, New York*

ELLEN GUNNARSDOTTIR

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Víctor Peralta Ruiz, *Patrones, clients y amigos: El poder burocrático indiano en la España del siglo XVIII* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2006), pp. 289, pb.

In this interesting and useful, if not unproblematic, book Víctor Peralta Ruiz sets out to define and explore the relationships of patronage and friendship which underpinned Spanish national and imperial government during the eighteenth century. In a striking phrase, *ancien régime* governments are described as 'fields of clientelistic force' exerted by (vertical) patron-client and (horizontal) friendship relations (p. 19). The main focus of the book is on the Ministry of Indies and Marine (*Secretaría de Indias y Marina*), and the work aims to go beyond traditional studies of ministerial notables, to look at their relations with their teams of officials and with other major offices and institutions, both in Spain and America. A second, equally novel, theme is the central role of written texts in creating ties of obligation between actors in bureaucratic networks, which Peralta Ruiz argues operated alongside the better-known links of family, place of origin, or marriage.

The first substantive chapter consists of an expert essay on the Ministry of Indies and Marine from its origins in the 1710s to its abolition in 1790. Peralta Ruiz skillfully surveys the historiography of the topic, before making his own contribution through analysis of the relations of the Ministry with the *Consejo de Indias*, *Casa de Contratación*, and *Consulado de Cádiz* in Spain, and also with the viceroys and major *consulados* in America.

The remaining five chapters then present case studies of how relations of patronage and friendship actually developed (or failed to develop) and how the production of written texts facilitated this process. Two chapters are devoted to individuals now known mainly for their books and tracts, while two concern figures of real power within Bourbon government. In the former category stands Dionisio de Alsedo y Herrera, who was Governor of Quito and Panama for some fourteen years between 1728 and 1749, but is probably best known for a series of wide-ranging papers on American problems and affairs, several with a commercial bent.