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Robert W. Patch, Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1648-1812

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Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1648-1812. By Robert W. Patch. (Stanford: Stanford University Press 1994. 329 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.50 cloth.)

One must commend the author for his comprehensive and systematic search of archival sources. Going beyond the obvious repositories such as the AGN and AGI, careful examination was made of strictly local and notarial collections (with the exception of the Spanish provincial repositories) rarely

used by the scholarly investigator. (For a sample of Yucatan documents in the mentioned repositories see Lawrence H. Feldman, "Hunting for Hispanic American Manuscripts in Spain," part 2, "America Documented in Spanish Provincial Archives, A Manuscript Sample for Central America," in *Discovery in the Archives of Spain and Portugal, Quincentenary Essays, 1492-1992*, ed. Lawrence J. McCrank [New York: Haworth Press, 1993], 521-40.)

In view of the discussion of the changes in northern Yucatan's organization during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the uniqueness of the uniformity of economic specializations found in this area should be pointed out. Excluding Champoton and Campeche, in the 1549-1551 assessments every town paid in fowl, *mantas*, honey, and wax (Alonso Cerrato, et al., 1549-1551, "Tasaciones de los naturales de las provincias de Guathemala," AGI, Guatemala, 128, fols. 307-396v.) With the notable exception of the region around Panuco, where the type of payment was similar to northern Yucatan, this means of compensation was very different from the rest of mid-sixteenth-century Mesoamerica.

Regardless, that in most areas every town, or cluster of immediately adjacent towns had their own specialties, in northern Yucatan what every community paid was identical to every other community. Only the amounts varied and often not by very much. Northern Yucatan was not just regionally different from the rest of Mesoamerica, as Patch argues, with regard to economic specialization it was radically distinct.

In terms of mobilization, colonial northern Yucatan was similar to other areas. Yucatan's colonial villagers like those from the rest of Mesoamerica, were extremely mobile. Non-native Indians residing in nineteen of twenty-two villages surveyed, plus outsiders, accounted for 17.2 percent of the adult Indians in five parishes. Patterns of distribution in eighteenth-century Guatemala as in Yucatan demonstrate that kinship ties were significant in determining where non-native Indians settled outside of their parish. (See Lawrence H. Feldman, Robert E. Brown, and Susan Garzon, "Alien Spouses in Eighteenth Century Guatemala, Implications for Language Change and Distribution," *Anthropological Linguistics* 29 [1987]:409-24.) The medieval image of a serf bound to the land was quite remote from reality in colonial society.

Despite the author's detailed research there is a problem with one statement. Ursua is said to have "used repartimiento profits to buy the title of Count of Lizarraga." Is this really what the documents support? Published works claim that he was named "Count Lizárraga-Vengoa, Conqueror, Perpetual Governor, and Captain General of the Itzá provinces" because of victory over the Indians of the Peten (Juan de Villagutierre Soto-Mayor, *History of the Conquest of the Province of the Itza* [Culver City: Labyrinthos Press, 1983], 400).

Nevertheless, this book is very comprehensive in its treatment of the interaction of Maya and Spaniard in northern Yucatan during 1648-1812. Those who have worked with eighteenth-century Hispanic administrative documents, or are familiar with their endless compilations and tabulations of data, will find it very gratifying to see many pages of this data analyzed and published, as in the tables on agricultural production. This type of study not only supports the conclusions of the author but also allows for systematic comparison with other contemporary parts of Central America.

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