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Robinson A. Herrera, Natives, Europeans, and Africans in Sixteenth-Century Santiago de Guatemala

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El temor de la Corona española se concretó cuando descubrieron que los franceses habían construido un fuerte en la costa de Texas, lo que llevó a acelerar el poblamiento y abrir un camino desde Monclova. En Yucatán, la preocupación era que los ingleses establecidos en Belice apoyaran una rebelión indígena contra los españoles y éstos no pudieran repelarla por la falta de caminos hacia Guatemala y el resto del virreinato.

Una deficiencia del texto es que la autora no ubica al lector al inicio del mismo sobre las características del entorno ecológico, algo que no expone hasta el cuarto capítulo. Es fundamental conocerlo desde el principio para comprender la continua movilidad hacia el territorio de refugio, principal estrategia de resistencia maya hacia la cultura occidental.

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Natives, Europeans, and Africans in Sixteenth-Century Santiago de Guatemala. By Robinson A. Herrera. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003. x + 261 pp. Maps, tables, notes, glossary, bibliography, index. \$50.00 cloth.)

Robinson A. Herrera presents a socio-economic history of an emerging market-driven colonial economy in and around modern-day Antigua, Guatemala, in which he concentrates on the structure and function of period commerce. Against this backdrop, Herrera brings forth the day-to-day contributions of fringe groups within that environment, examining how they coped in a fledgling system that would serve as a model for other Spanish territories.

The majority of the work recreates with vivid detail the active commercial area Santiago became for the region during the expansive economic period (1538-1594) ushered in by its export of cacao and indigo. Santiago, not being exempt from the dynamics affecting the rest of colonial Latin America, thus serves as an intriguing foundation for examining the social, economic, and political interplay among Spaniards, other Europeans, women, natives, and lower-level functionaries (muleteers and petty dealers, for instance), all within the confines of a burgeoning business world.

Herrera, arguing that history, in part, serves as a means to uncover lives "buried in obscurity and covered by a layer of misunderstanding" (p. 1), builds upon and enriches his discussion of exchanges (concentrating on the roles of credit, politicking, trade, land ownership, economic performance, and networking) by including stories from the non-elite. This not only adds depth to one's understanding of the piecing together of colonial society, but richly illustrates the complicated nature of non-elite participation in and contribution

to this vital region, as well as, one can rationally assume, other geographic areas of colonial territory.

The author successfully sheds detailed light on a secondary region typically overlooked in favor of stalwarts such as Mexico or Peru, and he takes great pains to promote his inclusion of neglected populaces (Blacks—free as well as slave—non-Guatemalan indigenous peoples, and the common man). He argues that this popular approach has recently taken off as scholars look beyond purely "institutional" histories. Herrera thus weaves private accounts into the text as a means to recreate the genuine complexity of the social situation and demonstrate how personal trials and tribulations of "nonencomendero and nonecclesiastical populations" (p. 13) evolved. Such an examination of the sixteenth century clearly fills an academic void, but, unfortunately, his endeavor to specifically develop empathy for the characters he includes falls short, and his primary content focus on Blacks and indigenous populations is relegated to the final three chapters.

Even so, the author accomplishes the difficult tasks of bringing life and energy to his story, and of creating a wonderful scholarly contribution, through his exhaustive mining of primary sources, including library and archival material, institutional documents, along with testimonials, notary papers, and work contracts, never before included. Readers will find the introductory historiography useful and, while not extensive, comprehensive enough to place the book in its proper context. This work also benefits from Herrera's fluid and mostly succinct writing style (some sections fall prey to brief repetition), as well as the work's well-organized structure.

This well-written book not only illuminates how a typically unnoticed colonial capital played a vibrant role in shaping regional commercial activity, but also provides insightful detail into the daily lives of non-elites who actively, and successfully, participated in making places for themselves within the networks of a complex colonial system. Giving personality to a period long vanished is difficult, but Robinson Herrera succeeds in this endeavor.

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El precio de un marido: el significado de la dote matrimonial en el Nuevo Reino de Granada. Pamplona, 1570-1650. Por Jorge Augusto Gamboa M. (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, 2003. 248 págs. Ilustraciones, notas, gráficos, cuadros, bibliografía. Precio no disponible.)

As Jorge Augusto Gamboa acknowledges, dowries played an extremely limited role in marriage patterns in this small community in northeastern Colombia on the border with Venezuela; only 142 were given during the town's 80 most prosperous years and almost entirely within the