

ENCOUNTERING PEOPLE,  
CREATING TEXTS:  
Cultural Studies of the Encounter and Beyond\*

*Susan Kellogg*  
*University of Houston*

*THE CONQUEST OF AMERICA: THE QUESTION OF THE OTHER.* By Tzvetan Todorov, foreword by Anthony Pagden, trans. by Richard Howard. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999. Pp. 274. \$19.95 paper.)

*OF THINGS OF THE INDIES: ESSAYS OLD AND NEW IN EARLY LATIN AMERICAN HISTORY.* By James Lockhart. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999. Pp. 397. \$70.00 cloth.)

*GRAMMAR OF THE MEXICAN LANGUAGE WITH AN EXPLANATION OF ITS ADVERBS.* By Horacio Carocho, S.J.; translated and edited by James Lockhart. (Stanford: Stanford University Press and University of California at Los Angeles, Latin American Center Publications, vol. 89, [1645] 2001. Pp. 516. \$65.00 cloth.)

*VICTORS AND VANQUISHED: SPANISH AND NAHUA VIEWS OF THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO.* Edited by Stuart B. Schwartz. Bedford Series in History and Art. (Boston and N.Y.: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Pp. 271. \$35.00 cloth.)

*SAHAGUN AND THE TRANSITION TO MODERNITY.* By Walden Browne. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000. Pp. 260. \$39.95 cloth.)

*WRITING VIOLENCE ON THE NORTHERN FRONTIER: THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY NEW MEXICO AND FLORIDA AND THE LEGACY OF CONQUEST.* By José Rabasa. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000. Pp. 359. \$64.95 cloth, \$21.95 paper.)

*AN ACCOUNT OF THE ANTIQUITIES OF THE INDIANS.* By Ramón Pané; introduction, notes, and appendixes by José Juan Arrom; translated by Susan C. Griswold. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999. Pp. 73. \$13.95 cloth.)

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- FROM VIRACOCOA TO THE VIRGIN OF COPACABANA: REPRESENTATION OF THE SACRED AT LAKE TITICACA.* By Verónica Salles-Reese. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997. Pp. 208. \$13.95 paper.)
- UNREQUITED CONQUESTS: LOVE AND EMPIRE IN THE COLONIAL AMERICAS.* By Roland Greene. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999. Pp. 289. \$47.00 cloth, \$18.00 paper.)
- FROM MOON GODDESSES TO VIRGINS: THE COLONIZATION OF YUCATECAN MAYA SEXUAL DESIRE.* By Pete Herman Sigal. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000. Pp. 320. \$45.00 cloth, \$19.95 paper.)
- TRANSATLANTIC TIES IN THE SPANISH EMPIRE: BRIHUEGA, SPAIN, AND PUEBLA, MEXICO, 1560–1620.* By Ida Altman. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000. Pp. 254. \$46.00 cloth.)
- ÉPOCA TEMPRANA DE LEÓN VIEJO: UNA HISTORIA DE LA PRIMERA CAPITAL DE NICARAGUA.* By Patrick S. Werner. (Managua: Asdi and Instituto Nicaragüense de Cultura, 2000. Pp. 177.)
- NATIVE RESISTANCE AND THE PAX COLONIAL IN NEW SPAIN.* Edited by Susan Schroeder. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998. Pp. 200. \$50.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper.)
- TIME, HISTORY, AND BELIEF IN AZTEC AND COLONIAL MEXICO.* By Ross Hassig. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001. Pp. 220. \$40.00 cloth, \$18.95 paper.)
- THE MIXTECS OF COLONIAL OAXACA: ÑUDZAHUI HISTORY, SIXTEENTH THROUGH EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES.* By Kevin Terraciano. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. Pp. 514. \$65.00 cloth.)

The historiography of the encounter between Europeans and indigenous peoples, subsequent conquests, and the early colonial period is an impossibly huge one.<sup>1</sup> There are, however, dominant interpretations within this literature, shaped by a small number of paradigms. While these paradigms (material, social, and cultural) were not wholly linear in their chronological development, they have waxed, waned, and interpenetrated. It is nonetheless the case that recent literature in this area, as exemplified by many of the works under review here, has largely turned away from the social history focus that dominated from the 1960s on, towards a cultural focus that privileges textual analysis across the variety of disciplines contributing to this area of study.<sup>2</sup> This cultural

1. James Axtell discusses the massive English-language literature in his review essay "Columbian Encounters, 1992–1995," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd Ser., 52, no. 4 (1995): 649–96.

2. A recent work that reemphasizes material factors as critical in explaining European expansionism is Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (N.Y.: W.W. Norton, 1997). Also see Warwick Bray, ed., *The Meeting of Two Worlds: Europe and the*

focus represents neither a single interpretation, methodology, nor type of source. But a theme that unifies recent cultural approaches is that many of its practitioners tend to invert Clifford Geertz's culture-as-text approach, adopting a text-as-culture approach, with texts often treated as the virtual equivalent of a culture or worldview.<sup>3</sup>

Two scholars whose work contributed powerfully toward this move away from the social towards the cultural and the linguistic but who could scarcely share less in common in their approaches to these topics, James Lockhart and Tzvetan Todorov, have books under review here. I try in this essay to trace some of the connections between their scholarship and those of followers and students working in a variety of disciplines (among them history, anthropology, ethnohistory, and literature), upon whom their influence has been keenly felt.

Todorov's influential work, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, first published in French in 1982 and English in 1984, was republished by the University of Oklahoma Press in 1999, with a brief new foreword by Anthony Pagden.<sup>4</sup> Todorov's work seems less

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Americas, 1492–1650 (Oxford: The British Academy and Oxford University Press, 1993). Useful critiques of Diamond's and other similar arguments may be found in George Raudzens, ed., *Technology, Disease and Colonial Conquests, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries: Essays Reappraising the Guns and Germs Theories* (Leiden: Brill Press, 2001). Benjamin Keen commented on studies of the Encounter and Conquest using social history approaches in his essay, "Recent Writing on the Spanish Conquest," *Latin American Research Review* 20, no. 2 (1985): 161–71. Overviews of social history approaches include Keen, "Main Currents in United States Writings on Colonial Spanish America, 1884–1984," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 65, no. 4 (1985): 657–82; John Kicza, "The Social and Ethnic Historiography of Colonial Latin America: The Last Twenty Years," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 45, no. 3 (1985): 453–88; and William B. Taylor, "Between Global Process and Local Knowledge: An Inquiry into Early Latin American Social History, 1500–1900," in Olivier Zunz, ed., *Reliving the Past: The Worlds of Social History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 115–189. Susan Deans-Smith earlier engaged the transition from social to cultural analyses in works of colonial Mexican history in "Culture, Power, and Society in Colonial Mexico," *Latin American Research Review* 33, no. 1 (1998): 257–77.

3. William Roseberry's essay, "Balinese Cockfights and the Seduction of Anthropology," in his *Anthropologies and Histories: Essays in Culture, History, and Political Economy* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 20–25, remains the clearest critique of Geertz's approach to culture, its products and patterns. For further discussion of the text-as-culture approach in colonial Latin American history, see Eric Van Young, "The New Cultural History Comes to Old Mexico," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 79, no. 2 (1999): 224–36. Two essays I found helpful in thinking about the transition from social to cultural approaches in recent history writing are Patricia Seed's "Poststructuralism in Postcolonial History," *The Maryland Historian* 24, no. 1 (1993): 9–28; and William Sewell's "Whatever Happened to the 'Social' in Social History?" in *Schools of Thought: Twenty-Five Years of Interpretive Social Science*, eds., Joan W. Scott and Debra Keates (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

4. See also *La conquete de l'Amérique: la question de l'autre* (Paris: Seuil, 1982) and Tzvetan Todorov's *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans., Richard Howard (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1984).

controversial now, his avowed goal of writing an “exemplary history” less singular (overcome by the wave of quincentennial and post-quincentennial literature assessing the morality of European actions in the Americas), his questioning of material explanations for Spanish success less bold, and his descriptions of the “other” more ethnocentric. Todorov’s clear explanation of how Spaniards moved through stages of knowledge and knowledge-production that paralleled the stages of Encounter, Conquest, and colonization remains powerful reading. His insightful discussions of the writings of Las Casas, Durán, and Sahagún retain value as well. Todorov’s sensitive discussion of Diego Durán as an ambiguous, hybrid figure, who—obsessed as he grew with rooting out syncretism—provides us with perhaps the closest description of Nahua rituals and beliefs that any Spaniard was capable of writing, remains a model of the insights that literary scholarship can offer to historians. Todorov also provided a model, though not the only one, of how literary scholars might undertake more historiographically relevant interdisciplinary scholarship.<sup>5</sup>

In his rich and rewarding volume of essays, *Of Things of the Indies: Essays Old and New in Early Latin American History*, Lockhart reveals in the more autobiographical of the essays the influences—personal, educational, philosophical—that shaped his deeply interdisciplinary, empirical, almost anti-theoretical approach to the study of early Latin American social and cultural history. His practically super-human powers of concentration and levels of energy can be perceived. What also leaps out reading these essays, which span a thirty-year period of his career (most of the essays having been published previously, with some revised), is that the theme of cultural continuities, a major point in his prize-winning 1992 work *The Nahuas after the Conquest*, was present in his earliest work, represented here by the essay “Encomienda and Hacienda” but visible as well in his pathbreaking work of social history *Spanish Peru, 1532–1560*, published in 1968.<sup>6</sup>

Lockhart’s turn toward Nahuatl-language texts as the privileged sources for studying the *colonial* history of indigenous peoples differentiated him from scholars who had already undertaken important studies of native-language texts. For Nahuatl studies, this group would include, among others, Angel María Garibay K., Miguel León-Portilla,

5. For overviews of the form of literary analysis known as New Historicism, see for example, H. Aram Veeser, *The New Historicism* (N.Y.: Routledge, 1989) and Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000).

6. See James Lockhart, *Spanish Peru, 1532–1560: A Colonial Society* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968) and *The Nahuas after the Conquest: A Social and Cultural History of the Indians of Central Mexico, Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

and Luis Reyes García. Lockhart shaped a whole following generation of North American scholars, most of whom he personally trained, some of whom later began to branch out into other languages.<sup>7</sup> However, whether such texts offer the direct pathway into Nahua social structures and cultural beliefs remains a significant question because the contexts of document production and the varying purposes served by the immense array of colonial written materials Nahuas generated are not explored to the same degree as are issues of translation and language change.

Lockhart's commitment to teaching and his understanding of the need for serious students of ethnohistory to grapple with native-language texts is clear, not only in these essays, but in his translation of Horacio Carochi's 1645 text, *Arte de la lengua mexicana*. If other usable texts exist that students and interested scholars can use to undertake study of this challenging language,<sup>8</sup> Carochi's text, in combination with Lockhart's workbook, ranks among the most accessible and useful, especially for those working without the benefit of a linguist to explain intricacies of vowel length, verb tenses, and the complex matters of word formation and order.<sup>9</sup>

Stuart Schwartz's *Victors and Vanquished* represents a well put-together volume of texts designed to provide undergraduate students with up-to-date translations of both Spanish- and Nahuatl-language texts. The texts included cover the Encounter, the Spanish Conquest, and the immediate consequences of conquest as Nahuas responded to Spanish consolidation of their military victory. An advantage of this volume is the number of texts and voices represented, helping students to grasp the multiple perspectives Spaniards held. If multiple Nahua voices are less accessible in this volume, this is in part because fewer texts exist, but Schwartz's compilation makes an array of English translations available to North American students. Drawing on and updating *Broken Spears*, Miguel León-Portilla's classic collection of translated

7. For an overview of much of this work, see Matthew Restall, "A History of the New Philology and the New Philology in History," *Latin American Research Review* 38, no. 1 (2003): 113–134.

8. See, for example, Angel María Garibay K., *Llave del náhuatl: colección de trozos clásicos, con gramática y vocabulario, para utilidad de los principiantes*, rev. ed. (México: Porrúa, 1961); J. Richard Andrews, *Introduction to Classical Nahuatl* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975); Thelma D. Sullivan, *Compendio de la gramática náhuatl* (Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1976); and R. Joe Campbell and Frances Karttunen, *Foundation Course in Nahuatl Grammar*, 2 vols. (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, Austin, 1989).

9. James Lockhart, *Nahuatl as Written: Lessons in Older Written Nahuatl, with Copious Examples and Texts* (Stanford: Stanford University Press and University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Latin American Center Publications, vol. 88, 2001).

Nahuatl-language texts relating to the Conquest,<sup>10</sup> this well-illustrated work provides several texts that show Nahua responses to colonial rule and their creative adapting and re-shaping of oral and pictorial ways of recording history to the requirements of written texts. Readers can see how Nahua local leaders and scribes tried to situate individual communities and personages in the wider flow of events.

A truly in-depth analysis of the mind-set, purposes, and scholarly value of one of the major Spanish observers of the conversion effort and colonial project in mid- and late-sixteenth-century central Mexico can be found in Walden Browne's brief, but densely argued, *Sahagún and the Transition to Modernity*. Browne argues that recent studies of this important Franciscan missionary and translator have emphasized an almost heroic conception of Sahagún as the father of modern anthropological studies of New World indigenous peoples and have granted his Nahuatl texts an authenticity (as early colonial renderings of late pre-Hispanic cultural beliefs and practices) they do not deserve.<sup>11</sup> While Browne usefully reminds us that Sahagún was both a product of a medieval church belief system and caught "in a tug-of-war between medieval and modern ways of knowing" (10), the question of whether Sahagún is ultimately a medieval or modern scholar is less important than understanding the ways Sahagún constructed many of his major texts. He engaged in dialogues with Nahua informants, and Nahua scribes and translators played important roles in the production of texts. Far from a mere "brief concession to using the life-worldly experiences of Nahua informants" (208), Sahagún and his collaborators created an abundance of hybrid colonial texts that betray complex reworkings of indigenous and European concepts, values, and structures of thought and action. A contribution to the contemporary corpus of Sahagún studies, because the book carefully places Sahagún within early modern forms of knowledge and writing, Browne's Sahagún ultimately remains a resolutely Old World figure, more divorced from encountering the Other (to put it in Todorov's terms) than he actually was.

Another literary scholar who engages in the close reading of texts, but who is more interested in connections between early modern writers and contemporary popular and scholarly writings is José Rabasa, whose excellent book *Writing Violence on the Northern Frontier: The Historiography of Sixteenth-Century New Mexico and Florida and the Legacy of*

10. Miguel León Portilla, ed., *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*, rev. ed., trans. from Nahuatl into Spanish by Angel María Garibay K., trans. to English by Lysander Kemp (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992).

11. For example, many of the essays in J. Jorge de Alva, H.B. Nicholson, and Eloise Quiñones Keber, eds., *The Work of Bernardino de Sahagún: Pioneer Ethnographer of Sixteenth-Century Aztec Mexico* (Albany, N.Y.: Institute for Mesoamerican Studies, University at Albany, State University of New York, 1988) take this point of view.

*Conquest* takes up some of the moral and political questions raised by Todorov but engages them more deeply. Defining the meaning of “writing violence” as constituted by both “the representations of massacres, tortures, rapes, and other forms of material terror, as well as categories and concepts informing the representation of territories for conquest, the definition of Indian cultures as inferior, and the constitution of colonized subjectivities” (22), Rabasa examines conqueror and other early settler accounts, legal texts, along with works by literary critics and contemporary political figures, especially Rigoberta Menchú. From Cabeza de Vaca to Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo and lesser-known Spanish, English, and French texts about the colonization of Florida, Rabasa effectively shows how colonial writing, even that by writers long considered the most critical of Spanish excesses, played a role—however indirect—in the conquest and settlement of the northern parts of Spain’s empire. Such writing downplayed the violence of these activities and justified them, by representing forms of subordination and exploitation that would be used by the Spanish and other colonial powers worldwide. More wide-ranging than Todorov, especially in the way Rabasa emphasizes how ideologies enshrined in older texts can be linked to unstated assumptions in contemporary scholarship, Rabasa’s dense argument but reasonably accessible writing style offers an interpretation and critique from which historians and anthropologists interested in the period of contact and conquest can learn.

While books on the Encounter and early colonial period in Mesoamerica abound, both translations of texts and analyses of other areas offer important comparisons. Susan Griswold’s translation of Fray Ramón Pané’s *Account of the Antiquities of the Indies*, based on a 1988 Spanish-language edition prepared by José Juan Arrom, provides one example. This slim volume offers a very readable version of probably the first quasi-ethnographic account of an indigenous culture, describing Taino culture and religion. It includes creation stories, descriptions of Taino deities, ceremonial practices and practitioners, and an account of varying Taino reactions to the first attempts at introducing Christianity. Useful for courses in Caribbean history and studies, Arrom’s introductory discussion of the history of Pané’s text and its relationship to those of Columbus and Las Casas offers insights into the differing lives, perspectives, and problems of interpretation of the first chroniclers of the earliest Spanish endeavors, especially for undergraduates. Scholars may be frustrated by the failure to translate directly from the 1571 Italian translation of Pané’s no longer extant work (completed ca. 1498) into English.

Verónica Salles-Reese’s *From Viracocha to the Virgin of Copacabana: Representation of the Sacred at Lake Titicaca* takes up a different region, Lake Titicaca, which crosses the southeastern and western borders of

Peru and Bolivia. The author seeks to explain why the lake and region have occupied a continuous central place in Andean thought and discourse throughout the late pre-Hispanic and early colonial history. Salles-Reese examines how both indigenous groups and Spaniards portrayed the region's sacredness by investigating the three narrative cycles, pre-Inca, Inca, and Christian that describe and explain this sacredness (45). Recognizing that past oral traditions exist only in "'contaminated' versions that do not faithfully represent early Andean thinking," Salles-Reese uses extensive quotations to reconstruct a "master narrative" intended to capture key mythical elements that accounts for the sacred import of Lake Titicaca in each narrative cycle (45). Perhaps the most interesting section of the book is the fourth chapter on the Christian narrative cycle. This chapter highlights texts by two seventeenth-century creole Augustinian friars, Alonso Ramos Gavilán and Antonio de la Calancha, who not only emphasize the pre-Conquest origins of Andean Christianity but who see the virgin figure, in this case the Virgin of Copacabana, as a unique figure who unifies the pre-Hispanic past with the colonial present. But this unifying role was also played by the Virgin of Guadalupe in central Mexico, and thus is not unique to the southern Andes.<sup>12</sup> While not as accessibly written as Browne's or Rabasa's books, Andean religion specialists in either the pre-Hispanic or colonial periods will find the discussion of texts and the interpretation of myth cycles instructive about ways Andeans and Spaniards perceived transformative changes and related them to sacred places, deities, and concepts of social and moral order.

All of the books discussed thus far place a heavy emphasis on close readings of texts to explore themes of cultural destruction (Todorov, Browne, and Rabasa), cultural replacement (Pané and Salles-Reese), and cultural continuity (Lockhart and, perhaps, Schwartz). Yet other responses to the Encounter and the development of forms of colonial control occurred as well, including cultural creativity and resistance. Works placing a special emphasis on cultural creativity include those by Roland Green, Pete Sigal, and Ida Altman. Green's and Sigal's books, in particular, develop one of the most interesting strands of argumentation in Todorov's *The Conquest of America*: out of the clash of cultures, with its profound destructiveness of indigenous life, property, and cultural beliefs, paradoxically enough, came European feelings of admiration, even

12. Recent studies that have done much to amplify our understanding of the origins and impact of the Guadalupe phenomenon include Lisa Sousa, Stafford Poole, and James Lockhart, trans. and eds., *The Story of Guadalupe: Luis Laso de la Vega's "Huei tlamahuiçoltica" of 1649* (Stanford and Los Angeles: Stanford University Press and UCLA Latin American Center Publications, vol.84, 1998); and David A. Brading, *Mexican Phoenix: Our Lady of Guadalupe: Image and Tradition across Five Centuries* (Cambridge and N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

desire. Greene explores Todorov's metaphorical use of the term "love" (or, as Todorov defines it, "the understanding-that-kills," [127]) and deepens notions of love and desire in his *Unrequited Conquests: Love and Empire in the Colonial Americas*. An exemplary work of interdisciplinary scholarship, Greene's book examines Renaissance and Early Modern love poetry, in particular, the genre known as Petrarchism (a writing style "that idealizes women, renovates poetry and evokes the emotions of unrequited love," [5]), to argue that all forms of writing in western Europe had to adapt to expanding realities. Greene further argues that sixteenth-century poetry has social elements and that lyric poetry, Petrarchism especially, provided a discourse that articulates

colonial experience as a set of relations between individual standpoints, treats the frustrations as well as the ambitions of Europeans, and gives Americans the capacity to play out their role as unwilling (or at best deeply ambivalent) participants in another's enterprise. (4–6)

The author quite literally elucidates the relationship between poetics and politics in a series of chapters treating connections between major Encounter personages and events (for example, Columbus, the discovery of Brazil, the rivalry between England and Spain) and major poets and writers (for example, Philip Sidney and the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega).

Running through Greene's analysis of writers and events is his emphasis on how the themes of love and unrequital are repeatedly reproduced in writings and visual images. He sheds much light on the contradictory, even paradoxical, reactions conquerors and conquered had to each other. Their interactions set off waves of changing ideas and discourses among each group, leading eventually to hybrid discourses in which political ideas and aesthetic conventions undermined older paradigms and traditions. Demonstrating the depth and breadth of cultural changes, particularly among European writers, set off by the Encounter and Conquest periods, this challenging and well-written book should be of interest to a broad array of scholars interested in the sixteenth century.

While Pete Sigal's book *From Moon Goddesses to Virgins: The Colonization of Yucatecan Maya Sexual Desire* illustrates the development of hybridity in indigenous-language writings, more importantly, it takes the theme of love in a different direction by exploring pre- and post-Conquest Maya discourses on sexuality, power, religion, and gender. This highly original and theoretically sophisticated work relies primarily on Maya-language sources. In this feature of his book, Sigal follows his mentor (James Lockhart), though he eschews the highly empirical focus of both Lockhart and many of his students. Sigal is more influenced by queer theory and postcolonial studies. Drawing primarily on the Books of the Chilam Balam and the Ritual of the Bacabs, texts written by anonymous Maya noblemen during the colonial period, Sigal is

forced to reconstruct Maya thought about sexuality, deities, and power relations from sources written by elite males. The perspectives of women and commoner Maya, male or female, are not easily accessible and reconstructing behavior and social patterns is even more problematic. Sigal nonetheless succeeds in showing that concepts and images of desire and sexual intercourse infiltrated discourses about politics and religion in both the pre- and post-Conquest eras. The book makes clear that distinctively Maya ideas about gender, lineage, fertility, trans-sexuality, and their relationships to power survived well into the colonial period, even as Maya concepts were influenced and sometimes reshaped by a powerful crusading Catholicism that sought to regulate family life, gender relations, and sexual identity in new, more restrictive ways.

If Sigal represents one strand of Lockhart's influence, Ida Altman, also concerned with cultural creativity (though in yet another very different way), represents an alternative. Her book *Transatlantic Ties in the Spanish Empire: Brihuega, Spain, and Puebla, Mexico, 1560–1620* shows how Lockhart's earlier work (based on the collective biographical approach of prosopography) influenced a generation of social historians.<sup>13</sup> But this recent book also represents an extension of Altman's earlier work on emigration that focused on Spanish emigrants and their impact on the development of colonial society. In *Transatlantic Ties* Altman analyzes Spanish local society, in particular, the Castilian town of Brihuega, to understand the values, skills, and desires the *bricenses* brought with them and that helped them creatively shape the development of the place where most of them settled in colonial New Spain, the city of Puebla. Even though the documentation on Puebla, especially its notarial records, appears to be richer than for Brihuega, Altman does a fine job of teasing out economic activities and networks, economic and familial, of *bricenses* in the old and new worlds. Carefully examining different domains of community life on both sides of the Atlantic—economic, political, familial, religious, and social—Altman provides a detailed picture of life for emigrants and their descendants. She shows their economic successes (which outweighed their failures), the social networks that fostered emigration and settlement, and the rivalries and conflicts that sometimes grew out of the stress of migrating. Perhaps most interestingly of all, Altman argues that far from

13. Ida Altman's earlier volume *Emigrants and Society: Extremadura and America in the Sixteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) and John Kicza's *Colonial Entrepreneurs: Families and Business in Bourbon Mexico City* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983) are representative of such work, at least for Mexico. Relevant works of social history for other areas are cited in Kicza, "The Social and Ethnic Historiography" and Taylor, "Between Global Process and Local Knowledge."

being more representative as we might expect, Puebla's political institutions were less so than Brihuega's, because of the very close relationship between income and status on the one hand and office-holding in Puebla, on the other.

Patrick S. Werner's *Época temprana de León viejo: Una historia de la primera capital de Nicaragua* harkens back to the pre-1960s preoccupation with institutional history. It does so in a way that shares Altman's interest in the activities of Spaniards, in this case, the very early years of establishing colonial rule in Nicaragua. While the author's emphasis on finding the heroes and villains among Spanish conquerors and bureaucrats is antiquated, he provides useful information about the economic value of slavery in the region. He also traces the poisonous disputes among local Spaniards as they sought to maintain a place in the sixteenth-century social hierarchy and enrich themselves through their activities in the local economy, especially through the *encomienda* system, even as the indigenous population declined precipitously and earthquakes played havoc with indigenous and Spanish settlements.<sup>14</sup>

Another book reflecting the social history approach associated with Lockhart, but which places a greater emphasis on indigenous society and politics as key to understanding disruptions of the colonial social fabric, is the excellent volume, *Native Resistance and the Pax Colonial in New Spain*, edited by Susan Schroeder. It contains articles covering many different regions that show variable chronologies and patterns of rebellion. Authors include Susan Deeds, Ronald Spores, Kevin Gosner, Robert Patch, Christon I. Archer, and Murdo MacLeod, whose essay on violence as part of everyday life in colonial societies provides an important context for better understanding the place of riots and rebellions in a continuum of violent actions. If I emphasize the Archer article, it is because of his stress upon indigenous insurgents in the independence period, a still under-studied topic. The essay can be seen as adding to the literature on regional variations in political events and processes associated with the independence struggles in Mexico.<sup>15</sup>

14. His analysis is in some ways reminiscent of the more sophisticated study of New Spain's Second Audiencia found in Ethelia Ruíz Medrano, *Gobierno y sociedad en Nueva España: Segunda Audiencia y Antonio de Mendoza* (Zamora, Michoacán: El Colegio de Michoacán y Gobierno del Estado de Michoacán, 1991).

15. Relevant works include Brian Hamnett, *Roots of Insurgency: Mexican Regions, 1750–1824* (N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 1986); John Tutino, *From Insurrection to Revolution in Mexico: Social Bases of Agrarian Violence, 1750–1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Peter Guardino, *Peasants, Politics, and the Formation of Mexico's National State* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); and Eric Van Young, *The Other Rebellion: Popular Violence, Ideology, and the Mexican Struggle for Independence, 1810–1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001). Also see Friedrich Katz, ed., *Riot, Rebellion and Revolt: Rural Social Conflict in Mexico* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988);

However, Archer contributes a detailed picture of the socioeconomic structure of the Lake Chapala region, the military strengths of the Mezcala Island indigenous insurgents and corresponding weaknesses of Spanish responses, and the success of the insurgents in dictating the terms of their surrender. He argues that while the Mezcala Island rebels were not nationalists, they relied upon innovation in their military strategies and methods of communication and alliance-building to fight for “traditional goals and idealized village societies” (128).

Ross Hassig puts politics and innovation at the center of his most recent study, *Time, History, and Belief in Aztec and Colonial Mexico*. This revisionist work convincingly argues that a linear rather than a cyclical conceptualization structured Aztec notions of time that were manipulated for political and economic purposes. The Spanish Conquest led to the introduction of the Christian calendar and thereby undermined the calendrical uniformity introduced by the Aztecs. Folk practitioners emerged to replace the indigenous priesthood. These practitioners emphasized the “divinatory and astrological aspects” of indigenous time-keeping during the colonial period (141). Using an array of codices and other written and visual texts (and reconciling many inconsistencies among them), anthropologist Hassig also addresses the issue of ideological versus practical interpretations. He uses Mesoamerican ethnohistorical evidence to address this on-going anthropological controversy, arguing that ideology can never be the sole explanation for cultural beliefs and practices because these occur within specific contexts of power and political economy that shape everyday life.

Also much focused on everyday life and bringing together some of the themes of text-as-culture and social history approaches appearing in other works, Kevin Terraciano’s beautifully written, encyclopedic study, *The Mixtecs of Colonial Oaxaca: Ñudzahui History, Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries*, emphasizes analysis of Mixtec- (or Ñudzahui, as Terraciano prefers) language documents as the main source. Terraciano applies his analysis of the rich body of documentation he found to both the study of Ñudzahui writing and language as these developed from the early post-Conquest period through the late eighteenth century as well as to analyze Ñudzahui sociopolitical units and positions, the colonial economy of the Mixtec region, and Christianity’s impact in the region. While acknowledging Spanish power and cultural transformation, Terraciano emphasizes indigenous agency, local and individual variability in responses to Spanish rule, and points to continuities in social structure and religious belief that have lasted to the present-day

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and Leticia Reina, ed., *Las luchas populares en México en el siglo XIX* (Mexico: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS), 1983).

to highlight the theme of continuity more than others writing on colonial Oaxaca.<sup>16</sup>

Terraciano's most interesting chapter (ch. 9) addresses the question of ethnicity. First appearing in colonial, indigenous-language texts, with a clearly ethnic signification, the term "Ñudzahui" is still used today and represents "the operative term for 'Mixtec' among those who speak a Mixtecan language" (320). Terraciano observes that the ethnic consciousness revealed by the term does not appear among either Nahuas or Yucatec Maya, with both peoples found in places where language patterns were more uniform, especially among the Yucatec Maya. From this discussion of indigenous ethnicity, Terraciano turns to the topic of race. He observes that, ultimately, while the non-Ñudzahui population of the Mixteca was small throughout the colonial period and its Nahua, Zapotec, Spanish, African, and mixed-race components were never fully segregated from the Ñudzahui, ethnic and racial identities became reinforced, not weakened.

The books under review, variable as they are in subject matter and approach, demonstrate the continuing vitality of studies of the Encounter and the sixteenth century. Clearly, works emphasizing textual interpretation or translation of Spanish or native-language documents represent the current dominant mode of analysis. These studies have enlarged the canon of texts under scrutiny. Scholars such as Rabasa and Greene have interrogated the interrelationships among older and newer texts, carrying on Todorov's analysis of the interrelationship among culture, text, and power but in more nuanced ways. The analysis of a growing corpus of indigenous languages and documents used by scholars of the early colonial period has added immeasurably to more regionally and culturally sensitive understandings of patterns of change. Applying the concepts of love and desire to a period when domination, hatred, and war have seemed more important to the larger story of Conquest and its aftermath has shown that out of the encounters came not just discontinuity, disruption, and decline. Continuity, vitality, survival, regeneration, and hybridity emerged as well. Indeed, several of these studies show that human and cultural creativity became important outcomes of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century interactions almost as surely as did destructiveness, loss, and resistance.<sup>17</sup>

16. See the still essential works of John Chance, *Race and Class in Colonial Oaxaca* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978); *Conquest of the Sierra: Spaniards and Indians in Colonial Oaxaca* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989); and Ronald Spores, *The Mixtecs in Ancient and Colonial Times* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984). Spores' earlier work on Mixtecs in the pre-Hispanic period also retains importance. See *The Mixtec Kings and Their People* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967).

17. Also see Stuart B. Schwartz, "Denounced by Lévi-Strauss: CLAH Luncheon Address," *The Americas* 59, no. 1 (2002): 1–8.

Scholars of the Encounter and early colonial periods must remember that the textual focus can carry certain risks. These include a too-ready privileging of the words and ideologies of those who had the most skills in or access to literacy, assuming the transparency of the meaning of texts and discourses, and failing to recognize the complex, hybrid nature of even early texts (be they written by Europeans or others). The tools of textual analysis as applied to documents in European and non-European languages should be used not only to analyze the discourses of elites, including elites in indigenous communities, but also to show how “the constraints of power, culture, and biology” operated on fields of social action in which natives, newcomers, and peoples of mixed identities interacted in cooperation, competition, and conflict.<sup>18</sup>

18. Quote from Axtell, “Columbian Encounters,” 679. Also see Sewell, “Whatever Happened to the ‘Social,’” 215–16.