

RECENT BOOKS ON ETHNOHISTORY  
AND ETHNIC RELATIONS IN  
COLONIAL MEXICO

*John E. Kicza*

*Washington State University*

*WE PEOPLE HERE: NAHUATL ACCOUNTS OF THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO.*  
Edited and translated by James Lockhart. *Repertorium Columbianum*  
1. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993.  
Pp. 235. \$45.00 cloth.)

*HISTORY AND MYTHOLOGY OF THE AZTECS: THE CODEX CHIMALPOPOCA.*  
Translated by John Bierhorst. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992.  
Pp. 238. \$35.00 cloth.)

*"CODEX CHIMALPOPOCA": THE TEXT IN NAHUATL WITH A GLOSSARY AND  
GRAMMATICAL NOTES.* Edited by John Bierhorst. (Tucson: University of  
Arizona Press, 1992. Pp. 210. \$55.00 cloth.)

*THE BOOK OF TRIBUTES: EARLY-SIXTEENTH-CENTURY NAHUATL CEN-  
SUSES FROM MORELOS.* Edited and translated by S. L. Cline. (Los An-  
geles: UCLA Latin American Center, 1993. Pp. 313. \$18.95 paper.)

*XALISCO: LA VOZ DE UN PUEBLO EN EL SIGLO XVI.* Introduction by Thomas  
Calvo, translated by Eustaquio Celestino, Magdalena Gómez, Jean Meyer,  
and Ricardo Xochitemol. (Mexico City: Casa Chata, 1993. Pp. 213.)

*LAND AND POLITICS IN THE VALLEY OF MEXICO: A TWO THOUSAND YEAR  
PERSPECTIVE.* Edited by H. R. Harvey. (Albuquerque: University of New  
Mexico Press, 1991. Pp. 325. \$35.00 cloth.)

*EL FUEGO DE LA INOBEDIENCIA: AUTONOMIA Y REBELION INDIA EN EL  
OBISPADO DE OAXACA.* Edited by Héctor Díaz-Polanco. (Mexico City:  
Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología So-  
cial, 1992. Pp. 214. \$12.20 paper.)

*DOCUMENTOS SOBRE LAS REBELIONES INDIAS DE TEHUANTEPEC Y NE-  
XEPA (1660-1661).* Edited by Héctor Díaz-Polanco and Carlos Manzo.  
(Mexico City: CIESAS, Colección Miguel Othón de Mendizábal, 1992.  
Pp. 221. \$13.15 paper.)

*UTOPIAS INDIAS: MOVIMIENTOS SOCIORRELIGIOSOS EN MEXICO.* By  
Alicia M. Barabas. (Mexico City: Grijalbo, 1989. Pp. 302.)

*MAYA AND SPANIARD IN YUCATAN, 1648-1812.* By Robert W. Patch. (Stan-  
ford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993. Pp. 329. \$49.50 cloth.)

*BLACKS IN COLONIAL VERACRUZ: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT.* By Patrick J. Carroll. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991. Pp. 240. \$35.00 cloth.)

Of all the rich fields of study that the history of Mexico offers, none have superseded colonial ethnohistory over the long term in the steady distinction of its scholarship. The reasons for the high caliber of these writings are several. The native peoples of Mexico enjoyed a complex history—and one that was recorded to some degree—for many centuries before Europeans arrived on the scene. They are thus ancient societies whose traditions and trajectories can be examined and then compared with what transpired after the Spanish Conquest. Further, despite horrendous population decline, these peoples retained tremendous integrity and autonomy and showed considerable vigor and creativity in responding to the demands of the new regime. They have remained distinctive and proud of their ethnic heritages. The historical experience of indigenous Mexican cultures has been recognized as a salient one in the larger human record. Their resilience and sometimes heroic defense of their interests have attracted numerous scholars of considerable conceptual capacity who wish to understand how peoples can preserve these qualities under the onslaught of tremendous pressures for hundreds of years.

Another vital contribution to the enduring vibrancy of colonial Mexican ethnohistory has been the richness of the documentation on these societies. The codices and chronicles composed by native authors and schools of authors have long been acknowledged and utilized. The colonial administration also created a wealth of documentation on these communities and individuals, often for diverse purposes and from distinct points of view, thus allowing comparison of different perspectives. Finally, for the last twenty years, investigators trained in Nahuatl have been working with the local records that the indigenous societies living primarily in central Mexico generated to preserve their internal transactions, concepts of themselves, and interactions with external agencies.

The resiliency and adaptability of such societies as well as their variety of experiences have encouraged numerous respected scholars to explore aspects of native cultures and histories. Moreover, the diversity of the documentation has prevented the interplay among investigators from becoming sterile or bogged down in the same issues, as can happen when researchers have to rely on a static and undifferentiated set of records. In fact, despite the importance of the questions being probed, colonial Mexican ethnohistory has remained remarkably free from ongoing polemics or stagnant debates. If one threatens to cloud the environment, a fresh new study or even several have come along to revitalize the discussion and turn attention to more fruitful aspects.

James Lockhart began his career in the 1960s as perhaps the primary advocate of the social historical approach to colonial Spanish America. By the early 1970s, he had switched into Mexican ethnohistory and became a pioneer in what is now termed the “new philology,” which stresses the examination of changes in language patterns to decipher shifts in beliefs and patterns of organization and behavior. Lockhart and many students he has trained over the years have combed national and regional archives throughout Mexico and have unearthed a vast reservoir of locally generated Nahuatl documents composed by native people to record their activities and to articulate their individual and community beliefs. Over this period, Lockhart published a series of books, often in collaboration with linguists and anthropologists, analyzing the nature and pace of change in written Nahuatl in central Mexico as well as the concerns and doings of native persons and communities as reflected in their own written records.<sup>1</sup> In the past several years, Lockhart has brought out a book of interpretive essays and a masterful broad study of the response of the native peoples of central Mexico to the Spanish colonial presence and its demands.<sup>2</sup>

Lockhart’s latest publication, *We People Here: Nahuatl Accounts of the Conquest of Mexico*, is a compilation of Nahuatl texts (largely from well-known codices) about the actual course of Spanish conquest of the Aztec empire. Each text has Lockhart’s English-language translation on an adjacent page and extensive footnotes concerning issues of transcription and translation. The book begins with his valuable discussion of the texts and their views of the conquest. This work constitutes the first volume of the *Repertorium Columbianum*, a new series highlighting contemporaneous sources from the time of Columbus’s first voyage through the Spanish Conquest of Mexico some thirty years later. Two documents are reprinted in their entirety with accompanying translations: “Book Twelve of the Florentine Codex” and “Letter from the Council of Huejotzingo, 1560.” Extracts or fragments are provided (again with translations) from four other sixteenth-century Nahuatl sources: the Annals of

1. These publications include Arthur J. O. Anderson, Frances Berdan, and James Lockhart, *Beyond the Codices: The Nahua View of Colonial Mexico* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976); Frances Karttunen and James Lockhart, *Nahuatl in the Middle Years: Language Contact Phenomena in Texts of the Colonial Period* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976); Frances Karttunen and James Lockhart, *The Art of Nahuatl Speech: The Bancroft Dialogues* (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center, 1987); James Lockhart, Frances Berdan, and Arthur J. O. Anderson, *The Tlaxcalan Actas: A Compendium of the Records of the Cabildo of Tlaxcala (1545–1627)* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987).

2. James Lockhart, *Nahuas and Spaniards: Postconquest Central Mexican History and Philology* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press and UCLA Latin American Center, 1991); and Lockhart, *The Nahuas after the Conquest: A Social and Cultural History of the Indians of Central Mexico, Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1992).

Tlatelolco, the Codex Aubin, the Annals of Quauhtitlan, and the Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca.

Lockhart's introductory section complements recent books by Susan Gillespie and Ross Hassig that directly address the behavior of Mexican indigenous peoples during the Spanish Conquest and their perception of it at the time and in the following decades.<sup>3</sup> The diverse ethnic groups inhabiting central Mexico placed the conquest in distinctive contexts, stressing their own qualities and historical importance and generally highlighting or downplaying the Spanish victory as it seemed to affect each particular group. Hence the chronicles composed in Tenochtitlán and Tlatelolco portray the conquest as cataclysmic, while those written in locations farther removed from the Aztec imperial center treat it more as just another event in a long litany. All these accounts depict the Spaniards as a group whose actions were comprehensible in the context of traditional politics and warfare in central Mexico. They are not portrayed as alien invaders who amazed and confounded the indigenous societies. Indeed, the "otherness" of the Spanish is minimized in the native versions of the conquest. These new adversaries were instead understood as a previously unknown ethnic group organized into a province (*altepetl*) like the other peoples of central Mexico and sharing the same goals in diplomacy and warfare: domination and exaction of tribute.

Lockhart sides strongly with recent scholars who consider the omens prefiguring the coming of the Spaniards as postconquest devices inserted to explain the defeat in terms congruent with indigenous belief systems: "In my view they are the typical attempt of a vanquished group to explain, after the fact, what has happened, saying that the gods were against us, we should have seen what was coming, instead of evidence of fatalism and undue superstition on the part of the indigenous people who were actually living the experience. Note that there are eight of the omens, the canonical number of any set of things in the Nahuatl world. The inventor of an omen would surely not be content until there were eight of them. No other Nahuatl source mentions any such phenomena" (p. 17). Lockhart interprets the indigenous portrayal of Montezuma as a weak and indecisive leader as scapegoating and notes that capturing the headman to rule through him for as long as possible (rarely long at all) was an established practice among the Spaniards well before Cortés seized the Aztec emperor.

3. See Susan D. Gillespie, *The Aztec Kings: The Construction of Rulership in Mexica History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989), especially chapters 6 and 7; and Ross Hassig, *Mexico and the Spanish Conquest* (London and New York: Longman, 1994). Also directly relevant are two of Hassig's earlier books: *Aztec Warfare: Imperial Expansion and Political Control* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988); and *War and Society in Ancient Mesoamerica* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992). See also John E. Kicza, "A Comparison of Spanish and Indian Accounts of the Conquest of Mexico," in *Five Centuries of Mexican History*, edited by Virginia Guedea and Jaime E. Rodríguez O. (San Juan Mixcoac, Mexico: Instituto Mora and University of California, Irvine, 1992), 1:49–63.

The introductory section of *We People Here* concludes by discussing the genesis of each Nahuatl text included. Lockhart understandably devotes most attention and space to Book Twelve of the Florentine Codex, as befits its preeminence as a Nahuatl source on the Spanish Conquest. His translation of Book Twelve is in fact the central accomplishment in this volume. Employing a marvelously useful and revealing technique, Lockhart offers the Nahuatl version (composed by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún's aides in their own language with the oversight of their mentor) along with his own English translation on one page and Sahagún's Spanish version and Lockhart's translation of it on the facing page. In the classic 1955 translation of Book Twelve, Arthur Anderson and Charles Dibble utilized a formal, even antiquated British English (including such forms as "telleth," "stretcheth," and "mayest"), which was congruent with the literary style chosen for their version of the preceding eleven books.<sup>4</sup> Lockhart preferred a much more accessible "colloquial contemporary English" style for his translation.

All the Nahuatl documents in this collection reflect the ethnic particularism and preoccupation characteristic of the worldview of indigenous societies in central Mexico. Book Twelve and the Annals of Tlatelolco were composed by persons from that city, and both documents place as much or more importance on what transpired there and the activities of people of that ethnicity than on what happened in the imperial capital of Tenochtitlán, which abutted them on the island. This perspective is even more notable because both cities were inhabited by Mexica, and Tenochtitlán had supposedly incorporated Tlatelolco some forty years before the Spaniards arrived. One passage from the annals reveals the sharpness of this ethnic distinction: "Then all the Tenochca decamped. They took Huitzilopochtli [an image of their patron god] in their arms and brought him into Tlatelolco, establishing him at the *telpochcalli* [house for youths] in Amaxac. And they set up their ruler Quauhtemoctzin at Yacacolco, and at that time all the common people left their former al-tepetl of Tenochtitlan; on coming into Tlatelolco they stopped among our houses; then they settled down everywhere against the wall of our houses and on our roofs" (p. 261).

The final document in *We People Here*, a letter from the cabildo of Huejotzingo to the king in 1560, offers an outstanding example of Nahuatl oratory in letter form and the "micropatriotism" and special pleading that typified each ethnic province. The purpose of the letter, to protest a new tax, receives relatively little space. Most of the letter is filled with honorifics and rhetoric glorifying both the Spanish monarch and Huejotzingo and casting that province as especially receptive to Cortés's ex-

4. Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble, *Book Twelve: The Conquest of Mexico* (Santa Fe, N.M.: School of American Research, 1955).

pedition and the subsequent arrival of Franciscan friars and the Catholic faith. The letter also contrasts Huejotzingo's supposed contributions and support—and lack of later recognition and reward—with the allegedly lesser backing that Tlaxcala (Huejotzingo's neighboring province) bestowed on the Spaniards and the benefits it received. *We People Here* will reward Nahuatl scholars who wish to see how one of their own approaches crucial documents and will also interest the more general scholarly public wanting to absorb the latest findings on the conquest and what the native sources have to offer.

John Bierhorst has long been recognized for his expertise in American Indian literature and for his translation of Nahuatl writings, particularly the *Cantares mexicanos*.<sup>5</sup> He has prepared another high-quality scholarly translation of a major Nahuatl work, this time the Codex Chimalpopoca in a two-volume set. The first volume, *History and Mythology of the Aztecs: The Codex Chimalpopoca*, includes a short introduction and the English translation of the codex followed by a concordance to proper names and titles and a subject guide. The second volume, "*Codex Chimalpopoca*": *The Text in Nahuatl with a Glossary and Grammatical Notes*, features the author's transcription of the text and a detailed glossary of some one hundred pages.

The Codex Chimalpopoca consists of two unequal parts: the Annals of Cuauhtitlan composed in 1570, whose English translation runs to nearly one hundred and twenty pages, and the Legend of the Suns dated 1558, a mere twenty pages. The annals take the form of a traditional pre-Hispanic year count, with the anonymous author's listing of significant events or phenomena for each year. It digresses at intervals to include noble genealogies and tribute lists. The author commences the count with the year 635 A.D. and the teachings of the goddess Itzpapalotl. The codex relates a specific event, a ruler coming to power, as early as 687 A.D.) and speaks of the Cuauhtitlan Chichimecs arriving in the region in 691. An almost year-by-year litany of events in Cuauhtitlan history begins in 1240.

The chronicler also incorporated numerous major events occurring outside Cuauhtitlan into his chronology. The annals examine the life of Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl, here dated 817–895, and notes the departure of the Mexica from Aztlan in 1090 and their erection of Tenochtitlán in 1318. Another narrative considers the career of Nezahualcoyotl, the poet-king of Texcoco, in an extensive section on the Tepaneca wars. Although the writer never entirely stops focusing on Cuauhtitlan, its history by the 1400s is increasingly subordinated to that of the Mexica and their expand-

5. John Bierhorst, *Cantares Mexicanos: Songs of the Aztecs* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1985); and its companion volume, *A Nahuatl-English Dictionary and Concordance to the Cantares Mexicanos, with an Analytic Transcription and Grammatical Notes* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1985).

ing empire. The reigns of the individual Aztec emperors are also enumerated.

The Legend of the Suns consists of three substantial parts. The first relates in some detail the story of the five suns that span human existence. According to central Mexican lore, the world has been destroyed, or rather transformed, four times previously, with humanity being eliminated or taking on different forms on each occasion: eaten by jaguars the first time and subsequently turned into monkeys, changed into turkeys, and made into fish. Events such as the origin of the new fire ceremony and the discovery of corn are also described. The second section devotes itself to the mythic origins, life, and demise of the Toltec icon Ce Acatl. Its author ascribes all accomplishments to Ce Acatl and the downfall of the Toltecs to his successors. The final section offers a history of the Mexica that closely parallels the one ending the Annals of Cuauhtitlan. The Legend of the Suns seems to have little to do with the history of Cuauhtitlan in that it is fully oriented toward the Mexica and Tenochtitlán. In this somewhat divergent presentation, the origins and fate of the first four suns as well as the life and failings of the Toltec culture-hero Ce Acatl lead directly to the dynasty of the Mexica emperors.

S. L. Cline had already compiled a distinguished record of translation and analysis of early colonial Nahuatl (and Spanish) documentation before turning her attention to the early-sixteenth-century Nahuatl censuses from Morelos.<sup>6</sup> She examines house-by-house enumerations of the towns of Huitzillan and Quauhchichinollan, a significant segment of the earliest known set of documents in Nahuatl. The greater part of *The Book of Tributes* is devoted to Cline's transcription and translation of the censuses on facing pages. These records were composed in the mid-1530s or early 1540s during a dispute between Hernando Cortés and the monarchy over the number of native people under the conqueror's control. Of the probable six communities in greater Morelos where censuses were conducted, only the well-known community of Tepotzlan can be identified definitely, although the names of several others seem evident, including the two in the section studied by Cline.

Her lengthy but excellent introduction to *The Book of Tributes* begins by considering the provenance of the documents, their physical condition, and the efforts of scholars who previously analyzed segments of the collection, notably Pedro Carrasco.<sup>7</sup> After assessing the stylistic charac-

6. *The Testaments of Culhuacan*, edited by S. L. Cline and Miguel León-Portilla (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center, 1984); S. L. Cline, *Colonial Culhuacan, 1580–1600: A Social History of an Aztec Town* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986); and Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *The Conquest of New Spain, 1585 Revision*, translated by Howard F. Cline, edited with an introduction and notes by S. L. Cline (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1989).

7. See especially Pedro Carrasco, "Family Structure of Sixteenth-Century Tepotzlan," in

teristics of the censuses (such as the lack of Spanish loanwords), Cline examines systematically what the documents say about the political and social structure of Huitzillan and Quauhchichinollan.

Each province was ruled by a *tlatoani* and thus probably constituted an altepetl. Both rulers headed extended households of some twenty people, and each had already gained the Spanish title of *don* in the mere twenty years since the conquest.<sup>8</sup> One was married to a noblewoman, and both had multiple concubines. Nearly all commoners resided in separate households, generally headed by the senior male. Only one slave appears in the census of these two provinces, described as attached to the mother of a *tlatoani* and a helper with food preparation.

Marriage seems to have taken place in adolescence in most cases, but sometimes in late childhood. Some unmarried young adults are also noted. No unmarried person headed a household, and only rarely did widowed individuals. The latter commonly resided with married offspring and siblings. Widowers seemingly remarried rather soon after the demise of their partners. A substantial minority of residences sheltered nonrelated dependents who enjoyed a lesser status and did not stand to inherit property.

Both communities contained persons baptized into the Catholic faith, including both *tlatoanis* (but not everyone else in their residences). Overall, male children were the ones most likely to be baptized. Few Christian names were given to the baptized, although more to males than to females. Christian marriage was adopted much more slowly. The censuses reveal only one such instance. Neither of the baptized *tlatoani* had been wed in a church ceremony. Both were still living openly with concubines, several of whom had been baptized. Some commoners also maintained concubines. Evidence indicates that childbearing took place even outside of these recognized indigenous matings. A considerable variety of nuclear and joint household forms characterized the two communities and are well categorized by Cline.

These censuses also yield information on land-tenure and tribute-delivery patterns. New arrivals in the communities who had no land were exempt from tribute obligations. The documents also illuminate gender divisions of labor among the indigenous population, with men

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*Process and Pattern in Culture*, edited by Robert A. Manners (Chicago, Ill.: Aldine, 1964), 185–210; Carrasco, “La casa y la hacienda de un señor tlalhuica,” *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl* 10 (1972):225–44; and Carrasco, “The Joint Family in Ancient Mexico: The Case of Molotla,” in *Essays in Mexican Kinship*, edited by Hugo Nutini et al. (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976), 45–64.

8. For a comprehensive study focusing on the political structure of indigenous communities in an important region of colonial central Mexico and on the political and social attributes and behavior of their officeholders, see Robert S. Haskett, *Indigenous Rulers: An Ethnohistory of Town Government in Colonial Cuernavaca* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991).

cultivating fields and working in the Spanish colonial center of Cuernavaca and women concentrating on preparing food, spinning, and weaving, although they are occasionally mentioned as assisting men in the fields.

This documentation and Cline's superior discussion of it in *The Book of Tributes* constitute far more than just another discovery and description of Nahuatl records. Their detailed composition so early in the colonial period make them especially revealing. Historians are fortunate that a scholar of Cline's capacity has devoted so much time and care to masterfully presenting and analyzing these records.

Various localities even outside central Mexico have begun to yield Nahuatl documentation of some magnitude. Analyzing a find that reveals the degree of nucleation and cultural retention possible, Leslie Offutt has shown that in late-eighteenth-century Saltillo, the descendants of Tlaxcalans who settled in an outlying community in the sixteenth century were still composing their wills in Nahuatl.<sup>9</sup> In a fine piece of collaborative scholarship, Thomas Calvo and his associates Eustaquio Celestino, Magdalena Gómez, Jean Meyer, and Ricardo Xochitemol have transcribed and translated several pieces of late-sixteenth-century Nahuatl documentation from Xalisco, an indigenous community located south of Tepic in the modern state of Nayarit. These records were found in the Biblioteca Pública of the state of Jalisco.

Contributors to *Xalisco, la voz de un pueblo en el Siglo XVI* note that this community (an altepetl) was situated on the margins of Mesoamerica. Nahuatl was known there and used routinely by a small elite within the society (as late as 1572, the cacique don Cristóbal did not speak Nahuatl). These records were composed by members of this minority to argue certain causes before the directorship of the Franciscan monastery erected in the town and to preserve the community's treasury records, some of which are translated in this collection. The indigenous governors refer to themselves with the Spanish honorific "don."

The writers complain of the horrors of the *encomienda* as experienced by their people. They relate that, among other abuses, the *encomenderos* hanged four "chichimecs," worked hundreds of "macehuales" (commoners) in the maize fields without pay, forced the people to develop large fields of cotton and cacao for them, and sent a hundred men and women out to search for gold.

9. Leslie S. Offutt, "Levels of Acculturation as Suggested by San Esteban Testaments: A Comparison of Wills from the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl* 22 (1992):409–43. A transcription and translation of some of these testaments is provided in Eustaquio Celestino Solís, *El señorío de San Esteban del Saltillo: Voz y escritura nahuas, Siglos XVII y XVIII* (Saltillo: Archivo Municipal de Saltillo, 1991). A description of the collection is available in David Lorey, "Eighteenth-Century Nahuatl Documents from the Mexican North," *UCLA Historical Journal* 7 (1986):60–74.

An intriguing set of records arose from an investigation of the cacique, don Cristóbal, in 1572. A group of tribute collectors (*tequitlatos*) making accusations against him arranged for testimonies by six commoners. The witnesses declared that the cacique had required them to work on holidays and when sick and to perform very difficult tasks. The commoners continued that he had refused to learn Nahuatl (termed *mexicano* in the documents) and had never been to confession. They added that the cacique had declared that he had no respect for the Franciscan friars (who owned a couple of monasteries in the area) and openly associated with known practitioners of traditional witchcraft and sorcery.

In *Land and Politics in the Valley of Mexico: A Two Thousand Year Perspective*, editor H. R. Harvey presents a worthwhile set of essays on the history of indigenous peoples and agricultural practices in the Valley of Mexico in the pre-Hispanic and colonial periods. These essays were first presented at a symposium at the Forty-Fifth International Congress of Americanists in 1985. Although they deal with various topics and utilize different kinds of evidence, the contributions in the volume have a certain integrity as a compilation, particularly in their emphasis on specific local communities, institutions, practices, and indigenous sources within the valley. These vital case studies, like the ones in the collections edited by Pedro Carrasco and Johanna Broda in the 1970s,<sup>10</sup> demonstrate the volume and usefulness of extant documentation in analyzing local societies and practices in the indigenous world before and after the conquest and for appreciating the diversity persisting within the Aztec Empire. Such research enables scholars to comprehend the limited impact of the empire in many aspects of the lives of the peoples of central Mexico.

Eight of the twelve contributions to *Land and Politics in the Valley of Mexico* examine land-tenure patterns or the character of agricultural cultivation in various areas of the valley at different times. Two of these also reconsider important indigenous sources: the Oztoticpac Lands Map and the Techialoyan Codices. The remaining four essays cover aspects of political organization, ranging from the form and function of the *tecpan* to the territorial structure of the Aztec empire. All of the contributions reward a serious reading, but those by H. R. Harvey on the Oztoticpac Land Map and S. L. Cline on the estate of a cacique of Xochimilco in the seventeenth century may prove the most significant over the long term.

Another successful example of scholarly collaboration is the two-volume work compiled by a group led by Héctor Díaz-Polanco, which treats the indigenous rebellions in Tehuantepec and nearby Nexapa in 1660–1661. The first volume, *El fuego de la inobediencia: Autonomía y rebelión*

10. *Estratificación social en el Mesoamérica prehispánica*, edited by Pedro Carrasco, Johanna Broda et al. (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1976); and *Economía política e ideología en el México prehispánico*, edited by Pedro Carrasco and Johanna Broda (Mexico City: Nueva Imagen, 1978).

*india en el Obispado de Oaxaca*, consists of five interpretive essays. The second volume, *Documentos sobre las rebeliones indias de Tehuantepec y Nexepa (1660–1661)*, contains the main documents pertaining to the events, some from the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City but the more central ones from the Archivo General de Indias in Seville. The Tehuantepec rebellion (whose success inspired the revolt in Nexapa) was not a community uprising like those in eighteenth-century Mexico analyzed by William Taylor.<sup>11</sup> The Tehuantepec rebellion involved some two hundred communities in the region and maintained its autonomy from colonial officials for about a year. In these aspects, it resembles the large-scale native revolts that marked Mexican history in the decades following independence.<sup>12</sup> But the rebellion's focus on abuse of the *repartimiento comercial* by Spanish district officials rather than on issues of self-governance and land tenure is more similar to what scholars have found about uprisings in the colonial Andes than to the "expected" Mesoamerican pattern.<sup>13</sup> Unlike earlier uprisings in the region, however, the rebellion never became messianic in character, focusing consistently on abuses of the colonial system, as the natives perceived it, rather than on colonial domination itself.

Díaz-Polanco, Carlos Manzo, and their team found that these indigenous provinces were responding to relentlessly increasing demands for their products from local Spanish officials, who kept competing merchants out of their provinces and physically punished local caciques for deficiencies in the amount or quality of goods demanded, particularly regarding *mantas* (pieces of cloth). The rebels attacked selectively, killing only the individuals they wanted to eliminate (including a native collaborator in one case). After driving other non-natives from their regions, the rebels opened negotiations with higher colonial and ecclesiastical officials in Antequera and Mexico City. They sought a lightening of the demands placed on them and the end of arbitrary exactions and treatment by Spanish provincial officials.

11. William B. Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide, and Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1979).

12. For thoughtful analysis of some of these individual revolts and identification of broader patterns in rural insurrections in the course of Mexican history, see *Riot, Rebellion, and Revolution: Rural Social Conflict in Mexico*, edited by Friedrich Katz (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988). See also John Tutino's important interpretation in *From Insurrection to Revolution in Mexico: Social Bases of Agrarian Violence, 1750–1940* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986).

13. Alfredo Moreno Cebrián, *El corregidor de indios y la economía peruana en el Siglo XVIII (los repartos forzosos de mercancías)* (Madrid: Instituto "Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo," 1977); Jürgen Golte, *Repartos y rebeliones: Túpac Amaru y las contradicciones de la economía colonial* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1980); Scarlett O'Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions and Revolts in Eighteenth-Century Peru and Upper Peru* (Cologne: Bohlau Verlag, 1985); and *Resistance, Rebellion, and Consciousness in the Andean Peasant World, 18th to 20th Centuries*, edited by Steve J. Stern (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986).

These essays are also illuminating regarding the government's response. Various individuals and groups in the ecclesiastical and civil hierarchies presented their views and dispatched envoys to the rebel leaders. The outgoing viceroy declined to take action, leaving the problem to his successor. Initially, the Spanish government sought to negotiate and seemed to want a peaceful accord. But following a dispute among officials over what approach to take, the viceroy adopted a hard line and sent in an armed contingent, which encountered no resistance when the rebels in each community surrendered or scattered. Harsh punishments were imposed on captured leaders, including executions, dismemberment, whippings, forced labor in the mines, and internal exile; and the government never addressed the abuses that had engendered the revolts in the first place.

In *Utopías indias: Movimientos sociorreligiosos en México*, Alicia Barabas analyzes one subset of indigenous revolts, socioreligious protests, seeking to discover their shared characteristics and patterns by tracing these events throughout Mexican history to the present. She offers brief portraits of thirty such movements prior to the eighteenth century that she views as cases of ethnic resistance, ten others occurring during that century, and another nine following independence (she clusters the repeated Yaqui revolts in the national period into a single socioreligious movement). The revolts in each of the three time periods are attached to one of three regions: the Maya zone of Chiapas and the Yucatán Peninsula; Oaxaca and Guerrero; and the North of Mexico (the zone north of the agrarian frontier of Mesoamerica). Barabas does not believe that Mexico had indigenous millennialist movements of note, perhaps because she completed this work shortly before Serge Gruzinski's important study came out.<sup>14</sup> Each of her nine groupings of case studies is followed by several pages of commentary summarizing their larger patterns and tendencies. The level of analysis in these is not particularly illuminating, however, nor does it offer much of a fresh perspective.

Barabas devotes nearly the first hundred pages of *Utopías indias* to reviewing theoretical approaches to socioreligious movements and concepts of utopia by major Western thinkers. For her examples, she relies almost exclusively on other scholars' studies and published accounts contemporaneous with the individual disturbances. This approach hinders Barabas in conducting suitable comparisons because she does not possess similar information on all incidents. In fact, despite its value, *Utopías indias* suffers from a certain sociological reification of categories and issues that prevents the reader from appreciating the various dimensions of each example. But then, Barabas's object was to identify certain

14. Serge Gruzinski, *Man-Gods in the Mexican Highlands: Indian Power and Colonial Society, 1520-1800* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1989).

broad underlying patterns that she could place in a global context, a laudable goal but one that is not well achieved in this work.

The great advances made in Mayan colonial studies in the 1980s are extended into the current decade with the appearance of Robert Patch's portrait of the interplay between Mayas and Spaniards in the middle and late colonial period. While the first two chapters of *Maya and Spaniard in Yucatán, 1648–1812* are devoted to routine overviews of Mayan civilization before the conquest and during the first century of colonization, the third chapter offers a valuable systematic examination of Maya society in the seventeenth century. Patch emphasizes the demographic devastation caused by an epidemic of yellow fever and the enduring impact of a large array of independent indigenous societies inhabiting the southern part of the peninsula. Goods, influences, and people moved continually across this frontier, and this zone of freedom strongly affected the relationship between colonists and Mayas even in the region supposedly under firm Spanish control. Patch notes the limited impact achieved by *reducción* policies intended to consolidate indigenous groups, as shown by the traditional settlement patterns and tremendous movement among communities that continued to characterize Maya society. The concluding sections of the chapter offer a sensitive appraisal of the forms of land tenure among the Mayas and a consideration of the forced production of textiles imposed on natives by the Spaniards via the *repartimiento*. This discussion, although useful, overstates the extent to which local weavers were tied into the larger colonial and transoceanic economies.

Patch's consideration of Hispanic society and the economy in the subsequent chapter focuses on the rural sector, the *encomienda* and the *estancia* in particular, disregarding the character of colonial cities and their social and business worlds. Economic and demographic expansion in the eighteenth century led to the emergence of true haciendas and resultant tension between Spaniards and Indians over issues of land-ownership and labor recruitment and retention. In Patch's view, internal demand, not expanding trade, accounted for the vast part of this growth. This elaboration of the Yucatecan economy finally brought about the gradual demise of the *encomienda* and the *repartimiento*, which had persisted in this peripheral part of the empire far longer than in central areas. The remainder of *Maya and Spaniard in Yucatán* illustrates the underlying continuities in Maya social, political, and settlement patterns. The volume then turns to the great social and ethnic elaboration taking place in the Hispanic sector of the population, with the advent of mixed bloods or *castas* (including a number of recent arrivals of African descent, seemingly from the Caribbean) as well as far more extensive Hispanic encroachment into the hinterland.

Certain thematic discontinuities mar Patch's study. For instance, the merchants of Mérida, absent from his consideration of the seven-

teenth century, spring up suddenly as important actors in the eighteenth. Their appearance is doubly surprising because he attributes the rural transformation of the later period to internal developments, not to greater trade or integration into the larger colonial Mexican and Atlantic economic spheres. The reader is left wondering if such switches in focus reflect actual shifts in the late-colonial world or if the author was following certain threads of documentation through the archives and assumed that the lack of reference to a group or process meant that it was not present at all.

The field of Afro-Mexican history will benefit significantly from Patrick Carroll's multifaceted *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz: Race, Ethnicity, and Regional Development*. The Americas received millions of slaves from Africa, and Mexico drew some of them, despite the sophistication of its society and economy. New Spain enjoyed only a modicum of success in developing plantations of any sort. Jalapa and Córdoba, the two Veracruz municipalities at the center of Carroll's study, witnessed such efforts, as did the region that became the state of Morelos.<sup>15</sup> With the early appearance of substantial numbers of mestizos in this society, these mixed bloods largely filled the same interstitial occupations of transporter, shopkeeper, and labor foreman that people of African ancestry commonly performed in other parts of the Americas. Blacks nevertheless became an integral part of the urban Hispanic world in most parts of the Americas, and some entered Mexico, where they remained a small percentage of the population. Even in Veracruz, where some sugar plantations were established, the classification of "negro" applied to less than 5 percent of the population of Jalapa and less than 20 percent of that of Córdoba.

Several chapters of this brief book are devoted to the economic history of Veracruz and demographic changes among its indigenous peoples. Carroll seeks to correlate changing patterns in the numbers and roles of black slaves with such factors, but never too rigorously. *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz* is a useful study of the nature of labor institutions and land-tenure patterns in a peripheral sugar plantation zone, although the author never describes his work as such. Most sugar estates did not develop much because the market for their products rarely expanded beyond Mexico. Even the largest proved to be unstable. Further, the plantations in Veracruz often employed black slaves as skilled workers and foremen over labor gangs of native workers recruited from nearby com-

15. Carroll's book expands on a small but worthy corpus of earlier works focusing on this racial group: Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México, 1519–1810: Estudio etno-histórico* (Mexico City: Fuente Cultural, 1946); Ward Barrett, *The Sugar Hacienda of the Marqueses del Valle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1970); Cheryl English Martin, *Rural Society in Colonial Morelos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985); Adriana Naveda Chávez-Hita, *Esclavos negros en las haciendas azucareras de Córdoba, Veracruz, 1690–1830* (Jalapa: Universidad Veracruzana, 1987); and Colin Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570–1650* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976).

munities. The natives were hired in groups, rather than individually, for particular tasks or set periods and were then free to return to their communities. Thus in Veracruz, sugar plantations—in their underdeveloped form—looked a good deal like mature haciendas in central Mexico.

*Blacks in Colonial Veracruz* contains considerable information about changing labor, marriage, demographic, and cultural patterns among people of African ancestry, much of it organized into useful tables in the extensive appendices. Over decades, as modest importation from Africa declined, the demographic characteristics of the black population came to resemble that of other racial groups in the province. Many blacks were able to sustain healthy family lives and attain positions as craftsmen, transporters, and shopkeepers, sometimes keeping them in the family over generations. The common practice of manumission led to the emergence of a substantial free black community. Inter-marriage with other ethnic groups, although never common, also became more frequent over the years.

Other slaves exploited the ruggedness of the countryside and the moderate population density in the highlands of Veracruz to form long-lived outlaw gangs and maroon societies. At least one *palenque* (community of runaway slaves) endured over decades by escaping destruction from expeditions launched against it and was ultimately recognized and codified by the colonial government. In subsequent decades, its members married women from nearby native communities, and by the time of independence, the *palenque* was no longer ethnically distinct.

As these diverse and high-quality studies demonstrate, the freshness and richness of the field of colonial Mexican ethnic history are far from exhausted, as new issues, approaches, and even types of documentation keep coming to the fore. Previously unanticipated or poorly comprehended groups, categories, and dynamics are becoming defined and understood as scholars disaggregate the racial designations that earlier clouded our comprehension of the functional organization and interplay of these peoples. The excitement and achievement of this branch of history will not soon diminish because the books reviewed here are already being joined by yet others of importance. Their freshness and scope—and the new documentation that they bring to bear—promise that the field will retain its vitality far into the future.