can also accommodate heterogeneous projects for indigenous autonomy. Whether and to what extent indigenous movements in the region will be successful in forging a transition to such a postliberal citizenship regime remains an open question.

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Herrera, Robinson A. (2003). *Natives, Europeans, and Africans in Sixteenth-Century Santiago de Guatemala.* University of Texas Press (Austin), x + 261 pp. £38 hbk.

Social history in the regional context of Latin America, for the colonial period especially, has advanced considerably over the past three decades. Progress in the field may be attributed to the initiatives of several distinguished scholars, James Lockhart prominently among them. To his own significant contributions, begun in relation to Peru and blossoming to maturity when dealing with Mexico, we now have a substantive literature fashioned by students of Lockhart in the mould of their mentor but, very importantly, taking historical inquiry to places where he himself never ventured. Such is the case of Robinson A. Herrera and his elaborately wrought study of sixteenth-century Santiago de Guatemala, the present-day Antigua Guatemala.

Herrera seeks 'to resurrect the forgotten' (p. 182) and so embarks on reconstructing a lost world in which the lower ranks of society are paid attention to, not just the elite. He sets the scene, however, and structures his book chapter after chapter, by writing about the well-to-do before engaging with the common folk. He justifies his focus 'on the nonencomendero and nonecclesiastical populations of Santiago' not only because those who received Indian tribute and converted Indians to Christianity 'have received attention elsewhere' but also because 'too much has been made of their role in shaping Santiago's early society' (p. 13), a claim some would contest. By discussing 'all ethnic groups at length', Herrera's goal is to chart the emergence of Santiago, between 1538 and 1594, as 'an important commercial centre' for all Central America 'thanks to the contributions of its multiethnic and multicultural population' (p. 171).

Santiago, Herrera maintains, 'was built by commerce', its development 'made possible by the use of credit and debt' on account of 'a chronic lack of hard currency'. We learn in Chapters Two and Three of lucrative connections with Mexico, 'the largest single market for Central American cacao' (p. 38), in addition to 'a well-established trunk line' (p. 25) via Puerto de Caballos in Honduras to Seville. Discussion of inter-regional and international trade then gives way to an exposition, in Chapter Four, of petty trading activities, ones in which women, operating as small shopkeepers, played their part. Chapter Five is devoted to the industry of small farmers or labradores, men who hailed 'from the lowest groups of Spanish society' (p. 67). Together with muleteers, labradores 'made immeasurable contributions to the growth of Santiago'; the latter 'kept the city stocked with essential foodstuffs' while the former 'toiled on the commercial arteries, catering to necessity and indulgence alike' (p. 74). Artisans who produced 'nearly the full gamut of European crafts' (p. 75) receive priority treatment in Chapter Six. They prove to be a diverse lot that included, as Table One (p. 76)

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illustrates, tailors, cobblers, saddlers, tanners, blacksmiths, barbers who doubled as surgeons, butchers, bakers, painters and sculptors. Literate professionals in various guises – court clerks and other Crown officials, notaries and tutors – are dealt with in Chapter Seven. Their livelihoods were sustained by what Herrera terms 'the wealth of literacy' (p. 95).

Not until Chapters Eight, Nine, and Ten, which highlight, in turn, the importation and deployment of black slaves and their mulatto descendents, corporate entities native to Guatemala, and the exploitation of Indian labour, do we hear about the lives and circumstances of the masses responsible, by the sweat of their brow, for making the colonial enterprise tick. Though their appearance in Herrera's narrative is delayed, reading about them and all they did is well worth the wait, testimony to dogged archival investigation and creative flair in interpreting the silences encountered in the documents, not just the evidence unearthed. Tracking down his protagonists in archives in Guatemala and in Spain must have been, at times, a decidedly frustrating business, but Herrera's persistence and sense of purpose have paid off handsomely.

This book will find a deserved niche alongside the *magnum opus* of Murdo J. MacLeod, whose *Spanish Central America* (1973) is still without equal when it comes to painting the big picture, and the socio-demographic history of Santiago crafted so assiduously by Christopher H. Lutz (1994), which pertains to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries also. Herrera is to be congratulated for furnishing us with a welcome addition to our knowledge of a city that refused to die when struck, in 1773, by devastating earthquakes, as well as the far-flung region over which, as capital, it once presided.

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Butler, Matthew (2004) *Popular Piety and Political Identity in Mexico's Cristero Rebellion: Michoacán, 1927–1929*. Oxford University Press/British Academy (Oxford), v-251 pp. £40 hbk.

Between 1927 and 1929, tens of thousands of Mexican peasants in the centre-west states of Jalisco, Michoacán, Guanajuato, Zacatecas, and Colima took up arms, some as cristeros, in support of the Catholic Church and in opposition to the new revolutionary regime, and some as agraristas, beneficiaries of the revolutionary agrarian reform program who fought the cristeros alongside the federal army in support of the government. Mexico's cristero rebellion, or cristiada, was, as Matthew Butler notes, 'a cruel and protracted civil war between rival peasant contingents' (p. 3), and thus raises challenging questions about political identities and collective action. In this superb book, Butler 'seeks to explain why some people chose to participate in the cristero rebellion, while many others did not, and why others actively opposed it'. 'The main argument', he contends, 'is a simple one; that religion mattered as peasants negotiated a path between the conflicting agendas of Church and state, and that the popular antagonisms which attended the cristero revolt included genuine ideological, indeed religious, differences between the contending peasant factions' (p. 3).

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