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“Strange Lands and Different Peoples”: Spaniards and Indians in Colonial Guatemala by W. George Lovell and Christopher H. Lutz, with Wendy Kramer and William R. Swezey, and: Indians and the Political Economy of Colonial Central America, 1670-1810 by Robert W. Patch (review)

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mythology in the context of the codical studies to reveal parallels between Highland Mexican and Maya creation narratives, calendar rituals, and interpretations of celestial phenomena at the time of the Spanish conquest.

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“Strange Lands and Different Peoples”: *Spaniards and Indians in Colonial Guatemala*. By W. George Lovell and Christopher H. Lutz, with Wendy Kramer and William R. Swezey (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 2013) 339 pp. \$45.00

Indians and the Political Economy of Colonial Central America, 1670–1810. By Robert W. Patch (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 2013) 284 pp. \$36.95

The two books under review, written by experienced historians of Spanish colonial Central America, appear at first sight to be complementary. The work by Lovell, Lutz, et al., despite an excursion documenting Native American demographic recovery into the nineteenth century, deals primarily with the years from the Spanish invasion to the 1620s. The Patch book begins in 1670 and moves quickly to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (as is often the case in Central American historiography, the middle years of the seventeenth century receive little attention.)

Both books rely heavily on the archival collections of the Archive of the Indies, Seville, Spain, while ignoring completely all of the Central American archives (Patch) or using the main archive in Guatemala City sparingly (Lovell and Lutz cite only fifteen of its documents, several of them admittedly lengthy and difficult). The two books concentrate on Spanish and Indian economic relationships and use data and insights from biography, geography and land tenure/use, economics, statistics, and political theory.

In many ways, however, the two works diverge. Geographically, Lovell, Lutz, et al. confine themselves to the province of Guatemala, including today’s El Salvador, whereas Patch attempts to cover all of colonial Central America, though not so much Honduras and Costa Rica. Lovell, Lutz, et al. offer a history of early Spanish exploitation and Indian accommodation and resistance; Patch dwells on one Spanish and Indian relationship, the *repartimiento de efectos* or *mercancías*. This illegal but largely tolerated institution was a “putting out” system, often of thread and textiles, involving Indian women, as well as a forced collection of basic goods via the tribute tax or other means, for resale by Spanish regional officials at higher prices.

Lovell, Lutz, et al. concentrate on local history within Guatemala,

stressing, among other themes, the prolonged impact of colonial exploitive behaviors on the brutal, divisive history of the modern nation. Patch, influenced by the patterns of global interdependence described by Wallerstein and Frank, accepts some of the findings of Baskes and Ouweneel regarding Mexican colonial repartimientos (though with several reservations), plus recent work about the early worldwide influence of the Chinese trades via Manila with colonial Mexico.¹ Thus, he attempts to insert Indian production through the repartimiento system as one of the means “to integrate peasants into the wider colonial and world economy” (7; see also 4). His argument holds, indirectly at best, for such basic foodstuffs as maize, beans, jerky, fish, and cheeses and more directly for such exports as cacao, indigo, and Honduran silver, depending on their boom-and-bust cycles.

“*Strange Lands and Different Peoples*,” an *omnium gatherum* of the individual and joint writings of four authors, performs a great service by revising and publishing in one place a diverse and scattered corpus. This scholarship, with its welcome emphasis on Indian demographic history, should put to rest the debate about Indian population decline, especially before the 1580s, and the slow, interrupted recovery after about 1630. Admitting to some informed guesses and to gaps in the documentary record, the authors have amassed a mountain of evidence, apparently conclusive.

The early chapters offer an exhaustive account of the long, destructive, and chaotic conquest of Guatemala. Notable are a full description of the early Cakchiquel uprisings and a discussion of the activities and lasting effect of the rapacious, brutal Pedro de Alvarado. Subsequent chapters examine the reforms of Alfonso López de Cerrato and Diego García de Valverde, two leaders who came later. Although some readers may find the praise of these two men excessive, there can be no doubt about the thoroughness of the research.

Other subjects that receive the authors’ careful scrutiny are *congregación*, the forced resettlement of more dispersed native populations, and the various systems, including the *encomienda*, of forced labor. In this book, the authors present not only a revised condensation of their previous work but also new findings and analysis.

Patch’s book is certainly the most comprehensive analysis of the repartimiento system in Central American colonial history. It establishes the institution as crucial to the understanding of the economic and social history of the second half of Spain’s colonial rule there. Patch’s discussion of the lesser-known pragmatic and effective arguments defending

1 See Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1976); André Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley, 1998); Jeremy Baskes, *Indians, Merchants, and Markets: A Reinterpretation of the Repartimiento and Spanish-Indian Economic Relations in Colonial Oaxaca* (Stanford, 2000); Arij Ouweneel, *Shadows over Anahuac: An Ecological Interpretation of Crisis and Development in Central Mexico, 1730–1800* (Albuquerque, 1996).

the system lends considerable insight into the contemporary bureaucratic and political debates that occurred in both Spain and Spanish America.

Two case studies, one from Huehuetenango, Guatemala, and the other from Nicaragua, are revealing. The first demonstrates the dangers of overreach, even in a hierarchical power situation, caused by hubris or personal selfish quarrels. The second finds that the Indian repartimiento was valuable to prominent Spanish officials in Nicaragua even after the decline of Indian populations and the rise in numbers of non-Indians.

Missing in this book is an investigation into who financed and managed regional governors and, in many cases, who controlled these financiers—a subject that research in Central American archives would have clarified. It is notable that Juan de Aycinena, the richest person in eighteenth-century Central America, does not rate a mention, even though he had his fingers in every pie. Local research would have shown how regional magistrates, even those who did not purchase their offices, were financed by, and then had to follow the dictates of, their patrons in Guatemala City and Mexico.

Also neglected is the fierce opposition that manipulators of the repartimiento met, not only from more senior officials, envious business partners, creditors, and Indian village leaders but also from such local rivals as provincials of the regular orders, bishops, Spanish town councils (or *cabildos*), hacienda owners, and merchants. Many of those who sought to use the repartimiento as a way to profit from the spoils of office failed, not only in Huehuetenango.

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Revolution in the Andes: The Age of Túpac Amaru. By Sergio Serulnikov (trans. David Frye) (Durham, Duke University Press, 2013) 159 pp. \$79.95 cloth \$22.95 paper

From 1780 to 1783, indigenous people in the southern Andes revolted against imperial Spain; this insurrection was the largest one in the history of the Americas. Closely associated with the leadership of Túpac Amaru II, a direct descendant of the last Inca emperor, the revolt devastated the region from Cusco to Chayanta. In this thin volume, Serulnikov manages to present an excellent overview of the insurrection as well as a nuanced discussion of regional and local variations. He references a large historiography dating from the 1950s to the present, and an array of archival material, including quotations from Túpac Amaru II and imperial officials. Serulnikov urges us to view the indigenous people as political actors who attempted to redress their grievances through established ju-