

Report to the King: Colonel Juan Camargo y Cavallero's Historical Account of New Spain, 1815. By JOHN S. LEIBY. New York: Peter Lang, 1984. Pp. 227. Paper. \$22.70.

Although its title would suggest a monograph, this work in fact is simply a translation, with notes, of a descriptive account of New Spain written in 1815 by Colonel Juan Camargo, a regular Spanish army officer who served in the vice-royalty from 1791 to 1821. The document presents general information on geography, demography, agriculture, textile production, trade through Veracruz (1796–1813), silver and gold mintage (1805–14), royal revenues, and fortifications. The final section, which is perhaps the most valuable, contains Camargo's personal reflections on the insurrection up to 1815.

The historical significance of this document goes without saying, and anyone engaged in research concerning New Spain between 1790 and 1815 will want to refer to it, especially its final section. The significance of this publication, however, is somewhat questionable. What separates a simple translation from a historiographical contribution is the explanatory information which supplements the text. While the introduction and epilogue are adequate, the serious scholar may be puzzled and misled by the notes, which pose some serious problems. All of the notes referring to documents are incomplete, in addition to being presented in an odd format. Further, the relationship between the works or sections of works referenced and this account is often very dubious and rarely clarified by Leiby. Finally, over half of the citations of books and articles in the notes do not include specific page numbers—leaving the reader to thumb through the entire reference to obtain further information.

We should be grateful to Leiby for finding this document, and for making it readily available (in Spanish) by its inclusion in the *Bibliotheca Americana* (2:1 [Sept. 1983]). I suggest that the serious scholar use this transcription of the 116-page document, refer to the original document in the Servicio Histórico Militar in Madrid (manuscript number 5-2-4-3), or obtain the microfilm (number 3813).

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Conquest and Survival in Colonial Guatemala: A Historical Geography of the Cuchumatán Highlands, 1500–1821. By W. GEORGE LOVELL. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985. Tables. Figures. Glossary. Plates. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xv, 254. Cloth. \$30.00.

A number of recent regional studies have emphasized the complexity of the colonial experience in Latin America. Each new study notes significant variations from patterns reported in earlier studies of different regions. George Lovell's su-

perb work on the mountainous Cuchumatán region of northwestern Guatemala is no exception. Based on meticulous research in the archives of Seville and Guatemala, Lovell has reconstructed the history of the Mayan people of the Cuchumatanes from 1500 to 1821 with remarkable clarity. He has demonstrated the region's unique qualities, as well as its historical similarities with other rural sections of the Spanish American empire.

The Cuchumatán region represented one of the most densely populated parts of preconquest Guatemala. The Spanish conquest, and the diseases accompanying it, devastated these people and only in the 1980s has the population of the area recovered to its 1500 level. Lovell paints a vivid picture of Cuchumatán physical and human geography on the eve of the conquest, including a plausible, if at times speculative, description of community organization and daily life. He documents their fierce though hopeless resistance to the Spanish conquerors, as well as the ultimate subjugation to Spanish encomenderos of those who survived the dreadful toll of war and pestilence. Yet he also shows the remarkable ability of the Maya to survive and to retain significant aspects of their cultural identity.

Lovell's description of the *encomienda* as it existed and evolved in the Cuchumatanes is especially well done. He shows the close geographical connection between *encomiendas* and the preconquest communities, which eventually evolved into the modern *municipios* of the region. Documenting the persistence of the *encomienda* long after the royal government sought to abolish the institution, Lovell also details the specific payments by *encomienda* Indians, including goods, livestock, and personal service. Personal service continued to be extracted by *encomenderos* even after the Cerrato reforms of 1549. In fact, Lovell makes it clear that throughout the colonial period Indian service to the Spaniards, in one form or another, constituted the most durable legacy of the conquest. He also reveals that *encomenderos* often lived at great distances from their *encomiendas*—in other parts of Central America or in Spain. Yet, gradually, the *encomiendas* evolved into landed estates that contributed significant income and power to the creole elite.

Lovell's work complements the more general recent studies of colonial Central America by Murdo MacLeod, William Sherman, and Miles Wortman. It provides detailed evidence of how the Spaniards exploited first native labor and later their lands to create the creole elites that came to dominate the country. He also emphasizes how European diseases not only devastated the native populations, but limited the ambitions and greed of their European conquerors. Historical geography at its best, this work reflects the high level of both the scientific and literary talent of its author.

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