

“Women and the Family” concludes with a paragraph that to a considerable degree, sums up the authors’ “reinterpretation of colonial Mexico”:

The wealth, dynamism, and greater openness of colonial Mexican society provided the people of New Spain, including women, with ample opportunities to lead active and varied lives. In addition Spanish law was progressive and more cognizant of women’s rights than most other legal systems. As a result, colonial Mexican women enjoyed more rewarding lives than most of their contemporaries in other parts of the world. (p. 248)

An occasional slip is noted. The book published by Father Kino in his polemic with Sigüenza y Góngora on the nature of comets was *Astronomical Exposition*, and not the one described on page 140, and it is doubtful that *La Monja Alférez* was “the first Mexican novel.” Such caveats, however, do not mar an admirable survey of Mexico’s colonial centuries.

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A Jesuit Hacienda in Colonial Mexico: Santa Lucía, 1576–1767. By HERMAN W. KONRAD. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980. Maps. Figures. Appendixes. Notes. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xii, 455. Cloth. \$28.50.

This book is a welcome addition to a growing number of local and regional hacienda studies that are deepening our understanding of the Mexican colonial landed estate. Based on extensive archival research, the volume is thoroughly grounded in Jesuit administrative records. Konrad has put these materials to good use. He provides a comprehensive analysis of one of the largest and most prosperous haciendas of central Mexico, and demonstrates that Jesuit operations were similar to those of their successful secular counterparts—all were directed toward maximizing profits, following the accepted business practices of the time.

The book is organized thematically. It begins with the acquisition of properties and the territorial development of Santa Lucía, then treats in turn the administration and management of the estate, production and revenues, the composition and functioning of the work force, and the seasonal rhythms of hacienda life. Chronologically, the book begins with the creation of the estate in 1576, then traces its history until the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767. For many topics—particularly social life—Konrad’s account is fullest for the eighteenth century.

Santa Lucía was the first Jesuit hacienda in Mexico and also the largest. It was established for the purpose of providing revenues for the Jesuit college in Mexico City, the Colegio Máximo. Thanks to the Jesuits' austere dedication and business acumen, their favored position in colonial society, and their influence with high political figures, Santa Lucía was a profitable enterprise from the start. Beginning with a nucleus of 70 square kilometers based in the northern Valley of Mexico, the hacienda ultimately controlled some 2,700 square kilometers of land extending from Cuernavaca to Ixmiquilpan. In the early years, livestock was the most important product—especially sheep and goats—but corn and barley were cultivated. By the 1760s, however, maguey was the major crop and 80 percent of the annual profits derived from pulque production.

The work force of Santa Lucía was varied and included slaves (about 300 of them in the eighteenth century), free people of color, and Indians from several neighboring communities. Despite its size, however, the hacienda contained few nonslave resident workers. Most of the labor force was temporary, and the hacienda constituted “a working community rather than a permanent settlement with community functions” (p. 322).

The overall picture that emerges is one of a remarkably efficient business enterprise that differed from other successful colonial Mexican estates only in its long stability of ownership and in certain features of social organization due in part to Jesuit celibacy. With regard to administrative and management patterns, rental and production strategies, encroachment on Indian lands, and labor relations, Santa Lucía was run much as were the secular estates. Konrad questions the “paternalistic, self-sufficient” model of the colonial hacienda put forth by Chevalier and Wolf. He also concludes, with Friedrich Katz, that debt peonage was not very important in the late colonial period, and cautions against projecting nineteenth- and twentieth-century patterns back into colonial times.

This is a book that significantly advances our knowledge of both the colonial Mexican hacienda and the history of the Jesuit Order in New Spain. It contributes to an understanding of regional similarities and differences and calls into question the older view of colonial haciendas as inefficiently run symbols of prestige that aimed at self-sufficiency rather than production for the market. Konrad's thorough research, patient attention to detail, and comparison of his findings with other studies all make this an important book.

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