

linkage between the roles of the prehispanic Aztec lords and the eighteenth-century *gobernadores* difficult to accept. From a spatial perspective others might argue that the alleged “internalist” ecological argument advanced here for Anáhuac belies its much wider spatial integration, and the fact that the von Thünen model is nowadays seen as oversimplistic and incapable of taking into account the much more complex production surfaces that were evident even in late colonial central Mexico.

Nevertheless, the highlighting of such problems is but one of the benefits of this very impressive work. It forces readers to question their own methods of inquiry, their own often undisclosed theoretic bases. It is a landmark analysis that should become required reading in research seminars on colonial Spanish America.

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*Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Religion, Art, and Feminism.* By PAMELA KIRK. New York: Continuum, 1998. Notes. Index. 180 pp. Cloth, \$34.50.

As the New World's foremost seventeenth-century literary figure, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz has stimulated the critical interest of generations of literary scholars. Surprisingly, perhaps, theologians have generally overlooked her, despite the omnipresence of religious orthodoxy—albeit at times exceptionally interpreted—in both her world and work. In *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Religion, Art, and Feminism*, Pamela Kirk has worked to bridge the gap between the two disciplines by considering the literary dimension of Sor Juana's so-called religious writings for theologians and illuminating the writer's religious framework for literary scholars. With a nonspecialized audience in mind, the author portrays Sor Juana not only as an exceptional Catholic woman and feminist but also as a surprising theological figure. The latter, an uncommon appellation for Sor Juana, stems from the author's examination of the religious components of a number of texts, including such acclaimed works as the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* and her little-studied devotional exercises.

The opening and closing chapters of this book briefly recount Sor Juana's life story. Chapter 2 examines the *Neptuno alegórico* in light of political and divine power. Chapter 3 discusses the nun-writer's sacramental dramas and accompanying *loas*, with specific attention given to the role of the Eucharist in the conversion of the indigenous populations. Chapters 4 and 5 are the most insightful, as the author examines Sor Juana's distinctive interpretation of the Virgin's agency in her often overlooked devotional texts, *Ejercicios de la Encarnación* and *Ofrecimientos de los Dolores*, a position more overtly expressed in her *villancicos* (carols). The nun-writer's critique of a sermon by the Jesuit Antonio Vieira on Christ's demonstrations of love, the *Carta atenagórica*, is the subject of chapter 5. Finally, the last three chapters explore the Catholic framework of the *Respuesta*, Sor Juana's apologia, from the model of Augustine's *Confessions* to the nun-writer's *Imitatio Christi*.

Well informed of contemporary literary criticism on Sor Juana, Kirk situates her

analysis within established interpretations, such as the writer's distinctive woman-centered theology as expressed in her *villancicos* or her audacious and impeccably argued self-defense of the *Respuesta*. If there is no groundbreaking work here, there is a new perspective. Kirk's insight regarding theology and, in particular, her knowledge of Biblical exegesis contribute to existing work on Sor Juana by supplying further evidence to substantiate the nun-writer's unorthodox Marian devotion, her knowledge of scriptures, and her ability to allusively justify her claim to learn and write despite her sex and calling, often by means of Biblical and Patristic *exempla*.

Owing to the introductory nature of this book, chapters are subdivided both to introduce the text in question and to furnish a synopsis of its prior critical treatment. As a result, there is little room for the author's often illuminating inferences. A work of this scope cannot presume to be comprehensive, yet a more detailed account of the accustomized theological practices of seventeenth-century New Spain and the extent to which Sor Juana appropriated or disavowed these would have greatly enriched the volume while at the same time strengthening the fragile bridge between literary criticism and theology.

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*Lucha agraria en Puerto Rico, 1541–1545: un ensayo de historia.* By FRANCISCO MOSCOSO. San Juan: Ediciones Puerto, 1997. Map. Tables. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. x, 246 pp. Paper.

The period immediately following the decline of gold mining and encomienda labor in the Caribbean is, for the most part, yet to be understood. While an abundant literature exists for the earliest phases of Spanish colonization of the islands, coverage declines dramatically for the years after the early 1530s. It was about this time that island settlers began to turn to agrarian production (of sugar and hides, especially) that was linked to the Andalusian merchant complex and to newly conquered areas in the American continents. How the economic transition occurred and how it affected island societies remains largely obscure.

Moscoso's book throws new light on the social struggles that accompanied the decline of the mining complex in Puerto Rico. He investigates the details of a conflict that ensued when in 1541 a group of colonists demanded the redistribution of choice lands along the river valleys of the north coast, close to the main settlement at San Juan. Earlier, leading members of the conquering party had been awarded enormous land grants, distant from each other by one league, for raising cattle. These landholding units, called *hatos*, quickly came to engulf the most fertile land and best pastures. When at the end of the mining cycle other settlers turned to agriculture and animal husbandry to survive, they found that the original grants did not leave enough free space for new grants—hence their petition to the San Juan cabildo to reduce by half the size of the original grants. Although many parts of the island were still unoccupied by Spaniards