

“lasting results” (p. 120) obtained in Mexico, the remainder of the Americas, the Philippines, and Vietnam. “For better or worse,” says Boxer, “Latin America is likely to remain basically Roman Catholic . . .” (p. 121). In Africa and Asia, however, he thinks Roman Catholics will remain minority groups.

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Orígenes de la colonización en el Río de la Plata. By SILVIO ZAVALA. México, 1977. Editorial de El Colegio Nacional. Maps. Illustrations. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Indexes. Pp. ix, 108. Paper.

Historians of colonial Spanish America, particularly those interested in the Río de la Plata region, will find Silvio Zavala’s study to be a useful and important reference work. Divided into three long and only loosely connected essays, the book deals with early efforts to conquer and colonize the region, the treatment of Indians by the first settlers, and the early development of political and economic life in the European settlements. As might be expected judging from Zavala’s earlier work on Mexico, the section that discusses the treatment of Indians is the most interesting portion of the book.

Even in his discussion of early efforts at conquest and settlement, Zavala concentrates much of his attention on the efforts of the Spanish crown to protect the Indian population from the abuses that characterized the conquests of Mexico and Peru. Since the settlement of the Río de la Plata region occurred in the midst of efforts by the crown to curb the mistreatment of Indians throughout the empire, the first conquerors of the Río de la Plata were forced to accept inhibiting policies, such as the Ordinances of Granada of 1526, before sailing from Spain (p. 76). These initial regulations were quickly followed by the New Laws and numerous codes and regulations designed to end Indian slavery, limit the power of encomenderos, and provide protections for Indian families and communities.

The second section of the book deals more directly with the issue of treatment and includes lengthy and detailed discussions of efforts by royal officials in the area to enforce official policy and evolve local codes to protect the Indians and meet the real needs of the settler class. One example is Zavala’s close analysis of the regulations governing the

treatment of Indians written by Visitador Francisco de Alfaro in 1611 and largely accepted by the Council of the Indies in 1618 (pp. 258–328). Although the regulations authored by Alfaro and the numerous laws promulgated by the Spanish crown provided potential safeguards for the Indians of the region, Zavala provides only a limited analysis of how the Indian populations were actually treated. It is clearly useful and important to know the legal and institutional structures within which societies function, but these structures, by themselves, neither define nor describe social reality.

The final section of Zavala's work discusses the development of some of the major Spanish settlements in the region. Among the numerous important topics touched upon by the author are the demographic characteristics of these settlements, early efforts at commercial expansion, the usefulness of the *diezmo* as a possible economic indicator, and the early development of creole sentiment among the native-born. Although Zavala often allows analysis to give way to anecdote, this section offers a richness of detail that should stimulate new and more systematic study.

Although published recently, this is an old book in methodological terms. It treats a series of interesting social issues without examining the documents that could illuminate them. The most significant failure is that the notarial records of the region were not consulted by the author. Probate records, census counts, and tribute lists were also ignored. What can be said about the treatment of the Indians of Paraguay or Corrientes or Buenos Aires, if we don't even know whether the populations decreased or increased? These weaknesses are explained in part by the temporal distance that separates the research for this book in the 1940s and its publication in 1978. It should be read and admired as a thirty-year-old book written by a careful and thoughtful historian. It is not, however, an adequate social history of this interesting region during the early colonial period.

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Los astilleros de Guayaquil colonial. By LAWRENCE A. CLAYTON. Prologue by JULIO ESTRADA YCAZA. Guayaquil, 1978. Archivo Histórico del Guayas. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xi, 230. Paper.

The history of intercolonial trade is a neglected field and no part of it has been so badly served as the history of shipbuilding. Lawrence