

RECENT TRENDS IN BOLIVIAN STUDIES

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- FROM THE FAT OF OUR SOULS: SOCIAL CHANGE, POLITICAL PROCESS, AND MEDICAL PLURALISM IN BOLIVIA.* By Libbet Crandon-Malamud. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991. Pp. 267. \$45.00 cloth.)
- REVOLUTION AND REACTION: BOLIVIA, 1964–1985.* By James M. Malloy and Eduardo Gamarra. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1988. Pp. 144. \$29.95 cloth.)
- LE RETOUR DES ANCESTRES: LES INDIENS URUS DE BOLIVIA XXe–XVIe SIECLE, ESSAI D'HISTOIRE REGRESSIVE.* By Nathan Wachtel. (Paris: Gallimard, 1990. Pp. 689.)
- SILVER AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY POTOSI: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ANTONIO LOPEZ DE QUIROGA.* By Peter Bakewell. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988. Pp. 250. \$35.00 cloth, \$15.95 paper.)
- COERCION AND MARKET: SILVER MINING IN COLONIAL POTOSI, 1692–1826.* By Enrique Tandeter. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993. Pp. 332. \$50.00 cloth.)
- BAJO UN CIELO DE ESTAÑO.* By Antonio Mitre. Biblioteca Minera Boliviana, no. 6. (La Paz: Asociación de Mineros Medianas and Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, 1993. Pp. 307.)
- EL ENIGMA DE LOS HORNOS: LA ECONOMIA POLITICA DE LA FUNDICION DE ESTAÑO: EL PROCESO BOLIVIANO A LA LUZ DE OTRAS EXPERIENCIAS.* By Antonio Mitre. Biblioteca Minera Boliviana, no. 7. (La Paz: Asociación de Mineros Medianas and Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, 1993. Pp. 143.)
- TECNOLOGIA MODERNA EN LOS ANDES: MINERIA E INGENIERIA EN BOLIVIA EN EL SIGLO XX.* By Manuel E. Contreras C. Biblioteca Minera Boliviana, no. 8. (La Paz: Asociación de Mineros Medianas and Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, 1993. Pp. 137.)

The last two decades have witnessed publication of a wealth of studies on the social and economic evolution of Bolivian society. Some of

these books focus on the colonial period, others on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While most of this historical work has been done by historians, some economists and anthropologists have also gotten into writing history. The ongoing concerns, due mostly to the *Revolución Nacional* in 1952 and its impact on Indian society, have been the Indian population of the past, the organization of Bolivian rural society, and (to a lesser extent) evolution of the non-Indian landed elite. Historians now know a great deal about the changing Quechua and Aymara Indian communities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Since Brooke Larson surveyed this literature in 1988, several dissertations and articles that she discussed have now appeared in book form.¹ These include Erick Langer's survey of the landed elite of Chuquisaca, Ricardo Godoy's analysis of peasant-miners in northern Potosí, Lesley Gill's study of highland Indians who migrated to the Santa Cruz lowlands, and Larson's own analysis of the declining Indian communities in the Cochabamba Valley.² My work on the demography and changing socioeconomic structure of the Aymara peasants living in the *ayllus* and haciendas of the department of La Paz in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has also been published.³

Overlooked in all this analysis of Quechua and Aymara peoples have been the more marginalized Indian groups. For this reason alone, the long-awaited study by Nathan Wachtel on the Urus of the altiplano is most welcome. Even more important is the fact that this study represents the first attempt by a traditional historian to combine historical research with modern ethnographic analysis. The result of what he calls "regressive history" is a largely successful amalgamation that shows how these two social sciences can be effectively wedded to make original contributions.

Although other historians including the late Thierry Saignes, Tristan Platt, Olivia Harris, and Xavier Albó have applied anthropological theory or included a few ethnographic observations in their historical studies, Wachtel's *Le retour des ancêtres: Les indiens Urus de Bolivie, XXe–XVIIe siècle, essai d'histoire régressive* is the first full-scale melding of these two approaches. Wachtel provides a full ethnographic community study with major historical underpinnings based on written records and oral

1. See Brooke Larson, "Bolivia Revisited: New Directions in North American Research in History and Anthropology," *LARR* 23, no.1 (1988):63–90.

2. Erick D. Langer, *Economic Change and Rural Resistance in Southern Bolivia, 1880–1930* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1989); Ricardo A. Godoy, *Mining and Agriculture in Highland Bolivia: Ecology, History, and Commerce among the Jukumanis* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1990); Lesley Gill, *Peasants, Entrepreneurs, and Social Change: Frontier Development in Lowland Bolivia* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1987); and Brooke Larson, *Colonialism and Agrarian Transformation in Bolivia, 1550–1900* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988).

3. Herbert S. Klein, *Haciendas and Ayllus: Rural Society in the Bolivian Andes in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993).

testimony. In this sense, his work is unique in the field of Andean studies. Wachtel's subject is the community of Chipaya (near Oruro), which contains the largest extant group of Uru (or Puquina) speakers in Bolivia. From the time of contact to the present day, the Uru have been considered the poorest of the altiplano Indians, a group historically exploited by their Aymara neighbors.

Wachtel's ethnography includes the usual detailed analysis of Andean dualities in cosmology and social organization and their physical representations. Because Wachtel is stressing the uniqueness of his subjects, however, it would have been useful to have a far more detailed comparative analysis of Aymara and Quechua beliefs. Much more linguistic analysis is usually found in this kind of ethnography. Nonetheless, Wachtel's discussion of the limits of "ritual impoverishment" (impoverishment due to participating in religious rituals) and the expenditures for the *cargos* of the civil-religious hierarchy of the village provides one of the most innovative contributions to the literature on this important topic for any area of Latin America.

The organization of the historical part of Wachtel's study is rather unusual. The first third is really an attempt to answer questions about recent community change in relation to the introduction of quinoa farming, demographic growth, the practice of marrying within the community, changing size of territory, and relations with the local Aymara. These topics are discussed by using oral testimony as well as historical documentation. Wachtel then turns to the history of all the Uru, who represented a quarter of the Indians in the region in 1500, and he produces a wealth of information on their resistance, their "Aymarization" (absorption of the wealthier Urus into Aymara status), and the survival of the poorest and most resistant elements who depended on the lakes and rivers for their sustenance. *Le retour des ancêtres* recounts the history of the disappearance of a people and excels in explaining how and why it occurred. Finally, students of colonial Andean history will find the hundred or so pages devoted to the theme of changing relations between Indians and whites to be the single best introduction to this crucial subject in any language.

The colonial history of Bolivia (which prior to 1825 was called either Charcas or Alto Perú) and the crucial study of the mining industry in Bolivian history are both well served by the appearance of two other recent works. Historians now have the second of Peter Bakewell's ongoing study of colonial mining in Potosí. His first work on this area, *Miners of the Red Mountain*, is the best analysis of the founding and early development of mining at Potosí.⁴ That study focused on working conditions

4. Peter Bakewell, *Miners of the Red Mountain: Indian Labor in Potosí, 1545–1650* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984). For a detailed review of this work, see my appraisal in *New Mexico Historical Review* 60, no. 4 (1985):451–52.

and the Indian laborers. Bakewell now provides the life history of the wealthiest Spanish mine owner in the seventeenth century. Drawing on his profound knowledge of mining and the economics of silver production, Bakewell is at his best in examining the investment strategies and mining activities of this wealthy representative of the Potosí elite. Antonio López de Quiroga, a Spaniard who arrived in Potosí in the middle of the seventeenth century, began his long career as an importing merchant. He went on to provide loans to miners (as an *aviador*), then progressed to purchasing and refining silver ores (as an *azoguero*), and finally got into full-scale mining activity. The basis of Quiroga's success was his strategy of revitalizing old mines by constructing new access and drainage adits (*socavones*), many of which cost as much or more to build as an entire church. Because of Quiroga's extraordinary business acumen and insight, he was involved in surprisingly few judicial conflicts, a rare situation for a wealthy colonial merchant and mine owner. The lack of complex court cases that would contain detailed economic data as well as the dearth of personal papers and extensive notarial records left Bakewell with a relatively limited range of documents for analyzing Quiroga's extraordinary career. Bakewell has done an impressive job nevertheless and has produced one of the best biographies of a member of the colonial elite.

Enrique Tandeter's study on the mines in the eighteenth century complements the work of Bakewell and also the earlier surveys of Jeffrey Cole on the *mita*⁵ and Rose Marie Buechler on late-eighteenth-century mining developments in general.⁶ Tandeter's central thesis is that the *mita* (the forced drafts of Indian labor to work the mines of Potosí) in the seventeenth century, although only one-sixth of its size in the sixteenth, remained a crucial economic factor in Potosí silver mining. As Wachtel demonstrated in his discussion of this topic, the *mita* by the eighteenth century was no longer a bitter issue for the taxed Indian communities because population growth, the declining size of the drafts, and the transformation of the *mita* into a money tax (*mitayos de plata*) had mitigated its negative impact. Late-colonial mine labor consisted primarily of free wage workers, but Tandeter shows that the *mita* still made the difference between profits and the lack of significant earnings in the smelting part of the industry. Although one might question some of the economic analysis on which Tandeter's thesis rests, he has unquestionably provided a wealth

5. Jeffrey Cole, *The Potosí Mita, 1573–1700: Compulsory Indian Labor in the Andes* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1985). For a more detailed analysis of this work, see my review in *Labor History* 27, no. 3 (Summer 1986):470–72.

6. Rose Marie Buechler, *Gobierno, minería y sociedad: Potosí y el "renacimiento" borbónico, 1776–1810*, 2 vols., Biblioteca Minera Boliviana, no. 5 (La Paz: Asociación Nacional de Mineros Medianos, 1989). An English edition has also been published under the title *The Mining Society of Potosí, 1776–1810* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms for the Department of Geography, Syracuse University, 1981).

of previously unexplored information on the late-colonial mining industry in Potosí.

It seems somewhat paradoxical that only after the great age of tin mining in Bolivia ended in the 1980s is serious historical research on the tin mining industry finally appearing. This sector is the subject of three new books on the twentieth century by Bolivian scholars. Antonio Mitre, whose *Patriarcas de plata* is the standard work on the nineteenth-century silver industry,⁷ has now carried his analysis of the mining industry into the twentieth century with two major studies. *Bajo un cielo de estaño* provides crucial analysis of the transition from mining silver to mining tin in the last decades of the nineteenth century. It also offers an excellent overview of the industry into the late 1940s. This new work presents the most comprehensive survey yet of the Bolivian tin industry in its golden age. Mitre describes the early association of tin mining with silver production, especially in the crucial district of Potosí. He then details tin's slow development in the newer mining districts in Oruro and La Paz and shows that fundamental modernization of the industry did not occur until after 1905. Mitre even discusses in an interesting way the economic rationality of animal transport in the industry until llamas were replaced in the 1920s by specially adapted trucks. He dates the decline of the industry in the 1920s, due to the progressive falling off in the quality of ores and the consequent rise in production costs despite extensive electrification and modernization of the major mines beginning in 1905. Once costs rose to world price levels, decline was inevitable, with progressive decapitalization becoming the norm from the 1930s until the 1950s. *Bajo un cielo de estaño* provides instructive analysis of the movement of foreign capital into the industry and the early key roles played first by English-Chilean capital and then by U.S. capital in the mining sector. The study also documents the domination of German investments in tin purchases and mining supplies.

In *El enigma de los hornos: La economía política de la fundición de estaño; El proceso boliviano a la luz de otras experiencias*, Mitre attempts to answer the important question of why Bolivia did not establish a smelting industry before World War II. The nationalists argued that the proposal was an imperialist plot to deny Bolivia access to industrial capacity, while the liberals maintained that legitimate economic constraints required refining Bolivian ores in Europe and the United States. In this densely argued monograph, Mitre accepts the existence of economic limitations on Bolivian smelting: the high cost of fuels and the anarchic nature of mine production that would have prevented a national smelter from monopolizing local supplies. But he also argues that market intervention by the state, as previously practiced by the English in Europe and Asia,

7. Antonio Mitre, *Los patriarcas de la plata* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Andinos, 1981).

could have compensated for these limitations and promoted an industry that might have been able to compete and be profitable. Although the argument is appealing, Mitre does not lay out the costs and benefits of such a protectionist policy for Bolivian industry, an extraordinarily open one throughout its history. When smelters were finally built in Bolivia, they actually had little impact on either national industrial growth or mining profitability, an outcome suggesting that even earlier they might have made little difference.

In *Tecnología moderna en los Andes: Minería e ingeniería en Bolivia en el siglo XX*, Manuel Contreras covers much the same ground as Mitre. But this engineer turned historian stresses the technology of the tin industry and the engineers who made it function. Contreras agrees with Mitre's findings on the timing of the changes in the industry and adds a new perspective by citing extensively the previously underutilized papers of the Patiño Mines Company. His discussion of the origin and market for national and foreign engineers represents the major contribution of *Tecnología moderna en los Andes*. The market began in the middle of the nineteenth century and brought a distinguished group of German-, English-, and French-speaking engineers who modernized the silver industry in Bolivia. Engineers from all the advanced countries helped modernize the tin mining and concentration industry at the beginning of the century. They also taught in the first and most successful national engineering school, which had been founded in Oruro in 1906. The success of schools in Oruro and Potosí guaranteed the emergence of a large group of Bolivian engineers, many of whom earned advanced degrees abroad. Although the mines worked closely with the Bolivian engineering students regarding summer employment, the careers of Bolivian graduates were initially limited to survey work and heading mine sections in the "Big Three" mining companies owned by Patiño, Aramayo, and Hochschild. Patiño Mines even employed a dual salary scale. In the small mines and the *medianos* (medium-sized ones), in contrast, Bolivian engineers became administrators prior to nationalization in 1952, and some Bolivians had extraordinarily successful careers abroad. Although traditional networks and prejudice sometimes limited the upward mobility of Bolivian-trained engineers (especially with the Big Three mines), Bolivian universities were successful in supplying the national market for mine engineers except in geology and metallurgy (two areas not taught in Bolivia until recently).

Thanks to newer books on the twentieth-century tin industry and earlier studies like that of Walter Gómez on taxation and the profitability of the tin industry,⁸ historians now know the basic economic features of

8. Walter Gómez, *La minería en el desarrollo económico de Bolivia* (La Paz: Los Amigos del Libro, 1978).

the so-called *Siglo de Estño* in Bolivian history. Meanwhile, the studies of Bakewell, Cole, Buechler, and Tandeter have laid out the chronology and development of the colonial silver mining industry, and Mitre's work on the nineteenth century provides an important beginning for a full-scale study of its evolution in that era. Thus mining has become almost as developed a topic in Bolivian studies as rural society. Now the work of Wachtel and the earlier work of the late Thierry Saignes have outlined the long-neglected field of Amerindian studies of the smaller Indian groups of Bolivia.⁹

But aside from mining studies and the works of Langer, Larson, and Klein dealing with the landed elite, scholars unfortunately have not yet generated a wealth of studies on the Spanish-speaking elite that would parallel those existing on Peru and Mexico in the colonial period.¹⁰ Wachtel's *Le retour des ancêtres* nevertheless establishes a significant model for interpreting the evolution of relations between Indians and whites in the colonial period, and it should also help historians link these two worlds in a more sophisticated manner.

Considered as a whole, these books go a long way toward resolving what many have perceived as the relatively undeveloped nature of Bolivian historiography and social studies. Major gaps can still be cited in the economic history of Bolivia, which needs studies of internal and international trade and markets, proto-industrialization and industrial growth, the creation of the communications infrastructure, the evolution of the urban centers, and state finances, to name only a few lacunae.¹¹ Numerous areas of social history—from demographic analysis of urban and rural populations to studies of the culture and ideology of differing urban classes, ethnic groups, and genders—remain to be analyzed. But at

9. For example, see Thierry Saignes, *Los andes orientales: Historia de un olvido* (La Paz: CERES-IFEA, 1985).

10. Clara López Beltrán's recent thesis provides an interesting beginning for analyzing the mechanism of elite maintenance and control in this crucial Bolivian urban center. See "The Vecinos of the City of La Paz in Charcas: A Study of an Urban Elite, 1645–1680," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1995.

11. Some initial studies in this area show the extraordinary richness of the archival materials. See, for examples, the works of Bolivian scholars: Laura Escobari de Querejazu, *Producción y comercio en el espacio sur andino, siglo XVII: Cusco-Potosí, 1650–1700* (La Paz: Embajada de España, 1985); and Mary Money, *Los obrajes, el traje y el comercio de ropa en la Audiencia de Charcas* (La Paz: Embajada de España, 1983). See also studies of urban history by Rossana Barragán, *Espacio urbano y dinámica étnica: La Paz en el siglo XIX* (La Paz: Hisbol, 1990); and Alberto Crespo, Mariano Baptista Gumucio, and José de Mesa, *La ciudad de La Paz: Su historia, su cultura* (La Paz: Alcaldía Municipal, 1989). An initial analysis of the evolution of regional markets and political systems is made in Gustavo Rodríguez Ostría, *Poder central y proyecto regional: Cochabamba y Santa Cruz en los siglos XIX y XX* (La Paz: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales and Instituto para el Desarrollo Alternativo Económico y Social, 1993). Also, see two interesting recent books on state finances: Thomas Millington, *Debt Politics after Independence: The Funding Conflict in Bolivia* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1992); and Carmenza Gallo, *Taxes and State Power: Political Instability in Bolivia, 1900–1950* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press, 1991).

least a general picture is now emerging that will enable scholars to place more detailed studies into a better grounded general analysis of social and economic change in Bolivia.

Less well understood are the profound transformations in economic, social, and political structures that have taken place in Bolivia over the past forty years. Some of these changes have resulted directly from the *Revolución Nacional* of 1952, but many others predated this event by decades. These trends led to important economic transformations and reorientation of the national and regional economies, to an unusually rapid and complex increase in social mobility, and to the establishment of important democratic institutions and new mass political movements.

In the economic sphere, the most important changes have been the end of the age of tin and the rise of new regional centers of economic power, such as the department of Santa Cruz. The social arena has witnessed the rise of intermediate bilingual *cholo* groups and the decline of the old rural white elite. Finally, after passing through some of the worst moments of cold-war militarization in the region, the Bolivian political system has emerged under a generation of new leaders and new mass parties that have ensured a mostly stable and powerful transition to democratic rule.

Several of the books reviewed here treat some of these issues, but because of the rapidity of these changes in recent decades, few works fully appreciate the extent of the changes that have occurred. For example, James Malloy and Eduardo Gamarra's review of twenty years of recent Bolivian history misses several of these developments and gives no clear view of the trends that would become dominant. Although *Revolution and Reaction: Bolivia, 1964–1985* offers a good survey of the cold-war military regimes and the early difficult transition to democratic rule, the authors' excessive and uncritical commitment to dependency theory (in this case, the variant known as "dependent state capitalism") interferes with their ability to interpret many of the changes that were occurring at the time. This surprising myopia on the part of scholars familiar with Bolivian politics may also result from the fact that they provide little serious economic and social analysis. Although *Revolution and Reaction* is useful in supplying the political details about these regimes, it does not supersede the more nuanced survey of the period from 1952 to 1982 made by James Dunkerley, which appeared four years earlier.¹²

An unusual micro-study of a small community on Lake Titicaca carried out during this same period of military rule demonstrates the

12. James Dunkerley, *Rebellion in the Veins: Political Struggle in Bolivia, 1952–1982* (London: Verso, 1982). See also my review of this work in the *American Historical Review* 91, no. 4 (Oct. 1986):1027–28.

impact being produced by these important social changes in rural areas of Bolivia. Libbet Crandon-Malamud's central theme in *From the Fat of Our Souls: Social Change, Political Process, and Medical Pluralism in Bolivia* is the plurality of medical practices that evolved in the town under study. She shows how the old (pre-1952) non-Indian elite in this lakeside community has declined economically and socially since the revolution and been forced to treat the landowning Indians on a reciprocal basis rather than according to the traditional asymmetrical patron-client relation. This shift has led to the spread of Aymara medical ideas among non-Indians as well as a counter-spread of modern medical practices among peasants. This involution of the regional non-Indian elites and their replacement by cholos and cholas of peasant origin mirrors much of the fundamental socioeconomic change affecting the rural world and now beginning to influence Bolivia's major urban centers as well. The recent granting of autonomy to the cholo-dominated city of El Alto (now the third-largest city in Bolivia) highlights how such rural changes are quickly being replicated in the urban environment.

Despite initial studies on recent change in Bolivia, major gaps remain in our understanding of what is currently emerging in the Bolivian social and political order. Numerous local studies have been made of various aspects of health and poverty, education and migration, and even urban and rural violence.¹³ A reasonable literature has also been created on past social and political protest movements, although less is known about new political institutions and movements.¹⁴ But an analytical body of literature has yet to emerge that would provide a coherent understanding of the nature of the recent socioeconomic and political changes. The surprising fact that change has been accepted so quickly by Bolivians may mean that it will take some time for national and foreign scholars to appreciate fully and comprehend the extraordinary developments that have been transforming this complex and rapidly evolving society.

13. One of the best of the numerous well-developed studies of national health and poverty is Rolando Morales Anaya, *Desarrollo y pobreza en Bolivia: Análisis de la situación del niño y la mujer* (La Paz: UNICEF, 1984). On urban migration, see Xavier Albó, Godofredo Sandoval, and Tomás Greaves, *Chukiyawuy: La cara aymara de La Paz*, 4 vols. (La Paz: Centro de Investigaciones y Promoción del Campesinado, 1981–1987). On violence, see *Violencias encubiertas en Bolivia*, edited by Xavier Albó and Raúl Barros, 2 vols. (La Paz: CIPCA Centro de Investigaciones y Promoción del Campesinado-Aruwiyiri, 1993).

14. For example, see Silvia Rivera, *Oprimidos pero no vencidos: Luchas del campesinado aymara y quechua de Bolivia, 1900–1980* (La Paz: Hisbol, 1986). Much ephemeral literature exists on politics, but few long-term systematic studies have been undertaken. A suggestive recent work that brings together numerous of the author's disparate essays is Jorge Lazarete R., *Bolivia: Certezas e incertidumbres de la democracia*, 3 vols. (La Paz: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales and Los Amigos del Libro, 1993). A first attempt at analyzing recent voting behavior is Salvador Romero Ballivián's *Geografía electoral de Bolivia: Así votan los bolivianos* (La Paz: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales and Centro Boliviano de Estudios Multidisciplinarios, 1993).