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*Columbian Consequences, Vol 3: The Spanish
Borderlands in Pan-American Perspective, by
David Hurst Thomas*

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and later, ranches in the narrow coastal zone occupied by the Spanish, and using the horses as an item of trade and a source of meat. Phillips argues that the Yokuts and Miwoks adapted in ways that gave them greater independence, and retarded the development of the ranching economy in the Spanish-Mexican coastal zone by seriously reducing the numbers of tame horses. The horse raiding escalated in the first four decades of the nineteenth century. Neophytes who had fled the missions assumed a leading role both in the raiding and in resisting Spanish-Mexican incursions into the valley.

Phillips has produced an important study, based on sound scholarship that blends conventional history with ethnohistory. He admirably explains interaction in the San Joaquin Valley from the perspective of the Yokuts, the Miwok, and other Indian groups. However, I wish to offer one concrete criticism that, although significant, does not detract from the solid scholarly contribution that Phillips makes. The author argues that Indian raids on the cattle ranches that were being carved out of former mission lands in the 1830s and 1840s weakened the ranchers' financial stability, and also left them vulnerable to the expensive and drawn-out process of validating their land titles following the U.S. conquest of California during the Mexican-American War (1846–1848).

Phillips relies on qualitative sources that emphasize the damage being done to the ranches by Indian raids, but he does not consult available quantitative sources that record the size of the livestock herds at the missions during much of the period he is concerned with. This evidence in some cases substantiates Phillips' assertions, but in some cases does not. Phillips also does not take into consideration the possibility of exaggeration in reports of the impact of horse raiding, to generate additional military support from the local government. In a recent article, for example, María Arbeláez shows that Jesuit missionaries stationed in Sonora during the eighteenth century also complained about the loss of livestock and consequent loss of profits to Indian raiders, but mission inventories and reports prepared by the same missionaries did not support the claim of significant losses (*Journal of the Southwest* 33:3, 1991).

This criticism aside, Phillips has produced an important contribution to the literature on colonial California and Indian responses to the invasion of their lands.

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Columbian Consequences. Vol. 3. *The Spanish Borderlands in Pan-American Perspective*. Edited by DAVID HURST THOMAS. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991. Tables. Photographs. Maps. Figures. Bibliography. Index. xxii, 592 pp. Cloth. \$45.00.

Contributor David J. Weber opens this volume on a pessimistic note as he comments on the malaise currently afflicting Spanish borderlands studies. Not only is this region considered peripheral to Latin American history, but the study of

the northern frontier, he contends, has an uncertain future in historical circles. This last of a three-volume series exploring the interaction between Spaniards and Indians and its consequences in the northern borderlands represents the dawn of a new era in borderland studies: the passing of the baton to nonhistorians. The authors of this work, most of whom are archaeologists, attempt to reconnect the borderlands to the rest of colonial Spanish America, and in doing so, boldly set the research agenda for the northern frontier.

Editor David Hurst Thomas, who is curator of anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History, divides the book into three loosely related sections. Part 1 reviews borderland scholarship over the last century. Part 2 examines the impact of Spanish colonialism on native societies in southern Mesoamerica and Central America, while part 3 proposes future research directions in borderland studies.

The stated objective of this volume is to offer a synthesis of current understanding about European and indigenous interaction after Columbus, but ultimately the book reads as a methodological and conceptual primer for borderlands studies. On the premise that Spanish strategies and Indian responses learned elsewhere in Spanish America would be discernible on the northern frontier as well, Part 2 is designed to showcase recent revisionist research of historians and social scientists of Mesoamerica and Central America. Parts 2 and 3 openly embrace a multidisciplinary approach, essentially fusing historical archaeology and ethnohistory, which forthrightly rejects the traditional and largely Eurocentric Boltonian scholarship. Thomas asserts that these innovative methods, relying heavily on non-European and unwritten records, will enrich our understanding of the complexity of the encounter in the northern borderlands and facilitate the search for the “several distinct histories” that were played out in this region (p. xix).

Most noteworthy in this volume is the series of opening essays, focusing on how both public celebrations and scholarship have shaped and continue to shape popular perceptions of Native Americans and of their interaction with the European colonizers. The writers portray indigenous groups in Mesoamerica, which by implication were typical of Indians in the borderlands, as innovative, persistent, and adaptable in the face of Spanish colonialism. Also valuable is the discussion on population change, in which historians and archaeologists debate the issue of cultural continuity between the pre-Contact and post-Contact periods.

While its shifting of borderland studies outside a narrow zone of inquiry and connecting it to larger Spanish American processes is laudatory, the book suffers from an absence of explicit comparative points. In the Mesoamerican case studies, most of the essays pertain to indigenous groups of more developed cultural levels than those found on the frontier; the editor fails to make a compelling case for ways in which they relate to the borderlands. Unfortunately for a book written partly for the general public, the volume does not make those critical spatial linkages.

Nevertheless, this ambitious anthology, and the series in general, makes important contributions to the evolving field of borderland studies. As Weber notes, "scholars continue to reinvent the borderlands to fit their current multidisciplinary and comparative interests" (p. 14). With the completion of the trilogy, historical archaeologists have staked their claim to define the field on their terms. We historians have much to learn from their research as well as their means of professional advocacy.

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Handbuch der Geschichte Lateinamerikas. Band 2. Lateinamerika von 1760 bis 1900. Edited by RAYMOND TH. BUVE and JOHN R. FISHER. Stuttgart: Verlag Clett-Cotta, 1992. Maps. Tables. Bibliography. Index. 891 pp. Cloth.

This volume, the first to appear in a projected three-volume series, was published during the Columbus Quincentenary. The first volume will extend to 1760, and the third will cover the twentieth century; both are scheduled to appear in 1994. Although the text is in German, the editors are authorities from the Netherlands and Britain and the contributors include German, Dutch, Spanish, and British historians. In this respect, the book recalls another noteworthy publication, the *Cambridge History of Latin America*, which first appeared in the 1980s. The present volume, however, appears far more compact. It is not a collection of independent studies but rather an integrated whole, which doubtless owes much to the editors' approach to Latin American history.

They have divided the material into two sections, the periods before and after 1830. The first section covers the preconditions for independence and the wars of independence, and the second deals with "rebuilding and modernization." In two long chapters, John Fisher examines broad topics in Latin American society and chief aspects of public life in the colonies and newly independent states, such as the legal system, the economy, and international relations. His presentation is complemented by Jan Lechner's essay on culture. Other authors describe developments in individual regions—the Caribbean, Central America, Mexico, Brazil, and so on. Hans Joachim König, Gert Oostindie, and Raymond Buve deal with fundamental aspects of communities that, at the turn of the nineteenth century, were being transformed from colonial creole societies into the national communities of modern states.

One advantage of the present volume is that its authors have avoided the pitfall that has tripped many Latin American historians, of devoting an unreasonable amount of space to the military aspect of the wars of independence. Although the space devoted to political, economic, military, and other spheres is by no means uniform in each of the chapters, the reader is rewarded with abundant useful information on all major aspects.