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**BOOK REVIEWS**

**Hernán Horna. *La Indianidad: The Indigenous World Before Latin Americans*. Introduction by Jane M. Rausch. Princeton, N.J.: Marcus Wiener Publishers, 2001.**

A presumptive descendant of precursors involved in his book, Horna was born in Cajamarca, Peru, in 1942, moved to the United States at the age of eighteen, and in due course received his B.A., M.A., and Ph. D. degrees from Tennessee institutions (the last one at Vanderbilt university in 1970). After meeting Swedish-born Anita Wahlgren, later to become his wife, Horna moved to Sweden, securing an appointment as a docent in the History Department at Uppsala University. He taught a variety of courses on Latin America during the 23 years that followed, while he also published in Swedish, English, and Columbian journals during that period (p. ix).

His book (of 152 text pages) is divided into two major parts, each containing two (or more) sections. The first part, a history of Amerindian civilizations, comprises of sections on: Horna's own distinctive historical perspective; the first New World emigrants; agriculture; foreign contacts; the diffusion-independent invention debate; religious fanaticism; and human sacrifice. These are preliminary to his major but brief summaries of Mayan, Aztec, and Incan cultures; the first two, each of ten pages, are exemplary for both their comprehensiveness and brevity. As a native Peruvian, his expanded (20) page exposition on the Incas incorporates a cultural-political analysis of Incan society, a review of its sciences-technology, and an exceptional analysis of its writing system(s).

His second part, From Colonization to Decolonization, contains two sections. The first reviews the details of the Spanish conquests, including Columbus, Cortes (vs. the Aztecs in Mexico), and Pizarro (vs. the Incas in Peru).

But it is the added critical context and perspective within which the various events of Spanish exploration and conquest occur that appear so illuminating: 1<sup>st</sup> is the fact that Cortes and Pizarro were not respectively the earliest discoverers of Mexico and Peru, rather Diego Velasquez and Pedro Arias Davila were (p. 97); 2<sup>nd</sup> is undeniable evidence that Spaniards were in Mexico and Peru before Cortes and Pizarro (pp. 88, 96); 3<sup>rd</sup> is information that the Indians of the Caribbean, Mexico, and Peru were in contact and traded with one another recurrently prior to the

Spanish conquests (p. 98); 4<sup>th</sup> such major social and political figures as Montezuma and Atahualpa were not so naive as to believe that the Spaniards were gods or that their superior weapons supernaturally endowed; 5<sup>th</sup> the eventual conquering success of the Spaniards can hardly be attributed solely or even primarily to their technical superiority, but rested on a series of strategies for undermining and overcoming Indians' military resistance: e.g., temporary alliances with other Indian tribes; kidnappings (military, political, and religious forms); adaptive syncretisms to undermine native religious beliefs and practices; and intermarriage (pp. 93-108, cf. 90, 92-3, 99),

Horna's title for the second section of the second part of his book, "From Underdevelopment to Neocolonialism," is economic and political in nature, but the section in fact focuses on the importance of ethnic-racial relations and their connection with the emerging social hierarchy or stratification in the Spanish New World from the 16<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The legal-institutional structure of the *encomienda* and *repartimiento* stem from the Spanish Crown's interest in economic development and the Church's concern for Indians' conversion to Catholicism, and led to the ensuing stratification. The *encomienda* ordinarily involved a grant or concession to a colonizer or private entrepreneur of authority over land in exchange for specific contributions to the Crown's imperial projects (p. 119). To this was also added the idea of the *repartimiento* as the colonizer's-entrepreneur's right to share in (or to receive) an allotment of Indians' services (i.e., labor from the adjacent Indian communities "in exchange for the Indians' Christianization," p. 119). The potentialities for exploitation were manifold and by 1542 the Crown began to impose various restrictions on the *encomienda* which required 140 years more to become effective (see especially pp. 120, 122-3, 134, 142).

Although Horna never invokes the term "social stratification," he argues for the emergence of a social hierarchy based in part on skin color (the "whiter" or lighter the "better"), plus such other features as "wealth, power, and social position" (pp. 125-6). At the top of the social hierarchy were both the Spanish and their native-born (Western hemisphere) descendants or "criollos". They were mixed family clans with extended links among the merchant elite, landowners, and royal bureaucrats, presumably on both sides of the Atlantic, sometimes with a small admixture of Indian (i.e., Incan royal or noble) blood (p. 126).

But for the mass of Indians, many in large-scale labor operations

(e.g., agriculture, cattle raising, and especially mining), the working conditions were exhausting and onerous. Indian laborers were subjected to extreme hardships, worked harder, were "malnourished, and suffered epidemics" (p. 122) Physical activity was no longer enjoyable (as it was under the Incas). Some fled to the bush or jungles and the population declined drastically. Prior to the conquest, what is now Mexico had 25 million inhabitants, but a century later, it had only about one million. Peru of the Incan empire had 30 million, but by 1754 less than a million inhabitants (p. 123). As Indians vacated the land, to which they had no paper titles, only the Blancos (or whites) could lay claim (p. 143).

To compensate for the scarcity of native-born Indians, Spain imported as slaves as many as a million African Blacks (p. 118), which exacerbated race-ethnic tensions, prompting legal efforts at racial isolation to create "separate republics" of Spaniards, criollos, and Indians (p. 126). Revolts occurred, but to no avail (pp. 131-135).

As a result of the War of Spanish Succession at the beginning of the 18th century, France was able to place on the Spanish throne a Bourbon dynasty that sought to impose modernization measures in Spanish America; but their effort largely failed. A century later, with the Napoleonic invasion of the Iberian Peninsula and persisting resentments, "the passions for emancipation among the Iberian Americans" were ignited (p. 150). Still, the racial heterogeneity and fragmentation of the colored masses in Latin America allowed the Neo-European elites to retain socioeconomic and political hegemony (p. 148). The "Amerindians, castes, and Blacks remained the most exploited and excluded [of all identifiable groups] in Latin America" (p. 152).

Attention must now be turned to the (untranslated) Hispanic American title *La Indianidad*, which intellectually and affectively pervades and unifies Horna's book. A study of the meanings of the suffix "-dad" attached to Spanish words suggests the second word in the title might be rendered into English as "Indianicity, Indianness, or Indianhood." Presumably, it would encompass the crucial commonalities selected out from the specific (hereditary) physical and (learned) socio-cultural differences of specific Amerindian groups

No matter how perceptible the crucial traits are (and skin color or pigmentation is only one specific feature), their meanings must be learned over time through historic-socio-cultural experience with other similar (and dissimilar) groups. Less powerful or inferior groups who (sociologically) become an "out-group" must come to understand the

views (including prejudices) of their antagonist, the dominant "in-group." It may be true that Amerindians did not initially understand that the White (or Spanish dominant group) had, in effect, reduced all separate native groups (despite internal rank differences) to "one people [a general category], Indians" (p. 104). But in time, as conflict persisted, they came to display--as they did in Peru and Bolivia between 1720-1790--"a proto-Amerindian nationalism that involves collaboration among distinct ethnic groups and language families" (e.g., Quechuas and Aymaras, p. 132). Presumably, the cooperation of these latter exemplifies, if not full-blown, then nascent "*Indianidad*," though Horna does not explicitly say as much.

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