

Colonial Latin American Historical Review

Volume 10

Issue 2 *Volume 10, Issue 2 (Spring 2001)*

Article 6

4-1-2001

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Recommended Citation

Sánchez-Clark, Angélica. "Dorothy Tanck de Estrada, Pueblos de indios y educación en el México colonial, 1750-1821." *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 10, 2 (2001): 256. <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/clahr/vol10/iss2/6>

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Pueblos de indios y educación en el México colonial, 1750-1821. Por Dorothy Tanck de Estrada. (México, D.F.: El Colegio de México, 1999. 665 pp. Ilustraciones, mapas, gráficos, cuadros, bibliografía, índice. Precio no disponible.)

As Dorothy Tanck de Estrada explains in the prologue, this work began as a study of indigenous education based on ecclesiastical and government reports. She quickly discovered, however, that a study of the educational system would entail an analysis of many other factors, such as local politics and finances and the effects of the Bourbon Reforms on local indigenous villages. Thus, the result is an ambitious work that attempts to analyze indigenous rural society—approximately 4,081 *pueblos de indios*—in the twelve *intendencias* of New Spain between 1750 and 1821.

This book is challenging to read because of the variety of themes and the large geographical area that Tanck de Estrada attempts to discuss. Oftentimes the reader becomes overwhelmed by numerous—and sometimes superfluous—details and facts. Nevertheless, the author's painstaking research also makes this an invaluable contribution to the study of how these indigenous pueblos fared under late-colonial Spanish control. Her archival research includes several branches of the Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico City, as well as municipal, judicial, and cabildo records throughout Mexico. Again, the types of archival records she utilizes attest to the variety of subtopics she has addressed in this work.

Tanck de Estrada begins her work with a detailed description of José de Gálvez's *visita* to New Spain in 1765, bringing with him "el encargo de organizar las finanzas de todas las ciudades y villas de españoles y de los pueblos de indios" (p. 17). In each chapter, Tanck de Estrada effectively provides a broad historical context before proceeding with detailed explanations of local politics and finances. She also provides numerous tables that summarize the copious information she has unearthed regarding legislative decisions such as *reglamentos* and *ordenanzas*; specific cultural activities undertaken by the Republic in the pueblos; financial records of the various pueblos; and lists of actual schools and teachers throughout the *intendencias*.

Other researchers, especially those interested in colonial fiscal matters, will find her research invaluable.

It is not until Chapter 3 that the author delves into the title of her work: the education of the indigenous peoples of colonial Mexico. This chapter, and two of the following ones, also provide insights into how these indigenous groups felt about the educational system implemented in their pueblos and what types of resistance, if any, were apparent. Again, the author shows that indigenous attitudes toward the education of their children were directly linked to financial concerns. If the families had to pay for the schools and teachers, then there were more complaints. If, on the other hand, the *caja de comunidad* financed the children's education, then there was little opposition. Of course, Tanck de Estrada also notes other reasons for resistance, such as the fact that the children would be taught in Spanish and that, once in school, the children could no longer help their parents in the fields. Regarding the former, the author explains that, although the children were officially taught in *castellano*, the teachers did not ignore their native languages, which she writes were widespread at the end of the eighteenth century. In fact, she notes, several books written in Nahuatl were utilized in the schools, thus concluding that "parte de la enseñanza impartida en las clases se hacía en el idioma indígena" (p. 433).

In her conclusion, Tanck de Estrada states that, in 1803, 26 percent of the *pueblos de indios* in New Spain had schools and acknowledges that it was through the educational system that the use of *castellano* as a second language was reinforced (p. 582). Nevertheless, she also emphasizes that in the rural areas there were Spaniards, mestizos, and mulattos who were bilingual, that is, they spoke both Spanish and the local indigenous language. To her, this signifies that, although these groups spoke two languages, this did not imply that they lost their cultural identity. She also writes that "aunque un indígena hablara el castellano, no dejaba de ser indio ni de ser dirigente o habitante del pueblo" (p. 583). This line of analysis is, unfortunately, not carried out in the rest of her conclusion and epilogue. Instead, she reverts again to offering more details on the legal ramifications of independence on the indigenous groups, especially concerning their land, but offers no information about their formal education after independence.

In this impressive but complex work, Dorothy Tanck de Estrada has undertaken the task of compiling numerous archival records—both civil and governmental—to write a history of the education of the indigenous peoples of New Spain. Although she does offer important insights into the actual educational system implemented in the pueblos, oftentimes they are buried under the copious details concerning the Bourbon Reforms and the Spanish governing of New Spain, as well as government at the local level. In this regard, the title of the book is misleading because she focuses on much more than just the educational system in the pueblos, but this is a minor peccadillo.

She succeeds in portraying the indigenous peoples of New Spain not as submissive or as rebels, but as part of a dynamic community that "formaban parte de un proceso complejo de desarrollo y se adaptaban a los cambios propiciando alternativas, defendiendo sus intereses e intentando resolver conflictos internos" (p. 589).

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