bountiful nature. Edward Burnett Tyler accepted this view entirely, even though he noted that the women "have a harder life of it, with the eternal grinding and cooking, cotton-spinning, mat weaving and tending the crowds of babies" (155). As Siemens points out, most of the writers, with the notable exception of Frances Calderón de la Barca, were men who described the "pretty feet" and other attributes of attractive Veracruzan women but were almost uniformly disdainful in their impressions of the men. Some travelers moderated their tone when they entered the more temperate uplands toward Jalapa, where the geography appeared more European and the people were perceived to be of a better sort. Siemens notes that most writers were not particularly astute in the area of ethnography. They observed unusual customs but left little of substance beyond basic description. Five of them stated that robbery was a natural activity for Mexicans, and their observations on banditry and guerrilla activities reflected similar biases.

The disciplinary interests of Siemens, a geographer, are evident throughout the book. Additional research in recent historical works would have supplemented themes from the travelers' accounts related to commerce, economic development, banditry, insurgency, and ethnography. Even some older studies, such as Miguel Lerdo de Tejada's *Apuntes históricos de la heróica ciudad de Veracruz* (1850), would have cast light upon banditry or guerrilla activities in the state of Veracruz during the war with the United States. Siemens's occasional digressions from the nineteenth-century travel accounts and his observations on prehistoric tropical agriculture in Veracruz are interesting but not always relevant. Indeed, the book concludes with something of a plea for Mexican and other planners of tropical lowlands to end "ecological mayhem" and to consider restoring the ancient systems of canals and planting platforms. Despite a number of somewhat eccentric side trips, however, Siemens's study of these travel accounts illuminates a most interesting and turbulent period.

Bandoleros, abigeos y montoneros: Criminalidad y violencia en el Perú, siglos 18–20. Edited by Carlos Aguirre and Charles Walker. (Lima: Instituto de Apoyo Agrario, 1990. 393 pp., introduction, tables, notes, sources, general bibliography. $10.00 paper.)

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Distinguished Peruvianist scholars—among them historians, sociologists, and anthropologists—have combined decades, in some cases lifetimes, of rewarding research and insightful analysis to render this stimulating foray

into the social ambiance of brigands, cattle rustlers, runaway slaves, and bandit-patriots called *montoneros*, all stretched out over three centuries of national history. No short review can nearly do this volume justice; each essay merits focused attention, but in sum the works both utilize and critique the present theoretical contours of "bandit studies" as well as contribute new and important data and notions on the social phenomenon itself.

Carmen Vivanco Lara finds coastal banditry in colonial Peru to be just one of the ways in which popular classes rebelled against socioeconomic oppression, but it represented more than class antagonism: it was also a facet of the struggle for social control between urban colonizers and Indian leaders. Whatever their origins, bandits had no ideas of social reconstruction. They might criticize the system, but they had no plans to change it. In fact, they tended merely to reformulate the attitudes, behavior, and customs of the dominant landowners. The late Alberto Flores Galindo to a large extent agreed. For him, Peru's coastal bandits displayed no real political consciousness until independence. In this sense, they hardly resembled the bandits Fernand Braudel identified on the Mediterranean coast, who perpetrated such vengeance against the ruling groups.

According to Ward Stavig, natives around Cuzco in the late eighteenth century so disdained brigands—whose practices so violated their traditional values—that they solidified their communities against them, while Charles Walker concludes that bandits became increasingly politicized as Peru floundered into its nationalist period. Banditry contributed to the political instability of the epoch, but while it prevented conservative politicians from imposing neocolonial practices, the montoneros who had helped to bring about independence lacked the vision and cohesion to inaugurate a more liberal and just society of their own. In an original study along further ideological lines, Carlos Aguirre juxtaposes runaway slaves with bandits before independence and determines that the ex-slaves were truly political in their development of a counterideology, which included elements of political independence and personal freedom, while bandits, who failed to raise any political sympathy among popular groups, were no more than a symptom of social malaise.

In search of causation, Eric Meyer turns to ecology and links periodic outbursts of criminality around Ayachuco from 1852 to 1929 to environmental variables (June to December are high-crime months) as well as to what he terms the "contagion of crime" (heightened criminality follows more serious rebellions). Lewis Taylor emphasizes personal linkages and weaknesses in federal and local governments as critical factors, along with

ideology, regional economic change, and the impact of war in creating conditions propitious for banditry, while Eric Langer concludes from a detailed regional analysis in the Chuquisaca sector of Bolivia that such activities do not often occur in areas with cohesive Indian communities. Who does and does not turn to banditry depends not only on rural social structure but, more importantly, on the internal cohesion (or lack of it) of society.

In fascinating ways Benjamin Orlove, Carmen Escalante Gutiérrez, and Ricardo Valderrama Fernández take us into the lair (not to speak of the minds) of present-day cattle thieves: Orlove through interviews conducted with prisoners in the Cuzco jail, Escalante and Valderrama through testimonies obtained during five years of residence in Cotabambas Province. In both chapters we learn a great deal about banditry as custom, culture, and way of life. Here, brigandage is hardly at the margin of society; it is instead tightly woven into the social, economic, and political relationships of the region and has been for a very long time. In other words, it is part of peasant consciousness. For Orlove, it represents the attempt of peasants to construct a life for themselves in a system that is inherently hierarchical and oppressive. Escalante and Valderrama call it, more simply, a "strategy for survival." Orlove suggests that banditry might best be considered within the context of the local political *patrones* and, if so, believes that it would be worthwhile to weigh variations among those patrones. He evokes the full panorama of cattle rustling, with its pragmatic linkages across geographical and social boundaries. Escalante and Valderrama further the human drama. While the peasants ask the gods for good crops, they also ask them to protect them from being discovered at their work.

The volume concludes with a fine essay by Deborah Poole, who utilizes some of the fertile leads from Foucault and Gramsci to deconstruct the place assigned to native Peruvians in federal law. She concludes that, as well intentioned as the lawyers and intellectuals in the country's *indigenista* movement may have been in designing legal codes over much of this century, they have nonetheless, from a juridical and moral point of view, created a native who is a culturally and socially distinct human being, "immutable and silent, inextricably rooted in the telluric ambiance of the Andean countryside" (367).

The editors and authors of this volume are to be congratulated for their significant contributions to the debate at hand; they are to be sincerely appreciated for their scholarly invitation to us to broaden our approaches and thinking about a topic so central to the study of all dimensions of society over time.