

To be sure, there are attempts to reveal social divisions, but these are marred by confusion of terms—for example, that the colonizers “were torn by contrary desires: greed for gold, which represented power; and the longing for Utopia, which meant, at the time, Christianity in the form the friars conceived it. Intense greed and liberalism thus grew up side by side and could find no way of coexisting without unbearable tensions” (p. 22). Or again: Peninsulares “could not comprehend the pride of the Creole in having been born in the New World, of the *mestizo* for the very fact of *mestizaje*. Indian and Spaniard had not mingled but had fused to create a new psychology and a new thought. The independence wars were fought in order to bring a new special order into being” (p. 36).

Economic forces, which have drawn so much attention in recent scholarship about the late Bourbon period, are mentioned but never in depth. References to “Spain’s jealous guarding of her trade” (p. 44) are not accompanied by probing analyses of commercial patterns. Efforts to explore economic grievances of the Indians are disrupted by such explanations as that for *corregidores*. They were, we are told, “owners of tracts of land known as *encomiendas* or *repartimientos*” (p. 49).

Were it not for the extravagant claims on the dust jacket it might be unfair to measure this work against scholarly and heuristic needs. There is, however, too much inaccuracy and superficial interpretation to sustain the notion that this is “a significant, fresh analysis of a basic aspect of Latin American history.” The best that can be said for the book is that Pilling’s version of Mitre’s account of San Martín’s Andean crossing is retold with verve.

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Petión y Bolívar. Cuarenta años (1790-1830) de relaciones haitiano-venezolanas y su aporte a la emancipación de Hispanoamérica. By PAUL VERNA. Caracas, 1969. Oficina Central de Información. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Indices. Pp. 595. Paper.

This is an important book which will attract all historians interested in the Independence movement. The author was born in Haiti and educated in Venezuela, where he now lives and works. As the title indicates, the core of his book concerns the relationship between Alexandre Petión, president of Haiti in 1816, and Simón Bolívar, who appealed to him for assistance after having been driven from the South American mainland. The framework of the author’s discussion, however, is considerably wider than the names of his two

protagonists would suggest. His narrative begins with an analysis of the social and economic state of the French colony prior to 1789. The miserable lot of the slave population is described in detail, and the Negro revolt against the white exploiters is outlined, followed by an account of the rise of Toussaint Louverture. The fate of the Haitian leader is contrasted with that of Napoleon, who tried in vain to reconquer the island for France. Verna's approach to his subject gives the reader a considerable amount of information about the repercussions of events in Haiti on nearby Venezuela.

The main part of the book is devoted to the contacts between Petión and Bolívar in 1816. "Bolívar no fué a Haiti por casualidad," asserts the author (p. 157), and he is able to substantiate his statement with new documents which prove that Bolívar did not leave Jamaica on December 18, 1815, but on the 19th, and that he intended all along to go first to Haiti before returning to the mainland, whether to Cartagena or to Venezuela. It appears that Bolívar was well informed about Petión's generosity, and that he hoped to make Haiti the refuge for all those revolutionaries who had escaped the Spanish fury. Even the Spanish commander, Morillo, was aware of the strategic role reserved for Haiti, for he wrote: "Sé de positivo que la expedición ha de formarse en esta isla" (p. 161).

It had previously been known that Bolívar received substantial assistance from Petión with no strings attached except for the Liberator's promise to free the slaves in his native country, and Verna confirms and enlarges this information. He has also been able to assemble a list of the men and women who participated in the expedition which left Aux Gayes for the shores of Venezuela in the spring of 1816. Perusing this list, the reader is struck by the youth of most patriots. The author also confirms that Bolívar was accompanied by his "great and good friend," Pepita Machado, thereby adding considerable weight to the testimony of Carlos Soubllette in the matter of the Ocumare debacle of July 1816, which forced Bolívar to return to Haiti with another plea for help. Bolívar's own report of the disaster is reprinted in the appendix (pp. 525-532), but quite naturally he does not mention the possible influence of his personal affiliations on his military decisions.

Verna's narrative is composed in elevated and somewhat lyrical prose and gives evidence of the pride which he feels in Haiti's contribution to the South American Independence movement. This is understandable and evokes the reader's sympathy. However, we must differ from him in his evaluation of the Negro problem. He asserts that the Independence movement might have been successful in 1811

had Bolívar freed not merely his own, but all slaves at the beginning of the revolution. This seems a highly questionable thesis. Not only does it ignore the class character of the Independence movement, but also the fact that the slave population was in no way prepared to play a constructive part in the achievement of political and economic independence. To be sure, the liberation of the slaves had to come; it developed naturally out of the separation from Spain and the young countries' adherence to the democratic ideology. But this step could be taken only after independence had been won, as the case of Brazil amply proves. Verna's own Haiti shows the chaos which would have engulfed South America had the slaves been freed before either they or the country were prepared for their mancipation. Bolívar himself had certain ideas about this problem, a strange mixture of Machiavelli and humanitarianism, as his letters to Santander reveal.

Despite these differences of opinion, Verna's book deserves careful study, and his findings should have a significant place in the annals of the Independence movement.

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Historia del Congreso de Tucumán. By LEONCIO GIANELLO. Buenos Aires, 1968. Ediciones Troquel. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Indices. Pp. 576. Paper. \$4.60.

Leoncio Gianello's book on the Congress of Tucumán, which issued the declaration of Argentine independence, was first published by the Academia Nacional de la Historia in the sesquicentennial celebrations of that event. It has now been reissued in a commercial edition, and it clearly deserves the wider circulation obtained thereby. To be sure, it is not a work that one would sit down and read straight through for either enjoyment or intellectual stimulation. Yet it will probably long remain a standard reference on the Congress of Tucumán, or more precisely (as Gianello points out) the National Congress of 1816-1820, since in 1817 it transferred its sessions to Buenos Aires.

In general the author's approach is one of detailed narration rather than analysis and interpretation. He covers the antecedents, composition, and installation of the Congress; the declaration of independence and the selection of Juan Martín de Pueyrredón as Supreme Director; the work of the Congress as a constituent assembly and as legislative body; and its involvement in military preparations, diplomacy, and political factionalism. Naturally all highlights of the period are treated, either in direct connection with the work of the Congress or as essential background. Gianello solves the problem