

any discussion of how this intellect dealt with the issues and ideas of the day. Salcedo decries the use of Bolívar as symbol by the conservatives, but in his attempt to capture the Liberator for the cause of the left, he remains superficial and polemical.

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El gobierno español del despotismo ilustrado ante la independencia de los Estados Unidos de América: Una nueva estructura de la política internacional, 1773–1783. By MARÍA PILAR RUIGÓMEZ DE HERNÁNDEZ. Madrid, 1978. Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. 338. Cloth.

La independencia de los Estados Unidos de Norteamérica: A través de la prensa española. Edited by LUÍS ANGEL GARCÍA MELERO. Madrid, 1977. Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores. Notes. Pp. 299. Cloth.

These two studies were published in the Spanish monograph series devoted to various aspects of the independence of the United States. The series was prompted by a desire on the part of Spanish scholars to help the United States celebrate the bicentennial. Many, perhaps all, of the volumes in this series are doctoral dissertations designed to further the study of the independence movement and the post-independence period largely from Spanish sources and were written under the direction of eminent *catedráticos* at the Spanish universities.

The volume by Luís Angel García Melero viewed the independence movement in the British colonies of North America, 1763–1776, through the Spanish press. He confined his survey to the *Gaceta de Madrid* and the *Mercurio Histórico y Político* because they were the best and the most continuous of the eighteenth-century Spanish newspapers. He recognized that the press was closely controlled and censored by the royal government. Thus, coverage of the events leading to the Declaration of Independence was often limited for fear of the effect it would have upon the Spanish New World colonies. The principal topics covered were: the peace following the Treaty of 1763, Pontiac's conspiracy, the Sugar, Stamp, and Townshend Acts, the Boston Tea Party, and the Declaration of Independence. Quotations from the two newspapers are connected by commentary intended to provide continuity and some explanation of the events. Little or no effort is made to provide any interpretation or to draw any conclusions from the press coverage. There is a table of contents but no bibliography or index.

María Pilar Ruigómez de Hernández focused her study upon international politics during the decade, 1773–1783, and particularly the economic and commercial relations between England, France, Spain, and after 1776, the United States. An excellent introductory chapter outlines the thesis of her study, provides an able overview of the pertinent literature, and discusses the manuscript sources which she utilized. The book is divided into two parts: the economic, commercial, and political rivalry among the three European powers including the struggle for control of the Mississippi River Valley, an area of considerable interest to the American colonists; and the Spanish political system, the negotiations which finally brought Spain into the war, and the peace negotiations. Included are such topics as the roles played by the Conde de Florida-blanca and the Conde de Aranda, the Spanish–French alliance of 1777, the missions of Juan Miralles to the United States and that of John Jay to Spain, and the changing attitude of the Philadelphia Congress toward Spain. The bibliography is especially good for Spanish and English studies. There is no index.

Both books add substantially to our knowledge about the role played by Spain during the crucial years leading to American independence, 1763–1783. Students of the diplomacy of the American Revolution will find these books useful.

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NATIONAL PERIOD

The French Experience in Mexico, 1821–1861: A History of Constant Misunderstanding. By NANCY NICHOLS BARKER. Chapel Hill, 1979. University of North Carolina Press. Map. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Appendix. Index. Pp. xv, 264. Cloth. \$18.00.

The involvements of France in Mexico during the Pastry War and the more important imposition of Maximilian as emperor are both well-known events. Far less well-known is the chronic friction that existed between the two nations from the time Mexico achieved its independence. In this sound, well researched book, Professor Barker, professor of history at the University of Texas at Austin, has examined the decades from 1821 to 1861 in French–Mexican relations, both for their own value and as a basis for a better understanding of the 1860s. Materials from