

from pretentious to poetic, reveals the creole resentment of Spanish prerogatives and reflects the growing tension between Americans and peninsulars. By analyzing Diez de Medina's attitudes as well as his eyewitness accounts, the scholar can learn much about what the inhabitants of La Paz were doing and thinking when, "on the eve of Independence, enclosed between walls, they supported the rigors of an implacable Indian siege" (p. 52).

Siles has equipped this handsome edition with many useful tools. In addition to the "Estudio preliminar," there are copious notes accompanying the text, capsule biographies of the principal characters, a glossary, and indexes of names and places. Gunnar Mendoza's graceful prolog places the account within the context of other eighteenth-century archival materials. There are thirty-three pages of illustrations, including three maps of La Paz, portraits of Seguro and Bishop Gregorio Francisco de Campos, and photographs of colonial buildings. With these fine printed and pictorial accessories, the diary promises to become an indispensable and widely consulted source.

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Slavery, War, and Revolution: The British Occupation of Saint Domingue 1793–1798. By DAVID PATRICK GEGGUS. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982. Tables. Notes. Maps. Appendixes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xi, 492. Cloth. \$67.00.

When Louis XVI recalled the Estates-General to Versailles on May 5, 1789, he inadvertently set in motion a profound revolutionary process of dire consequences for himself and for France. He eventually lost his head, both figuratively and literally. France lost its premier colony, the tropical, staple-producing western part of the island of Hispaniola called Saint Domingue. If Europe was never the same after the French Revolution, the Western world was never the same after the Haitian revolution. And when the slaves became the masters of that ill-fated French colony in 1798, they not only laid the foundation for the emergent free Black republic (in 1804), but also sounded the deathknell for the system of slavery in the Western Hemisphere.

David Geggus has focused on the years of the British military occupation, when a faction of the French plantocracy opted to invite the English to defend (and eventually to restore) the system of slavery in the colony. This superb history is, however, far more than an accounting of

the complex and ultimately disastrous military events between 1793 and the expulsion in 1798. Based on archival research in England, Scotland, Spain, France, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and the United States, as well as an extraordinarily exacting reading of the extensive published accounts by contemporaries and historians, this work is a magisterial examination of both the colonial slave society on the eve of its disintegration and the profound consequences for British and European military and an imperial analysis of the late eighteenth-century colonial slave society.

Although Geggus supports the conventional view that every slave society was a potentially revolutionary society, he insists that the social situation in Saint Domingue was not especially explosive in the 1780s. The colonial society exhibited a “high degree of segmentation” (p. 30), but “contemporary correspondence shows the colonists pre-occupied not with imminent cataclysm but with the mundane realities of day to day life, which for many, in the short term was proving pleasantly profitable” (p. 32). Nevertheless, the author illustrates the ways in which segmentation along racial and class lines militated against any permanent alliances after 1789, when the political situation degenerated to open conflict. As in metropolitan France, it was the legal and legislative reforms—contemplated, perceived, or instituted—that slowly eroded the relative cohesion of the colonial society. *Grands blancs* resented proposals to change the laws of debt and to reform the local governing bodies. *Petits blancs* welcomed the dissolution of the Estates, but refused to accept the political equality of the *gens de couleur*, who, encouraged by the metropolitan Société des Amis des Noirs, advocated greater economic class democracy. The slaves, though slow to express themselves, wanted freedom. Yet the main point that emerges clearly from this study is that divisions of any sort were quite unclear in Saint Domingue, and throughout the revolution, the race and class wars became inextricably entwined with a civil war. At its most complex stage, no fewer than six sides were fighting simultaneously for elusive goals.

Geggus goes farther than any previous author to subject the development of the conflict to localized scrutiny, not merely at the level of departments, but at the level of parishes, towns, and estates. The result is a realistic, complex, and not glorified account of the heroism and capability of the leading combatants. He examines the recruitment, deployment, and expertise of the various contending forces; the state of urban and rural society and economy in both occupied and unoccupied zones; the responses of whites, free coloreds, and slaves to the changes; and the impact of the war on ideas about race, slavery, health, and the implementation of colonial policy. The chapter dealing with disease, mor-

tality, and morbidity is simply brilliant. The analysis of the physical destruction of property and consequent decline of production is impressive. And throughout, the author corrects the factual inaccuracies or assails the implausible assertions of a wide range of writers from Bryan Edwards and Moreau de Saint-Mery to Thomas Ott and Leslie Manigat. He poignantly exposes the anomalies not only of the war but also of the British occupation: in coming to defend slavery and the plantation system, the British accelerated their demise in Saint Domingue.

Despite a number of disconcerting aspects—the footnoting, the use of percentages without whole numbers, the repeated assertions of “chilly nights” of summer or cold as a factor of death in the mountains, or the accusation that “Rotberg and Ott confuse *Patriote* with *petit blanc*” (p. 35) without fully explaining terms—this book represents an outstanding contribution to the historiography of the Haitian revolution and slave society in the Americas. With considerable value for both specialists and generalists, it sets a high standard for all future attempts to explain the events leading up to the independence of Haiti and the distintegration of slave societies.

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El proceso de la convocatoria a Cortes (1808–1810). By FEDERICO SUÁREZ. Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1982. Notes. Index. Pp. 528. Paper.

Federico Suárez, one of Spain’s leading historians for over thirty years, is probably best known for his participation in the valuable series *Documentos del reinado de Fernando VII*. In the present, extraordinarily detailed study, he examines each position that the Junta Central and subsequently the first Regency espoused and each action they took that related to the convocation of the Cortes of Cádiz. Rather than developing a major new thesis, the author carefully presents a mass of material related to the theme.

Suárez uses documentation from the Archivo de las Cortes Españolas and the Archivo Histórico Nacional. This he supplements with letters, contemporary publications, and memoirs by members of the Junta Central, the Regency, and other eyewitnesses. Melchor de Jovellanos receives extensive attention as Suárez draws repeatedly on the Asturian’s revealing letters to Lord Holland and his other writings.

The strengths of the book include: its focus on the oft-mentioned, but inadequately understood, Junta Central and first Regency and especially