

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

on the call for a Cortes that both endorsed; the clear delineation of divergent points of view toward convoking a Cortes; clarification of the ongoing controversy over establishing a regency; consideration of the relationship of the Junta Central to the provincial juntas and the Regency to the Junta of Cádiz; analysis of the conflict between adherents to the “fundamental laws” of Spain and those who wanted a clear, precise “constitution”—in short, between men tied to the old regime and those who sought a profound break with the past; and a solid awareness of how much remains unknown about the protagonists of the years 1808–10.

One weakness arises from the book’s tight focus. Although Suárez occasionally mentions the military and financial travail of the years 1808–10, the reader often is left in a world of ideas too divorced from the conflict raging in Spain. A detailed chronology of political and military actions would have facilitated integrating the convoluted process of convoking the Cortes with the broader historical setting.

This book is essential reading for anyone interested in the Junta Central, Regency, and the Cortes of Cádiz. Students of the wars of independence in Spanish America will be especially interested in the discussion of proposed American participation in the Cortes.

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*Esclavos rebeldes: Conspiraciones y sublevaciones de esclavos en Puerto Rico (1795–1873)*. By GUILLERMO A. BARALT. Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracán, 1982. Notes. Tables. Bibliography. Pp. 183. Paper.

Baralt’s monograph grew out of a dissertation done at the University of Chicago on slave rebellions in Puerto Rico. The period covered is primarily from 1795 to the late 1840s, during which the majority of the organized revolts took place. This is followed by a chapter on individual acts of murder and rebellion, which characterized slave uprisings from the 1850s down to abolition in 1873.

The author has chapters describing each rebellion, beginning with those growing out of the Haitian revolution and ending with an analysis of the general characteristics of Puerto Rican rebellions. In addition to using the obvious secondary sources, Baralt has relied extensively on Puerto Rican archives, primarily the municipal records of Ponce, Manatí, Vega Baja, Bayamón, and Guayama, and of the Archivo General de Puerto Rico and the Archivo Histórico Nacional (Spain). Many of the descriptions of various rebellions are drawn entirely from archival material and hence constitute new data on nineteenth-century Puerto Rican slavery.