

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.

University of Missouri–St. Louis

MARK A. BURKHOLDER

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.

The author argues that as the sugar industry spread, bringing with it an expanded slave population in the early 1800s, revolts took place, often led by Blacks recently brought over from Africa and now wanting their freedom. As the sugar industry went into decline by the 1840s, working and living conditions deteriorated, providing additional incentive for revolts. All revolutions were crushed; punishment, particularly in the later period, was quite harsh; and fear of such revolts was always common in the white population. Baralt shows that slaves consistently resisted their bondage, first with rebellions and later by murdering owners. Rebellions were easy to quash because they frequently were small, the island too little to hide fugitives, and the government able to marshal sufficient strength quickly.

Slaves fought for their personal freedom and, less frequently, for that of Puerto Rico. They usually made detailed plans before a revolt and followed a common pattern of seizing weapons, killing owners, and fleeing their properties. Contrary to common belief, the government did not always execute rebels; officials also used banishment, imprisonment, and condemnation to public service.

What might have enhanced his study would have been a chapter-length analysis of how slave revolts in Puerto Rico compared to those in Cuba, other Caribbean islands, and in the southern United States. Such a comparison would contribute additionally to our understanding of the Puerto Rican situation. Regardless of this suggestion, Baralt has done a competent job.

IBM Corporation

JAMES W. CORTADA

NATIONAL PERIOD

On the Periphery of Nineteenth-Century Mexico: Sonora and Sinaloa 1810–1877. By STUART F. VOSS. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1982. Notes. Maps. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xv, 318. Cloth. \$17.85.

On the Periphery is a welcome contribution to regional historiography for northwestern Mexico during the formative period of the national republic. Basically a political history of the dominant class, Voss's study centers on the "urban notables" who vie with each other for control of state and district offices, their rivalry centered around the governorship. Socioeconomic data are well researched and used to supplement the political narrative, but not employed as the integrative element that could