

Spanish rebuilt the castle stronger than ever. Crown investment in defenses at San Lorenzo in the 1680s was mirrored in large military construction projects in Panama City and Portobelo during the same decade—surprising, considering that these same years saw the nadir of Spanish economic and military fortunes.

In response to heightened northern European activities in the area, of which Admiral Edward Vernon's 1740 attack was the most dramatic, further modifications to San Lorenzo were made in the late eighteenth century. The castle, however, was not attacked after the War of Jenkins' Ear, and even during the wars for independence, Panama's relatively peaceful emancipation from Spain made San Lorenzo's role in the struggle minor.

Although the bulk of Zapatero's study is based on archival research, the second part of the book reports in great detail the results of archeological work undertaken as preparation for the eventual restoration of the site. Excellent diagrams in this part of the book, together with numerous photographs of the fort, well complement the dozens of colonial-era maps and plans presented in the historical section. Indeed, the reason this study stands out from a voluminous corpus of historical literature on forts and battles is that Zapatero has successfully blended history and archeology to produce a fine work of scholarship. Drawing from these two disciplines, Zapatero's broadened perspective has resulted in a more sophisticated analysis of isthmian defense strategy and tactics. To be sure, *Historia del Castillo de San Lorenzo* is the most remarkable publication on New World fortifications to come out in recent years.

University of Florida

CHRISTOPHER WARD

*Commercial Relations between Spain and Spanish America in the Era of Free Trade, 1778–1796.* By JOHN FISHER. Liverpool: Institute of Latin American Studies, 1985. Figures. Notes. Appendixes. Tables. Bibliography. Pp. 158. Paper.

John Fisher's model minimonograph on *comercio libre* in the last quarter of the eighteenth century addresses at least two aspects of the era of Charles III. First, there were the efforts of Madrid authorities to capture colonial resources for peninsular growth and development. Second were attempts to counter English and French criticism that Spain was an economically backward imperial power, unable to supply its colonies in America with domestic manufactures. Hence in 1786 the government publicized statistics on its colonial trade indicating an impressive trade upsurge, followed by Prime Minister Floridablanca's "Memorial" (1788) lauding the "happy revolution in trade between Spain and the Indies" over the decade 1778–88. More recently, the issue of Spain's colonial trade has been revisited by Cuenca Esteban in this journal (1981).

Now in four chapters, a conclusion, and an extended statistical appendix of

82 tables drawing on manuscript materials at Simancas and Seville, Fisher quantifies shipping, volume, and value of Spain's exchanges between peninsular and colonial ports, 1778–96. An introductory chapter sketching colonial commercial policy precedes a methodical analysis of sources both general and by peninsular port trading with the American colonies; a tantalizingly short third chapter assays the peninsular response to colonial demand (including the composition of exports categorized as “national” as well as “foreign” or reexports), and the main colonial ports of destination. By far the longest chapter examines the colonies' response to commercial policy changes in terms of the volume and type of their exports, colonial ports of origin, and peninsular ports of destination, and presents an economic survey of the principal colonial areas and analysis of the impact of *comercio libre* on colonial manufactures. Fisher has relied primarily upon data from ships' registers (cargo inventories of 2,812 departures, 4,012 arrivals) at peninsular ports for value and composition of cargo, supplemented with three of the annual trade surveys available, i.e., those of 1778, 1783, and 1784. The published Balanza del comercio of 1792 Fisher finds misleading; here Cádiz's exports were undervalued by 24 percent, far below what individual ships' registers filed at Cádiz reveal. *Avalúos* (official values) established in the *reglamento del comercio libre* of 1778 are his basis for computing export values and real fluctuations in annual exports. As Fisher notes, Cádiz's data are deficient in one key respect: exports there “simply give the gross value . . . of national and foreign products” (p. 20)—a notable shortcoming since 76 percent of all peninsular exports and reexports to the colonies passed through that port. Five peninsular ports, Cádiz, Barcelona, Málaga, Santander, and La Coruña, accounted for 97 percent of peninsular exports. A major portion of Cádiz's exports by value (36 percent) was shipped to New Spain and another 7 percent to Havana; roughly two-thirds of Cádiz's exports went to Spain's Caribbean and circum-Caribbean possessions.

Colonial response generally mirrored the patterns of metropolitan exports. Veracruz (32 percent) and Havana (23 percent) dominated shipments to the peninsula, far outstripping cargoes from the River Plate (12 percent) and the Pacific (14 percent). Cádiz (84 percent) and La Coruña (7 percent) were the principal peninsular ports of destination with their largest percentage of colonial staples coming from the Caribbean and circum-Caribbean ports. Three colonial areas, New Spain, Cuba, and Peru, supplied three-quarters of Spain's colonial imports. Predictably, the most valuable colonial exports remained the “most traditional of imperial products,” precious metals (principally silver), and consequently the “richest . . . most productive” of Spain's American colonies was New Spain (p. 73). Precious metals constituted fully 56 percent of the combined colonial imports of Cádiz and Barcelona during 1782–96.

On balance, peninsular and colonial responses to change in commercial policy appear impressive. Fisher's calculations show that the average annual value of exports to America, 1782–96, was 400 percent higher than in the base year, 1778,

while average annual exports from colonies to metropole rose 1,000 percent. There was growth, but is this synonymous with development? For 12 years, 1785–96, so-called “national” goods shipped to America averaged 68 percent of the total, uncommonly high given colonial consumer demand for imports of non-Spanish textiles. No doubt some expansion of “national” products occurred, probably reflecting shipments of alcoholic beverages, some domestic manufactures, and a large volume of reexports of foreign goods mislabeled as “national.” Second, Cádiz continued as the “channel through which passed to America the bulk of foreign manufactures.” We can appreciate why Cádiz’s authorities failed to supply details of the composition of its exports. Fisher logically concludes that Madrid “failed in its prime aim of promoting a significant alteration in the structure of the peninsular economy” through “an industrial regeneration . . .” (p. 88).

Clearly growth of colonial exports was due to silver mining, followed far behind by sugar, hides, cacao, and tobacco production. In this sense, the imperial government succeeded in generating a surplus of colonial staples for European distribution. Does this success indicate a shift of capital and entrepreneurial skills from a major colonial economic sector, the woolen manufacture? Fisher argues that this industry in New Spain and Quito, for example, suffered a long-term contraction in the eighteenth century, antedating the impact of *comercio libre*, and due to large-scale smuggling and growing consumer preference for cottons at the century’s close. Fisher’s painstaking work underscores that the legacy of *comercio libre* accentuated the Spanish colonies’ role in the Atlantic economy as producers of colonial staples and importers of Europe’s (not Spain’s) manufactures.

Princeton University

STANLEY J. STEIN

*El contrabando holandés en el Caribe durante la primera mitad del siglo XVIII.* By CELESTINO ANDRÉS ARAUZ MONFANTE. 2 vols. Caracas: Academia Nacional de la Historia, 1984. Notes. Tables. Photos. Index. Pp. 352; 344. Paper.

*Et audietur altera pars*—hear the other side also—is a Roman adage which Celestino Andrés Arauz Monfante should have heeded when he wrote his extensive two-volume study of the Dutch contraband trade in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Citing an impressive amount of research in the Spanish archives (Archivo General de Indias in Seville, Archivo General de Simancas, the Archivo Histórico Nacional, the Biblioteca Nacional, and the Biblioteca de la Real Academia), the author inexplicably failed to consult the ARA (Algemeen Rijksarchief) in The Hague, the Netherlands. To have done so would undoubtedly have resulted in a less one-sided evaluation of this controversial topic.

A similar observation applies to the bibliography, which contains more than