

*Una tribuna para los godos: El periodismo contrarrevolucionario de Miguel José Sanz y José Domingo Díaz.* By JULIO BARROETA LARA. Caracas: Biblioteca de la Academia Nacional de la Historia, 1987. Bibliography. General Index. Pp. 140. Paper.

This essay deals with two controversial figures of the independence period in Caracas: Miguel José Sanz and José Domingo Díaz, founders of the short-lived *Semanario de Caracas* (1810), Venezuela's first independent newspaper. Sanz, a wealthy  *mantuano*  and a bureaucrat, supported the independence movement and participated in the government of the First Republic.

Díaz, a respected physician and a journalist of obscure social origins, remained an embittered monarchist. From his later exile, Díaz missed few opportunities to slur the independence movement and the patriots, Bolívar in particular. Not surprisingly, Venezuelan historiography, favorable to Sanz, has dealt unkindly with Díaz. His *Recuerdos de la rebelión de Caracas*, published in Spain in 1829 and reprinted by the Academia Nacional de la Historia in 1961, was heavily footnoted for the purpose of discrediting the accusations that Díaz so freely leveled against the patriots. Barroeta Lara advances a different interpretation, using as his sources the *Semanario de Caracas*, reprinted by the Academia Nacional de la Historia in 1959, as well as other primary and secondary material. He argues that, despite their political differences, Sanz the republican and Díaz the monarchist shared a common fear of the masses and social unrest. The *Semanario* thus allowed them to voice their conservative social views and influence public opinion with different aims in mind.

This is not a novel interpretation of the independence movement in Caracas. Yet events in the lives of Sanz, Díaz, and other contemporaries allow Barroeta Lara to highlight some of the passions and contradictions of the time: e.g., Díaz, the royalist, was slighted for his lowly social origins by his political opponents, the revolutionaries. Barroeta Lara's style is at times impressionistic, and certain assumptions are made for which there is no clear proof. Yet the book remains of value for those interested in the independence period.

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CARMEN ANHALZER

*Las Venezuelas del siglo veinte.* By MANUEL CABALLERO. Caracas: Grijalbo/Testimonios, 1988. Index. Pp. 304. Paper.

This volume by a prominent Venezuelan intellectual and historian consists mainly of three chapters on three milestone events: the mass protests in Caracas in 1936, which, although harshly dealt with, induced the López Contreras government to quickly announce far-reaching reforms; the 1945 coup d'état which brought Acción Democrática (AD) and its leading figure, Rómulo Betancourt,