

French commerce, and two on the refining industry. Particular stress is placed on the Ancien Régime environment, in which this often strikingly modern business was conducted. As a brief overview, the work succeeds admirably, relating the parts to the whole, providing perspective, and sketching the main lines of development. The author touches on a wide variety of topics—production techniques, productivity, legislation, trade patterns, family histories, etc.—and the research ranges widely: collections in 20 French archives are cited.

Inevitably in such a general work, depth is sacrificed to breadth, and the attempts to gauge plantation size, demographic rates, indebtedness, or profitability will not satisfy all readers. The impossibility, as Stein sees it (p. 104), of distinguishing between the sugar and coffee trades also leaves one wondering just how much the problems of colonial commerce in the 1780s specifically related to sugar production. In particular, the sections dealing with the slave-labor force suggest unfamiliarity with plantation society and with the differences between Saint-Domingue and the French Windward Islands. Failure to distinguish colonial from metropolitan currency, and use of the terms “Gold Coast” (for *Côte d’Or*) and “workshop” (for *atelier*) cause confusion in places. The slave trade chapter curiously makes no use of the Mettas’ *Répertoire*. A reference (p. 27) to the Portuguese allowing trade on the southern Angola coast is intriguing—or should this read “northern”? Minor quibbles apart, Stein has produced a compact survey, with clear lines of interpretation and many fascinating nuggets of information. It is well written, and has no counterpart in either English or French.

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Lords of the Tiger Spirit: A History of the Caribs in Colonial Venezuela and Guyana, 1498–1820. By NEIL L. WHITEHEAD. Providence: Foris Publications, 1988. Maps. Tables. Figures. Illustrations. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. vii, 250. Paper.

The Caribs of lowland South America comprise one of the many indigenous groups on the frontiers of early Latin America who have long deserved greater attention, but whose history suffers from inadequate sources. As they left no written records of their own, the Caribs’ story must be pieced together from self-serving European accounts. Neil Whitehead here compiles, from archival, printed, and ethnographic materials, a surprisingly detailed chronology of three centuries’ protracted violence, gradually spreading disease, proliferating missions, and expanding trade, as the Caribs of the greater Orinoco basin faced the encroaching Spanish, Dutch, English, French, and even Swedes. Sensitive to slanderous charges of Carib savagery, Whitehead strives to reconstruct a balanced view of their experiences during the frontier period of 1498–1700, conquest era of 1700–71, and the final episodes before Venezuelan independence.

Whitehead's study is particularly critical of both "the uniformly bad treatment" the Spaniards gave the Caribs and "the evil image given to them by the Spanish chroniclers" (p. 3), although it does also consider something of the negative impact of other European colonizers and critiques some of their records. The sources, difficult as they are, might have been mined more for the crucial historical differences between Spanish approaches to Carib and Arawak societies—which Whitehead too easily dismisses—to produce a more even-handed picture of colonization in the region. Ethnohistorical studies of other parts of early Latin America are revealing how the organization of local societies (e.g., sedentary vs. semisedentary) was often as important as various European groups' goals (e.g., peripheral trade vs. permanent settlement) in determining the various colonial structures that emerged. This question aside, Whitehead's book makes an admirable stab at capturing an elusive history of a valiant people which should interest historians of indigenous peoples and colonial experiences of the entire hemisphere.

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NATIONAL PERIOD

El desgaste de las levitas: Entre el Quebracho y la elección de Batlle, 1886–1903.

By ENRIQUE AROCENA OLIVERA. Montevideo: Barreiro y Ramos Editores, 1989. Tables. Graphics. Pp. 206.

The political and social transformations which took place in Uruguay in the second half of the nineteenth century resulted from a long process. Aided by supporting documents, Arocena Olivera examines the intimate network of that process; its complex plotting; the multiple political, cultural, and sociological factors involved in its conception and development; and, above all, its interrelation with the economic and demographic vicissitudes of Uruguayan society.

This book covers the period from the Quebracho Revolution—which, though defeated on the battlefield in March 1886, marked the end of military authoritarianism and thus made way for antimilitary constitutionalism—to José Batlle's first inauguration in 1903, a starting point of modern Uruguay. The author explains the main events and underlying developments of those years, using interdisciplinary methodology and drawing on a wide range of data, conversations, and socioeconomic references.

The Quebracho Revolution, promoted by citizens of various political hues but of the same homogeneous social and cultural extraction, was intended to end Máximo Santos's dictatorship. In it could be seen again the dichotomy between