

Part 1 deals with slavery and the slave trade in Africa. It includes four pieces, treating the Western Sudan, the abolition question in Northern Nigeria, the Angolan trade, and demographic impacts across Africa. These pieces are the work of accomplished Africanists, and they present an unsentimental vision of the subject. Part 2 features four chapters devoted to the proposition that slavery and the slave trade provided capital and other advantages that assisted either Britain or New England in achieving industrialization or simply economic growth. Each is a gloss on the Eric Williams thesis of a half-century ago. Curiously, Engerman, who has argued against this view, is left out: part 2 is unanimous.

Part 3 is a grab bag, with chapters on the Dutch slave trade, Antigua in the 1720s, dehydration as a cause of death on the Middle Passage, salt retention as an essential for survival on that passage, and finally the relationship between abolition and racism in Britain and France. The piece on the Dutch slave trade by J. Postma touches on Spanish America briefly but still more than any other chapter in this book; greater detail is available in Postma's monograph *The Dutch in Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600–1815* (1990). The two chapters on dehydration and salt retention complement each other well and offer a new vision of the Middle Passage; they are the most original contributions in the book. Biologically informed history of this sort provides more new insight than any of the other approaches in the volume, and promises a "usable past" in the sense that health problems today (such as hypertension among descendants of Middle Passage survivors) may prove easier to confront with a knowledge of relevant history.

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*Ilustración y derecho: los fiscales del Consejo de Castilla en el siglo XVIII.* By SANTOS M. CORONAS GONZÁLEZ. Madrid: Ministerio para las Administraciones Públicas, 1992. Illustrations. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. 549 pp. Paper.

The first obvious problem with this book is its uncomfortably large format. At 10 by 12 inches, and in paperback, it is unwieldy. More than half the volume, moreover, consists of a documentary appendix of laws and other texts by eighteenth-century legists, printed in full solemnity (with their original footnotes in Latin, for instance), that could more digestibly have been incorporated into the body of the book. The publication was issued by a government ministry, which no doubt liked the sonorous roll of nearly three hundred pages of official administrative prose. A final problem of presentation, small but nonetheless irritating, is the regular misspelling of words in languages other than Castilian, which one might charitably attribute to deficient proofreading were it not for the consistency of the misspelling. In German, for example, we are offered *Aufklärung* and *europäische Privatrechtsgeschichte*.

Once these obstacles are overcome, the book emerges as an acceptable and thoroughly straightforward summary of recent historical work on the Council of

Castile and, in particular, its attorneys general (*fiscales*). It must be emphasized that the author does not make any study of the council as an institution, nor does he deal with its composition and powers. The book is limited strictly to summarizing the most famous of the documents drawn up by the well-known *fiscales* during the period. Due attention is therefore given to the Pedimiento Fiscal of 1713 by Melchor de Macanaz, and above all to the numerous legal measures dealing with the church, the land question, the Jesuits, and other matters by the most famous *fiscal* of the century, Campomanes.

The emphasis given to the textual aspect of these measures rather than to their historical or administrative context stems from the author's focus as a professor of legal history whose intention is to demonstrate the active part played by the *fiscales* in the shaping of government policy. The reference in the title to the Enlightenment is to be understood exclusively in the Spanish sense of government-inspired reform measures, commonly called *regalism*. The Enlightenment as such makes no appearance here. In the final chapter, the author assesses the *fiscales'* contribution to the reformism of the Bourbon regime. There is also a useful bibliography (with attendant misspellings).

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*A Distinctive Industrialization: Cotton in Barcelona, 1728–1832.* By J. K. J. THOMSON. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Maps. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xix, 347 pp. Cloth. \$89.95.

This study carefully dissects a critical but understudied phase of Catalonia's industrial development by focusing on the cotton industry from the establishment of calico printing to the first steam-powered factory. It was during this period that the industry made the transition from commercial to industrial capitalism. J. K. J. Thomson's work refines, amplifies, and modifies Pierre Vilar's interpretation of Catalonia's economic expansion in *La Catalogne dans l'Espagne moderne* (1962), and thereby complements Vilar's landmark three-volume study.

Chapter 1, a superb introduction to the issues and controversy surrounding industrialization processes in Catalonia, is followed in chapter 2 by a brief history of wool cloth production in Barcelona. Chapters 3 through 6 trace the chronological development of the cotton industry from its foundation through its expansion and consolidation during the second half of the eighteenth century. Chapter 7 analyzes the incorporation of spinning into the industry at the turn of the century, and the final two chapters focus on a pivotal period of development occasioned by the War of Independence, post-crisis development, and the introduction of new technology in the 1830s. Finally, the book addresses more general issues of interpretation raised in the introduction, such as the extent of continuity between the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century manufacture of cotton in Barcelona. It also