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Scott Eastman and Natalia Sobrevilla Perea (eds.), *The Rise of Constitutional Government in the Iberian Atlantic World: The Impact of the Cádiz Constitution of 1812* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2015), pp. xi + 304, $64.95, hb.

The bicentennial commemorating the creation and implementation of the Spanish Constitution of 1812 has proven to be a productive anniversary. Long dismissed as a failure and, consequentially, neglected as a fertile area for scholarship, the constitutional experiment that emerged from the debates at Cádiz has fortunately captured the attention of a new generation of historians during the past two decades. Thirteen of these scholars have brought their unique perspectives together in this creative new work, *The Rise of Constitutional Government in the Iberian Atlantic World*, to engage each other in a wide-ranging assessment of what they consider to be the legacies of the Cádiz Constitution. Inspired by recent historiographical trends in such fields as Atlantic, imperial, and local history, political culture, as well as gender, ethnic, and subaltern studies, the contributors to this volume make a powerful collective argument for the importance of the Cádiz charter as a milestone in the evolving relationship between the state and its subjects/citizens across the length and breadth of the 'Iberian Atlantic World' during the nineteenth century.

A challenge to essay collections is the difficulty of drawing broad conclusions from contributions that often share only the most tenuous of connections. In this case, the chapters are linked by their efforts to explore diverse facets of a common experience: the creation, reception, implementation, and impact of the Cádiz constitution on the territories of the Spanish empire and the wider Atlantic world. Overall, the authors seem determined to avoid grand pronouncements beyond affirming in their own ways the importance of the charter as an agent of change. In a statement that could serve as an epigraph for the entire volume, Marcela Echeverri notes in her essay on the reaction to the constitution in Popayán, New Granada, that '[i]t is not possible to generalize regarding its impact, which always was a product of local circumstances and went beyond the charter's institutionalization and foreseen consequences' (p. 105).

Therefore, at a fundamental level this is a work that underscores and reinforces the centrality of context in historical interpretation. Except for Brian Hamnett's introductory essay, which links the constitution to its medieval roots and traces the evolution of Spanish legal traditions up through the Enlightenment to the debates at Cádiz, and Gregorio Alonso's capstone chapter, which explores the second implementation of the constitution between 1820 and 1823, the remaining 11 authors stake out separate, yet occasionally overlapping thematic and geographic positions from which to demonstrate the relevance of the Cádiz experiment to the emergence of the modern world. In the process, the contributors to *The Rise of Constitutional Government in the Iberian Atlantic World* shed light on many corners of the Spanish empire and beyond during the early nineteenth century.

With respect to topical coverage, Rafael Marquese and Tâmis Parron draw from the Atlantic-studies paradigm to explore the impact of the constitution on regional views of slavery, asserting that movements in neighbouring Atlantic societies influenced the Spanish debates about race. Similarly, Reuben Zahler places gender at the centre of his analysis of the impact of Cádiz and argues that while the constitution avoided any direct discussion of women's rights it nonetheless 'accelerated progressive trends' in the Atlantic world. Marcela Echeverri and Natalia Sobrevilla Perea highlight the

role of race in the reception of the constitution in New Granada and Peru, respectively. Their essays focus attention on two strongly royalist areas of the empire and underscore the way in which the implementation of the constitution was shaped by local experiences. David Sartorius draws on the extended colonial history of Cuba to link the Cádiz reforms to an increasingly modern understanding on the island of abstract concepts such as sovereignty, national identity and citizenship. Roberto Breña for New Spain, Jordana Dym for Central America, Natalia Sobrevilla Perea for Peru, Marcela Ternavario for the Río de la Plata, and M. C. Mirow for Cuba and Florida all find common ground by exploring the process of internalisation of the Cádiz political culture during the Imperial Crisis. Each of their chapters reinforces the important point that Americans were not in fact passive recipients of the Spanish political reforms. Instead, colonial societies shaped the constitution according to their own experiences and needs. Even the Río de la Plata, as Ternavario shows, found its national-era constitutional debates influenced by Cádiz, despite the fact that Buenos Aires launched its bid for autonomy from Spain as early as 1810.

Despite the variation among the individual essays, the contributors make explicit attempts to address a number of common questions that thread their way through the chapters and serve to bind the volume together. For example: How did the Cádiz debates contribute to the emergence of liberalism? Where does the Cádiz charter fit in the political transition between the traditional and the modern world? How did the key figures in the debates understand the implications of their reforms? To what extent did the Cádiz system influence political trends across the Atlantic world? To what extent was it a successful experiment? How were marginalised groups affected by it? How did they shape its implementation? Finally, what was its immediate and long-term impact on the Iberian world?

Anyone hoping to grapple with the legacy of Cádiz must consider these questions. *The Rise of Constitutional Government in the Iberian Atlantic World* does not seek to provide definitive answers – but this is its overarching merit. The value of this collective work is a product less of the individual conclusions than in the innovative approaches taken by its authors as they investigate small parts of the larger picture. They demonstrate above all that the Cádiz era is a fertile area for research and that modern scholars have powerful analytical tools at their disposal for unlocking its local and regional significance.

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Matthew J. Smith, *Liberty, Fraternity, Exile: Haiti and Jamaica after Emancipation* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), pp. xiv + 409, $32.95, pb.

In recent decades, scholars have pushed for an approach to the Atlantic world that moves beyond and between political and linguistic borders in order to understand the movement of people and products across economic and legal jurisdictions. This approach has opened up the field to allow for innovative research that highlights the fluidity of the geographical space that constituted the Atlantic world from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

Matthew Smith's well-researched and beautifully written *Liberty, Fraternity, Exile: Haiti and Jamaica after Emancipation*, reveals the extent to which the Atlantic must