

G. BÉAUR, *Histoire agraire de la France au XVIII^e siècle. Inerties et changements dans les campagnes françaises entre 1715 et 1815*, Paris, SEDES, 2000, pp.320.

G. Béaur's book has two aims: to present an overall picture of the principal problems which have arisen in historiography concerning eighteenth-century France, and to try to be as objective and realistic as possible when considering the results of a complex wealth of publications. Béaur has succeeded in both these aims. In fact, although the material to be considered is abundant and well-written and Béaur shows that he has an immediate and detailed knowledge of a literature that ranges from the works of March Bloch and Ernest Labrousse to those of E. Le Roy Ladurie and Michel Morineau, he is extremely cautious when faced with the complexity of the questions posed, and prefers to leave many questions open rather than give exhaustive answers which would still be dubious in that research is still continuing.

The book consists of eight chapters which deal with property and owners, collective practices and the "peasantry", productivity and agricultural production, taxation and prices. The author arrives at this overall picture after considering the fundamental classics, *thèses d'état*, and more recent books and articles which go beyond the problems of growth and the upheaval of the Revolution in France and go forward into a European dimension which must surely be taken up by other scholars. The fact is that what happened in eighteenth-century France is related to what rights of ownership meant in the *ancien régime*, to the peasant communities' resistance to the process of bourgeois appropriation, to the growth of agricultural production in connection with population movement and productivity factors (capital, labour, techniques), to tax levies and seigniorial revenue, and to price trends until the crisis at the end of the century. It is however true that this theoretical picture found, in the *exagone* of developments, its own particular evolution, which can hardly be ascribed to other European contexts, especially to England, to which Béaur pays particular attention in his conclusions.

Revising and interpreting the results of the intense documentary research that in France has characterised recent decades (not to mention all the historiography which has followed the French Revolution), Béaur suggests the following answers. Property and owners appear closely interwoven in the eighteenth century, although in an aristocratic and feudal setting which ultimately exploded in the French Revolution because of the contradictions within it. It has proved epistemologically useful to propose a model that considers, also for later research, at least six broad subdivisions: 1) the clergy; 2) the aristocracy; 3) the bourgeoisie; 4) the artisans; 5) the peasantry; 6) municipal property. None of these categories has the same importance all over France. For example, in maritime Flanders bourgeois property and small-holders' property are more

important, whereas in other regions, such as Beauce and Haute-Marne, aristocratic property is more important. It is evident that the land concentration process and the subdivision of peasants' land into tiny lots had a different trend during the Revolution. Which social class was to come out of this turbulent period the winner? Judging by the most recent studies, only a fraction of the peasant owners (the richest peasantry, especially the great *fermiers* and *laboureurs* of the Paris Basin, studied by Jean-Marc Moriceau and Gilles Postel-Vinay) took advantage of the lands put on the market, i.e. the lands belonging to the clergy and the noble *émigrés* which were put up for sale. On this point, Béaur is even more reductive than a historiographical tradition that has exalted the extent of the sale of national property, reducing the percentage to about 10% of national land (previous assessments, often the result of hasty research, had suggested a figure of about 15%). There is no doubt that these operations led to a more dynamic legal structure, which the peasant masses took advantage of in the long run. However, at the turn of the century, they were not the people who benefited most.

In fact, a similar pattern is to be seen in the issue of municipal ownership and collective rights, in that the peasant masses were not at all willing to accept the suppression of municipal ownership in favour of constituting a bourgeois ownership. And this is a point where historiography has drawn erroneous conclusions, even though the restraining influence of the poor peasants on the triumphant bourgeoisie has been stressed. Béaur opportunely emphasises the contradictory process of the French *paysannerie*, stressing the continuity with a past which had seen the monarchy and the aristocracy acting in unison with the peasant masses to preserve public property and collective rights.

The other great chapter of French agrarian history is production growth and agricultural productivity growth, and the possibility of succeeding in calculating this with sufficient approximation, especially in relation to that other fundamental constant, population growth (cf. Michel Morineau). Analysing the estimates suggested by J.-C. Toutain, J. Goy and E. Le Roy Ladurie, Béaur once again adopts a very cautious stance, estimating the increase in agricultural production at 30% (Toutain had supposed 60% and Goy and Le Roy Ladurie 25-40%). Regarding the calculation of the percentage of land that agriculture gained from drainage and *défrichement* operations compared to the effective agricultural area, Béaur's conclusions are among the most pessimistic, calculating a percentage of only 4% in the last fifty years of the *ancien régime*, a percentage totally disproportionate to the agronomical debate in the eighteenth century and to physiocratic expectations.

The last chapters are devoted to no less delicate issues, such as the trends in prices, salaries, agricultural revenue and the economic situation, all aspects which were interlinked to the ultimate causes of the pre-revolutionary crisis and to its coming to a head. The decades which preceded the French Revolution had witnessed a relative stability of real salaries and peasant income until 1760-

1768, compared with agricultural prices that had appeared to be rising until then. Consequently the pressure of income and rent prices, the fiscal crisis and an institutional framework that no longer answered the needs of an expanding economy and a growing society all led to collusion between the productive classes and the Revolution crisis.

Béaur has the merit of having traced it with great competence through debate, research and comparisons which, although they leave many conclusions hanging in mid-air and although they could surely benefit from analyses of the situation in Italy and Germany, deserve widespread attention from European historians.

SALVATORE CIRIACONO
University of Padua

L. DE ROSA (ed.), *La Roma del Duemila*, Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2000, pp. XV-414.

Among the six volumes that make up *Storia di Roma dall'antichità a oggi*, which are being published by Laterza with its usual good taste, the one under review is perhaps the only one that focuses on the economic and social aspects of Rome's development. Yet perhaps it is only logical that economic aspects are highlighted in a study of a city like Rome which in the course of just a few decades has almost tripled its population, not with an increase in births but as a result of continual and increasing immigration.

The book is not a collection of disparate essays on Rome which are unconnected to each another, but a carefully chosen volume of works which aim to provide a valid and detailed explanation about Rome's transformation in the fifty years spanning the liberation from the Nazi occupation to the present day. It therefore also provides insights into Rome's conditions and prospects as it steps onto the threshold of the new millenium.

The main theme which binds all the chapters of the book is the effect that such rapid and substantial immigration has had on the city. These immigrants came originally from areas in the Lazio interior and above all from southern regions and were largely made up of persons belonging to the lower social classes who arrived in Rome convinced that they would find work there and the answer to their search for security and well-being, although artists, writers, poets and intellectuals were also drawn to the city, encouraged firstly by the cinema and then by television which offered them stimulus and gratification. This immigration movement was constant and significant up to about 1981, after which it faded. Since then Rome has become the destination of migratory flows mainly from the Third World, so much so that Rome is now the city with the highest number of work permits issued to immigrants from these countries.

We have said that this conspicuous and rapid immigration was what triggered

the numerous and complex changes affecting the city. Politics, the Church, local government, demography, urban and economic structures have all been deeply affected by the intensity of the phenomenon, as is borne out by the eight chapters, the editor's introduction and conclusions. The chapters moreover are the work of distinguished scholars and include G Talamo, A. Riccardi, A. Golini, M. De Nicolò, P. Avarello, M. Brutti, F. Ferrarotti and F. Erbani.

The rapid and substantial flow of immigrants has had an effect on the city's housing, encouraging illegal building and speculation in 'brown-belt-areas'. This has helped to deprive Rome of any cohesive and coherent urban framework for development and had given rise to a city which is made up of a large number of outlying areas that have mushroomed in an urban sprawl. Moreover, through the increase in spending for public facilities and the urbanisation of the areas involved, it has also affected the City Council's financial situation, with its rapidly increasing deficit and the growth in its indebtedness. In addition it has had an influence on the city's demography and, by driving away the inhabitants towards the outskirts or towards towns in the province within easy reach, it has caused the abandonment of the old town centre. It has affected political struggles since the conditions of the new arrivals gave impetus to disruptive social and ideological movements and Rome became the stage for subversive and bloody conflict with its vain attempt to topple the ruling class. It has also had an effect on the political parties themselves which, regardless of whether they are right wing, left wing or in the centre, have been unable to put a brake on and regulate the disorders in the housing situation. It has had an influence on production since, not finding employment in public administration, immigrants embarked on a growing number of old and new enterprises in industry and services thereby reducing the share of public administration and building in the city's gross domestic product.

In this way, in the period under study Rome has transformed itself from a city which was mainly made up of office workers into a city with industrial development (see M. Brutti's chapter) and especially the growth in services for enterprise. This widening of the productive base has not only quadrupled the city's income between 1951 and 1991, surpassing considerably the national average, but it has also profoundly changed the city's traditional image of itself, transforming it into a less clearly defined city but bringing it more into line with other European capitals. The hardships and needs generated by these intense social and economic changes have also had their effects on the Church, giving rise to a movement from below among the minor clergy and forcing dioceses to actively concern themselves with the needs of the inhabitants in the outlying areas.

At the beginning of the year 2000, despite these various and complex changes, the city is nonetheless far from having a definitive configuration. The political situation is still uncertain and the effects that both the intensification of European unification and the adoption of a federal system within Italy will have on the city's political, administrative and economic conditions are yet to be seen.

The city's physiognomy may be altered further since the outcome of either of these two processes might deprive it of its powers of intervention, thereby reducing its operative capacity.

This book stands out not only for the thoroughness of its analysis and for the wealth of documentation, much of which is completely new, but also for the large number of appendices which provide very interesting material for economic and social historians and for anyone who wishes to understand more about the complex realities of contemporary Rome.

ANTONIO MESSINA,
Rome.

P. FERNÁNDEZ PÉREZ, *El rostro familiar de la metrópoli. Redes de parentesco y lazos mercantiles en Cádiz, 1700-1812*, Siglo veniumo de España editores S. A., Madrid, 1997, pp.311

Studying the family units of an old-regime town and the values underlying the family, which is what Richard Herr defines as the *human* aspect of economic history (prologue, p. X) is not unuseful for a better understanding of the mechanisms regulating a community's trade and economy. Paloma Fernández Pérez is well aware of this and in the book under review, which is a re-elaboration of her doctoral thesis, she emphasises the importance of an interdisciplinary approach which spans economic and social history, anthropology, historical demography, family and private ("privada", p. 28) history. By using the different methodologies of each discipline, Fernández Pérez does, indeed, manage to achieve her aim, namely that of examining family ties and analysing the role that they play in the formation of merchant networks in Cadiz in the eighteenth century (Introduction, p. XVII).

At that time Cadiz occupied a central position in trade between Europe and the New World; from the time of its founding by the Phœnecians... it had always shown a natural predisposition for trade, having a poor water supply and being situated in a rocky area which made it unsuitable for agriculture. The turning point came in 1717 when the Spanish kings decided to move the *Casa de Contratación* and the *Consulado* - two vital institutions in trade with the Americas - from Seville (a town that was difficult to reach by sea and that had been confronted by a number of epidemics in the previous century) to Cadiz which enjoyed a strategic geographical position as far as trans-Atlantic trade was afflicted. It is not fortuitous that from 1717 trade in Cadiz began to expand, reaching very high levels in the mid-eighteenth-century and declining only towards the end of the century when other political, military and economic factors caused Spain to lose its primacy in trade with the Americas.

Cadiz was therefore a town which prospered thanks to merchants who

came from different parts and who had varying backgrounds which helped to make Cadiz such a cosmopolitan town; this emerges clearly from the first two chapters (*La comunicad mercantil de Cádiz. Composición y fuentes para su estudio and America y el comercio colonial gaditano: movidad masculina y feminización de la ciudad*). Consequently Cadiz was a much more open town compared to other places in Spain and was more tolerant both from a religious and cultural point of view. Tolerance, of course, was something which people engaged in trade could not easily relinquish, as Fernández Pérez shows. Tolerance, moreover, facilitated social mobility and enabled women to take on the role of head of the family and to participate more actively in public life in the absence of husbands and fathers (p. 55).

This role was completely unheard of in societies which at that time were anchored to more traditional principles and it led to a change in the very values of the family which Fernández Pérez sets out to examine in the subsequent chapters: on the one hand there were the values imposed by the church and the Spanish monarchy and on the other those adopted by the merchant community in Cadiz which reflected the individual family strategies and the different mentality of the merchants who were engaged in trade with the Americas.

Chapter three (*Discursos oficiales y prácticas matrimoniales*) examines the rules about marriage which were in force in the eighteenth century. Firstly Fernández Pérez looks at the thinking of the Catholic Church about such matters, thinking that supported the principle of the free will of the contracting parties as regards the validity of the marriage tie in contrast to Lutheran doctrine which subjected the validity of the marriage to paternal consent in order to guarantee social peace. The ideas of the Catholic Church changed towards the end of the eighteenth century when they came more into line with the new view adopted by the Spanish monarchy: while at the beginning of the century it had supported the principle of the free consent of the parties, in the last few decades of the century it placed paternal consent at the centre of marriage as a guarantee for family stability and therefore as a guarantee for the whole country's peace and stability.

Paternal consent had a vital function for the mercantile elite in Cadiz since marriage afforded a good opportunity for concluding alliances among families to enhance their wealth. This is borne out by the practice of secret marriages which the mercantile elite adopted frequently. In this way the families of couples were able to stipulate more advantageous agreements concerning their property and sons were able to marry women to whom they were bound by economic and professional interests but with whom it was impossible to legalise their relationship due to the great difference in age or the existence of very close family ties. Above all, marriages conducted in secrecy enabled families to be discreet about personal matters and their wealth, especially before the curious eyes of public opinion.

Thus, we can conclude, in the words of the author, that marriage between members of the mercantile elite was generally a "premeditated and well thought-out strategy" (p. 114). Forming a family and undertaking trading activities were, in fact, two closely related aspects and the families of the couples were called upon to give their approval and even to organise the marriage. And, at least for most of the second half of the eighteenth century, young people - with few exceptions - accepted the decisions of their parents concerning their fate since individual interests were subjected to those of the family to ensure the continuity of the mercantile house. In any case the young person had little to gain from entering into conflict with the family group which gave him his own identity and better prospects for commercial success. Understandably, in return he submitted himself not only to family decisions but also to the rules and values of the group.

Rules, values and merchant behaviour in eighteenth-century Cadiz are examined in the fourth chapter (*La formación de las redes de parentesco y la consolidación de lazos mercantiles*) through the study of strategies and marriage alliances which they fostered. A good marriage was the best way to get established in the town and to undertake a career in trading. In this respect Fernández Pérez points out the very close connection between marriage and trade and examines the various strategies adopted by the merchants, stressing the changes in trends which took place over the years. In particular, as time went on men began to get married at an older age since they preferred firstly to strengthen their business and financial situation as it became easier to make fortunes in trade; in this way they would be in a better position to choose the family they were to marry into. The situation was different for women who generally got married at a young age. According to Fernández Pérez this was not because - as occurred in agricultural communities - females were an economic burden upon families but because marriage was often a way of getting talented men into the woman's family group and to get them to participate actively in the family's business, particularly in the cases in which sons had been sent out of town in order to learn merchant techniques or to pursue other professions.

This use of sons-in law was one of the main strategies adopted by the commercial elite in Cadiz to guarantee the continuity of mercantile houses. Such continuity was made possible through the total obedience of young people regarding the decisions taken by their fathers for the good of the group and which, together with family harmony and union, were among the most widely respected values of the merchants in Cadiz.

It is not surprising therefore that the mercantile houses which fared better throughout the troubles of the period and were able to prosper in their trade were precisely those who managed to turn the rules about inheritance to their advantage. There were many ways for passing on inheritance to heirs intact, although in the end these did not produce the hoped-for results, either because following the crisis in colonial trade many houses went bankrupt or because

in the first few years of the eighteenth century the new generations among the mercantile elite began to act with greater independence with respect to the values and criteria imposed for generations by their forebears.

The turning point came towards the end of the eighteenth century as we can see in the sixth and final chapter (*Acumulación de capital mercantil y cambio social en el último cuarto del siglo XVIII*): while throughout the century obedience and the respect for family strategies had been the criteria chosen by the mercantile elite in Cadiz, from around 1770 younger generations began to assert their independence. As far as women were concerned, this was due to the fact that, following the migration of men to America, they were often forced to administer family property at first hand and also because, compared to the past, women now enjoyed a more solid financial situation. Men, on the other hand, now had greater professional opportunities outside of trans-Atlantic trade in sectors like the army and they could also draw upon the wealth accumulated by their fathers' trading activities, wealth which enabled them to live off rents.

In conclusion a strong spirit of independence began to be shown by individuals in relations with their family group. This was made possible by the climate of openness and tolerance which prevailed in the town and which often led to a rift between the individual and the family unit to which he belonged. The effects of this trend on family values, which emerge clearly from the present book, were, on the one hand, the triumph of "contemporary liberal individualism" (p. 251) and, on the other, the inevitable decline of the mercantile community in Cadiz. This decline was aggravated by economic and political factors such as the crisis in the town's Atlantic trade at the end of the eighteenth century and the wars between Spain and Britain in 1779-1783 and their repercussions.

IDAMARIA FUSCO
University of Calabria

B. HAUSBERGER: *La Nueva España y sus metales preciosos. La industria minera colonial a través de los libros de cargo y data de la Real Hacienda, 1761-1767*. Vervuert Verlag-Iberoamericana, Frankfurt am Main - Madrid, 1997, p.323.

This book is an excellent example of the information which it is possible to extract from the financial administration registers of the Spanish colonies in America. Hausberger uses the *libros de cargo y data* - which recorded day by day the income and expenditure of the colonial treasuries - and from the huge mass of documentation he extracts the data concerning the revenue from the taxes on gold and silver production collected in the principal mining areas of New Spain: Bolanos, Durango, Guadalajara, Guanajuato, Mexico, Pachuca, San Luis Potosi, Sombrerete, Zacatecas and Zimapan. He is thus able to reconstruct the fundamental economic aspects of the silver-mining process in Mexico in the

second half of the eighteenth century, and calculate the overall production between 1761 and 1767. The text is supplemented by numerous charts and tables illustrating different aspects of the mining industry: the technologies used, the production of the single areas, the seasonal fluctuation of production and the type of miners and traders involved.

In the first chapter, Hausberger illustrates the different sources for the Spanish financial administration and explains why he chose to use the *libros da cargo y data*, the ponderous but extremely analytical registers kept by the officials of the *Real Hacienda*, rather than the so-called *cartas cuentas*, the annual summary of movements in the treasuries, a source which economic historians use much more because it is very much easier and is particularly suitable for documentation over a long period.

The second chapter gives a general outline of silver production in Mexico in the colonial period, together with a comprehensive analysis of the existing bibliography. Hausberger considers the beginning of mining activity and then the crisis in the seventeenth century which he puts down to the different trends in production structures in Mexico and Peru, concluding that Mexican mining production's recovery and growth in the late seventeenth century were due to geographical expansion after the discovery of new mines, which provided mineral of excellent quality, while the yield of the mines at Zacatecas diminished. The chapter ends with the expansion of the mining industry in the eighteenth century.

Chapter three is the most important chapter in the book, with its analysis of the cost-return ratio in the Mexican mining industry. As well as calculating the overall production of Mexican silver between 1761 and 1767, Hausberger addresses the issue of the margin of profit generated by installations in the different mining areas. The mines' profitability depended on several factors: the pureness and therefore the value of the silver; the quantity of gold obtained as a by-product of silver; the distance from markets for supplies and for selling the metal; the availability and therefore the cost of the work-force; the price of mercury, which was necessary for the amalgam method which does not require smelting. Much of the chapter is concerned with the technologies applied to obtain silver: although the purest silver, and therefore the most valuable, was obtained by the cold amalgam method, the high capitalization this technique required meant that it could be applied only in the richest mines, thereby rendering them very sensitive to trends in the international market. On the contrary, the cheaper hot-fusion methods, with or without mercury, which gave a less pure silver - *plata de cazo* and *plata de fuego* respectively - and so with smaller profits, made it possible to keep outlying or rather poor mines working.

Chapter four examines the regional distribution of the mining industry, and for each region Hausberger calculates the quantity and the value compared to the overall production. As has already been stated, the lesser amount of capital required for the extraction techniques used allowed the Mexican mining industry

to be more widespread and to have a greater degree of flexibility compared to mining in the Andes. The Mexican mining industry was therefore able both to be relocated in regions that were a long way from its markets and to survive bad periods, should they arise.

Chapter five is about the people who smelted the silver. Their details are all meticulously recorded in the *cargo y data* registers. Hausberg has calculated how much metal was produced by every worker of the 1,244 people who smelted metals in the period he studied. He has pointed out that they were active in more than one mining area when that is the case; he has reconstructed the biography of the more important people involved, with a masterly combination of quantitative and qualitative information.

The last chapter is about the seasonal fluctuations in mining production, a subject which has not attracted much attention from scholars. The length of the production period varied from zone to zone: it was affected by the organisation of transport, by the climate in the different mining regions, by the repercussions of non-working days on work in the mines, and by the relationship between agricultural cycles and mining cycles. Great importance is attached to this latter factor, in that both the mining industry and agriculture used the same people as their work-force.

The book ends with abundant appendixes comprising: 1) a comparison of the data obtained with the totals in the source; 2) a list of the mining sites where silver was mined (146 in all); 3) the production of each of these mines, indicating the amounts of gold, the amounts of silver obtained, using the various types of mineral technology, and the percentage compared to total Mexican production; 4) the list of treasuries, together with the indication of the mining centres in their respective territories and the amount of metal recorded in each treasury; 5-6) a list of the people who recorded the metal and the owners for whom it was recorded; 7) the place of origin of the people mentioned.

FRANCESCO D'ESPOSITO
University of Chieti

H. TOVAR PINZON, *La estacion del miedo o la desolacion dispersa. El Caribe colombiano en el siglo XVI*, Editorial Ariel, Bogota, 1997, pp.256.

IDEM, *El Imperio y sus Colonias: las Cajas Reales de la Nueva Granada en el siglo XVI*, Archivo General de la Nacion, Bogota, 1999, pp.208.

Both these books reveal two aspects of the academic publications and the personality of H. Tovar Pinzon, the famous South American scholar. In stating the fundamental characteristics of the process of conquering the lands that today make up the Republic of Columbia, *La estacion del miedo o la desolacion dispersa* recounts the tragedy and the grief of the native peoples in

the face of the radical cultural, ecological and social disintegration brought by the presence of the European conquerors, whereas *El Imperio y sus Colonias* consists of impersonal tables - preceded by an ample introduction explaining the methods used - which summarize and make available for scholars the rich store of information held in the account registers of the state treasuries of the Nuevo Reino de Granada in the sixteenth century. However, the contrast between the two books is merely in appearance, because the second book provides most of the documentary material on which the first book is based, and, although it was published at a later date, the second book is the prelude to the first.

We shall therefore consider firstly *El Imperio y sus colonias*, in which Tovar Pinzon reconstructs the income and expenses for the years of the sixteenth century - for which documentation has survived - of the state treasuries in the territory of present-day Columbia: Santa Maria la Antigua del Darien (1514-1526), Cartagena (1533-1599), Santa Maria de los Remedios de Rio Hacha (1539-1599), Santa Marta (1543-1546 and 1576-1580), Santa Fe (1538-1599), Cali (1551-1562), Cartago (1551-1560), Popayan (1569 and 1595-1599), Santa Fé de Antioquia (1546-1588 and 1595-1597), Caccres (1595) and Mariquita (1590-1607). It is an important work, fundamental for research concerning the reconstruction of the trends in public finances in the Spanish Empire. As well as the new information which he extracts from the archives, Prof. Tovar presents a methodological contribution which is not to be ignored.

Tovar Pinzon states that the aim of the book is to fill a gap in research on public finances and the production of precious metals in the New World. He argues that the production and exports of some countries belonging to the Spanish colonial empire, such as, for example, the Antilles and Columbia, are underestimated by scholars who always concentrate on the economic events in the great silver-producing countries, Mexico and Peru. Even the important research project on the colonial *Real Hacienda*, in which scholars of the calibre of J. Te Paske and H. Klein were involved, has ignored Nueva Granada. According to Tovar Pinzon, this omission is responsible for a serious lacuna in their work because, although from the seventeenth century onwards the Nueva Granada remittances were less than 10% of those of Mexico and Peru, at least until 1559 Nueva Granada sent more gold to Spain than Mexico and Peru did.

However, Tovar Pinzon does not limit his criticism to research on colonial finances and the remittance of precious metals to the imperial treasury. He aims to contribute to an approach that considers Spanish America as a whole and does not exclude the history of regions deemed uninteresting because they did not export precious metals. He criticises those who make generalisations and then apply them to the whole of America, maintaining that, in a world which is undergoing globalisation, the history of small countries takes on a dimension of its own in the face of attempts to homogenize the world.

Columbia, rich in gold, is obviously not one of those countries that never exported precious metals to Europe, both through private traders and through

the Crown. Aiming to quantify the amount of coinable metal sent to the King of Spain from the Nuevo Reino de Granada, in 1984 Hermes Tovar Pinzon began to work on the accounts of the Columbian colonial treasuries. Since almost all records of the Spanish financial administration have been lost in America, Tovar Pinzon went to Seville to analyse the records kept there, thus beginning a systematic study of the accounts of the Columbian treasuries for the three centuries of colonial rule.

For the sixteenth century, Tovar Pinzon used an extremely difficult source: the audits the central government inspectors carried out on the New World financial administration officials' registers to check their correctness. Audits were carried out when the treasury official finished his mandate or, in exceptional circumstances, when *juez de residencia y de cuenta* were sent out to the American colonies to check on the above-mentioned officials of the *Real Hacienda*, especially the *tesorero* and the *factor*. The *rendiciones de cuentas*, preserved in the *Contaduria* fund in the *Archivo de Indias*, are priceless treasures for historians, because the detailed daily recording, item by item, of the accounts of the treasurers and the royal factores permits the researcher to discover information about events and situations concerning every aspect of life in those regions, as well as the details of income and expenses in the American treasuries, for much of the colonial period.

Before examining the problems of methodology which must be faced to obtain all the data this source contains, Tovar Pinzon looks at what could be called the geography of the Nuevo Reino de Granada's financial administration. In the general reorganisation of the American area which the Spanish carried out in accordance with the administrative structure and the economic activities they were gradually imposing on the territories they had conquered, the network of treasury offices was extremely important. In Columbia, as in the rest of the New World, in order to collect taxes and the various contributions levied on the conquered peoples - and on the Europeans who emigrated to those regions - the Spanish created a complex two-level system of treasury offices: secondary treasuries, which were opened mainly in outlying districts with some important economic resource, such as, for example, mining or pearl-fishing, and main treasuries located in the principal colonial cities. Secondary treasuries were connected to main treasuries, in that they sent them the funds that remained after local expenses had been covered. There was a third level, consisting of the treasuries at Santa Fe and Cartagena, which collected all the funds to be sent to Spain. And so, in the sixteenth century, the Santa Fe treasury collected taxes from its own area and collected what was left over after expenses from the secondary treasuries of Pamplona, Remedis, Mariquita, Cartago and Cali; similarly the Cartagena treasury collected the balance from Mompoix, Caceres and Antioquia; and the Santa Marta treasury collected the balance from Valledupar, Tamalameque and Tenerife. The Santa Fe and Cartagena treasuries then sent all the money from the whole country to Spain.

After having outlined the physical geography of the Nuevo Reino de Granada, Tovar Pinzon illustrates the method he used to reconstruct the income and expenditure movements in the Columbian treasuries and to present them in a way comprehensible to the modern reader. To achieve this end, Tovar Pinzon had to carry out a mammoth task. In the source, treasurers' accounts are not kept on an annual basis but cover longer periods, sometimes periods of ten years. Tovar Pinzon has processed almost all the accounts so that they are on a yearly basis, thereby making it possible to reconstruct the annual income and expenditure of the Columbian treasuries in the sixteenth century. Within these annual accounts, Tovar Pinzon has rendered homogeneous the different treasuries' items of income and expenditure, so that a comparison can be made of the different kinds of income and expenditure in different areas and at different times.

Another big problem the author had to face was reducing the many coinages used in the sources studied to accounting units that can be compared with one another. It is a well-known fact that there were many accounting units in the Spanish colonies in America, according to the type of metal which was predominant - gold or silver - and to their pureness. In Columbia, during the period of conquest, together with the 22-23 carat *buen oro*, whose *peso* (the accounting unit) was worth 450 *maravedis*, there was also gold of different levels of pureness and even alloys of gold and copper, whose accounting unit, still called *peso*, could vary from 450 to 40 *maravedis*. Some accounts were kept in silver coins and some even in pearls. Prof. Tovar Pinzon has the merit of supplying us with a compass to find our way in this sea of numbers.

There is another difficulty in Tovar Pinzon's source which he has overcome with his very careful examination of the original. Since, as has been stated, before arriving at its destination (either to be spent in America or to be sent to Seville), money could be recorded - first as in-coming, then as out-going - in more than one treasury, it is very easy in a later reconstruction to count the same sum several times and to consider it as an item of income or expenditure in more than one account. However, Tovar Pinzon's analysis of the accounts enables us to avoid this difficulty and, more importantly, to go back to the economic activity that was taxed, thereby revealing the reality of the country's economic life. And here we come to themes dealt with mainly in *La estacion del miedo o la desolacion dispersa*.

The handling of the first period of the Spanish presence in the New World is very effective. At this time, contacts between conquerors and conquered were marked by the former robbing and plundering the latter, and by what Tovar Pinzon calls "looting economy". The source used allows him both to quantify the value of the booty the conquistadores plundered during the main expeditions both on the Columbian coasts and inland, and to illustrate the contacts with the native communities, contacts characterised by the exchange of axes, mirrors, knives and trinkets for gold. Particular emphasis is placed on the following period, which the author calls the *época del repartimiento*, a period when the

Indians were shared out, i.e. assigned to individual *conquistadores* who had the exclusive right to frequent their villages to swap gold for trinkets: an economic system whose most deep-rooted dynamics are still unknown, in that no serious research on these mechanisms of dominion in the Caribbean has yet been published.

Tavor Pinzon then goes on to examine the following period, the *encomienda* period which followed after the period of plunder and *repartimiento*. The natives were entrusted body and soul to an *encomendero* and the *encomienda* became the heart of colonial life. Its fundamental characteristic stemmed from the monopoly that came to exercise control over the work force, making the development of mineral economy possible. The book stresses once again that in the sixteenth century Columbia was an important gold producer - the *encomienda* system made the collecting of gold possible - although Columbia did not have big mining centres as in Mexico and Peru. Gold was found in rivers and streams and was gathered by small and medium-sized enterprises: the difference between here and the big exporting countries lies in the size of the different economies. There were no large transactions, but there was a small, steady flow which supported agriculture and trade.

In fact, despite being scattered throughout the region, mineral activity in Nueva Granada gave rise to a lively and dynamic trading activity which was centred on a large town with a port, Cartagena de Indias. Cartagena, together with Veracruz, Portobelo and la Habana, was the trade axis in the Caribbean, and when the convoys arrived, caravans of traders from the whole of South America flocked to Cartagena. We do not know the entire volume of the goods that changed hands during the colonial period, but Tovar Pinzon reconstructs the value of trade imports by means of the yield of taxation on them, the *almojarifazgo*. Other important ports, which Tovar Pinzon studies, were Santa Marta and Rio Hacha.

In conclusion, we must not forget the important contribution these two books make to the study of public expenditure in the Spanish colonial world. Contrary to general belief, public remittances in Seville were not the American lands' only contribution to the imperial coffers: gold from the colonies was shipped to Spain only after payments had been made - which, as well as those for expenses of local commitments, might involve the Empire as a whole. In fact, if we want to gain a real understanding of the colonies' contribution to Spanish and imperial politics, we should calculate these expenses together with the remittances. This is what Prof. Tovar does for the Columbian treasuries, after having demonstrated how a large part of colonial public resources remained in America to pay the expenses of the bureaucracy and of war, so that often only a small part was sent to Spain.

FRANCESCO D'ESPOSITO
University of Chictl

V. VÁZQUEZ DE PRADA, *Historia económica mundial*. Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, Pamplona, 1999, pp. 412.

Among the major syntheses of economic history published in the last few years, this work by Vázquez de Prada deserves a special place for several reasons but above all for the very effective approach it has adopted. The historical and economic development from Paleolithic times to the present day is very well reconstructed.

Vázquez de Prada is not the first writer to tackle such a complex and difficult task. A few years ago a similar attempt was made by Rondo Cameron.¹ Like Vázquez de Prada, Cameron undertook the same enormous and painstaking work of synthesis and interpretation and also obtained laudable results. However, the two works differ greatly. In his division of material Cameron seems to be less concerned with chronology and more interested in issues strictly related to present-day trends in economic history. For example he often uses concepts like economic structure and structural change, the logistics of economic growth, factors of change, the prerequisites and concomitant factors of industrialisation, strategic sectors, growth models and so on. As a result, although the arguments are clearly set out, the material is divided up into as many as fifteen chapters, each one of which rarely exceeds thirty pages. Considering that the book also contains illustrations, geographical maps, diagrams and tables, the contents of each chapter are smaller than would appear.

Vázquez de Prada's approach is different. His work is condensed into five large chapters (Antiquity, the Middle Ages, European State Economies, Industrialisation and Capitalism and the World Economy in the Twentieth Century), the last of which is divided into two parts, one dealing with the inter-war period, the other dealing with the period following the second world war. In one respect Vázquez de Prada's approach reflects the traditional divisions of total history. Basically he mediates between the major divisions of general history (Ancient, Medieval, Modern and Contemporary) and the theories about economic history which have been unfolding since the nineteenth century. In any case, the chapters are wide ranging, each of them structured around a number of paragraphs that stand out for the lucidity and the thoroughness with which the subject is examined and which are always related to theories about economic history and its terminology. The picture that emerges about economic development is not only European but also colonial and post-colonial. More recent than Cameron's work, Vázquez de Prada's book comes down to the immediate present and examines the latest events concerning Europe, namely the Euro and the Central European Bank.

Overall, as in the case of Cameron's work, this is a good handbook of

¹ R. Cameron, *A Concise Economic History of the World from Paleolithic Times to the Present*, (Oxford University Press, New York-Oxford, 1989), pp.XIV-437.

economic history which both students of economics and of history in the wider sense will find useful. The book might also be stimulating for those who search for answers about the present in the past. The only weak point is the bibliography which although substantial and rationally classified is limited to works published in English and Spanish. Reference to studies in Italian, French and German is scarce, although this shortcoming could easily be obviated in a new edition which is sure to follow.

LUIGI DE ROSA
University of Naples - Parthenope