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*De Navarra a Buenos Aires, 1580-1810.* Por Susana R. Frías y César A. García Belsunce. (Buenos Aires: Instituto Americano de Estudios Vascos, 1996. 238 pp. Gráficos, cuadros, notas. Precio no disponible.)

*De Navarra a Buenos Aires* is a stellar example of the promise and limitations of a modest revisionist movement within historical circles, namely the growing awareness of the inadequacy of regarding all Old World-born-protagonists in Latin American colonial history as the same. Iberian cultural and linguistic reality is considerably more complex. Indeed, Catalans, Valencians, Castilians, Basques, Navarrese, Asturians, Galicians, Extremadurans, and Andalusians, not to mention Canary Islanders, met and commingled in the New World. Whether in the New World or the Old, the various Iberian peoples were at times either allied protagonists or hostile antagonists. It is therefore simplistic to regard the above-mentioned groups as homogeneous architects of monolithic social, economic, and political arrangements and policies.

Using Argentine archival and published secondary sources, Susana R. Frías and César A. García Belsunce closely examine the lives of 156 Navarrese. The already small sample is further divided into those sixty individuals who emigrated to Argentina during the Hapsburg period (1550-1713) and the remaining ninety-six Navarrese who lived in the city of Buenos Aires during the Bourbon period (1713-1810). The analytical part of the book encompasses slightly more than fifty pages, while the remainder is dedicated to *noticias biográficas*, or individual thumbnail biographies. The biographies vary greatly in length and substance, depending on the economic success and/or social prominence of the individual.

Strengths of this work include an excellent discussion of the methodological difficulties inherent in prosopographic research. Delineation of the genealogical connections that link together Navarrese and Basques into wider extended families, as well as the ethnically configured business ties of

some individuals, demonstrate the power of an Old World regional association's perspective in discerning the New World activities of at least some *peninsulares*. Also to be commended, though dampened by the small size of their sample, is the authors' use of demographic and family history approaches (fecundity, nuptiality, mean age at marriage, household size, and composition) in the analysis of their data. Frías and García Belsunce conclude that the men married at a relatively late age (30.4 years in the Bourbon period), that they usually selected *criolla* wives (largely non-Navarrese/Basque but proportionately more than might be expected given the small number of Navarrese immigrants), that a marriage between a daughter and a Navarrese/Basque was viewed positively by *criollo* parents, and that the unions produced large numbers of offspring (a mean of 4.9 children in the Bourbon period). Although none of this information is surprising, any qualified quantification is welcomed research. Again, while the sample contains individuals from across the social spectrum, from shoemakers to viceroys, it is heavily weighted with important personages. Clearly, the Navarrese, mostly merchants (several with ties in Cádiz) and administrators, constituted a part of Argentina's social elite.

Regionalism within and without the Navarrese regional rubric receives only limited attention and deserves more. The authors note that Navarra itself may be readily divided into five districts and two broad cultural divisions—the Hispanic center and south versus the Basque north. There is also considerable emphasis throughout on ties between Navarrese and Basques. There is no discussion of the extent to which the latter generalization may be applied to individuals from "Hispanic" Navarra. Similarly, at one point we are told of the unions of the three daughters of an Asturian with three Navarrese as an example of how well Navarrese suitors were viewed "aún entre quienes nada tenían que ver con lo vasco-navarro" (p. 57). In fact, whether in Cádiz or Seville, as well as in other Latin American destinations, Basques, *montañeses*, and Asturians formed a *norteños* complex interlaced with kinship and business ties. This is evident when reading David Ringrose's recent work, *Spain, Europe and the "Spanish Miracle" 1700-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), or even Pío Baroja's *The Restlessness of Shanti Andia* (New York: New American Library, 1962). The extent to which this northerner complex plays out in Buenos Aires is not evident from reading *De Navarra a Buenos Aires*.

This reviewer failed to detect a "natural" reason for distinguishing the Hapsburg period from the Bourbon one. It did permit basis for some internal comparison in the sample, but again the conclusions were more forced than startling. The most salient fact is that proportionately more Navarrese than non-Navarrese Basques arrived during the Hapsburg period, a situation that was reversed during the Bourbon one. However, the significance, if any, of this is elusive.



It was also a bit disconcerting to realize that the analysis leaves off in 1810. If, following Caro Baroja's lead, the authors contend that qualitatively the eighteenth century was "la hora navarra" in both Spain and the Empire, it is equally true that the nineteenth century was the *siglo navarro* in terms of emigration to Argentina. The volume of emigration was so great that in 1852 the bishop of Pamplona published his *Circular en que reprueba com inmoral el sistema de "enganchav" jóvenes de ambos sexos para conducirlos a Continente Americano bajo las sedutoras promesas de una estable fortuna y de un Feliz porvenir*. Similarly, in 1882 José Cola y Goiti published an investigative report, *La emigración vasco-navarra*, which details the abuses of emigration agents recruiting candidates mainly for Argentina. One would like to know more about this from an Argentine perspective.

There is also the question of the subsequent fates of the family lines established in the colonial period. One of the authors' longest biographical entries regards the Anchorena family. While we are told that their descendants were important landholders, it is never made clear if this is the direct family line of the Anchorena family who owned the second largest amount of land in all of Argentina by the mid-twentieth century (Gastón Gori, *El pan nuestro* [Buenos Aires, 1958], 119). According to the Espasa-Calpe encyclopedia, Eugenio Neocochea, born in Buenos Aires in 1797, also became a general in the revolution. *De Navarra a Buenos Aires* states that Francisco Neocochea had a son named Eugenio but little else about him is given, and one is left wondering if this is the general or if the town of Necochea, a crowning Navarrese toponym in Argentina, was named after Francisco, Mariano, Eugenio or none of the above.

While it is always to possible to nitpick, the authors should be commended for providing the kind of fine-grained detail that will allow others to pose different questions of their data. If others follow their lead one will eventually have the means to better test their hypotheses, as well as other's, regarding the activities of distinct groups of *peninsulares* on the Latin American stage. For this reason, *De Navarra a Buenos Aires* is a thought-provoking work.

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