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**A Spanish Prisoner in the Ruins of Napoleon's Empire**

*LSU Press to publish new book edited by Christopher Schmidt-Nowara in April*

**Baton Rouge**—Between 1808 and the mid-1820s, Spaniards struggled to liberate their country from French rule while also fighting to retain control over their vast American empire. Spain's War of Independence eventually led to the French evacuation of the Iberian Peninsula and the restoration of the Bourbon monarch Ferdinand VII in 1814, but the wars in the Americas were much more tortuous. ***A Spanish Prisoner in the Ruins of Napoleon's Empire*** offers a rare primary document from this period, the journal of Fernando Blanco White. As a Spaniard whose family made its fortune in trade in Seville—historically Spain's vital link to the American empire—Blanco White experienced the turmoil of this time period, both as a prisoner of war and as a free man. His diary offers personal insights into how people in Europe and across its global empires coped with these profound transformations.

Taken prisoner by the French in 1809, Blanco White fled from captivity in 1814. Along with other Spanish escapees, he traversed Switzerland, the Rhineland, and the Netherlands before finally setting sail for England. Unlike most of his countrymen, who were quickly whisked back to Spain, Blanco White stayed in England for two years, during which time he composed his account of his flight across Europe. His diary offers gripping, witty, and sometimes cranky accounts of this time, as he records rich descriptions of places he passed through, his companions and fellow Spaniards, and his many encounters with soldiers and civilians. He writes vividly about his imprisonment, his fear of recapture, his renewed exercise of autonomy, and the inverse, his "slavery"—a term he employs in evocative fashion to describe both his captivity at the hands of the French and the condition of Spaniards more generally under the absolutist Bourbon monarchy.

Never before published, Blanco White's diary tracks firsthand the Spanish experience of war, captivity, and flight during the War of Independence.

Author of *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World*, **Christopher Schmidt-Nowara** was professor of history and Prince of Asturias Chair in Spanish Culture & Civilization at Tufts University until his death in 2015.

4 April 2018  
192 pages, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, 8 halftones, 1 map  
978-0-8071-6854-7  
Cloth \$40.00s  
European History

To request a review copy or set up an interview with the author,  
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