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From Cadíz to San Juan:  
Spanish Revolutionary Institutions During the Peninsular War and Their Effects on Puerto Rico and  
Latin America

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## INTRODUCTION

During Napoleon's invasion of Spain during 1808 and 1814, Spain and its colonies found itself among a political chaos. Accustomed to centralized government – where administration poured from the metropolis of Madrid to the rest of Spain and its ultramarine territories – anarchy dawned over the kingdom, as the royal family were easily sacked by the French Army. Just like the French had their *sociétés révolutionnaires* and the Soviets would later have their *soviets*, the Spanish population would create a series of improvised and spontaneous *juntas*, *consejos*, and *cortes*, which would temporarily supplement centralized government during the French invasion. The following pages explore the foundation, labor, transformation, and democratic qualities of these institutions along with their relationship with each other and their effect on the government of Puerto Rico. During the investigation of the subject, two questions continued to surface; “What are the popular and democratic credentials of these revolutionary organizations?” and “why is it that such organizations proclaimed the democratic sovereignty of the people while simultaneously calling for the return to monarchy?” These questions will be further explored in the concluding paragraphs of this report.

## PRELUDE

In the dawn of the Peninsular War The Spain of Charles IV was riddled with exploitation, a parasitic aristocracy, paternalism, rigid social hierarchies, and a lagging economic state. All of these factors played a major part in the work and direction of the numerous *juntas* and courts that would soon arise among Spain's population in face of their French occupiers.

In comparison to many of their neighbors, Spain's aristocracy was much larger and thus much more dependent towards social structure that gave them their power. France's nobles were composed of 2% of the population and owned 10% of the land<sup>1</sup> while Spain's were twice as large and owned almost half of the land<sup>2</sup>. *Hidalgos* or “children of important people” represented another 5%, the ecclesiastic class 2%, bureaucrats and military professionals 2%, and another 2% lawyers, doctors, and other intellectuals.<sup>3</sup> The Church owned 16% of the land in comparison to France's which owned 10% and also administered a number of cities. A magistrate, for example, earned 9 times more pay than your average industrial worker at the time<sup>4</sup>. The ecclesiastic group had lost 65% of their riches in the

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1 Jantzen, Steven L., Krieger, Larry S., and Neill, Kenneth, World History: Perspectives on the Past D.C. Heath and Company, 1992, p. 438.

2 Fernandez de Castro, Ignacio, De Las Cortes de Cadiz al Posfranquismo, El Viejo Topo, 1980, pp. 14-15

3 *Ibid*, p. 14, 16, 17

4 Jantze, Krieger, & Neill, p. 438 & Fernandez de Castro, p. 16

previous years and thus had every reason to push for the continuance of present social structures.<sup>5</sup>

60% of the population was composed of *campesinos* and 10% artisans and small time merchants. 50% of these *campesinos* were landless.<sup>6</sup> As opposed to Great Britain, Spain's Industrial Revolution had yet to fully develop, with Spain continuing to depend on its American colonies for its riches, resources, and goods.<sup>7</sup> Sociologist Ignacio Fernandez de Castro referred to Spain's dependency on its American colonies as “artificial” and often referred to the lack of “internal economic development” and “structural lag behind Europe”.<sup>8</sup>

Due to the lagging industrialism, Spain for the most part remained absent of a large organized working class and lacked large urban migration characteristic of its neighbors.<sup>9</sup> This along with the existence of such a large parasitic ruling class assured the monarchy's continuance. Revolutionary forces prior to the invasion were absent as opposed to the Britain's colony and revolutionary France and manifested itself solely in a short-lived popular uprising against the unpopular Prime Minister Manuel de Godoy known as the “Mutiny of Aranjuez.” This sole act is often considered the first political act on behalf of the Spanish population.

The following invasion by Napoleon and the French army and the subsequent naming of his brother Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain was met with much opposition from the Spanish. This is no surprise, considering the fact that the Mutiny of Aranjuez was partially due to Godoy's permitting of French troops to cross the Spanish border. In a letter to his brother, Joseph, stated that “my real power does not extend beyond Madrid, and even in Madrid, people are contrary to me on the daily... I would not be the King of Spain if it were not for the force of our weapons.”<sup>10</sup> Instantly the Spanish population rose against the occupation, carrying out a lengthy, famous, and profound guerrilla war against the French army.

### **CREATION OF THE REGIONAL & CENTRAL *JUNTAS***

The lack of the French to establish control throughout the country and the absence of the royal family produced an environment of chaos, which thus led guerrillas and their cities to establish local *juntas*, which would coordinate the resistance efforts and administer their domain in the absence of the King. These *juntas* were initially decentralized and regional, thus further limiting Napoleon's ability to

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5 Fernandez de Castro, p. 16

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

7 *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

8 *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 37-28.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

10 Diaz-Plaja, Fernando (Ed.), *Historia de España en sus Documentos Siglo XIX*, Ediciones Cátedra, S. A., 1983, p. 66.

conquer Spain. As each of these *juntas* separately treaties with foreign powers, these *juntas* constituted a sort of “anarchical kind of federal government” as Karl Marx referred to it as. Marx continued by stating that:

The division of power among the provincial juntas had saved Spain from the first shock of the French invasion under Napoleon, not only by multiplying the resources of the country, but also by putting the invader at a loss for a mark whereat to strike; the French being quite amazed at the discovery that the center of Spanish resistance was nowhere and everywhere.<sup>11</sup>

Due to the need of a unified wartime effort against the invading force, some *juntas* began to call for the creation of a larger, centralized *junta*. In one instance, one revolutionary army refused to accept orders unless from their respective *junta*.<sup>12</sup> A sort of central *junta* needed to be created with the power to negotiate treaties and keep connection with and receive tribute from Spanish America.<sup>13</sup> This central *junta*, known as the *Junta Suprema Central Central y Gubernativa del Reino* was formed on September 25, 1808 and was composed of 35 members in total and was to rule the country in the absence of the King.<sup>14</sup> It was molded from the *Junta* of Seville, which had declared itself the central *junta* to the approval of the other cities' *juntas*.

Some of Spain's upper classes considered Napoleon to be the “providential regenerators” of Spain and many collaborated with Joseph who was even received by a deputation of Spain's most distinguished persons upon his arrival to Spain.<sup>15</sup> Despite the fact that Joseph received the support of the first Ministry and Ferdinand VII's first Household (actually adopting them as his own) members of the middle class and aristocracy penetrated the new central *junta*. Though the *juntas* were elected by citizens of general suffrage, they would often elect their “natural superiors” as Marx calls them; the provincial nobility, gentry, clergymen, and notabilities of the middle class.<sup>16</sup> (Citizens of modern democracies often do the same, as they elect members of the upper class as their representative leaders). The Church in collaborated with the *Junta*, viewing the revolution as the only way to fight off the institutionalized secularism and atheism of Napoleon's France.<sup>17</sup> Peasants flooded to join guerrilla efforts and some regional *juntas* allowed general enlistment in their armies without respect to privileges and class.<sup>18</sup> With the exception of a few instances of “popular justice” against former authorities with

11 Marx, Karl. *Revolution in Spain*, University Press of the Pacific, 2001, Chapter 2.

12 Moro, B., *El Capitán General Don Joaquín Blake*, Madrid, 1960, p. 127

13 Marx, Chapter 3.

14 *Ibid.*, Chapter 3 & 4.

15 Marx, Chapter 2 & Walton, William, *The Revolutions of Spain, from 1808 to the End of 1836*, R. Bentley, 1837, p. 137

16 *Ibid.*, Chapter 2.

17 *Ibid.* & Fernandez de Castro, p. 35

18 Marx, Chapter 4.

the occupation and division of their lands, the popular violence at the time was not socially revolutionary and could have been interpreted more as an organ of resistance against occupation.<sup>19</sup> One could imagine the diversity of ideas and composition of the Central *Junta*, which would be filled with contradictions and internal struggle from the start. One member even defected to the Bonaparte camp.<sup>20</sup> The only initiative that was agreed upon by all *Junta* members was the expulsion of the French invaders. The consensus ended there. Never the less, the *Junta* declared itself the country's governing body only until Charles IV's heir Ferdinand VII returned from imprisonment in France.

An obvious tilt towards former concepts of social structures was obviously surging, for the members of the *Junta* began to adorn themselves with extravagant titles, uniforms, badges, and salaries. The President of the *Junta* was to be referred to as “highness”, the other members as “excellency”, and the *Junta* in its entirety as “majesty”. The *Junta* had given themselves a salary of 120,000 reals, 60 times that of an industrial worker.<sup>21</sup>

On January 22, 1809 a decree was issued by the Central *Junta* converting the American colonies into integral provinces of Spain. Members of the American colonies were invited to participate in the *Junta*, leading to the election in Puerto Rico of liberal Ramon Power y Giralt as its representative to the *Junta*.<sup>22</sup> Most of the American colonies did not accept the invasion and followed different routes.<sup>23</sup> One must acknowledge the fact that these candidates were to be approved by a Provincial Electoral Board (that is if we are to apply the model that was used to select Puerto Rico's candidate). Despite such, in Puerto Rico's case at the least, there was great joy and celebration among the populace at the election of Power y Giralt.<sup>24</sup> The election of Power y Giralt was soon after invalidated as the *Junta* was disbanded and gave way to the Regency Council.<sup>25</sup>

## CREATION OF THE COUNCIL

Due to doubts over the Central *Junta*'s capabilities and a general belief that its members too numerous and fortuitously mixed, the *Junta* had decided to disband itself and give way to the *Consejo*

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19 Fernandez de Castro, p. 44

20 Marx, Chapter 4.

21 *Ibid*, Chapter 3., Oman, Charles, A History of the Peninsular War, Greenhill Books, 1902, p. 361, & Glover, Michael, Legacy of Glory: The Bonaparte Kingdom of Spain, Scribner, 1971, p. 353.

22 Scarano, Francisco A., Puerto Rico: Cinco Siglos de Historia, McGraw Hill, 2008, p. 296., Ribes Tovar, Federico, A Chronological History of Puerto Rico, Plus Ultra Educational Publishers, Inc., 1973, p. 210, Figueroa, Loida, Breve Historia de Puerto Rico Volumen I, Editorial Edil, Inc, 1979, p. 140, & Morales Carrión, Arturo, Puerto Rico: A Political and Cultural History, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1983, p. 83.

23 Figueroa, p. 140.

24 Morales Carrión, pp. 83-84.

25 Scarano, p. 299

*de Regencia de España e Indias*.<sup>26</sup> The Council was formed of 4 Spanish members and 1 members from the Americas. This Council initiated its work on January 31, 1910 with only three of its members present (including the representative from Latin America).<sup>27</sup> The Council acted as an executive committee with the responsibility to create a sort of legislative and constitutional body that would create the new state that would wield power while Ferdinand VII was gone. Again, contradiction pursued as the conservative Council stated itself that

Our detractors say that we are fighting to defend old abuses and the inveterate vices of our corrupted government. Let them know that your struggle is for the happiness as well as the independence of your country; that you will not depend henceforward on the uncertain will or the various temper of a single man.<sup>28</sup>

### CREATION OF THE COURT

Cádiz had remained the last bastion of Spanish resistance against Napoleon's army. Being the most revolutionary place in Spain at the epoch,<sup>29</sup> Cádiz was the place of refuge for Spaniards from all over the empire. Cádiz was also now home to the conservative Council which hesitated to proceed with the creation of the courts, but gave way due to pressure from liberals gathered in Cadiz and news of rebellion in the Americas.<sup>30</sup> Elections were held where possible, and where not due to French occupation, representatives for each region were designated and chosen from among their respective refugees in Cádiz.<sup>31</sup> Members of the Ultramarine population in Cádiz also took position in the courts as the representative from the actual American colonies were making the lengthy travel across seas. The majority of the representatives were designated.<sup>32</sup>

The Court was initially composed of 104 members including 30 from overseas territories, but at its height, counted on the participation of 300 members, including 63 Americans.<sup>33</sup> Puerto Rico's original representative to the Central *Junta*, Power y Giralt, was elected as the island's representative to

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26 Marx, Chapter 3., Thiers, Adolphe, History of the Consulate and the Empire of France Under Napoleon, H. Colburn, 1850, p. 207, Jacob, William, Travels in the South of Spain, In Letters Written AD 1809 and 1810, 1811, p. 23, Guizot, Witt, & Black, Robert, The History of France from the Earliest Times to 1848, Bradley Co., 1901, p. 248., Diaz-Plaja, p. 76.

27 Rico, José María, Justicia Penal y Transición Democrática en América Latina, Administration of Criminal Justice, 1997, p. 162 & Suarez, Federico, Las Cortes de Cádiz, Ediciones Rialp, 2002, p. 21

28 Southey, Robert, History of the Peninsular War, J. Murray, 1828, p. 116

29 Marx, Chapter 4 & 7. & Diaz-Plaja, p. 76

30 Cowans, Jon, Modern Spain: A Documentary History, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, p. 14

31 *Ibid.* pp. 14, 24 & Marx, Chapter 7.

32 Fernandez de Castro, p. 42.

33 Rodriguez O., Jaime E., The Independence of Spanish America, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 82

the Court. Due to the fact that he was the first overseas American to attend the Court upon its initial sessions, Power y Giralt was elected as the Court's Vice President.<sup>34</sup> The other 29 initial American members were designated but other delegates were to be added as they arrived from their lengthy journeys. These elections actually proved to be the first ever to be held in Latin America.<sup>35</sup>

The court members quickly split into three groups, which were referred to as the *liberales*, the *serviles*, and the *americanos*, with the later swaying their support depending on their interests.<sup>36</sup> While most historians agree that the courts were ruled by the *liberales*<sup>37</sup>, some such as Marx argue that the *serviles* were the majority. Despite such, Marx, Fernandez de Castro, and even the King Ferdinand VII himself attributes the *liberal's* triumph in many issues as a result of their zeal, enthusiasm, and even intimidation from spectators of the Court.<sup>38</sup> Puerto Rico's own intendant Alejandro Ramirez after the voiding of the Constitution after Ferdinand VII's return soon after would state, "several incidents have convinced me that there was a hot-headed and passionate action and all the signs of regrettable partisan spirit during these solemn ceremonies."<sup>39</sup> Whichever way, it is agreed that almost all of the members were representatives of the upper and former ruling classes, with the exception of a few professions that would be considered middle class by today's standards.<sup>40</sup> One source states that one third of the body were considered "Middle Class".<sup>41</sup> The court was composed of the following: 35% representatives from the Church, 27% bureaucrats and military officials, 21% professionals, 5% nobles, and the rest divided among smaller privileged groups.<sup>42</sup> (It is interesting to see the over-representation of each group in comparison with their proportion of the entire population.)

The *americanos* (including the representatives from Spain's Asian colony, the Philippines) group proved to be the most radical, reformist, and liberal of the entire Court, presenting legislation for free trade, equal opportunities for Indians, *mestizos*, and even blacks, and even the abolishing of slavery.<sup>43</sup> Due to such legislation, Indians in the Spanish colonies were to be granted citizenship 100 years before they would in North America.<sup>44</sup> The *americanos* delegation also presented measures

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34 Scarano, p. 299, Figueroa, p. 141, & Morales Carrión, p. 86.

35 Rodriguez, O., p. 82.

36 Marx, Chapter 7.

37 Scarano, p. 304 & Cowens, p. 19.

38 Marx, Chapter 7., Fernandez de Castro, p. 42, & Cowans, p. 30.

39 Ribes Tovar, p. 219.

40 Fernandez de Casto, p. 42.

41 Rodriguez, O., p. 82

42 Seoane Couceiro, María Cruz, Oratoria y Periodismo en la España del Siglo XIX, Fundación Juan March, 1977, p. 65, Tuñón de Lara, Manuel, La España del Siglo XIX, Editorial Laia, 1975, p. 35, & Tapia, Francisco Xavier, Historiadores Sobre España, Editora Nacional, 1973, p. 582.

43 Morales Carrión, p. 87. & Rodriguez, O., p. 90.

44 Rodriguez O., p. 92.

requesting that the Constitution be submitted to a popular referendum throughout Spain and the colonies for approval!<sup>45</sup> Cuba had requested the right to draft its own autonomous constitution.<sup>46</sup>

The *americanos* were in fact so radical, that they attracted criticism from many of the Spanish-appointed governors and bureaucrats back home.<sup>47</sup> Even Power y Giralt attracted criticism from Spanish authorities.<sup>48</sup> One issue that was of fervent debate was that of the representation of the Ultramarine provinces, with Quinto's representative submitting legislation to increase the number of Court members representing such regions.<sup>49</sup> Despite Power y Giralt's liberal tendencies, he was far less radical as his *Americano* counterparts, declaring “radical” the idea that Puerto Rico declare itself independent if the Courts were to fall prey to Napoleon's invasion.<sup>50</sup> In fact, when the Constitution was to make a distinction between citizens and Spaniards and would deprive Blacks of certain basic rights, there was no protest from Puerto Rico, while Latin American objected fiercely.<sup>51</sup>

One thing is known for sure, and that is that the decrees of the Court were the result of lengthy heated debate, compromise, and negotiation. For examples, when the issue of freedom of speech was being debated, the *liberals* had agreed to include a clause that would denounce statements “contrary to religion”.<sup>52</sup> The volatility of the Court balance can be seen even after the Constitution, as some of the Courts very members (including at least one Representative from the Americas) petitioned the King to void the Constitution.<sup>53</sup>

From the moment that it had initiated its work September 24, 1810, the Court issued a number of decrees, finally leading up the drafting of the Constitution of 1812. Some of the most significant decrees are as follow: October 15, 1810; Latin Americans were granted the same rights as their Spanish counterparts.<sup>54</sup> November 10, 1810; freedom of the press.<sup>55</sup> February 19, 1811; Latin Americans were allowed to carry posts in the military, courts, and other institutions.<sup>56</sup> August 6, 1811; special titles and privileges among the ruling classes were abolished.<sup>57</sup> November 9, 1811; numerous acts meant to grant

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45 Blanco White, Joseph (Ed.), *El Español*, 1811, pp.389-394

46 Figueroa, p. 142.

47 Ribes Tovar, p. 212.

48 *Ibid.* & Figueroa, p. 142

49 Rodriguez O., p. 83

50 Figueroa, p. 142

51 *Ibid.*, p. 143

52 Marx, Chapter 7 & Pérez, Joseph, *The Spanish Inquisition: A History*, Yale University Press, 2005, pp. 98-99

53 *Constitucion Politica de la Monarquia Española*, Imprenta Nacional, 1836, p. 117 & Cristina Diz, María, *El Manifiesto de 1814*, Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1967, p. 285.

54 Cowans, p. 15 & Diaz-Plaja, p. 86.

55 Cowans, p. 21.

56 *Ibid.*, p. 16.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

rights to Indians.<sup>58</sup> November 28, 1811; the famous “Power Law” which would bring about a series of benefits to Puerto Rico.<sup>59</sup> Finally, on March 19, 1812 the Constitution was drafted, declaring national sovereignty, representative rights, the division of powers, and general suffrage. Two other significant decrees were issued afterwards, one on February 22, 1813 which deemed the Inquisition to be incompatible with the Constitution, and another on September 8, 1813 which eliminated cruel punishment.<sup>60</sup> These decrees would continue to stand until the return of King Ferdinand VII in 1814 and his annulling of the Court's work.

### INTERNAL AND COLONIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Court's legislation was quite aggressive and prolific indeed. Decree after decree of social, economic, and political reform would be passed, despite the fact that the limit of the Constitution's influence stretched barely beyond Cadiz.<sup>61</sup> It was in Latin America that the citizens of Spain took advantage of the democratic potential of the Constitution. Such reforms would have been easier to implement in the Americas, for Spain's Ultramarine provinces worried little about French occupation. Considering the fact that Puerto Rico was often the first to receive instructions and news from Spain due to it being the first stop in travel to the New World,<sup>62</sup> it can only be supposed that it was the first of the colonies to be able to implement the new laws. Despite such, it is obvious the difficulty of Spain to implement its own reforms, as many of the issues that were tended to in the decrees of the Court - such as the opening of administrative positions and posts to Latin Americans – were cited as pending problems in Venezuela's Declaration of Independence.<sup>63</sup>

The Power Law gave birth to a new era of liberal government in Puerto Rico. Granting limited free trade, the opening of ports, the creation of an independent Department of Treasury, tax reform, the elimination of the monopoly of the State in the import of flour, better treatment for slaves, immigration reform, education services, and the establishment of an “economic society”, the changes were welcomed with much enthusiasm on the island and implemented fervently.<sup>64</sup> Even after the overturning of the Constitution, many of these same reforms would be petitioned to the King Ferdinand VII and would reach Puerto Rico in the *Real Cédula de Gracias*<sup>65</sup> and would for long remain demands that

58 Diaz-Plaja, pp. 100-101.

59 Scarano, p. 303.

60 Cowans, pp. 16, 19.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 26. & Marx, Chapter 7.

62 Figueroa, p. 137.

63 Cowans, p. 24.

64 Morales Carrión, pp. 88, 89

65 Ribas Rovar, pp. 221-222.

Puerto Ricans would make throughout social conflict for decades to come.

The decrees of the Cadiz Courts, their 1812 Constitution, and the Power Law were all abolished upon the return of Ferdinand VII, his first act was to void such legislation.<sup>66</sup> Ferdinand VII cited the foreign nature of such laws; referring to their influence from the French Revolution, the absence of his presence during their drafting and implementation, the intimidation of the delegates by liberals, and their incompatibility with Spanish tradition, among other reasons.<sup>67</sup> Ferdinand VII's act was in response to a document which was submitted to him titled the the *Manifiesto de las Persas*; a document presented to him by a group of 69 Court delegates pushing for the revoking of the liberal changes implemented during the King's absence.<sup>68</sup> After returning to a Spain liberated of its French occupiers and annulling the Constitution, Ferdinand VII oversaw the execution of prominent resistance leaders Juan Diaz Porlier and de Lacy.<sup>69</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Utilizing the elections procedures utilized in Puerto Rico as an example, one must question the democratic credentials of the Central *Junta* and then the Cadíz Courts. One first take into consideration the limitations present in who exactly could vote. Obviously, Indians and even free slaves were denied some of the most even basic civil liberties until later Court decrees (and even then there existed social and legal impediments to their political integration with the rest of society). Also, one must take into consideration that all candidacies were passed through a Provincial Electoral Board. Finally, one must also acknowledge the large number of Court delegates that were designated to their posts. Even in cases where the delegates of Ultramarine colonies were voted by refugees and citizens from those regions, these citizens did not necessarily represent the majority of their compatriots. The fact that the Court in its entirety was made up of members of the privileged classes is another detail that should be pointed out.

Despite such, the election of the Court members from the Old and New Worlds represented a drastic step towards the development of democracy. These elections marked the first in Latin America (with the first elections taking place in Puerto Rico), and were to change the face of American politics for centuries to come. The legislation enacted increased the number of New World *ayuntamientos* and

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66 Fernandez de Castro, p. 43

67 Marx, Chapter 6 &

68 Kriesi, Hanspeter, *New Social Movements in Western Europe*, Ediciones Rialp, 1995, p. 90 & Cuenca, José Manuel, *La Guerra de la Independencia; Un Conflicto Decisivo (1808-1814)*, Encuentro, 2006, p. 392

69 Griffiths, p. 508-509, Marx, Chapter 7, and *Historia de la Vida y Reinado de Fernando VII de España*, Impr. De Repullés, 1842, p. 145

thus enhanced the autonomy of colony communities and their capacity to self-govern. These units of local government actually increased 10 fold during this period.<sup>70</sup> Also, as seen in the case of Puerto Rico, the decrees had set a new standard for public policy, causing Power y Giralt and Puerto Ricans after him to continue petitioning the Crown for self government.

Also, despite the underrepresentation of the marginalized classes and the impediments to democratic representation, the Cadíz policies led to a number of revolutionary social and liberal changes. For example, despite all the debate over citizenship and representative rights, the new state had refused to consider Indians and Blacks as less than human.<sup>71</sup> The Constitution had recognized Indians and Mestizos as full citizens more than 100 years before the U.S. And Britain seized to refer to them as “foreigners”.<sup>72</sup> This Constitution has been acknowledged to be the most liberal constitution the era.<sup>73</sup>

Thus, one could conclude that despite the democratic barriers and bourgeoisie composition of the Courts, that its labor benefited its constituents, the Americas, and Puerto Rico in terms of democratic and social development.

## OPINION

From the moment I began reading the provided texts to my investigation of collections available at the University library to my review of digitalized historic works available from stateside University libraries, I continued to ask myself the same question; Why is it that the authors and proponents of such liberal changes simultaneously champion the return to a monarchy? How could a group of intellectuals who call for general suffrage, national sovereignty, and reject Napoleon's reign due to his “having lacked the consent of the nation” wish to return to a system of undemocratic, tyrant royalty?

Considering the social background of the Court members, it is only natural to suppose that they wished to maintain the same privileges and standings that they had prior to the invasion. Even the most liberal members of the Court were prestigious men educated in reputable institutions of higher education and sympathized with such policies not as victims of society but as champions. The Cadíz Courts were a prime example of what Economist Jack Powelson calls “reforms “by grace,” offered by governments who advocate the poor.” Powelson's comments on the subject are almost prophetic: “...all the reforms by grace were ultimately reversed... Why? Because reforms by grace required

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70 Rodriguez O., p. 91.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 82.

72 *Ibid.*

73 David Frank, Waldo, *Birth of a World: Bolivar in Terms of His People*, Houghton Mifflin, 1951, p. 65

powerful governments to grant them, and what government gave it could also take away; and ultimately it or its powerful successor would do so.”<sup>74</sup>

The Spanish of the time seemed to be subservient and placid at the time, a condition which would later prevent the war of independence to convert to a full fledged social revolution. The monarchy, one could suppose, still had yet to reach its expiration, for even after it was to return after the expulsion of the French, it would continue with its method of governing without a violent unrest for another 6 years (which was actually a troop mutiny)<sup>75</sup>. As German political scientist Hannah Arendt stated in her book “On Revolution”, “no revolution ever succeeded, that few rebellions ever started, so long as the authority of the body politic was truly intact.”<sup>76</sup> Thus, the *Junta* and the Court cannot be viewed as tools of a revolution in its ideological sense, but simply substitutes for a void that had been created during a war for independence. The primary function of these institutions were to resist the French invasion; the remainder of the social legislation was simply wishful thinking.

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74 Powelson, Jack, Facing Social Revolution, Horizon Society Publications, 1987, pp. 7-8

75 Griffiths, Ralph, The Monthly Review of Literary Journal from September to December 1821, R. Griffiths, 1821, p. 508

76 Arendt, Hannah, On Revolution, Penguin Books, 1987, p. 155

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