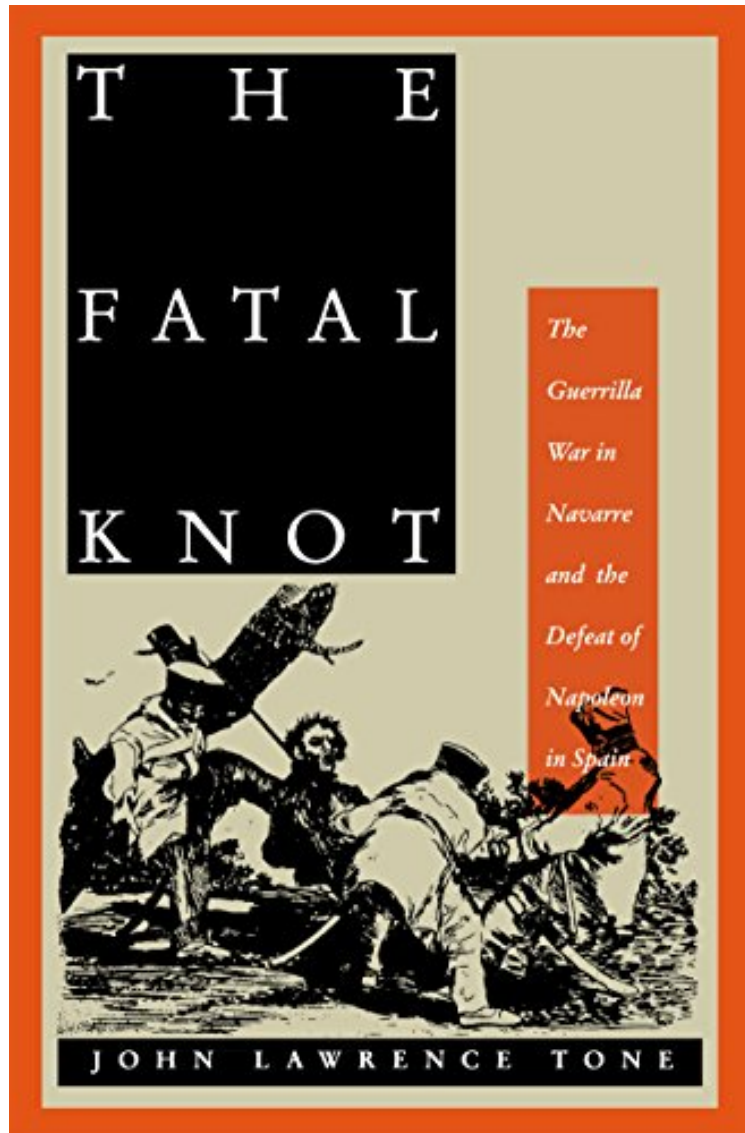


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The Fatal Knot: The Guerrilla War in Navarre and the Defeat of Napoleon in Spain

John Lawrence Tone

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John Tone recounts the dramatic story of how, between 1808 and 1814, Spanish peasants created and sustained the world's first guerrilla insurgency movement, thereby playing a major role in Napoleon's defeat in the Peninsula War. Focusing on the army of Francisco Mina, Tone offers new insights into the origins, motives, and successes of these first guerrilla forces by interpreting the conflict from the long-ignored perspective of the guerrillas themselves. Only months after Napoleon's invasion in 1807, Spain seemed ready to fall: its rulers were in prison or in exile, its armies were in complete disarray, and Madrid had been occupied. However, the Spanish people themselves, particularly the peasants of Navarre, proved unexpectedly resilient. In response to impending defeat, they formed makeshift governing juntas, raised new armies, and initiated a new kind of people's war of national liberation that came to be known as guerrilla warfare. Key to the peasants' success, says Tone, was the fact that they possessed both the material means and the motives to resist. The guerrillas were neither bandits nor selfless patriots but landowning peasants who fought to protect the old regime in Navarre and their established position within it. from the book: "That unfortunate war destroyed me; it divided my forces, multiplied my obligations, undermined my morale. . . . All the circumstances of my disasters are bound up in that fatal knot.--Napoleon Bonaparte on the Spanish war

Well written and solidly researched. . . . It will be a valuable resource for students of the Napoleonic era; for military historians in general it provides the first thorough study of the first guerrilla war.--History: s of New BooksThat unfortunate war destroyed me; it divided my forces, multiplied my obligations, undermined my morale. . . . All the circumstances of my disasters are bound up in that fatal knot.--Napoleon Bonaparte on the Spanish warTone's is a remarkable study, skillfully articulated and ably argued. It will be compulsory reading for military historians and scholars of the period for many years to come.--International History Thoroughly researched in French and Spanish archives and nicely written. . . . Highly recommended.--ChoiceThis work is well researched, coherently organized, and persuasively argued. More important, it offers a fresh interpretation of the role of Spanish guerrillas in the War of Independence.--Renato Barahona, University of Illinois at ChicagoAbout the AuthorJohn Tone is professor of history at the Georgia Institute of Technology.