

J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 47 (2015). doi:10.1017/S0022216X15000139

Clément Thibaud, Gabriel Entin, Alejandro Gómez and Federica Morelli (eds.), *L'Atlantique Révolutionnaire: Une Perspective Ibéro-Américaine* (Bécherel, France: Les Perséides Éditions, 2013), pp. 525, €29.90, pb.

L'Atlantique Révolutionnaire falls into one category of the scholarly works which, inspired by the 2010 Bicentenary of Spanish American independence, have refocused attention on the fall of Spain's empire and the emergence of new states in Latin America. However, while belonging to the genre of multi-author collections dedicated to the Spanish American revolutions, it displays some notable differences. Like other such volumes, it juxtaposes articles by scholars who approach the questions of the origins, character and consequences of Spanish American independence from different perspectives. Here, however, analysis is not confined to Spanish America. Taking up the 'Atlantic studies' paradigm, the editors have put together a set of essays, six in French, six in English and eight in Spanish, which examine facets of the non-Anglophone Atlantic world across the long phase of global change inaugurated in the eighteenth century.

For those interested in the international setting of Spanish American independence, the opening articles throw new light on the ways in which continental turmoil spilled onto the lands and seas of neighbouring powers, involved men from many nations, and created networks of adventurers who pursued their own agendas. The Caribbean Basin, Johanna von Grafenstein shows, was an important space for such revolutionary action, whether as a place of refuge for exiled revolutionaries, a theatre for interaction with foreign adventurers, or an arena for armed conflict. Vanessa Mongey enriches this picture by treating the Caribbean as an environment for textual as well as military struggle, showing the sources and circulations of revolutionary and anti-revolutionary propaganda, while also emphasising the role of agitators who carried revolutionary ideas across borders. Monica Henry complements these Caribbean-based studies by focusing on reactions of the United States to the Spanish American revolutions. Her account of US diplomacy shows how and why the American republic, while rejecting the new black state born from revolution in Haiti, moved haltingly towards accommodating revolutionary Spanish America.

The transnational dimensions of the revolutionary world are further illuminated by essays that touch on the lives of individual revolutionists and, through them, American interactions with Europe. Erika Pani traces the life of Santangelo, a Neapolitan aristocrat who took to America ideas learned among radical Bonapartists in Italy, only to find his romantic ideals of republican brotherhood and his desire to participate in creating a new political order thwarted by conservative Mexican politicians. Matthew Brown's sketch of another European adventurer, the Irish volunteer Thomas Murray, though outlined in the introduction, is missing from the book. The editors include instead an essay, previously published in *Connections after Colonialism*, which looks at British influence from another angle. There, Brown reflects on Bolívar's preference for British ideas and connections and how this preference was sustained after his death by such leading figures as José Antonio Páez and Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera, both of whom sought to tie their countries closer to British commerce and power.

The second group of articles examines aspects of colonial economic life and developments in economic thinking during the eighteenth century, and thus addresses questions about the significance of changes in the ideology and organisation of Spain's empire under Bourbon rule. Irene Fatacciu traces Bourbon-sponsored expansion of

the Venezuelan cacao trade, and advances the rather speculative thesis that crown policy for promoting chocolate consumption in Spain fostered a café-frequenting middle-class and, with it, an emerging public realm. Rossana Barragán's article draws further attention to Bourbon efforts to move from an empire secured by conquest and religion to one fuelled by commerce. Focusing on reform of the Potosí *mita*, she provides a strong example of the impact of Enlightenment-inspired ideas for turning Indians from coerced workers into potential consumers, an idea that subsequently became a liberal orthodoxy. Erik Schnakenbourg reminds us too of the ways in which commerce eroded old restraints and stimulated new attitudes. He delves into the interstices of the Euro-American empires, to show how Dutch and Danish interloping in French, British and Spanish colonial commerce created American connections and solidarities that functioned outside imperial controls and, by implication, tended to dissolve them. Indeed, he points to the emergence of a new kind of colonial subject, for whom ties of reciprocity and solidarity with other Americans were more important than European connections.

In the third section, contributors offer expositions of the intellectual traditions and innovations which shaped revolutionary thinking before, during, and after the wars of independence. Elías Palti argues that historians who insist that the Spanish American revolutions brought no fundamental change (because they were not 'social' or 'democratic' revolutions) have overlooked the profound transformation which did occur. However, unlike those who see the *vacatio regis* of 1808 and influx of liberal ideas as the transformative forces, Palti suggests that change in Hispanic political culture had deeper roots, found in later seventeenth-century political thinking (with the discovery of the symbolic nature of power) and projected by absolutism in the eighteenth century. Other contributors turn to questions about the character, extent and dissemination of political changes arising from American revolutions. James Parsons' perusal of liberal rhetoric in mid-nineteenth-century Mexico and Colombia convinces him that Spanish American liberals created their own concept of modernity. Rather than blindly follow European notions of civilisation and material progress, they asserted that republicanism was in itself the sufficient source of liberty and independence. And this belief, Parsons argues, extended beyond the elites to subalterns who adopted the language of revolution and popular sovereignty to advance their own political claims. Manuel Covo offers another perspective on our understanding of revolution in the Americas. Noting French neglect of one of the great transformations in the Atlantic world, the overthrow of St Domingue's slave society and its replacement by the free black state of Haiti, he mounts a historiographical discussion which traces growing awareness of the ways in which the Haitian Revolution is central to understanding how racial conflicts affected post-colonial politics in the Americas. João Pimenta also examines the implications of political ideas and models which crossed borders, in this case by tracing the interactions between political change in Spanish and Portuguese America. He argues that Brazil's independence was accelerated by Brazilians' awareness of revolution in Spanish America and by desires either to emulate or avoid Spanish American political experiences.

Social actors are the subject of the fourth section. On the question of women's role, Sarah Chambers discusses the difficulties of uncovering women's political motives in paternalist societies, where loyalty to male heads of family was the norm, and she points to the failure of republicans to convert their demands for female commitment to the republic into an offer of full citizenship. María Dolores González-Ripoll moves to a much smaller social grouping, that of an elite family network, to investigate the

reasons for Cuban adherence to Spain. Her micro-history of the Arango family shows how the interests and activities of this powerful group spanned the Atlantic world and by influencing metropolitan policy helped to bind Cuba to Spain.

Succeeding articles turn to the issue of popular participation. Marixa Lasso asks how our interpretation of the wars of independence would change if we recognised that Latin American modernity stemmed from below, from subaltern participants who fought for independence in order to secure their equality as citizens. From the perspective of politics in Cartagena and Caracas, she argues that Latin America's most original contribution to modern political thinking came from blacks and mulattos who injected demands for racial equality into debates about republicanism and democracy. Cecilia Méndez examines the question of popular participation in another, quite different society, that of highland Peru and its Indian peasantry. Noting Tilly's dictum that 'states make war and wars make states', she argues that, when looking at forces for the foundations of an independent state, we should look to the Andean communities who organised the provision of resources and guerrillas vital to San Martín's armies, and, through their participation, created a bedrock of state-building.

The fifth section brings together essays which examine the impact of revolution in the Atlantic world on the behaviour and condition of slaves. Eugene Genovese's famous thesis of a fundamental shift from restorationist rebellion to revolutionary action among slaves, hinged on the Haitian Revolution, is re-examined in Worden's essay on slave resistance in the Cape Colony of South Africa, criticised, and reframed in terms of cultural resistance. Genovese's thesis is also critically re-examined by Tâmis Parron and Rafael Marquese: they discuss the repercussions in Cuba and Brazil of the Atlantic World's political upheavals of the 1790s and early 1800s, tracing patterns of slave rebellion while also explaining why these societies avoided major insurgency among slaves. António de Almeida Mendes takes another, wider perspective on the evolution of slavery with his reflections on long-term developments in the discourses and practices of slavery in the Portuguese world. He shows that Pombal sought to end slavery and integrate blacks and coloureds in Portugal, for fear of the social effect of their presence as groups with distinct identities, while at the same time promoting African slavery in Brazil, thus ensuring the persistence of racial discriminations which, he argues, remain visible in Portugal today.

In the closing essay, Tulio Halperín avoids direct engagement with the concept of 'Atlantic history'. Instead, he traces turning points along the way towards the current modes of multilateral, globalising, non-linear historiography, expressed in the long, sinuous sentences which, piling phrase on phrase, characterise his inimitable style. Praising his fellow contributors for dispensing with past paradigms, he reflects on why they have replaced them with an infinitely elastic agenda for research rather than an alternative model. And, ranging over developments in historiography since the mid-nineteenth century, he comments on historians' present situation in times of mass education, university managerialism, and changing commercial imperatives among publishers.

Taken together, the essays in this collection show how far we have come from seeing independence as a 'revolución anunciada' driven by incipient nationalism and dominated by narrow elites. Some authors bring in actors and regions ignored by national historiographies; others indicate trans-imperial and transnational linkages; some explore the character and limitations of Latin America's modernity; others expose the contradictions of liberalism in slavery and racial discrimination. The collection

as a whole has several strengths. The editors' introduction provides a robust rationale for going beyond national frameworks and chronologies, and seeking out a 'third moment' where traditions interacted with modernity; the individual articles make valuable contributions to important debates about Latin America's transition to modernity; and, finally, their combination reminds us, as the editors intend, of the many intersections between historical processes in Spanish America and the wider world. Editors and contributors have done a fine job in bringing this tri-lingual work to completion, and it will no doubt become a valued work of reference for all those with an interest in the histories of independence and revolution in Latin America.

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J. Lat. Amer. Stud. 47 (2015). doi:10.1017/S0022216X15000140

Reuben Zahler, *Ambitious Rebels: Remaking Honor, Law and Liberalism in Venezuela, 1780–1850* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2013), pp. xvii + 330, \$26.95, pb.

When the political elites of early republican Venezuela aimed to build a new state on liberal models imported from the North Atlantic, they had to overcome ways of thinking, feeling and behaving that came from the past. To bring about the changes they wanted, consonant with the liberal principles they admired, they not only had to establish constitutional government and design new laws. In Venezuela, as in other Latin American states, liberal governments also had to persuade people that the new regime was legitimate and find ways of supplanting the values of the old order with those of the new.

To address the question of whether Venezuelan liberals were able to harmonise independence and modernity, Reuben Zahler examines three major issues. First, he focuses on the shift from a Spanish legal system, which he argues was based on an unwritten code of 'honour', to a liberal system of law which treated citizens as equals; second, he considers the persistence of patriarchy; third, he examines the part played by law and honour in the political conflicts which broke out in the late 1830s and early 1840s, when the decline of Venezuela's export economy precipitated conflict between economic and social groups.

Venezuela is a particularly interesting place to study the construction of an independent state: its society had an unusually high proportion of people of African descent, both slave and free; its internal wars had been unusually violent; and, during a decade of destructive warfare, power had passed into the hands of armed caudillos. In short, for Venezuelans more than their neighbours, power was associated with armed violence. Yet, despite devastation by war, post-independence Venezuela made a rapid economic recovery and saw a relatively smooth transition to a stable system of republican government based on liberal principles.

Zahler explains this by arguing that early Venezuelan liberals achieved more than historians have allowed. He argues, first, that they built a burgeoning export economy and a wide franchise to create a broad social base for the new republic. Second, they aspired to improve government by reforming administrative structures and promoting citizenship. Third, he believes that liberal governments soon succeeded in building an effective legal system that encouraged people to resolve conflicts in the courts just as they had under Spanish rule. With this, he suggests, went an important change in attitudes. Republican government made the idea of equality before the law a