the majority of the text is based upon secondary works, a limitation the author acknowledges, due to the variety of topics and lengthy time frame covered. Nonetheless, this is a work that will shine light on the early history of the Cuba and hopefully lead to more in-depth research.

doi:10.1017/S0022216X19000671

Joshua Simon, *The Ideology of Creole Revolution: Imperialism and Independence in American and Latin American Political Thought*

(Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. x + 276, £22.99, pb.

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The revolutionary experiences of the United States and Spanish America in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries led to divergent social, political and economic paths. The explanations can be varied, but few would contest the assumption that independence brought more stability and prosperity to the United States than to Spanish America. Joshua Simon himself joins this scholarly consensus, but what is important about his book is that he emphasises convergence over divergence in the challenges that the founders of the different nations encountered at the outset of their respective revolutionary experiences. Hence the title of *Creole Revolution*, which signals the commonality of interests, aspirations and fears among the descendants of Europeans who shaped the ideology of the revolution in both areas.

The commonalities identified by Simon include the Creoles' desire to break away from their empires whilst maintaining the social structures intact; the determination to introduce constitutions that gave ample prerogatives to the executive over the legislature; the preference for long-term or even lifetime presidencies; the drive for the union of ever-expanding territories under institutions inherited from their former empires. To summarise these commonalities, the author coins the term 'anti-imperial imperialism', to which I shall return later in this review.

The main ideologues he examines, devoting a chapter to each, are Alexander Hamilton, Simón Bolívar and Lucas Alamán, in addition to shorter references to various other founders. In the case of Hamilton, Simon argues that his proposals to the Constitutional Convention bore close resemblance to the various constitutions that would later be adopted in Spanish America. His call for a life presidency, Simon reminds us, was supported by four different delegations. Hamilton also sought to build barriers against the tendency of the legislature to prevail over other powers and to deprive the states of part of their sovereign authority.

Ultimately, as a 'Creole revolutionary he sought … to undermine European imperialism by building an empire of his own, to spread the principles of the American Revolution throughout the hemisphere as a means of forestalling the imminent arrival of French ones' (p. 86).

Bolívar, for his part, used constitutional means to contain social unrest deriving from the multiplicity of regional, social and economic cleavages. He intended to supplant imperial rule to more effectively control the restless colonial population that could undermine the social order. His ideal of the *presidente vitalicio* was one of the ways in which the new nations could avoid the instability of frequent elections. But institutional devices could not deliver unity and, as demonstrated by his treatment of Pasto (southern Colombia) rebels or Guayaquil separatists, Bolívar showed his penchant for the use of 'imperial' means. Finally, his Congress of Panama 'could coordinate not only its members' efforts to repulse external attackers, but also aggregate resources to suppress internal resistance to Creole rule' (p. 124).

In the case of Lucas Alamán, Simon sees another example of the common challenges facing Creoles. In his view, Alamán advocated centralisation, a limited legislative authority and the role of property owners not simply as the uncritical application of Edmund Burke's ideas but rather as 'a uniquely Creole concern with governing a heterogeneous population divided by imperial social and ethnic categories' (p. 157). As in the other cases, Alamán favoured independence but sought the means to minimise the impact on the traditional social structure. Finally, his Spanish Americanism resembled Hamilton's American System and Bolívar's Panama Congress, in that it represented 'an effort to establish a new empire, which would match and exceed the old one in its capacity to create internal order and win external respectability' (p. 166).

Perhaps a couple of caveats might add nuance to Simon's analysis. The first one concerns the notion of 'Creole', which has an ideological rather than a social connotation in this book. Should one look at the Creoles as a social group, as many scholars have done, one would see an enormous diversity: royalists and revolutionaries, radicals and gradualists, merchants and landowners, priests, bureaucrats and lawyers. Could such a diverse group come up with a common Creole ideology? If one adds the element of race, it would be difficult to identify a homogeneous Creole class embracing a consistent ideology. Not all wanted to get rid of a vicious empire to preserve the social structure or impose internal colonialism.

The second concern is the usefulness of the concept of 'anti-imperial imperialism'. One of the basic principles of sovereignty is control over a claimed territory for political, administrative and security reasons. It would be hard to think of a viable nation without those basic elements of sovereignty. But is that the same as imperialism? The independence process shows several examples of the attempt to preserve the boundaries of the former viceroyalties. A case in point is the Río de la Plata, which for various reasons attempted (with disastrous consequences) to retain Alto Perú (as well as Uruguay and Paraguay). Perhaps one could see that policy under an economic light, as opposed to an imperial drive, or see the experience of Gran Colombia as an effort to shelter the various regions from external threats and at the same time provide an attractive market to international commercial partners. 'Imperialism' does not have the same explanatory power.

It is refreshing to see how the fields of political science and history come together in *The Ideology of the Creole Revolution*. The main contribution of the book is to invite a focus on the commonalities in the revolutionary ideologies of both North and South, grounded as they were in common challenges and concerns. John Adams, in a letter to James Lloyd penned in Quincy in March of 1815, expressed his view that installing free governments in Spanish America was, given the 'ignorance' and 'bigoted' nature of its population, as absurd as an attempt 'to establish democracies among the birds, beasts, and fishes'. That one day, as in the present book, he would be counted among the members of the same class of Creole revolutionaries in the hemisphere would have struck him as equally absurd. He must surely be turning in his grave.

doi:10.1017/S0022216X19000683

Daniel Gutiérrez Ardila, *La restauración en la Nueva Granada (1815–1819)*

(Bogotá: Universidad Externado de Colombia, 2016), pp. 299, pb.

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One of the most fascinating questions in the history of the Atlantic world is why, after Napoleon's defeat in Europe and the restoration of Ferdinand VII to the Spanish throne in 1814, the Spanish monarchy subsequently proved incapable of rebuilding or at least repairing the old regime. There is of course no single answer to this question. Historians of Spain and the Spanish world have long discussed the many obstacles that stood in the way of imperial recovery, notably the legacy of economic and political disruption carried over from Ferdinand's interregnum and the destabilisation of the monarchy caused by political shifts on both sides of the Atlantic. Historians have, moreover, pointed to the flaws in Spanish policy under Ferdinand VII and shown how the king and his ministers encountered enormous difficulties in shaping and implementing an American policy that combined armed repression and political reconciliation. Especially interesting is the question of the ways in which royal authority was restored in Spanish America, given that Spain's future rested on its ability to erase the revolutions of 1810 and to reconstruct its transatlantic ties.

In this book, Daniel Gutiérrez Ardila sets out to clarify our understanding of how the restoration of monarchical rule played out in the Viceroyalty of New Granada. This region (roughly modern Colombia) had some unusual features: the Spanish monarchy had been largely displaced by autonomous states during Ferdinand VII's 1808–14 interregnum and in 1815 New Granada was the target for a large military expedition sent from Spain. This is not the first study of New Granada's