Introduction

The empires of Spain and Portugal have already generated a rich historical literature. Yet, the process and consequences of disaggregation still require elucidation. This is the theme of the present book rather than the origins of Independence movements or national sentiment.[1] My overall concern is to explain why the empires lasted so long, why there was such strong identification with them, and how Spain and Portugal finally lost their continental-American territories.

Few attempts have been made to view the Hispanic and Lusitanian Monarchies together in comparative form. This has always seemed to me the outstanding omission in our historical studies.[2] When I taught at the University of Strathclyde, my first attempts to do this were in Latin

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[1] See Brian R. Hamnett, "Process and Pattern: A Re-examination of the Ibero-American Independence Movements, 1808–1826," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 29, ii (May 1997), 279–328, and "Spain and Portugal and the Loss of Their Continental American Territories in the 1820s: An Examination of the Issues," *European Historical Quarterly*, 41, no. 3, (2011), 397–412.

[2] Notable exceptions are: James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, *Early Latin America. A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil* (Cambridge 1983); Lyle N. McAlister, *Spain and Portugal in the New World, 1492–1700* (Minneapolis 1984) and Jeremy Adelman, *Sovereignty and Revolution in the Iberian Atlantic* (Princeton 2006). James D. Tracy (ed.), *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350–1750* (Cambridge 1990) and *State Power and World Trade, 1350–1750* (Cambridge 1991). Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan, (eds.), *Atlantic History. A Critical Appraisal* (Oxford 2009), in which see Kenneth J. Andrien, "The Spanish Atlantic System" and A. J. R. Russell-Wood, "The Portuguese Atlantic, 1415–1808," 55–109. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500–1640," *AHR*, 5, (2007), 1359–85.

American history courses from 1800 to the present. At the University of Essex, I brought Spain and Portugal into the picture in "Comparative Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500–1750." Later, I taught "Comparative Nationalism in Latin America," a real minefield of problems, from Independence movements to the present day.

Just as Brazil's growing importance from the time of the gold boom of the 1690s to 1760s rescued Portugal from obscurity as a lesser European Power, New Spain as a source of revenue and credit bailed out Old Spain as it tumbled toward its military, financial, and political collapse in the later 1790s and early 1800s. For these reasons, the Lisbon and Madrid governments intended to preserve what they could of their commercial monopolies with the empires. The Lusitanian and Hispanic Monarchies were strikingly different, however, in their historical contexts and evolution. Portugal, in contrast to Spain, remained largely isolated from the rest of Europe, as a virtual non-participant in the continuous power struggles between the eighteenth-century dynasties. From the 1670s, Portugal's primary focus as an imperial power lay in Luso-America, the territory broadly known as "Brazil." Portuguese Western Africa remained subordinate to Brazilian interests as part of the South-Atlantic network of slavery and commerce, extending at times to Spanish American ports like Montevideo and Buenos Aires. This system exercised a persistent hold on the political and economic life of Brazil well into the nineteenth century.[3]

Dominic Lieven's identification of the core problem of empires certainly has a bearing on the Iberian case.

Perhaps the biggest single problem was that the best responses to the internal and external challenges to empire *pushed in opposite directions*. Internally, maximum decentralization, cultural autonomy, mutual vetoes, and agreed power-sharing between communities were not only much the most human and civilized policies but also the ones in the long run best to limit inter-ethnic conflict. Such policies were, however, hardly the ones best designed to maximize the state's military and fiscal resources, in the face of external challenge to its existence.[4]

[3] Kenneth Maxwell, "The Generation of the 1790s and the Idea of the Luso-Brazilian Empire," in Dauril Alden (ed.), *Colonial Roots of Modern Brazil, Papers of the Newberry Library Conference* (Berkeley 1973), 107–44; "Portuguese America," *IHR*, VI, no. 4 (November 1984), 529–50; "The Atlantic in the Eighteenth Century: A Southern Perspective on the Need to Return to the Big Picture," *TRHS*, 6th series, 3 (1993), 209–36. Gabriel B. Paquette, *Imperial Portugal and the Age of Atlantic Revolutions. The Luso-Brazilian World, c. 1770–1850* (Cambridge 2013), 133, compares and contrasts the Spanish and Portuguese Constitutions of 1812 and 1822.

[4] Dominic Lieven, "Dilemmas of Empire, 1850–1918. Power, Territory, Identity," *JCH*, 34, no. 2 (April 1999), 163–200: pp. 196–97.

Tensions such as these provided the long-term explanations for the break-down of the transatlantic Monarchies. One of the central theses of C. J. Bayly's *Birth of the Modern World*, is the following:

During the years, 1756–63, warfare in the Americas and Asia between Europeans, or between Europeans and indigenous people, hastened the crisis of the old régime in Europe. It helped to crack the financial systems of the old régime and throw doubts on the capacity and legitimacy of its rulers.

Bayly points to the connection between war and government-finance as the key to the crisis of the Great Powers during the later eighteenth century. Such pressures accounted for the urgency of reform of the old structures and the emergence of the phenomenon described in the historiography as "Enlightened Absolutism." The Seven Years' War (1756–63) revealed the increasing cost of war.[5] Transatlantic warfare after 1795 further pushed up the cost of navies and weaponry, with paralytic effects on government finance and, in particular, Spanish commerce. The Lusitanian Monarchy, a historic ally of Great Britain, became unavoidably caught up in the general struggle during the 1800s, especially after Napoleon's establishment of the Continental System in 1805.

The period 1770–1830 was dominated by the three great revolutions of the western world. It began with the rebellion of the British North American Thirteen Colonies (1776–83), the collapse of Bourbon France and the Revolution of 1789–99, which was then followed by the Napoleonic Consulate and Empire to 1814–15. In the final phase were the collapse of Bourbon Spain in 1808, the Wars of Independence on the Spanish American continent (1810–25), the division of the Portuguese Empire into the European sector, with its African and Asiatic dependencies, and the development of a separate Brazilian Empire still under the Braganza dynasty from 1822–89. Metropolitan Spain's inability to resolve the disputes with the American territories helped to explain why the momentous events after 1808 took the course that they did. The view that Brazil took a different course to Spanish America, with the minimum of violence, has rightly been contested.

The habitual separation of the Hispanic and the Lusitanian Monarchies into different compartments has had a distorting effect. Furthermore, their European metropoles should not be separated from

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[5] C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914* (Blackwell, Oxford 2004), 86, 91–96.

the overseas dominions as distinct case studies. Spatial networks operating through patronage, personal relationships, common beliefs and notions, and the exchange of ideas contributed to the enrichment of the connection between Portugal and Brazil, as also between Spain and Spanish America.

Viewed in totality, Spain and Portugal were just as much *parts* of their Monarchies as their American territories. In the period examined in this book, we are witnessing crisis on both sides of the Atlantic. The separation of Brazil and Spanish American Emancipation, to use the term current in the 1820s, should be seen in relation to the structural determinants of imperial collapse at the metropolitan centers.

Spain and Portugal lay at the core of the crisis that beset their continental American Empires in the last decades of the eighteenth century. I have long held the view that we should look for the essential explanation of the disaggregation of the two Monarchies on the American continent in the irresolvable problems of their two metropoles.[6] Traditional history has largely seen the period in terms of the opposition between American patriots and metropolitan rule. Often the conflicts more resembled civil wars within the American territories than straightforward struggles between colony and imperial center. Many fought to resist the break-up of the Monarchy and to defend its unity, whether as an absolute or a constitutional monarchy.

Imperial identities and loyalties remained the strongest in Mexico and Peru. In fact, this latter aspect of the question has been largely superseded in the historical literature by explorations of the origins of Independence, even though hardly anyone thought in terms of separatism at the time.[7] Simon Bolivar recognized that fact, in 1813, by his policy of "War to the Death" against anyone opposing the idea of outright separation from the Monarchy.[8]

Despite the variety of jurisdictions within them, several centripetal factors held the Ibero-American Monarchies together. These included dynastic loyalties, the Catholic Church under Royal Patronage, the senior bureaucracy and judicial agencies, the crucially important mercantile

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[6] See also Adelman, *Sovereignty and Revolution*, 395: "The revolutions that made the world anew were the consequence, not the cause, of the end of imperial sovereignty."

[7] See Marcela Echeverri, "Popular Royalists, Empire, and Politics in North-Western New Granada, 1809–1819," *HAHR*, 91, no. 2, (May 2011), 237–69.

[8] See Part II, Chapter 5.

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élite, the mining sector (where appropriate), and the shared political and religious cultures within both Monarchies.[9]

Only in the later decades of Spanish rule on the American continent did the metropolitan government significantly strengthen its armed forces. Colonial militias of varying degrees of impotence existed before the military reforms enacted in response to the British seizure of Havana and Manila in the Seven Years' War. Madrid henceforth perceived external defense rather than internal order as the priority, despite the impact of the rebellions of 1780–81 in New Granada and the Perus. New Spain's Bourbon Army proved able to hold back insurrection after 1810. The Army of Upper Peru, created by Viceroy José Fernando Abascal of Peru in 1810, opposed the Buenos Aires' revolutionary junta's attempt to control Upper Peru. The former Army, although weakened, survived Independence; the latter continued in the field until 1824, sustaining the Spanish cause until final defeat by Bolívar and Sucre.[10]

Personal and professional linkages, which often cut across royal institutions and specific territories, acted as long-term elements in binding metropoles and overseas dependencies together. In colonial Brazil, the interrelation between formal institutions and the personal relationships of those who manned them explained how the system subsisted.[11] Arrigo Amadori's examination of the interconnection of the two Spanish American viceroyalties and the metropolitan government during the period of the Conde-Duque de Olivares' supremacy (1621–43) points to a "system

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[9] António Manuel Hespanha, *As vésperas do Leviathan. Instituicões e poder político. Portugal – século XVII*, 2 vols. (Lisbon 1994), has developed these points in the Portuguese context.

[10] See Lyle McAlister, *The "Fuero Militar" in New Spain, 1764–1800* (Gainesville 1957) and "The Reorganization of the Army in New Spain, 1763–1765," *HAHR*, 33 (1953), 1–32. Christon I. Archer, *The Army in Bourbon Mexico, 1760–1810* (Albuquerque 1977). Leon Campbell, *The Military and Society in Colonial Peru, 1750–1820* (Philadelphia 1978). Allan J. Kuethe, *Military Reform and Society in New Granada, 1773–1808* (Gainesville 1978) and *Cuba, 1753–1815: Crown, Military, and Society* (Knoxville 1986). Juan Marchena Fernández, *Oficiales y soldados en el ejército de América* (Seville 1983). Clément Thibaud, *Repúblicas en armas. Los ejércitos bolivarianos en la guerra de Independencia en Colombia y Venezuela* (Bogotá 2003). Juan Ortiz Escamilla (coordinador), *Fuerzas militares en Iberoamérica, siglos XVIII y XIX* (Mexico City, Zamora, Xalapa 2005). Anthony McFarlane, *War and Independence in Spanish America* (New York 2014). Kenneth J. Andrien and Allan Kuethe, *The Spanish Atlantic World in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge 2014).

[11] See Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sovereignty and Society. The High Cort of Bahía and Its Judges, 1610–1757* (Berkeley 1973).

of multiple interrelationships."[12] Eric Myrup argues that Portugal managed to keep its disparate empire together for so long by virtue of the fact that

social networks not only played crucial roles in the interactions between the Portuguese and other peoples, but they also were a central feature in the activities of the colonial state ... the Portuguese empire was brought together by an evolving web of human relationships that lay beneath the surface of formal colonial government.[13]

This is also an approach I adopt here. My intention is to throw the spotlight on élites resident in the Americas, local interest-groups and the provincial milieux.

The interrelation between institutions and informal relationships explained how the empires lasted so long. In the late-colonial Hispanic world, however, official attempts to break up older networks contribute to the explanation of why the Hispanic Monarchy broke apart in a way completely different to the process of separation between Brazil and Portugal. Ministers strove to save their Monarchies by reform but often met with obstruction. A sense that time was running out prevailed among ministers by the 1790s, if Spain and Portugal were to salvage their positions as international powers. At first, entrenched élites in Spanish America were unsure of the new direction of policy and hardly knew how to respond or on what legitimate basis to challenge metropolitan goals. Within several decades, legitimacy became a political issue.

In Spain, the call for reform had been nothing new:. It did not come into being with the change of dynasty from Habsburg to Bourbon in 1700. The *arbitristas* of the first decades of the seventeenth century had already been asking why, when it possessed such a great empire, Spain had not become a prosperous country.[14] Discrete reforms of the administrative structures at the center of imperial government had already begun in the last two decades of Charles II's reign, in the 1680s and 1690s.[15] Much, however, hinged on the sense of the term "reform" and on the objectives of government policy. Even before the end of the War of Succession in the

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[12] Arrigo Amadori, *Negociando la obediencia. Gestión y reforma de los virreinatos americanos en tiempos del conde-duque de Olivares (1621–1643)* (Madrid 2013).

[13] Erik Lars Myrup, *Power and Corruption in the Early Modern Portuguese World* (Baton Rouge 2015), 2–3, 5.

[14] J. H. Elliot, *The Count-Duke of Olivares. The Statesman in an Age of Decline* (New Haven and London 1986), 69–70, 89–101.

[15] See Henry Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth Century, 1665–1700* (London 1980) and Christopher Storrs, *The Resilience of the Spanish Monarchy, 1665–1700* (Oxford 2006).

peninsula (1701–15), the new Bourbon king and his ministers were interpreting reform in terms of centralizing government agencies and strengthening royal power. Imperial Spain saw itself increasingly pressed between France and Great Britain, both of which also had powerful interests in the Caribbean and on the American continent. Commercial rationalization and tighter fiscal management were the responses.[16]

The idea that the entire Monarchy constituted the "Nation" took shape in the course of the eighteenth century. Constitutionalists, as much as absolutists, accepted the idea of Hispanic or Lusitanian Nations consisting of the Monarchies as a whole. The difference between them was that the absolutists saw the dynasty as the apex of union, while Liberal constitutionalists regarded the Constitution as the unifying agency. Both, however, were monarchists and defenders of continued union. The Portuguese Cortes of 1821–23 reaffirmed the unity of the Monarchy but sought to reassert Lisbon's pivotal position as the commercial and political center, a view regarded as a threat to their interests by the Brazilian élites, which had benefited so much from the presence of king, court, and government in Rio de Janeiro from 1808 to 1821.[17]

This present book falls into a historiographical context. We should turn now to examine its position in relation to those of other authors. José María Portillo highlights the problem faced by absolutist ministers and their constitutionalist successors in laying solid foundations for a transoceanic political structure during the period from the 1760s into the 1820s. Portillo's concept of "Atlantic careers" demonstrates the institutional linkages across continents through the developing careers of the educated individuals who staffed senior levels of magistracy and administration.[18] There will be many examples of these "imperial careers" (as I should prefer) in the forthcoming pages. Abascal, for example, spent his mature years in the Indies, gaining knowledge of how the Monarchy really functioned.

Jorge Domínguez places the focus on élite–State relationships in his exploration of the disintegration of the Hispanic Monarchy: "the critical factor was the political bargaining relationship between local elites and

[16] Henry Kamen, *The War of Succession in Spain, 1700–15* (Bloomington and London 1969), 42–56, 114–17, 199–241. Geoffrey J. Walker, *Spanish Politics and Imperial Trade, 1700–1789* (Bloomington and London 1979).

[17] Paquette, *Imperial Portugal*, 19–25, 95–103, 140–47, 324.

[18] J. M. Portillo, *Crisis atlántica. Autonomía e independencia en la crisis de la monarquía hispana* (Madrid 2006), 16–21, and the same author's *La vida atlántica de Victorián de Villava* (Madrid 2009), 23, 28–29.

the government of the empire and of each colony." Domínguez shows how Mexico, Venezuela, Chile, and Cuba all responded in different ways to the crisis of 1808–10. Despite stirrings in Cuba from the 1790s, conditions on the island made for the survival of Spanish rule during the nineteenth century. His argument is that political institutions in the first three territories proved unable to adapt (at varying stages) to the crisis in the Monarchy. Domínguez, nevertheless, portrays the Spanish state as "a centralized bureaucratic empire," which rather overstates the position.[19]

Three volumes by Barbara and Stanley Stein focus on the relationships between Spain and the Empire, showing clearly how New Spain shored up the metropolis. Rather than Spain acting as the dynamic center of the Monarchy, by the 1790s it became the principal burden. The parallel studies by John TePaske, Jacques Barbier, and Carlos Marichal have also penetrated metropolitan Spain's fiscal tergiversations, most especially in relation to Mexican resources. The urgent need to tighten the relationship with New Spain is the focus of the Steins' latter two volumes. Spain, however, became ground down in the process. Accordingly, they argue that the crisis in Spain antedated the Napoleonic intervention in the peninsula in 1808, a position I have consistently adopted myself. Yet, the Steins do not examine in depth the perceptions and objectives of the American elites, particularly provincial and local power-groupings. We have no discussion of what the situation might have been in Peru, for instance. There is no attempt at any comparison or contrast with the Lusitanian Monarchy.[20]

Jeremy Adelman's study integrates comparatively Brazilian developments with those of Spanish America. The book advances considerably our understanding of the crises of the two Monarchies. Above all, it rejects nationalist stories of emerging or embryonic nations trapped within

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[19] Jorge Dominguez, *Insurrection or Loyalty. The Breakdown of the Spanish American Empire* (Cambridge, MA, 1980), 241, 249, 255.

[20] I am referring to *Silver, Trade, and War. Spain and America in the Making of Early Modern Europe* (Baltimore and London 2000), *Apogee of Empire: Spain and New Spain in the Age of Charles III, 1759–1788* (Baltimore and London 2003), and *Edge of Crisis. War and Trade in the Spanish Atlantic, 1789–1808* (Baltimore 2009). Jacques Barbier, "Peninsular Finance and Colonial Trade. The Dilemma of Charles IV's Spain," *JLAS*, 12, i (1980), 21–37. John J. TePaske, "The Financial Disintegration of the Royal Government in Mexico during the Epoch of Independence," in Jaime E. Rodriguez O. (ed.), *The Independence of Mexico and the Creation of the New Nation* (Los Angeles 1989), 63–83. Carlos Marichal, *Bankruptcy of Empire. Mexican Silver and the Wars between Spain, Britain and France, 1760–1810* (Cambridge 2007) and by the same author, "Beneficios y costes fiscales del colonialismo: las remesas americanas a España, 1760–1814," *Revista de Historia Económica*, 15, no. 3 (1997), 475–505.

empires, in favor of a view of the two Monarchies as spatial and cultural unities. They are broken apart because of the collapse of their metropoles, a thesis also developed here. As a result, the continental-American territories were plunged into a crisis of legitimacy, which they had not anticipated. The end result was a conglomeration of divided, confused, and largely unstable successor states, saddled with the task of constructing nations out of their sometimes disputed territories. New Spain, however, is virtually unmentioned.[21]

François-Xavier Guerra's perspective of the Independence period moves the focus away from socio-economic causality toward intellectual and cultural shifts. François Furet's revisionist approach to the French Revolution may be perceived in Guerra's work. This relies heavily on the notion of the expansion of the "public sphere." Applied to the Hispanic world, the idea includes private meetings, the press, clubs, masonic lodges, and reforming-societies. However, Guerra puts the metropolis at the epicenter of the crisis of the Hispanic Monarchy, a position with which I concur.[22] Guerra describes a phenomenon, which he calls "las revoluciones hispánicas," and interprets them as the "transition to Modernity as much as the negotiation of independence."[23] He defines "modernity" as "the nation envisaged as a voluntary association of equal individuals." I should prefer to omit reference to "modernity," and draw attention less to a common revolutionary process throughout the Monarchy than to many different ones, often conflicting. On the other hand, I agree with Guerra's argument that unitarism represented the crux of the problem between metropolitan government and the aspiration of the American élites toward some form of home rule within the Monarchy.[24]

The issue of representation, a central theme of my book, was openly discussed after 1808, though in different forms throughout the European and American territories. As Roberto Breña argues, the American élites and the deputies sent to the Cádiz Cortes of 1810–13 came up against the Spanish peninsula deputies' determination not to comply in practice with the declared principle of equality of status between the American and European sectors of the Monarchy. Both Breña and Guerra argue, as I do in this book, that constitutionalist ministers after 1810 and 1820 opposed

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[21] Adelman, *Sovereignty and Revolution.*
[22] François-Xavier Guerra, *Modernidad e Independencia. Ensayos sobre las revoluciones hispanas* (Madrid 1992), 85–113.
[23] Guerra, *Modernidad e Independencia*, 21, 115.
[24] Guerra, *Modernidad e Independencia*, 115–48.

the transformation of the unitary Monarchy into "una monarquía plural."[25]

The term "colonialism" is rarely far from any discussion of empire. Jaime Rodríguez' two major studies of Hispanic-American Independence reject the idea of anticolonial struggle, putting emphasis on the Cádiz Constitution of 1812 as the culminating point in the debate concerning the transformation of the Monarchy. The Cádiz Liberal tradition of 1810–14 and 1820–23, however, tolerated no substantial devolution of power to the American territories or division of sovereignty. This was unacceptable to many Americans. Several Hispanic American territories' developed their own constitutional forms, moving toward republicanism and federalism.[26] Furthermore, in both Guerra and Rodriguez, we lose sight of the bitterly contested armed struggles across Spanish America. We have no sense of why men and women took the decision to risk their lives and livelihoods by resorting to arms. There is little appreciation of how warfare and insurrection in Spanish America shaped the character of the states that followed Independence.[27]

Works by Germán Carrera Damas, Juan Ortiz Escamilla, Marixa Lasso, Alfonso Múnera, Núria Sala i Vila, Cecilia Méndez, and others argue cogently in the opposite direction. I would also place my own work on this scale of the argument. Ortiz, followed later by Eric Van Young, places the issues of loyalty, insurgency, neutrality, or indifference, within the village context. Lasso and Múnera attach prime importance to the active participation of blacks and mulattos in the struggle for racial equality on the New Granada Caribbean coast, while Carrera Damas opened discussion of non-white action on behalf of the Royalist cause in Venezuela in 1812–15. Andean peasant involvement on one side or another, as armed bands, or suppliers of victuals or information, in the conflict between the rival Royalist and Patriot armies in the early 1820s

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[25] Roberto Breña, *El primer liberalismo español y los procesos de emancipación de América, 1808–1824. Una revisión historiográfica del liberalismo hispánico* (Mexico City 2006), 109–110, 130–35, 142–48, 155. There were some sixty American deputies in the Extraordinary Cortes of 1810–13.

[26] Jaime E. Rodríguez O., *The Independence of Spanish America* (Cambridge 2008) and *Nosotros somos ahora los verdaderos españoles*, 2 vols. (Zamora and Mexico City 2009).

[27] Rodriguez, *Nosotros somos*, p. 633, "The Independence of New Spain was not the result of an anticolonial armed struggle. Above all, it resulted from a *political revolution* [author's italics] which culminated in the *dissolution* [same] of an international political system." There is a sharp contrast with Anthony McFarlane, *War and Independence in Spanish America* (New York 2014) and Juan Luis Ossa Santa Cruz, *Armies, Politics and Revolution. Chile, 1808–1826* (Liverpool 2014).