

In the second volume of his *Spain under the Habsburgs*, John Lynch attacked the hypothesis that Spanish America experienced a severe economic depression during the seventeenth century. He argued that the sharp decline in transatlantic trade with the Peninsula served rather to stimulate domestic industry and agriculture and to encourage inter-regional commerce. The balance of economic power within the Hispanic world shifted decisively in favor of the colonies. "Spain's recession was America's growth." The theory heightens our sense of the impact of the Bourbon reforms. Lesley Byrd Simpson's "forgotten century," if pushed forward to encompass the years 1650-1750, was precisely the time when Spain derived least profit from its empire.

In contrast to this periodization, Demetrio Ramos implicitly accepts (his chapters divisions prove this) an older scheme in which only three main epochs were discerned: the first years of conquest and settlement; the long middle decades of quiet growth; and the final Bourbon assault upon the older order. In the first of the two essays into which his book is divided, Ramos examines the formulation of the various codes of law which governed colonial mining. He remarks the oddity whereby the Mexican industry was regulated not by the Toledan ordinances but by the *Nuevo Cuaderno* promulgated by Philip II for the Peninsula. He comments that the eighteenth century code was influenced by enlightenment notions of progress and efficiency. Ramos describes the main sea-lines of interprovincial trade in the Caribbean, the River Plate, and the Pacific. He neglects the long-distance commerce of the Mexican interior. He merely hints at the magnet-like quality of Potosí's rich market. The consequence of *comercio libre* and its antecedents was to destroy the inter-regional "common market" in colonial produce which had developed under the Habsburgs.

The declared aim of this work is to describe the channels through which trade flowed. Ramos explicitly avoids any examination of supply and demand, of markets and producers, of the variations or cycles in the volume and value of merchandise. His few statistics are illustrative rather than demonstrative. Granted this abstention from any assessment of relative magnitudes or values, what remains is an impression of overall movement rather than any sense of the economic forces which prompted it. Ramos has read widely in the secondary literature of his subject and is careful to cite it all.

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*Politics and Trade in Southern Mexico, 1750-1821*. By BRIAN R. HAMNETT. Cambridge, England, 1971. Cambridge University Press.

Cambridge Latin American Studies, 12. Maps. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. Pp. viii, 214. Cloth. \$12.50.

There are two general interpretations of main currents in Spain and the Spanish empire of the eighteenth century. The "Spanish" school sees the rise of a spirit of reform before 1759, its implementation under Charles III, followed by reaction, drift, and collapse accelerated by the events in Spain after 1800. The "American" school accepts the spirit of reform and some implementation, with a healthy scepticism about the results; moreover, it questions the direction or intent of change by raising the question, reform for whom? More than half a century ago the American school's position was stated by Priestley in a sympathetic biography of Gálvez and his time, apropos of change in Mexico: "There was simply an enforcement of more rigid adherence to the paramount interest of the mother country in the production and wealth of New Spain." Brian Hamnett's *Politics and Trade in Southern Mexico* is a fresh contribution to the American school of interpretation.

Hamnett's brief, information-packed study is distinguished by monographic scope as well as the breadth of manuscript materials consulted. In a key area of Mexico, Oaxaca, he examines both the economy and the politics of change at the end of the colony to trace at the grass-roots level the intent and effect of Spanish-imposed change, and to furnish a firm basis for locating protagonists and antagonists of change. At this point the pioneer nature of the study is evident, for Hamnett has gone beyond legislation and intent to pinpoint conflicting interest-groups both *criollo* and *peninsular*, the changing role of the old commercial center at Mexico City and the new one at Veracruz, as well as the build-up of pressure in the colony on the eve of Spain's collapse in 1808—all reflections of the structure and function of production of an export crop, the cochineal dye. In conception, utilization of manuscript sources, attention to interest groups and economic structures of which they were a part and which in turn they manipulated, Hamnett's study indicates the utility of the monograph.

Emphasis is first upon the development of the cochineal export economy: the cultivation of the crop by Indian communities, the use of church funds by Mexico City merchants in supplying commercial agents in Oaxaca, the interdependence of merchants and local bureaucrats (*alcaldes mayores*, *corregidores*) in manipulating the cochineal economy for earnings and salaries. Hamnett analyzes the merchants' and bureaucrats' principal instrument of coercion in forcing Indian

producers from subsistence to export agriculture, the *repartimiento*. *Repartimiento*—forced advance of cash, tools, and oxen at artificially high prices to Indian producers of cochineal—coerced Indians into production of cochineal and to a less extent of raw cotton and cotton cloth. Change in the form of Gálvez's intendancies was designed to strip local officials of their excessive share of cochineal earnings by putting them on a salary, to increase the government's tax revenues, and to open access to the production, export and gains of cochineal to many Spanish entrepreneurs by eliminating the instrument of Mexico City merchants' monopoly of supply and purchase, the *repartimiento*.

It is instructive to recall that Gálvez's project for intendancies, initiated in 1768, was not formally instituted until 1786 and then immediately attacked and subverted. Under pressure from merchants and bureaucrats, Mexico's *Junta Superior de Hacienda* (1794) recommended the return to *repartimiento* and in Oaxaca local administrators in fact did so: although the *Nueva Ordenanza de Intendentes* (1803) re-affirmed abolition of *repartimiento*, within four months the *Ordenanza* too was rescinded. Attitudes toward the *repartimiento* remained equivocal, indicating "a clear failure to back up the reform strongly enough with the full force of the Royal Authority."

Hamnett's thesis, developed in chapters 5 and 6, is that changes in Oaxaca economic structure leading to the weakening of Mexico City merchants' hegemony were the product of the intendancy system, the extension of *comercio libre* to Mexico (1789) and the creation of new *consulados*, notably that of Veracruz. By 1798 Veracruz merchants were the main suppliers of credit to Oaxaca producers; in the sense that the Gálvez system was applied to introduce "more enterprising and efficient merchants . . . in the profitable cochineal trade," it therefore achieved success. Hamnett does not indicate the position of Veracruz merchants on the key issue of *repartimiento*; on the other hand, whatever the differences between the merchants of Mexico City and Veracruz over control of the Oaxaca economy, enforcement of the *Consolidación* (1804-1808) by Viceroy Iturrigaray united both groups in a common front to depose him in 1808; by siphoning off ecclesiastical funds to Spain, the *Consolidación* affected the merchants of Mexico City and Veracruz as well as the *criollo* landed interests of Oaxaca. Both merchant communities advocated Iturrigaray's deposition because they "believed that the ending of Spanish Metropolitan rule in Mexico was about to take place;" in Oaxaca the merchant community hoped thereby "to reverse the consequences of the establishment of the Intendancy in 1786." In October, 1810, *repartimiento* was reaffirmed,

suspended during the insurgents' occupation of Oaxaca, and re-instituted in 1814; at independence it disappeared. Hamnett sees in the combination of intendancies, *comercio libre* and new *consulados* a further development, the formation of "Mexican Creole Liberalism," the growth of regionalism, and consequently "the weakening of Mexico City's traditional dominant role."

Hamnett's presentation is regrettably flawed by many infelicitous phrases which editorial care might have removed and, more seriously, by a repeated tendency to present viewpoints of eighteenth-century observers without his own critical evaluation and analysis. More often than not the contradictions implicit in by no means impartial testimony are simply left unresolved.

A number of questions emerge from Hamnett's short yet ambitious study. They concern the motivations, goals, and impact of the colonial strategies of "Spanish enlightened despotism." At the core of Hamnett's study is the Spanish government's effort to tamper with a major mechanism of the colonial economy, *repartimiento*. The multiple objectives of the strategies—to increase the flow of revenue to the Spanish state, to incorporate Indian producers via market inducements, to offer more Spaniards greater access to economic opportunity in the colonies—were contradictory, which may explain Hamnett's reluctance to offer a new synthesis at this point. Although this study does not resolve the contradictions, his data and that of other researchers will be invaluable in achieving a more accurate and more balanced synthesis of the Spanish empire at the end of the eighteenth century.

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*Las industrias durante el Virreinato (1776-1810)*. By PEDRO SANTOS MARTÍNEZ. Buenos Aires, 1969. Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires. Colección Argentina. Tables. Maps. Illustrations. Pp. 160.

This study of Dr. Pedro S. Martínez should be included in the list of fine works from the school of Argentine economic historians which developed from Álvarez and Levene. It is based upon sound research of archival material and upon a thorough canvassing of all available bibliography.

The first section of the book is an essay in itself. It analyzes the industrial policy of the Spanish Bourbons during the eighteenth century. Philip V and his successors, particularly Charles III, attempted to counter the remarkable upsurge of Great Britain as an expansive industrial power by an increase of Spanish productivity and concentra-