

In This Issue

We return in this issue to the study of the independence era. In early 2008, we issued a call for papers for a special issue marking the bicentennial of Latin American independence. We hoped to showcase new theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of independence, highlight its transnational linkages and influences, and sample some of the themes, questions, and arguments covered by the most recent scholarship.

This is the second of two issues devoted to the subject (the first one, vol. 90, no. 3, was published in August 2010). Some of the themes raised in the previous issue are also present in this one, such as the perennial debate concerning changes and continuities, or the regional variations that characterized the process of independence. The articles included in this issue, however, exemplify other approaches, methodologies, and thematic concerns as well, offering intriguing and sometimes unexpected results. For instance, in “New Viceroyalty, New Nation, New Empire: A Transnational Imaginary for Peruvian Independence,” David Cahill argues that the principal ideologue of the 1814–15 Revolution in Cuzco that greeted the restoration of Ferdinand VII was not a *criollo* intellectual, but peninsular cleric Francisco Carrascón y la Sota, who advocated the creation of a fully independent Peruvian state that would stretch from Lima to Rio de la Plata. Cahill notes that Carrascón’s “high profile in the separatist politics of the southern Andes is another salutary reminder that Latin American independence was not just a creole endeavor,” an argument that is also central to Marcela Echeverri’s “Popular Royalists, Empire, and Politics in Southwestern New Granada, 1809–1819.” As Echeverri notes, during the last two decades historians of independence have researched how subordinate social groups, including Indians and people of African descent, enslaved or free, participated in the struggles for independence and helped to shape the creation of the new republics. Most scholarship, however, has concentrated on the study of popular republicanism, ignoring in the process the potential appeal of royalism. Her study, however, shows that indigenous peoples and African slaves in the province of Popayán chose to defend the royalist cause between 1809 and 1820. Echeverri explains how, faced with threats of insurrection, colonial authorities

Hispanic American Historical Review 91:2

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in Popayán broke with tradition and boldly built an alliance with indigenous communities and with slaves laboring in the mines. Indians (caciques and commoners) and slaves, in turn, seized these new opportunities, giving the royalist cause a new popular meaning in the process. As a result, “Popular Royalists” offers a characterization of a popular politics that is considerably more complex and diverse than frequently assumed.

Mark A. Burkholder also looks at the issue of loyalties, but from a different angle. Using a prosopographical approach, Burkholder studies the impact that independence had on an important group of colonial officials, *audiencia* ministers. It is well known that the process of independence destroyed many of the administrative units of the Spanish Empire such as the viceroalties, giving birth to independent republics based on constitutional orders. These changes, however, frequently obscure important continuities. In our previous issue on independence, for instance, José Carlos Chiaramonte in “The ‘Ancient Constitution’ after Independence (1808–1852),” argued that traditional conceptions of legitimate power continued to inform governance in the new republics. Burkholder finds further evidence of continuity by looking at the fate of the *audiencia* ministers, many of whom managed to transition successfully into the new regimes and to retain positions of power. Surprisingly, this was true not only of criollo ministers but also those of peninsular origin who chose to stay in the newly independent countries. Like the actors observed by Cahill and Echeverri, the bureaucrats studied by Burkholder cannot be easily categorized as royalists or supporters of independence according to their place of birth. “That a minority of peninsulars remained on the American mainland while a few creoles emigrated to Spain is a reminder of the complexity of the independence era and the political revolution and civil wars it encompassed,” he notes.

Not that place of birth was inconsequential. As Burkholder’s article documents, between 1750 and 1808 the proportion of *peninsulares* appointed to the colonial *audiencias* increased dramatically. Lack of adequate opportunities for advancement and representation in the bureaucracy was one of the grievances most frequently invoked by colonial elites in their allegations of misrule. These elites also complained about the structures of colonial commerce and about peninsular control over it. Yet the contribution of Xabier Lamikiz, “Transatlantic Networks and Merchant Guild Rivalry in Colonial Trade with Peru, 1729–1780: A New Interpretation,” challenges long-standing characterizations of colonial trade as a space of confrontation and conflict. As Lamikiz explains, by concentrating on the important roles of the merchant *consulados* (guilds) of Lima and Cadiz, scholars have emphasized the conflictive

nature of colonial trade and the numerous regulations that limited the participation of American-born subjects in transatlantic commerce. By looking at trade through individual merchants and their networks, which relied heavily on “trust,” Lamikiz offers a novel vision of colonial commerce in the period preceding independence. This vision emphasizes cooperation and integration rather than conflict and domination.

