

THE INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT OF BRITISH DIPLOMATIC
RECOGNITION OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS, C. 1800–1830¹

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Great Britain's formal diplomatic recognition of Colombia and the United Provinces of the Río de la Plata, two of Spain's renegade colonies in South America, as independent states in 1825 derived from confluences of competing political and economic ideas. When interpreted in its political context, Britain's action appears incongruous with the resurgent spirit of political reaction in Europe, a defiant departure from the Congress System committed to principles of legitimacy, sovereignty, and stability. An examination of the intellectual context, however, reveals shifts in ideas that permitted British statesmen to diverge from the reinvigorated Old Regime and to author an important chapter in transatlantic history. The cause of Spanish American independence galvanized intellectual alliances between revolutionaries and reactionaries, mercantilists and proponents of free trade, and champions of colonial expansion together with their detractors. Its ultimate success, in the arena of diplomacy, was anticipated by intellectual developments that had undermined the legitimacy of Spain's sovereignty in the New World and had strengthened the preference for unrestricted trade over colonial monopoly.

While acknowledging the significance of parliamentary debates and Britain's geopolitical position in Europe in this process, this essay is concerned chiefly with the ideas, expressed in pamphlets, journals, and theoretical texts that paved the way for British recognition. There are two overarching explanations for diplomatic recognition in the existing historical literature which may be summarized, somewhat crudely, in the following manner: the first makes diplomatic causes pre-eminent and contends that Britain's preoccupation with preserving the European balance of power restricted its diplomacy. Before 1815, the exigencies of the Napoleonic Wars, an alliance with Spain, and apprehension of French colonial designs precluded consideration of recognition.² After 1815, Britain placated the European powers and was entangled in the Congress system that annihilated all nationalist movements. These factors outweighed the 'voracious appetite' of British merchants for Spanish American markets and dictated an official policy of

neutrality. The Monroe Doctrine of 1823, coupled with France's re-occupation of Spain to restore absolutism with the Congress of Verona's consent, threatened to eclipse Britain's politico-economic power in South America. These events forced Foreign Secretary George Canning (1807–1809, 1822–1827) to negotiate commercial treaties with the new states that elaborated and formalized the vague maritime recognition granted by his predecessor, Lord Castlereagh, in 1822. The decision is depicted as 'retarded by [Canning's] preference for monarchy' and adherence to the principles of legitimacy, but hastened by anxiety about Franco-American ascendancy.³

The second type of explanation focuses on Britain's economic motivation. The growth of British industry, it is claimed, 'moved the political arm to force an entry into markets closed by the power of foreign monopolies,' such as Latin America. The purpose was 'not only to redress the Old World balance of power but to restore British influence in the New.' Recognition, therefore, aimed at 'informal empire,' extending British influence through free trade, without employing the expensive coercive force entailed by direct rule.⁴ Moreover, recognition of 'stable and progressive' governments in South America was an early moment in the creation of 'an international trading system centred on London and mediated by sterling,' employing long-term loans to foreign governments and direct overseas investment. The allure of these newly opened markets increased during the dismal post-war depression of 1815–1823 and the reckless, frenzied investment in Latin American stock and mining companies bolsters the credibility of this thesis.⁵

My approach supplements these two explanations by recreating the intellectual context in which diplomatic recognition occurred.⁶ In the first section of this essay, I argue that British political writers re-appraised the economic viability of colonies and concluded that free trade's benefits outweighed those of the old monopoly system. The Spanish colonial system was deemed archaic and insufferable because its monopolistic policies prohibited foreign commerce. In the second section, I contend that Spain's legitimacy as a colonial power was undermined by pervasive perceptions of its irreversible decline. Spain's political turmoil between 1808–1823 enabled the American revolutions to be portrayed as counter-revolutionary, restorative and purifying struggles, hostile to the radicalism of the 1789 French Revolution. In the third section, I argue that grandiose fantasies of South America as an outlet for capital, a depot of raw materials, and a lucrative testing ground for technology and industry was a ubiquitous feature of the milieu from which recognition emerged. Canning's public position on colonial monopoly and the legitimacy of Spanish colonial rule, like many of his parliamentary colleagues, shifted considerably between 1808–1826. The purpose of this essay, however, is neither to trace Canning's intellectual evolution nor to 'decipher' the inner-workings of the 'official mind,'⁷ but rather to examine how the ideological environment rendered official neutrality untenable.

Proponents of South American recognition bolstered their argument by

reviving two negative assessments of colonies that originated in British politico-economic thought. In both cases, the value and viability of colonial possessions were not repudiated indiscriminately, but specific colonial arrangements were rejected because they were politically illegitimate or hindered economic prosperity. The utility of colonies, or 'plantations', was one of the most contentious and least-resolved issues debated by seventeenth-century English political writers. Roger Coke derogated their value, asserting that 'Ireland and our plantations rob us of all the growing youth and industry of the nation, whereby it becomes weak and feeble, and the strength as well as trade becomes decayed and diminished.'⁸ William Petty lamented the treasury-draining impact of providing for imperial defense of 'small, divided and remote governments, being seldom able to defend themselves, the burthen of protecting them all must lie upon the chief kingdom England.' He calculated that, 'instead of being additions,' far-flung territories 'are really diminutions' of national strength.⁹

Even political writers who propounded the benefits of colonies to England placed multiple conditions on their viability. Josiah Child conceded that 'if they were not kept to the rules of navigation' then the 'benefit of them would be wholly lost to the nation ... leaving us only the trouble of breeding men, and sending them abroad to cultivate the ground.'¹⁰ Charles Davenant argued that colonies constitute a 'strength' so long as they remain 'under good discipline' and 'are strictly made to observe the fundamental laws' of the mother country. Under any other circumstances, however, colonies degenerated into 'members lopped off from the body politick, being indeed like offensive arms, wrested from a nation, to be turned against it.' The beneficence of colonies hinged, therefore, on proper and regular governance. Davenant argued that colonies and metropolitan countries responded to the same stimuli, proposing that the 'welfare of all countries whatsoever depends upon good government and without doubt these colonies will flourish if they are entrusted to honest discreet and skilful hands.'¹¹ William Wood also diagnosed improper administration as a potential destroyer of colonial utility, noting that since the 'laws have ty'd them fast to us ... nothing but our arbitrary treatment of them, and our misgovernment can make them otherwise beneficial and advantageous to us.'¹² A further limitation, identified by Child, was population size. He argued that 'lands (though excellent) without hands proportionable will not enrich any kingdom' and that most nations were 'more or less rich or poor proportionably to the paucity or plenty of their people, and not to the sterility of fruitlessness of their lands.'¹³

In his deprecation of mercantilism, written more than a century after the publication of Child's treatise, Adam Smith asserted monopoly of colonial commerce is a 'dead weight,' retarding the prosperity of the colony by raising the price of its produce abroad. In this way, it 'cramps' and 'encumbers the industry of all countries.' Smith acknowledged colonialism as a 'general advantage' to Europe's economy, facilitating 'the increase of its enjoyments' and 'the augmentation of its

industry,' but he claimed that monopoly 'keeps [those advantages] down below what they would otherwise rise to in the case of a free trade.' Furthermore, it 'renders less secure' the long-term prosperity of the colonial power because 'her commerce, instead of running in a great number of small channels, has been taught to run principally in one great channel.' The costs of military defense, Smith contended, are exorbitant, profligate burdens on home taxpayers and consumers.¹⁴ Smith employed Spain as a test case for monopoly's defects that 'have nearly overbalanced the natural good effects of the colonial trade.'¹⁵ His observation encapsulated the pervasive notion that Spain's empire was improperly acquired and maintained, certainly contrary to the British self-perception of an 'oceanic empire of trade and settlement, not an empire of conquest.'¹⁶ Smith's ambivalence toward colonies, conceding their benefit as producers of raw materials but repudiating closed trade as deleterious, permeated the subsequent debate over their viability.

Smith's argument against monopoly struck at the 1696 Comprehensive Navigation Act that denied foreign ships access to colonial markets, strangled colonial exports, and limited colonial imports to English goods.¹⁷ 'Reciprocal freedom of commerce' was the explicit justification for Britain's recognition, thereby undermining its own Navigation Act. But mercantilist principles prevailed in colonial policy until the early nineteenth century.¹⁸ In the debate on the American Intercourse Bill in 1806 to permit foreign merchants in the West Indies, colonial monopoly was lauded as 'the foundation of our naval power, of our real strength . . . which has made us what we are, the admiration and envy of the world.' Similarly, Canning extolled this prerogative as 'the fundamental law of every country' whereas Castlereagh lashed out against the 'economists [who] laugh at the notion of compelling commerce to be carried in native shipping' and credited colonial monopoly with 'the rise of this nation into greatness and security.'¹⁹ Colonial monopoly, therefore, remained part of the political creed, but would slowly be replaced by free trade ideas by 1825.²⁰ Spain's suffocation of South America's markets became an aspect of the rationale for recognition, and Canning cited 'care for the commerce and navigation of [British] dominions' in his notification to the Spanish Crown.²¹

Jeremy Bentham, by applying his utilitarian calculus, radicalized Smith's position, asserting that the home country was invariably governed expensively and corruptly due to the 'uselessness and burthensomeness' of colonies. Furthermore, sheer distance precluded efficient management of colonies, 'irremediably' producing 'a settled despondency, or a series of insurrections.'²² Seeking to demonstrate the illusory benefit of colonies since his speech 'Emancipate Your Colonies' to the French Assembly in 1793, Bentham argued that overseas colonies underpin European bellicosity by becoming 'objects of envy' which are 'subject of concupiscence and invasion to swarms of depredators.' The dismantling of formal empire and the advent of free trade circumvented this predicament while

preserving those 'instruments of mutual attraction,' specifically common 'language, religion, laws, [and] customs,' which guarantee 'unequalled facility' in commercial intercourse. Bentham employed the rapidly-expanding, mutually-prosperous trade between Britain and the U.S.A. after its independence to demonstrate 'the only channel through which net profit can be derived . . . trade, on terms equal and free on both sides; subjection, none on either side.'²³ Bentham prescribed this remedy for Spain in 'Rid Yourselves of Ultramarina,' a pamphlet circulated privately in 1822. Bentham was enamored of South America as a pristine laboratory for his ideas: after conversations with the cosmopolitan Venezuelan revolutionary Francisco de Miranda, whom he met through James Mill, Bentham briefly aspired to emigrate to codify constitutions for the new nations, and he corresponded with leading revolutionaries, bombarding them with legislative advice.²⁴

Apologists for monopolistic empire attempted to refute the Smithian and Benthamite indictments, yet often endorsed Spanish American independence according to their mercantilist paradigm. Henry Brougham, M.P., *Edinburgh Review* contributor, and champion of Spanish American independence, argued that mercantile empire is rendered 'subservient to the most narrow-minded sort of ambition' and does not generate, as Bentham claimed, internecine and unremitting strife, locating its origins in 'the mutual relation of the European powers, the diversity of national characters, and the belligerent nature of man.' Brougham acknowledged 'ruinous' and 'unwieldy colonial empire' existed, but insisted it cannot 'injure the mother country.'²⁵ He postulated that it was more fruitful to consider colonies as 'parts of the same extensive empire,' which could alleviate conditions of surplus population and capital. Colonies were not discarded as useless. Whereas the West Indies were increasingly disparaged as 'arid sand hills,' jeopardizing Britain's future prosperity, India's 'rich fields and produce'²⁶ were deemed suitable objects of colonial enterprise. Even Brougham, however, derided Spain for obtaining 'as little advantage as possible from the finest colonial possessions that were ever possessed by any state,'²⁷ though he did not imply that this incompetence threatened its legitimacy as a sovereign.

West Indian agricultural interests vociferously defended colonial monopoly, disparaged free trade's purported benefits, and embraced South American independence. Asserting that Britain had been 'raised to pre-eminence by the resources which those colonies have supplied,' they credited monopoly with providing the entire population with 'ease, comfort, wealth, independence; the conveniences and luxuries which minister to human happiness.' Colonies, however, also promoted free trade with independent states, including 'rich and extensive' South America, whose 'security and protection can only be afforded by the possession of naval stations in the vicinity.'²⁸ This hybrid of monopoly and free trade sought to retain the benefits of mercantilism for colonial producers in a less regulated economy.

Smith's and Bentham's ideas defined the contours of the debate over the viability of colonies. Their views are discernible in the ideas espoused by the

Edinburgh Review between 1809–1825. Although it would champion the legitimacy of the *Cortes* before the restoration and thereafter support limited monarchy, the *Edinburgh Review* communicated South American affairs to a substantial reading public and staunchly criticized colonial monopoly.²⁹ James Mill's 1809 article, 'The Emancipation of Spanish America,' contained three features that would reverberate in subsequent debates: an exaggerated appraisal of America's capacity for free commerce; a framework to legitimize colonial revolt; and a refutation of colonial monopoly. First, Mill enthusiastically envisaged a proto-Panama Canal through which 'all the riches of India and China would move toward America [and] the riches of Europe and America would move toward Asia.'³⁰ Second, he reluctantly respected Spain's sovereignty, but predicted enhanced British enthusiasm for independence if French control of South America were possible. Third, Mill dismissed British merchant demands for monopoly in Spanish American markets as misguided because 'it raises the price of all commodities at home.'³¹

The *Edinburgh Review*, in spite of breaking with Mill on other issues, adhered to these ideas through 1825: it castigated Spain's 'blind and intolerant despotism' for having 'fettered and retarded the progress' of America.³² Furthermore, it amalgamated Smith's and Brougham's critiques, insisting a colony was 'an integral and constituent part of the empire' while adopting the Smithian insight into the detrimental consequences of colonial monopoly. Like their intellectual precursors, the *Edinburgh Review* was not averse to colonies, but only 'the trammels that have been laid on their industry' and 'interference caused by the mother country in their domestic concerns.'³³ By 1825, even those hostile to free trade under most circumstances endorsed the cessation of Spanish colonial monopoly. Partial free trade 'with nations which produce commodities different from [Britain]-with such nations as those in South America' was tolerable so long as 'those nations abstain from producing what Britain produces.'³⁴ There remained, however, a predilection for empire that the ideas of a French champion of the restoration, Abbé de Pradt, unified: the prosperity of free trade and the security of Empire.

De Pradt, 'friend of the altar and the throne,'³⁵ apologist for Napoleon, and former Archbishop of Malines, synthesized the apparently incompatible arguments of free trade, colonial emancipation, and empire. His works were translated and widely disseminated in Britain, often reviewed with both disdain and avid interest, owing to his esteem for England's industry and his conviction that the Holy Alliance should intercede in South America to uphold monarchical principles and Catholicism. He contended that America's 'treasures, shut up in her bosom, are hidden, till her liberty shall reveal them to the world.' Postulating that all colonies 'pass through different ages' of maturation, he argued that the absence of colonial manufactured goods presaged 'dependence on Europe for a long time to come' and offered 'great vents for its industry.' De Pradt reiterated the conventional free trade position, deploring monopoly's tendency to 'keep up a

continual state of war' requiring 'armies of guards, of judges, of gaolers, and of executioners' while depressing profits, but inserted a twist: free trade eliminated colonists' 'motives of separation' and England's 'superior industry would preserve' the old system's advantages in the guise of liberty without the financial burden.³⁶ The prospect of invisible, informal, and inexpensive empire could be countenanced, especially following the miserable collapse of Sir Home Popham's unauthorized, quixotic capture of Buenos Aires in 1806, initially adulated by Castlereagh as 'the highest class of military service.'³⁷ A mechanism was needed to thwart Napoleon's Spanish American designs, to secure a bullion supply, and to replace markets blocked by the Continental system.³⁸ Indeed, proponents of emancipation scorned conquest as 'hazardous and worse than dubious' and contended 'the benefits certain to arise from emancipation . . . [are] greatly superior.'³⁹ The actions, for example, of the *Cabildo* of Buenos Aires (1810) made this debate obsolete by drastically reducing duties on goods and eliminating bullion export restrictions, corroborating British optimism for unregulated markets.⁴⁰ Free trade ideas alone, however, were insufficient for policy-makers to recognize rebellious provinces of a European state as independent. In the second part of this essay, I examine how the Spanish American revolution was legitimized and represented as a counter-revolution.

The prospective independence of Spanish America garnered broad support, in part, because it reflected both reactionary and revolutionary aspects of the European, especially Spanish, political context. Yet it also had antecedents in British political thought: Richard Price addressed the legitimacy of colonial revolt against corrupt despotism. Price was responding to the British North American colonies' revolt in the 1770s. In his 'Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty' (1776), Price contended that a country 'subject to the legislature of another country in which it has no voice . . . is in a state of slavery,' and distinguished between this 'empire of slaves' and an 'empire of free men.' With admiration, therefore, he observed Britain's 'sending to a distant world colonies . . . under free legislatures of their own' was a novel experiment. Yet Price's chief preoccupation was the degenerative force of tyranny on the liberty of subjects. He derided 'licentiousness and despotism' as 'both alike inconsistent with liberty and the end of government.' For Price, corruption spreads from the colonial power to the colony. He contrasted the 'vigour of youth' of America with Britain 'inflated and irreligious, enervated by luxury, encumbered with debts and hanging on by a thread.'⁴¹

The legitimacy of separation, in spite of Britain's pervasive antipathy to revolution, was also embedded in conceptions of Spain's decay, decrepitude, and decadence that rendered it an incompetent sovereign, unable to tend properly to its overseas subjects. These attitudes persisted from the early modern period: although Coke asserted that the 'condition of England is worse by our plantations than Spain is by theirs,' the vast majority of seventeenth-century English political writers employed the Spanish empire as a symbol of incompetence, rapacity and

misgovernment, an aspirant to universal monarchy, a barbarous destroyer of America's indigenous peoples and, according to Anthony Pagden, an 'inflexible, illiberal, and ultimately corrupting tyranny.' British depictions of Spain invariably made use of the deeply-entrenched Black Legend concerning its rapacious conduct in the New World.⁴² The analysis of the causes of Spain's collapse proffered by Child and Davenant reveals a critique of administrative methods and misguided policies rather than an indictment of national character: Davenant lauded Spain's 'laws and political institutions' as 'well form'd and contriv'd with as much skill and wisdom, as in any country perhaps in the world.' Spain's decline derived from the 'negligent loose and unsteady executions of their councils.'⁴³ Child faulted the 'extraordinarily high customs at home, high freights, high interest of money, [number of] ecclesiastical persons' as the cause which 'principally dwarfs' and 'hinders' the Spanish colonies. Although these policies 'drained Spain of people,' Child rejected the proposition that England and Holland would suffer similar consequences because when 'liberty and property are not so well preserved and where interest of money is permitted to go at 12%, there can be no considerable manufacturing.'⁴⁴ Yet the revitalization of the Iberian empires was a complicated task: Davenant postulated that Spain represented a 'sufficient instance, [of] what a weight old debts are upon any country and how they render present administration difficult and impotent.'⁴⁵

In the eighteenth century, most British political writers disparaged Spain's long-standing failure to exploit the prodigious natural wealth of its empire. Joseph Townsend ruefully remarked that 'no country ever invented a more ruinous system of finance, or one less friendly to manufactures and to commerce.' Indeed, the reforms undertaken were deemed defective or out-moded, Spain's 'best political writers resemble lag hounds hunting the stale scent whilst the fleetest are already in possession of the game.' Spain's efforts were stymied by the 'rising industry, and consequent prosperity of rival nations . . . [which] grew into greatness; and, like the spreading oak casting a shade on more weakly saplings, did not suffer them to rise.'⁴⁶

However, the centralizing and reforming impulses of the Caroline Enlightenment solicited the approbation of some sectors of British opinion, particularly the monarch's 'incredible efforts to restore his marine, which in his brother's lifetime, had gone to decay' and his staunch commitment to the 'arts of peace' through which he was 'endeavoring both to cultivate and protect commerce.'⁴⁷ In the eighth book of his *History of America* (1777), William Robertson traced the economic progress of the Spanish colonies. Robertson defended the early monopolist and bullionist policies of Spain as 'natural, and perhaps necessary.' Spain's pioneering efforts as a colonial power rendered excusable its early missteps. He leniently forgave the lust for 'immediate wealth' and lauded the commercial monopoly that fastened Spain's colonies in a condition of 'perpetual pupillage' and maintained 'the supremacy of the parent state' for 250 years. Robertson also

invoked environmental explanations, attributing slow economic growth to 'the diseases of unwholesome climates' and the burden of 'bringing a country, covered with forests, into culture.'⁴⁸ He criticized the persistence of these features of Spanish colonialism because they detracted from 'the sober, persevering spirit of industry' that leads 'more slowly but with greater certainty, to wealth and increase in national strength.' Robertson admired the Bourbon economic reforms inspired by 'sentiments more liberal and enlarged'⁴⁹ and argued that both foreign and Iberian 'enlightened writers' revealed the 'destructive tendency of those narrow maxims' that had 'cramped commerce in all its operations.' He praised Charles III (1759–1788) for repudiating 'narrow prejudices,' embracing limited free and 'reciprocal intercourse,' and overseeing an 'arduous' effort to 'revive the spirit of industry where it has declined.'⁵⁰ Robertson's defense of the Spanish Monarchy, was subjected to harsh criticism in the popular press and haunted Robertson's most stalwart supporters, including Dugald Stewart, who conceded, twenty-four years after the *History's* initial publication, that 'the disposition [Robertson] has shewn to palliate or veil the enormities of the Spaniards in their American conquests, is a blemish of a deeper or more serious nature.'⁵¹

Notwithstanding pleas from several prominent apologists, British observers disparaged Spanish legitimacy as tenuous and this conviction infused and bolstered the case for South American independence. Before Napoleon forced Charles IV and his heir Ferdinand VII to abdicate, the British commentator William Burke derogated Spain's 'bloody and nefarious conquest, and consequent violent and tyrannical possession' of America, asserting 'barbarous oppressions and stupid preclusions' combined in the 'unjust and cruel suppression of industry, production, and consumption.' Spain could not give 'healthy and robust form' to 'vast, fertile, and luxuriant' South America and, instead, condemned it to 'helpless infancy' while avariciously exploiting mineral resources.⁵² Increasingly, British observers depicted Spain's colonialism as 'officious, intermeddling, complicated, and expensive,' its flawed policies designed to compensate for 'the laziness, ignorance, and unskilfulness of Spanish workmen and manufacturers,' the final gasp of a 'state sinking under weakness and decrepitude.'⁵³ These defects of Spanish administration justified its colonists' 'wish for an exchange of situation more congenial, leading them to a state of prosperous, enlightened and happy humanity.'⁵⁴

In spite of the frenetic and ultimately fruitless efforts of revolutionaries, such as Miranda, to attract British assistance for expeditions to destabilize Spanish rule in America, Napoleon's 1808 Iberian campaign instigated debates concerning the legitimacy of colonial revolt.⁵⁵ The rapid metamorphoses of Spain's political system between 1808–1823—vacillating unpredictably from foreign dictatorship to liberal *Cortes* to Bourbon restoration—provoked inconsistent responses. Lord Byron's lament for Spain victimized by 'Gaul's vulture, with his wings unfurl'd,' complemented by his characterization of its impotent, 'kingless people for

nerveless state,⁵⁶ captured the initial British sentiment, but Spanish America's separation would be predicated on its perceived counter-revolutionary character.

In the political arena, Spain's sovereignty loomed as the primary obstacle to recognition. In 1824, Lord Liverpool cited 'difficulties in our relations or intercourse with those possessions until Spain should have renounced all claim to their obedience, and recognized that independence *de jure* which they enjoyed *de facto*.' Similarly, Canning insisted that recognition would be decided 'not with reference to the constitutional changes which Spain herself had undergone,' arguing that it would be 'unkind, unjust, unfair, and ungenerous' to interfere with Spain's 'right, *bona fide*, to a resumption of her colonial possessions, if she were in a position to reclaim them.'⁵⁷ Although many members of Parliament conceived of Ferdinand as a terrible ruler, recognition of South America would constitute a repudiation of Spanish sovereignty. For this reason, proponents of independence sought to illustrate that Spain's negligent and barbaric conduct had rendered it illegitimate.

William Walton, a prolific pamphleteer and ardent defender of independence,⁵⁸ denied that there had been burgeoning dissent in America before Napoleon's invasion of Spain, claiming that the colonists 'are not weary of being called Spaniards . . . they want equitable, wise, and just enactments, but they are still ambitious of forming part of the Spanish nation.'⁵⁹ Indeed, the rejection of Joseph Bonaparte's request for submission to him as legitimate sovereign bolstered Walton's claim and, therefore, the *juntas* and *cabildos* that assumed control in the name of Ferdinand VII were anti-French, counter-revolutionary institutions. Even British mercenaries who intended to foment rebellion became disenchanted with the 'listless character' of South Americans who are 'little excitable by doctrines of liberty' and reject 'knowledge of any kind, and especially of the enemies of kings.'⁶⁰ Canning, too, praised 'the noble struggle which a part of the Spanish nation is now making to resist the unexampled atrocity of France . . . the common enemy of all nations'⁶¹ in order to restore the Bourbons.

After the restoration of Ferdinand VII in 1814, many British observers refrained from classifying upheavals in Spanish America as dangerously revolutionary. The image of the valiant Spanish patriots, 'the advanced guard of civilization,' persisted and the 'renewal of tyranny' under Ferdinand, especially the revival of the 'arbitrary and systematic restrictions upon commerce' and 'exorbitant duties' on foreign goods, diverted British opprobrium from Spanish America.⁶² Resistance, originally justified as allegiance to the ancestral monarch, now achieved validity from Ferdinand's 'peculation and plunder' and his departure from 'just, liberal, and generous sentiments' in abolishing the *Cortes*. Americans, not the venal Spanish monarch, were adhering to the 'strict letter of the law.'⁶³ There was a justified and conservative revolution against a monarch to restore ancient rights that coincide with modern liberal principles. Assertions of the anti-revolutionary complexion of Spanish America persisted into the 1820s, denying 'the spirit of

rebellion or perfidy' in these 'most faithful dependents.'⁶⁴ The political self-determination sought by American rebels, then, was conflated with the Spanish patriots' defense of national sovereignty during Napoleon's usurpation and the 'salutary, just, and necessary revolution' they wrought 'over all the departments of the state.'⁶⁵ Their character, lauded as 'humane and docile,' reflected the minimal 'rapine, violence and cruelty'⁶⁶ of their revolution.

This type of argument emerged out of dissatisfaction with the reactionary Quadruple and Holy Alliance systems after 1815: although England, Prussia, Russia, and Austria ostensibly agreed to meet periodically to consider mutual interests and 'measures for the repose and prosperity of the nations and for the maintenance of the European peace,' their repressive policing suffocated nationalist and liberal movements.⁶⁷ Disillusioned contemporaries depicted Europe as ossified and decayed, necessarily gazing beyond Europe for regeneration and reconnection with its ancient ideals. British support for Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire, a manifestation of literary-cultural philhellenism, derived from this anticipated revitalization and represented a prominent context for South American independence. Regeneration could occur when colonies gained independence and purified contaminated political institutions. British commentators, therefore, nurtured 'imagined realities' of South America whose proto-national institutions, previously shrouded by European empire, embodied qualities that contrast favorably with the dynastic empires of Europe.⁶⁸ Contemporary observers envisaged '15 millions of people; released from colonial dependence . . . enjoying a free government; elevated from their depressed condition; commanding the ample and inexhaustible resources derived from Providence.'⁶⁹ For this reason, the languages of slavery and the restoration of pre-colonial political freedom underpinned British arguments for Greek and South American independence.

Both the Greeks and South Americans were victims of overextended, autocratic empires. Indeed, just as philhellenism was more 'inspired by hatred of Turks and Muslims than by concerns for the Greeks,'⁷⁰ the same template applied to Spain and its colonies. Philhellenism's most prominent exponent, Lord Byron, disparaged Greeks as 'downright slaves'⁷¹ and identified bondage with Greece's colonial fetters. He garnered the sympathy of Britain's anti-slavery movement whose popularity secured Parliament's abolition of the slave trade in 1807–1808 and was re-invigorated by mounting pressure in favor of emancipation in the British colonies in 1822–1824.⁷² Proponents of independence conflated slavery with America's condition, declaring 'the American and French Revolutions have flashed lights around them, which has enabled even the most remote and secluded slaves to see . . . the deformity of their fetters.' For Greece's struggle, Byron invoked the classical tradition, 'their fathers' heritage,' to 'tear their name from slavery's mournful page.'⁷³ South American sympathizers, however, possessed no comparable argument and, instead, underscored the illegitimacy of Spain's sovereignty.

The political thought of the Spanish American revolution sought to legitimate independence and was, in part, aimed at a European audience. Simón Bolívar's ideas, articulated starkly in the *Jamaica Letter* and the *Angostura Discourse*, justified revolt by employing European political concepts. In the *Jamaica Letter* of 1815, Bolívar portrayed separation from Spain as a 'legitimate and certain means through which Europe can acquire commercial establishments.' Bolívar described America as 'in a position lower than slavery' because Spain 'infringes and usurps the rights of citizen and subject.'⁷⁴ In spite of this miserable treatment that inculcated 'ignorance and weakness,'⁷⁵ Bolívar asserted secession was 'suddenly brought about by [the] illegal abdication' of Charles IV and regretted the allegiance to the Spanish Monarchy had been reciprocated by 'an unrighteous war ... illegally and unjustly' declared. Four years later, in the *Angostura Discourse*, he suggested the solution to South America's governing dilemma was to emulate the British constitution 'as a model for those who aspire to the rights of man and seek all the political happiness which is compatible with the frailty of human nature.'⁷⁶ In this manner, Bolívar's political thought mirrored the antipathy for Spain among British politico-economic thinkers.⁷⁷ Bolívar's rhetoric fostered an approbatory image in the British press where he was depicted as a military leader boldly endeavoring to unshackle his nascent nation.⁷⁸ Bolívar's ideas alone, however, were insufficient to rouse Britain to support independence. In the third section of the essay, I analyze the impact of British financiers and speculators on diplomatic recognition.

The vast, untapped wealth of South America was a fertile concept in the British political imagination. The conjectured size and richness of its market was indispensable to diplomatic recognition. The post-1815 downturn provoked merchant demand for new markets for manufactured goods, rapid industrialization ensured demand for raw materials, and latent fantasies of an anglicized *El Dorado* resurfaced with Spain's collapse. This immediate context for recognition, however, was the latest phase of burgeoning British interest in Latin American markets. Under the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713, Britain received the *asiento*, the exclusive right to trade slaves, from Spain. Britain's emerging maritime supremacy facilitated the efflorescence of contraband trade.⁷⁹ The policy of *comercio libre*, conceded by Charles III in 1778, designed to protect national shipping and industry on the basis of uniform, centralized and efficient administration, proved salubrious and inaugurated 'an era of unprecedented prosperity and economic growth.'⁸⁰ War with Britain, recommencing in 1797, however, led to the cessation of the imperial trade and the Napoleonic upheavals accelerated its decline to twenty percent of its prior level.⁸¹

British merchants, meanwhile, continued their relentless penetration of South American markets while their government's entreaties to legalize trade were dismissed. When Spain finally conceded foreign trade in 1824, there existed 80–100 British-owned commercial houses in Spanish American cities⁸² and its share

of overall trade had increased from two to thirteen percent between 1806–1826. A ubiquitous conviction arose that British 'industry' and technological ingenuity could generate wealth from fecund resources which Spanish primitive methods and indolence squandered. Free trade opened markets that Britain could exploit with 'the superiority and excellence in machinery, skill of the artisan, and extent of capital' it enjoyed.⁸³ In Chile, for example, British investors marveled over the absence of competitors since 'the inhabitants possess neither sufficient capital nor enterprise to enter into commercial speculations'⁸⁴ which could hinder the penetration of external finance. The exponential proliferation of mining companies was premised on the conviction that 'the mines, if worked with a moderate industry and knowledge of metallurgy, might yield considerably more than the quantity necessary for the supply of the whole world.'⁸⁵ Spain failed to maximize America's bounty, impeded by 'the disadvantage of a heavy duty, a defective system of smelting, and a want of knowledge of the correct principle of the art of mining.'⁸⁶ This attitude permeated public debates: Lord Ellenborough remarked 'even the power of steam seemed to be discovered at the most favorable moment for giving faculties to the navigation of [South American] rivers and the working of precious mines.'⁸⁷ In this way, hyper-optimistic accounts of British technological superiority were integrated into fantastic estimates of American wealth to justify recognition.

Although unobstructed access to goods, including bark, gum, horsehair, hides, horns, indigo, and skins generated some excitement, it was only the first response. To understand the matrix of ideas immediately underpinning recognition, international finance's emergence as an estimable political force, the 'true lords of Europe,'⁸⁸ must be appreciated. The political impact of the £20 million in Latin American government bonds floated between 1822–1825 in London and the £36 million capitalization of mining company shares is unmistakable and merits consideration alongside ideological factors behind diplomatic recognition. Indeed, private lending preceded official recognition. Although the cash-strapped provisional governments accepted onerous borrowing terms, through which they received sixty percent of the loans' face value,⁸⁹ recognition was expected to stabilize bond prices. A significant moment was Lord Lansdown's motion to recognize South American states on the strength of the City of London's support. This 'jury, composed of very vigilant persons, who are daily engaged in deciding upon the solidity of states, in the most impartial manner'⁹⁰ sent a petition to the House of Commons. Presented by Sir James Mackintosh, and bearing the eminent signatures of Alexander Baring and David Ricardo, it complained that the 'many millions of capital embarked' in unrecognized South American countries provoked these financiers to be 'greatly embarrassed' because 'sudden and excessive alterations in the value of property' were caused by 'constant alarms of political change.'⁹¹ They urged recognition of 'Columbia, Buenos Ayres, and Chili' to protect commerce and investment. The City's arguments dovetailed with the aggrandized perception that Britain's technological supremacy would guarantee profits.

Diplomatic pressures and economic motivation were certainly factors in British recognition of Colombia and the United Provinces. Yet, this essay has argued, recognition must be situated in its intellectual context: first, colonial monopoly was deemed unprofitable and unrestricted commerce's benefits were embraced; second, Spain's legitimacy as a colonial power was repudiated due to its unstable government, pernicious degradation, and hostility to unregulated commerce; and third, the fledgling states' separation from Spain was justified because they accommodated British political and financial institutions. Without an awareness of these currents, recognition appears as a departure from prior British political principles. British recognition was not, unfortunately, a panacea for Latin America's persistent political instability, nor was it a guarantor of subsequent robust relations with other powers in the Atlantic Political Community.⁹² While remaining mindful of 'essentialist formulations' and 'teleological traps' with regard to the History of Latin American External Relations, it is useful to note that if British recognition in the nineteenth century was originally justified by the perceived liberal and anti-revolutionary character of the fledgling regimes, the current disenchantment with the "reasonable' package of democracy and markets' in Argentina, the persistence of violent conflict in Colombia, and the fickle fortunes of electoral democracy in Venezuela pose problems for Anglo-American policy-makers still committed, by and large, to the basic contours of the principles which underpinned diplomatic recognition 180 years ago.⁹³ This subject, unfortunately, must be left for another essay. The present article has attempted to demonstrate that transformed notions of colonial legitimacy and trade created an intellectual environment in the 1820s which facilitated British legislators to connect South American independence with the 'happiness, prosperity, and greatness of Europe and the world.'⁹⁴

NOTES

¹ I gratefully acknowledge the comments and advice, at various stages of the research upon which this article is based, of Gearóid ÓTuathaigh, Sean Ryder and Simon Potter of the National University of Ireland (Galway), and Emma Rothschild of the Centre for History and Economics (Cambridge). This article has incorporated, and benefited from, the comments of two external readers. Generous material support has been provided by the U.S.-Ireland Alliance (Washington D.C.), the Sir John Plumb Charitable Trust (Cambridge), and Trinity College (Cambridge).

² William Spence Robertson, *France and Latin American Independence* (Baltimore, 1939), 40, 69.

³ William W. Kaufmann, *British Policy and the Independence of Latin America 1804-1828* (New Haven, 1951), 6, 163; one of the most controversial aspects of this neutrality was the 1819 Foreign Enlistment Act that barred British citizens from being mercenaries in armies of foreign states or insurgents. See D.A.G. Waddell, 'British Neutrality and Spanish American Independence: The Problem of Foreign Enlistment' *Journal of Latin American Studies* 19 (1987): 1-18 passim; Harold Temperley, *The Foreign Policy of Canning 1822-1827: England, the Neo-Holy Alliance and the New World* (London, 1966), 45, 132, 184. Britain was the third power to recognize the South American states:

Portugal recognized the United Provinces in 1822, followed by the United States in the same year; for an overview of Canning's policy, see Leslie Bethell, 'George Canning and the Independence of Latin America' (London, 1970).

- ⁴ John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, 'The Imperialism of Free Trade' in John Gallagher, *The Decline, Revival and Fall of the British Empire. The Ford Lectures and Other Essays* ed. Anil Seal (Cambridge, 1982), 9–10; Robinson and Gallagher argued that 'it is only when and where informal means failed to provide the framework of security for British enterprise that the questions of establishing formal empire arose' 13; for an early influential critique of the 'excessive universality and depersonalization' of their thesis, see Oliver MacDonagh, 'The Anti-Imperialism of Free Trade' *Economic History Review* (1962): 489–501.
- ⁵ P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion 1688–1914*, 2 Vols. (London and New York, 1993), I, 44, 282; Frank Griffith Dawson, *The First Latin American Debt Crisis: The City of London and the 1822–25 Loan Bubble* (New Haven, 1990), 92–119 passim.
- ⁶ This article's methodology draws on the work of D.A. Brading, *The First America: The Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots, and the Liberal State 1492–1867* (Cambridge, 1991); Antonello Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World: The History of a Polemic 1750–1900*, trans. Jeremy Moyle (Pittsburgh, 1973); Anthony Pagden, *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain, and France 1500–1800* (New Haven, 1995); Mario Rodríguez, 'William Burke' and Francisco de Miranda: *The Word and Deed in Spanish American Emancipation* (London and New York, 1994); John Lynch, ed., *Andrés Bello: The London Years* (Richmond, 1982).
- ⁷ Robinson and Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians: the Official Mind of Imperialism* (London, 1961), 25, 26; Paul Kennedy, 'El Imperio "Cautivo"' *El País*, 19 July 2003.
- ⁸ Roger Coke, *A Discourse of Trade* (London, 1670), part I, 46.
- ⁹ Sir William Petty, *Political Arithmetick, or a Discourse* (London, 1691), 88.
- ¹⁰ [Josiah Child], *A Discourse About Trade* (London, 1668, 1690), 94–95.
- ¹¹ Charles Davenant, *Discourses on the Publick Revenues and on the Trade of England* (London, 1698), part II, 207, 252; on Davenant, see Istvan Hont, 'Free Trade and the Economic Limits to National Politics: Neo-Machiavellian Political Economy Reconsidered' in John Dunn, ed. *The Economic Limits to Modern Politics* (Cambridge, 1990), 70, 72.
- ¹² William Wood, *A Survey of Trade in Four Parts* (London, 1718), 135, 154.
- ¹³ Child, *A Discourse about Trade*, 165.
- ¹⁴ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1976), II, 592, 591, 594, 604. See also, Klaus E. Knorr, *British Colonial Theories 1570–1850* (London, 1968), 183; Donald Winch, *Classical Political Economy and Colonies* (London, 1965), 13; and Bernard Semmel, *The Rise of Free Trade Imperialism: Classical Political Economy, the Empire of Free Trade and Imperialism 1750–1850* (Cambridge, 1970), 151.
- ¹⁵ Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, 609–610; R.C. Simmons, 'A Sett of Exchanges': Adam Smith and the Colonisation of the Americas' *Storia Nordamericana* 4 (1987): 57–69.
- ¹⁶ David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2000), 3, 8; Gabriel Paquette, 'Hegel's Analysis of Colonialism and its Roots in Scottish Political Economy' *Clio* 32:4 (2003): forthcoming.
- ¹⁷ Schuyler, *The Fall of the Old Colonial System*, 23.
- ¹⁸ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, 6 February 1826, col. 113. This language is taken from the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation with Colombia; on the influence of Smith on British policy before the French Revolution, see J.E. Crowley, 'Neo-Mercantilism and the *Wealth of Nations*: British Commercial Policy after the American Revolution' *Historical Journal* 33 (1990): 339–360.

- ¹⁹ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates* (London, 1807), 707, 719, 982.
- ²⁰ C.A. Bayly argues that the 'mentality was still bullionist and mercantilist' through 1815 in *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World 1780–1830* (London and New York, 1989), 4; on the ideas animating British imperialism in this period, see Richard Drayton, *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain and the 'Improvement' of the World* (New Haven and London, 2000), esp. chapters 3 and 4.
- ²¹ George Canning to George Bosanquet, 31 December 1824, F.O. 72/280, reprinted in C.K. Webster ed., *Britain and the Independence of Latin America 1812–1830: Selected Documents from the Foreign Office Archives*, 2 vols. (London, 1938), II, 431.
- ²² Jeremy Bentham, 'Rid Yourselves of Ultramarina' (1821) in Philip Schofield ed., *Colonies, Commerce, and Constitutional Law: Rid Yourselves of Ultramarina and Other Writings on Spain and Spanish America* (Oxford, 1995), 64.
- ²³ Bentham, 'Rid Yourselves of Ultramarina,' 114, 118–119, 135.
- ²⁴ Miriam Williford, *Jeremy Bentham on Spanish America: An Account of his Letters and Proposals to the New World* (London and Baton Rouge, 1980), 12–13. Bentham corresponded with Bolívar and San Martín; on his influence in Spanish America, see Luis Antonio Calderón Rodríguez, 'Apuntes Sobre la Recepción del Pensamiento Francés Ilustrado en Colombia' in Diana Soto Arango, ed., *Recepción y Difusión de Textos Ilustrados: Intercambio Científico Entre Europa y América en la Ilustración* (León, 2003), 198–199; F. Rosen suggests that Greek independence soon consumed Bentham's intellectual energies and he became disillusioned by the 'settled habits of rule and obedience' he discerned among Spanish Americans in *Bentham, Byron, and Greece: Constitutionalism, Nationalism, and Early Liberal Political Thought* (Oxford, 1992), 99–100.
- ²⁵ Henry Brougham, *An Inquiry into the Colonial Policy of the European Powers* (Edinburgh, 1803), 105, 128, 381.
- ²⁶ James Kennedy, *England and Venice Compared: An Argument on the Policy of England Towards Her Colonies* (London, 1827); Ronald Hyam describes the West Indies in 1800 as no longer of 'vital national interest,' due to 'increasing costs of sugar production, rising slave prices, soil erosion, wartime losses, bad weather and slave rebellion' in *Britain's Imperial Century 1815–1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion* (London, 1976), 110.
- ²⁷ Brougham, *The Colonial Policy of the Great Powers*, 412.
- ²⁸ *The Colonial Register and West Indian Journal* (London, May 1824), I, 5, 18; [Anon.], *War in Disguise; or, the Frauds of the Neutral Flags* (London, 1805), 108, 204.
- ²⁹ The editorial policy of the *Edinburgh Review* shifted considerably, especially as it increasingly maligned Benthamite ideas after 1818. cf. J.R. Dinwiddy, 'Liberal and Benthamite Circles in London 1810–1829,' in Lynch, *Bello*, 124–125; Biancamaria Fontana, *Rethinking the Politics of Commercial Society: The Edinburgh Review 1802–1832* (Cambridge, 1985); circulation of the *Edinburgh Review* reached 13,000 in 1814.
- ³⁰ [James Mill], review of 'Lettre aux Espagnols Américains,' also entitled 'The Emancipation of Spanish America,' *Edinburgh Review* (January 1809), 282; Mario Rodríguez (1994) argues that James Mill also authored radical tracts on Spanish American affairs under the pseudonym 'William Burke.' If correct, it would provoke a reevaluation of both Mill's intellectual development as well as the impact of the Spanish American Revolution among the British intelligentsia; for a general overview of Spanish and Spanish American affairs in the British Press, see José Alberich, 'English Attitudes Towards the Hispanic World in the Time of Bello As Reflected By the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews*,' in Lynch, ed., *Andrés Bello*.
- ³¹ Mill, 'The Emancipation of Spanish America,' 310; Semmel argues that Mill 'presented colonization as the means of overcoming both the pressure of population on the land and

- declining returns from agriculture' in *The Liberal Idea and the Demons of Empire: Theories of Imperialism from Adam Smith to Lenin* (Baltimore and London, 1993), 77.
- ³² Review of 'The Substance of Two Speeches Delivered in the House of Commons on the 21st and 25th March, 1825 by the Right Honourable William Huskisson, Respecting the Colonial Policy and Foreign Commerce of the Country,' *Edinburgh Review* (August 1825), 275.
- ³³ 'Value of Colonial Possessions,' 302; it should be noted that free trade was not a monolithic concept defended by a single group. Boyd Hilton has shown the 'expansionist, industrialist, competitive and cosmopolitan' aspects of free trade in classical political economy constituted one of several, notably evangelical, strands of free trade thought in *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought 1795–1865* (Oxford, 1988), 69.
- ³⁴ David Robinson, 'Free Trade,' *Blackwood's Magazine* 17 (May 1825), reprinted in Peter Cain, ed., *Free Trade and Protectionism, Vol. 1: Origins of Free Trade to 1850* (London, 1996), 36–37.
- ³⁵ *The Colonial Journal* (London, 1817), 438.
- ³⁶ Dominique Dufour De Pradt, *The Colonies and the Present American Revolutions* (London, 1817) trans., xvi., 121–122, 163, 159, 451; cf. Brading, *The First America*, 558–560 passim.
- ³⁷ Hansard, *The Parliamentary Debates*, 16 April 1807, 476.
- ³⁸ R.A. Humphreys, *Liberation in South America 1806–1827: The Career of James Paroissen* (London, 1952), 12. William Walton, *An Exposé of the Dissentions of Spanish America* (London, 1814) explicitly claimed 'the present expensive war system and the great continental combination formed against our resources' requires Britain 'to open up new sources of intercourse and vent for our stagnant trade, to promote the influx of precious metals and the entry of manufacturing raw materials,' 1.
- ³⁹ William Burke, *Additional Reasons, for our Immediately Emancipating Spanish America* (London, 1808)
- ⁴⁰ H.S. Ferns, *Britain and Argentina in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, 1960), 65; not every new-declared independent South American state followed this procedure of liberalization. As Celia Wu has demonstrated, Peru imposed high tariffs to protect indigenous industry and prohibited foreign merchants from interference in the domestic trade in *Generals and Diplomats: Great Britain and Peru 1820–1840*, trans. and ed. D.A. Brading (Cambridge, 1991), 7.
- ⁴¹ Richard Price, 'Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of War with America,' in Price, *Political Writings*, ed. D.O. Thomas (Cambridge, 1991), 30, 35, 36, 27, 69; Price's views attracted ardent criticism: Adam Ferguson vehemently rejected the American declaration of independence from Britain in 1776. Because 'no nation ever planted colonies with so liberal or noble a hand as England has done,' Ferguson reasoned, the Americans should 'repay us for all the blood and treasure we have expended in the common cause.' He mocked the American hope for an 'exemption from the common fate of mankind; the fate that has attended democracies attempted on too large a scale; that of plunging at once into military government,' in Ferguson, *Remarks on a Pamphlet Lately Published by Dr. Price* (London, 1776), 19, 27, 23.
- ⁴² Coke, *A Discourse of Trade*, 12–12; Anthony Pagden, *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain, and France, c.1500–1800* (New Haven and London, 1995), 87, 116; on the Black Legend in England, see Colin Steele, *English Interpreters of the Iberian New World from Purchas to Stevens: A Bibliographical Study 1603–1726* (Oxford, 1975), 21, 108–109; William S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England: The Development of Anti-Spanish Sentiment 1558–1660* (Durham, N.C, 1971), 4, 31, 63.

- ⁴³ Davenant, *Publick Revenues*, vol. II, 240
- ⁴⁴ Child, *A Discourse About Trade*, 194, 177–78.
- ⁴⁵ Davenant, *Publick Revenues*, vol I, 66.
- ⁴⁶ Joseph Townsend, *A Journey through Spain in the Years 1786 and 1787* (London, 1792), vol. II, 226, 394, 252; see Ana Clara Guerrero, *Viajeros Británicos en la España del Siglo XVIII* (Madrid, 1990).
- ⁴⁷ Anon., *The Conduct of a Right Honorable Gentleman*, 72; Anon., *A Letter to the Right Honorable the Earl of B***, on a Late Important Resignation, and its Probable Consequences* (London, 1761), 59.
- ⁴⁸ William Robertson, *History of America* (London, 1777), vol. III, book 8, 270–275; Robertson's *History* was remarkably well-circulated: for example, records from the Bristol Library between 1773 and 1784 reveal 111 loans of the *History*, cited in P.J. Marshall and Glyndwr Williams, *The Great Map of Mankind: British Perceptions of the World in the Age of Enlightenment* (London, 1982), 56; see also, Stewart J. Brown, ed., *William Robertson and the Expansion of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- ⁴⁹ Robertson, *History*, vol. III, book 8, 303, 314, 320, 337.
- ⁵⁰ Robertson, *History*, vol. III, book 8, 343, 349, 350; contemporary critics scrutinized Robertson's praise of Spain: even laudatory reviews negotiated Robertson's 'elogiums' of Bourbon imperial reforms with unconcealed skepticism, insinuating that 'this affords an obvious reason why this work has been read with approbation in Spain.' Certain reviewers suspiciously noted Robertson had 'taken much pains . . . to vindicate the court of Spain from the imputation of having adopted a most inhuman and barbarous system of policy to massacre and extirpate its new subjects' Robertson was accused of 'labouring to palliate enormous crimes.' See *Annual Register* (1777), *The Critical Review, or Annals of Literature* (1777), *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle* (1777–1778), *Monthly Review, or Literary Journal* (1777, 1798), *Scots Magazine* (1777) for greater detail.
- ⁵¹ Dugald Stewart, *Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith LL.D., William Robertson, D.D. and Thomas Reid, D.D. Read Before the Royal Society of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1811), 242; although the *History of America* was officially censored in Spain, many Spanish reformers recognized its apologetic nature: in the dedicatory preface to Count Campomanes in his *Discurso Economico-Politico en Defensa del Trabajo* (Madrid, 1778), Ramón Miguel Palacio praised the 'pluma maestra del elegante y juicioso' Robertson who had recorded Campomanes's 'fervoso zelo e ilustrado patriotismo,' ii.
- ⁵² William Burke, *South American Independence: or, the Emancipation of South America, the Glory and Interest of England* (London, 1807), 2, 13, 38.
- ⁵³ Review of 'Voyage à la Partie Orientale de la Terre-Firme, dans l'Amérique Meridionale, fait pendant les années 1801, 1802, 1803, 1804 par F. Depons,' *Edinburgh Review*, 8 (July 1806), 397.
- ⁵⁴ William Walton, *Present State of the Spanish Colonies*, 2 vols. (London, 1810), 249.
- ⁵⁵ R.A. Humphreys asserts the 'French Revolution and its Napoleonic aspect was the occasion, if not the cause, of the emancipation of Spanish America,' in 'The Fall of the Spanish American Empire,' in *Tradition and Revolt*, 77.
- ⁵⁶ Lord Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, canto 1, stanzas 35, 86; on Byron's political thought, see Marilyn Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Revolutionaries: English Literature and its Background 1760–1830* (Oxford, 1981), 118; although South American independence was a rallying cry for Romantics, it should be noted that 'romantically, revolution and restoration can be taken in the same way . . . the romantic quasi-argument can justify every state of affairs' in Carl Schmitt, *Political Romanticism*. Trans. Guy

- Oakes (London: MIT Press, 1986), 123, 145.
- ⁵⁷ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, 3 February 1824, cols. 28, 73, 74. N.B. Canning contended that 'an understanding of a free commercial intercourse' has existed since 1809 between Britain and the 'provinces of South America.' C.A. Bayly suggests that recognition was not only the result of the mercantile lobby but reflected a desire 'to restore social stability under the Creole elites and avoid the kind of slave revolt which broke out in Demerara in 1823 and might infect the whole Caribbean' in *Imperial Meridian*, 143; furthermore, Britain could not impose order by sending troops after the traumatic impact of catastrophic casualties during the occupation of Saint Domingue in the 1790s. Cf. David Patrick Geggus, *Slavery, War and Revolution: The British Occupation of Saint Domingue 1793–1798* (Oxford, 1982).
- ⁵⁸ R.A. Humpreys characterizes him as 'a hack journalist, well known for his books and articles on South America, who worked for the *Morning Chronicle* and received 'gratification' from various American governments' in *Liberation in South America*, 120.
- ⁵⁹ Walton, *Present State of the Spanish Colonies*, 250.
- ⁶⁰ James Biggs, *The History of Don Francisco de Miranda's Attempt to Effect a Revolution in South America* (London, 1809), 260. For more detailed treatment of the theme of Anglo-Irish mercenaries in South American armies, see Alfred Hasbrouck, *Foreign Legionnaires in the Liberation of Spanish South America* (New York, 1928)
- ⁶¹ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, 15 June 1808, col. 890.
- ⁶² Edward Blaquiére, *An Historical Review of the Spanish Revolution* (London, 1822), 24, 159, 171; Rafael Sánchez Mantero, *Fernando VII* (Madrid, 2001), 108–115 passim.
- ⁶³ Blaquiére, *Spanish Revolution*, 281; Walton, *Dissentions of Spanish America*, 91, 182.
- ⁶⁴ Alexander Caldeleugh, *Travels in South America During the Years 1819–20–21* (London, 1822), 223.
- ⁶⁵ Review of 'Don Pedro Cevallos, *Exposition of the Practices and Machinations Which Led to the Usurpation of the Crown of Spain, and the Means Adopted by the Emperor of the French to Carry it Into Execution*,' *Edinburgh Review*, 8 (October 1808), 221.
- ⁶⁶ Review of Basil Hall, 'Extracts From a Journal Written on the Coasts of Chili, Peru, and Mexico in 1820, 1821, and 1822,' *The Colonial Register and West Indian Journal* (London, May 1824), 26.
- ⁶⁷ Arthur J. May, *The Age of Metternich 1814–1848* (New York, 1933), 19; Jacques Droz, *Europe Between Revolutions 1815–1848* (London, 1967), 218.
- ⁶⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York, 1991), 81.
- ⁶⁹ Biggs, *Miranda's Attempt to Effect a Revolution in South America*, 106
- ⁷⁰ William St. Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free: The Philhellenes in the War of Independence* (London, 1972), 54.
- ⁷¹ Lord Byron, 'The Present State of Greece' in *The Complete Miscellaneous Prose* (Oxford, 1991), 193.
- ⁷² J.R. Oldfield, *Popular Politics and British Slavery: The Mobilization of Public Opinion Against the Slave Trade 1787–1807* (Manchester, 1995); it should be noted that opponents of slavery took heart from the abolition of slavery from Spanish Central America in 1821, a situation which left British Honduras (Mosquito Coast) as the solitary slave-holding colony on the mainland.
- ⁷³ Burke, *South American Independence*, 66; Byron, *Don Juan*, canto 2, stanza 75.
- ⁷⁴ Simon Bolívar, 'Reply of a South American to a Gentleman of this Island [Jamaica],' *Selected Writings of Bolívar*, ed. Lecuna and Bierck, 2 vols. (New York, 1951), I, 108, 110.
- ⁷⁵ Bolívar, 'To the Editor, *The Royal Gazette*, Kingston, Jamaica' in Lecuna and Bierck, eds., *Selected Writings of Bolívar*, 123.

- ⁷⁶ Gerald E. Fitzgerald, ed., *The Political Thought of Bolívar: Selected Writings* (The Hague, 1971), 55. N.B. The Angostura Discourse was Bolívar's address to the Congress of Venezuela; Bolívar's political writings of this period depart from the rhetoric of eighteenth-century Creole reformers who sought to 'improve the social welfare of the colony and thus eliminate potential sources of instability or insurrection,' in Jeremy Adelman, *Republic of Capital: Buenos Aires and the Legal Transformation of the Atlantic World* (Stanford, 1999), 71.
- ⁷⁷ The influence of Montesquieu's political thought on Bolívar has been demonstrated by D.A. Brading who also argues 'the doctrines of Rousseau and Machiavelli, of personal *virtú* and public liberty, jostled for primacy in [Bolívar's] soul' in 'Classical Republicanism and Creole Patriotism: Simon Bolívar (1783–1830) and the Spanish American Revolution' (Cambridge, 1983), 16; Simon Collier speculates that Montesquieu's 'admiration of the British constitution, his exposition of the balance of power, his fervent hatred of despotic government, allied with a conservative streak in his nature, endeared him to the Creole intelligentsia' in *The Ideas and Politics of Chilean Independence 1808–1833* (Cambridge, 1967), 72.
- ⁷⁸ C.P. Jones, 'The Image of Simón Bolívar as Reflected in Ten Leading British Periodicals 1816–1830,' *The Americas* 40 (1984), 384. Indeed, the mutual seduction of Bolívar and Britain is noted by Victor Andrés Belaunde who describes Bolívar's 'romantic exaggeration' of Britain and his aspirations, particularly pronounced before the Congress of Panama, for a British 'moral protectorate' in South America in *Bolívar and the Political Thought of the Spanish American Revolution* (New York, 1930), 262.
- ⁷⁹ Rory Miller, *Britain and Latin America in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London and New York, 1993), 21–45 *passim*.
- ⁸⁰ John R. Fisher, *The Economic Aspects of Spanish Imperialism in America, 1492–1810* (Liverpool, 1997), 197. Anthony Pagden, however, contending that cultural reverberations were more disruptive than salutary, argues free trade signified a 'radical overhaul' of the Spanish Empire that threatened 'the image of a single, culturally varied political order' which required a 'closed society' in 'Liberty, Honour, and *Comercio Libre*: The Structure of the Debates Over the State of the Spanish Empire in the Eighteenth Century,' in Pagden, ed. *The Uncertainties of Empire: Essays in Iberian and Ibero-American Intellectual History* (London, 1994), 15.
- ⁸¹ David R. Ringrose, *Spain, Europe and the Spanish Miracle, 1700–1900* (Cambridge, 1996), 122.
- ⁸² R.A. Humphreys, 'British Merchants and South American Independence,' in Humphreys, *Tradition and Revolt in Latin America and Other Essays* (London, 1969), 125. Certainly, the importance of Latin American markets to Britain in this period should not be exaggerated. D.C.M. Platt argues that 'it was only in the middle of the nineteenth century that new demand in Europe created substantial outlets for Latin American pastoral and agricultural products, for industrial raw materials,' in Platt, *Latin America and British Trade 1806–1914* (London, 1972), 3; however, the intention of British ministers to create a 'commercial emporium of the vast Plata basin' as early as 1826 has been demonstrated by Peter Winn, 'British Informal Empire in Uruguay in the Nineteenth Century' *Past & Present* 73 (1976): 102–103.
- ⁸³ Anon., *Notes and Reflections on Mexico, Its Mines, Policy & C. by a Traveler Some Years Resident in That and Other American States* (London, 1827), 4; for a detailed treatment of British Travelers' Accounts leading up to 1825, see Desmond Gregory, *Brute New World: The Rediscovery of Latin America in the Early Nineteenth Century* (London and New York: British Academic Press, 1993); for perceptions of British capital in Argentina in the century following independence, see Charles Jones, 'British Capital in Argentine History: Structures, Rhetoric and Change' in Alistair Hennessey and John King, eds., *The*

- Land That England Lost: Argentina and Britain, a Special Relationship* (London, 1992).
- ⁸⁴ Caldcleugh, *Travels in South America*, 347.
- ⁸⁵ Prospectus of *The Anglo-Peruvian Mining Association* in Henry English, *A General Guide to the Companies Formed for Working Foreign Mines* (London, 1825), 9.
- ⁸⁶ Prospectus of *The Potosí, La Paz, and Peruvian Mining Association* in English, *General Guide*, 48.
- ⁸⁷ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, 15 March 1824, 1005.
- ⁸⁸ Byron, *Don Juan*, canto 12, stanza 4–5.
- ⁸⁹ Dawson, *The First Latin American Debt Crisis*, 15. By 1827, however, the £20m had a market value of £7.25m.
- ⁹⁰ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, 15 March 1824, col. 978.
- ⁹¹ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, 15 June 1824, col. 1393; A.G. Hopkins, 'Informal Empire in Argentina: An Alternative View' *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26(1994): 478.
- ⁹² Editorial, 'Turmoil in the Andes,' *New York Times*, 12 March 2003; Jorge G Castañeda, 'The Forgotten Relationship' *Foreign Affairs* (May/June, 2003).
- ⁹³ Jeremy Adelman, 'Introduction: the Problem of Persistence in Latin American History' in Adelman, ed. *Colonial Legacies: the Problem of Persistence in Latin American History* (New York and London, 1999), 12–13; George Philip, 'Adapting to Democracy' *Government & Opposition* 37 (2002): 573.
- ⁹⁴ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, 15 March 1824, col. 1009.

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