

LIFE WITHOUT THE KING
Centralists, Federalists, and Constitutional Monarchists
in the Making of the Spanish American Republics, 1808–1830

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the institutional options facing political and military leaders during the wars of independence in Spanish America in the early nineteenth century. The first point to be established is that these leaders did not set out with a preconceived republican model; rather, the first forms of autonomous government were intended to preserve the rule of Ferdinand VII while he was in captivity in Napoleon's France. The authors argue that as Ferdinand sought to return the Spanish American territories to the status quo ante after his return to Spain in 1814, Spanish American leaders entertained three institutional options: constitutional monarchy, centralist republicanism, and federalism. As the attempts to establish constitutional monarchies failed, the choices resolved into a contest between centralist and federalist republican models. The authors trace the intellectual sources of both and explore the linkages between classical and modern republicanism. They conclude that, while the postindependence pattern had become securely republican by 1830, it was comparatively more conservative than the American and French examples. The emphasis of Spanish American republicanism was on the preservation of order rather than on the creation of a new society, precisely because it came after the experiences of 1776 and 1789.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo examina las opciones institucionales que los líderes políticos y militares enfrentaron durante las guerras de independencia en Hispanoamérica a comienzos del Siglo XIX. La primera observación a realizar es que estos líderes no comenzaron con un modelo republicano preestablecido; sino que, más bien, las primeras formas de gobierno autónomo tuvieron como propósito preservar el dominio de Fernando VII mientras éste permanecía cautivo en la Francia de Napoleón. Los autores sostienen que en tanto Fernando procuraba reestablecer el statu quo ante en los territorios hispanoamericanos luego de su retorno a España en 1814, los líderes hispanoamericanos consideraban tres opciones institucionales: la monarquía constitucional, el centralismo republicano y el federalismo. Puesto que los intentos por establecer monarquías constitucionales fracasaron, las opciones se redujeron a una compulsa entre modelos republicanos centralistas o federales. Los autores identifican las fuentes intelectuales de ambos modelos y exploran los vínculos entre los republicanismos clásicos y los modernos. Los autores concluyen en que el modelo político posterior a la independencia, aunque firmemente republicano, era más conservador que en los casos norteamericano y francés. El republicanismo hispanoamericano enfatizó la preservación del orden antes que la creación de una sociedad nueva, precisamente porque tuvo lugar luego de las experiencias de 1776 y 1789.

I have always believed...that liberty is possible under all forms [of government]: that liberty is the target, and that forms are just means; that there are individual rights, sacred rights, indispensable guarantees that must be enforced in a republic as in a monarchy, without which monarchy and republic are equally intolerable, with which they are both good.

—Benjamin Constant, *Mémoires sur les Cent-Jours*

In the aftermath of independence, Spanish American political leaders and thinkers demonstrated that individual rights were not as central an objective as Constant¹ recommended. Their main priority was to form governments to ensure order rather than liberty. Monarchy was considered and even adopted by some countries. But by 1830 all countries in Spanish America had become republics. Why was this the case? Was it the result of philosophical reflection and debate or rather a result of the hardening of positions after Ferdinand VII attempted to return Spain and its former territories to absolutist monarchical rule? Once Spanish Americans chose a republican form of government, did they model it after ancient or modern sources or both? What did Spanish Americans mean by 'republic,' anyway?

The purpose of this essay is to explain the intensity and complexity of political choices leading to the adoption of republican forms of government after independence from Spain. We examine a variety of thinkers, politicians, and statesmen (often one person combining all three roles) and their references to republican models, both ancient and modern. We seek to understand their use of a complex tradition of political thought going back to ancient sources and their attempts, not always successful, to adapt it to local realities. We argue that perhaps the strongest emphasis of the immediate postindependence period was on the creation of a political framework that would prevent the chaos and violence of revolutionary France, which had become practically synonymous with the concept of republic. Leaders of the independence struggle were also aware of the devastations, closer to home, of the Haitian revolution in 1791. As a result, we argue, both the development of republican ideas and the establishment of republican institutions became a singularly conservative response to the central question of how to build governments that contained rather than promoted popular sovereignty. Spanish American republicanism was largely silent on questions of individual rights and the role of the Catholic Church in the new political order, in effect postponing such issues for decades.

In this essay we also examine the role of Great Britain in formulating Spanish American political choices. Spanish Americans could not ignore the political preferences of the British government, a country that they hoped would provide the trade and recognition needed for the consolidation of independence. Great Britain made no secret of its preference for constitutional

¹ *Mémoires sur les Cent-Jours* was published in 2 vols. (Paris: Chez Béchot Aîné, Libraire-Éditeur, 1820). This epigraph is from I. 61. We use Biancamaria Fontana's translation in *Benjamin Constant and the Post-Revolutionary Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 144.

monarchy. It was suspicious of republics, especially the Jacobinism of early revolutionary France, and was also committed to an alliance with Spain during the independence process. As a result the emerging Spanish American nations had to negotiate a difficult choice between workable domestic political models and international recognition. The ultimate choice was republican, but it is important to examine why monarchy was discarded and to pay closer attention to the competing interpretations and understanding of republics. In particular, the tension between federalism and centralized republicanism came to dominate the intellectual and political struggles of the postindependence period.

In the pages that follow, we first provide a brief review of the early steps towards independence. Second, we examine the proposals for constitutional monarchy in the context of European views and policy. Third, we consider the emergence of centralist republicanism in the writings and actions of Simón Bolívar, with particular emphasis on his classical and modern sources. Finally, we discuss the federalist ideas of Vicente Rocafuerte. This essay maintains a political focus that is in line with recent research on the dynamics of the independence process and that encourages, the authors hope, further discussion on ideas and politics during the crucial postindependence period.² In particular, we seek to fill a significant gap in the literature concerning the contested meaning of republicanism in the early stages of nation building in Spanish America.

The First Steps toward Independence

The independence of Spanish America came about as a consequence of Napoleon's installation of his brother Joseph on the throne of Spain in 1808. There were some serious grievances against the colonial administration in Spanish America, but Creoles rallied around their king to resist the French occupation and preserve the integrity of the empire. The initial establishment of local governing committees, or *Juntas*, was primarily an effort to fill the vacuum of power caused by the collapse of central authority in Spain. Just as in Spain, local *Juntas* established authority in the name of the king, with or without the participation of royal officials. Some countries, especially Venezuela and Argentina, were more prepared than others to drop, in the period's parlance, 'the mask of Ferdinand' and declare full independence, as was the case with Venezuela as early as 5 July 1811. Originally the Caracas Junta in April 1810 had sought to rule in the name of the king, but due to the efforts of Francisco Miranda, Simón Bolívar, and others

² See, especially, François-Xavier Guerra, "The Spanish American Tradition of Representation and its European Roots," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26, no. 1 (February 1994): 1–35; and Brian R. Hamnett, "Process and Pattern: A Re-examination of the Ibero-American Independence Movements, 1808–1826," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 29, no. 2 (May 1997): 279–328. For a recent review of the literature on independence, see Victor M. Uribe, "The Enigma of Latin American Independence: Analyses of the Last Ten Years," *Latin American Research Review* 32, no. 1 (1997): 236–55.

through a so-called *Sociedad Patriótica*, the colony moved decisively to give itself an independent and republican government. This experiment proved to be short-lived, for in less than a year the republic succumbed to royalist reaction from within, and after the restoration of Ferdinand VII in 1814, from without.³

During the period between the initial creation of the *Juntas* and the restoration of Ferdinand, the schism between Spain and Spanish America grew larger, in part because peninsular authorities disappointed Creoles with their meager offer of parliamentary representation at the *Cortes* (national assembly) in Spain. As Brian Hamnett has recently stated, "the collapse of Bourbon absolutism in 1808 took place in a radically altered international and ideological context. The issue of representation or the constitutional restructuring of the political process became uppermost for the American elites."⁴ Creole leaders were also disappointed by the Spanish government's insistence on maintaining a colonial linkage, and thus they moved to actively pursue independence by military, ideological, and political means during the first decade of the imperial crisis. Moreover, the flux of political events in the peninsula, which translated into uncertainty regarding legitimate authority in Spanish America, convinced Creoles that a complete separation from Spain was necessary.⁵

Historian John Lynch has stated that an 'incipient' nationalism had been developing in Spanish America since the late eighteenth century, concluding that "this presentiment of nationality could only find satisfaction in independence."⁶ The growing sense of difference between Spaniards and Spanish Americans has also been emphasized by Benedict Anderson as a factor leading to the formation of nation-states.⁷ Had this process not been interrupted by the Napoleonic invasion of Spain, nationalism could have led to independence. Yet because of the invasion, the immediate emphasis was on the preservation of legitimate authority. Creoles were prompted into action by fear of domestic disorder, continued instability, and eventually the vindictive and reactionary policies of Ferdinand VII.

³ The literature on the independence process is quite extensive. The major events of the period are competently outlined by John Lynch, *The Spanish American Revolutions, 1808-1826*, 2nd. ed. (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1986). Another extremely useful source is vol. 3 of *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, 11 vols., edited by Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). The last volume in the collection has updated bibliographies for the subjects covered in vol. 3, and all others.

⁴ Hamnett, "Process and Pattern," op. cit. n. 2, 291.

⁵ The participation of American deputies in the Spanish *Cortes* and Spain's response to the events of independence are covered by François-Xavier Guerra, *Modernidad e independencias: Ensayos sobre las revoluciones hispánicas* (Madrid: Editorial MAPFRE, 1992); Timothy E. Anna, *Spain and the Loss of America* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1983); and Michael P. Costeloe, *Response to Revolution: Imperial Spain and the Spanish American Revolutions, 1810-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

⁶ Lynch, *Spanish American Revolutions*, op. cit. n. 3, 24.

⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London and New York: Verso, 1991), especially chapter IV, "Creole Pioneers," 47-65. Anderson's account closely follows Lynch's.

In light of this transition, whereby nationhood was a result of rather than a motivation for independence, one might consider the evolution of political thought leading to the formation of republics as a remarkably nonrevolutionary response to the imperial crisis, which nevertheless included elements of radical political rhetoric absorbed from some early pronouncements of the Spanish *Cortes* and various Enlightenment sources. Issues of representation, autonomy, and equality had become sufficiently familiar to provide the basic ingredients of any discussion on new forms of political organization. Constitutionalism, at least in theory, became the most significant alternative to monarchic absolutism. As will be clear when we analyze the political thought of Simón Bolívar, the potentially radical implications of such issues as legal equality and popular sovereignty embodied in a constitutional framework would be balanced with serious doubts concerning the civic-mindedness of the masses. First, however, we must point out that not all Spanish American leaders were committed to republican forms of government. For a significant number, the most desirable option was constitutional monarchy.

Monarchical Legitimacy

The fundamental reason for the serious consideration given to the continuation of some form of monarchy in Spanish America was twofold: First, no other political system had the legitimacy, antiquity, and emphasis on order and stability that monarchy had.⁸ Second, monarchy continued to be the dominant political system in Europe, the area of the world that mattered the most to Spanish America for reasons of trade and communication. Those who supported monarchy believed that Great Britain would be more amenable to recognizing and trading with countries that had institutions similar to its own. Some of the proponents of monarchy had observed those British institutions first hand, when they lived in Britain in the 1810s and 1820s as either diplomats or exiles. They thought that constitutional monarchy combined the best possible worlds of political legitimacy and limited popular sovereignty (generally in the form of restricted male suffrage and a bicameral legislature). There were very few die-hard absolutist monarchists by the 1820s; they were rapidly losing ground because of the intransigence of both Ferdinand VII and the Holy Alliance. Those who defended monarchy were almost invariably defenders of a constitutional monarchy that resembled Great Britain's.

In Spain itself the Napoleonic invasion had led to the consideration of constitutional monarchy in order to substitute for the captive king. The discussion over the precise form of that

⁸ This essay focuses on those regions that broke away from Spain, but the experience of Brazil shows one instance in Latin America where monarchy retained its legitimacy and lasted almost to the end of the nineteenth century. Interestingly, Spanish Americans concerned with order and stability rarely, if at all, mentioned Brazil as a model to follow. The initial reaction to the independence of Brazil was positive, but the mood of the neighboring nations became negative when king Dom Pedro demonstrated little tolerance for the views of the constituent assembly. See Ron Seckinger, *The Brazilian Monarchy and the South American Republics, 1822–1831: Diplomacy and State Building* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1984).

government led to the establishment of the *Cortes* in 1810 and to the adoption of the Constitution of 1812. An influential strand of constitutional thought had been developed by the prestigious intellectual and statesman Melchor Gaspar de Jovellanos, who urged consideration of the British system and that of the ancient *Cortes* of Spain.⁹ Despite such efforts, the *Cortes* that convened in 1810 followed the French example more closely than those favored by Jovellanos.¹⁰ The *Cortes* declared itself the repository of national sovereignty and transferred executive authority to a weak three-member Regency.¹¹ The *Cortes* proceeded to write the constitution, which was promulgated on 19 March 1812. The document recognized Ferdinand VII as the legitimate king but shifted the locus of sovereignty to 'the nation' embodied in the *Cortes*. It was a revolutionary step with one fundamental flaw: the king was not available to agree to the terms, and Ferdinand VII later refused to be bound by a constitution when he returned in 1814. Such a flaw was not apparent to the constitutionalists, and their disregard for such political realities added ammunition to critics who viewed such an experiment as ill-conceived.

The depth of the dilemmas faced by advocates of monarchic constitutionalism is best exemplified by the activities of the Spanish expatriate José María Blanco y Crespo. During the critical 1808–10 period in Spain Blanco had been somewhat to the left of Jovellanos, advocating popular sovereignty without the heavier emphasis on ancient history and tradition. Residing in England after 1810, Blanco became an early critic of the *Cortes* and the Constitution of 1812. In London he worked closely with Lord Holland, who advocated a mixed constitution balancing the extremes of despotism and mob rule. Also in London, Blanco launched an influential periodical, *El Español*, from which he criticized the unicameral legislature, the *Cortes's* radicalism (reflected, among other things, in its failure to incorporate the *grandees* of Spain), its anticlericalism, and its refusal to recognize both the proposals and the grievances of the Spanish American representatives.¹² At the same time, he took no comfort when Ferdinand VII returned to the throne and persecuted the liberals of the 1812 Constitution. Perhaps prophetically, he wrote that such a hard line could only lead to yet another cycle of retribution and instability in Spain.¹³

⁹ Guerra, *Modernidad e independencias*, op. cit. n. 5, 139 and 330. One of the premises underlying Spanish constitutionalist thought was that a form of constitutional monarchy had existed in medieval Spain until the Hapsburgs replaced it with absolutism. Jovellanos and other constitutionalists argued that given the collapse of the monarchy the time had come to resurrect the *Cortes*. When the *Cortes* did in fact convene in September 1810, they followed one part of Jovellanos's advice, but not the other, which was the adoption of a bicameral legislature, as in Great Britain. On Jovellanos and the emergence of historical constitutionalism, see Richard Herr, *The Eighteenth-Century Revolution in Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958).

¹⁰ Brian R. Hamnett, "Spanish Constitutionalism and the Impact of the French Revolution, 1808–1814" in *The Impact of the French Revolution on European Consciousness*, ed. by H.T. Mason and W. Doyle (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1989), 64–80.

¹¹ Anna, *Spain and the Loss of America*, op. cit. n. 5, 67.

¹² Martin Murphy, *Blanco White: Self-Banished Spaniard* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 51. Once in England, Blanco anglicized his name to Joseph Blanco White. See also Anna, *Spain*, 84–5.

¹³ Blanco White made this comment in the last issue of *El Español* in June 1814. See Murphy, *Blanco White*, 93.

Blanco White established himself as an important interlocutor on matters concerning Spain and Spanish America. His was a respected voice in the British Foreign Office, which subsidized his paper through a subscription. Blanco White's connections to Holland House ensured that his voice would also be heard among an influential circle of intellectuals, politicians, and business people. Spanish Americans who felt that he represented the interests of their countries clustered around him and eagerly sought his advice. As a result, he was in a position to shape opinion on matters concerning the political crisis in the Hispanic world. Bolívar was aware of Blanco's role and made admiring references to him and his paper in the *Jamaica Letter* (1815). As François-Xavier Guerra has pointed out, Blanco White and his paper *El Español* represented "the most important nexus among Hispanic revolutionaries, both peninsular and [Spanish] American."¹⁴

Blanco was particularly close to two Spanish Americans: the Mexican Fr. Servando Teresa de Mier and the Venezuelan Andrés Bello. Blanco helped them secure financial assistance, without which neither would have been able to survive in England, and provided them with an important set of intellectual influences. Many of Mier's ideas were shaped in a friendly controversy with Blanco. Blanco sought to preserve a commonwealth of Hispanic nations and therefore did not welcome the Venezuelan declaration of independence in 1811.¹⁵ Mier defended both the Caracas action and a fuller movement toward independence in *Carta de un Americano al Español* (1811), followed by a *Segunda Carta* in 1812.¹⁶ David Brading has demonstrated that, despite their differences, the influence of Blanco White on Mier was strong, especially with regard to the dangers inherent in revolutions.¹⁷ Mier, in fact, became a strong opponent of the federalist constitution of 1824 in Mexico. After rejecting the idea that Mexico was prepared to adopt federalism, he warned of the dangers of applying revolutionary principles to different societies in the following remarkable autobiographical reference:

I was a Jacobin myself, as can be seen in my two *Cartas de un Americano al Español en Londres*, because in Spain we knew little more than what we had learned in French revolutionary books. I saw [France] in uninterrupted chaos for

¹⁴ Guerra, *Modernidad*, op. cit. n. 5, 231 and 307. For a detailed account of the activities of Blanco White in the context of the Hispanic community in London, see María Teresa Berrueto León, *La lucha de Hispanoamérica por su independencia en Inglaterra, 1800–1830* (Madrid: Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, 1989). A selection of Blanco White's writings on Spanish America are in José María Blanco White, *Conversaciones americanas y otros escritos sobre España y sus Indias*, ed. by Manuel Moreno Alonso (Madrid: Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, 1993).

¹⁵ *El Español* (London) no. 19, 30 October 1811.

¹⁶ The *Segunda Carta*, which summarizes the major points of the first, is included in Servando Teresa de Mier, *Ideario Político* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1978), 16–73. For an account of Mier's activities in London, and specifically his relationship with Blanco White, see the introduction of Mier's *Historia de la Revolución de la Nueva España Antiguamente Anáhuac* (1813), by André Saint-Lu, Marie-Cécile Bénassy-Berling, Jeanne Chenu, Jean-Pierre Clément, André Pons, Marie-Laure Rieu-Millan, and Paul Roche (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1990).

¹⁷ David A. Brading, *The First America: The Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots, and the Liberal State, 1492–1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 583–602.

twenty-eight years, just like all countries that followed its [revolutionary] principles... I ended up in England, and I saw that country at peace in the middle of a convulsed Europe, like an enchanted ship in the middle of a storm. I tried to understand such a phenomenon; I studied in this old school of practical politics; I read its Burkes, its [William] Paleys, its Benthams and many other authors. I listened to their wise experts and became convinced that the problem came from Jacobin principles. These make up the Pandora's box that contains all the evils of the universe. I stepped back in horror and recanted, just like my famous Spanish friend Blanco White had done in the sixth volume [of *El Español*].¹⁸

Unlike Blanco, Mier was a committed republican, in part perhaps because of his reading of Thomas Paine, in part because of the disastrous experience of monarchism under Agustín de Iturbide in Mexico.¹⁹ During the Napoleonic wars, however, the main issue was how to maintain the unity of the Spanish commonwealth under the framework of a reformed monarchy. Great Britain was strongly supportive of this option even after the restoration of Ferdinand VII. The option of constitutional monarchy gained momentum between 1820, when Spanish liberals regained power, and 1823, when the Holy Alliance restored monarchical absolutism. Andrés Bello was very much at the center of the flurry of discussions that took place in London during that period.

Bello was a Caracas Creole who had served the colonial administration in a variety of positions and who hoped for the preservation of a reformed Spanish commonwealth.²⁰ Not because of his choice—he was basically stranded in London—he was far removed from the growing radicalism of the independence process. As a result, he observed monarchy and British policy more dispassionately. He was, indeed, the person to approach when the fledgling Spanish American nations, especially in southern Spanish America, began to consider the monarchical option. Bello, in turn, sought Blanco's advice:

The question is whether or not, in case one of the [Spanish American] governments attempts to establish a monarchy (not like the Spanish monarchy contemplated in the 1812 Constitution but rather a true one, though not absolutist) and asks the European courts for a prince from any of the reigning families, including the Bourbons, the proposal would be well received under the present circumstances. It seems to me that no other proposal better reflects the interests of the Spanish Americans (who, as you well know, are not made to be republicans)... I am persuaded that the [Spanish American] provinces will not find peace if they try to organize under principles other than those of monarchy.²¹

¹⁸ Mier, *Ideario Político*, 293. This and other translations in the text, unless otherwise indicated, are by the authors.

¹⁹ Brading discusses the areas of agreement between Paine and Mier in *The First America*, 597.

²⁰ A good selection of works on Bello's London period is by John Lynch, ed., *Andrés Bello: The London Years* (Richmond, Surrey: The Richmond Publishing Co., 1982). See also *Bello y Londres*, 2 vols. (Caracas: Fundación La Casa de Bello, 1980–81). For a selection of texts and a general introduction to Bello's thought, see Iván Jaksic, *Selected Writings of Andrés Bello*, trans. by Frances M. López-Morillas (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

²¹ Andrés Bello to Blanco White, 25 April 1826, Special Collections and Archives, Sidney Jones Library, University of Liverpool, "Correspondence and Papers of Joseph Blanco White," Section I, Box 41, item 1. The reference to a 'true' monarchy is undoubtedly the respective and mutually

Blanco responded encouragingly, agreeing that peace in the region could only be achieved after "the abandonment of republican ideas."²² Such skepticism about the prospects for republicanism was shared by Simón Bolívar, who was, however, adamantly opposed to monarchy. Bello and Blanco, in contrast to Bolívar, were typically Burkean in their view of republicanism, at least at this stage when they considered it as too abstract and foreign and therefore bound to clash with embedded Hispanic institutional traditions.²³ For the moment, however, Bello's early approach for advice was soon succeeded by a more serious effort on the part of Argentine general José de San Martín, who was at this point poised to launch a campaign for the liberation of Peru. On 3 August 1821, he became 'Protector' of that country, and by November he commissioned two representatives, Juan García del Río and James Paroissien, to begin negotiations to secure a European prince for Peru.²⁴ Such a possibility had been entertained by his compatriot Manuel Belgrano as early as 1816 and actively pursued by Supreme Director Juan Martín de Pueyrredón in 1820, but without success. In late 1821 San Martín insisted, again without success.²⁵ By the time his envoys arrived in Europe on 29 August 1822, San Martín's star was in a precipitous decline after his interview with Simón Bolívar in Guayaquil (26 and 27 July 1822). He soon left Spanish America for Europe, never to return again. García del Río and Paroissien did not hear of this news until February 1823. Their credentials were revoked by the new government in Peru in June 1823.²⁶

The other major Spanish American country to actually establish a monarchical regime of sorts was Mexico under Agustín de Iturbide. Independence had come to Mexico as a reaction against the liberal regime installed in Spain in 1820 and manifested itself in the form of a constitutional monarchy. The crown was actually offered to Ferdinand VII who, feeling that he could not accept what was already his, declined the honor. Iturbide felt compelled to crown himself Emperor Agustín I in May 1822, but he soon ran afoul of Congress and was confronted by the rebellion of Antonio López de Santa Anna, who forced Iturbide's abdication and exile in March

balancing powers of king and parliament, in addition to the bicameral legislature. The original inquiry came most likely from Antonio José de Irisarri, the Chilean envoy in London since 1819.

²² Blanco White to Bello, 26 April 1820, in *Ibid.*, I, 41, item 2.

²³ We are referring to Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (London: J. Dodsley, 1790).

²⁴ San Martín had hoped that General Bernardo O'Higgins of Chile would also request a European monarch, but his instructions to García del Río and Paroissien were limited to securing a monarch for Peru. See Lynch, *The Spanish American Revolutions*, op. cit. n. 3, 181; R.A. Humphreys, *Liberation in South America, 1806-1827: The Career of James Paroissien* (London: The Athlone Press, 1952), and Ricardo Levene, *El genio político de San Martín* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Guillermo Kraft, 1950), 198-210.

²⁵ Miguel Jorrín and John D. Martz, *Latin American Political Thought and Ideology* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1970), 79.

²⁶ See Antonio Cussen, *Bello and Bolívar: Poetry and Politics in the Spanish American Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), especially his chapter "The Campaign of the Monarchists," 85-95.

1823.²⁷ At about the same time the European Holy Alliance restored Ferdinand VII to power in Spain. The monarchical experiment had proven a failure on both sides of the Spanish Atlantic.

The final blow against the monarchical project was a change in the foreign policy of England, which up to now had refused to recognize the Spanish American regions as independent nations. In early 1824 and despite his own preference for monarchical regimes, Foreign Secretary George Canning announced his government's willingness to enter into discussions with the Spanish American regions (in many ways prompted by US willingness to do the same in a series of pronouncements and policies in 1822 and 1823).²⁸ When actual treaties of friendship were signed in 1825 with Mexico, Colombia, and Buenos Aires, it became clear that Great Britain no longer considered a monarchy, constitutional or otherwise, a *sine qua non* for diplomatic relations. This recognition, which signaled that there was less British emphasis on the form of government than on the fact that there was government at all, substantially undermined the arguments for the adoption of a monarchical system. Andrés Bello himself recognized this reality when he wrote, "the time of monarchies has passed in America."²⁹ There would be some subsequent efforts to establish monarchical regimes, most notably in Ecuador in the 1840s and in Mexico in the 1860s. But in the immediate postindependence period monarchy was doomed by the twin forces of British policy and Spanish American experience.

The Bolivarian Version of Republic

The demise of the first republic in Venezuela and the subsequent collapse of various other *juntas* across the continent were in some ways due to the restoration of Ferdinand VII but more importantly to the internal conflicts that plagued each of these regions.³⁰ What concerns us in this essay is the attempt on the part of contemporaries to understand the failure of the first

²⁷ Bushnell and Macauley, *The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 63–4. Iturbide was caught attempting to return to Mexico and promptly executed in 1824.

²⁸ See Harold Temperley, *The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822–1827: England, the Neo-Holy Alliance, and the New World* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1966). For the US position on Spanish American independence, see Arthur Preston Whitaker, *The United States and the Independence of Latin America, 1800–1830* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1964).

²⁹ *El Araucano*, (Chile) no. 270, 6 November 1835. Bello reiterated this point in a series of articles that appeared in *El Araucano* between 1846 and 1847 which have been collected under the title "Expedición del General Flores" in Bello, *Obras Completas*, (Caracas: Ministerio de Educación, 1951–), XI, 375–419. A recent treatment of the career of Flores, including his monarchical project, is by Mark J. Van Aken, *King of the Night: Juan José Flores and Ecuador, 1824–1864* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1989).

³⁰ A detailed account of the rise and fall of the first republic in Venezuela is by Caracciolo Parra-Pérez, *Historia de la Primera República de Venezuela* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1992). This classic study first appeared in 1939. See also Pedro Grases, ed., *Pensamiento político de la emancipación venezolana* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1988); and P. Michael McKinley, *Pre-Revolutionary Caracas: Politics, Economy, and Society, 1777–1811* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). John Lynch summarizes the main dynamics of this stage of the independence process in the rest of Spanish America in his *The Spanish American Revolutions*,

round of republican experimentation and the subsequent strategy for building a new program of independent nationhood. The role of Simón Bolívar is central to both aspects of this history.

Bolívar's notion of republic was shaped by his reading of classical sources. As Gerald E. Fitzgerald has pointed out, "all educated people of [Bolívar's] era were familiar with Greek and Roman institutions and philosophers."³¹ This familiarity with the classics was reinforced by the Enlightenment, which Bolívar absorbed during his stay in Europe between 1803 and 1806. The relationship between the Enlightenment and the classics is not purely philosophical. The political discourse of both the French and American revolutions was permeated by the influence of, and reflection on, the classics of antiquity.³² The writings of the leading classical philosophers and statesmen, as well as the major events and figures of republican Rome and Greece, became an economical way of establishing a language for the discussion of politics. Spanish Americans were very much a part of this cultural universe, and they used the language of antiquity, albeit with new meanings, well into the nineteenth century. Bolívar's pledge to the liberation of Spanish America, which he delivered in Rome in 1805 (when he was twenty-two years of age), underscores the extent of his classical lexicon:

[Rome] has given the world just about everything: severity during ancient times; austerity during the Republic. It gave depravity to the emperors, and catacombs to the Christians. It supplied valor to conquer the entire world, and greed to turn all states on earth into a tax-paying periphery... It produced moving orators, like Cicero; seductive poets, like Virgil; satirists, like Juvenal and Lucretius; feeble philosophers, like Seneca; and citizens of integrity, like Cato.³³

Venezuelan historian Manuel Pérez Vila has reconstructed Bolívar's extensive list of readings and also the books he carried even during his military campaigns. Prominent among the latter are Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, works by Julius Caesar, Tacitus, Cicero, Ovid, Virgil, and a Latin grammar.³⁴ Bolívar was well acquainted with these books, and he peppered many of his letters

op. cit. n. 3. In this essay we seek to put more emphasis on the emergence of republicanism as a political model for organizing new nations.

³¹ Simón Bolívar, *The Political Thought of Bolívar*, ed. by Gerald E. Fitzgerald (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 4. We rely on Fitzgerald's translation of Bolívar's writings. David Brading's chapter on Bolívar in his *The First America*, op. cit. n. 17, 603–20, examines the significance of classical republican traditions in Bolívar's political thought. We seek to build on Brading's insights in that chapter.

³² See, for example, Harold T. Parker, *The Cult of Antiquity and the French Revolutionaries: A Study in the Development of the Revolutionary Spirit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937). For the American Revolution, see Carl J. Richard, *The Founders and the Classics: Greece, Rome, and the American Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

³³ Simón Bolívar, *Doctrina del Libertador*, edited by Manuel Pérez Vila (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1985), 3–4. This pledge was printed years later (1850) by Simón Rodríguez, Bolívar's mentor and friend, so one must allow for some contributions of his own. Bolívar's subsequent classical references, however, leave little doubt that this rendition reflects Bolívar's knowledge of the classics.

³⁴ Manuel Pérez Vila, *La formación intelectual del Libertador* (Caracas: Ministerio de Educación, 1971). See also Mario Briceño Perozo, *Reminiscencias griegas y latinas en las obras del Libertador* (Caracas: Biblioteca de la Academia Nacional de la Historia, 1992).

and speeches with references to them. We must ask, however, about the relationship of this literature to Bolívar's notion of republicanism.

An examination of Bolívar's correspondence from 1812 to 1830 shows no fewer than 93 references to Greek and Roman classics. The dominant references were to examples of character and political virtue; generals and emperors, whether virtuous or not (Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Nero, Sulla); founders of republics (Theseus, Lycurgus, Pompilius Numa); prominent philosophers and tribunes (Plato, Seneca, Cicero, Cato); and an assortment of heroes culled from Homer's *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and Virgil's *Aeneid*.³⁵ Bolívar did not engage in scholarly commentary on his references and often confused Greek and Roman antiquity, but he revealed a penchant for quick and timely delivery of classical examples.

Bolívar first attempt to explain the collapse of Venezuela's first republic was the "Cartagena Manifesto" of 1812. He blamed the failure of the republican experiment on the excessive confidence with which the founders introduced a constitutional system modeled after that of the United States. Bolívar blamed the disorder and chaos that followed the declaration of independence not on the US constitution *per se* but rather on the lack of the political virtues that underpinned both the ancient republics and the United States. As he put it, "our fellow citizens are not yet able to exercise their rights themselves because they lack the political virtues that characterize true republicans."³⁶ Instead, the newly acquired liberty had degenerated into anarchy, and had resulted in the defeat of the first independence experiment.

The "Cartagena Manifesto" was written by a bitter Bolívar still reeling from the pain of a premature political and military defeat that would prolong the war of independence for another decade. It is clear, however, that beneath the anger there lies a view of a republic based on the notion of political virtue, to which he would return in subsequent writings. The much calmer and reflective "Jamaica Letter" of 1815, for example, poses the question of the postindependence political order in the form of a choice between monarchy and republic. He does not hesitate to reject monarchy, even if it is an American monarchy, because a king's "constant desire is to increase his possessions, wealth, and authority" which he does at the expense of his vassals and neighbors. Spanish Americans, however, "being anxious for peace, science, art, commerce, and agriculture, would prefer republics to kingdoms."³⁷ Such a conclusion may seem disingenuous,

³⁵ Our reading of Bolívar's correspondence showed 93 references in 43 letters. Of these, 36 are in 21 letters to the Vice-President of Gran Colombia, Francisco de Paula Santander, between November 1819 and 26 October 1826. There are 21 references in 3 letters to José Joaquín Olmedo, the Ecuadorean poet, and 6 references in 3 letters to Sir Robert Wilson, the British General and father of Bolívar's aide-de-camp, Belford Hinton Wilson. Therefore, 63 references are made in letters to Santander, Olmedo and Wilson, indicating that he felt most comfortable in making them to these individuals. The remaining 30 references are contained in single letters to a dozen or so correspondents, including Carlos Soublette, Joaquín Mosquera, José Antonio Páez, Rafael Urdaneta, and Juan José Flores. See Simón Bolívar, *Cartas del Libertador*, 2nd ed., 8 vols. (Caracas: Fundación Vicente Lecuna, 1964–1970).

³⁶ Bolívar, "The Cartagena Manifesto" in *Political Thought*, op. cit. n. 31, 13.

³⁷ Bolívar, "The Jamaica Letter" in *Ibid.*, 39. Tulio Halperín Donghi has pointed out that Bolívar rejected monarchy on rational grounds but that ultimately his abhorrence was highly emotional: it

because Bolívar was determined to establish republican institutions even if he was unsure of their chances of success.

We might do well to pause at this point to consider Bolívar's sources. The concern with political virtue is central to Cicero's *De Re Publica*, an author and work Bolívar certainly knew. It is clear, however, that Bolívar followed Montesquieu on a central point that was alien to antiquity, namely, the idea of virtue as love of country. In an explanatory note to *The Spirit of the Laws*, Montesquieu stated:

For the better understanding of the first four books of this work, it is to be observed that what I distinguish by the name of virtue, in a republic, is the love of one's country, that is, the love of equality. It is not a moral, nor a Christian, but a political virtue; and it is the spring which sets the republican government in motion, as honor is the spring which gives motion to monarchy.³⁸

The first books of *The Spirit of the Laws* are devoted to an examination of Montesquieu's typology of governments (republican, monarchic, and despotic). His central points are that each of these forms are based on 'principles,' or human passions that set the machinery of government in motion. Book III, in particular, examines those human passions that are essential to securing loyalty and obedience to the different types of government. Democracy (one of the two varieties of republican government, the other being aristocracy) is, according to Montesquieu, the one most dependent on the virtue of its citizens. In Book V Montesquieu makes clear that the virtue of citizens consists of the postponement of private passions in favor of devotion to the public. Democratic virtue means embracing the love of equality, and this requires a disposition to bring about and sustain equality. Such equality is predicated on equal access to government responsibilities and frugal limitation of personal enrichment. It "does not imply that everybody should command, or that no one should be commanded, but that we obey or command our equals" (Book VIII, ch. 3).

Montesquieu's characterization obviously caught Bolívar's eye. But when he turned his sight to the conditions of Spanish America, he reached the following rather sarcastic conclusion: republics, especially federal republics, are the best political models, but Spanish America is not prepared for them because of a lack of 'political virtues.' Spanish Americans, corrupted by centuries of Spanish absolutism, had not developed the public-mindedness necessary for self-government. In the "Jamaica Letter" he explained why he did not favor the federal system: "It is over-perfect, and it demands political virtues and talents far superior to our own."³⁹ Later, in the "Angostura Discourse" of 1819, he quoted Montesquieu to the effect that the laws must reflect

was "a moral repugnance for the institution itself, in which there survived something of his youthful indignation on seeing the French Revolution confiscated by Bonaparte." See his *The Aftermath of Revolution in Latin America*, trans. by Josephine de Bunsen (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1973), 134.

³⁸ Charles Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, trans. by Thomas Nugent (New York: Hafner Press, 1949), lxxi.

³⁹ Bolívar, "The Jamaica Letter," op. cit. n. 37, 41.

the customs, location, geography, and other conditions of the country in which they are applied. Bolívar used this thesis to reject the federal system as inappropriate.⁴⁰ Even towards the end of his life Bolívar wrote to his friend General Daniel O'Leary, "I think it would be better for South America to adopt the Koran rather than the United States' form of government, although the latter is the best on earth."⁴¹

Such pessimism with regard to the political virtues of his compatriots was not definitive. After all, in Bolívar's view, the lack of political virtues was the direct result of Spanish colonialism. Republics would in the end succeed in Spanish America, but they would need to have special features adapted to the circumstances of the region. The first outlines of such a republic appeared in the "Angostura Discourse" of 1819, a time when Bolívar had established enough of a foothold in the interior of Venezuela to consider the possibilities of a victory against royalist forces. "Venezuela had, has, and should have a republican government. Its principles should be the sovereignty of the people, division of powers, civil liberty, proscription of slavery, and the abolition of monarchy and privileges."⁴² Thus, while he continued to emphasize the importance of virtue in a modern sense, that of love of country, he also took into consideration some features of recent Spanish constitutionalism.⁴³ Indeed, the combination of ancient and modern republicanism is at the core of his proposals for political development. Bolívar averred that the best expressions of ancient and modern republicanism were embodied in Rome and Great Britain, respectively, but warned that the features of Great Britain that he recommended the most were precisely those of a republican nature: "Indeed, can a political system be labeled a monarchy when it recognizes popular sovereignty, division and balance of powers, civil liberty, freedom of conscience and of press, and all that is politically sublime?"⁴⁴

In the "Angostura Discourse" Bolívar proposed a senate, initially elected by the Chamber of Representatives (chosen, he hoped, from the heroes of the independence struggle) but subsequently hereditary, which would be composed of virtuous individuals neither dependent on the government nor on elections, which Bolívar did not trust because uneducated voters could be easily deceived. The senate would check the potential excesses of the people should such

⁴⁰ Bolívar, "The Angostura Discourse" in *The Political Thought*, op. cit. n. 31, 51–2. He took the wording of his reference almost literally from Book I, chapter 3 of *The Spirit of the Laws*, op. cit. n. 38.

⁴¹ Bolívar to O'Leary, 13 September 1829, in *Political Thought*, op. cit. no. 31, 118.

⁴² Bolívar, "The Angostura Discourse," 54.

⁴³ The Cádiz Constitution of 1812, which was an important precedent in the development of Spanish American constitutionalism, states in Chapter II, art. 6, that "the love of country is one of the principal obligations of all Spaniards." See "Constitución Política de la Monarquía Española" in Rafael Garófano and J.R. de Páramo, *La Constitución Gaditana de 1812*, 2nd ed. (Cádiz: Diputación de Cádiz, 1987). The idea of "love of country" is also present in Machiavelli, an author Bolívar knew well. See Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince and the Discourses* (New York: The Modern Library, 1940), especially Book III, Chapter XLVII of the *Discourses*: "Love of country should make a good citizen forget private wrongs," 536–7.

⁴⁴ Bolívar, "The Angostura Discourse," op. cit. n. 40, 56. "All that is politically sublime" should be considered as a point of emphasis, along the lines of Bolívar's (and he was certainly not alone in this) many other flamboyant statements.

excesses regrettably be embraced by the elected Chamber of Representatives. "What I propose is an office for which the candidates must prepare themselves, an office that demands great knowledge and the ability to acquire such knowledge. All should not be left to chance and the outcome of elections."⁴⁵ This hereditary senate would serve as a neutral power to check on both the executive and the congress, but Bolívar's political model did not weaken the executive branch:

In republics the executive should be the stronger, for everything conspires against it; while in monarchies the legislative power should be superior, as everything works in the monarch's favor... Consequently, the significance of these same advantages should serve to justify the necessity of investing the chief magistrate of a republic with a greater measure of authority than that possessed by a constitutional prince.⁴⁶

It is apparent that he combined his reading of Montesquieu with the concrete experience of the first republic of Venezuela, which floundered, among other reasons, because of a weak executive branch.⁴⁷ Despite such emphasis on the division of powers, Bolívar did not follow Montesquieu completely on this point and remained consistent in his reliance on political virtue. Neither the laws nor the government would by themselves guarantee the strength and stability of republican institutions; but in combination with political virtue, they could.

Morality and enlightenment are the foundations of a republic; morality and enlightenment constitute our primary needs. From Athens let us take her Areopagus and her guardians of custom and law; from Rome, her censors and domestic tribunals; and, having effected a holy alliance of these moral institutions, let us revive in the world the idea of a people who, not content to be free and strong, desire also to be virtuous.⁴⁸

The vehicle for the implementation of this idea was a 'fourth power.' As Bolívar put it in a letter to his friend and correspondent in Trinidad, Guillermo White, "I have very little confidence in the morality of our citizens, and without republican morality there can be no free government. In order to strengthen this morality, I have invented a fourth power which will nurture men with virtue and keep them in line."⁴⁹ Bolívar had the opportunity to introduce this 'fourth power' in his constitution for the appropriately called Republic of Bolivia in 1826. It was a 'moral' power modeled after the Roman institution of the Censors, which exercised supervisory powers over the community's morality (*regimen morum*) for five centuries until just before the dawn of the Christian era. The

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴⁷ In Book 11, chapter 6, of *The Spirit of the Laws* (op. cit. n. 38), Montesquieu expressed strong reservations about a weak executive. In such a case, the legislature would likely become 'despotic,' and end liberty. The Venezuelan Constitution of 1811 provided for an executive of three members, and though there were a number of different reasons why it became ineffective, Bolívar's perception of its weakness must have been reinforced by Montesquieu's views.

⁴⁸ Bolívar, "The Angostura Discourse," op. cit. n. 40, 63.

constitution of Bolivia, therefore, consisted of an executive branch, a judicial branch, and a tricameral legislature that included a Chamber of Tribunes, a Senate, and the Chamber of Censors. The Censors, Bolívar stated in his message to the Congress, "are to safeguard morality, the sciences, the arts, education, and the press. The Censors exercise the most fearful yet the most august authority... To these high priests of the laws I have entrusted the preservation of our sacred tablets, as it is for them to denounce the violators of these laws."⁵⁰ These recommendations strongly recall those of Rousseau in Book V of *The Social Contract*, where he wrestled with similar issues and proposed a Tribunate modeled after the Censors of Rome and the Ephors of ancient Sparta.⁵¹ This constitution illustrates well Bolívar's attempt to adapt republican institutions to local realities. Since local realities, shaped by centuries of colonialism, did not offer a ready-made set of political virtues, a 'fourth' or moral power was designed to bring them into existence. But the constitutional project failed as Bolívar was forced to leave for Colombia in 1826, and the country he left behind plunged into regional and political factionalism. Bolívar had outlived his constitution by just one year when he died in 1830.

Bolívar was not the only centralist to emphasize matters of political virtue and morality. Chilean intellectual and statesman Juan Egaña had authored a centralist constitution in 1823 which contained a section on 'national morality' (arts. 249–61) that is pertinent to reproduce here:

The legislation of the State will include a moral code that will detail the duties of the citizen in all the periods of his life and in all states of society, creating his habits, activities, duties, public instructions, rituals and pleasures, all of which transform laws into customs and customs into civic and moral virtues.⁵²

Historian Simon Collier has noted the similarities between Bolívar's 'fourth power' and Egaña's 'conservative and legislative senate.'⁵³ Both writers were centralists, both were familiar with the main sources of ancient and modern republicanism, and both had a deeply skeptical view of the virtues of most Spanish Americans. As Egaña put it, "there will never be a stable and self-

⁴⁹ Bolívar to White, 26 May 1820, in *Cartas del Libertador*, op. cit. n. 35, II, 346. This translation is by the authors.

⁵⁰ Bolívar, "Message to the Congress of Bolivia" in *Political Thought*, op. cit. n. 31, 97–8. This speech is dated 25 May 1826.

⁵¹ Bolívar was well acquainted with Rousseau's *The Social Contract*. Sir Robert Wilson had given him Napoleon's personal copy of this book, which Bolívar acknowledged in a letter of 15 November 1824 (Bolívar to Wilson, in *Cartas del Libertador*, IV, op. cit. n. 35, 203). Anthony Pagden has strongly emphasized the centrality of Rousseau in Bolívar's political thought in his *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination: Studies in European and Spanish-American Social and Political Theory, 1513–1830* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990). See chapter VI, "The End of Empire: Simón Bolívar and the Liberal Republic," 133–53. Pagden—and we agree—still considers classical republicanism the stronger component influencing Bolívar's political thought.

⁵² Juan Egaña, *Colección de algunos escritos políticos, morales, poéticos y filosóficos del Dr. D. Juan Egaña*, 6 vols. (London: Imprenta de M. Calero, 1826–30), I, 80. We use Simon Collier's translation of this passage.

⁵³ Simon Collier, *Ideas and Politics of Chilean Independence, 1808–1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 278–9.

sustaining government if the Republic is left to a popular administration without a permanent and conservative body of notables dedicated to the protection of the Constitution, and to the control of the errors and abuses of a vicious democracy."⁵⁴ Egaña's models, just like Bolívar's were the Athenian Areopagus, the Spartan Ephors, and the Roman Senate.⁵⁵

Bolívar and Egaña coincided on some fundamental constitutional ideas, but the former was more sensitive to political realities. Due to his traumatic experience with the federalism of the first Venezuelan republic, Bolívar remained steadfast in his support for a centralized government with strong executive powers, including a life-time presidency with the power to choose a successor. Many contemporaries viewed such an arrangement as a monarchy in republican dress; others openly suggested that he crown himself.⁵⁶ Bolívar strongly rejected this last possibility on both personal and political grounds. Personally, he stated, he would rather be remembered as 'The Liberator' than as an ambitious emperor in the manner of Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and Napoleon.⁵⁷ Politically, he associated hereditary monarchy with the corruption of the Bourbon monarchy: restoring this failed system would simply perpetuate the problems of the region. In addition, England would be suspicious of a Bourbon, and Monroe-Doctrine United States would not welcome it.⁵⁸ He acknowledged, however, the need for stable and legitimate government, and hoped that a strong executive would provide it.

Bolívar justified his search for strong executive powers on the basis of the population's lack of political virtues. Had such virtues been in place, a more liberal system might have been possible. In addition, the exigencies of war required, in his view, a centralized administration. He was successful, at least for a time, in building such a government. There was, however, a strong current of support for federalism that had survived the failure of the early republic in Venezuela and gained momentum in various countries in the 1820s.

The Federalist Model

In their recent *The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century*, David Bushnell and Neill Macauley have stated that "while federalists might copy some of the outward forms of the US Constitution, they were not federalist for having read Hamilton and Madison.

⁵⁴ Juan Egaña, *Memorias políticas sobre las federaciones y legislaturas en general i con relación a Chile* (Santiago: Imprenta de la Independencia, 1825), 56–7.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁵⁶ Caracciolo Parra-Pérez has traced the monarchical movement in Gran Colombia, as well as Bolívar's position regarding it, in *La Monarquía en la Gran Colombia* (Madrid: Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, 1957).

⁵⁷ Bolívar to Santander, 21 February 1826, in *Cartas del Libertador*, op. cit. n. 35, V, 31. This letter confirms Halperín's insight quoted in n. 37.

⁵⁸ Bolívar to Patrick Campbell, 5 August 1829, in *Cartas del Libertador*, VI, 260–1. Bolívar was certainly overestimating the power of the United States to enforce its own policy, but at the time it served him as a convenient reference to undermine monarchy as a political option.

They embraced federalism because they felt their own needs were different from those of the people in the next mountain valley and were sure they could handle them better than a congress or bureaucracy in the remote national capital.⁵⁹ Such an interpretation is appropriate for what it covers, but it tends to ignore an important source of political thinking in Spanish America. Federalism deserves to be studied in all its aspects, and recent scholarship is moving in that direction.⁶⁰ An examination of federalism is also important for understanding Bolívar's own insistence on centralized republics. As we have discussed, Bolívar did not think that Spanish Americans possessed the necessary political virtues to turn federalism into a working political system. He also rejected federalism because he associated it with regionalism and was concerned about its consequences in a context of war.

Federalism, in fact, became closely associated with the centrifugal tendencies already at work during the independence process. Both the intendency system established in the last quarter of the eighteenth century and the provincial divisions (*Diputaciones Provinciales*) sanctioned by the Constitution of 1812 reinforced the tendency toward local autonomy.⁶¹ In a situation of continuously contested territorial domination, peripheral towns challenged the authority of regional centers of power and these, in turn, resented the commercial privileges and political ascendancy of the former viceregal capitals. Geography, poor transportation and communication, and the sheer political, administrative, and fiscal turmoil of capital cities seriously challenged attempts at centralized administration of large regions. Geography, in particular, represented a formidable obstacle for the successful implementation of federalism. Those who attempted to transplant the US model tended to forget that the thirteen colonies that became the United States all fit in an area smaller than Venezuela. But distance was not the greatest problem in South America. The enormous variety of climates, ecosystems, and ethnicities, coupled with great topographical and fluvial barriers to communication, made South America, and even portions of it, difficult to govern under any political system.

In this context federalism acquired early connotations of separation, independence, and local and regional sovereignty. At the same time few of the former intendancies or *Diputaciones Provinciales* could expect to survive economically and politically on their own. They had to leave the door open to some form of unification with other regions, and this is where federalism came to play a role. Such dilemmas were not unique to Spanish America, but few political theorists familiar to actors of the postindependence stage could lend clear guidelines. In *The Spirit of the Laws* (Book IX, ch. 2), Montesquieu referred to 'federation' as a defensive alliance among independent sovereign states that delegated the conduct of foreign affairs to a central government. Such

⁵⁹ Bushnell and Macauley, *The Emergence of Latin America*, op. cit. n. 27, 36.

⁶⁰ Marcello Carmagnani, ed., *Federalismos latinoamericanos: México/Brasil/Argentina* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993).

⁶¹ The Cádiz Constitution was most influential in Central America. See Mario Rodríguez, *The Cádiz Experiment in Central America, 1808 to 1826* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978).

delegation did not affect the legal and economic autonomy of the member states. The example of the United States, which had the attraction of being contemporary, suggested a complicated balance between state and central prerogatives. Neither example seemed applicable to Spanish American states that had developed from the breakdown of the highly centralized Spanish imperial arrangements.⁶² Consequently, their federalism was more concerned with the relative autonomy of the regions, while recognizing the need for a limited central government. Disagreements surfaced, however, on the degree of institutionalization of regional autonomy, and federalists tended to distrust any concentration of power in a central government.

Spanish American federalism was not as strongly concerned with other dimensions of republicanism, such as the nature of individual rights and, especially, freedom of religion. Spanish American federalists, however, were more likely to promote religious toleration, but not as insistently during this period. It was as if they wished to first establish the institutional forms of the new nation-states and postpone other issues that were very much a part of the federalist agenda. We might consider, in this context, the ideas of Vicente Rocafuerte (1783–1847).⁶³

Rocafuerte was perhaps the most articulate exponent of federalist views in Spanish America in the 1820s. Born in Guayaquil, Ecuador, he studied in Europe, briefly became a member of the Spanish *Cortes* in 1814, represented Mexico in England and continental Europe from 1824 to 1830, and returned to Mexico to a controversial career as a journalist and government critic. Back in Ecuador in 1833, Rocafuerte became a member of Congress, president of the country from 1835 to 1839, governor of Guayas, president of the senate, and envoy to Peru, where he died in 1847. Rocafuerte had been a close friend of Bolívar in their youth, but political differences turned them into bitter enemies in the 1820s.

Rocafuerte did not develop federalist views until fairly late in his political and intellectual career. Like many others who were convinced of the necessity of independence, he was initially more concerned with the rejection of monarchy, especially hereditary monarchy, and the meaning of liberty in republics. His main source for the first issue was Thomas Paine, especially the

⁶² In his *Mexican Liberalism in the Age of Mora, 1821–1853* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968) Charles A. Hale has analyzed the complex interplay of US and European constitutionalism in the federalist 1824 Constitution in Mexico. See also Josefina Zoraida Vásquez, "El federalismo mexicano, 1823–1847" in Carmagnani, *Federalismos latinoamericanos*, op. cit. n. 60, 15–47, and Jaime E. Rodríguez O., "Mexico in the Age of Democratic Revolutions" in his edited volume *Mexico in the Age of Democratic Revolutions, 1750–1850* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), 1–17.

⁶³ The most complete treatment of Vicente Rocafuerte is by Jaime E. Rodríguez O., *The Emergence of Spanish America: Vicente Rocafuerte and Spanish Americanism, 1808–1832* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975). See also his *Estudios sobre Vicente Rocafuerte* (Guayaquil: Publicaciones de Archivo Histórico del Guayas, 1975) and his entry on Rocafuerte in Barbara Tenenbaum, ed., *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture*, 5 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1996), IV, 585. Rocafuerte was among the few republicans to address the issue of religious toleration, in *Ensayo sobre tolerancia religiosa por el ciudadano Vicente Rocafuerte* (Mexico, 1831), in Neptalí Zúñiga, ed., *Vicente Rocafuerte*, 4 vols. (Quito: Corporación de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1983), II, 377–430.

pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776); for the second, Benjamin Constant, whose "The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns" (1819) he published in Spanish in 1820.⁶⁴

The appearance of Thomas Paine on the Spanish American stage, and especially in the ideas of Rocafuerte, requires some explanation.⁶⁵ Paine's views on hereditary monarchy as lacking either divine or rational sanction were embraced by those who, from the start, expected the elimination of monarchy as a political option for Spanish America. Bolívar, as we have seen, was equally adamant about the rejection of monarchy, but he did not seek the inspiration of Thomas Paine, whose vehemence on the matter was unrelated to Bolívar's concern with political virtue. Rocafuerte, however, responded more positively to Thomas Paine's arguments because he was an actor in Mexican politics when the country adopted a monarchical form of government under the ill-fated regime of Agustín de Iturbide. Rocafuerte sought out the strongest arguments he could find against monarchical regimes, but he was also part of a significant ideological current considering political options for Spanish America during this period. Because Paine had in addition promoted religious tolerance, those Spanish Americans who concurred on its necessity found in the British writer a strong source of ideological support. In addition, Paine represented an important counterweight to the notion that laws and governments must be appropriate to the conditions of different countries. His emphasis on the preponderance of laws and government over customs provided much more room for political experimentation for those who rejected the Bolivarian notion that federalism—"the best system on earth"—could not find roots in Spanish America.

Rocafuerte was determined to build on Paine's antimonarchical views in order to set the stage for the creation of a republic organized according to federal features, but he did not initially oppose Bolívar's emerging notion of centralized republicanism. In 1821 Rocafuerte published his *Ideas necesarias a todo pueblo americano independiente que quiera ser libre* [Ideas Necessary to Any Independent American People Who Want to Be Free]. There, he included sections of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, especially the part on monarchy and hereditary succession, as

⁶⁴ Rocafuerte published an edited translation of Constant's essay without attribution in the Cuban periodical *El Argos*, no. 17, 5 October 1820. In this famous essay Constant outlined the fundamental difference between liberty according to the ancients (the liberty to actively participate in political affairs) and the moderns (more concerned with individual rights, security, and property). Constant advocated a combination of the two but did not hesitate to call individual liberty "the true modern liberty" in *Political Writings*, trans. and ed. by Biancamaria Fontana (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 323. In contrast to Bolívar, who for conjunctural reasons was more interested in the practice of virtue, Rocafuerte emphasized issues of individual rights which he felt would be better protected by federal republics. To our knowledge, this is the first time that Constant's essay, or at least part of it, was published in Spanish America.

⁶⁵ There were various sources for the dissemination of Paine's views after the independence process began. In Venezuela Juan Germán Roscio translated *The Rights of Man* (1791) in 1810. The Upper Peruvian Vicente Pazos Kanki translated and printed *Common Sense* in London in 1811. The Colombian José María Vergara translated Paine's *Dissertations on Government* and published it in London under the title *Disertación sobre los primeros principios del gobierno, por T[h]omas Pain[fe]* (London: E. Justins, 1819). For a discussion on the context of this publication, see María Teresa Berrueto León, *La lucha de Hispanoamérica*, op. cit. n. 14, 255–61.

well as *Dissertations on Government*. The book included a variety of other documents, such as John Quincy Adams's speech commemorating the fourth of July, 1776, the American Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States, among others. The purpose of such a compilation was, first, to gather ideological support for the rejection of monarchy in any form, including constitutional monarchy, and second, to acquaint his Spanish American readership with the political system of the United States. Rocafulerte's prologue stopped short of promoting federalism, but the choice of the United States' political system as a model revealed a clear partiality in that direction. "It has been fifty years since the genius of [American] independence has been pointing to the Constitution of the United States as the only hope for oppressed peoples, and the true beacon of their happiness."⁶⁶

Rocafulerte expanded on some of these themes in his *Ensayo político, el sistema colombiano popular, electivo, y representativo es el que más conviene a la América independiente* [Political Essay: The Colombian Popular, Elective, and Representative System Is the Most Appropriate for Independent Spanish America] in 1823. He expressed support for the US Constitution, but also for the Colombian Constitution promulgated at Cúcuta in 1821. Because this Constitution was a highly centralistic document, uniting the former components of the Viceroyalty of New Granada and placing the capital in Bogotá, it is clear that Rocafulerte's conversion to militant federalism was not yet complete. Indeed, he indicated that it might be a few years before Colombia could fully imitate "our brothers to the North, whose federal system is too difficult to adopt just yet, as the unfortunate developments of Venezuela and Buenos Aires show."⁶⁷ Little, if anything up to the publication of the *Ensayo político* shows any schism with Bolívar's vision of a republic, except that Rocafulerte was more insistent on the advantages of the US Constitution. In fact, in addition to some of the documents he included in the *Ideas necesarias*, the new publication added the Constitution of the Republic of Colombia and the accompanying speech to Congress by Simón Bolívar. He also added the speech delivered by George Washington at the end of his second administration (1796), a leader whom he likened to his South American counterpart.

The feelings were mutual. Bolívar had written to Rocafulerte in 1821 with unquestionable affection: "Will you remember that I am your good old friend? I always am, and I always will be."⁶⁸ Rocafulerte's praise of Bolívar approached the sycophantic in the prologue to the *Ensayo político*: "The heart of every generous American throbs when witnessing the sublime association of the name of Bolívar with that of Columbus and Washington."⁶⁹ As Jaime Rodríguez has suggested,

⁶⁶ Vicente Rocafulerte, *Ideas necesarias* (Philadelphia: T & W Mercier, Printers, 1821), 9. Also included in Zúñiga, *Rocafulerte*, op. cit. n. 63, I, 285.

⁶⁷ Rocafulerte, *Ensayo político* (New York: Imprenta de A. Paul, 1823), 37. Also in Zúñiga, *Rocafulerte*, II, 54. His references are to the Venezuelan Constitution of 1811 and the provincial revolts in the Río de la Plata which dismantled the centralist 1819 Constitution and created a federation at the Treaty of Pilar in 1821, inaugurating a decade of interprovincial struggles.

⁶⁸ Bolívar to Rocafulerte, 10 January 1821, in *Cartas del Libertador*, op. cit. n. 35, III, 11.

⁶⁹ Rocafulerte, *Ensayo político*, op. cit. n. 67, 7, and in Zúñiga, *Rocafulerte*, op. cit. n. 63, II, 30.

their differences surfaced when Bolívar refused to support a scheme for the liberation of Cuba in 1824.⁷² but especially after the publication of Rocafuerte's (coauthored by the Spanish exile in London José Canga Arguelles) *Cartas de un Americano sobre las Ventajas de los Gobiernos Republicanos Federativos*, which appeared in London in 1826. By that time Rocafuerte was openly and defiantly promoting federalism in opposition to Bolívar's brand of centralized republicanism.

The immediate target of Rocafuerte's *Cartas* was Juan Egaña's 1825 critique of federalism.⁷³ Egaña's son Mariano, who was in London at the time representing the government of Chile (1824–9), was incensed by Rocafuerte's publication and urged his father to respond.⁷⁴ Juan Egaña obliged by reprinting his original work and adding a "Breve contestación a las observaciones publicadas impugnando la memoria sobre sistemas federativos" [Brief Response to the Published Statements Challenging the Essay on Federal Systems].⁷⁵ Juan Egaña had initially rejected federalism on the grounds that for countries that had inherited a centralist tradition and had established new central governments, it would be unwise to federalize: "It is impossible to imagine," he stated, "what improvement this [federalism] would bring about."⁷⁶ In the response to Rocafuerte, he argued that what was good about federations, where and if they worked, was precisely their central government structures and, therefore, "this unity will always be more perfect than the federation."⁷⁷

Rocafuerte had not anticipated Egaña's rebuttal, nor did he wish to debate with the Chilean intellectual: he had a different target in mind in his *Cartas*. In the closing paragraphs of the publication he inserted a cryptic reference to Bolívar. Rocafuerte challenged the president of Gran Colombia to make the sacrifices needed, as Bolívar himself had offered, to adopt the best form of government, which for Rocafuerte could only mean federalism. "Free men wait with anticipation for the day when the illustrious warrior who secured Spanish American independence will provide the necessary guarantees for the preservation of liberty."⁷⁸

⁷² Rodríguez, *The Emergence of Spanish America*, op. cit. n. 63, 81 and 84. Bolívar explained his reasons in a letter to Francisco de Paula Santander: "Peace is more important to us than the liberation of these two islands [Cuba and Puerto Rico]... An independent Havana is likely to become a nuisance," Bolívar to Santander, 20 December 1824, in *Cartas del Libertador*, op. cit. n. 35, IV, 221. His judgment coincided with that of George Canning, who preferred Cuba to be under the rule of weak Spain rather than under the influence of any established or emerging state.

⁷³ Egaña, *Memorias políticas*, op. cit. n. 54.

⁷⁴ Mariano Egaña to Juan Egaña, 20 November 1826, in *Cartas de don Mariano Egaña a su Padre, 1824–1829* (Santiago: Sociedad de Bibliófilos de Chile, 1948), 174–85.

⁷⁵ This new publication had no date, or rather the same date of 1825, but it was obviously published after receipt of Mariano's letter of 20 November 1826. Mariano, in turn, reprinted this work along with the response in *Colección de algunos escritos*, op. cit. n. 52, I, 1–88. The volumes were not all printed in London, and the date of the first volume is likely to be 1827 rather than 1826. Raúl Silva Castro has traced the history of this publication, which Simon Collier endorses, in *Bibliografía de don Juan Egaña, 1768–1836* (Santiago: Imprenta Universitaria, 1949), 159–63.

⁷⁶ Juan Egaña, *Memorias políticas*, op. cit. n. 54, 33.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁷⁸ Rocafuerte and José Canga Arguelles, *Cartas de un Americano*, in Zúñiga, *Rocafuerte*, I, op. cit. n. 63, 499–500.

Rocafuerte's main source in the *Cartas* was the *Federalist Papers*, parts of which he paraphrased (at least with proper attribution) and from which he extracted multiple historical examples. It is not his originality, therefore, that really matters but rather the underlying message of his rendition and the intended audience. Federalism was preferable, indeed simply better, than centralized republicanism, because it encouraged local autonomy, responsibility, and hence liberty. But most importantly, it limited the chances for the emergence of despotic governments or leaders.

Rocafuerte tried to convince Bolívar that centralism must be abandoned. In a letter dated 27 September 1826 Rocafuerte articulated with singular clarity his view of a federal alternative for Gran Colombia:

I have heard that in Colombia there is support for the creation of a federation composed of...Venezuela, Cundinamarca, and Quito. This division would be fatal, because each section is big enough to weaken the [central] government, and even aspire to absolute independence... It would be much better to divide the Republic in twelve or more states according to the geography and local conditions of the country...[we must] improve [political] institutions and make the transition from centralism to federalism...let us move to the vanguard of civilization. As the chosen son of liberty, it is your responsibility to establish [freedom] in the manner that is most appropriate to the enlightenment of our century.⁷⁷

Bolívar's lack of a direct response, in addition to his strenuous efforts to keep at least a part of South America united and in order, even if dictatorial means were required, pushed Rocafuerte into a stance of open hostility. On the eve of the Panama Congress in 1826, convened by Bolívar to establish an inter-American alliance and security system, Rocafuerte criticized Bolívar's handling of Peruvian affairs: "his conduct is alarming to the liberty and well-being of the other republics of Spanish America."⁷⁸ By 1828 Rocafuerte became even more accusatory: "Bolívar has taken off his disguise of a patriot and is now capable of anything. In his delirious ambition he might well offer Spain the help of Colombia in this Machiavellic transaction [Spain's domination of Mexico], for as long as he is recognized king or life-time absolute chief of Colombia."⁷⁹ Beleaguered though he was by myriad political problems and his own declining health, Bolívar did not fail to detect the hostility of his former friend. Barely a month before his death, Bolívar warned General Juan José Flores of Vicente Rocafuerte's imminent arrival in Ecuador: "he is the world's

⁷⁷ Rocafuerte to Bolívar, in Daniel O'Leary, *Memorias del General O'Leary*, 32 vols. (Caracas: Imprenta de la Gazeta Oficial, 1880), IV, 398–401.

⁷⁸ Rocafuerte, "Reflexiones sobre el estado actual político de Hispano-América" in Zúñiga, *Rocafuerte*, op. cit. n. 63, III, 435. The Congress met in Panama in June–July 1826. Bolívar's national and hemispheric views are examined by Simon Collier in "Nationality, Nationalism, and Supranationalism in the Writings of Simón Bolívar," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 63, no. 1 (February 1983), 37–64.

⁷⁹ Rocafuerte to Secretary of State [Juan de Dios Cañedo], Republic of Mexico, 18 September 1828, in Rodríguez, *Estudios*, op. cit. n. 63, 135, and Zúñiga, *Rocafuerte*, IV, 851.

most rabid federalist and antimilitarist...he is capable of anything and has the means to accomplish it...he has become my relentless enemy..."⁸⁰

However intense, the personal conflict between Bolívar and Rocafuerte (and the latter was neither the only nor the most important of Bolívar's enemies) was only a facet of a larger conflict involving the nature of republics, be they centralist or federalist. In the end, just as Bolívar himself had predicted, both systems alternated for domination, even in his own Colombia, which acquired an extreme version of federalism in the Constitution of 1863.⁸¹ As Table 1 shows, by the time of Bolívar's death in 1830 Spanish America was roughly equally divided between centralist and federalist republics, although the labels allowed for enormous differences from country to country. What was firm and evident, however, was that all of Spanish America had become republican territory.

Country	Type
Argentina	Federalist Pact
Bolivia	Centralist
Chile	Federalist Elements
Colombia	Centralist
Ecuador	Federalist
Mexico	Federalist
Paraguay	Personal Dictatorship
Peru	Centralist
United Provinces of Central America	Federalist
Uruguay	Centralist
Venezuela	Centralist

* Argentina adopted a proto-constitutional federalist pact in 1831; a federal constitution was adopted in 1853. Bolivia had the 1826 centralist constitution overturned in 1829, but the 1831 constitution was also centralist. Chile adopted some federalist principles in 1826-7 and in the constitution of 1828, but the latter was replaced by a centralist document in 1833. The 1821 centralist constitution of Gran Colombia was replaced in 1830: in Venezuela by a basically centralist constitution which nevertheless allowed for indirect election of local authority and some autonomy, seldom respected; in Colombia, by a compromise between centralism and federalism in 1832; in Ecuador, by a nominally federative arrangement that provided for strong executive powers. In Mexico the federalist 1824 constitution lasted until 1836. Peru adopted a centralist constitution in 1828, replaced in 1839. Paraguay was the home of Francia's perpetual dictatorship. The United Provinces of Central America (Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica) adopted a federalist constitution in 1824. It was replaced in 1835 by another federalist constitution.

Source: Loveman, *The Constitution of Tyranny*, op. cit. n. 81.

⁸⁰ Bolívar to J.J. Flores, 9 November 1830, in *Cartas del Libertador*, op. cit. n. 35, VII, 586.

⁸¹ For a description of this constitution, see Bushnell and Macauley, *The Emergence of Latin America*, op. cit. n. 27, 217-8. For a discussion of this and all other constitutions in the region, see Brian Loveman, *The Constitution of Tyranny: Regimes of Exception in Spanish America* (Pittsburgh and London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993).

Conclusion

Republicanism, by the mid-1820s, had prevailed over monarchy. This did not necessarily mean that the political virtues that Bolívar envisioned as the fundamental basis of the republic had finally established roots. Bolívar himself was skeptical about republicanism and admitted that it was mainly a needed weapon in the fight for independence. It was clear, however, that the fundamental discussion had shifted from the republic-monarchy opposition to centralist republics versus federalist republics. The heroic phase of struggle against an evil monarchy had run its course, and the main question became the extent to which either of those models could secure the order and stability that was essential for the consolidation of nationhood.

A corollary of this shift was that political virtues received less attention than institutional forms of government. Bolívar was convinced that his Bolivian Constitution was the best, with its life-time presidency and its aristocratic legislature: "it brings together," he stated in August 1826, "all the benefits of federalism, the solidity of centralized government, and the stability of monarchies."⁸² Not all agreed, and by 1830 the region was in utter chaos: countries were fighting over the centralized versus federalist institutional shape of their republics, and Bolívar's own treasured creation, Gran Colombia, disintegrated. A demoralized Bolívar was to exclaim by the end of his days "America is ungovernable...he who fights a revolution ploughs the sea."⁸³

Despite Bolívar's anguished conclusion, the new republics could now begin to define more precisely the nature of political life without a hereditary king. This involved a heavier emphasis on the constitutional arrangements that defined the attributes of the various branches of government and the participation of the citizenry through elections. The republics that emerged were remarkably less egalitarian than many, including Bolívar, had feared. Differences and exceptions notwithstanding, civil codes ensuring property rights and constitutional arrangements allowing governments to quickly respond to challenges via regimes of exception made certain that the postindependence order would be less than revolutionary. In the apt words of Tulio Halperín Donghi, "conservatism was the solution for a very specific Spanish America which had won its independence only to discover that the order which this process had made possible was unexpectedly static."⁸⁴ Whether countries called themselves federalist or centralist, the emphasis was on order, stability, and international recognition. Much remained to be done in

⁸² Bolívar repeated the same formula in several letters: to Diego Ibarra, Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera, Juan Paz del Castillo, and Francisco de Paula Santander, all dated 6 to 8 August 1826. An interesting variation is that Bolívar did not mention the word 'monarquía' in the letters to Castillo and Santander. These letters are in vol. V of *Cartas del Libertador*, op. cit. n. 35, 224–34.

⁸³ Bolívar to Juan José Flores, 9 November 1830, in *Cartas del Libertador*, op. cit. n. 35, VII, 587.

⁸⁴ *The Aftermath of Revolution*, op. cit. n. 37, 140.

terms of building durable institutions, but this could at least begin on the certain basis of republics. The intensity of the struggle over forms of government, however, postponed other important aspects of republicanism, such as the protection of individual rights and the role of the Catholic Church in the new order. When Bolívar addressed the legislators at Angostura in 1819, "Gentlemen: You may begin your labors, I have finished mine," he articulated an important truth, except that it was eleven years too soon and his labors were still unfinished when he died.