

# The Hispanic-Anglosphere from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century

An Introduction

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## Chapter 1

### Spanish ‘Colonies’: A Term Forged in the Hispanic-Anglosphere

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# 1 Spanish ‘Colonies’: A Term Forged in the Hispanic-Anglosphere

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In the middle of complex discussions surrounding Brexit in 2019, the use of the term ‘colony’ in a draft regulation approved by the Council of the European Union to allude to Gibraltar caused much heated debate in London, Madrid and Brussels.<sup>1</sup> British officials rejected the label arguing that it was ‘completely inappropriate’ language to describe the British dominion over which Spain has been claiming sovereignty since 1713.<sup>2</sup> A similar remark was made over 200 years earlier by the Spanish authorities with the decree of 22 January 1809 that famously stated that the American dominions were neither ‘*colonias o Factorias, como las de otras Naciones, sino una parte esencial integral de la Monarquía Española*’<sup>3</sup> (neither colonies nor *feitorias*, as those of other nations, but an essential and integral part of the Spanish Monarchy). The statement sat on solid ground. The legal codes of the Spanish Monarchy never employed the term ‘*colonias*’ (colonies) to refer to its overseas dominions, and the absence from the Spanish juridical lexicon had wider implications. The aim of our work is not to revive the controversy sparked in 1948 by Ricardo Levene who, based on that assumption, sought to eradicate from the history books the term ‘colonial’ when used in reference to anything relating to the period of Spanish rule in the Americas.<sup>4</sup> The objective here is to trace the way and to establish the extent to which the word ‘colonies’ came to be applied to the Hispanic context through increased entanglement with the British and Irish world. We suggest that this lodging took place in the late eighteenth-early nineteenth centuries with a shift in meaning within the Anglophone world and by formulations of the Hispanic world produced in Ireland, where its own ‘colonial’ status and designation had long been the subject of protracted disputes and debates. The chapter also offers a glimpse into a one-size-fits-all understanding of how global polities operated that was prevalent at the time in the British Isles.

It seems important to start from making it clear that the term ‘colony’ was adopted early on in the process of English overseas expansion to identify territories administered by Europeans who had been granted charters by the English (later the British) crown that conferred certain specific liberties to establish *ad hoc* institutions and to practice non-established religions while keeping a satellite-style relationship with

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Britain. Used interchangeably with the softer horticulturally evocative term of ‘plantation’, from the late seventeenth century, the English word began to imply a level of dependency. This interpretation was alien to the Roman term from which it had originally been borrowed which referred to any new settlement established outside the original political community and that, as Annick Lempérière has rightly pointed out, gave us the word *colonos* and *colonize* which meant ‘first of all to settle; a migration and the establishment of a community that involved taking possession of territory but not the domination over other people’.<sup>5</sup> In an English context, the subaltern condition was in relation to both the Crown and to what began to be referred as the mother country: mainly England.<sup>6</sup> We know from the work of historians of the Anglo-American independence that by the mid-to-late eighteenth century, it became an expression that reflected the troubled British experience of the management of overseas territories and that it was heavily charged with notions of systemic unfairness.<sup>7</sup>

In the Hispanic world, although not unknown, the term was uncommon. It is difficult to find it in publications and even in correspondence. An advance search of the word ‘*colonias*’ covering the period 1750–1800 in the online portal of the Spanish archives (PARES) produced only 78 results out of the hundreds of thousands of records currently available through this facility which offers access to catalogues and digitalized material of the *Archivo General de Indias*, the *Archivo Histórico Nacional* among many other repositories – and the results were invariably within phrases referring to foreign dominions, at times explicitly as in the phrase ‘*colonias extranjeras*’ and also specifically (e.g. ‘*colonias inglesas*’, ‘*colonias holandesas*’, and ‘*colonias del Norte de América*’ in reference to the United States).<sup>8</sup> Although digital resources are yet to offer a comprehensive account of all archival holdings, what it seems certain from this survey is that during the second half of the eighteenth century the term ‘*colonias*’ was not used routinely, not even by officials in Madrid as it has been recently suggested,<sup>9</sup> but rather rarely. Instead, the terms that can be seen used routinely in a global Hispanic context are *territorios* (territories), *dominios* (domains), the latter combined in a variety of phrases such as *dominios de ultramar* (overseas domains) and *dominios americanos* (American domains), and more frequently, *provincias* (provinces).<sup>10</sup>

This is not to say that the term had not begun to get some traction in select circles of the Spanish administration from around the mid-eighteenth century, particularly among *proyectistas* who promoted a view of the Crown’s dominions akin to property that needed to be placed under the subordination of the metropolis and locked in a relationship characterized by the pre-eminence of structures of unfree labour, displacement, expropriation and extraction.<sup>11</sup> In the period following the advent of the second *Reglamento del Comercio libre* in 1778, the incorporation of New Spain into the *comercio libre* and the onset of the French

Revolution, an anonymous commentator in Cádiz stated in no uncertain terms that 'nuestras Yndias son colonias, que deben ser dependientes de la Metrópoli' (our Indies are colonies, that must be dependent to the Metropolis), whereas a member of the *ayuntamiento* of Seville expressed his satisfaction at seeing all but dismantled the monopoly – 'that destroying vice of our Spain which has kept our colonies in misery for over two and a half centuries'.<sup>12</sup> A few years later, Francisco Arango y Parreño also made repeated reference to the 'colonies' in his well-known *Discurso* for the development of commercial agriculture in Cuba (1793)<sup>13</sup> and Rafael Antúnez y Acevedo, a jurist with a long trajectory in mercantile law defended the commercial system in place until 1765 even carrying the word in its title.<sup>14</sup> There is also evidence that the term was used occasionally in private correspondence (never in public) by some high officials of the crown in the Americas, particularly those who were in contact with other European polities who used the term to entail a degree of dependency.<sup>15</sup>

Notwithstanding these cases, the reluctance to apply the term to the Spanish dominions is likewise noteworthy. For instance, José del Campillo y Cossío was careful to avoid the concept in his *Nuevo sistema de gobierno económico para la América* penned in 1743, but not published until 1789. The same can be said of Bernardo Ward's *Proyecto económico* (written in 1762, but published in 1779) which relying heavily on the manuscripts of Campillo and other authors, clearly set the case of the Spanish dominions as distinct from those of the British and French colonies. In his view, the Spanish Monarchy 'en América tiene una posesión, que consiste, no en Islas y Colonias, sino en Reynos, e Imperios vastísimos [...] (in America has possessions which consist, not of Isles and Colonies, but of extensive Kingdoms and Empires [...]).<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the instances where the usage of 'colonias' is documented stem for the most part from the higher echelons of the bureaucratic elite, making it difficult, as other scholars have pointed out, to determine the extent of its use among the lower echelons of the administration both in Europe and overseas. The repeated citation of single-case instances recorded in secondary sources has not contributed greatly to clarify the situation.<sup>17</sup>

The state of affairs, in any case, appears to have barely changed in the early 1800s (at least when it comes to written records) even after the introduction in July 1808 of Napoleon's Bayonne Statute when for the first time a clear binary demarcation was established between Spanish dominions located in Europe on one side and American and Asian (Africa was largely overlooked) on the other side, as proclaimed in its title: the *Constitution of the Spains* (the traditional plural form of *Españas* was kept, but now only for Spanish Europe) and the *Indies* (non-European territories).<sup>18</sup> Crucially, the first draft of the charter had transferred to the Spanish sphere the long-established French legal use of the term 'colonies' for its own overseas empire.<sup>19</sup> The text drawn by Napoleon was

revised by an unelected General Deputation of Spaniards, and it was during that process that the transfer was successfully resisted by a Catalan merchant with extensive interests in the south of Spanish America, José Ramón Milá de la Roca and by the man that the Napoleonic regime had designated as representative of the River Plate, the Montevideo-born Nicolás de Herrera.<sup>20</sup> Both men praised the text for proclaiming the principle of equality of American and peninsular Spaniards within a Catholic monarchy, but they urged a series of amendments (highlighted in the original text with italics) not just to erase the term *colonias* from the document, but to abolish its very use:

El artículo 70 de la Constitución dice: *Los Diputados de las colonias tendrán voz y voto en las Cortes*. Se podría sustituir: *Los Diputados de las provincias hispano-americanas ó de las provincias de España en América* ó alguna otra clausula equivalente, y en que no suene el nombre de colonias. Lo mismo podrá subrogarse en los demás artículos que hablan con respecto a las posesiones ultramarinas (...) Convendría asimismo que al título 10 del Estatuto se agregase este artículo: *Queda abolido el nombre de colonias. Las posesiones de España en América y Asia se titularán provincias hispano-americanas ó provincias de España en América, etcétera.*<sup>21</sup>

[Article 70 of the Constitution says: *The deputies of the colonies will have voice and vote in the Cortes* (Parliament). It could be replaced with: *The Deputies of the Spanish-American provinces or of the provinces of Spain in America* or some other equivalent clause, and in which the name of colonies should not appear. The same can be substituted in the other articles that refer to the overseas possessions (...) It would also be advisable that this article would be added to the title 10 of the Statute: *The name of colonies is abolished. The possessions of Spain in America and Asia will be titled Spanish-American provinces or provinces of Spain in America, etcetera.*]

Milá de la Roca and Herrera succeeded in having the term replaced in the definitive text by ‘*reinos*’ (kingdoms) and ‘*provincias*’ (provinces) for America and Asia (the final text overlooked Africa), but not in eradicating its use, a move which would have entailed enforcing a prohibition.<sup>22</sup>

This episode suggests, nonetheless, that the word *colonias* with a subaltern meaning must have been creeping into Spanish American parlance for a while. From the discussions in Bayonne, it seems that this was particularly the case among insurgents with an established base abroad, particularly in the British Isles. The legitimate Spanish authorities seem to have shared this view at the time – hence the refuting decree issued by the *Junta Central* in 1809. Yet the word does not appear to have been circulating invariably in those circles with a detrimental sense, but merely as synonym for ‘provinces’ and at times even ‘country’ more akin to the

original Roman meaning of the word. For example, in the will that Francisco de Miranda wrote before embarking on the first of his military interventions in the Americas (1 August 1805), he said:

(...) Dexo asi mismo en la ciudad de Londres en Inglaterra mis Papeles, Correspondencias Oficiales con ministros y Generales de Francia en tiempo que comandé los Exercitos de dha Republica; y tambien varios Mss. que contienen mis Viajes é investigaciones en la America, Europa, Asia, y Africa con objeto de buscar la mejor forma y Plan de Gobierno para establecimiento de una Sabia y juiciosa Libertad civil en las Colonias H-Americanas; que son a mi juicio los Países mas bien situados, y los Pueblos mas aptos para ello, de quantos yo tengo conocidos (...)<sup>23</sup>

[...] I also leave in the city of London in England my Papers, Official Correspondence with Ministers and Generals from France at the time I commanded the Armies of that Republic; and also several Manuscripts which contain my Travels and research in the America, Europe, Asia, and Africa with a view to look for the best form and Plan of Government for the establishment of a Wise and judicious civil Liberty in the Hispanic-American Colonies; which are, in my opinion, the most well-located Countries, and the most suitable Peoples for this purpose, among all of those I have known (...)]

By the time Miranda was penning his will in London, references to the 'Spanish colonies' with its modern, negatively infused sense had become increasingly common in the media printed in the British Isles. This may seem unsurprising amid the prevailing spirit of the Spanish 'black legend',<sup>24</sup> but a contextualized search of the phrase 'Spanish colonies' conducted in the British Newspaper Archive database of the British Library starting on 1 January 1776 and ending on 31 December 1824,<sup>25</sup> produced none for the period 1776–96, two instances in 1797 (but these are doubtful because echoed news reported by the French press which already carried the term 'colony'), again none in the years 1798, 1799 and 1800; eight in 1801 (including probably the first by an English correspondent published by the *Morning Post* stating that Republicans in Haiti were being fitted in the 'Spanish colonies');<sup>26</sup> nine in 1802 and none in 1803. The first big increase, with 23 instances, was registered in 1804, the year when Spain declared war against the United Kingdom following the Cape Santa Maria incident which led to the loss of four Spanish frigates carrying a New World treasure. From then on, that level was not only sustained but also at times increased dramatically: 27 mentions in 1805 (the year of Miranda's will); 52 in 1806 and 44 in 1807 (years of the British invasions of Buenos Aires and Montevideo); 169 in 1808 (particularly after Napoleon's Iberian invasion); 79 in 1809 (half the previous figure, perhaps due to British war involvement in the peninsula); 154 in 1810 (mainly reporting

on American insurgency) and 122 in 1811. Two big drops were recorded when the British war front extended to the North of America: 87 mentions in 1812 and just 22 in 1813. But numbers increased again to 42 in 1814 and 75 in 1815 when the Napoleonic wars were brought to an end. After a small drop to 72 hits in 1816, the period 1817–25 produced a total of 1,368 instances. The lowest figure was registered in 1821 (24 instances, largely as attention shifted towards events under the Liberal Triennium in Spain). The high numbers of 1817 (185, a difficult period for Spanish America revolutionaries) more than doubled in 1824 (358 instances) when the Battle of Ayacucho secured the independence of Spanish South America to fall only slightly in 1825 (214) at the time that Britain recognized the independent governments of Buenos Aires, Mexico and Colombia. We should make it clear that these figures are meant to provide only an impressionistic view of the situation. British newspapers were often subject to influence from private interests, directly and indirectly. We know that *The Morning Chronicle* and, to a lesser extent, *The Times* were involved in operations of propaganda in favour of South American emancipation through hack journalists who received ‘gratuities’ from various Spanish American agents.<sup>27</sup> A notable example was that of William Walton (1783/4–1857), author of *The Present State of the Spanish Colonies* published in 1810. Little is known about his origins, excluding that he was the son of the honorary consul for Spain in Liverpool, a city that as the main British gateway towards Ireland had already a good amount of Irish living in its midst.<sup>28</sup>

In the particular case of Ireland, however, attention to economic and political processes in non-metropolitan spaces carried added significance. By the second half of the eighteenth century, the issue surrounding the status of Ireland and the Irish within the British imperial system already had a long and contentious history. For one thing, the issue had gained particular currency amid the debates on liberty and empire which followed the publication of Locke’s *Two Treatises* in 1689. Views such as those of the Bristolian John Cary, who in his influential *Essay on the State of England* (1695) had argued that Ireland ought to be reduced ‘to the terms of a Colony, equal with our own settlements abroad’, were confronted by Irish Protestants who, as Sean Connolly noted, ‘indignantly rejected the suggestion that they lived in a colony’.<sup>29</sup> One of the clearest enunciations of this is William Molyneux’s *The Case of Ireland’s Being Bound by Acts of Parliament in England, Stated* (1698). For this close friend of Locke, the issue was above all of a legal nature: in his view, there had been no conquest of Ireland to begin with, but a free acceptance of Henry II’s authority by most of the Irish elite; thus Ireland was unquestionably a kingdom of its own, bound by direct compact to the English king.<sup>30</sup> The resurgence over the past decades of academic interest in Irish attitudes to colonialism and empire has brought the question ‘*Was Ireland a colony?*’ back into focus.<sup>31</sup> For some of the major critics of the



insistence on the kingdom or colony conundrum, the question has been afforded a somewhat superficial and unmerited centrality in the debate.<sup>32</sup> Stephen Howe, for instance, has spoken of a 'gross oversimplification [...], compounded by a general failure of historians both of Ireland and of the British Empire to think comparatively, theoretically or even definitionally about the very term 'colony''.<sup>33</sup>

This 'failure' is all the more remarkable considering that from the outbreak of the revolution in the British colonies in North America, the Spanish American context became increasingly present in the imagination of political commentators in Ireland. The colonial rebellion in North America generated a revival of Irish patriotism and ignited interest in other monarchies that were understood to have territories in a similar predicament, even if the relationship was constitutionally different. This is not to say that Irish public opinion necessarily equated the circumstances in British North America to those of Ireland.<sup>34</sup> The situation of Spanish America was brought into discussions of Irish affairs during the patriotic upheaval of the late 1770s and throughout the 1780s in a number of forms, particularly in the wake of the granting of legislative independence to Ireland in 1782, one of the ripple effects of the colonial crisis in North America. In recognizing that only the king, lords and commons of Ireland had the right to make laws binding on the island, the British government had seemingly vindicated anti-unionist discourse. Yet this constitutional reform was not without opposition. In a short pamphlet entitled *The utility of an union between Great Britain and Ireland, considered* (Dublin, 1787), its author – 'a friend to both countries' – referred precisely to the case of the 'Spanish colonies in South America', to conclude that the government by a viceroy was not best adapted to Ireland because it always entailed 'a perpetual source of smothered discontent', which, just as in the Hispanic New World, could from time to time break out in insurrection.<sup>35</sup>

According to the author of this pamphlet, the so-called Spanish colonies in South America 'were daily revolting', in reference no doubt to the revolt of the Comuneros in New Granada (1781) and to Túpac Amaru's rebellion in Peru (1780–82), both of which received considerable attention in the Irish press of the time. But it was not solely in the form of a warning that the struggle of native populations in Spanish America found its way into Irish debates during these years. In the summer of 1779, for instance, a series of influential letters contesting British claims to rule Ireland had been published in Dublin's *Freeman's Journal* under the pseudonym of 'Guatimozin', the Hispanicized name of Cuauhtémoc, the last emperor of the Aztecs. An excerpt on the first page of the collection of these letters reveals that their author Frederick Jebb had obtained the name of Guatimozin from the Scottish William Robertson's *History of America*, which had appeared only two years before and repeatedly mentioned the 'Spanish colonies' when referring to South America.<sup>36</sup> Other authors followed



suit, including Dr William Drennan, later to become one of the founders of the Society of United Irishmen in Belfast, who in 1785 advocated unity amongst the Irish of all confessions in his *Letters of Orellana, an Irish Helot, to the seven northern counties not represented in the National Assembly of Delegates, held at Dublin, 1784, for obtaining a more equal representation of the people in the Parliament of Ireland*.<sup>37</sup>

The gradual definition of the American territories of the Spanish Monarchy as colonies coincided with the revitalization of anti-Spanish tropes and of pejorative representations of three centuries of Spanish rule in the Americas. It is not by coincidence that the Irish playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *Pizarro* – an adaptation of August von Kotzebue's *Die Spanier in Peru, oder: Rolla's Tod* (1796) – premiered in 1799 became 'the most popular play of the 1790s in London and the second most popular play of the entire eighteenth century'.<sup>38</sup> Other factor at play was the definitive radicalization of Irish politics in the aftermath of the French Revolution in the 1790s, as represented by the founding of the Society of United Irishmen, its demand for the extension of full political rights to Catholics and Dissenters and the sum of events finally leading to the failed Irish rebellion of 1798.

These developments led some Irishmen to bring forward a geopolitical understanding of the Atlantic world which connected the futures of Ireland and Spanish America. In 1801, James Workman, a barrister from Co. Cavan who had recently migrated to the United States, reissued in Virginia some proposals he had originally presented to the British authorities between 1795 and 1797, including his *Memorial, proposing a plan, for the conquest and emancipation of Spanish America; by means, which would contribute to the tranquillity of Ireland*.<sup>39</sup> Workman's project signalled the occupation of what he repeatedly termed the 'Spanish colonies' as a necessary measure to preserve the equilibrium between France and Britain. Confident that ending the rule of the Spanish Monarchy in the Americas would be 'extremely desirable, not only for every description of the inhabitants of the colonies in question, and for the British empire, but in a considerable degree for the whole world', Workman was also sure that nobody could be better suited for "the capture of the Spanish colonies" than the Irish, '[...] brave, hardy, inured to the difficulties and wants attendant on such occasions, and above all, greedy of adventure'.<sup>40</sup>

Workman was a vigorous opponent of the rebels of 1798, and in his writings, he envisioned the birth of a global Anglo-world in which 'whatever may become of sovereignty and imperial dominion, it should be a proud satisfaction to every Briton to establish and immortalize his name, his language, and his race in every part'.<sup>41</sup> Theobald Wolfe Tone, arguably the main representative of the opposite spectrum of Irish politics, had also shared a similar notion of the 'coloniality' of Spanish America while abstaining from throwing any comparisons with the case

of Ireland. Before becoming the leader of the United Irish rebellion of 1798 and a 'martyr' of Irish republicanism, as a young man, he referred constantly to the 'Spanish colonies' in four proposals to establish a military outpost on the Sandwich Islands sent to British officials between 1788 and 1790.<sup>42</sup> This telling coincidence also serves as a useful reminder of the contingency of these processes and the importance of the wider geopolitical stage: at the height of the Nootka Sound crisis, Lord Edward Fitzgerald – the other great Irish revolutionary to die fighting for an independent Ireland at the end of that decade – saw his application for permission to sail from Spanish New Orleans to Havana rejected by authorities in Madrid because '*con las actuales circunstancias no sería conveniente la presencia de un inglés (sic) de este carácter en ningún puerto español*' ['in the present circumstances the presence of an Englishman (sic) of this character would not be convenient in any Spanish port'].<sup>43</sup>

Drafted in the aftermath of the failed Irish rebellion of 1798, the Act of Union of Great Britain and Ireland (1801) led to the reversion of almost all the reforms introduced from the 1780s to relax the restrictions on Catholics and thus inaugurated a new political era in the British Isles, one shaped notably by the effects of the unification of the legislature and the ubiquity of 'the Irish question'. War with France and the arrival in England of Spanish American revolutionaries, such as Francisco de Miranda, made the idea of fitting out a military expedition against the possessions of Spain in the Americas a tangible possibility. News of the capture of Buenos Aires in 1806 by a British fleet that had sailed from the Cape of Good Hope prompted a flurry of new comments about 'the Spanish colonies' in the Irish press. For instance, in October of that year, the *Belfast News-Letter* considered the recent acquisition of Buenos Aires of an 'incontrovertibly obvious' importance precisely because 'our colonies in the West Indies' were endangered. A letter to the editor on the very same day, signed 'Anson' – in reference no doubt to the Lord who had designed the successful expedition against Havana in 1762 – openly suggested the foundation of British 'colonies' which in time would become 'the bulwarks and pride of the mother country'. Confident of the sure triumph of the British naval force in the River Plate, the editorial spoke with unreserved anticipation of 'the resources to be derived from the population, the industry, the productions, and the territorial consequences of those widely extending colonies'.<sup>44</sup>

This kind of analysis, which saw the New World quickly and inevitably falling out of the grasp of the Spanish crown, became increasingly common in the Irish newspapers following the transatlantic crisis of the Spanish Monarchy unleashed by Napoleon's kidnapping of the Bourbons in the spring of 1808. An editorial in the *Dublin Freeman's Journal* in November 1809 openly endorsed the idea of permitting a French takeover of the Bourbon monarchy, if this was to accelerate the independence of 'the Spanish colonies'.<sup>45</sup> When reports from the Peninsula suggested

two years later that the British cabinet was attempting to mediate in the transoceanic conflict of the Hispanic Atlantic, an article in the *Freeman's Journal* devoted exclusively to 'Spanish South America' elaborated on its colonial status:

If the settlements that have declared themselves independent of Old Spain refuse to accept our mediation, are we in any condition to enforce it, even provided we had any right so to do? Colonies are something in their constitution like private families. So long as the infant colony cannot exist with the protection of the parent state, the parent state has a right to its allegiance, because protection and allegiance go hand in hand; but when protection ceases to be necessary in consequence of the increased strength of a colony, then the parent state should be very cautious how it touched on the question of allegiance, lest its authority to command should only be regarded according to its means of enforcing obedience.<sup>46</sup>

Dublin journalists thought that Britain should not get involved in these internal disputes and instead accept "that whatever may contribute most eminently to the glory and happiness of Spain, or her colonies, will not less contribute to ours".<sup>47</sup> Importantly, not even the proposed mediation, which openly addressed issues such as the relationship between metropolis and other territories and ways to reconcile various parts of a composite monarchy led to comparisons with Ireland.

During the same period, the term managed to embed itself in an important piece of work: the first English translation of the Constitution of Cadiz. The translator signing under the mysterious pseudonym of *Philos Hispaniae* was not a scholar or a linguist but a professional soldier originally trained by the Royal Navy who had joined the Spanish forces as a volunteer during the Peninsular war. The story of this translation has been published elsewhere,<sup>48</sup> let's just say here that significant mismatches were made in some key terms – e.g. 'dominions' and 'overseas territories' – in order to make them familiar to English notions of imperial governance and that these inaccuracies which included the use of the term 'colonies' were carried along and manipulated by later authors including Karl Marx who as a reader of the British Library used this translation to build his own analysis of revolutions in the Hispanic world that he published in the *New York Tribune* in 1854. The centrality of the British Isles seems in the case evident because Marx relied on a British translation of the Constitution of Cadiz accessed at the British Library to produce his interpretation of politics in the Hispanic world. Marx was neither born in the British Isles nor in the Hispanic world, yet perhaps unwittingly at some stage he did operate within the Hispanic-Anglosphere and produce work of relevance for the Hispanic-Anglosphere and beyond.

Interestingly, the understanding of the Hispanic New World as a collection of Spanish colonies even crept into the discourse of Irish individuals who offered their services to the Spanish crown during the independence period to try to counteract the propaganda being distributed in the British Isles in favour of the insurgents. In May 1819, for example, the Spanish ambassador in London wrote to Madrid to inform his superiors that in view of the "scandalous levies" being conducted in Ireland, he had resolved to accept the offering of Dr Collins, an Irish priest and respected figure in the Catholic community in London to write a letter to the bishops of Ireland asking them to discourage their parishioners from joining these expeditions. The letter exhorted the Irish prelates to remind their flock about the historical affinities between the peoples of Ireland and Spain, which made fighting for the insurgents in 'the colonies' completely unjustifiable to the eyes of men and God alike.<sup>49</sup>

Another Irishman willing to lend his pen to the cause of His Catholic Majesty and to the principle of legitimacy which had guided the Congress of Vienna was George Dawson Flinter. In 1815, he joined a British delegation to Caracas where he acted, according to his own words, 'as interpreter to the embassy, and translated into Spanish the letters and documents of the British admiral'.<sup>50</sup> The case of Flinter is somewhat different because he spoke Spanish, had lived in Caracas and was related by marriage to the creole elite of the city. His reading of the Spanish American situation was conditioned in good measure by his own family history of loyalism in Ireland: his father, a lieutenant in the British army, had died fighting the Irish revolutionaries at the Battle of New Ross on 5 June 1798.<sup>51</sup> Driven by a combination of circumstances and experiences that took him to Cadiz where he settled as a merchant, Flinter decided to offer his services to the Spanish crown as a propagandist in the United Kingdom to which he returned in 1818. Consequently, a year later, he authored two pamphlets aimed at discouraging his fellow countrymen from joining the expeditions composed mainly by the Irish Legion which was then being recruited. Noticeably, in his attempts to discredit the revolutionaries in Venezuela before the court of public opinion, Flinter also referred constantly to those territories as 'the Spanish colonies':

If we take a retrospective glance at the situation of the Spanish colonies, previous to the revolution, and draw a parallel between them and the colonies of other European nations, we shall find that the people of the former were infinitely more happily situated in every respect; they might have laboured under some trifling restrictions in their trade, from the prohibitory laws of the mother country; but what colony is there that is not placed under some restrictions? What country does not dictate law to her colonies? The Spanish colonies did not groan under that miserable state of mendicity which characterizes the lower orders in the French and Dutch colonies.<sup>52</sup>

## Conclusion

In this chapter we set ourselves the task of tracing how and how far the word ‘colonies’ managed to root itself into a global Hispanic context. The evidence provided suggests that it did it in an effective, enduring and widespread way and on the whole with a modern, negatively infused meaning forged in the Hispanic-Anglosphere during the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries. Having said that, it seems important to acknowledge that, regardless of the increasingly strong circulation of the word in the public sphere, the term was never incorporated into the legal lexicon of the Spanish Monarchy. None of its constitutions (those of 1812, 1837, 1845, 1876) as indeed that of the Spanish Nation of 1869 referred to the overseas territories – including those that had been lost – as *colonias*. Why could this be the case? We have seen that in the early 1800s, the term was strongly resisted by those Americans who wanted to preserve the integrity of the Spanish Monarchy model of global governance, perhaps because this model conferred them a degree of participation and, indeed, of representation that was non-existent in the British model at the time. We have to remember that 75 Spanish American and Asian deputies participated in the *Cortes* of Cadiz while there was never any formal representation of the American and Asian colonies in the British Parliament. But the issue of representation may not be the sole factor at play. After all, the word was not used in the constitution of 1837 which excluded the Cuban, Puerto Rican and Philippine deputies from the *Cortes* in Madrid and also did not appear in the text of 1869 which intended to bring back the American, but not the Asian representatives to the national parliament.<sup>53</sup> Neither the term entered into the legal lexicon of the newly independent Spanish American republics to refer to overseas territories, although it certainly did within the context of state-driven policies of massive migration and colonization introduced towards the end of the nineteenth century. For example, the Argentine *Ley de Inmigración y Colonización* of 1876 (also known as Avellaneda Law) enshrined the notion of ‘*colonias nacionales*’ (national colonies) of migrants, although it could be argued that the term was used more in the original Roman sense of being just new human settlements, in this case for the purpose of rural development as indeed was also the case for the establishment of a Spanish ‘*colonia agrícola manufacturera*’ in the African island of Fernando Poo in 1885.<sup>54</sup>

The role of the British Isles as a key hub for the global Hispanic world during the nineteenth century offers a plausible explanation for the comparatively far more successful rooting of the term in the public realm. Certain Irish agitators played a role in forging its modern, negatively infused meaning, but the concept was spread through the Hispanic-Anglosphere by a variety of other actors, including Anglophone individuals in intermediary roles such as translators and journalists, the latter through an increasingly powerful British media with a global reach that

extended beyond the confines of the British Empire. Irish political commentators looked to Spanish America increasingly from the last quarter of the eighteenth century. While doing so, however, they were generally reluctant to establish direct and explicit comparisons between the situations of Ireland and Spanish America in their respective monarchies. If anything, it was during the 1810s and early 1820s, precisely when the participation of thousands of Irish mercenaries and volunteers in the Spanish American wars of independence made events in that continent more current for readers in Dublin, Belfast or Cork, that writers in Ireland seemed less prone to any kind of colonial analogies. This resistance may be associated not only with the persistence even among Irish Catholics of particularly negative views of Spain but also with the history of Irish patriotism and the recent effects of the passing of the Act of Union. With the 'colonial pact' superseded, and the revolutionaries of 1798 defeated, banished or in exile, there was little space for polemics of this kind.<sup>55</sup> By 1819, even public events honouring the Irish Legion going out to serve Bolívar in Venezuela and Colombia had become occasions to proclaim the belonging of the Irish to the political body of the British empire: 'As men, our best feelings; as freemen, our best principles; and as citizens of this empire, our best and nearest interests are deeply involved with South America, in her struggle, and for her independence [...]'.<sup>56</sup>

The persistent referencing of the Spanish territories in the Americas as 'colonies' also prefigured a conceptualization of the continent as a market of importance for the British Isles and prepared the public for the possible emergence of British settler colonialism in South America. Some earlier observers, such as James Workman, had actually considered 'the capture of the Spanish colonies' as a necessary step in the establishment of 'a chain of British posts round the world, each of them supporting, and supported by, the adjacent ones. Canada, Louisiana, the Floridas, Surinam, and the West India islands, would form one connected chain of colonies, and thence almost round again to Chile, by La Plata, the Cape of Good Hope, Madagascar, Ceylon, the Oriental islands, and the settlements in New Holland'.<sup>57</sup>

Flinter's application of the term 'colonies' to all European overseas territories provides a useful example of the reductionist and homogenizing approach to foreign global polities that was prevalent at the time in the British Isles. Crucially, considering his activities as an interpreter in Spanish America, his intervention also gives us an early insight into the globalizing power of the English language to insert itself into other tongues through translations that displace the original, a topic that is currently under much discussion among linguists who are looking into notions of transculturation and language imperialism.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, it could be argued that the incorporation of the term 'colonies' into reformist texts in Spanish from the mid-eighteenth century onwards had as much to do with the exposition of their authors to works originally



published in other languages – mostly French and English – as with their contact with those ‘colonial’ territories. As Jesús Astigarraga has noted, for example, Spain ‘was rather an importer than an exporter of economic ideas’ during the period.<sup>59</sup> It has been also asserted that the concept of ‘Spanish empire’ was introduced in the 1960s by the British historian J.H. Parry and quickly adopted by scholars in Latin America keen to suggest that Spaniards in the sixteenth century exercised an ‘informal governance’ comparable to that arguably played by the British in eighteenth century India.<sup>60</sup> The adoption of the term *colonias* into the Spanish language cannot be explored in isolation. The impact of foreign works and networks of information and translations played a decisive role. Even original works, such as the anonymous *Reflexiones sobre el comercio de España con sus colonias en America, en tiempo de guerra* (1789) authored by ‘a Spaniard’ and printed in Philadelphia on the presses of an Irish exile, must be understood in a profoundly far-reaching context mediated by the geopolitics of international war and competition.<sup>61</sup>

Can we find also here any dynamic of mutual influences at play? Did British involvement with the Hispanic world ever result in questioning the effectiveness of the term ‘colonies’ or did it bring Spanish notions of ‘overseas territories or provinces’ into English usage? More research is needed in this area. Instances of this kind of transformative entanglement may have happened in the public, but certainly not in the legal sphere until well into the twentieth century. The term ‘colony’ still appeared in British legislation as late as in 1992 when the Extradition Act 1989 applicable to the Commonwealth and also negotiated with Ireland was extended to the British Antarctic Territory with the statutory instrument entitled ‘The Extradition (British Antarctic Territory) (Commonwealth Countries, Colonies and Republic of Ireland)’,<sup>62</sup> By then, however, a distinct concept had already been selected to replace ‘colonies’. It was not ‘overseas territories’ – as it is currently used by the media – but, curiously, ‘dependent territories’. The first piece of legislation using that term was ‘The Copyright (Status of Former Dependent Territories) Order of 1990’ which specified norms for design and patents of certain former territories of the United Kingdom.<sup>63</sup>

## Notes

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- 2 Alex Barker, “Gibraltar to be designated ‘Crown Colony’ in EU Law for No-Deal Brexit: Anger in London at ‘Completely Inappropriate’ Language in Proposed Legislation,” *The Financial Times*, 31 January 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/ab72fb3a-2578-11e9-b329-c7e6ceb5ffdf>.



- 3 'América. Representación en la Junta de los Territorios de América,' *Archivo Histórico Nacional* (AHN), Estado, 54, D.
- 4 Ricardo Levene, *Las Indias No Eran Colonias* (3rd edition, Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1973), especially 153–6.
- 5 Annick Lempérière, 'El paradigma colonial en la historiografía latinoamericana,' *Istor: Revista de Historia Internacional* 5, no. 19 (2004): 107–28, at 114.
- 6 Nicholas P. Canny, *Kingdom and Colony: Ireland in the Atlantic World 1560–1800* (Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 33; John H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 467–8.
- 7 Stephen Conway, 'From Fellow-Nationals to Foreigners: British Perceptions of the Americans, circa 1739–1783,' *The William and Mary Quarterly* 59, no. 1 (2002): 65–100; Jack P. Greene, 'Independence and Dependence: The Psychology of the Colonial Relationship on the Eve of the American Revolution,' in *Imperatives, Behaviors, and Identities: Essays in Early American Cultural History*, ed. Jack P. Greene (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992), 174–80.
- 8 Search conducted in *Portal de Archivos Españoles* (PARES) on 7 September 2018, <http://pares.mcu.es>. To gain an idea of the extent of the records available, the *Archivo General de Indias* added to PARES just in one year 61.824 new digitalised records, see 'Incorporación a PARES de nuevas imágenes del Archivo General de Indias' available at <http://www.culturaydeporte.gob.es/cultura/areas/archivos/mc/archivos/agi/destacados/incorporacion-pares.html>. For references to the 'colonies of North America' in Spanish manuscripts, see for example 'Sobre cómo han de pasar 2 comisionados a las colonias del Norte de América,' AHN, Diversos-Colecciones, 44, N.77.
- 9 Francisco A. Ortega, 'The Conceptual History of Independence and the Colonial Question in Spanish America,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 79, no. 1 (January 2018): 98.
- 10 A search made on 7 September 2018 in PARES of the terms 'provincias' and 'dominios' produced such a high number of hits that the system was unable to process them all; nonetheless, 933 of the former and 191 of the latter could be sieved just among pieces digitalised by the *Archivo General de Indias*.
- 11 'Consulta hecha a su Magestad en Junta formada de su Real Orden por el Marqués de Llanos, D. Francisco Craywinkel, D. Simón de Aragorri, D. Tomás Ortiz de Landázuri y D. Pedro Gossens sobre el comercio interior y exterior de España con sus colonias de América y sus provincias,' cited in Jesús Astigarraga, 'Las *Reflexiones* (1761) de Simón de Aragorri y la reforma del comercio atlántico español,' *Revista de Indias* 73, no. 259 (2013): 759–88, at 760.
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- eligirlos' (1809). For a full transcription and detailed discussion of this document, see José María Portillo Valdés, 'Imaginación y representación de la nación española (El debate sobre la naturaleza de la representación nacional y la tentativa de Francisco Xavier Uriortua),' *Anuario de historia del derecho español* 65 (1995): 267–320.
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- 15 Philippe Castejón, "Colonia' y 'metrópoli', la génesis de unos conceptos históricos fundamentales (1760–1808)," *Illes i Imperis* 18 (2016): 170. Castejón refers to this term as used in this sense by the viceroy of New Granada, Caballero y Góngora, the *intendentes* of Venezuela, Ábalos and Saavedra, the *visitadores generales*, Areche, Escobedo and Gutiérrez de Piñeres and the regent of Mexico, Herrera. Another instance can be found in a letter the viceroy of New Spain, Miguel de Azanza, sent to Francisco de Saavedra on 26 November 1798, in *Archivo General de Indias* (Seville), Indiferente General, 2.466, cited in Javier Ortiz de la Tabla Ducasse, *Comercio exterior de Veracruz, 1778–1821: crisis de dependencia* (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-americanos, 1978), 290. Barbara and Stanley Stein offer a further example of the term being employed in this sense by the secretary of the *consulado* of Veracruz in 1802 in Barbara H. Stein and Stanley J. Stein, *Edge of Empire: Crisis, War and Trade in the Spanish Atlantic, 1789–1808* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins Press, 2009), 504.
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- 17 'Informe y Plan de Intendencias para el reino de Nueva España presentado por el Visitador D. José de Gálvez y el Virrey Marqués de Croix, y recomendado por el Obispo de Puebla y el Arzobispo de México,' reprinted in Luis Navarro García, *Intendencias en Indias* (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1959), 173; *Instrucción reservada que el Conde de Revillagigedo dio a su sucesor en el mando Marqués de Branciforte sobre el gobierno de este continente en el tiempo que fue su Virrey* (Mexico City: Agustín Guiol, 1831), 90–1. These two sources cited by Francisco A. Ortega, "A Brief Conceptual History of "Colonia," in *The First Wave of Decolonization*, ed. Mark Thurner (Taylor & Francis, 2019), 21 notes 20 and 28. For a discussion of the context of these remarks, see Fidel J. Tavárez, 'Colonial Economic Improvement: How Spain Created New *Consulados* to Preserve and Develop Its American Empire, 1778–1795,' *Hispanic American Historical Review* 98, no. 4 (2018): 605–34. See also Light Townsend Cummins, 'The Gálvez Family and Spanish Participation in the Independence of the United States of America,' *Revista Complutense de Historia de América* 32 (2006): 179–96.
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- 19 *Actas de la Diputación General de Españoles que se juntó en Bayona el 15 de Junio de 1808, en virtud de convocatoria por el Gran Duque de Berg, como Lugar-Teniente General del Reino y la Junta Suprema de Gobierno, con fecha 19 de Mayo del mismo año* (Madrid: Imprenta y Fundición de J.A. García, reprinted 1874), 57–8.
- 20 Milá de la Roca was neither 'rioplatense' nor was ever appointed deputy for Buenos Aires as some authors have claimed, see Itamar Olivares, "José Ramón Milá de la Roca, un 'afrancesado' du Río de la Plata," *Caravelle. Cahiers du monde hispanique et luso-brésilien* 51 (1988): 5–21; Caracciolo Parra-Perez, *Bayona y la Política de Napoleón en América* (Caracas: Tipografía Americana, 1939), 74–96; Maximiliano Camarda, 'De comerciante exitoso a hacendado y revolucionario. La estrategia económica de fines del siglo XVIII en el complejo portuario rioplatense a partir de un actor: José Ramón Milá de la Roca,' *Naveg@merica. Revista electrónica editada por la Asociación Española de Americanistas* 12 (2014), <http://revistas.um.es/navegamerica/article/view/195421>, accessed 5 October 2018. For a general appraisal of the Bayonne text, see Antonio-Filiu Franco Pérez, "La 'Cuestión Americana' y la Constitución de Bayona (1808)," *Historia constitucional: Revista Electrónica de Historia Constitucional* 9 (2008): 110–26, available at <http://hc.rediris.es/09/index.html>.
- 21 *Actas de la Diputación*, 114.
- 22 *Actas de la Diputación*, 124. Africa was only mentioned in the message that opened the publication of an Extract of the Minutes which stated (translated here into English): 'We guarantee to the King of the Spains the independence and integrity of his States, including those of Europe, Africa, Asia and America,' see in *Sesion Primera de la Junta Española, Bayona 15 de junio de 1808, etc.*
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- 24 On the 'black legend,' see Ruth MacKay, "*Lazy, Improvident People*": *Myth and Reality in the Writing of Spanish History* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2006).
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- 35 *The Utility of an Union between Great Britain and Ireland, Considered* (Dublin: Printed by P. Byrne, 1787), 7–8.
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- 61 [A Spaniard in Philadelphia], *Reflexiones sobre el comercio de España con sus colonias en America, en tiempo de guerra* (Philadelphia, PA: Imprenta de Jaime Carey, 1789). The work has been attributed to the diplomats Valentín de Foronda and the Marquis de Casa Irujo, amongst others, see Raúl Coronado, *A World Not to Come. A History of Latino Writing and Print Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 125–9. Another relevant title published in Spanish in Philadelphia, although probably penned in Spain, is Valentín de Foronda's *Carta sobre lo que debe hacer un príncipe que tenga colonias a gran distancia* (Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society, 1803).
- 62 'The Extradition (British Antarctic Territory) (Commonwealth Countries, Colonies and Republic of Ireland) Order 1992,' *UK Statutory Instruments 1992 No. 1300*, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1992/1300/contents/made>.
- 63 'The Copyright (Status of Former Dependent Territories) Order 1990 – Explanatory Note,' *UK Statutory Instruments 1990 No. 1512*, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1990/1512/note/made>.