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## Independence in Latin America: Contrasts and Comparisons, 3rd Edition

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*Independence in Latin America: Contrasts and Comparisons*, Third Edition by Richard Graham. University of Texas Press, Austin. 2013. Contents: Illustrations. Acknowledgments. Introduction. Chapters 1-6. Documents. Chronology. Glossary. Notes. Illustration Credits. Index. Maps. Figures. Pg. 194. Paperback. \$24.94.

The bicentennial celebrations of Latin American independences have given a new impulse to the study of the emancipation processes of the American nations that were once part of the Spanish and Portuguese empires. These revitalized enthusiasm, backed with institutional support and with a clear national underpinning, has sparked national studies as well new approaches that examine Latin American independences as a whole within an Atlantic and hemispheric revolutionary context. Therefore, this new third edition of Richard Graham's classic *Independence in Latin America* (first edition 1972, second edition 1994) is greatly welcome. Graham's book analyzes the socio-economic and ideological intricacies that led to the emancipation movements in Latin America from a comparative and Atlantic perspective. Graham has again updated his textbook with new research, including the role played by non-elites and the effects of war and violence on Latin Americans. The addition of an appendix with primary sources to this edition makes the book more complete for undergraduate use. The book stands out for its concision and clarity of exposition, sharp analysis, and judicious selection of primary sources.

The book, like its two previous editions, follows a chronological organization in six chapters. After a succinct introduction the first three chapters overview the American and Iberian preludes to the wars for independence. Chapter one sets the historical context on the decades prior to independence, with a focus on the enlightened restructuring of the Spanish and Portuguese empires and the precedent set by the Haitian revolution. Chapter two outlines Latin American reactions to changes emanating from Lisbon and Madrid in the late eighteenth century.

Through comparative analysis among regions, Graham explains how two colonial empires eventually gave birth to multiple nations. Graham intriguingly contrasts Argentina and Uruguay to Chile, Venezuela to Mexico and Central America, and Peru to Brazil. The next chapter transfers the reader to European affairs and their influence on the Latin American revolutions. This chapter focuses on the institutional crisis on both sides of the Atlantic after the French invasion of the Iberian Peninsula.

Like in previous editions, Graham breaks the war events chronologically in two distinct wars around 1816, comprising each one chapter 5 and 6. The level of detail varies for each country, Mexico and Brazil standing out for lengthier discussions. While identity self-consciousness appeared more visible during the first war (1810-1816), Spanish violence and repression and Portuguese insensitivity widened the divides between Iberia and the colonies. Each of these two chapters concludes with an interesting comparative analysis of the distinct emancipation movements with a focus on socioeconomic aspects, ideological reforms, and leadership. The last chapter uncorks the consequences of the wars to the different social actors. Particularly interesting to U.S. readers, who commonly wonder why Latin American nations and the United States took different paths, Graham analyzes how extreme violence, geographical difficulties, the particular cultural realities, local vs. national leaderships, and economic dependency brought a swinging beginning to the new republics.

A novelty in this edition, Graham's book includes an appendix with eight documents that range from *laissez faire* doctrines, racial divisions, excerpts from Bolívar's famous letter from Jamaica to Mexican Vicente Guerrero's view on Mexican independence. The sources do not stand alone. Graham judiciously refers to them throughout the text. The third edition further appends a list of five recent scholarly works. To help students and readers in general, the book

includes a Spanish-English term glossary and a detailed chronology. *Independence in Latin America* remains an outstanding undergraduate textbook as well as a useful introductory work to the lay reader. This is therefore a welcome updated third edition of an already popular book that comes at an opportune time.

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