*Ibero-Americana*Nordic Journal of Latin American Studies
Vol. XVII :1-2, 1987, pp 27-43

THE COLONIAL CRISIS IN MEXICO AND PERU: METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF COMPARISON*

*MAGNUS MÖRNER***

In historiography, the crisis of the Spanish overseas Empire and the process of Spanish American State formation have been the object of innumerable books and studies, mostly of a traditional, purely political-military type. During recent decades, fortunately, students have also increasingly turned their attention to the economic, social and cultural aspects of the giant, twin processes. Apart from the traditional type of essayist historians, there are today a considerable number of professional historians in the various Latin American countries, who like their Latin Americanist colleagues in Europe and the United States, are quite specialized in geographical, chronological and thematical terms. Certain specialization is per se a prerequisite for serious research.

* Based on a paper presented at the International Symposium on "El sistema colonial en Mesoamérica y los Andes" in Lima, June, 1986.

** Professor of History at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

doi:https://doi.org/10.16993/ibero.346

At the same time, however, it tends to make it more difficult to arrive at new syntheses and generalizations, based on research in more than one specialized field. As early as 1960, English historians Dietrich Gerhard and Sylvia L. Thrupp recommended the path to follow:

> Comparative study may wellprove to be the best counterforce we can oppose to the danger of the fragmentation of historical knowledge through overspecialization.[1]

In June 1986, The Commission of Economic History of the Latin American Council for Social Sciences (CLACSO), under its Coordinator General Dr. Heraclio Bonilla, arranged a meeting in Lima dedicated to the comparative study of the viceroyalties of New Spain (Mexico) and Peru in the course of almost three centuries of colonial rule and its ensuing collapse. This was a most praiseworthy and pathfinding attempt. Still the basic methodological problem remains to be faced. How may we overcome our unavoidable limitations as specialized scholars of one viceroylty or the other to do justice to both when attempting comparative approaches? This problem becomes especially difficult as far as the colonial collapse is concerned. Like the Conquest but unlike the long period of colonial rule,the comparative analysis of the breakdown of the Spanish overseas empire must bring into account a great deal of action by great figures and/or masses and a long series of consequential events in addition to structures. How should the powerful but slow impact of structural change be discerned from the apparently arbitrary impact of events? I cannot pretend to give an exhaustive or definite answer to this most difficult question but I shall try to present some relevant points of view.

Let us compare the two viceroyalties of Mexico and Peru on the most elementary and superficial level. Immediately, some common traits will stand out that, at the same time, distinguish them from the other Spanish American territories during the late colonial and Emancipation period. Both formed the main bulwarks against the waves of Independence movements, even though the Spanish Antilles would remain linked to Spain for another eight decades. Peru as well as Mexico had for historical reasons an especially strong relationship with the mother country. In both viceroyalties, Peninsular Spaniards occupied a particularly outstanding position within the respective elites. In both viceroyalties, the coreland was formed by mountainous highlands and in both cases, silver mining was the main export product. In the highlands of both viceroyalties, there were massive populations of sedentary Indians, the descendants of the Incas and Aztecs, respectively. They were the survivors of the great Old World plagues that had scored so many victims ever since the sixteenth century.[2]

Moreover, in both viceroyalties massive uprisings of these Indians had the momentuous importance of scaring the Criollos from rising against the Crown. If they did

so, most of them long believed, the social control that guaranteed them their lives and goods might be destroyed. Admittedly, the timing of such massive uprisings did not coincide. In Peru, the uprising of Tupac Amaru in Cuzco and Puno and of his fellow rebel leaders in Upper Peru, a dependency of the new Viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata, comprised the period of 1780-1783. Another explosion in Cuzco would occur in 1814 under the leadership of Mateo Pumacahua.[3] In New Spain, as is well known, the great rebellion led by the parish priest Miguel Hidalgo took place during the brief lapse of 1810-1811. In most of the rest of Spanish America, the second great wave of Independence started in 1816 under Bolívar and San Martín. Step by step, one territory after another was liberated by their armies. Mexico and Peru, on the other hand, would remain under firm Loyalist control until 1821. Even though gerilla bands of rebels went on fighting in both viceroyalties, the great majority of their men-at-arms constituted the bulk of the respective armies of the King.

The fact that Mexico as well as Peru remained tied to metropolitan Spain for so long implies that, in their case, what happened in Spain after the return of Ferdinand VII from French captivity in 1814 would be more important for them than for the territories under rebel control. After the King had suppressed the liberal Cádiz Constitution of 1812, in Mexico as well as Peru traditional royal absolutism was completely restored after a brief moment of uncertainty in 1812-1813. This is why the liberal Cádiz revolution in January 1820 came in both viceroyalties as a decisive shock. In both cases, the Criollo elite all of a sudden found national Independence under the auspices of Conservatism more attractive than the continuation of the colonial order under a liberal Spanish regime. In both countries, however, there was a lapse of transition until the new political order had been established in a lasting way. In Mexico, the prolongation of autocrat rule with Agustín de Iturbide as Emperor in 1822-23 also implied the incorporation of Central America. This link was then cut off, however. In Peru, the military triumph of the Patriots over Loyalist forces could only be attained with the help of outside military forces under their two great leaders, first San Martín, then Bolívar. After the departure of the latter in 1826, the Peruvian Criollo elite finally found itself in absolute political control. In Bolivia, the old Upper Peru, the same thing happened after the departure of Bolivar's associate, Marshal José Antonio Sucre, in 1829.

From a methodological point of view, it is clearly a question of two strictly synchronic processes. Also, the two territories form part of the same colonial Empire. Their administrative system, the composition of their population of European origin and their European-derived culture are practically the same. Even their sedentary Indian populations subjugated three centuries earlier, present a number of similar cultural traits. The summary I have just presented focused on *similarities* between them. This is what normally characterizes *distant comparison*. This is to compare units that are

distant in time and/or space. When you do so, similarities present themselves as more striking than the many differences. In this way, distant comparison may prove a stimulus for future research on the phenomena in question. Peru and Mexico, however, would appear to lend themselves to a more ambitious comparative treatment. With this I refer to *close comparison* focusing on *differences* rather than similarities. In this way, close comparison may serve not merely to pinpoint what is common and what is unique with respect to a certain phenomenon. It may also forward causal explanation by testing a hypothesis. Consequently, our first question will be to ascertain whether the two viceroyalties can serve as analytical units for the purpose of close comparison or to what extent they would do so.[4]

A common methodological mistake is the choice of phenomena or subjects as units of comparison despite their great differences in size and complexity. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the two viceroyalties of Peru and New Spain had become very different in size. After the transfer of Upper Peru to the new Viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata in 1776-78, that of Peru was only a quarter of that of New Spain. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Viceroyalty of New Spain, according to the figures of Alexander v. Humboldt, as revised more recently, had a population of six million people. This was five times more than that of the Viceroyalty of Peru, mutilated as it had been. Admittedly, in 1809 the efficient Viceroy Abascal succeeded in recovering for Peru the vast territory of Upper Peru. Its 600,000 inhabitants helped to diminish the gap between the two viceroyalties in this regard somewhat. It is more important to establish demographic dynamics, however, than the population at a given moment.[5]

In Mexico, population seems to have doubled between 1740 and 1810, which is a considerable rate of growth for the time. In the case of Peru, it is more difficult to establish the rate of growth due to the scarcity of reliable data. According to my own calculations for the diocesis of Cuzco, the population there between 1689 and 1786 experienced an annual growth rate of 0.4 percent. For a Mexican region, Michoacán, historian Claude Morin calculated an annual growth rate more than twice as high, that is 1.2 percent for the period, 1760-1810. If we were really able to establish real growth rates using the same method an data of similar reliability, it is quite possible that the differences between Mexico and Peru in this regard would turn out to be significant. In that case, it would influence all other variables on the level of a global comparison, including cultural aspects and that of "mentalité".[6]

Whatever the case, the demographical question is clearly relevant to the comparative study of silver mining, the backbone of the economy of each viceroyalty. In the eighteenth century, New Spain surpassed Peru to become the main producer of that product. Towards the end of that century, minted silver in New Spain reached a total of 24 million pesos, that is a fourfold multiplication since 1706. By comparison, Peru

had a total of 6 million pesos to which 4.5 should be added for Upper Peru, with the old mining center of Potosí. The dynamics of the phenomenon of New Spain stand out clearly. According to historians David Brading and Harry Cross, in their seminal article on silver mining in colonial Mexico and Peru in 1972, the phenomenon had to do with to different factors. The first was the demographic factor I have just mentioned. In the mining districts of New Spain, the labour supply was abundant and there was a free labour market which functioned smoothly. In Peru, and especially Upper Peru, indigenous populations were practically stagnant. Alos, the remainder of the traditional "mita" system of forced Indian labour made it more difficult to secure the labour required. The second factor had to do with the supply of mercury, required for the amalgamation process of extracting silver being used at the time. Mexican silver mining depended on the supply from the mercury mine of Almadén in Spain, Peruvian mining on that of the Central Andean mine of Huancavelica. While the supply from Almadén grew steadily in the late eighteenth century, that from Huancavelica was always problematic, ceasing altogether after 1760.

The two factors underscored by Brading and Cross remain very important.[7] However, to a certain degree recent research tends to diminish the contrast. In the case of the silver production of Lower Peru, John Fisher made clear the high level obtained between 1778 and 1811 with Cerro de Pasco as a centre. And here it was the question of a largely free labour force. On the other hand, according to John Coatsworth, for example, the Mexican silver boom was already undermined prior to 1810. Both quality and productivity were dropping. Once again, fourteen years after the Brading-Cross study, a systematic comparative approach is required to assess the new state of research on silver mining.[8]

In the case of both viceroyalties, silver constituted the main article of export. According to Humboldt, New Spain together with the Captaincy General of Guatemala in the early years of the nineteenth century exported a total of merchandize valued at 31,500 pesos, 71 percent of which was specie. With respect to Peru, to which the Captaincy General of Chile is then added, the total would be worth merely 12,000 pesos, 67 percent of which in specie.[9] Of all colonial merchandize imported into Spain, 36 percent came from New Spain and only 14 from Peru. Logically, almost the same discrepancy could be noted with regard to Spanish exports to the colonies. Veracruz in Mexico received 35 percent of the total between 1782 and 1796; the ports on the Pacific, the principal one of which was Lima, received 22 percent. Arguably, New Spain with a shorter and more comfortable trade route to Spain should have been able to export a larger percentage of its dynamic agriculture than Peru, largely producing the same items. It barely seems to be so, however. According to Jaime F. Rodríguez, out of the exports of New Spain around 1800, 84 percent were mineral products, 15 percent agricultural ones. According to John Fisher, the mineral percen-

tage of Peruvian exports during the period of 1790-94 was almost the same, 85 percent, even though it had dropped from 88 during the previous decade.[10] To summarize: the external trade of the two viceroyalties seems to lend itself well to comparative analysis granted that the same methods and approaches are being used. Yet a number of clearcut differences have to be kept in mind, such as the application of the "free trade" principle to New Spain as late as 1789, that is more than ten years later than in Peru.

In both viceroyalties, the capital city had a predominant position. The city of Mexico, with a total of 113,000 inhabitants in 1793, was without competition the most populous city of the Western hemisphere. With an annual growth rate of 4 percent it seems to have reached as many as 180,000 inhabitants in 1810, that is 3 percent of the total population of the viceroyalty. In the case of Peru, the population of Lima appears to have oscillated between 53,000 and 64,000 people between the mid-eighteenth century and the eighteen-thirties.[11] Whitin the overall Peruvian framework, its demographic share was somewhat larger than that of Mexico City, towards 5 percent, more or less. In Peru, second rank cities followed the capital rather closely. According to the Census of 1795, Arequipa had some 36,000 inhabitants, Cuzco 25,000. In New Spain, on the other hand, in 1793, Puebla's population was less than half that of the capital, that is 57,000. It would almost reach 68,000 in 1803. Guanajuato, centre of the prosperous region of El Bajío, grew from only 32,000 to 71,000 during the seventeen-nineties. In the case of Puebla, it suffered a reduction of its population of the same dimension during this period, as a consequence of the decline of its textile industry in competition with that of Queretaro, better situated in terms of wool supply[12], Guanajuato in 1810, witnessed a sudden demographic collapse as a result of the siege and occupation of the city by Father Hidalgo's rebel forces.

However, the differences we have observed between the urban patterns so far are only gradual and of less importance. They should not overshadow a fundamental difference between the two cases, with lasting consequences. I refer to the fact that the City of the Kings of Lima was a Spanish foundation on the coast, whereas the city of Mexico was the direct descendant of Tenochtitlán, the Aztec capital, situated in the very coreland of the country. The decisions in this regard taken by Cortés and Pizarro, respectively, thus had crucial effects, in fact, immeasurable effects for the future of each of the countries in question. Lima (with its harbour, El Callao) has always played a divisory role in Peru. It strengthened the ecological and social contrast between Coast and Sierra. Moreover, it excercised an almost total *de facto* control over the access of the country to the Pacific, because the country had no other outlet. Peru has no other spaces available for expansion than the inhospitable *ceja de montaña*, that is the forested slopes down towards the Amazon basin.

In all these respects, Mexico presents a totally different picture. The city of Mexico, situated at the heart of the country, was able to play an integrating role and usually did so. The port of Veracruz on the Atlantic coast had a counterpart, allthough on a lesser scale, in Acapulco on the Pacific, umbilical cord of the Spanish Philippines. Moreover, northwards, at the end of the colonial period, an enormously wide, open space opened up, the so-called Internal Provinces. Even though they remained sparsely settled, according to Peter Gerhard their population grew from 613,000 in 1750 to reach 940,000 in 1800 and 1,230,000 in 1821. In this region, Indians formed merely a third of the total population.[13] These great differences of mainly geographical origin, as I have stated already, have had enormous, incalculable consequences. They would influence, for example, two different conceptions of nationality, different patterns of political conflict, and different collective attitudes and behaviour.

In global terms, the characteristics of the ethnic composition of the two viceroyalties were similar, even though it is true that the Indian share of total Peruvian population was higher, towards 60 percent, than that of New Spain, according to Humboldt, about 40. These global averages, however, tend to overshadow a much more notable regional variation in this regard within each of the two viceroyalties. Therefore, it becomes much more interesting to study ethnic composition on regional and local levels. In New Spain, the Indian share on a regional level in 1789/93 varied from 88 in Oaxaca in the South to 34 in New Mexico in the North. Within the central area, the percentages of the Tlaxcala and Guanajuato provinces were 72 and 44, respectively. Moreover, in Tlaxcala by far the majority of Indians lived in landowning communities, whereas, in Guanajuato, no less than 69 percent were classified as "vagos", that is vagrants without ties to the land.[14] In Peru, 1795, Indians formed half of the population of the provinces of Arequipa and Trujillo, while in Cuzco they constituted 74 percent and in Huancavelica formed as much as 77 percent. Almost all the Blacks, free or slaves, lived in the three coastal provinces of Lima, Arequipa and Trujillo.[15]

It may be worthwhile to carry out a comparison between, let us say, Cuzco and Tlaxcala. Both were territories in the interior with Indians constituting about three quarters of the population. They lacked mining, and communities and landed estates (*haciendas*) presented comparable densities. Similarly, it might be rewarding to compare Guanajuato and Tarma, even though the population of the former was twice as large as that of the latter. Both were nuclear zones of silver mining and their Indian shares were not too different (66 and 53 respectively). Toward 1800, as Fisher observes, the labour force of both was mainly free, not forced.[16]

In the case of one Andean province, that of Cochabamba in Upper Peru, and one Meso-American, Chiapas, during the colonial period a part of the Audiency of Guatemala, two United States students, Brooke Larson and Robert Wasserstrom,

in 1982 made a comparative study of the type suggested above. Their purpose was to analyse the phenomenon of "repartimiento de mercancías" or forced commodity distribution to the Indians on the part of local functionaries of the Crown (*corregidores, alcaldes mayores*). Both areas, in their view, "served as an economic *hinterland* for distant export sectors which were themselves linked directly to the world market". In the case of Cochabamba, this linkage was to Upper Peruvian exports of silver, whereas the territories surrounding Chiapas specialized in agricultural exports. However, both kinds of dominant economic interest required Indian labour in Spanish enterprises "through mechanisms of tribute and compulsory exchange". With respect to this phenomenon Larson and Wasserstrom then find a number of similarities. In Cochabamba however, *curacas*, the traditional native leaders, often collaborated with the Spanish functionaries in the matter of coerced consumption, whereas in Chiapas, their counterparts, *caciques*, had long since vanished from the scene. Thus, there were no similar intermediaries between the two worlds.[17]

Larson and Wasserstrom carried out a comparison on the regional level where established practice in evident. Stanley J. Stein, on the other hand, in 1981 made an attempt to analyse why the attempts of José de Gálvez and other "reformist" Spanish administrators failed miserably when they tried to abolish the repartimiento on the highest political level. This was in connection with the introduction of the Intendency in New Spain as well as Peru. Behind the failure, Stein discerns a long-standing conflict between two opposite groups of interest, that of bureaucrats and merchants formed in accordance with "reformist" and "traditionalist" notions, respectively. For Stein, the abolition of the prohibition of the repartimiento and of the salaries enjoyed by the *subdelegados*, provincial deputies of the *intendentes* in 1804 signified the final defeat of the "reformist" fraction. Notwithstanding its high level of ambition, Stein's study cannot be termed "comparative" in the strict sense. It is also doubtful if the unequal state of research on the subject would have allowed a comparative approach on this level.[18]

In his famous Political Essay of the Kingdom of New Spain, Alexander von Humboldt makes a fascinating comparison between Peruvian and Mexican elites in terms of wealth:

> In Lima few people bring together an annual income of more than 4,000 *pesos*. I do not know any Peruvian family that today enjoys a fixed and secure one of 6,500 pesos. On the contrary, in New Spain there are individuals who without owning any mines, bring together an annual income of 200,000 *pesos fuertes*. For instance, the family of the Count of Valenciana owns properties in the shoulder of the Cordillera valued at more than 5 million pesos without counting the mine of Valenciana, near Guanajuato, which yields about 75,000

> pesos yearly...There can be no doubt that the mines have been the origin of the great fortunes of Mexico.

At the same time, Humboldt is inclined to believe that there existed "more of true well-being in Lima than in Mexico because in Lima the inequality in terms of fortune is less." He goes into maintaining that in Lima there were few who enjoyed an income of more that 10-12,000 pesos. He does so without noticing, apparently, that earlier ha fixed the upper limit at only 6,500 pesos. On the other hand, there were in Lima, if Humboldt is to be believed, "a great number of Mulato and free Black artisans for whom their industry provides much more than the necessities of life. Among this class of people, capital fortunes of 10-15,000 pesos are rather common. In the city of Mexico, on the other hand, there is an ant-hill of about 20-30,000 so-called *zaragates* (rogues) and *guachinangos* (nickname for Mexicans), most of whom spend their nights exposed to wind and weather, and in day-time stretch their bodies in the sunshine, nude or wrapped in a flannel shaw."[19]

Humboldt's claim would well serve as a first working hypothesis for a comparative study on the patterns of wealth ditribution and poverty in the two capital cities, even though, as we have seen, it is far from being entirely consistent. After all, it would not be difficult to find exceptions to his bold generalizations. When abandoning Lima, José Arizmendi, who used to be its most important merchant, left behind properties valued in 1825 at more than 2 million pesos. His merchant house had enjoyed an annual income of no less than 15 million pesos. Also, far from confirming Humboldt's claim, United States historian Paul Ganster, when analysing the social recruitment of the ecclesiastical Chapters of Mexico and Lima in the eighteenth century, found a lower rate of social mobility in Lima than in Mexico. On the other hand, Humboldt seems to be right in asserting that priests and religious people formed a larger share of Lima's population that of that of Mexico City. The percentages seem to have 3.7 in Lima in 1790 as compared to 2.1 in Mexico in 1792. With respect to the extent and composition of the elites of the capital cities, the number of titled nobles in Mexico seems to have been somewhat lower than in Lima, even though the latter city was much smaller. The total white population of Mexico City, on the other hand, was much larger, not only in absolute but also in relative terms.[20]

So far, I have only been concerned with the comparison of structures. The most ambitious attempt made until now to compare the complex process of Emancipation in the two viceroyalties is that of British historian Brian Hamnett. His book, "Revolución y contrarrevolución en México y en Perú: liberalismo, realeza y separatismo, 1800-1824", published in Mexico City in 1978, refers mainly to the period of 1814-24 when serious events taking place in Spain formed a common determinant and point of departure. Hamnett's account is very keen. In many respects he is able to explain

differences as well as similarities of the various phases of the lengthy process, even with respect to action taken by leading personalities. One observes, for example, how the two viceroys named, in fact, by Manuel Godoy, de facto ruler of Spain at the time, had very different luck. In Peru, the Marquess of Abascal succeeded in guaranteeing the stability of the viceroyalty. He also triumphed over revolution in neighbouring territories until 1816 when he had to leave his position to a less qualified man. In New Spain, on the other hand, his colleague José de Iturrigaray, in 1808 was already the victim of a coup organized by the anti-Criollo fraction of the viceregal elite. Hamnett interestingly explains the causal circumstances. He seems to be more familiar with Mexico than with Peru. This is a minor handicap, at most. More important is the involved character of his account without any clear distinction between essential things and details. Even more regrettably, he does not distinguish between structural traits, on the one hand, event and individual action, on the other.

Another attempt to use a comparative approach to the process of Emancipation was made in 1980 by political scientist Jorge Domínguez. His study focuses on Chile, Cuba, Venezuela and Mexico, however. Peru receives only a final, short comment. The author takes modernization theory as his point of departure. He tries to include in his analysis structures as well as events. In his view, differences in the bargaining positions in politics and the elite coalitions above all help to explain the different political outcome in the various countries. His use of quantification corresponds to what political science allows itself to do on the basis of contemporary documentation. He does not show the cautiousness due to the fragile character of the quantifiable data available for that period. From the methodological point of view, the countries chosen as units of comparison by Domínguez are simply too heterogenous and disparate one from another. If, for example, he had chosen to compare the two viceroyalties of New Spain and Peru, at least some variables could have been brought under control. That would have improved the results considerably, notwithstanding all the problems and pitfalls we have already suggested in this case.[21]

Let us now have a look at two measures taken both in Mexico and in Peru in the course of the process of transition from colony to national statehood. The so-called *Consolidación de Vales Reales*, decreed by the Metropolitan government in December 1804, was a very radical fiscal measure in order to save the Monarchy from imminent bankruptcy. This confiscation of all the mortgage loans (*censos* held by Church institutions and of their landed properties had to affect most negatively the interests of the large Criollo landholders and lower-rank clerics, also mostly Criollo. Thanks to German historian Reinhard Liehr we now have a global estimate of the amount of money derived from this confiscation from 1805 to 1810. The grand total for the whole of Spanish America and the Philippines is 15,400,000 pesos. Out of this total, New Spain was responsible for as much as 10,322,000 pesos, that is no less than 67 percent. In

Peru, merely 1,487,000 pesos were levied, that is 10 percent.

Liehr rightly underscores that the impact of the measure has to be related not only to the population and economic potential of each region but also to its respective socio-economic structure. In whatever aspect, however New Spain must have been more affected than Peru. Some historians believe that the bitterness of those affected by the measure even influenced the facility with which, ten years later, the colonial regime was overthrown. As far as I know, however, the effects in Peru have so far not received any attention on the part of historians.

In this way, the Consolidación de Vales Reales also illustrates a most serious problem with regard to our efforts to carry out comparative analyses at this juncture of the two viceroyalties. I refer to the unevenness of research. It is only thanks to Liehr's recent study that at last we have at our disposal data showing the global dimension of the measure.[22]

Our knowledge also remains very uneven with respect to the expulsions of Peninsular Spaniards, decreed almost simultaneously, in 1821 and 1822 respectively, by the national governments of Peru and Mexico. On the Mexican action, no doubt on a larger scale, we have the detailed, even exhaustive studies of American historian Harold Sims, whereas, for Peru, apart from a short paragraph in the great work of Jorge Basadre, I have only seen the accounts of a couple of travellers.[23]

One of this travellers, Captain Basil Hall, if I am allowed this digression, must have been one of very few observers on the spot of the coming of Independence in Mexico as well as Peru. He visited Lima in December, 1821, that is four months after his previous visit. He was able to observe some striking differences. The harbour of Callao was now open to foreign ships and the crowds who used to be hostile and suspicious, were now quite cordial to the strangers. Hall was really surprised when witnessing "... the facility and total unconcern with which the sentiments of a whole town can be reversed, when it suits their (=the population') interests." Hall underlines that the expectation of practical advantages was behind the Peruvian enthusiasm for external contacts. In his account of Mexico which he visited shortly afterwards, Hall emphasizes rather the exuberance of the people, however superficial it might be, on account of the newly won Independence. "In all companies, the conversation invariably turned on political topics; and it was very curious to observe, amidst much prejudice and error in reasoning...how justly everyone felt on this occasion, and with what delight they exercised the new privilege of uttering their thoughts freely...". Unfortunately, Basil Hall in his work makes no attempt at comparing systematically what he observed in the two countries. It would have been of great interest, had he done so, not only because of his exceptional opportunity as an observer but also considering his keen and balanced mind.[24]

The state of modern historical research is in general more satisfactory, at times even excellent, in the case of New Spain/Mexico that in the case of Peru.[25] But there is also unevenness of another kind. Historian Eric Young observes that the Indian society is better known in Peru than in Mexico, at least after the pathfinding work of Charles Gibson in 1964. On the other hand, literature on agrarian structures as such for the late colonial period are more developed in Mexico than in Peru:

> This difference itself is a telling one, since it suggests that the loci of traditional life in the countryside are seen to be fundamentally different in the two cases: the great hacienda in Mexico and the Indian community in Peru. The contrast in the development of the two bodies of literature further suggests that whereas in both cases the major colonial interaction is seen to be between Spaniards and Indian peasants, in the instance of Mexico peasantness is emphasized, and in the instance of Peru Indianness is emphasized.

In this way, the absence of serious attempts at comparison may have caused an exaggeration of the relative importance of the large Hacienda in Mexico and a corresponding neglect of the Indian community. The opposite would then be true about Peru.[26] It would not be difficult to find other examples of the uneven distribution of research in the two countries until the present and the consequences of this situation.[27]

After this short discussion of a very large subject, difficult to grapple with, I shall try to summarize my main points of view. Necessarily, these viewpoints can also be seen as recommendations to the scholarly community as to research that should deserve to be undertaken in years to come.

First, we need an inventary of research already carried out or in process, the results of which could serve for a more profound and serious comparative analysis between structures and conditions in the two viceroyalties on the eve of Independence. This does not only imply the listing of what has been done in the case of one of the viceroyalties but also the identification of tasks worthwhile to carry out with respect to the other, as well. The imposition of common norms of comparison is basic, be it that the same researcher performs the task in question or that it is entrusted to a research team. The approach and criteria must be the same, the source material used as similar as possible. This is the only way of guaranteeing valid results in making a balance between differences and similarities.

Secondly, our comparative interests should focus above all on structures, not less on structural change. Because the two viceroyalties are enormously complex in their entirety, at least to begin with the comparison between them should above all focuss on the fundamental aspects of general development and their activity as functioning political bodies. With this I refer to their economy and external trade on a

viceroyal/national level, to the elites and administration on the same level and to general ideological currents. For the rest, it seems to me more realistic to make use of comparison on regional levels, however the vague term of "regional" is being used.[28] Such comparison can be, or rather should be, carried out above all between regions belonging to the same viceroyalty in order to establish the extreme as well as the "normal" patterns. In the case of a rather high degree of analogy existing between the units of comparison in question, comparison could then also be carried out between regions pertaining to different viceroyalties, as I have already exemplified.

Such approaches could hopefully draw us closer to a situation where we may discern much better than at the present time what was similar and what was different between Mexico and Peru on the eve of Independence. In turn, such an evaluation should not merely reveal much of the dynamics behind this fundamental historical process. It would also partly explain why the subsequent national historical development of the two countries turned out as it did.

NOTES

1. Dietrich Gerhard and Sylvia L. Thrupp, "Comparative study at Stockholm", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 3:4 (The Hague, 1961), p. 483.

2. According to James Lockhart in *Cambridge History of Latin America*, II (1984), p. 295: "In both Mexico and Peru, labour arrangements at the level of permanent temporary workers owe a great deal of both terminology and content to aboriginal modes of organization, proving that Indian culture was definitely still alive and capable of imposing its ways in this part of the Spanish world. It was able to do so even in the Mexican north, where the Indian employees were permanently out of touch with their central Mexican homeland." He stresses the sluggishness of social change where the Indian "hinterland" was strong, its rapidity where it was weak. At least until the mid-eighteenth century, two sources of wealth, that is silver and societies of sedentary Indians, gave Peru and Mexico their positions as "central areas" (p. 313).

3. In the case of Peru, the Túpac Amaru rebellion was the culmination of a very long series of uprisings, as shown by Scarlett O'Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions and revolts in eighteenth century Peru and Upper Peru*, Cologne, 1985. On pp. 285-298, the authors lists 140 revolts from 1708 until 1783.

4. See Mörner, Julia Fawaz the Viñuela and John French, "Comparative approaches to Latin American History", *Latin American Research Review* (hereinafter abbreviated LARR), 177:3 (1982), pp.55-89.

5. Apart from vital rates it is also the question of immigration. In *Cambridge History...*, I (1984), p. 31, Nicolás Sánchez Albornoz presents a global calculus of 53,000 Spanish emigrants to Spanish America in the course of the eighteenth century. Although he does not say so, he seems to support himself on the conjecture of Mario Sánchez Barba in *Historia de España y América*, IV, edited by J. Vicens Vives, Barcelona, 1961, pp. 326 f. It was based on figures for three single years only and, in our view, it is without any value. In fact, we do not as yet have any general idea of the phenomenon during this long period. In his study "La emigración española a América Latina durante la época del comercio libre (1765-1820): el ejemplo catalán", *Boletín Americanista*, 32 (Barcelona, 1983), Josep M. Delgado Ribas presents a total of 1263 Catalan merchants who settled in the Americas between 1778 and 1820: 157 in New Spain

whereas only 6 in Peru with another 2 in Upper Peru. The largest groups went to the Antilles (533), to the River Plate (321) and New Granada (234). The author believes that why so relatively few merchants went to New Spain had to do with the fact that "free trade" was extended so late to this viceroyalty. He does not comment on the almost total absence of Peru as a destination.

6. My calculations in the book *Perfil de la sociedad rural del Cuzco a fines de la Colonia*, Lima, 1978; Claude Morin, *Michoacán en la Nueva España del siglo XVIII: crecimiento y desigualdad en una economía colonial*, Mexico City, 1979. It is, in fact, impossible to estimate the global rate of demographic change in Peru during this period as clearly shown by David G. Browning and David J. Robinson, "The origin and comparability of Peruvian population data: 1776-1815", *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas* (hereinafter abbreviated JBLA), XIV (Cologne, 1977), pp. 199-223. In an attempt at synthesis, Heraclio Bonilla and Karen Spalding, in their study "La Independencia en el Perú: las palabras y los hechos", take the risk of maintaining that " en el Perú, a diferencia de Nueva España donde la población nativa empezaba a crecer desde la segunda mitad del siglo XVII, la recuperación no se hace sensible sino a mediados del siglo XVIII, es decir cuando la crisis económica era ya bastante avanzada", *La independencia en el Perú*, 2. ed., Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, Lima, 1981, p. 86. In his survey article, "De demografische ontwikkeling van Spaans Amerika in de koloniale tijd", B.H. Slicher Van Bath uses the population estimated in 1570 as the point of departure (100) for an index reaching the year 1800. By then New Spain is found to have recovered from its previous violent fall (index = 96.4); for Peru, in 1792, he gives the index of 83.6. See the anthology, *Geschiedenis van matschappij en cultuur*, edited by Slicher and A.C. van Oss, Baarn (The Netherlands), 1978, pp. 140-171.

7. D.A. Brading and Harry E. Cross, "Colonial silver mining: Mexico and Peru", *The Hispanic American Historical Review* (hereinafter abbreviated HAHR), 52:4 (1972), pp. 545-579. Apart from structural factors, they also in part attribute the successes of Mexican mining to "sheer skill and enterprise of such men as José de la Borda and the Count of Regla... they acted as pacemakers of the industry" (p. 577).

8. John Fisher, "Silver production in the Viceroyalty of Peru, 1776-1824", HAHR, 55:1 (1975), pp. 25-43; "Miners, silver merchants and capitalists in late colonial Peru", *Ibero-Amerikanisches Archiv*, N.S. 2:3 (West-Berlin, 1976), pp. 257-268. A contemporary writer, in the journal *Mercurio Peruano* in 1791 traced the difference between the prosperous state of the mining of New Spain and the decay of that of Peru from the different attitudes of the rich merchants in the two viceroyalties. Whereas in New Spain they gave generous credits to miners, in Peru credits were hard to obtain. The second study of Fisher, already cited above, supports this claim and helps to explain these different attitudes. See also "The Mexican mining industry in the eighteenth century" by John H. Coatsworth in Nils Jacobsen and Hans-Jürgen Puhle (eds.), *The economies of Mexico and Peru during the late colonial period, 1760-1810*, West-Berlin, 1986, pp. 25-45. Enrique Tandeter and Nathan Wachtel, in their *Precios y producción agraria: Potosí y Charcas en el siglo XVIII*, Buenos Aires, 1983, maintain that in the course of the eighteenth century silver production costs tended to increase in Potosí, while in Mexico the trend was an opposite one. In turn this implied that the prices on other goods would drop in Potosí while on the rise in Mexico.

9. A. von Humboldt, *Ensayo político sobre el reino de la Nueva España*, edited by J.A. Ortega y Medina, Mexico City, 1966, pp. 283-286, 510. According to D.A. Brading, *Miners and merchants in Bourbon Mexico, 1763-1810*, Cambridge, 1971, p. 291 f., the Valenciana mine yielded a profit of more than 1 million pesos to the owners. Apart from their great generosity shown towards the Church, they above all reinvested these fabulous profits in local mining.

10. Between 1796 and 1820, 73 percent of exports from Veracruz to Spain were still formed by silver (and gold), the remainder was cochineal (16.2 percent) and other agricultural products. Javier Ortiz de la Tabla Ducasse. *Comercio exterior de Veracruz 1778-1821*, Seville, 1978, p. 254. According to Jaime O. Rodríguez, *Down from colonialism: Mexico's nineteenth century crisis*, Irvine, CA, 1981, the GNP of

New Spain ought to have comprised some 22 million pesos, 14 percent of which should refer to exports. There is no counterpart to this, admittedly very bold and uncertain estimate in historiography on Peru, as far as I know. Rodríguez estimates material losses suffered by Mexico during the war from 1810 to 1816 at a total of no less than 786 million pesos. He gives a low estimate of Mexico's population, merely 4 million in 1800. Fisher, *Commercial relations between Spain and Spanish America in the area of free trade, 1778-1796*, Liverpool, 1985, pp. 71-75, 78-82 and *passim*.

11. Richard M. Morse (ed.), *Las ciudades latinoamericanas*, II. *Desarrollo histórico*, Mexico City, 1973, pp. 172-196. According to Pilar Pérez Canto, "La población en Lima en el siglo XVIII", *Boletín Americanista* 32 (Barcelona, 1983), pp. 383-407, basing herself on the census of 1791, the city then housed a total of 50,000 inhabitants, 38 percent of whom "Spaniards", 18 Blacks and 8 percent Indians.

12. This interpretation of the decay of Puebla offered by Brading in *Cambridge History*, I, pp. 431 f. Usually the decline is attributed above all to the impact of imported European textile goods.

13. For this estimate see Peter Gerhard, *The North frontier of New Spain*, Princeton, N.J., 1982, p. 24. This is the last of three volumes constituting an admirably detailed geographical-historical survey of New Spain. Although similar works of reference are not entirely lacking in the case of Peru they are outdated and not so well done. For the purpose of comparison a counterpart to Gerhard's work would be highly desirable. Recently, Prof. John F. Schwaller of Florida Atlantic University has expressed his interest in editing a cooperative work of this kind on the Audiencias of Lima, Charcas and Quito.

14. Slicher van Bath, *op. cit.*, makes a comparison of the ethnic composition of the population of the two viceroyalties using data on Peru for 1792 (exc. Puno) and of Mexico for 1743. He then finds, for example, the Indian share in Peru to be 56.6 as compared to 75.3 for New Spain, and that of Mestizos to be 22.7 and 8.2 respectively. In my opinion, however, it is not satisfactory or even admissible to compare populations for moments of time as distant from each other. I have taken the Mexican regional percentages from Sherburne F. Cook and Wodroow Borah, *Essays in population history: Mexico and the Caribbean*, II(Berkeley, CA, 1974), p. 222 and *passim*; the Peruvian data from Günther Vollmer, *Bevölkerungspolitik und Bevölkerungsstruktur im Vizekönigreich Peru zu Ende der Kolonialzeit (1741-1821)*, Bad Homburg, West-Germany, 1967, p. 328. In Guanajuato,there were no less than 31.1 persons per km2, in Oaxaca 6.7 and in New Mexico merely 0.3. *Historia general de México*, El Colegio de México, Mexico City, 1976, p. 234 f.

15. In Arequipa, between 1780 and 1810, more than half of the 40 principal merchants (23) were Peninsulars, from 1810 to 1824, 22 were, while in 1827, out of the 10 principal merchants, 7 were from other European countries, 2 Arequipa-born and just one a Peninsular Spaniard. John F. Wibel, "The evolution of a regional community within the Spanish empire and Peruvian nation: Arequipa, 1780-1845", Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, CA, 1975, pp. 473, 478.

16. In the diocese of Cuzco, in 1786, there were 206,605 inhabitants, 78.4 of whom were Indians. There were 647 haciendas. Less than 10 percent of the Indians were "landless" (*forasteros*). Mörner, *Perfil*. In the city and province of Tlaxcala, in 1793, there were a total of 59,148 inhabitants, 72.5 percent of whom Indians. Out of the economically active population, tribute-paying Indians formed 36.8 percent, dayworkers 44.7 percent according to Horst Pietschmann, "La población de Tlaxcala a fines del siglo XVIII", JBLA, XX (1983), pp. 223-238. Fisher, "Silver", p. 41.

17. Brooke Larson and Robert Wasserstrom, "Coerced consumption in colonial Bolivia and Guatemala", *Radical History Review*, 27 (New York, 1983), pp. 49-78 (quotes p. 52). See also another study of Larson for comparative observations with respect to landowners' profits at the cost of small producers, "Rural rhythms of class conflict in eighteenth century Cochabamba", HAHR, LX (1980), pp. 407-430. Also

Brading, *Haciendas y ranchos in the Mexican Bajío: León, 1700-1860*, Cambridge, 1978 and Enrique Florescano, *Precios del maíz y crisis agrícolas en México*, Mexico City, 1969, especially pp. 140-170.

18. S.J. Stein, "Bureaucracy and business in the Spanish empire, 1759-1804: failure of a Bourbon reform in Mexico and Peru", HAHR, 61:1 (1981), pp. 2-28. For polemics between Jacques A. Barbier, Mark A. Burkholder and Stein see *ibid.* 63:3 (1982), pp. 469-477. Among all the authors cited, Larson-Wasserstrom are the only ones to refer to a work of great relevance in this context: Jürgen Golte, *Repartos y rebeliones, Túpac Amaru y las contradicciones de la economía colonial*, Lima, 1980. The fine studies of Horst Pietschmann on the subject, e.g. "El comercio de repartimientos de los alcaldes mayores y corregidores en la región de Puebla-Tlaxcala en el siglo XVIII", *Estudios sobre la política española en América*, III (Valladolid, 1977), pp. 147-153, seem to have escaped everybody's attention. Pietschmann suggests that in the course of the eighteenth century, the repartimiento was becoming less burdensome for the Indians of New Spain, while in Peru it continued to be as abusive as it always had been. This might serve as a working hypothesis for systematic comparison.

19. Humboldt, *op.cit.*, pp. 83-86.

20. Timothy E. Anna, "The Peruvian declaration of Independence: freedom by coercion", *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 7:2 (1975), p. 243. In his excellent summary "Urban society in colonial Spanish America: research trends", Fred Bronner cites a study by Paul Ganster which was not available to me; "Los cabildos eclesiásticos de Lima y de México en el siglo XVIII", in *Memorias del simposio hispanoamericano sobre las leyes de Indias*, San José, Costa Rica, 1981. The clergy share of Lima based on Anna's study, p. 237, that of Mexico City on Humboldt's data as given by E. Florescano and Isabel Gil (eds.), *Descripciones económicas generales de Nueva España, 1784-1817*, Mexico City, 1973, p. 129. Burkholder, "Titled nobles, elites and Independence: some comments", LARR, 13:2 (1978), p. 293. In New Spain, at least 10 Peninsular Spaniards acquired titles of nobility between 1704 and 1811. See Brading, *Miners*, p. 105, and for more detail, Doris M. Ladd, *The Mexican nobility at Independence*, Austin, Texas, Chapter I ans *passim*.

21. J.I. Domínguez, *Insurrection or loyalty: the breakdown of the Spanish American empire*, Cambridge, Mass. 1980. In his view,the collapse of the empire has been "extensively studied but underanalyzed" which seems quite right (p. 1). His note on Peru pp. 258-263.

22. R. Liehr, "Endeudamiento estatal y crédito privado: la Consolidación de vales reales en Hispanoamérica", *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, XL (Seville, 1984), pp. 553-578, especially the table on p. 573. From 1969 onwards, the subject has been studied by reference to New Spain by Romeo Flores Caballero, Asunción Lavrín, Brian Hamnett and Doris Ladd. The latter (*op.cit.*, p. 104), however, concludes: "Amortizacion provoked a desire for autonomy, not for Independence". See also Arnold J. Bauer, "The Church in the economy of Spanish America: *censos* and *depositos* in the eighteenth and nineteenth century", HAHR, 63:4 (1983). He maintains (p. 729) that despite everything, Consolidation only reduced lay indebtedness to the Church in a very limited way.

23. H.D. Sims, *La expulsión de los españoles de México (1818-1821)*, Mexico City, 1974; *Descolonización en México. El conflicto entre mexicanos y españoles*, Mexico City, 1982; "The expulsion of the Spaniards from Mexico, 1827-28", Ann Arbor, Mich., 1968: University microfilms; "Las clases económicas y la dicotomía criollo-peninsular en Durango, 1827", *Historia Mexicana, 20:4 (Mexico City, 1971), pp. 539-562*. For reference to the testimonies of travellers in Peru see my article "European travelogues as sources for Latin American history from the late eighteenth century until 1870", *Revista de Historia de América*, 93 (Mexico City, 1982), p. 116 f.

24. B. Hall, *Extracts from a journal written on the coasts of Chile, Peru and Mexico in the years 1820,*

1821, 1822, II, Edinburgh, 1826, pp. 50, 215 (quotes).

25. The proliferation in recent years of studies on Mexican social history is highlighted in state of research reports such as Marcello Carmagnani, "The intertia of Clio: the social history of colonial Mexico", LARR, 20:1 (1985) followed by the critical comments of other scholars (pp. 149-183) and Eric Van Young, "Mexican rural history since Chevalier: the historiography of the colonial hacienda", LARR, 18:3 (1983), pp. 5-61.

26. Eric Van Young, "Recent Anglophone scholarship on Mexico and Central America in the age of revolution (1750-1850)", HAHR, 65:4 (1985), pp. 725-743 (quote p. 739 f.). Reference to Charles Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish rule: a history of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1810*, Stanford, CA, 1964.

27. A case in point is the entails, *mayorazgos*. About 1,000 were founded in New Spain, most of them rather modest, however. Of mayorazgos in other parts of Spanish America little is known. See Mörner, "Economic factors and stratification in colonial Spanish America with special regard to elites", HAHR, 63:2 (1983), p. 348. Another example: the importance of the participation of delegates from New Spain in the Spanish Cortes has been emphasized by Nettie Lee.Benson in her book *La diputación provincial y el federalismo mexicano*, Mexico City, 1955 and in her anthology *Mexico and the Spanish Cortes, 1810-1822: Eight essays*, Austin, Texas, 1966. As far as I know there are no similar works with regard to Peru. Also, I find no counterpart to the recent study of John E. Kicza, *Colonial entrepreneurs: Families and business in Bourbon Mexico City*, Albuquerque, N.M., 1983, with its multi-analytical approach. It would also be userful to have a study on Lima of the same kind as that of María Dolores Morales, "Estructura urbana y distribución de la propiedad en la ciudad de México en 1813", *Historia Mexicana* 25:3 (1976), pp. 363-402.

28. With respect to the concept of "region" see e.g. the article by Fred Bronner, p. 21 f. The anthology of Ida Altman and James Lockhart (eds.), *Provinces of early Mexico. Variants of Spanish American regional evolution*, Los Angeles, CA, 1976, presents an interesting though not strictly systematical regional approach.