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Review of Gabriel Paquette, *Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions: The Luso-Brazilian world, c. 1770-1850*

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Gabriel Paquette. *Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions: The Luso-Brazilian world, c. 1770-1850*. Cambridge, New York, Singapore: Cambridge University Press, 2013. 450 pp.

Gabriel Paquette's *Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions: The Luso-Brazilian World* fills a specific gap in the historical literature. It discusses the political developments in, and development of, foreign and colonial policies in metropole Portugal in a tumultuous period before and after the upheaval of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars. It also illuminates the transition of Portugal's second empire and the independence of Brazil and its effects. These topics are analyzed in relation to one another as Portugal and its empire plod through the period 1770 to 1850 covered in the book.

Paquette's overall thesis (that the independence of Brazil was not an "inevitable" development but experienced the forces which aided and detracted the process in the metropole and outside it, in the Atlantic, in Africa and on the ground in Brazil) was systematically argued through a series of sub-theses in five chapters. Chapter 1 establishes the situation that despite whatever enlightened reforms were implemented (especially in overhauling the colonial administration) during the prime minister-ship of Pombal (under José), these were dismantled to some extent in the reign of Maria I. Portugal remained deeply dependent on the resources and exports of Brazil to stay afloat financially even as pressures for the reduction, and possibly, the eventual stoppage of slave trade (to which Brazil relied greatly in its plantation economy) began to build up. Paquette's second and third chapter discusses the impact of the invasion of Portugal and subsequent fall of the metropole on the empire. While the semblance of the court was reconstituted by the fleeing Portuguese monarchy in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), the detachment and divergent developments of those who remained in Portugal and those who accompanied the royal entourage abroad climaxed in the Porto revolution (in Portugal) and the declaration of independence of Brazil shortly after (in 1822, with legitimacy claimed on opposite sides of the Atlantic by two members of the royal family). Throughout chapters 2 and 3, Paquette devotes attention to the evolution of the constitution from its 1822 to the 1826 (Carta Constitucional) form and how this was linked to its crafters and supporters in the metropole and in Brazil and even involved a foreign power like Britain.

Chapter 4 discusses the official split between Portugal and Brazil did not end the acrimonious quarrel between the monarchs, monarch-aspirants or the groups supporting them leading to the Portuguese Civil War (1828-34). Chapter 5 aims to correct the perception that the period of revolutions in Europe and abroad following the Napoleonic Wars was a hiatus for the Portuguese empire. The

continuing coup and revolution led by groups espousing different versions of the constitution continued to affect, at least up to the end of the Civil War in 1834, debates in the *Cortes* and distracted developments that needed to be undertaken in the African colonies (in Angola and Mozambique) with reverberations on Portugal's recovery on the colonial front in the aftermath of its loss of Brazil. On the ground, the need to deter Brazil from encroaching on Portugal's territories in Africa, given the continuing economic linkages, also meant that an ambience of suspicions continued to mire the relations between the two states. Paquette tries to show that there were serious attempts to revive and stabilize the empire.

The continuities and disjunctures of the developments of the Portuguese empire between 1770-1850 are well illuminated – crisis and resilience in the empire, independence of and continued linkages with Brazil etc. Non-nationalist literature written in the 1990s and at the turn of the millennium is less likely to convey a monolithic picture of Brazil's independence (see for instance, H. Kraay's *Race, state and armed forces in independence-era Brazil*). The value in Paquette's work lies in combining the narrative of the chronological process (1770-1850) with the static analysis of the groups and individuals in action; all these against the larger background of revolutions occurring across the Atlantic and wider world. The message that the case of Brazil need not conform to any deterministic pattern in the age of revolutions (1760-1840) is clear. The detailed bibliography consulted by Paquette, which included numerous archival references and printed primary sources, is listed. Accompanied by a comprehensive map and occasional lithographs, the book can be better cross-referenced in terms of its index or added with a glossary. "Regency", for instance, receives one or two entries (although Dona Maria II is given a number of page reference in the index); "Civil War" finds only one entry. These terms form the crux of the discussion in chapter 4 and can be found to overspill into the other chapters. The period of 1770-1850 can be a complex and confusing epoch in the history of Portugal and its empire, Paquette's work is an important read for anyone aspiring to work on the subject in the ascribed periodization.

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