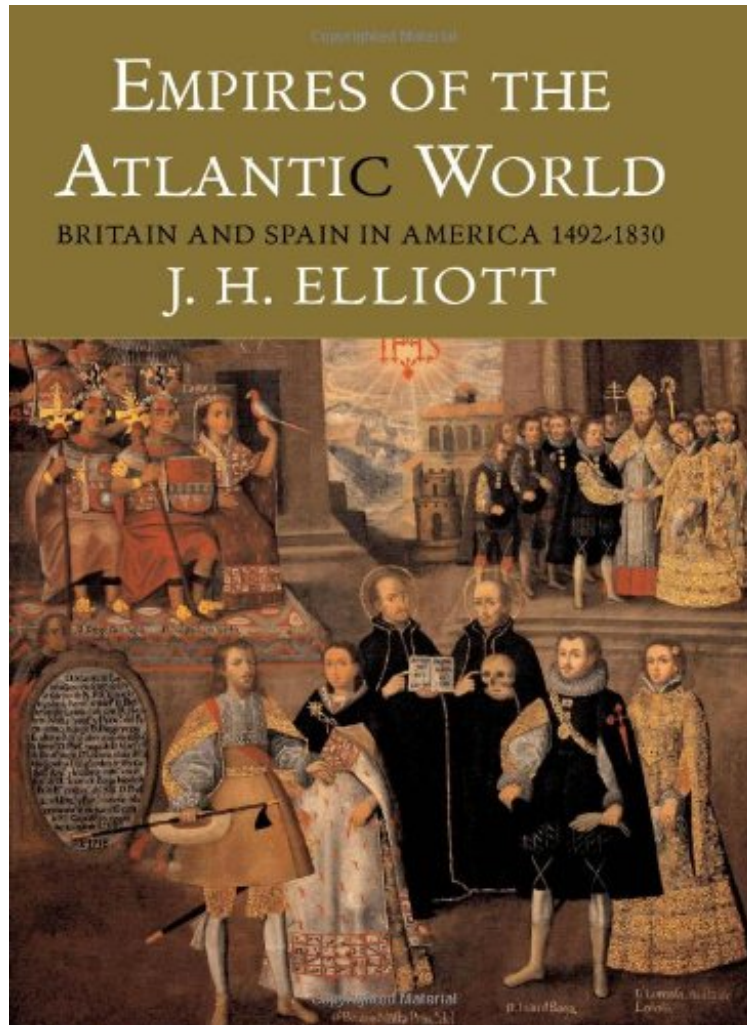


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John H. Elliott

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John H. Elliott : Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492-1830 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492-1830:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Great Analysis of the origins of cultural differences By Chris Lubensky I am an American born in the United States, but have lived in Ecuador for over 50 years. Discovering the reasons for which Latin America has had so much difficulty managing its democratic systems has been among my principal reading objectives for many years. John Elliott has done a great job of answering my questions. He demonstrates that accumulated circumstances are stronger than past culture in making the difference. Or, in some

since, he states that the circumstances eventually have a great deal to do with the creation of a culture. This well documented, cause and effect historical analysis of the origins of the differences between Spanish American culture and British American culture is well worth reading.³ of 3 people found the following review helpful. If and only if, that is the question

By T. E. Leonard Elliott covers the colonial adventures and misadventures of the two dominant European powers in the western hemisphere, England and Spain, in the three hundred years following Columbus' landing. Upon her arrival, Spain's western possessions were populated by vast pools of indigenous peoples, where intermingling between the new arrivals and domestic peoples became commonplace, resulting, as it did, in a growing number of Creoles (individuals of mixed Indian/Spanish blood). Conversely New Englanders, for the most part, remained congregated in their Protestant clusters, ideologically and socially segregated from their native cousins. At first blush, economic fortunes seemingly shone well on Spain, where a mother load of Peruvian silver, which, in spite of strict mercantile controls by the mother country, fueled a cultural colonial renaissance and resultant growth in universities, cathedrals, and regal cities far larger and exquisite than anything in Massachusetts or Maryland. Silver's blessing, however, also created a false-sense of Spanish invincibility; and it didn't take long for the conquerors to find themselves hard pressed scraping together the necessary resources to police such a vast and increasingly threatened empire. The English, in achieving supremacy over the seas, provided the American colonialists a cushion from outside interference which allowed them the sort of freedom to explore and develop hitherto unknown pluralistic political associations; yet while the English melting pot provided the experimental grounds to reconcile Euro-American inter-cultural and religious conflagrations, it was far less altruistic and tolerant and respectful toward its indigenous neighbors. Ironic as it sounds, one can easily make the case that the more regimented and Spanish regal/clerical hierarchy did far more than its European rival in giving voice to her native peoples. It is interesting to see how the French, both directly and indirectly, thwarted both Spanish and English hegemony. In the case of the Brits, it was the costs of underwriting the French and Indian War and the mother country's subsequent attempt to have the their colonies pay for that war which provided a key stimulus to the American Revolution. Spain's demise arrived more slowly and subtly; Napoleon's Iberian Peninsula adventures in the the early 1800s estranged Spain from her American colonies, creating in the process political independence in the form of Simone Bolivar.⁰ of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book provides a great panoramic view of how it was done

By JFB53 This book is more about the empire-building practices exhibited by the British and the Spanish in their American colonies, than about the reasons behind the two empires of the Atlantic. This book provides a great panoramic view of how it was done. It is weaker in telling you why it was done. Sporadically the author chooses to get into some of the reasons, but he is inconsistent and inconclusive. When the British crown chartered the Virginia Company, what were they trying to achieve? Was this a British government effort or was this a private initiative? When the Spanish discovered that these were not the Indies, why did they continue to finance the exploration and settlement in America? Was conquest of the unknown a plan B or was this the logical solution to finance the war against the Muslims in the Mediterranean? The author calls the Spanish Empire an empire of conquest and the British Empire an empire of commerce. I did not like this labeling. Both European nations acquired and occupied territories in the New World. The fact that the Spaniards did it by force and the British in a less aggressive way (initially) by occupying vacant territories does not mean that it was not conquering. I feel that conquest is a foreign policy and commerce economic policy, and therefore we are comparing apples and oranges. I would have preferred a contrast between the Spanish centralized monopoly and the British decentralized oligopoly on the economic, and the British Constitutional Monarchy vs the Spanish Absolutist Monarchy on the foreign government policy aspect. As the Spanish 100 years before them, the British chose to have an empire paid for by their own colonies. A self-sustained operation that turn out to be neither an empire nor self-sustained. Again! Why? Author gives us a scholars work that is not easy reading (no chronological sequence), but it is a must read for people interested in reading about the arrival of the European civilization in the New World. Of the three sections in the book (Occupation, Consolidation and Emancipation) I felt Emancipation was easier to read and better organized. I especially enjoyed Elliotts very perceptive review of the legal basis behind (and in some cases ahead) the action on the ground. He made me realize that the reasons behind historical events are better found in Treaties, rather than in the historical events stories.

This epic history compares the empires built by Spain and Britain in the Americas, from Columbuss arrival in the New World to the end of Spanish colonial rule in the early nineteenth century. J. H. Elliott, one of the most distinguished and versatile historians working today, offers us history on a grand scale, contrasting the worlds built by Britain and by Spain on the ruins of the civilizations they encountered and destroyed in North and South America. Elliott identifies and explains both the similarities and differences in the two empires processes of colonization, the character of their colonial societies, their distinctive styles of imperial government, and the independence movements mounted against them. Based on wide reading in the history of the two great Atlantic civilizations, the book sets the Spanish and British colonial empires in the context of their own times and offers us insights into aspects of this dual history that still influence the Americas.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . In a masterful account, Oxford don Elliott explores the simultaneous development of Spanish and English colonies in the so-called New World. Though colonists tried to recreate traditional institutions on American soil, there were inevitable differences between colonial life and life in the mother countries: familial roles, for example, were reconfigured across the ocean. In addition to differing from Europe, Spanish and British settlements differed from one another, says Elliott. Whereas Spain determined to prevent Jews and Moors from entering its territories, Britain's grudging acceptance of religious diversity was evidenced in the Crown's allowing, and in some cases encouraging, persecuted minorities to join colonial ventures. The English colonies' fractious Protestantism made Spain's Catholic colonies look homogeneous by contrast. Yet the "pigmentocratic" social order of Spanish colonies proved to be exceedingly complex. English colonies, with their adoption of racial slavery, came to be organized around the deceptively simple categories of black and white, while Spanish America was home to varied ethnic groups that readily produced "mixed-blood" offspring. Ultimately, British colonies would privilege innovation and entrepreneurship, while Spanish-speaking society held on more firmly to "the old hierarchies." Elliott's synthesis represents some of the finest fruits of the study of the Atlantic world. Illus., maps. (May) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "[A] magisterial comparative history of empire of the Americas. . . . [A] richly textured comparative history. . . . [A] meticulously researched and elegantly executed synthesis. . . . Mr. Elliott's achievement is to identify with brilliant clarity the similarities and differences between British and Spanish America while embroidering his analysis with memorable details." Niall Ferguson, Wall Street Journal