

Enlightenment, Governance, and Reform in Spain and its Empire, 1759-1808

Gabriel B. Paquette

'Leading intellectuals in Spain wholeheartedly embraced the new science of political economy, for trade would rescue Spain from decline. They sought critically to emulate the successful commercial models of Spain's European rivals, yet without doing away with traditional legal formulas. Wielding the discourse of medieval "regalism," these reformers went after all corporate privileges, not only those of the Church, and expanded the centralizing hold of the State. Equally patriotic and cosmopolitan, government officials and Creole merchants in the backwaters of the empire, however, had views of their own and did not passively accept the formulas dished out by metropolitan reformers. This is a substantive contribution to the study of the colonial and imperial dimensions of political economy in the Enlightenment.' - Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, University of Texas at Austin, USA

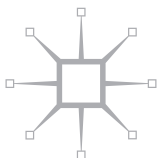
'An important study that has much to say on both Spain and her empire in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and ought finally to kill the notion of the *Antiguo Régimen* as an archaic backwater whose only hope was reform at the hands of Napoleon Bonaparte.' - Charles Esdaile, University of Liverpool, UK

'This fine book provides a meticulously researched and carefully written examination of the intellectual foundations of the Bourbon Reforms in the Caroline Era, all within the context of the wider Atlantic World. It is a major contribution to the burgeoning field of "Atlantic History," which should appeal to an audience of specialists and students alike.' - Kenneth J. Andrien, The Ohio State University, USA

Enlightenment, Governance, and Reform in Spain and its Empire, 1759-1808 offers a new interpretation of political reform in Spain and its American empire in the second half of the eighteenth century. It examines the intellectual foundations of commercial, administrative, and colonial policy during the tumultuous reigns of Charles III (1759-1788) and Charles IV (1788-1808), and explores how crown reformers employed both the ideas of the European Enlightenment and Iberian juridical concepts to create a distinctive ideology of governance. They sought to use these ideas in order to reinvigorate the Spanish monarchy and to transform the institutions of the Old Regime into those of a modern state in both the Old World and the New. Drawing on archival research undertaken in Spain, Cuba, Chile, and Argentina, this book makes an important contribution to the histories of Spain, Latin America, and the Atlantic World.

CONTENTS: Abbreviations – Glossary – Introduction - The Intellectual Impact of International Rivalry - *Felicidad Pública*, Regalism and the Bourbon Ideology of Governance - Imperial Governance and Reform: Ideas and *Proyectos* - Colonial Elites and Imperial Governance - Conclusion: Enlightenment, Governance and Reform in the Spanish Atlantic World: A Reconsideration - Bibliography

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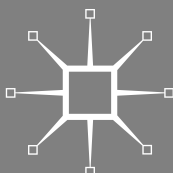
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