

century to impose plans of study, which would foster a shift from theology to more scientific and utilitarian subjects, on the Church-dominated universities and *colegios*. This involved story is related in a clear, agreeable prose and with almost excessive documentation in footnotes that occasionally crowd the text off the page.

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COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENCE PERIODS

Spanish Politics and Imperial Trade, 1700–1789. By GEOFFREY J. WALKER. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979. Illustrations. Maps. Glossary. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvii, 297. Cloth. \$17.50.

Like inflation fighters today, Crown strategists in the eighteenth century were confounded by an obstreperous animal that refused to obey. Their inflation was represented by the merchants of Mexico and Peru, who refused to allow the system to work, the system being the classic colonial model wherein the metropolis benefits in disproportion to its colony from the relationship.

Professor Walker has threaded, weaved, and bobbed through the minefield of contradictory reports, memoranda, complaints, claims, and counterclaims made by all the leading participants from the Crown on down, and he has produced a superb reconstruction of the mercantile dynamics between Spain and its subjects in the period from 1700 to 1789.

Basing his study largely on the archives of Spain and America (AGI, Simancas, Lima, to mention a few), Walker separates his book into major chronological blocks, and traces the movement of ships and fleets, dissects the rationale for behavior of the many interested groups, and slowly builds up his case: the fleet system—no matter how well-organized, mandated, or adjusted to the varying circumstances—could not and would not work, since it was basically contradictory to the interests of the American merchants.

The merchants of Peru and New Spain, organized into their powerful corporate guilds, the *consulados*, were weaned by circumstances—the War of the Spanish Succession, the beginnings of legal French trade in the Pacific, the *asiento* granting the English an “annual” ship to attend each of the trade fairs celebrated in the Indies, and, of course, the interlopers and contrabandists from all over Europe—from depending upon

Spain, its merchants, and its goods. This process had been well under way since the seventeenth century, but the breakdown and the motivations of the various entities are nowhere better portrayed than in this book.

Walker makes a persuasive case for the determination of major Crown advisers and powers, such as José Patiño in the 1720s, to reform and rejuvenate a stagnant commercial system between Spain and the Indies. Most efforts to improve, change, or re-create the old system, however, were to little avail, especially since the annual ship sent by the English South Sea Company undermined Spanish wares and prices. Walker perhaps attributes too much credit to this one ship, for it was as much a symbol of Spain's weakness (the right to send the *asiento* ship granted in the wake of Spain's poor show during the War of the Spanish Succession), as a cause for continual deterioration.

This book edged me a bit further into the almost byzantine and complex world of the Spanish Empire in the eighteenth century, which drove at least one viceroy to comment that "'this matter [of commerce] is the most extraordinary of all those that can come before the Government. In dealing with it it is necessary for a command to go dressed in the clothes of a request'" (p. 154). Walker pierces well behind the scenes in this work, and admirably strips away some of the clothes on that request, to discover not only the nature of the command, but, equally important, the rationale of the respondents.

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LAWRENCE CLAYTON

Los virreyes españoles en América durante el gobierno de la casa de Austria. México. 5 vols. *Perú.* 7 vols. Edited by LEWIS HANKE with CELSO RODRÍGUEZ. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 1976–80. Notes. Appendixes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 329, 314, 336, 315, 302; 296, 284, 287, 306, 296, 318, 246. Paper.

In the 1960s Lewis Hanke outlined the ambitious goal of compiling documentation about the viceroys of New Spain and Peru during the years of Hapsburg rule. After more than a decade's labor, the last of twelve volumes containing the promised material has appeared, thus making available sources cited earlier in his *Guía de las fuentes en el Archivo General de Indias* (reviewed in *HAHR*, May 1978).

Hanke has provided about 1,600 pages on the viceroys of New Spain and just over 2,000 pages on those of Peru. Five volumes are devoted to Mexico's viceroys from the celebrated Antonio de Mendoza to the Conde