

'Misunderstood Love': Children and Wet Nurses, Creoles and Kings in Lima's Enlightenment¹

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'The creole,' Juan Pablo Viscado y Guzmán wrote in a 1781 letter, 'far from being abhorred' by the non-white majority of the New World, 'is respected, and what is more even loved . . . Born among Indians, [creoles] are suckled by their women . . . and they have become almost the same people (*polopo*).'² Viscado, a Peruvian Jesuit exiled in Italy, addressed these comments to a British consul. His letter was an attempt to persuade the English to send troops to fuel the Túpac Amaru II rebellion, which had set the Andes ablaze in the years 1780–82. In this and other epistolary writings, the Jesuit repeatedly argued that Spanish American creoles had fostered an intimacy with the Indian population because, born and raised together, they shared customs and attitudes, not least of which was a mutual resentment of colonial rule. When Viscado composed his famously revolutionary 'Letter to Spanish Americans' 10 years later, the theme of childhood recurred as a central trope. He portrayed Spain alternately as a 'distant father' and as a 'perverse guardian, who is accustomed to living in pride and opulence at the expense of his ward.' America was a 'son' who would be 'a fool if in the conduct of his concerns he always waited for the decision of his father.' 'The son,' he proclaimed, 'is set free by natural right.' In his closing remarks, Viscado rallied his compatriots across the Atlantic to independence, to form 'one great family of brothers' (Viscado y Guzmán [1810] 2002, 72, 81–82, 85).

Employing family metaphors to describe political society was unique neither to Viscado nor to his historical moment. The Jesuit plucked his characterization of an independent Spanish America as a fraternity from the dominant discourses of the Age of Revolution. Lynn Hunt, for one, has described the collapse of the *ancien régime* in France as a Freudian 'family romance' in which regicide was tantamount to patricide and in which revolutions created nations comprised of citizen-brothers (1992; also see Burrows and Wallace 1972; Fliegelman 1982; Yazawa 1985; Pateman 1988).

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This was the radical Enlightenment variant on an entrenched political ideology—the early modern notion that European monarchs ruled child-subjects, that the authority of kings was as natural as the authority of fathers (Dwyer Amussen 1988; Merrick 1993). Indeed, in Spain and in its colonies, ideologies of royal paternalism reached peak intensity during the second half of the eighteenth century (Graham 1972; Goldwert 1978; Anna 1982; MacLachlan 1988, xxi, 1–19, 256; Elliot 1989, 7–8). Under the Spanish Bourbon kings Charles III (1759–88) and Charles IV (1788–1808), the traditional Hapsburg representation of the king as father appeared time and again as a legitimating metaphor for new policy, particularly the social reforms that thrust royal authority deeper into the colonies and deeper into the lives of imperial subjects (Reyes Leoz 1988).

Viscardo's metaphors were not, then, exceptional. However, in employing these metaphors, he faced a problem of kinship that was uniquely colonial. As Ann Laura Stoler (1997, 150) has pointed out, scholars of colonial Africa, Asia, and the Americas can extract 'a common thread' from these diverse settings, 'namely that racialized "Others" invariably have been compared and equated with children' (also see Mehta 1997, 68–70, 76). When, in his 1781 letter, Viscardo replaced a colonial history of paternalistic domination—perpetrated by peninsular and creole alike—with a fraternal kinship between creoles and Indians, he was in fact repositioning the branches of kinship between creoles and Spanish America's non-white masses on a new family tree.

Like Viscardo, creole intellectuals in the Spanish empire struggled to reconcile Enlightenment philosophies, paternalistic Bourbon-era social policies and traditional colonial caste hierarchies at the end of the eighteenth century.³ Also like Viscardo, they looked to the domestic intimacy between creoles and non-white wet nurses as the source of a certain kind of family proximity. But, unlike Viscardo, creole elites living in the Peruvian capital city of Lima would not so easily claim fraternity with the non-white masses.

Revolutionary currents ran through the old channels of family metaphors during the last half-century of Spanish rule, producing a creole family predicament. Creole men occupied an increasingly uncertain place in emergent Enlightenment political discourses on race, patriarchal governance and monarchy. Traditionally perched at the top of the colonial caste hierarchy as slaveholders and land owners, officials and priests, these native-born *españoles* were paternal figures, and their position depended on guarding the racial order of colonial society. Yet in emergent European natural histories, which equated race with place, creoles were portrayed as child-like racial subordinates who had been corrupted and stunted by their New World environs. Late colonial transformations in the family model of governance, especially the rise of fraternal discourses of the type that Viscardo embraced, would only serve to further destabilize the creole position as colonial patriarchs.

This article shows that creoles' racialized family predicament originated not only from revolutionary strains of Enlightenment political thought or from Eurocentric world histories. It also sprang from Spanish royal policy. Bourbon kings and their

advisers served as an important wellspring of new philosophies of childhood and, concomitantly, domestic and imperial governance. Beginning around 1770, the crown implemented a series of self-proclaimed 'enlightened' social reform projects in the American colonies, including the reform and creation of institutions for youths, jurisdictional changes giving royal courts more legal sway over domestic matters, and policies on foundlings and wet nursing. The revitalized language of royal paternalism that ran through these rulings increasingly cast creoles in the role of loyal children of an absolutist Spanish father king and worked in tandem with the racial philosophies of the European Enlightenment to strain the metaphorical link between Spanish royal paternalism and creole racial paternalism.

As we shall see, Spanish American elites successfully resisted a series of Bourbon policies on children that threatened the traditional patriarchal ordering of colonial society. But the creole family predicament spurred more than opposition to social reform. In articles on child rearing practices published in Lima's late colonial newspapers, the creole literati also produced Enlightenment thought on children, pedagogies, and race, and they wrestled to fit the loving relationships their offspring forged with non-white women into evolving family metaphors. Lima's creole family predicament was ultimately much more than a struggle over how children should be raised. It was a wrenching process of re-evaluating the colonial social order itself, of facing the possibility that creoles had become more akin to the women who nursed them than to the paternal king who ruled them.

Extinguishing Differences by 'Diffusing the Lights': Enlightened Bourbon Social Reform

'Second conquest.' 'New imperialism.' 'Uncertain and incomplete.' 'Defensive modernization.' The various terms attached to the sprawling economic, military, and administrative measures collectively known as 'the Bourbon Reforms' reflect historians' latest conclusions about the royal policies themselves: the measures were sometimes coherent but often contradictory, sometimes part of larger imperial plans yet at other times improvised (see, for example, Lynch 1986, 7; MacLachlan 1988; Lynch 1989, 254; Rodríguez O. 1998, 5). And where once the official story of the late eighteenth century was a tale of late colonial economic rejuvenation and rational defense policy, in the last three decades historians have provided example after example of regionally disarticulated royal measures that produced uneven results (Barbier 1977; Kueth 1986; Fisher 1997; Stein and Stein 2003). It is precisely because there was no single ideological lynchpin holding the reforms together, the new story goes, that a weak, grasping Spanish state forced creoles to thwart or 'water down' one ill-conceived or ad hoc policy after another until they finally reached the exhausted point of political alienation from colonial rule.⁴ Thus quite ironically and unintentionally, an inchoate bundle of royal reform policies produced a relatively uniform political consequence in the colonies.

The Bourbon program involved more than economic or administrative measures; it also comprised pointedly *social* policies concerning hygiene, popular culture, education, and even household governance. Apart from the issue of Bourbon marriage legislation, social policies have only recently sparked scholarly interest (Walker 1996; O'Phelan Godoy 1999; Vinson 2001; Arrom, 2000). This strain of scholarship suggests that colonial elites received Bourbon policy on issues like marriage, race or legitimacy in much the same way that they reacted to other centralizing measures. The upper classes proved especially wary of those reforms, such as legislation granting certain subjects the natal status of 'legitimate' or forcing them to abandon ostentatious Baroque burials, which threatened to shake traditional hierarchies (Twinam 1999; Voekel 2002).

Yet if we momentarily turn our attention away from colonial reaction and toward royal intention, it becomes clear that, rather than comprising a sphere of reform altogether separate from crown policies on trade or administrative centralization, Bourbon social measures complemented a broader royal vision—one that I maintain should be characterized as enlightened absolutism. Even if they were not always perfectly consistent in their legislation, the Bourbon kings certainly did not fumble for ideological inspiration with their social reforms. Indeed, as historian Scarlett O'Phelan Godoy has argued, by focusing on social rather than political and economic policies it is obvious that the Bourbons initiated an 'integrated project' based on 'orchestrated objectives' (O'Phelan Godoy 1999a, 8; also see O'Phelan Godoy 1996, 309–10).

Ideological elements that we have come to associate with the diverse political and cultural movement known as the 'Enlightenment' were particularly evident in a central subset of the social reform process—a new attentiveness to children and youths. The goal was to create orderly clans that churned out children who would one day become educated, economically productive adult subjects. To achieve this goal, Bourbon kings and royal officials outlined social policies using physiocratic blueprints to reduce childhood mortality, new pedagogies that promoted rational education, and Enlightenment-era ideas about childhood as an innocent stage of life closer to nature than adulthood when reason could be nurtured by experience (Ariès 1960; deMause [1974] 1988; Shorter 1975; Stone 1977; Badinter 1980; Wilson 1984; Hiner and Hawes 1991; Cunningham 1995; Cox 1996).⁵

To describe the Bourbon kings as 'enlightened' many run against conventional wisdom concerning eighteenth-century Spain. Many scholars continue to measure Spain politically and intellectually against other Western European countries, and it usually comes up short. It has been described as religiously 'superstitious'; 'ideologically hesitant'; 'backward'; 'incomplete' (Noel [1990] 1993, 120; McClelland 1991; Fisher 1997; also see Aldridge 1971; Equipo Madrid 1988). Indeed, one Spanish historian has called the reign of Charles III 'absolutismo sin luces,' ['absolutism without Enlightenment'] (Sánchez-Blanco 2002).

To draw too fine a distinction between the radical Enlightenment and Spanish enlightened absolutism, however, risks falling into a teleological trap in which all

political and cultural developments in the eighteenth century must lead to the demise of the Old Regime and all economic measures must lead to an Industrial Revolution in order to be labeled 'enlightened' (Whitaker [1942] 1961, 5–6; Gordon 2001, 1–6). It should be remembered that the Enlightenment was a multifaceted cultural and intellectual movement that produced discussion, debate and criticism more than an orthodoxy (Gordon 2001). And it was neither coeval nor coterminous with revolutionary thought. Monarchies in France, England, the Germanys, and czarist Russia sponsored enlightened projects ranging from direct challenges to traditional epistemologies and institutions to more modest attempts to correct or tweak long-standing economic and political models (Scott 1990; also see Carey 1981).

During the period, some inhabitants of Spain and the colonies emerged, jittery from cafes and dizzy from discussing newspaper articles in afternoon salons, to form the Habermasian public sphere that served as petri dishes for liberal civil society (Herr 1958, 194–99; Domínguez Ortiz 1990b, 187–93; Zegarra Flórez 1999). Yet throughout eighteenth-century Europe, nobles as well as a nascent 'bourgeoisie' frequented such new spaces of sociability (Melton 2001, 12). Furthermore, the ideas generated within the enlightened public sphere were not always formulated in opposition to the Old Regime. Similarly, the Spanish empire's enlightened few who gathered to form economic societies or published newspapers in Madrid and in colonial cities like Lima often were aristocrats, and the key figures of the imperial '*ilustración*' were often servants of the state—practical types christened with the unromantic name of *proyectistas*.⁶

From their influential positions as advisers to the Bourbons, *proyectistas* encouraged social policies that infused the rearing and control of the empire's children with a deep political importance quite characteristic of Enlightenment thought. Spanish policy makers embraced scientific methods in statecraft, the replacement of received knowledge with experimentation and natural observation, and a reconfigured state relationship with the Church and religion. These new ideas often made an official debut in absolutist policies, particularly those that expressed an invigorated ideology of royal paternalism. Thus the Spanish Enlightenment did not have to be aimed at dismantling monarchy or even the Church (see Voekel 2002) to have a dramatic effect on the old colonial order.

In turn, colonial elites were far more than conservative reactionaries who swatted away the volley of disparate laws and measures weakly lobbed from Madrid. The colonial population was actively engaged with the broader political and cultural questions of the day. Multiple sectors of colonial society—from influential Spanish government officials traveling through the colonies, to Indian leaders and ordinary peasants and plebeians—shaped reform policy, articulated enlightened versions of world history or advanced local versions of new philosophies of authority in courts (for example, see Andrien 1998; Fisher 2000, 161–62; Cañizares-Esguerra 2001; Serúlnikov 2004). And in Lima, many creole intellectuals and royal officials saw themselves as 'enlightened' (*ilustrados*). They debated and reformulated new pedagogies and approaches to childhood; they read, admired, and critiqued even

the works of Europe's radical *philosophes* as well as masterworks of the Spanish Enlightenment. They also celebrated many of the crown's reform policies, hoping that the king could contain the potential dissolution of their own control over the city by vesting more power in parents and in a paternal secular state. And quite significantly, local officials often crafted their own enlightened social measures without prompting from Madrid.

But, of course, particularly after the French Revolution, *ilustrados* throughout Spain's empire realized that powerful political metaphors lay nestled inside new pedagogies. For when Rousseau wrote on education in his wildly popular *Emile*, the children he described were stand-ins for royal subjects. And when Rousseau proclaimed in *The Social Contract* that, at a certain stage, 'children must be released from the obedience that they owe to the father,' the implication for monarchies was obvious (Rousseau [1762] 1990, 182; also see Badinter 1980, 132–43).

Thus Spanish intellectuals like Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos attempted to make selective use of the practical tenets of contemporary ideas about youth and education without endorsing their anti-monarchical and democratic political implications.⁷ Jovellanos promoted rational methods of child rearing that were in many ways no different from those that his radical contemporaries advanced. Nevertheless, he still proclaimed that while individuals theoretically may be born equal, 'inequality is not only necessary but essential to civil society,' and he condemned revolutionaries as 'enemies of all religion and all sovereignty' ([1799] 1987, 94–95). In short, Spanish *proyectistas* pressed Enlightenment pedagogies into service for the crown rather than revolution, into traditional forms of social hierarchy rather than into new models of fraternal equality among citizens. The Spanish monarchy, in turn, set about producing highly paternalistic reform legislation that could transform the greatest possible number of colonial children into productive workers for a new, revenue-driven, centralized state.

After the Jesuit expulsion of 1767, programs to reform Lima's educational institutions targeted a broader array of urban youths than had traditionally received education and occupational training. The 1771 creation of Lima's Poor House, which interned vagrant and orphaned youths and widows, showcased the Bourbon campaign to promote utility by tapping potential citizen-producers. The Poor House generated royal correspondence, petitions, and items in the local press that brimmed with paternal metaphors. Commentators reflecting on the establishment of the Poor House acclaimed their own love of the 'patria,' meaning alternately Peru and Spain, and the 'paternal love' of the king, who was the 'true Father of the Patria.'⁸

Paternalistic language also flowed through an early nineteenth-century royal vaccination campaign, which paraded Spanish orphans who had been exposed to smallpox through the Americas, using their blood to inoculate the colonial population. These children arrived in Lima in 1805 to provide transfusions for Lima's own orphaned children and the inhabitants of its Indian district.⁹ In a speech given at the Royal University of San Marcos in Lima to celebrate the event, the Peruvian physician José Hipólito Unánue contrasted the royal paternalism at work in

the vaccination campaign with slave revolution in Haiti, where 'colonial blood runs in torrents, spilled by implacable barbarous hands' (Unánue 1807). Peruvians, he proclaimed, although

busy burying the children smallpox kills . . . can proclaim that Lord Charles IV is the father of Americas . . . Friends, the KING, your lord and father, said to the poor savages, I send you this remedy that will free you from smallpox . . . Just as the paternal cares of our good monarch are engraved in the breasts of our rustic Indians, they are [engraved too] on the chest of our most cultured citizens.

To Unánue, the monarch's policies involved circulating Spanish blood through the veins of colonial orphans and 'poor savages,' creating a figurative consanguinity between non-white subjects and the Father King. The Bourbon vaccination campaign was more than a scientific experiment in enlightened absolutism; it was a lifesaving antidote for race rebellion and anti-colonial revolution.

Creoles found it easy to applaud the king's magnanimity to his non-white subjects when they considered Bourbon social policy as social control policy. It was more difficult, however, to accept educational programs like the establishment of the Colegio de Nobles Americanos that treated all of the empire's children with a dose of social parity. In 1792 Charles IV announced plans to establish a secondary school for 'creole noble' male adolescents in the Spanish city of Granada.¹⁰ Importantly, the Colegio would admit 'the children and descendants of pure Spanish Nobles, born in the Indies . . . *without excluding* the children of Caciques and Indian Nobles, nor of Noble Mestizos' (emphasis mine). The purpose of establishing the school, where students were to 'rapidly progress' through studies in theology, military arts, law, and politics, was that 'nothing is as important as the universal diffusion of *las luces* [literally, "the lights," or the Enlightenment], and in no way can this be assured except by perfecting the system of human studies in the growing generation'.

Lima's creole newspaper, *Mercurio Peruano*, published the king's announcement along with an approving commentary on providing 'the youth of the Americas the education necessary for the man and citizen.' Its editors feted Charles IV as 'Peacemaker of his Pueblos, the restorer of letters . . . Father of America' and lauded the school's opening as a signal that 'trying to find differences between the children of the same father is in harm and dishonor to the State' and an 'odious rivalry'. But the editors stumbled over the provision that made the school open to mestizos as well as creoles and Indian nobility. They referred only to the opportunity the king gave 'the Noble Indian' to enroll in the school, regarding it as a recompense for 'fatigues of his efforts,' and made no comment on the king's decision to accept mestizo students.

As we shall repeatedly see here, Lima's elite population seemed far less threatened by indigenous sectors of society than by the city's mixed race and slave masses. This was, in part, due to sheer demographics. Lima claimed a relatively small indigenous sector, which made up only between 7 and 11 percent of the population in the eighteenth century. Yet the city had undergone significant population growth during

the eighteenth century, and more than one foreign observer noted the diminishing proportion of white inhabitants of Lima (Cangas [1770] 1997, 56–59; Lanuzo y Sotelo [1738] 1995, 106). In fact, the proportion of city inhabitants categorized as belonging to the ‘pure’ castes—African, Indian, and white/Spanish—dropped, overtaken by a growing population of mixed-race city residents. This mixed-race population was increasingly likely to be free rather than enslaved.¹¹

Thus it was the inclusion of mestizo pupils on the school’s admission roster that elicited uncomfortable silence. In fact, other laws that tended equally to all imperial children without distinguishing between the increasingly varied castes of colonial society drew outright protest from the colonial elite. In reforms treating the issues of marriage, slaves, and foundlings, the Bourbon crown failed to institute policies that would both transform the greatest number of children into productive subjects of the empire and preserve the integrity of the colonial caste system.

Charles III’s 1776 Pragmatic Sanction on Unequal Marriages is perhaps the best-studied Bourbon social policy that targeted minors (Martínez-Alier 1974; Rípodaz Ardanaz 1977; Gutiérrez 1985; Socolow 1989; Gutiérrez 1991; Saether 2003). The ruling required all children under the age of 25 to obtain elders’ consent in order to marry, and if children married ‘unequally’ or over elders’ ‘rational’ objections, elders were permitted to disinherit them or deny their daughters dowries.¹² The references to ‘inequality’ in the sanction might seem to be direct references to racial inequality, and, indeed, Patricia Seed (1989) has argued that the king was attempting to halt miscegenation in colonial society. Yet a close reading of the Pragmatic Sanction reveals that the crown was more concerned with asserting local secular jurisdiction over marriage than with dictating which castes could form unions with one another.¹³ In fact, the king failed to define both ‘rational’ grounds for objecting to children’s marriage choice and ‘equality’ between partners.

In the 1778 edict extending the Pragmatic Sanction to Spain’s American colonies, the king did include clauses addressing the applicability of his ruling to different castes of colonial subjects.¹⁴ However, these exceptions, far from exposing a racial motivation for the ruling, instead displayed a notable lack of sensitivity to the racial situation in the colonies. The edict equated most inhabitants of African descent with slaves and characterized all Indians as migrating tribute-payers who would face great difficulty in locating their parents to obtain consent (Rípodaz Ardanaz 1977, 286). In fact, the Pragmatic Sanction produced a great deal of confusion when applied to the colonies, in part because of these racial exceptions, and in part because the edict’s vague language and silence on several legal matters opened a Pandora’s box of questions in the colonial setting.¹⁵

In response to the uncertainties colonial officials registered about his father’s ruling, in 1803 Charles IV issued another royal *cédula* intended to clear up the confusion.¹⁶ In this order, the king lowered the age at which children were considered minors for the purposes of marriage, but stated that all of these newly defined minors of age, ‘of whatever category (*clase*) of the State [to which] they pertain,’ were required to seek their elders’ consent to marry. Despite the removal of all racial

exceptions to the ruling, colonial officials still pushed the king and the Council of Indies to address specifically the subject of interracial marriages. The Archbishop of Buenos Aires protested that the updated ruling still did not suffice ‘in countries where *negros* and *mulatos* of all classes abound.’ Given the complex racial situation in the colonies produced by miscegenation, he argued, releasing older children from the need to obtain parental consent was dangerous.¹⁷

The Council remained reluctant to issue a blanket ruling about mixed-race marriages, and its ministers responded that, in any situation where a noble subject of ‘known [*notoria*] clean blood’ wished to marry someone of ‘another caste,’ local secular courts should hear the case. But ‘inequality’ was still to be determined by local officials according to regional custom rather than on the basis of an abstract or universal set of caste-based qualifications. It was not until 1805 that the Council issued a decree that indicated that African descent could be argued as a basis for ‘inequality’ (Saether 2003, 508). For almost three decades, the Pragmatic Sanction on Unequal Marriages was, from the crown’s perspective, intended to align the institution of matrimony with the objectives of monarchical authority rather than to prevent race mixing.

While colonial elites and officials were clearly frustrated by royal reticence to rule specifically on the matter of race in marriage, they would mount even more vehement opposition against Charles IV when he instituted royal policies that aimed to strengthen local courts’ supervision of the domestic governance of slaves. In a 1789 royal instruction on slavery, the king intended to restate existing laws on the master-slave relationship in order to ensure that slaves were ‘useful.’¹⁸ In the edict, the king made only a weak gesture toward reinforcing masters’ paternal authority over slaves when he briefly treated slaves’ responsibilities, which consisted only of ‘venerating masters as *padres de familia*.’ But his real concern was that masters uphold their responsibilities to slaves. The instruction detailed masters’ duties to feed, clothe and educate the slaves under their dominion—particularly the slave children—as well as to provide them work assignments and punishment that corresponded to their ages. Although the code was not designed as new legislation, it did contain a provision that reminded masters of their responsibility to provide slave children with basic support (*alimentos*) in the form of food, shelter, and clothing. This provision, coupled with the king’s reiteration of slaves’ basic rights to sue masters for mistreatment, provided an aperture in Lima’s court system. The parents of slave children in Lima began to sue masters for recompense for the time and money they had spent rearing their own children (Premo forthcoming).

Precisely because the instruction had galvanized slaves to sue masters, slaveholders throughout the empire produced litigation of their own, flooding the Council of Indies with apocalyptic tales of how the king’s standardization of work and punishment might unleash massive slave insubordination. More to the point, the New Orleans Cabildo reported that slaves were filing into the municipal court with ‘infinite lawsuits that excited their natural disquiet and rebellious nature’ (Lucena Samoral 1996, 19, 21, 112–23). In response to these protests and on the advice of the

Council of Indies, the king retracted the ruling only six years after the Instruction was published. He was forced to acknowledge that he had overreached when asserting royal supremacy in monitoring masters' treatment of slaves.

To the colonial elite, a 1794 ruling that granted all foundlings in the empire the status of 'legitimate' children represented another royal misstep regarding colonial notions of childhood, equality, and caste.¹⁹ In the ruling, Charles IV stated that, because foundlings 'lack knowledge [about] and the care of their natural parents,' 'it falls to my dignity and Royal authority to consider them as my own sons and daughters.' The king believed most foundlings were victims of family poverty, not the 'bastards, spurious children and the products of incest and adultery' that they had been believed to be. Thus they were to be considered the legitimate children of the king himself, and thus claimed the honors of legitimate children and nobles as a kind of new birthright. In practical terms, this meant they could use their new status as a royal admission ticket to enter exclusive schools, religious institutions, and the military.

The 1794 ruling was a model of enlightened absolutist legislation on children. It exhibited a sensibility that infancy was a critical stage of life and a deep concern with the detrimental effects of being raised by wet nurses. The ruling's provisions closely paralleled the arguments of continental physiocrats, such as those Claude Piarron de Chamousset had advanced in his 1756 *Mémoire politique sur les enfants*. Indeed, the legislation was modeled after other royal absolutist programs to lower vertiginously high rates of infant mortality. For example, beginning in the 1760s, French physiocrats, physicians, and statesmen had urged Louis XVI to promote improvements in infant care through programs to lower infant mortality and the licensing of wet nurses (Badinter 1980, 128–29; Sussman 1982, 19–20; Clément 1983). The Spanish king, too, fretted over the use of wet nurses for foundlings in Spain (Bonells 1786; Badinter 1980; Sussman 1982, 27–29). He blamed the common practice of sending urban infants to rural wet nurses for the stunning number of deaths among foundlings, and he designed the 1794 ruling in large measure to slow population decline by eradicating the practice. He referred to wet nurses' tendency to suckle several children at once (presumably for maximum income) as an insalubrious strain on the health of infants, and he was convinced that the fact that the women kept the children until the advanced ages of six and seven years old meant that, during this period, the children were 'lost to the state.'²⁰

When Charles IV claimed these children as his own legitimate wards, he ultimately was in step with broader Enlightenment absolutist projects aimed at foundlings and infants, even if by granting legitimacy status to abandoned children he went farther than his absolutist counterparts ever had in their own legislation. All of these Enlightenment underpinnings in Spanish royal policies regarding abandoned children were evidence of what historian Joan Sherwood calls a 'new paternalism' in which the 'foundling was seen not as a stain of family honor' but as a 'component of the state separate from the family—a unit to be utilized for the public good' (Sherwood 1988, 101).

However, just as with the Pragmatic Sanction on Marriage, the Bourbon king had failed to consider the racial ramifications that this new paternalism would have for vast areas of his empire. Presuming foundlings to be legitimate would be far less disruptive in the mother country than in the colonies, where the political legitimacy of Spanish rule rested heavily on legitimacy as a natal/racial status. Indeed, the ability to prove lineage tracing back to Europe was precisely what endowed the colonial elite with social precedence. Lima's elites thus opposed the king's new inclusive treatment of foundlings, insulating their ranks and institutions against the newly legitimated foundlings.

The director of Lima's School of Navigation refused to accept the city's foundlings in his institution.²¹ In 1801, don Juan José de Cavero, the director of the city's foundling home, the Casa de Niños Expósitos, attempted to use his young inmates' new status to enroll them in the exclusive school for nautical studies. The director of the School of Navigation objected and pointed out that the 1794 ruling exempted any institution that required its entrants prove they were the progeny of 'true marriages.' He argued that, according to his school's constitution, pupils admitted to the school were to be not only legitimate but also 'indispensably white.' The foundlings of the Casa, he suggested, may have been 'legitimate' according to the 1794 ruling, but they remained the social equals not of white children but of commoners. He scoffed that the foundlings spent their time 'rubbing shoulders with servants,' mixing with ordinary plebeians (notably the wet nurses who nursed them for a stipend), and 'beating the streets asking for alms.'

Officials who, like the director of the School of Navigation, were responsible for educating white elites might have most vehemently rejected the ruling, but they were not alone. The director of the local school for sons of Indian nobles also worried about the leveling of traditional caste distinctions and waged a decades-long battle against the director of Lima's foundling home over their students' symbolic placement in the Plaza Mayor during public events. The Indian school's director was dismayed that his 'noble' pupils stood below the foundlings when the public gathered for *autos de fe*, bullfights and public processions. The physical placement of his students, who were 'illustrious vassals,' indicated a 'diminished [social] position' relative to abandoned children, whom he equated with the 'lowliest plebeians.'²²

Even while jockeying to elevate his students' status over Indian youths at public events or fighting to enroll them in exclusive schools, the director of the foundling home himself expressed doubts about the 1794 royal ruling, albeit doubts of a different nature. Juan José de Cavero published some of his correspondence with Lima's archbishop, in which they contradicted the king's assertion that infant abandonment was the result of poverty rather than promiscuity. During Cavero's tenure as director of the Casa de Niños Expósitos, which began just after the 1794 ruling, the number of infants abandoned at the door of the Casa soared. Cavero believed that most of these children were the progeny of immoral unions, infants whose parents possessed sufficient means to support them (Cavero 1811).

Although Cavero retreated into the notion that foundlings were degraded by their parents' sins rather than race, his protests reveal how colonial elites from a broad social spectrum in Lima detected in the 1794 edict a troubling tendency to stress the equal lot of children by means of their shared innocence, as well as a reckless royal disregard for proof of origins. To the creole elite, the equalizing tendencies of the edict held the potential to raze the very socio-economic pillars of colonial hierarchies. And, in some places, they had proof that the edict could undo that most basic of colonial institutions: forced Indian labor. According to Cynthia Milton, Indian children in Ecuador were increasingly labeled as foundlings and thus ascribed the status of 'legitimate' after the 1794 ruling. On this basis they were exempted from mandatory labor duty over the loud protests of local elites (Milton 2002, 315–24). Instead of innocence by virtue of youth, colonial elites repeatedly underscored the 'danger' inherent in children of unknown origin. Rather than equality, colonial elites sought to reinforce the inequity built into the colonial social structure and to preserve traditional means of identifying children's status.

Just as with the Pragmatic Sanction on Marriage and the 1789 Royal Instruction on slavery, local elites demanded that the Bourbon state clarify the racial implications of the policy on foundlings. But rather than refer the matter to local courts as they had with the ruling on inequality in marriage, members of the *Cámara* in Madrid recoiled as early as 1797, refusing to actively enforce the royal fiat (Twinam 1999, 303). By 1805, when a case concerning a foundling's admission to Mexico's *Colegio de Abogados* reached the justices, they decided that considering all foundlings to be legitimate was ultimately incompatible with the promotion of caste order in the colonies.²³ The ministers referred to foundlings as potentially the offspring 'of punishable and damnable sexual relations or of dark quality and infected origin.'

Many Bourbon social reforms, therefore, followed a familiar pattern. The Spanish king wrote edicts that harnessed elements of Enlightenment thought to social policies aimed at children and youths. Time and again, the policies sidestepped the issue of race to ensure that no young subject was lost to the royal exchequer. And, consistently, these policies were channeled through an ideology of crown paternalism.

The reaction of local elites in each instance also followed a familiar pattern. In their responses to each ruling, they protested that reform policies concerning youths were too inclusive and failed to differentiate among colonial castes. A new paternalism, they continually reminded the king, could not be applied universally to all children in the empire without careful consideration of traditional racial and social hierarchies. It was within this dialectic of enlightened absolutist reform and local elite reaction that Lima's creole intellectuals began to reflect on what emerging ideas regarding children, equality, and paternal authority conveyed about their own political and racial kinship to Spain.

The Creole Family Predicament

Articles about wet nurses filled the periodicals of late colonial Lima. Even the public notices (*avisos*) section in Lima's newspapers gave evidence of the common practice of sending *español* children out to be nursed by non-white women. For example, on 17 November 1790, the *Diario de Lima* announced that a 17 year-old *negra criolla*, described as 'healthy and robust' and who had 'five months' worth of breast milk,' was available for hire at the address 88 calle Matajudios.²⁴ Tucked in with these advertisements were a number of announcements for the sale of slaves. If they were female, nursing their own offspring and could nurse owners' children or be hired out, they fetched a higher price. 'Servant with [nursing] offspring,' one ad reads, '500 pesos.'²⁵

The publishers of these papers were acutely aware that their advertisements reflected certain features of the city's changing social order. *Avisos*, no less than any other aspect of social and political life in the colonies, became the target of satire. The *Diario* even occasionally ran bogus announcements, like those it published on 19 October 1791. 'An ancient old man (*hombre rancio*),' one ad reads, 'seeks a teacher to think for his children.'

The use of non-white wet nurses also became a special object of biting satirical attention, as well as sober concern, in Lima's late colonial press. In fact, wet nursing developed into a lightning rod for political commentary about the racial order of late colonial society. Local papers began to focus on the intimacy forged between colonial servants and creole children and published articles in which authors wondered if wet nursing in particular had become a degenerative force that corrupted and stunted the colonies. The idea was that the milk passed from non-white subordinates to creole infants debased American-born Spaniards, making them, in essence, the same as the women who suckled them.

If Michel Foucault ([1978] 1990) saw the eighteenth century in Europe as an era of increased adult scrutiny of children's sexuality, Ann Laura Stoler has expanded the observation for colonial settings, asserting that this monitoring of children had everything to do with the highly colonial concerns of miscegenation, acculturation, and degeneration. She comments on colonial policymakers' 'overwhelming concern with the dispositions of very small children and the malleabilities of their minds. All attended to the importance of breeding self-disciplined children and to the dangers of servants in the home' (Stoler 1997, 152). Anxiety over sexual relations between servants and colonial elites was one of the reasons that the proximity between servants and children in the colonial household moved to the center of colonial concerns, but it was only part of a more generalized preoccupation with what John Locke had described in the late seventeenth century as domestic 'contagion' (Locke [1693] 1964, 47).

The newspapers appearing in Lima at the end of the century served as a site for grappling with precisely such notions about colonial servants and the potential corruption of their young charges. Enlightenment thinkers in Europe disparaged wet

nursing as harmful in terms of education and hygiene, and self-proclaimed *ilustrados* and intellectuals in Peru generated their own articulations of the criticism.²⁶ Ideas about the degenerative influence of nursemaids were not, of course, completely novel to those living at the end of the eighteenth century. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish writers such as Juan Luis Vives ([1523] 1995), Damián Carbón ([1541] 1995), and Juan Gutiérrez de Godoy (1629) had encouraged mothers to nurse their own children. In the event that wet nurses were to be chosen, these early modern authors stressed the importance of selecting women of ‘good customs’ and ‘appearance’—racially and religiously coded language to be sure. But the concern over wet nurses that was reawakened in late-colonial Lima was more than a mere revival of these earlier admonitions. It was the product of shifting family models of political legitimacy and a coalescing image of creoles as racially degraded and politically stunted.

Just as European Enlightenment philosophers and scientists disparaged wet nursing, they also leveled a racial and political critique of the inhabitants of the New World that contrasted the perpetual infancy of the New World to European political maturity and manhood. Europeans had long imagined America’s native inhabitants to be feminine and infantile. But in the eighteenth century this image of Indians shone with a new, scientific patina. Guillaume-Thomas Raynal’s *Histoire philosophique de . . . deux Indes*, a collaborative effort by 12 Enlightenment philosophers published in the 1770s and 80s, drew from the scientific theories of George-Louis Leclerc Comte de Buffon and Corneille de Pauw, who argued that the land mass known as the New World was relatively ‘young’ in geological time and its inhabitants biologically and culturally underdeveloped (Brading 1991, 429–30; Cañizares Esguerra 2001). In Raynal’s *Histoire*, the infantilization and emasculation of Indians had clear political connotations:

The men there are less strong, less courageous, without beard or hair, degenerate in all signs of manhood . . . The indifference of the males toward that other sex to which Nature has entrusted the place of reproduction suggests an organic imperfection, a sort of infancy of the people of America similar to that of the individuals on our continent who have not reached the age of puberty. (Quoted in Rodríguez O. 1998, 15)

The characterization of Indians in the *Histoire* bore a striking resemblance to contemporary European commentary on Lima’s creoles published elsewhere. For example, an anonymous visitor to Lima characterized creoles as ‘natural cowards and effeminate, and as a consequence weak and incapable of withstanding work with constancy’ (Descripción de la Ciudad [1774?] 1991, 287).

It was within this context that creole readers turned the pages of the *Semanario Crítico* in 1791 and discovered an invective against their child rearing practices laid out in black and white. The peninsular Franciscan priest Juan Antonio de Olavarrieta had recently arrived in Peru’s capital to publish the paper, and in it, he observed that Lima’s elite mothers passed children to wet nurses—‘foreign mothers,’ in his words.

This was no less than a 'sinful, vile commerce' through which the wet nurse transmitted 'seeds of vile corruption' to children from her breasts.²⁷ In addition to biological contamination, Olavarrieta pointed out that Lima's inhabitants had a tendency to leave the children as they grew older in the care of lower-caste women, exposing them to pernicious cultural influences. He repeated basic Enlightenment truisms dating back to Locke: these women filled children with fears of the boogeyman (*el coco*), of fairies, elves, devils, witches, and spells. Furthermore, the children of the city began speaking with a 'ridiculous' language because their vocabulary and pronunciation were ruined by 'the tendency to feign and diminish vowels that is the philosopher's stone of all wet nurses.'²⁸

The creoles of Lima's Sociedad de Amantes del País, which published the patriotic periodical *Mercurio Peruano*, bristled at Olavarrieta's article. It was not precisely that members of the Sociedad were staunch defenders of black and Indian wet nurses. It was that they recognized a damning European racial condemnation of 'españoles' born in Spanish America behind the Spanish priest's criticism of creole wet nursing practices.

Dubbing the priest '*el Frayle de las Amas de Criar*,' or 'the Wet Nurses' Priest,' writers at *Mercurio* accused Olavarrieta of attempting to reignite factionalism between creoles and peninsulars. This animosity, they said, had long since been extinguished, 'to the point that Europeans and Americans see ourselves as sons of the same father.' Creole elites in Lima enthusiastically touted the new Bourbon paternalism when it equalized their position with peninsular subjects. But the phrasing here also prefigured the words *Mercurio's* editors would use when praising the king's creation of the Colegio de Nobles Americanos, and especially its proclamation that the inclusive enrollment in the school would extinguish the 'odious rivalry' between Indians and creoles, who were 'sons' of the same Spanish Father King. Extinguishing differences among all of the king's subjects meant much more than simply asserting creoles' equality with peninsulars. Creoles only had to look around them—to their own experience with Bourbon policy, to emerging European reflections on the political and racial character of creoles, and even to the papers published in their own city—to understand that it might as easily imply creole equality with the king's non-white subjects.

The response of the Sociedad was not, however, to retreat into tradition but to announce that its members were more enlightened than the Spaniard. In an article published in *Mercurio*, it claimed that Olavarrieta was ignorant not only of the customs of the city but of Enlightenment science itself. The Sociedad accused Olavarrieta of misunderstanding its publication of priest Pedro Nolasco Crespo's observations on the properties of body fluids, an article that in part had inspired Olavarrieta's comments on the transmission of customs through the breast milk of wet nurses. 'Dear priest,' a respondent wrote, 'it would have been better if you had stayed quiet in your Monastery . . . than to have come from so far away, and gotten yourself involved in a critique of a noble and wise Country before familiarizing yourself with the [city's] streets and its customs.'²⁹

Olavarrieta wrote back. He admitted in his newspaper that his treatise on child rearing was, in fact, inspired by writings in the *Mercurio Peruano*. But he claimed that, rather than drawing from Pedro Nolasco Crespo's articles, he had written his treatise in reaction to two different letters to the *Mercurio's* editor. Olavarrieta singled out some letters to the editor that an individual assuming the pen name 'Eustaquio Filómates' had sent the creole periodical. These epistles, he claimed, had disparaged the 'honorable houses of the city,' not he.³⁰

The articles to which Olavarietta referred were satires of creole domestic life in Lima that demonstrate that the matter of child rearing was a well-understood allegory for the broader political question of Spanish colonial rule and creole racial paternalism in the age of Enlightenment. Filómates's letters were based on perhaps the most critical European literary work about Lima published during the period.³¹ The poem *Lima por dentro y fuera*, written by the Spanish poet Esteban Terralla y Landa, had vilified the city as a site of colonial decay. The character Simón Ayanque, a fictional scribe, recorded the quotidian habits of materialistic, degenerate *limeños* as they went about their lives in a city where traditional hierarchies were turned upside down (Greer Johnson 1993, 126–27). Ayanque's Lima was a nightmare of social reversals and disorder. Women ruled men, slaves ruled their masters, and children ruled adults:

You will see, then, how the children lack respect for the father,
 Calling even their own slaves 'tú' and playing with them.
 You will see how [they exchange] that 'tú' for 'tú,' the same as coppersmiths;
 You will see how that which the she's should do, the he's do,
 Since they offer their hands in exchange for a hand offered. (Terralla y Landa [1790]
 1978, 58)

Like other European authors of the age, the Spanish poet believed American-born boys to be effeminate and far from what Olavarietta would later describe in his paper as the 'robust men of solid constitution' needed for a strong state. This was because the colonial family itself was in a critical state of class, racial, gender, and generational disorder.

The reaction against the poem in Lima was fierce. Cabildo records for 1 January 1790 show that the city council offered a vote of appreciation to one don Pedro Tadeo Bravo de Rivera, who had confiscated printed copies of *Lima por dentro y fuera*. Shortly thereafter, according to nineteenth-century Peruvian historian Ricardo Palma, a crowd gathered in public and summarily set fire to prints of the poem in a grand spectacle staged at a theatrical performance (Palma [s.a.] 1957, 712).

But the idea that creole households were in crisis did not float away in the smoke of the bonfire. A year later, the *Mercurio* ran the first of Filómates's two articles. The first, 'Educación: Carta sobre el abuso de los hijos que tuteen a sus padres,' took the form of a letter to the editor, its title directly borrowed from one of Terralla y Landa's verses in *Lima por dentro y fuera*. Given the scandal surrounding the poem, it is safe

to assume that the readership of *Mercurio Peruano* would have recognized the reference.³²

The two letters Filómates crafted ‘creolized’ the Spaniard’s poem by reproducing its dystopic vision of elite domestic life. He further fictionalized Terralla y Landa’s portrait of Lima’s creole families, adding local color to his image of disorderly homes where sassy broods ruled parents, wives ruled husbands, and uppity slaves ruled masters. As in Terralla y Landa’s poem, Lima’s domestic hierarchy, and thus the entire social hierarchy of colonial Spanish America, had been turned on its head. But Filómates’s letters were a medium for satirizing not only social disorder in Lima but also the dangers of implementing Enlightenment pedagogies in colonial homes.

In the first letter, the author pointed to the very grammar household dependants used when addressing their elders as indicative of a political inversion of the gendered and generational elements of patriarchal order.³³ Filómates lamented that his daughter, Clarisa, had adopted the ‘pernicious habit’ of addressing adults with the familiar ‘tú.’ The origin of this insubordination was his mother-in-law, Democracia, who had taught her granddaughter to use the linguistic form ‘common among all classes of citizens.’ Upon hearing his young daughter freely demanding, ‘give me candy, give me this, give me that (*dáme caramelos, dáme esto, dáme*),’ Filómates finally chastised his daughter. Democracia met his reprimands by charging, ‘Your Mercy does not love your children; you are more tyrant to them than father.’ She went on, ‘Your Mercy who wants to teach others good rearing (*buena crianza*), should know first that it is audacious to attempt to correct general custom.’

Although this letter elaborated on Terralla y Landa’s criticism, it located the threats to domestic order not in the weakness of creole patriarchs but instead in the corrosive effect Enlightenment notions of equality had on traditional colonial child rearing customs. In the Filómates clan, children and women—naturally subordinate members of political society—had begun to think of themselves as equals of the father. The origin of disorder was the mother-in-law, Democracia, who accuses the father (king) of tyranny simply for attempting to establish order.

The names chosen for the family members are revealing: Filómates is a name whose parts translate into ‘child killer’; ‘Democracia’ is an obvious choice for the reviled mother-in-law; and ‘Teopiste,’ the taciturn, neglected mother, personifies religion. But ‘Clarisa’ claimed the most illustrious Enlightenment pedigree, for it was the name assigned to the heroine in the widely read novel by Englishman Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa or the History of a Young Lady* (1748)—in which the young heroine is delivered from dependence on her patriarchal family—as well as in a French woman’s 1767 literary response to the novel, Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont’s *La nouvelle Clarise, histoire véritable*.³⁴ The first of Filómates’s letters, then, was in direct dialogue with a broader Enlightenment literature in which the home, as kingdom, was the theater for the dramas associated with replacing patriarchal monarchies with societies of free and equal individuals.

But in Lima, ‘*las luces*’ were refracted through a distinctly colonial prism of racial dimensions. In a second letter to the editor, entitled ‘*Amas de leche*,’ Filómates turned

to consider another, particularly colonial danger threatening the creole family. The beleaguered patriarch described how, upon returning home from a 22-month business junket to Cuzco, he discovered that María, the once humble slave wet nurse charged with Clarisa's care, had emerged as the de facto head of the household. In fact, the girl had become so intimate with María that she slept, ate, and played with the slave, and even called her 'my mama,' displacing the affection due to her mother, Teopiste.

In this second letter, then, the source of the creole patriarchal predicament was not only the democratic leveling of colonial gender and generational hierarchies but also the proximity between races that colonial domination engendered. Filómates wrote that he appreciated the 'services of a *negra* who raises children with care and tenderness.' But he decried how the 'openness and familiarity' between creole families and the humans they owned permitted slaves to feel as though they could 'lord over (*señorear*) everyone in the family,' and he classified wet nurses' rearing as 'always a detriment to the good rearing of innocent little children.' For revolutionaries like Viscardo, the intimacy forged between non-white wet nurses and creole children was a pretext for uniting against monarchical paternalism. For Filómates, it was a reason to guard the patriarchal political order of Spanish rule.

It may be that these articles were a kind of double satire, that *Mercurio* cleverly presented the dethroned creole *pater familias* to its readers to satirize not Lima's 'real' domestic disorder but elite fears about the inversion of racial power in the city. Yet there is a niggling sense of sincerity in Filómates's attempt to identify social problems and to offer enlightened solutions, and it is in this sincerity that the creole family predicament becomes most obvious. *Mercurio* editor José Rossi y Rubi added a comment to Filómates's second letter praising the educative value of the articles and wondering, if this was the condition of Filómates's family after his absence, 'what disorders there might be in those families where the father hardly pays a bit of attention, and the mother cares not at all . . . We do not speak only of Lima: all of Peru and all of America are included in the declamations of our correspondent and our comments.'³⁵ What is more, the story the author recounted may not have been completely fictional. Jean-Pierre Clément identifies Filómates as Demetrio Guasque, an archivist of the viceregal cámara, who, like the fictional patriarch, had been absent from Lima for 22 months before returning in 1790 (Clément 1998, 2:43).

As Julie Greer Johnson has pointed out in her study of colonial Spanish American satire (1993, 9), the literary device is meant not to be didactic as much as to inspire the reader to think critically about the 'interpretative distance' between the hyperbolic image it presents and reality. Put another way, satire is only effective if it contains an element of recognized 'truth.' Filómates's letters may have been fiction, and may even have been satires of elites' racial fears, but they offered a social critique that could be achieved only by portraying elements of accepted realities about the colonial order writ large.

The *Mercurio* ran several other articles on child rearing that operated simultaneously as political commentary and as treatises on actual methods of child rearing

and education. In each of these articles, the seemingly contradictory use of European texts both for wrestling with notions of political maturity and as practical prescription for social disorder exposed the deeply ambivalent nature of Lima's creole Enlightenment.

Perhaps the most inflammatory European criticism of the American-born inhabitants of the Spanish empire was the charge that creole men were effeminate. In response to this criticism, *Mercurio* published a stinging satire, a 'Letter about queers (*maricones*),' on 27 November 1791.³⁶ The letter stirred a response from the friar Tomás de Méndez y Lachica who, under the pen name Teagnes, expressed his fear that the sardonic article would not be effective in eradicating the 'vice' of sodomy among the 'lowest class, against whom the satire, with all of its acrimony, has less force than the cautious care of justices employed in prosecuting it.' The priest took the matter both seriously and quite literally, publishing a response that set out to determine whether the feminization of men and the masculinization of women in Peru was an 'anomaly of nature,' 'defect of the climate,' or 'vice engendered through education.'

In defense of the environment of Peru, Méndez y Lachica decided that the culprit was nurture rather than nature, and he concentrated his discussion on the feminization of Peru's male children. The cause of the 'defect,' according to Méndez y Lachica, was that Peruvian boys were 'abandoned in the hands of a wet nurse.'³⁷ Echoing Locke ([1693] 1996, 38), the priest wrote that 'excessive maternal love' during early education ensured that the child 'has no other lessons than the manners of the [feminine] sex; and since in her he encounters all of the flatteries of misunderstood love, the reciprocal tenderness brings to his tender soul customs which do not conform to his condition.' Then, turning to no other than the French encyclopedist Raynal, he took inspiration from a reputed Indonesian practice recorded in the *Histoire*. Méndez y Lachica recommended that Peruvian boys, like the children of a Southeast Asian island, be removed from the women's care until the age of six or seven so that male colonial subjects would no longer be 'weak,' 'corrupted' and 'effeminate.'³⁸

Just as Filómates's letters suggested a profound fear that the use of wet nurses in elite homes could ultimately lead to the reversal of the racial, patriarchal order in colonial society, Tegan's letters revealed a lurking suspicion that creoles, these native sons of Peruvian soil, had in fact become degenerate, effeminate, and perpetual children. And in a gesture common among colonial intellectuals, he groped for a solution in the writings of the same European Enlightened philosophers that had cast the problem as 'degeneration' in the first place. Thus, even while creoles produced their own versions of enlightened thought, they found themselves infantilized objects of both European discourse and Spanish royal policy, not altogether unlike Indians had been before them. In the end, perhaps a kind of 'second conquest' did take place in Spanish America at the close of the eighteenth century, not in administrative or fiscal spheres, but here in this ideological arena of paternalistic colonial rule.

Conclusion

It has long been scholarly consensus that most creoles remained reluctant to embrace independence until the Napoleonic invasion of Spain because they were trapped between king and non-white masses. As John Lynch evocatively put it, if creoles had ‘one eye on their master, they kept the other eye on their servants’ (Lynch 1984, 29, 32; also see Flores Galindo [1988] 1991, 180–81; Anderson [1983] 2000, 48). But this did not mean that the creole elite somehow stood suspended in time, hovering above the political and ideological currents swirling through the Atlantic world. Instead, as I have attempted to demonstrate, if their enlightened philosophies on children, race, and equality were ambivalent, it was because creoles were in many ways in the very center of the storm. Early on, creoles saw the potential to be both empowered and excluded embedded in the Enlightenment’s universalistic notions of equality; they perceived in new notions of political fraternity the possibility of being both elevated and denigrated. This was a dark side of *las luces* that later revealed itself to non-whites and women when republican states walled off their access to citizenship (Mallon 1995; Earle 2000; Schultz 2001; for Europe, see Landes 1988; Melton 2001, 12; Desan 2004). And it was on full display to Indian and African colonial subjects of the new (liberal) imperialism during the twentieth century (Mehta 1997).

Admittedly, the inhabitants of Lima who published in late colonial newspapers are only a thin segment of colonial society, hardly representative of the masses of illiterate slaves and plebeians who populated the city. But the articles they wrote suggest that elite creoles lived with implications of changing ideologies of race, children, and paternal authority in their own homes. And, as Filómates’s letters express in no uncertain terms, they suspected their cohabitants too were living such transformations. Anxious that principles of equality and democracy would reach mothers-in-law and wet nurses, creoles hastily crafted plans to transform new political pedagogies into preventive domestic practices. It was as though grabbing at European child rearing philosophies and forcing them into their homes would stanch the flow of what Teagnes called the ‘reciprocal tenderness’ between creole children and non-white wet nurses.

Clearly, for creoles, the ‘reciprocal tenderness’ between colonial children and wet nurses had become the source of a severe misunderstanding. How different their views were than those advanced by Juan Pablo Viscardo, whose Enlightenment led him to envision a revolution that would produce a great Indian and creole family. But Viscardo’s utopian fantasies of fraternal caste harmony faded into obscurity for over a century (Brading 2002, 49–50). Even during his own time, Viscardo’s proclamation of the liberating natural affections between the inhabitants of Spanish America could not withstand the Enlightenment of de Pauw, Buffon, and eventually George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, whose natural histories rendered the Americas geographically young and their native inhabitants ‘unenlightened children’ (see Hegel in Chukwudi Eze 1997, 116).

Enlightened Eurocentrism was only one of the forces that pushed creoles into their late colonial family predicament. However tentative the Bourbon kings may have been in implementing social legislation, the reform process involved a conscious attempt to promote central tenants of Enlightenment philosophy. This philosophy included elements of what historians normally associate with a (less than complete) 'Spanish Enlightenment': an emphasis on rational education, utility, and a cautious degree of secularization in the name of royal centralization. But royal social reforms aimed at children also contained a variant on a notion not normally associated with the Spanish Enlightenment—the idea of equality.³⁹ In policies on marriage, slavery, and foundlings, the Bourbon monarchy utilized expansive, inclusive, and equalizing definitions of childhood in order to nurture productive, rational subjects.

The Spanish crown's failure to implement these plans successfully should not be taken as a sign of ideological inconsistency. Rather, the failure may have been due to too much consistency. In the late eighteenth century, the Bourbon kings insisted on writing social reform policy for the empire as a whole in one piece of legislation after another. In doing so, they asserted royal paternal authority at the expense of the paternal authority of colonial elites, oblivious to the ways in which enlightened social reforms were undermining foundational racial ideologies of colonial rule. Bewildered by opposition to his policies, Charles III could only see the rejection of his innovations through the lens of his own paternalistic absolutism: he scolded his subjects, who he claimed were 'like children who cry when they have to take a bath' (quoted in Hargreaves-Mawdsley 1979, 142).

There were signs in the early nineteenth century that some of Lima's creoles were growing restive and resentful toward Spanish political paternalism. During the Napoleonic crisis in 1811, a Peruvian deputy warned the Cortes assembled to take sovereignty in the king's absence that 'America is . . . no longer a child who, put to bed with promises, will forget them when he awakes' (quoted in Anna 1982, 260). Still, Peru's capital city remained the last bastion of Spanish rule in South America during the wars of Independence. The more revolutionary of enlightened creoles in the city might have entertained fantasies of equality and dreamt of their own emancipatory rite of passage from colonial domination. But they knew too that these very ideologies also held the potential to produce a dangerous denouement in which creoles would assume the role of tyrant-father rather than child-citizen. In the end, the late colonial creole family predicament would become the very political challenge of independence: to reconfigure traditional paternalistic ideologies of governance in such a way as to proclaim creoles' maturity and emancipation from Spanish tutelage without unleashing a family romance for the multitudes of colonial inhabitants who claimed no racial kinship with the Spanish Father King.

Notes

¹ Some information contained in this article will be republished in Premo (forthcoming).

- ² *'I creoli, lungi dall'essere abborriti, erano rispettati, e da molti anche amat i . . . Nati in mezzo angli'indiani, allattati dalle loro donne, . . . e divenuti quasi un medesimo popolo,'* 'J.P. Viscardo propone a John Udny [sic], que el gobierno británico ayude a Túpac Amaru desde el Río de la Plata . . . Massacarrara, 30 septiembre 1781,' in Batllori (1953, 206). All translations here are mine unless otherwise noted. In fact, I depart from Anthony Pagden (1990, 128) in translating 'popolo' as 'people' rather than 'race.' Although I believe the term did connote something of a modern conception of 'race,' the term, close to the Spanish term 'pueblo,' denoted a people of common geographical rather than only biological origins. For the historical importance of Viscardo's letter, see D. A. Brading, Introduction, in Viscardo y Guzmán (2002, 5–7).
- ³ Cañizares-Esguerra's recent work (2001) on the Spanish American Enlightenment, although primarily an intellectual history and not a study of either the Spanish state or local conditions in the colonies, makes a compelling case for the centrality of indigenous history in creole patriotic intellectual projects, inspiring some of my conclusions about the creole predicament.
- ⁴ For example, Brading (1984, 409) writes that the Bourbon reforms 'failed to form any true alliance, founded on common interest, with the trading sectors of colonial society'; Coatsworth (1982, 36) claims that, apart from certain successful economic policies, most absolutist measures were undertaken by a weak Bourbon state; MacLachlan (1988, esp. 127–30) regards the Bourbons as possessing an inflexible Enlightenment ideology that clashed with the colonial reality; Stein (1981, 7) notes that economic reforms were often based on inaccurate local information, thwarting Bourbon effectiveness; Walker and Guardino (1996, 10–43) claim that state reform policies were undermined by 'very human local agents' and failed to break the political power of local elites, who controlled politics directly and indirectly; and, finally, Stein and Stein (2003) argue that a burgeoning bourgeoisie in New Spain was the primary faction that undermined Madrid's (late) adjustments to imperial commercial policy.
- ⁵ Each of these elements can be found in a particularly illustrative piece of Bourbon legislation, a 1790 circular, or summary of royal orders, on children, the courts, and parents, 'Relación de algunos puntos de consultas de Indias' in Sánchez (1794).
- ⁶ On the noble origins of members of the emerging enlightened public sphere in Lima, see Clément (1998, 1:88). On Enlightened royal advisers in Spain, see van Kley (1996, 7) and Noel, ([1990] 1993, 125).
- ⁷ On major changes in education in Spain, and the ensuing tightrope walk between the Spanish Enlightenment and reforms for the colonies, see Whitaker ([1942] 1961) and Domínguez Ortiz (1990b, 16, 211–23). On the Enlightenment, the emerging public sphere and reforms in Spain, see Herr (1958); Domínguez Ortiz ([1978] 1990a, 488–89); and Pérez Estévez (2002, 96).
- ⁸ El Maiordomo del Hospicio de Pobres del Cercado pide se le entreguen vajo de fianza . . . los Reditos de la Obrapia, BNP, C3466, 1791; Meligario, Disertación histórico-ética sobre el Real Hospicio general de pobres de esta ciudad, y la necesidad de sus socorros, *Mercurio Peruano* (23 February 1794); *Proyecto Instructivo* (1799); Expediente promovido ante el Superior Gobierno por el Marqués de Zelada de la Fuente . . . y otros solicitando licencia para el establecimiento de unas casas escuelas . . . y la adjudicación de la casa habitación con el nombre de la Casa de los Pobres del Cercado, AGN, Superior Gobierno-Contensioso, Leg. 30, C. 940, 1799–1803. For the development of a similar institution in Mexico City, and particularly for the Bourbon king's concern that it specifically target youths, see Arrom (2000, 24, 46).
- ⁹ Libro de Reales Ordenes y Actas concernientes a la Expedición Filantrópica de la vacuna . . . 1802–1820, BNP, D 13105: Sobre establecimiento del hospital de pobres en el antiguo colegio del Cercado, AGN, Fáctica, Cercado, 180; *Minerva Peruana* (19 November 1805, 367).
- ¹⁰ Real Cédula por la qual su magestad funda un colegio de Nobles Americanos en la ciudad de Granada, *Mercurio Peruano* (26 August 1792).

- ¹¹ All statements on demography are derived from a comparison of my analysis of a sample of 659 households listed in a 1700 city census reproduced by Cook (1985) with the 1790 Plan demonstrativo de la población comprendida en el recinto de la ciudad de Lima, *Mercurio Peruano* (3 February 1791).
- ¹² Sanción Prágmatica para evitar el abuso de contraer matrimonios desiguales in Konetzke (1962, 3:404). The law states that minors of age should obtain the ‘advice and consent of the father, and in [case of] his defect, of the mother, and in absence of both, of their grandparents on both sides . . .’
- ¹³ This interpretation is often repeated in more recent scholarship. See Chaves (2000, 110–11); and Stoler (2001).
- ¹⁴ Real Cédula declarando la forma en que se ha de guardar y cumplir en las Indias la Pragmática Sanción, de 23 de Marzo de 1776 sobre contraer matrimonios, 23 March 1778 in Konetzke (1962, 3:438–42). The Sanction did provide an exception to the exceptions. Black and mixed-race militiamen who were minors of age—those ‘who distinguish themselves from the rest by reputation, good conduct and service’—were to obtain consent from military superiors.
- ¹⁵ For a detailed view of the regional reactions to the ruling see Saether (2003). Also see Consulta del Consejo de Indias sobre las dificultades que se promueven en cumplir la Real Prágmatica sobre Matrimonios, 17 February 1798 in Konetzke (1962, 3:759–66).
- ¹⁶ Before promulgation as a ‘pragmatic sanction,’ the ruling was issued as a *cédula* on 27 February 1793, and was printed in *Mercurio Peruano* (22 August 1793). Also see Ripodaz Ardanaz (1977, 273).
- ¹⁷ ‘Consulta del Consejo sobre la habilitación de pardos para empleos y matrimonios’ in Konetzke (1962, 3:826). Also note that, in his petition, the archbishop connected marriage legislation to controlling people of African descent, especially in light of the Túpac Amaru rebellion, which, he stated, was instigated by blacks ‘improperly titled mestizos’ (Konetzke 1962, 3:827).
- ¹⁸ The code is printed as ‘Instrucción sobre la educación, trato y ocupación de los esclavos’ in Konetzke (1962, 3:643–52), and as ‘Real Cédula insertando la Instrucción acerca de la educación, trato, ocupación, derechos, deberes, garantías, etc. de los esclavos’ in *Cedulario* (1929, 299–306). Also see Watson (1989, 49–50).
- ¹⁹ Real cédula expedida en Aranjuez, a 20 de enero de 1794, por la cual S. Magestad legitima a los niños expósitos, y les acuerde privilegios, ABPL, Huérfanos Antecedentes (hereafter H-A), T. 2, no. 5. The edict is also found in Para que se observe lo resuelto en favor de los Niños Expósitos, 19 February 1794, AGI, Leg. 1543, no. 179. Also see Instrucción para el cuidado de los expósitos a cargo de los obispos, 3 mayo de 1797, RAH Colección Mata Linares, Leg. CXVIII, fols. 351–61. Beginning in the 1750s, various governing bodies in both Spain and the Americas had made similar decisions that erased the presumption of illegitimacy. See Twinam (1999, 301).
- ²⁰ Real cédula expedida en Aranjuez. ABPL HA, T. 2, no. 5.
- ²¹ Autos promovidos por D. Juan José Cavero, Mayordomo de la Real Casa de Niños Expósitos, a fin de que éstos pudiesen en su oportunidad ser admitidos al estudio de la Náutica en la Escuela de Pilotos de Callao, 1801, ABPL, H-A, T. 2, no. 10.
- ²² Autos que promovió el Dr. Don Juan de Bordanave, Rector del Colegio del Príncipe, sobre que a los alumnos del d[ic]ho colegio se les señalase sitio en la plaza mayor, para ver los toros y demás fiestas reales, 1788–91, ABPL H-A, T. 2, no. 2.
- ²³ Dictamen del fiscal del Consejo de las Indias sobre admission de un expósito al exámen de abogado, 26 December 1805, in Konetzke (1962, 3:816–18).
- ²⁴ Avisos, *Diario de Lima* (17 November 1790).
- ²⁵ Avisos, *Diario de Lima* (16 January 1790). The advertisement reads ‘*Cria con cria*,’ highlighting the linguistic overlap between *criado/cria* (servant) and *criar* (to raise).
- ²⁶ Among articles on childbirth and rearing see ‘Disertación en la que se proponen las reglas que deben observar las mujeres en el tiempo de preñez,’ *Mercurio Peruano* (5 June 1791); ‘Sobre las

costumbres,' *Diario de Lima* (12 June 1791; 15 May 1791); 'Práctica general de la educación, y defectos que abraza,' *Semanario Crítico* 2 (1791). Note that the advice on birthing was intended as a corrective to the 'deplorable' practices of midwives of the 'humble sphere' who normally aided in childbirth. Claudia Rosas Lauro (1999a, 372) argues that women, and particularly mothers, were the prime audience of the *Semanario*. Also see Clément (1998, 122) and Rosas Lauro (1999b).

- ²⁷ Juan Antonio de Olavarrieta, 'Práctica general de la Educación, y defectos que abraza,' *Semanario Crítico* 6 (1790).
- ²⁸ Olavarrieta, Práctica general, *Semanario Crítico* 2 (1791).
- ²⁹ 'Justificación de la Sociedad, y del Perú,' *Mercurio Peruano* 1, no. 49 (19 June 1791).
- ³⁰ See Olavarrieta, 'Justa repulsa contra inicuas acusaciones . . . de la Real Sociedad Académica,' *Semanario Crítico*, 5 (1791, 44).
- ³¹ It is critical to note that Terralla y Landa's poem was by no means the first European account of the perceived disorder caused by the use of slave wet nurses in Lima's creole households. In an anonymous Spaniard's description of Lima from the mid-eighteenth century, the author claims that 'the Whites . . . find themselves forced to tolerate and many times defend the excesses of their slaves, either because of the money they cost or because the female slaves raise the children of their mistresses,' *Descripción de la Ciudad* ([1774?] 1991, 287).
- ³² For a study of *Mercurio Peruano*'s readership, see Clément (1998).
- ³³ Eustaquio Filómates [Demetrio Guasque?], 'Educación, o sobre el abuso de que los hijos tuteen a sus padres,' *Mercurio Peruano* 1, no. 5 (23 January 1791).
- ³⁴ For Richardson's *Clarissa*, see Fliegleman (1982, 28). On *La Nouvelle Clarisse* as female utopian response to Richardson, see Johns (2001).
- ³⁵ Eustaquio Filómates [Demetrio Guasque?], 'Amas de leche. Segunda carta de Filómates sobre la educación,' *Mercurio Peruano*, 1, no. 8 (27 January 1791).
- ³⁶ Filalaetes, 'Carta sobre los maricones,' *Mercurio Peruano* 3, no. 94 (27 November 1791).
- ³⁷ Teagnes [Fray Tomás de Méndez y Lachica], 'Carta remitida a la *Sociedad* haciendo algunas reflexiones sobre la que se contiene en el *Mercurio* núm 94 en que se pinta a los *maricones*,' *Mercurio Peruano* 4, no. 118 (19 February 1792). The phrasing in Spanish is somewhat nebulous: '*Niño abandonado a las manos de su nutriz, o sea de su propia madre . . .*' For hygiene campaigns against wet nurses during the Bourbon years in Guatemala, see Webre (2001).
- ³⁸ Teagnes, 'Carta remitida.' The separation of children from mothers was said to be practiced on the island of Celebes, in eastern Indonesia.
- ³⁹ Brading (1991, 476) detects a philosophy of Indian equality in visitor-general José de Gálvez's reforms in Mexico, and a similar creole reaction to this idea, and Voekel (2002) outlines similar fault lines between the traditional elite and enlightened religious *sensatos*, who promoted nominally egalitarian attitudes toward death and burial.

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