

Content

Appreciations — vii

Illustrations — xi

Introduction — 1

I The king – all-seeing and blind — 17

- 1 The spider in the web: Philip II and the Escorial — 17
- 2 The center's eyes and ears: cognition and communication — 22
- 3 The idea and imagery of the watchful ruler — 26
- 4 Observation and punishment: The inquisitorial legal culture — 29
- 5 Observation and reward: Distributive justice — 38
- 6 The blindness of the king and the corridors of power — 42

II Knowledge as the ruler's postulate — 56

- 1 Integra informatio: Empirical methods in the Late Middle Ages — 56
- 2 Ex certa scientia: The absolutist appeal to certain knowledge — 59
- 3 Somos informados: Linking information to decisions — 61

III Strolls through the world. The epistemic setting of the court — 68

- 1 The Spanish court — 69
- 2 Spaces of knowledge — 73
- 3 Media of knowledge — 75
- 4 Land recording projects in Spain — 81

IV The authorities of colonial rule — 87

- 1 The Casa de la Contratación: Nautical knowledge becomes political — 87
- 2 The Council of the Indies — 93
- 3 Institution-building in Spanish America — 102

V Knowledge in the setting of colonial rule — 111

- 1 The vigilant triangle — 111
- 2 Beginnings of knowledge acquisition — 120
- 3 Early initiatives: land recording, control, and participation — 125
- 4 Objectivity as technique for control and exoneration — 135
- 5 Listen, describe, and decide: the viceroy's court — 141

VI	Entera noticia: Ovando's project of complete knowledge — 151
1	America cannot be understood: The path to reform — 155
2	The Visitor's work — 161
3	Positions in the reform discourse — 169
4	The Ovandian Reform's measures — 178
4.1	Compiling colonial law — 178
4.2	The Chief Cosmographer-Chronicler of America — 182
4.3	The Law on the Permanent Description of America — 185
VII	Practices of knowledge acquisition — 192
1	Mirror on the world — 192
2	Traveling science — 208
3	The permanent description of America — 212
4	Interrogative methods — 216
5	The questions — 219
6	The answers — 226
VIII	Consulting: scenarios for the application of knowledge — 235
1	Authorities without eyes: The dilemma of the court chronicler — 235
2	Everyday decision-making: The epistemic setting of the Council — 252
2.1	The little tools of colonial knowledge — 253
2.2	The performance of media and mediators — 261
IX	Conclusions — 279
Appendix — 290	
1	Abbreviations — 290
2	Printed sources — 290
3	Books, chapters, and journal articles — 294
4	Index — 310