



Framing Majismo: Art and Royal Identity in Eighteenth-Century Spain

Tara Zanardi

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Majismo, a cultural phenomenon that embodied the popular aesthetic in Spain from the second half of the eighteenth century, served as a vehicle to “regain” Spanish heritage. As expressed in visual representations of popular types participating in traditional customs and wearing garments viewed as historically Spanish, majismo conferred on Spanish “citizens” the pictorial ideal of a shared national character.

In *Framing Majismo*, Tara Zanardi explores nobles’ fascination with and appropriation of the practices and types associated with majismo, as well as how this connection cultivated the formation of an elite Spanish identity in the late 1700s and aided the Bourbons’ objective to fashion themselves as the legitimate rulers of Spain. In particular, the book considers artistic and literary representations of the *majo* and the *maja*, purportedly native types who embodied and performed uniquely Spanish characteristics. Such visual examples of majismo emerge as critical and contentious sites for navigating eighteenth-century conceptions of gender, national character, and noble identity. Zanardi also examines how these bodies were contrasted with those regarded as “foreign,” finding that “foreign” and “national” bodies were frequently described and depicted in similar ways. She isolates and uncovers the nuances of bodily representation, ultimately showing how the body and the emergent nation were mutually constructed at a critical historical moment for both.

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