

SPANISH 18th CENTURY

War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714)

•The **War of the Spanish Succession** (1701-1714) was fought among several European powers, principally the [Holy Roman Empire](#), [Great Britain](#), the [Dutch Republic](#), [Portugal](#), and the [Duchy of Savoy](#), against the Kingdoms of [France](#) and [Spain](#) and the [Electorate of Bavaria](#), over a possible unification of the Kingdoms of Spain and France under a single [Bourbon](#) monarch. Such an unification would have drastically changed the European [balance of power](#).

•It resulted in the recognition of the Bourbon Philip V as King of Spain while requiring him both to renounce any claim to the French throne and to cede much of the European Spanish Crown's possessions.

•In 1700, the last Spanish Habsburg King, [Charles II of Spain](#), died without issue, leaving his possessions to Philip, duc d'Anjou, grandson of [his half-sister](#) and King [Louis XIV of France](#). Philip thereby became [Philip V of Spain](#).

•The war began slowly, as [Leopold I, Holy Roman Emperor](#), fought to protect the [Austrian Habsburg](#) claim to the Spanish inheritance, in favour of his younger son, the archduke Charles.

•The war was concluded by the treaties of [Utrecht \(1713\)](#) and [Rastatt \(1714\)](#). As a result, Philip V remained King of Spain but was removed from the French line of succession, thereby averting a union of the two kingdoms. The Austrians gained most of the Spanish territories in Italy and the Netherlands. As a consequence, France's [hegemony](#) over continental Europe was ended, and the idea of a [balance of power](#) became a part of the international order.

•With regard to the political organization of their kingdoms, Philip issued the [Nueva Planta decrees](#), following the centralizing approach of the Bourbons in France, ending the political autonomy of the kingdoms which had made up the [Crown of Aragon](#); territories in Spain that had supported the Archduke Charles, and up to then had kept their institutions in a framework of loose dynastic union, lost them. On the other hand, the [Kingdom of Navarre](#) and the [Basque Provinces](#), having supported the king against the Habsburg pretender, did not lose their autonomy and retained their traditional differentiated institutions and laws ([fueros](#)).

Timeline and maps

◆ LOST EUROPEAN TERRITORIES

◆ AMERICAN VICEROYALTIES

TERRITORIAL HEIGHT OF
SPANISH EMPIRE

SPANISH SOCIETY

- ◆ From 8 until 12 millions of inhabitants
- ◆ Inland Spain lost population, coasts grew.
- ◆ 90%, peasants, mainly day laborers, a lot of beggars.
- ◆ Urban bourgeoisie, minority (civil servants, army officers, craftsmen and merchants).
- ◆ Clergy (privileged), owner of 25% of all the lands.
- ◆ Nobility (privileged), landowners.

Philip V (1700-1746)

- ◆ French, sad and depressive, he missed Versailles from La Granja (a copy).
- ◆ 1724, a short reign of Louis I, his son.
- ◆ 1707/1716: NUEVA PLANTA DECREES for Aragonese Crown countries. Aftermath: a centralized government following Castilian model, a real state without customs inside. Spain is divided into provinces (in front, a major general, not a viceroy).
- ◆ An absolute monarch, despot but “enlightened”, Parliament (Cortes) won’t be called.
- ◆ The king ruled with ministers: Patiño reorganized a powerful navy.
- ◆ Foreign policy: Spain was stripped of her remaining European dominions in [1714](#). Spain reconquered some of her lost Italian possessions from the Austrians in the 18th century, placing [Bourbon](#) princes on the thrones of [Parma](#), [Naples](#), and Sicily. However, these were not incorporated again into the Spanish Crown. This policy was called “irredentism”.
- ◆ Two Family’s Pacts with France against England.
- ◆

Ferdinand VI (1746-1759)

- ◆ Educated and clever.
- ◆ The Marquis of [Ensenada](#), his more important minister, made a lot of public works and reorganized the Treasury to get more taxes. He strengthened the navy, called foreign technicians and scientists and he also ordered to make the famous cadastre ([Catastro](#)), a general report about the wealth of the country and the taxpayers.

Charles III (1759-1788)

- ◆ A good king, a good major for Madrid, surrounded by good ministers: Aranda, Floridablanca, Campomanes.
- ◆ Former king of Naples and Sicily.
- ◆ Third Family’s Pact with France (England is already a serious threat for the Empire): as a result of the Seven Years’ War, France lost Canada and Spain, Florida. As a compensation, France gave Louisiana to Spain.
- ◆ France and Spain supported Americans against British (War of Independence): 1783, Peace of

Versailles, Spain recovered Florida and Menorca.

◆ INSIDE REFORMS (Enlightened despotism):

- Sierra Morena colonization
- Royal manufactures (silk, crystal, tapestries, china) and cotton mills (Catalonia)
- Free trade among Spanish and American ports, big shipping companies
- New roads and bridges
- Canals, as Castile or Imperial ones
- Tenants' expelling from land will be banned, to plough up new lands will not (against Mesta)
- New clothes (shorter capes, three point hats). This thing and the wheat's high cost caused a rebellion against the minister Esquilache (1766)
- Jesuits' expulsion (Indian missions in Paraguay will be abandoned)

Charles IV (1788-1808)

- ◆ No interest, no competence.
- ◆ The government, in Prime Minister Manuel Godoy (Queen's favourite) hands.
- ◆ Spain follows French foreign policy.
- ◆ Reforms will be stopped because of the fear for French Revolution.
- ◆ Moreover, reforms will be failed because bourgeoisie is a weak minority, people have a conservative and religious closed mind and ancient nobility and clergy were very powerful.