

# CONTENTS

*Acknowledgments* ix

Introduction:

*Imperium*, Metaphysical Instrumentalism, and Potosí Mining 1

1. Grounding the Empire: Francisco de Vitoria's Political Physics 40

2. The Impasses of Instrumentalism:

Revisiting the Polemics between Sepúlveda and Las Casas 95

3. Mastering Nature:

José de Acosta's Pragmatic Instrumentalism 151

4. From Imperial Reason to Instrumental Reason:

The Ideology of the Circle of Toledo 217

5. The Exhaustion of Natural Subordination: Solórzano Pereira  
and the Demise of Metaphysical Instrumentalism 284

*Notes* 353

*Bibliography* 377

*Index* 389