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Empire, Reform, and Corruption: José de Gálvez and Political Culture in the Spanish  
World, 1765-1787

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor  
of Philosophy

in

History

by

María Bárbara Zepeda Cortés

Committee in charge:

Professor Eric Van Young, Chair  
Professor Christine Hunefeldt  
Professor David Mares  
Professor Everard Meade  
Professor Michael Monteón

2013

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2013

For Rubén Lorenzo

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“La posición de México ante la invasión estadounidense a República Dominicana.” In *Sociedades locales y culturas en tránsito en el Caribe español*. Edited by María Teresa Cortés Zavala, 139-161. Morelia, Mexico: Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, 2005.

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Empire, Reform, and Corruption: José de Gálvez and Political Culture in the Spanish  
World, 1765-1787

by

María Bárbara Zepeda Cortés

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, San Diego, 2013

Professor Eric Van Young, Chair

This dissertation analyzes state modernization and political culture in the eighteenth-century Spanish Empire. The central paradox unpacked by this study is how positive reform of the Spanish Empire was achieved by statesman José de Gálvez (1720-1787) employing exactly the sort of nepotism and patronage which was considered damaging to the old regime. Gálvez was the central architect of the so-called Bourbon

Reforms, a set of measures addressed at raising colonial revenue to enhance Spain's position in the concert of Europe through the renewal of the Empire's economy, administration, defense, and general levels of social wellbeing. This was the first (and probably the most ambitious) scheme of large-scale institutional modernization led by an authoritarian state in the history of Spanish America. My research proposes that structural transformations create a moment of vulnerability for state institutions, but also one of political risk for reformers themselves. This is a case study of how traditional practices of political culture—the personal acquisition of wealth by public officials, certainly, and arguably “corruption,” but also the mobilization of patronage networks and nepotism—can be adapted to transitional political moments, for good or ill. Overall, this dissertation provides significant explanations to long-asked scholarly questions about the ways in which the legacy of colonialism determined (or not) certain practices of governance in independent Latin America and modern Spain, where corruption continues to be a pervasive problem in public life.

## Introduction

### **The Gálvez Era**

As Spain's global empire declined into senescence in the late seventeenth century, a major critique of Spanish colonial and metropolitan observers, and political thinkers, concerned the ubiquity of corruption within the political structure. Critics and reformers saw this particularly in the form of governmental inefficiency, illicit commerce, bribery at all levels, the sale of public offices, and nepotism. As late as the middle decades of the eighteenth century, Madrid's chief bureaucrats typically were grim in their evaluation of the Empire and preoccupied with the widespread acknowledgement of Bourbon Spain's decadence relative to her rival powers, namely, England, France, and even Russia. Yet by 1786 the Spanish minister of State, the Conde de Floridablanca, confided to the King's ambassador in Paris, the Conde de Aranda: "Believe me Your Excellency, right now our Indies [i.e., the Spanish American colonies] are better than ever."<sup>1</sup> Floridablanca's statement represents a high point of optimism in the general attitude of the period's Spanish statesmen. What had changed in three decades? The minister's statement conveyed what he perceived as positive results from the so-called Bourbon Reforms. Basically, these reformist efforts were addressed to raising the volume of colonial revenue to enhance the metropole's position in the concert of Europe through the renewal of the Empire's economy, administration, defense, and general levels of social wellbeing, culture, and even scientific knowledge. With his positive words, Floridablanca was also praising the then decade-long work of his protégé, José de Gálvez, as head of the Spanish colonial office (the Ministry of the Indies). The central paradox unpacked by my doctoral

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<sup>1</sup> Conde de Floridablanca to Conde de Aranda, El Pardo, 6 Apr. 1786, AGS, Estado, leg. 4615, fol. 180.

dissertation is how positive reform of the Spanish Empire was achieved by Gálvez employing exactly the sort of nepotism and patronage adduced as some of the most “corrupt” and damaging practices of the old regime.

Every scholar specialized in late eighteenth-century colonial Spanish America knows José de Gálvez (1720-1787) because sooner or later they have encountered his name mentioned in historical literature or his signature marking hundreds (if not thousands) of archival documents. It is surprising, however, that when being offered a couple of biographical coordinates on him, an educated lay audience in Latin America, the United States, and Europe, can easily relate to his remarkable legacy too. The U.S. public reacts when I mention that Galveston, Texas is named after his family; Argentines feel curiosity when I say he is responsible for the creation of the Viceroyalty of the River Plate (their country’s direct ancestor) in 1776; Sevillians nod their heads when I explain that Gálvez founded the General Archive of the Indies in 1784; Californians from Los Angeles and San Francisco smile when I speak of Gálvez’s essential support of the Franciscan missions that originated these cities.<sup>2</sup> Even scientists get interested in history when I show, for example, that a genus of plants, the *Galvezias*, received his name because his ministry backed numerous botanical expeditions.<sup>3</sup> This dissertation is, therefore, an attempt to establish the “Gálvez era” as a historical periodization of its own in the history of colonial Spanish America, meaning the period from 1765 to 1787 during

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<sup>2</sup> Although I have never interacted with inhabitants of the *Ha'apai* Islands of Tonga in Oceania, I am sure they will be surprised if I told them that in the 1780s Spanish explorer Francisco Antonio Mourelle baptized their archipelago as the Gálvez Islands.

<sup>3</sup> Very early in his career as a colonial bureaucrat, Gálvez became a patron for scientists, thus in 1769 he supported the astronomical observations of Joaquín Velázquez de León, a remarkable Mexican scientist. For more on this astronomer, refer to Alexander von Humboldt, *Essai politique sur le royaume de la Nouvelle Espagne*, vol. 1 (Paris: Schoell, 1811).

which the Andalusian minister held a position of power in the Spanish colonial government. Gálvez, however, is not a popular historical figure precisely because of the grayish shroud of paper and dust that covers bureaucracies in general.<sup>4</sup> For me, Gálvez is the quintessential bureaucrat for the impressive amount of official documents he produced, which, frustratingly, contrasts sharply with his few surviving personal papers.

Sailing through the Spanish Empire—the vast territory from today’s British Columbia to Cape Horn, and beyond the Pacific Ocean to the Philippines—with the biography of a man as the vessel’s mast, this dissertation does drop anchors regularly at the ports of New Spain. There is no doubt that the bureaucratic career of Gálvez had a more compelling influence on the economic and political restructuring of eighteenth-century Mexico than on other Spanish American territories. For generations, his general inspection (or *visita general*, from 1765 to 1771) of New Spain (modern Mexico) has captured the attention of historians and even the imagination of novelists. The legendary, wide-ranging discretionary powers delegated to Gálvez by King Charles III loom large in both historical and fictional portrayals of the visitor-general. For historian Héctor Hernández, Gálvez’s efforts to reform the administration and economy of Bourbon Mexico can be compared with the nineteenth- and twentieth-century programs of forced modernization designed by dictator Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911) and President Carlos

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<sup>4</sup> Among historians, however, the mentioning of Gálvez’s name may unleash passions. Mexican scholar Felipe Castro, for example, dedicated one of his books to “the memory of the men and women that were exiled, jailed, mutilated, hanged, and quartered by orders of José de Gálvez,” referring to the minister’s ruthless repression of the popular rebellions of 1767 in New Spain; see his *Nueva ley y nuevo rey: reformas borbónicas y rebelión popular en Nueva España* (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1996). In contrast, Spanish historians of the old school write about Gálvez with nationalistic pride, eclipsing the possibilities for intellectual debate and criticism; such is the tone of Luis Navarro García’s introduction to his *Don José de Gálvez y la Comandancia General de las Provincias Internas del Norte de Nueva España* (Seville: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1964).

Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994). For his part, Mexican novelist Agustín Ramos states that this eighteenth-century official may be regarded as the most powerful authority to be found in the history of Mexico.<sup>5</sup> When one takes into account Gálvez's bureaucratic career, this penchant for anachronistic comparisons and hyperbole is understandable. Intellectual interest in his inspection of New Spain continues because the reforms he later imposed on other regions of Spanish America, as minister of the Indies, were first conceived or applied locally during this period; it is thus surprising that the most complete historical account of this period in his life continues to be Herbert Ingram Priestley's *José de Gálvez, Visitor-general of New Spain*, published back in 1916. One scholarly rationale for expanding my research in the future is to address precisely this question; that is, how Gálvez's experience during the *visita general* became a laboratory for the later reproduction of colonial administrative knowledge during his years as head of the Spanish colonial office. My dissertation already provides hints at the answer to this larger question.

Among the key findings of my research is that, during the *visita general*, Gálvez started to build a network of close collaborators that two decades later had been transformed into a dense governmental system of personal relationships extending across the hemispheres, with him at the center. Patronage and nepotism became hallmarks of Gálvez's appointment practices and administrative activities. Many members of his family, friends, people from his hometown and region (Málaga and Andalusia), and collaborators he met during his inspection of New Spain benefited from public posts

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<sup>5</sup> Héctor Cuauhtémoc Hernández Silva, *La expedición del visitador José de Gálvez al Septentrión Novohispano, 1768-1770, o, La locura de la modernidad* (Hermosillo: Universidad de Sonora, 2000), 40, and Agustín Ramos, *La visita: Un sueño de la razón* (Mexico City: Océano, 2000), 77.



conferred by him. Among his most nakedly nepotistic moves was the positioning of his brother Matías in 1783, and then his nephew Bernardo in 1784, in one of the highest offices in the Empire: as viceroys of New Spain, the richest of the Spanish overseas possessions. His network of protégés reproduced itself on diverse levels and in different sites of the colonial regime. To recognize the participants, density, and internal dynamics of this social network has been one of the challenges faced by this research.

There are some problematic issues, however, regarding Gálvez's appointment practices. He was a self-touted enemy of corruption. In effect, in his writings he vehemently denounced—and then punished at every opportunity—all sorts of bureaucratic shenanigans, Atlantic and Pacific networks of smuggling, cases of embezzlement at the expense of the royal treasury, and even instances of favoritism and nepotism. His official reports, treatises, personal and official correspondence, and even his actions in the form of public policy pronouncements or actual bureaucratic decision-making, reveal a constant preoccupation with the multiple ways in which corruption corroded the structures of the Spanish Empire. On the other hand, not all his dependents, relatives, or protégés necessarily became inefficient and corrupt as officials. In 1780, for example, Gálvez named Ramón Posada royal attorney for exchequer affairs of New Spain. A nephew by marriage of Gálvez's brother Matías, Posada became so renowned for his honesty that even Father Servando Teresa de Mier, a famous creole ideologue of Mexican patriotism and future participant in the independence movement, praised him for his integrity. Such was the ambiguous nature of corruption in the eighteenth century that a nepotistic appointment could produce efficient results in the public administration of the colonies. The selection of Posada (as well as of other positions filled by Gálvez) was

originally meant to function efficiently because of the appointee's very relationship to Gálvez. Because Bourbon reformers first exposed, then weakened, and sought to overhaul long-established colonial state institutions, various levels of Spanish American society tenaciously opposed their measures. Gálvez's novel guidelines in effect inevitably clashed with several sectors of colonial society, from powerful, old commercial interests such as the merchant guild or *Consulado* of Mexico City, who used all legal means available to avert institutional change, to violent, massive reactions to taxation policies by indigenous peoples like the Túpac Amaru and Túpac Catari rebellions in the Andean highlands of modern Peru and Bolivia in 1780-1783. Under such tense political circumstances, Gálvez employed traditional practices, such as nepotism and patronage, to form a responsive bureaucracy able to force imperial modernization on a colonial system that resisted change.

Gálvez's biased appointment system and his parallel resolve to fight governmental corruption at the moment of structural imperial reforms were not just the products of individual opportunism or political cynicism. Both his behavior and that of lower-level bureaucrats outside the *formal* legal-institutional context took place in an *informal* order in which political favoritism was widespread. The Spanish domination over the New World had in theory always been an extraordinarily legalistic arrangement. Decrees and regulations mandated from higher offices in distant Spain, however, frequently encountered resistance, noncompliance, or evasion in the Americas and the Philippines, especially at the local levels of government. When Bourbon reformers tried to impose their new laws, policies, and ideals in order to create a more rational, centralized, defensible, and profitable imperial state, they encountered a colonial society

*habituated to disobey*. This culture of noncompliance was deeply embedded in colonial relationships negotiated before Gálvez's generation of Bourbon statesmen came to power.<sup>6</sup> The study of José de Gálvez's bureaucratic career illuminates how the jostling between the informal order and the growth of the modern imperial state (with its new normative principles and expanded, rationalized bureaucracy) was mediated by an individual in charge of top-level decision-making.

State institutions become especially vulnerable *at the moment* of structural reforms, a circumstance that puts executive agents in a risky and exposed position given the unforeseeable outcomes such transformations might produce. Acting in a context where evasion of imperial mandates was common, and as head of the colonial office, Gálvez considered the strength and cohesion of his network of client-relatives to represent a reliable vehicle to exchange crucial, costly, and potentially unreliable information. Moreover, through patronage and nepotism Gálvez could control a situation that required close cooperation across vast distances among trusted allies, such as can be found within the family (or hometown) circle. From the perspective of the imperial administration, therefore, a tight-knit network of colonial officials became a secure and necessary instrument of governance. Here, the logic of the Gálvez-directed system of social-bureaucratic relationships is analyzed through a thick prosopography. Recent historiography has suggested that the Bourbon Reforms did not signify a rupture with the older Habsburg forms of Spanish imperialism, thus contravening David Brading's

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<sup>6</sup> The ambivalent attitude of colonial Spanish American government officials (from viceroys to *audiencia* judges to local administrators) toward orders coming from the Crown summarized in the formula *obedezco pero no cumplo*—I obey but I do not execute—that was used to delay, dispute, or suspend the implementation of a royal mandate. John Leddy Phelan discusses the legal origins and practical uses of this bureaucratic tradition in his "Authority and Flexibility in the Spanish Imperial Bureaucracy," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (1960): 47-65.

famous 1971 essay, “Revolution in Government.”<sup>7</sup> My study of a leading eighteenth-century statesman and his entourage recuperates the historical actors’ political commitment to institutional change through a more intimate and mundane view of Bourbon reformists: how and what they communicated, what they worried about, how they confronted political adversaries, what their fundamental ideas and conceptions about politics and reform were, etc. On the whole, their mission was Quixotic, but they were fully invested in it and, not surprisingly, most of Gálvez’s favorites became overspecialized colonial officers. Thus, from 1765 to 1787 Gálvez and his network of protégés functioned as a hinge that sustained a large, heavy gate composed of the most variegated non-Western societies, attached to a common and ominously feeble edifice, imperial Spain.

For career bureaucrats like Gálvez, the extended family contributed toward achieving administrative ends and also to gaining and accumulating social and material privileges. The Andalusian minister became a wealthy man, after all, and evidence indicates that a great part of his fortune originated in the New World. For example, after his general inspection of New Spain, José de Gálvez supported the creation of the Mexican Mining Guild, a fairly autonomous body in which miners would have the upper hand in the decision-making process concerning their economic activities; in turn, the miners of New Spain granted him an annual pension for life of four thousand pesos—a far from negligible amount. In 1776 one of his critics, Francisco Carrasco, the Marqués de la Corona, noted that as head of the colonial office the *Malagueño* was the best paid minister of Charles III; he also mentioned that in his recent wedding ceremony, Gálvez’s

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<sup>7</sup> David. A. Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico, 1763-1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 31-92.

young bride had exhibited jewels the like of which had never before been seen in Madrid.<sup>8</sup> Even more suggestive was a concession granted to Gálvez by the king in 1779 linked to a type of corruption, smuggling. By this privilege, the Ministry of the Indies would receive one third of the cash gained from the sale of confiscated contraband goods in the Spanish Empire, funds at the entire disposition of the minister.<sup>9</sup> On top of that, in 1785 Gálvez obtained another incentive to fight illicit commerce from his office, this time of a more personal nature. As superintendant-general of the royal treasury of the Indies he would receive one fourth of the total value of contrabanded goods confiscated by the imperial state retroactively beginning in 1777. Years after his death his widow was still collecting the money from this concession.<sup>10</sup> In these examples it is difficult to assess with precision whether there was a line that separated personal and public interests, or if these were conflated. A measured study of Gálvez's life helps explain his complex relationship with the phenomenon of corruption.

Through the methods of a historian, and the creative use of concepts absorbed from other disciplines, I have unearthed from archival documents what corruption meant for eighteenth-century Bourbon decision-makers, and to what extent an ideal of "good government" or "clean" governance was part of the political debate and agenda throughout this era. Were patronage and nepotism particularly characteristic of the Gálvez clan? Or were extensive networks of personal loyalty a logical expression of

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<sup>8</sup> Francisco Carrasco (Marqués de la Corona) to (José Martínez de) Viergol, 13 Mar. 1776, AHN, Estado, leg. 3211.

<sup>9</sup> For an example of this decree in circular-letter form, see Gálvez to the intendant of Buenos Aires, Aranjuez, 6 May 1779, BRAH, 9/1763. Indeed, the money was explicitly destined for ministerial affairs but Gálvez could decide its allocation and he usually had it deposited in his personal account; AGI, Indiferente General, leg. 1834.

<sup>10</sup> AGI, Ultramar, leg. 836.

eighteenth-century political culture at the moment of implementing a public policy or developing a bureaucratic career? Several documentary collections in Europe and Latin America and, especially, Spanish archives and libraries became my guide to answering these questions. Seville's General Archive of the Indies was the center of my fieldwork in 2008. Before this experience, in late 2007, I also carried out a short reconnaissance of the sources related to Gálvez's networks of protégés working in the administration of the viceroyalties of Peru, New Granada, and the River Plate—a vast territory that encompasses today's Spanish South American countries. This tour involved the national archives of Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina. At the center of this work is a focus on his official visit to New Spain but I also develop a cross-regional comparison of the routine patterns of administration which, as minister of the Indies, Gálvez applied to different areas of Spanish America. In early 2009 I collected more documentary evidence in Mexico City.

This dissertation has two parts. The first of these main sections (chapters one to three) deals extensively with a particular form of political network dynamics surrounding José de Gálvez's career as an imperial reformer, namely, patronage and nepotism. The second part relates to the material dividends Gálvez could harvest from being a major participant in Spain's efforts to modernize its colonial system. In Part One of the dissertation, entitled "All the Minister's Men," chapters one and two are devoted to patronage. Chapter One is a first approach to José de Gálvez's networks of patronage. Using a wide-angle perspective, this chapter examines the density of the social connections Gálvez maintained and created during his general inspection of New Spain. Chapter Two functions as a zoom lens to focus on a case study that reveals a full-face

portrait of what was discussed in the antecedent chapter. It deals exclusively with the relationship between Gálvez and Pedro Antonio de Cossío, a Spanish merchant resident in Veracruz. In Chapter Three I discuss nepotism—the topic that brought me into this research. This chapter not only talks about the Gálvez family in power, but also about how people from their hometown and province in Andalusia benefited from the family's strong links with the New World. Part Two, “How to Reform an Empire (and Make a Fortune in the Process),” includes chapters four and five and is devoted to Gálvez's material (or economic) life before and after imperial politics defined his career and allowed him to gain and accumulate social and material privileges.

There should be little doubt that political culture in the Spanish colonial world deserves serious attention from historians. Although the importance of understanding how the abuse of public trust has taken place historically is self-evident, this research provides significant explanations to long-asked scholarly questions about the ways in which Spanish colonialism determined (or not) certain practices of governance in the independent Spanish American successor states, where corruption has continued to be a pervasive problem in public life. In addition, the study of the particularities of Gálvez's bureaucratic career and his role as executive agent of the Bourbon Reforms necessarily conveys a re-assessment of the elusive nature of the phenomenon of reformism in general. Gálvez's rich historical legacy is a guarantee that my dissertation turned into a book will be attractive for many readers. Taken as a whole, my work contributes to the underdeveloped fields of the history of Spanish colonial political culture, the history of corruption in the past, and the history of state reform in Latin America.

Part One

**All the Minister's Men: Patronage and Nepotism**



## Chapter 1

### **All the Minister's Men: The Origins of José de Gálvez's Networks of Patronage in the General Inspection of New Spain<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Introduction**

1776: a year remembered for the thirteen North American colonies' decision to initiate the violent repudiation of British rule. The date thus serves as one of the early markers of a period frequently identified by scholars as the "Age of Revolution."<sup>2</sup> More often than not, historians of this era leave Spain and its empire in the Americas out of the revolutionary equation.<sup>3</sup> Yet during the decade or so before and after this iconic year, the largest empire at the dawn of the modern age was immersed in a self-administered attempt to change the ways in which the state, the economy, and society functioned. Precisely in 1776 a seemingly minor movement in the higher echelons of the Spanish imperial government had major consequences. With the arrival of José de Gálvez at the Ministry of the Indies in March of 1776, Spain tightened her grip over her colonies with a

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<sup>1</sup> Title based on the 1946 novel by Robert Penn Warren—*All the King's Men*—about a corrupt governor in the state of Louisiana in the 1930s. The central character is arguably modeled after real governor, Huey Long. Warren got his title from a famous nineteenth-century nursery rhyme about an anthropomorphized egg called "Humpty Dumpty." I presented an earlier version of this chapter at the 13th Meeting of Historians from Mexico, the United States, and Canada held in Querétaro, Mexico in October 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Introduced originally by Robert Palmer (*The Age of Democratic Revolution*, 1959) and reiterated a decade later by Eric Hobsbawm (*The Age of Revolution*, 1969), scholars have used this periodization to explain historical developments in the North Atlantic world, roughly from the 1750s to the 1850s, especially in relation to the events surrounding the French and American Revolutions up until the late 1840s European revolutions.

<sup>3</sup> Recently, the Age of Revolution, a rather "Western-centric" nomenclature, has been applied to Latin American history—a practice not free from controversy. For a thoughtful discussion on the usefulness (or uselessness) of this periodization see Eric Van Young, "Conclusion—Was There an Age of Revolution in Spanish America?," in *State and Society in Spanish America during the Age of Revolution*, ed. Victor M. Uribe-Uran (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Inc., 2001), 219-246; and for a thorough rejection of its utilization, see Sinclair Thomson, *We Alone Will Rule: Native Andean Politics in the Age of Insurgency* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 6-12.

project of reform that finally achieved a decisive and coherent tone. During his extremely dynamic administration of Spanish colonial affairs, Gálvez dictated innumerable policies that inevitably changed Spain's relationship with her overseas territories. In the year 1776 alone, Spanish Americans witnessed sweeping transformations in the ways they related to the imperial state. One of these changes was a veritable "geographical revolution." In that year Gálvez proclaimed the creation of new administrative territories, the most important of which was probably the new viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata (modern Argentina); but he also created an intendancy in Caracas (modern Venezuela), and the *Comandancia General* of the Interior Provinces of New Spain.<sup>4</sup> Other changes in 1776 did not involve territorial innovations but the expansion of the existing Spanish colonial bureaucratic system. Gálvez ordered an increase in the number of seats in the *Audiencias* (high courts) of all capitals—a measure that resulted in the appointment of more judges and one regent for each court. Trying to reproduce his own past experience as visitor-general of New Spain, the hyperactive minister also dispatched a general inspection team to the second most important colonial territory, the Viceroyalty of Peru.

For the new and enlarged administrations the Spanish crown required an army of royal officials. In his first year at the Ministry of the Indies, one of Gálvez's main activities was dispensing many of these numerous appointments.<sup>5</sup> Even if not all of them can be attributed to Gálvez's personal patronage—since some new and relocated officials

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<sup>4</sup> The *Comandancia* survived for 45 years. It was a new administrative territory that first unified the provinces of California, Sinaloa, Sonora and New Biscay, and later incorporated those of New Mexico, Coahuila, and Texas; see Luis Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez y la Comandancia General de las Provincias Internas del norte de Nueva España* (Seville: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1964).

<sup>5</sup> Although it is difficult to trace the total number of appointments in 1776, from a simple comparison between *legajos* it is possible to discern an increase in "appointment activities" during that year; review of files related to titles to office in Spanish America during Charles III's reign in AGS, Dirección General del Tesoro (hereafter DGS), Inventarios 2 (leg. 69) and 24 (legs. 183, 184, and 185).

were protégés of other Spanish statesmen—many of these nominations reveal that the minister was relying on people he already knew well. To cite an example, Gálvez recommended José Antonio de Areche for the delicate position of visitor-general of Peru. Areche had been known to the minister since 1766, when they met in Mexico City during Gálvez's own visitation of New Spain.<sup>6</sup> Gálvez helped promote Areche's bureaucratic career, and at least for a while Areche proved in return a valuable ally in the process of reform.<sup>7</sup> As a man able to dispense patronage in the form of government posts, salaries, and other honors and privileges, and in the midst of a contested process of institutional change such as that caused by the Bourbon Reforms, Gálvez needed men he could trust. At the same time an implicit dilemma probably made the minister hesitate before each instance of recruitment. Besides loyalty, his recruits had to provide evidence of some degree of expertise; after all, they were about to deal with delicate matters of state. In all, if Gálvez's choices in allocating government patronage were wise, they would generate stability for his project of reform; if unwise, the fall of his favorites would certainly bring on political turbulence endangering his policies as well as his ministry. Furthermore, for the Andalusian minister it was necessary to take into account the distribution of power and authority within the imperial state in a way that would not undermine his own

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<sup>6</sup> A native from the province of Biscay, José Antonio de Areche arrived in Mexico City in 1766; he was travelling on his way to Manila as appointed judge to the main audiencia in the Philippines. Areche made such a positive impression on Viceroy Marqués de Croix and José de Gálvez that he was stopped and prompted to occupy the vacant office of *fiscal* (state attorney) of the Mexican audiencia. Areche's performance as *fiscal* of both civil and criminal affairs stood out and even Viceroy Antonio de Bucareli (an opponent of Gálvez's reforms) praised him for his work.

<sup>7</sup> As visitor of Peru, Areche quickly won powerful enemies, including the viceroy, who managed to bring him down in 1782; in his performance as general-inspector, however, he showed loyalty to Gálvez by following his instructions and plans of reform to the letter. Gálvez named a substitute visitor-general in place of Areche. The destitute inspector general of Peru ended his life as member of the prestigious Council of the Indies in Madrid but always harassed by the political enemies he won during his *visita*. The relationship between Gálvez and Areche deserves more attention. The classic work on the Areche Visitation only shows glimpses of it; see Vicente Palacio Atard, "Areche y Guirior: Observaciones sobre el fracaso de una visita al Perú," *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 3, (1946): 269-376.

position in a political context in which many (Spanish Americans *and* Spaniards alike) stood against reform. So, how did Gálvez build his administration of the Americas? How did he create his extensive network of patronage?

The *visita general* or general inspection of New Spain from 1765 to 1771 is a good place to start. It is important to recall that for Bourbon society in Mexico generally, the Gálvez Visitation represented the imperial state's assault upon the relative autonomy they had enjoyed for decades. Gálvez's first experience in colonial administration not only affected the internal equilibriums of Mexican society, but also marked his own life and future career in a variety of ways. In colonial Mexico he met people who would be his followers (some of them for life); he savored power and the power of influence; lastly, the position gave him visibility in Spanish politics and thus functioned as a springboard for his future success. Shortly before Gálvez became minister of the Indies, and certainly as part of the spreading ripples that his actions as visitor-general provoked, an interesting anonymous document was circulating in Madrid after 1776. The paper warned that, "Gálvez has destroyed more than he has built... [H]is destructive hand is going to prepare the greatest revolution in the American Empire."<sup>8</sup> In this chapter I present an initial approach to all the minister's men, a sampler of thumbnail sketches that shows who these people were and how they related to and served Gálvez, first in New Spain and then elsewhere. In short, this chapter offers a deeper understanding of how the perceived "destructive hand" of José de Gálvez worked by focusing on his "thumb and

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<sup>8</sup> Anonymous, "Apuntes sucintos y prácticas de la América Española," AGI, Estado, leg. 42, N. 3, undated. Brading attributes this paper to the years 1775-1776 but the fact that it mentions some of the reforms Gálvez introduced in 1776 and the American Revolution suggests it was written *ca.* 1777; David A. Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico, 1763-1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 38-39.

fingers,” that is, those men who were central for the minister’s official mission in Mexico.

### **Brief Notes on Historiography and on the Concept of Patronage**

Since the mid-1970s, Enrique Florescano and Isabel Gil Sánchez underlined the importance of studying the less known actions of many high imperial functionaries operating in New Spain and as examples they cited men of Gálvez such as “Ramón de Posada (royal attorney for exchequer affairs), José Fernando Mangino (mint superintendent), Fausto de Elhuyar (director of the Mining School), and the intendants and provincial governors.” According to them, these men consciously transformed into policies the new ideas of the Enlightenment, sometimes provoking serious public conflicts and even at the cost of great personal crises.<sup>9</sup> For decades, historians have generally ignored the call of Florescano and Gil Sánchez, and they have rarely paid attention to Gálvez’s bureaucratic appointment practices. A major exception is Linda Salvucci’s “Costumbres viejas, ‘hombres nuevos.’ José de Gálvez y la burocracia fiscal novohispana, 1754-1800,” published in 1983 in *Historia Mexicana*. In this fairly well-known article, the author attempts to demystify a vision nurtured through generations of historical scholarship since it was introduced by H. I. Priestley in his classic 1916 book on the general inspection of New Spain. Basically, her objective is to tear down the statue

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<sup>9</sup> Enrique Florescano and Isabel Gil Sánchez, “La época de las reformas borbónicas y el crecimiento económico 1750-1808,” In *Historia General de México*, 4th ed. (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1998), 1:585. Of the functionaries cited by the authors, we know more about Posada thanks to Vicente Rodríguez García’s *El fiscal de real hacienda en Nueva España: Don Ramón de Posada y Soto, 1781-1793* (Oviedo: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Oviedo, 1986).

of Gálvez as an efficient and progressive administrator.<sup>10</sup> Salvucci focuses on the case of the sales tax reform initiated a decade before the Gálvez Visitation and on the *visita general* team's official inspection of the customs house in Mexico City.<sup>11</sup> She mentions that the visitor-general's major criterion in recruiting his "new men" not surprisingly was their loyalty to his *and* the Crown's interests. She stresses, however, that Gálvez tolerated "old customs" like his appointees' engagement in corrupt practices, and their tendency to merge with local interests through marriages and joint ventures. Salvucci's findings give credence to certain common notions about Gálvez's bureaucratic appointment routines, such as his marked preference for Andalusians. By examining through the lens of patronage other sectors of the colonial administration in the times of the *visita general* and later, however, I have developed a more complex picture that gives nuance to her arguments. Let us take two examples. First, not all the members of Gálvez's entourage came from the same region in Spain as the visitor-general. Second, Salvucci repeatedly accuses Gálvez of not understanding that the prevalent low wages of colonial bureaucrats produced a need for "financial supplements" usually obtained through practices associated with corruption. As this chapter shows, Gálvez was a munificent patron, and perhaps *because of* his men's decent wages and added honors they could marry locally into wealthy families and engage in profitable business. An analysis that is sensitive to the prevailing political culture, to the deep-rooted patterns of behavior and belief about how politics worked and the ways of constructing political relationships and bureaucratic

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<sup>10</sup> Linda K. Salvucci, "Costumbres viejas, 'hombres nuevos': José de Gálvez y la burocracia fiscal novohispana, 1754-1800," *Historia Mexicana* 33, no. 2 (1983): 224-264, and for the classic work on the general-visitation: H. I. Priestley, *José de Gálvez, Visitor-general of New Spain (1765-1771)* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1980; first published 1916 by University of California Press).

<sup>11</sup> I refer to the group of a dozen or so bureaucrats that supported Gálvez during the general inspection of New Spain as the "*visita general* team."

careers, all in the context of institutional change, seems a good approach to breathe new life back into the study of “old customs and new men.”

Unlike social anthropologists, political sociologists, and political scientists, historians have been more cautious (or suspicious) in treating patronage as a historical phenomenon with sufficient autonomy of its own to become a central topic of research.<sup>12</sup> Patronage is a central component of political culture in the Iberian world,<sup>13</sup> and as a concept it can help us to make some sense of Gálvez’s strategies of political association. Patronage in its broadest sense is a type of social relationship with three basic components: reciprocity, inequality, and intimacy. Patronage involves a reciprocal exchange of resources (money, land, security, government posts, honors, loyalty, information, knowledge, contracts, licenses, votes and other types of partisan support) among (usually) two individuals; pressures of supply and demand condition the intensity and longevity of the bargain. The hierarchical or unequal characteristic of patronage means that one of these individuals (the patron) has more power than the other (the client) and can determine the nature of the exchange; the degree of unevenness varies and

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<sup>12</sup> A rapid search in J-stor of the word “patronage” in titles of articles in the *Hispanic American Historical Review* (HAHR, from 1918 to 1999) shows only three results: these are all reviews of books on patronage (two on Brazil and one on Mexico). A search for the word “clientelism,” shows no articles and only two book reviews, one of a theoretical book and the other on Colombia. A search in the *American Historical Review*, 1895-2004, results in 43 entries, of which there are only two articles dealing with patronage, and the rest are book reviews (most of the examined works are on Europe and the U.S. and those about Latin America coincide with the ones reviewed in HAHR). In a search for the words “patron” and “clientelism” in the same academic journal, I only found a book review for each. I understand that titles may not reflect the theme of an article but this exercise serves as a point to illustrate that historians have not been particularly interested in the subject up until the last decade. Indeed we have examples of recent works focused precisely on eighteenth-century Spanish American politics, see for example, Víctor Peralta Ruiz, *Patrones, clientes y amigos: el poder burocrático indiano en la España del siglo XVIII* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2006) and Christoph Rosenmüller, *Patrons, Partisans, and Palace Intrigues: The Court Society of Colonial Mexico 1702-1710* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2008).

<sup>13</sup> For a *longue durée* survey of Iberian political culture see Howard Wiarda, *The Soul of Latin America: The Cultural and Political Tradition* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2001). Patronage, however, is not ascribed to one region of the world or to one period in history.

only in extreme cases the patron may coerce the client, who then will not be free to decide whether to enter or leave the deal. Patronage is intimate because it involves a personal selection on the part of the patron amongst members of his (or her) entourage, and the language of patronage includes protestations of loyalty, appreciation, and even affection.<sup>14</sup>

A social science definition of patronage is the “granting of offices, employment, contracts, franchises, licenses, and other special favors to allies.”<sup>15</sup> In effect, the discretionary allocation of public offices is probably the first image that comes to mind when thinking about patronage, yet the fact is that it is an ampler concept with deeper implications for society. In 1737, the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy defined *patrón* as *defensor*, *protector* or *amparador*. As J.M. Bourne notes, English dictionaries from 1755 to our days have related “patronage” (by humans, saints, and gods) to protection, benefaction, sponsorship, and/or guardianship.<sup>16</sup> Thus, when one of Gálvez’s favorites, Fernando José Mangino, wrote him a secret (*reservada*) letter in 1787 asking for the king’s permission to marry, he addressed the minister as “my venerable sir *and loving protector*.”<sup>17</sup> Therefore patronage is a diffuse social phenomenon with two dimensions: one cultural (patronage as a common, accepted means of social protection)

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<sup>14</sup> Patronage has been defined as a “lopsided friendship,” a nice, short definition that clearly evokes the elements of inequality and intimacy; see Julian A. Pitt-Rivers, *The People of the Sierra*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), 140. My reflections on the reciprocal, unequal, and intimate character of patronage come from reading J. M. Bourne, *Patronage and Society in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986), 1-11, and Simona Piattoni, “Clientelism in Historical and Comparative Perspective,” in *Clientelism, Interests, and Democratic Representation. The European Experience in Historical and Comparative Perspective*, ed. Simona Piattoni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1-29.

<sup>15</sup> Craig J. Calhoun, *Dictionary of Social Sciences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), s.v. “patronage.”

<sup>16</sup> Bourne, *Patronage and Society in Nineteenth-Century England*, 4.

<sup>17</sup> Fernando José Mangino to José de Gálvez, Mexico City, 27 May 1787, AGS, Secretaría de Guerra, leg. 7221, my emphasis.



and one political (patronage as the distribution of offices). I turn now to our case of study to test the strengths and limitations of patronage as a means to explain Gálvez's relationships with his men and to demonstrate that by 1776 he had managed to build veritable networks of patronage located across the hemispheres.<sup>18</sup> But first let me take a brief detour to show that Gálvez's bureaucratic success was a product of patronage too; this will place this practice as a reference point in his political horizon.

### **Visitor-General Gálvez as a Product of Patronage**

Available primary sources and secondary literature cannot explain with precision how José de Gálvez captured the attention of Spain's top ministers of state (and ultimately Charles III's) to become visitor-general of New Spain. After learning about his impressive legacy in the colonial administration from 1765 to 1787, it is difficult to believe that he was not the Spanish king's first choice for the post, but his third.<sup>19</sup> Even though the reason why he was chosen as visitor-general of New Spain in 1765 is obscure, from the little we know of his previous personal and professional life it is possible to infer that he reached that momentous point in his career thanks to patronage too. It thus seems appropriate to start a discussion of Gálvez's brand of patronage by highlighting his origins as a politically influential historical figure in the same type of interpersonal relation.

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<sup>18</sup> Very recently, Mexican and Spanish scholars have developed a battery of studies on social networks, but the majority of these refer to early modern merchants and their commercial enterprises; see for example Antonio Ibarra and Guillermina del Valle Pavón *Redes Sociales e instituciones comerciales en el imperio español, siglos XVII a XIX* (Mexico City: UNAM-Instituto Mora, 2007) and a special issue of *Historia Mexicana* 56, 3 (2007) dedicated to the same topic.

<sup>19</sup> When the Crown decided to send a visitor-general to New Spain in 1763, the first nominee declined without delay the offer to carry out such a thorny task. The Crown practically forced the second choice, Francisco de Armona, intendant of Murcia, to accept the position but he died at sea. Account in Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 133-134.

H. I. Priestley's biographical sketch of Gálvez tells the story of Bishop Diego González de Toro from Málaga touring the mountainous, arid Andalusian region that surrounds Macharaviaya, and taking the child José de Gálvez to receive education under his protection. Macharaviaya was (and is) a very small village where the old and noble Gálvez family enjoyed social status but suffered from financial inanition.<sup>20</sup> When Toro was appointed Bishop of Cuenca, Spain, Gálvez became the protégé of his successor in Málaga, Bishop Gaspar de Molina y Oviedo. Molina's recommendation allowed Gálvez to enter university to study law. Thus, thanks to the patronage of his bishop-sponsors he turned into a *letrado* [a lawyer]. King Ferdinand VI named Gaspar de Molina president of the Council of Castilla in 1742. No doubt the promotion of his patron allowed young Gálvez to have a first contact with the Spanish court.

In 1750 Gálvez married Luisa Lucía Romet y Pichelin, the daughter of a French couple. His marriage, his knowledge of French, and his own merits as a lawyer earned him a position among the "French coterie at Madrid."<sup>21</sup> At some point he became legal councilor of the French ambassador.<sup>22</sup> We also know that up until late 1764, he was a lawyer of the Royal Councils and perhaps from this position he specialized in representing foreign interests. No doubt his French connections gave him visibility at the Court and the minister of State of Charles III, the Marqués de Grimaldi, made him his

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<sup>20</sup> Research in Malagueño archives by historian Soledad Santos Arrébola has demonstrated that this story of the Bishop tour is not unfounded; see her *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado en Málaga: José de Gálvez* (Málaga: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Málaga-Obra Social y Cultural Caja Sur, 1999), 30; and for Priestley's biographical sketch, see his, *José de Gálvez*, pp. 1-12.

<sup>21</sup> Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 4. More on Gálvez's marriage with Luisa Lucía Romet y Pichelin in chapter 4.

<sup>22</sup> For some authors, it was the Marquis d'Ossun who recommended Gálvez to the post of visitor-general of New Spain; see María Isabel Pérez de Colosía Rodríguez, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," in *Los Gálvez de Macharaviaya*, ed. José Miguel Morales Folgera, María Isabel Pérez de Colosía Rodríguez, Marion Reder Gadow, and Siro Villas Tinoco (Málaga: Junta de Andalucía-Consejería de Cultura y Medio Ambiente-Asesoría Quinto Centenario-Benedito Editores, 1991), 45.

secretary around 1763. During this nebulous era in Gálvez's biography a story in which he obtains direct patronage from the king emerged: according to this popular account, the lawyer defended brilliantly a foreign business house in a lawsuit against the state. The case gained such notoriety that Charles III summoned him and questioned Gálvez about his temerity in confronting the Crown, to which the lawyer replied: "*Señor, antes que el rey, está la ley.*"<sup>23</sup> This was his springboard to "high patronage."

The king's bestowal of patronage upon Gálvez may be crucial even if the bold response of the Andalusian *letrado* never happened. The truth is that a structural type of patronage characterized Charles III's reign: a sort of new "enlightened patronage" of an imperial administration now turned to recruiting men of modest origins and provincial extraction.<sup>24</sup> Several of Charles III's ministers of state were not members of the old aristocratic families who had served the Crown in both Spain and the Americas for centuries; some of the most prominent of them—Floridablanca, Campomanes, and Gálvez—were *manteístas*. The *manteístas* were university graduates in law of noble but humble families that did not (or could not) attend the six *colegios mayores* of Alcalá, Salamanca, and Valladolid, bastions for the education of the sons of the grandees of Spain.<sup>25</sup> One unequivocal show of the Crown's new enlightened patronage was the creation of a civil order in 1772: the knights of the Cross of Charles III, whose motto was

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<sup>23</sup> "Sir, the law is greater than the King," Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 4-5 and n. 4, says this is part of the cherished local stories of Macharaviaya. When I visited Macharaviaya with a group of scholars interested in Gálvez in 2006, the town mayor told us the same story.

<sup>24</sup> MacLachlan argues that this trend initiated earlier, during Ferdinand VI's reign, as an idea of the Marqués de Ensenada in 1751. According to this author, Ensenada believed that the *manteístas* (university graduates who had not attended the *colegios mayores*) were more prone to the new ideas of reform, and would serve as a counterbalancing tool against traditionalists; see Colin M. MacLachlan, *Spain's Empire in the New World. The Role of Ideas in Institutional and Social Change* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 88.

<sup>25</sup> Brading, *The First America. The Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots, and the Liberal State 1492-1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 478.

“*Per virtute et merito.*” Indeed, this new patronage would cause the first advances of the meritocratic middle class. José de Gálvez was among the first to receive this cross in the same year the order was created, and some of the men that worked for him eventually became knights of the Order of Charles III too. The rest of the chapter will show how Gálvez became a patron himself.

### **The *Visita General* Team: A Step for Long-Lasting Patronage**

Gálvez conducted his general inspection of New Spain supported by an “official family” (as H. I. Priestley calls this group) of secretaries, lawyers, accountants, and other minor bureaucrats such as clerks or scribes.<sup>26</sup> The visitor-general’s *dependientes* (as the members of the inspection team are called in documents) were responsible for the day-to-day business of the *visita*, and in distant geographical areas they conducted the inspection in Gálvez’s name, as his surrogates. Officially they were state personnel like the visitor-general himself. This would suggest that they could have been chosen by a “higher patron” that appointed the whole team, from Gálvez to the humbler scribe. Evidence hints, however, that some of them had a previous relationship with Gálvez or, in other words, that the visitor-general had a hand in choosing his own *dependientes*. On 11 March 1765 the Marqués de Esquilache (minister of War and Treasury and the statesman most involved in the launching of the *visita general*) sent to Julián de Arriaga, the minister of the Indies, the names of the individuals who would support José de Gálvez. He mentioned that he was forwarding “the list of subjects that have been named” for the official mission. The list included five individuals: Francisco Machado, as secretary;

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<sup>26</sup> Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 135. On the makeup of a typical *visitador* team see Guillermo Céspedes del Castillo, “La visita como institución indiana,” *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 3, (1946): 1006.

Francisco de Corres and Benito Linares, “destined to the commissions José de Gálvez himself chooses to put under their care,” and who eventually became the inspection’s accountants; Salvador Barrachina and Prudencio Ochoa Badiola, clerks. Esquilache added a note, which speaks of the role of Gálvez in assembling his own team: “The visitor-general wants to take two lawyers, José Hernández de Vinuesa and Juan [Antonio de] Valera; they should go without assigned salary.”<sup>27</sup> In the end, the José Hernández de Vinuesa did not accompany Gálvez, and in his place, the second lawyer of the visitation was Bartolomé de Ortega y Montenegro.<sup>28</sup>

If most of the official members of the *visita* were pre-assigned, Gálvez was later to incorporate other men he met while in New Spain. Here is where direct patronage by the Andalusian minister enters the scene in a clearer fashion. During the general inspection’s busiest years, the 1767-1768 biennium, Gálvez reinforced his team with more functionaries.<sup>29</sup> In early 1768, the visitor-general decided to seek formal recognition of the enlargement of his official family; he informed Minister Arriaga that the originally named public servants were now joined by Fernando Mangino (the subject of this chapter’s subsequent section) as *alguacil mayor*, and at least two other new individuals.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Marqués de Esquilache to Julián de Arriaga, El Pardo, 11 Mar. 1765, and Arriaga to Esquilache, draft, Palacio, 13 Mar. 1765, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1245.

<sup>28</sup> At the end of March 1765, when Arriaga was making a definitive roll of who would join José de Gálvez in the general inspection of New Spain, Hernández de Vinuesa was listed as *fiscal* and Bartolomé de Ortega appeared for the first time as lawyer; see note attached to Arriaga to the President of the *Casa de Contratación* in Cádiz, Mar. 1765, *ibid*. The final list has a handwritten note by Arriaga next to the name of Hernández de Vinuesa that says, “this one is not going,” see “Nota de los sujetos que han de pasar á Nueva España con el Visitador g.l.d.n Joseph Galbez Gallardo” (hereafter cited as “Nota de los sujetos”), Madrid, 29 Mar. 1765, *ibid*.

<sup>29</sup> During the 1767-1768 biennium Gálvez was in charge of enforcing the Crown’s provision for the expulsion of the Jesuit religious order from New Spain and he prepared a military campaign to pacify the Northwestern provinces, the so-called Sonora Expedition of 1768-1770.

<sup>30</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, n. 44, Mexico City, 27 Feb. 1768, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246. In addition to the original members of the team and Fernando Mangino, Gálvez listed Juan Manuel Viniegra, Juan Antonio Gómez Argüello, Manuel Santibañez, Antonio Jáuregui, Francisco Saavedra, and deceased *alguacil mayor*

Moreover, before leaving Mexico City for a military campaign to pacify the Northwestern provinces of New Spain known as the Sonora Expedition (1768-1770), Gálvez raised the salaries of his subalterns.<sup>31</sup> He also left them well accommodated in the offices located at his house in Mexico City. They did not have to worry in his absence, since the rent of this building, the visitor-general determined, was going to be paid from the king's coffers. In Madrid, the accountant-general of the Indies, Tomás Ortiz de Landázuri, an opponent of the Gálvez Visitation, reproved this minister's measures and mentioned to Arriaga that the visitor-general already counted with too many dependents. According to the accountant-general, the *visita* officers already had competent salaries, sufficient to pay their living expenses in Mexico City; moreover, Ortiz de Landázuri asserted that Gálvez and his subalterns could pay the rent of the visitor-general's house right from their pockets instead of pretending to use monies from the royal treasury.<sup>32</sup>

The most important thing I want to stress here is that some of these *dependientes* advanced their bureaucratic careers spectacularly when Gálvez became minister of the

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Ambrosio Caballero. Of these, Gómez y Arguello, Santibañez, and Caballero had joined the inspection as minor officials before Gálvez embarked to the New World, that is, they were original members too; see "Nota de los sujetos." Viniegra, Gómez Argüello, and also Miguel de Azanza, who functioned as secretaries of the visitor during the Sonora Expedition, would be protagonists in Gálvez's most serious conflict with his dependents. It is well known that, while in Sonora, the future minister of the Indies suffered a severe episode of insanity. Vinegra, Gómez Argüello and Azanza informed the viceroy of what was occurring without hiding any of the shocking details of the *visitador*'s disease. When Gálvez was returning to sanity and Mexico City, they were incarcerated and then sent to Madrid, arguably because they had made bad use of some official papers. They defended themselves by claiming that their only wrongdoing was having told the whole truth of what had happened to the visitor-general in the Sonoran dessert. This story has been explored by a score of historians but is still waiting for a more theoretically informed reassessment.

<sup>31</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, n. 44, Mexico City, 27 Feb. 1768, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246. Arriaga approved this measure in July 1768, but after receiving some complaints from the court of audits (*Tribunal de Cuentas*) in New Spain he revoked it at the end of 1769; see Arriaga to Marqués de Croix and Gálvez, draft, Madrid, 19 Dec. 1769, *ibid*.

<sup>32</sup> Tomás Ortiz de Landázuri to Arriaga, draft report, Madrid, 23 Oct. 1768, AGI, Indiferente General (hereafter Indiferente), leg. 38.

Indies and even earlier, but in any case always under the shadow of the powerful Andalusian bureaucrat.

One of them was Francisco Machado, the visitor-general's secretary. Originally, he had been assigned a salary of 1,000 pesos per year, but in 1768 Gálvez requested a premium for him of 1,500 annual pesos from the date they disembarked in Veracruz.<sup>33</sup> We know little of the activities of Machado during the Gálvez Visitation, a remarkable fact that contrasts with the great number of documents that mention other, arguably less important members of the inspection team. Most probably his proximity to José de Gálvez eclipsed the functions he performed as secretary that could have left a trace in official documents. Francisco Xavier de Machado y Fiesco was born in 1730 in the Canary Islands, specifically in the city of San Cristóbal de la Laguna, capital of Tenerife. He held a military rank and had some bureaucratic experience before following Gálvez in his official mission. In his father's last will, dictated in 1764, he was referred to as a captain, town councilor (*regidor*) of his city, resident in the king's court in Madrid, and elected deputy of the Island of Tenerife.<sup>34</sup> There is one rare occasion in which Machado acted autonomously: when Gálvez put him in charge of the expulsion of the Jesuits from the city of Puebla in the summer of 1767.<sup>35</sup> More interesting is that at one point during the second half of the period of the Gálvez Visitation, Machado became secretary of Viceroy Marqués de Croix (1766-1771). When the visitor-general began to plan his

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<sup>33</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, n. 44, Mexico City, 27 Feb. 1768, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246. As n. 31 *supra* says, the minister of the Indies, Julián de Arriaga, managed to block this general raise in the salaries of the *visita* team members.

<sup>34</sup> Details of Francisco Machado's biography and his father's last will can be found in "Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Justo German de Machado," 1807, AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp. 1345.

<sup>35</sup> Luis Navarro García, "El virrey Marqués de Croix (1766-1771)" in *Los virreyes de Nueva España en el reinado de Carlos III*, ed. José Antonio Calderón Quijano (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos-Escuela Gráfica Salesiana, 1968), 1:262.

return to Spain in 1771, he requested the Crown's permission to take Machado with him.<sup>36</sup> His merits as secretary in the Mexican viceroyalty won Machado a Cross of the Order of Charles III in 1774. When his former patron, José de Gálvez, became head of the Spanish colonial office, Machado entered the prestigious Council of the Indies as a *capa y espada* minister and succeeded Tomás Ortiz de Landázuri in the office of the General Accountancy of the Indies.

Other *dependientes* of Gálvez are more visible in available documentary evidence. The lawyers of the *visita*, Juan Antonio Valera and Bartolomé Ortega y Montenegro, may be found everywhere in documents concerned with the inspection of the customs houses in Campeche, Veracruz, and Mexico City. Gálvez had named them his *subdelegados*; that is, they conducted the evaluations of these nodal economic centers in his name and he only had to supervise their activities, review the cases, and dictate the final sentences. Valera and Ortega were in charge of the general inspection during the two years in which Gálvez led the Sonora Expedition.<sup>37</sup> I have not been able to trace what happened to Valera after the Gálvez Visitation, but in the 1780s Ortega was serving as interim head of the *Casa de Contratación* in Cádiz, not a minor position in the imperial administration.<sup>38</sup>

Among the members of the official family of the visitor-general, Francisco Xavier de Corres offers the most puzzling story. A peek into his life shows the image of a dynamic

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<sup>36</sup> Arriaga accepted Gálvez's and Machado's request on the condition that the latter had to resolve first all the issues concerning his *juicio de residencia* as secretary of the viceroy. Arriga to Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa, and Arriaga to Gálvez, Madrid, 25 Dec. 1771, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246. A *residencia* trial was a Spanish judicial instrument that aimed at good governance practices. Each administrator in the colonial territories, from *alcaldes mayores*—local authorities—to viceroys, had to render a *residencia* at the end of their tenure in which higher authorities, and also the public, scrutinized their actions.

<sup>37</sup> AGNM, Correspondencia de Virreyes, vol. 12, 12 Apr. 1768, fol. 140.

<sup>38</sup> In AGI, Indiferente, leg. 1834 and AGI, Ultramar, leg. 836, I found correspondence between Gálvez and the president of the *Contratación* in Cádiz, Bartolomé Ortega, dated between 1784 and 1786. The *Casa de Contratación* was a Crown-appointed body that controlled trade and commerce between Spain and her colonies; it also enforced regulations on navigation and assessed duties.



and ambitious royal servant who profited professionally and economically under the shadow of his powerful Andalusian patron. Gálvez appointed Corres as one of the general inspection's accountants, but he had a higher salary (1,300 pesos a year) than his counterpart, Benito Linares (1,000 pesos); moreover, he had the highest wage among all the visitor-general's creatures, including secretary Machado.<sup>39</sup> When Gálvez disembarked in Veracruz in July 1765, he immediately dispatched *subdelegado* Valera, together with accountant Corres, and clerk Ochoa Badiola, to conduct the official inspection of the Laguna de Términos in Campeche. In 1766, while he was in that southeastern region of New Spain, Corres composed by order of Gálvez a "*Descripción política y geográfica de las provincias de Campeche and Yucatán.*" Showing a great deal of energy, in the following years he supported the work of the other *subdelegado*, Bartolomé Ortega, by helping him prepare the secret investigation on frauds by royal officials discovered during the inspection of Veracruz.<sup>40</sup> After the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767, the Crown decided to create an office that would administer the properties (or *temporalidades* as they were called) confiscated from the banished order. This new branch, the general direction and accountancy of *Temporalidades*, had two heads, a director general and a chief accountant, and the men chosen to fill these posts were Fernando Mangino and Francisco de Corres, from the *visita*'s rank and file.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Esquilache to Arriaga, El Pardo, 11 Mar. 1765, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1245.

<sup>40</sup> On 8 April 1768, just before departing for the Sonora Expedition, Gálvez wrote to the minister of the Indies, pointing at the wretched state of treasury affairs in Veracruz discovered by the secret investigation directed by Bartolomé Ortega and demonstrated with documents by accountant Francisco Xavier de Corres; see summary of Gálvez to Arriaga, 8 Apr. 1768, in Consejo de Indias, "Extracto de los autos de visita de cajas reales y ramos de Real Hacienda de la ciudad y puerto de la Nueva Veracruz," 1770, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1250.

<sup>41</sup> This double appointment happened in February 1768, by early 1769, accountant-general of the Indies, Ortiz de Landázuri, criticized it in one of his reports; see Ortiz de Landázuri to Arriaga, draft report, Madrid, 4 Jan. 1769, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 39.

Born in the city of Burgos in 1733, Francisco Xavier de Corres had held a minor administrative position of some kind before 1765. This is revealed in one petition to Minister Esquilache written by the agents of Corres and Benito Linares in Madrid. In this undated document they requested a reimbursement “of whatever amount” to cover the debts the future accountants of the *visita general* had incurred before departing for the New World. Apparently, Esquilache had promised Corres and Linares a gratification that would take care of both their travel expenses to the port of Cádiz, and the equipment needed for the transatlantic crossing. The agents reminded the minister that their clients had had a small salary in their “last employment,” and in addition, Corres and Linares were responsible for the support of their parents and siblings.<sup>42</sup> Although the nature of Corres’ “last employment” is unknown, I am certain that he had studied, that his family belonged to the low nobility strata (they were *hidalgos*), and that his father had worked as an officer at the Accountancy and General Administration of the Salt Mines in the province of Burgos.<sup>43</sup> Corres returned to Spain after the Gálvez Visitation, and soon he would forget the financial penuries of his past, for he received a very lucrative reward for his services to the Crown.

1774 was the *annus mirabilis* for Corres because the king granted him the *alcadía mayor* of Miahuatlán, located in Oaxaca’s Southern Sierra and one of the richest in New

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<sup>42</sup> The agents also informed that Corres and Linares had not paid them and for this reason they asked Esquilache to fulfill his promised gratification. The minister brushed aside their request by writing a note on the margin of their petition: “Turn to the viceroy of Mexico.” Request by Pedro Nuñez de Ameaga and Joaquín Palacios, agents of Francisco de Corres and Benito Linares, to Marqués de Esquilache, Madrid, undated, AGS, Dirección General de Rentas, Remesas II, leg. 2075.

<sup>43</sup> Data gathered from “Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Francisco Xavier de Corres,” 1774 (hereafter cited as “Pruebas Carlos III Corres 1774”), AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp.17. Regarding his education, one witness in this file recalled that after Corres finished his studies, he entered the king’s service.

Spain in terms of cochineal dye production.<sup>44</sup> In addition, the former accountant of the *visita general* had conferred upon him a Cross of the Order of Charles III.<sup>45</sup> In 1775, a decorated Corres crossed the Atlantic Ocean one more time and returned to New Spain to oversee his *alcaldía*. Some scattered evidence shows that Corres was trading cochineal between 1777 and 1778 with the support of powerful merchant companies in Veracruz such as the House of Cossío.<sup>46</sup> The head of this trading company, Pedro Antonio de Cossío, was the Gálvez-appointed administrator of the Veracruz customs and one of the Andalusian minister's closest allies from the times of the *visita general* up to 1782.<sup>47</sup> There is also evidence of an incident in 1778 in which Corres needed to expedite a shipment of his cochineal to Spain, and requested permission to use a merchant vessel without accompanying warship. This situation prompted an official investigation in which merchant-bureaucrat Pedro Antonio de Cossío supported Corres with an explanation of the hardships faced at the time by dye traders due to the fact that the new laws of *Comercio Libre* (Free Trade) did not apply to New Spain.<sup>48</sup> It is out of the ordinary, however, that in one of his letters to Gálvez, Cossío wrote that some time in 1776, most probably at the instance of Gálvez's ascent to the Ministry of the Indies, Corres had left his *alcaldía* for Mexico City in order to begin the reform of the *Tribunal*

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<sup>44</sup> This post was a grant for his good services to the Crown; see Jeremy Baskes, *Indians, Merchants, and Markets: A Reinterpretation of the Repartimiento and Spanish-Indian Economic Relations in Colonial Oaxaca, 1750-1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), Appendix A, 200. Miahuatlán received a first class categorization in an index of 1770 that assigned value to *alcaldías mayores* according to the products district magistrates could trade; about this index and Miahuatlán's classification, see Peter Gerhard, *México en 1742* (Mexico City: José Porrúa e hijos, 1962), 19 and 24.

<sup>45</sup> Also in 1774, see "Pruebas Carlos III Corres 1774"

<sup>46</sup> Brian Hamnett, *Politics and Trade in Southern Mexico 1750-1821* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 35.

<sup>47</sup> Pedro Antonio de Cossío is the subject of chapter 2 of this dissertation.

<sup>48</sup> Baskes, *Indians, Merchants, and Markets*, 155. Gálvez's famous 1778 Free Trade law for the Spanish Empire applied to New Spain only until 1789.

*de Cuentas*, or court of audits in Mexico City.<sup>49</sup> As had happened during the *visita general*, Gálvez was conferring multiple posts upon his protégés. A letter from Cossío dated in early 1781 confirms that Corres considered himself a man with privileges in the Gálvez system. At that time, Cossío had become secretary of the viceroyalty and he told Gálvez that Viceroy Martín Mayorga (1779-1783) complained that Corres, “not satisfied with having *and enjoying the* alcaldía *without being there*, nor with the commission of reforming the *Tribunal*, [he now] wanted [to occupy] the treasury and directorates of [recently defunct merchant-bureaucrat Juan José] Echeveste.”<sup>50</sup> Corres did not obtain these positions but he became Cossío’s especial aide in the task of reforming the *Tribunal*.

Only in May 1782 did Cossío admit that he and Corres had just began to “enter the forest” of the *Tribunal de Cuentas*.<sup>51</sup> In July 1782 Cossío and Corres finally produced a highly critical report in which they proposed the abolition of the *Tribunal*. The threatened senior auditors responded to the attack by criticizing Cossío and Corres, mentioning that the latter had been working as an auditor with them for the last month, but that his talents “left much to be desired.”<sup>52</sup> Soon Cossío would fall from Gálvez’s grace, and we do not know if Corres kept working for the *Tribunal* or if he returned to

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<sup>49</sup> Pedro Antonio de Cossío to Gálvez, 28 Feb. 1777, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511. See description of the court of audits’ functions in H. I. Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 67.

<sup>50</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, 11 Mar. 1781, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511, my emphasis. Juan José Echeveste was another favorite of José de Gálvez. He was a merchant like Cossío who, from the time of the *visita general* to his death served several offices simultaneously. Gálvez appointed him as treasurer of the tobacco state monopoly, director and treasurer of the playing cards monopoly, treasurer of the gunpowder administration, and treasurer of the Sonora Expedition. He maintained the first three positions until his death in 1781. Find more on Echeveste in chapter 2.

<sup>51</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, 16 May 1782, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511.

<sup>52</sup> This conflict appears in Linda Arnold, *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City, 1742-1835* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1988), 85, she cites from Tribunal de Cuentas to Gálvez, Mexico City, 31 July 1782, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511. I also talk about this in chapter 2.

Oaxaca. But evidence hints that he and his family enjoyed Miahuatlán's *alcaldía* for a few decades more.<sup>53</sup>

### **The Constant Lawyer: A Prototypical Man of Gálvez<sup>54</sup>**

Fernando José Mangino Fernández de Lima (1731-1806) was José de Gálvez's longest-lasting associate among the group of collaborators the minister met during his *visita general* of New Spain. Over the years, the Andalusian minister tailored Mangino's bureaucratic career to his liking. In fact, in matters of the royal treasury this favorite of Gálvez was a veritable renaissance man, always holding several official commissions at the same time. By the second half of the 1780s Mangino had become a successful royal functionary with an ever-ascending career, attained the status of a prominent public figure in Mexico City, and accrued a substantial personal fortune. Efficiency, that is, getting the work done, seems to have been the key for Mangino to survive as a member of Gálvez's team of reformists. Indeed, becoming a man of Gálvez was not enough for surviving as one. Many of the Andalusian minister's client-bureaucrats, with brilliant and promising careers in government fell from Gálvez's grace, as will be seen later.

A decade younger than Gálvez, Mangino was born in 1731, in Seville. His younger brother, Rafael, who eventually would reside in New Spain and become a royal treasury functionary like him, was not Andalusian, however, since he was born in Madrid

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<sup>53</sup> Baskes mentions one Fausto Corres as subdelegate (*alcalde mayor*) of Miahuatlán negotiating cochineal prices in 1798; Baskes, *Indians, Merchants, and Markets*, 103. Hamnett also refers to a Fausto Corres paying a debt as ex-subdelegate of the same town in 1806. The truth is that Hamnett interchanges the names Fausto and Francisco Xavier several times to refer to the same person; see his *Politics and Trade in Southern Mexico 1750-1821*, 156 and 183.

<sup>54</sup> I presented a version of this essay on Mangino at the 58th Annual Conference of the Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies, Santa Fe, NM (8 April 2011).

seven years later, in 1738. This readily suggests a certain spatial mobility for the Mangino family which is in fact substantiated by evidence. The parents of Fernando José and Rafael were foreigners living in Spain: their father, Antonio Mangino, was born in the city of Genoa and their mother, Juana Ignacia Fernández de Lima, was a native of Lisbon.<sup>55</sup> The couple married in the Portuguese capital in 1722. At the end of the 1780s some merchants interviewed in the Genovese town of Nervi, reminded that the Mangino family used to live there. The interviewees' families—the Chiapelas, the Ferraris, the Pencos—had conducted some business with the Manginos who specialized in trading with Spain since the early seventeenth century. They knew the Manginos owned several real estate properties in Madrid and that Antonio Mangino had taken the whole family fortune to Spain.

Fernando José graduated from the University of Alcalá and became a law professor at his *alma mater*. In 1791, when he applied for a Cross of the Order of Charles III award, he demonstrated that his father, grandfather, and great grandfather were nobles whose names were kept in the Republic of Genoa's "Golden Book" of nobility.<sup>56</sup> With his high education and petty noble origins, Mangino reflected a usual background pattern for imperial bureaucrats of the era. Let us remember that Gálvez shared these

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<sup>55</sup> Biographical data on the Manginos gathered from "Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Fernando José Mangino Fernández de Lima," 1791 (hereafter cited as "Pruebas Carlos III Fernando Mangino 1791"), and "Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Rafael Mangino Fernández de Lima," 1791, AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exps. 500 and 573, respectively. Fernando José and Rafael had a sister who married twice. María Ignacia Mangino Fernández de Lima was married to a man with an Italian surname in 1759, as her mother's last will mentioned. In 1774, she married an *oficial mayor* of the *Contaduría de Cuentas* of Madrid; see "Expediente de licencia de casamiento de Julián Pérez Farto, Oficial Mayor de la Contaduría de Cuentas de Madrid, con María Ignacia Mangino Fernández de Lima," 1774, AHN, FC-Ministerio de Hacienda, leg. 504, exp. 161.

<sup>56</sup> "Pruebas Carlos III Fernando Mangino 1791." Mangino's order of Charles III *expediente* clearly establishes that his Genovese family was wealthy, while his maternal ancestors had more humble origins (notwithstanding that his mother was born at the Portuguese court).

antecedents: he was trained as a lawyer and he had noble, though rather humble, origins. The truth is that this was a moment of transition when societies were witnessing the configuration of a modern state and the professionalization of bureaucracies. Since the sixteenth century, and only progressively, men of modest social backgrounds but with proper training—specific skills in law, accounting, and administration—were displacing the traditional nobility from government positions. Thus, the fact that proven nobility and acceptable social background (that is, purity of blood) remained entrance prerequisites to high imperial bureaucracy is part of the usual contradictions experienced in transitional eras like the early modern period.<sup>57</sup> Armed with all these credentials, in addition to some personal connections,<sup>58</sup> lawyer Mangino obtained his first job in the colonial administration in 1762. In July, the king appointed him district magistrate (*alcalde mayor*) of Zacatlán de las Manzanas, a town located in the northwest of the modern Mexican state of Puebla.<sup>59</sup>

The Manginos eventually became a powerful family in the city of Puebla de los Ángeles (the second largest in New Spain), but Rafael's appointment as head of the sales tax (*alcabala*) administration of that city in the late 1780s is probably the main cause for

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<sup>57</sup> In Cross of the Order of Charles III's applications it was important that the *pretendientes* demonstrated they had no Moor or Jewish blood. In the proofs of purity that the Mangino brothers collected in Portugal it called my attention that some witnesses listed the absence of "mulatto" blood before mentioning Moorish or Jewish antecedents; see *ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> In the realm of personal connections, according to Luis Navarro García, the Conde de Ricla recommended Mangino to the Marqués de Cruillas (Viceroy of New Spain from 1760 to 1766), and this endorsement was his passport for becoming a royal functionary; see his "El Virrey Marqués de Croix (1766-1771)" 301. Unfortunately, Navarro García does not cite a source and I have not been able to locate evidence for this assertion. The Conde de Ricla was a top imperial bureaucrat in those times (mid-1760s to mid-1770s).

<sup>59</sup> Copy of title of *alcalde mayor* of Zacatlán de las Manzanas for Fernando José Mangino, 25 July 1762, AGS, DGS, Inventario 24, leg. 184, fol. 87.

this coincidence.<sup>60</sup> In fact, the sons of Rafael—Rafael (1788-1837) and Fernando (?-1873) Mangino y Mendívil—grew to be important members of the Mexican political class in the post-independence era. Rafael had the honor to crown Mexican Emperor Agustín de Iturbide and was secretary for fiscal affairs during the first administration of President Anastasio Bustamante; Fernando, on the other hand, was ambassador to France at the end of the 1840s.<sup>61</sup>

Let us return to their uncle, Fernando José. At some point between José de Gálvez's arrival in New Spain in July 1765 and early 1767, Mangino met the visitor-general. The first news of collaboration between the two Andalusian functionaries comes from mid-1767, when Gálvez and his political ally, Viceroy Marqués de Croix, commissioned Mangino to supervise the expulsion of the Jesuits from the city of Valladolid (modern Morelia) on 25 June.<sup>62</sup> There, Mangino experienced the din of the popular rebellions that erupted in the province of Michoacán as a result of the banishment of the religious order. He received orders from Gálvez to start the criminal investigation against the indigenous agitators from the towns of Uruapan and Pátzcuaro who had been captured and taken to Valladolid. Dutifully, Mangino collected the depositions of the nineteen accused Indians.<sup>63</sup> In November, Gálvez and his *subdelegado* Juan Antonio de Valera arrived in Valladolid to review the criminal cases set up by Mangino and executed

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<sup>60</sup> Rafael Mangino travelled to New Spain for the first time in 1768 to join the dragoons regiment as a lieutenant according to AGI, Contratación, leg. 5511B, n. 2, r. 35.

<sup>61</sup> Lucas Alamán, *Semblanzas e ideario*, ed. Arturo Arnáiz Freg (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1989), 126; Arnold, *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City*, 125; and Rafael Heliodoro Valle, *Un diplomático mexicano en París (don Fernando Mangino, 1848-1851)* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores-Departamento de Información para el Extranjero, 1948).

<sup>62</sup> Navarro García, "El Virrey Marqués de Croix," 262.

<sup>63</sup> "Qdno. No. 2º. Declaraciones a 19 yndios de Uruapan por Fernando Joseph Mangino (Corregidor de Zacatlán)" and "Qdno. 1. Causa Criminal hecha de oficio por Dn Fernando Joseph Mangino en virtud de la comisión de Gálvez sobre los alborotos sucedidos en Pátzcuaro y excesos cometidos por el Gobernador Pedro de Soria, alias Armola," BRAH, Jesuitas 9-713.



the tragically famous harsh sentences. Mangino, still *alcalde mayor* of Zacatlán, received eulogies for his efficient role in processing the criminal charges against the rebels of Michoacán.<sup>64</sup>

As I mentioned earlier, the Crown created the office of *Temporalidades* to administer the properties confiscated to the banished Jesuit order. In February 1768, Viceroy Croix handpicked Mangino as director general of *Temporalidades* and the Californian missions' fund. The new protégé of Gálvez thus began to develop his expertise in colonial treasury affairs. This was the first of many appointments in branches of the royal treasury. Double appointments (that later would become triple and quadruple) characterized the rest of his bureaucratic career. In the same year, Mangino had become a member of the Gálvez Visitation team. In a letter to Arriaga, also dated in February 1768, the visitor-general mentioned that Fernando Mangino had been appointed *alguacil mayor* of the general inspection. The duties of the position were not clearly defined and Gálvez simply remarked that Mangino was working on a "variety of matters." Gálvez assigned him a handsome 2,000 pesos per year as salary.<sup>65</sup> With this sum, Mangino earned more than any other member of the *visita general* team (with the exception of Gálvez, of course).

During 1768, Juan Antonio Varela and Mangino worked together preparing a legal suit for fraud against the former officers of the Mexico City customs house.<sup>66</sup> This was a normal task in *visita general* affairs, also performed by a duo composed by

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<sup>64</sup> Croix to Conde de Aranda, recommends Mangino to a promotion, 24 Feb. 1769 in "Relación de mérito de Fernando José Mangino," AGI, Mexico, leg. 1161, undated notes taken by Dr. Linda Arnold (graciously shared with the author).

<sup>65</sup> See Gálvez to Arriaga, n. 44, Mexico City, 27 Feb. 1768, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246.

<sup>66</sup> According to Salvucci, they finished their investigation on 22 December 1768; see her "Costumbres viejas, 'hombres nuevos'", 236n22.

*subdelegado* and an accountant for the custom houses of Veracruz and Campeche, and it only indicates that Mangino was fully integrated to the team as an accountant, along Corres and Linares. In September 1769 Mangino presented his *juicio de residencia* as *alcalde mayor* of Zacatlán. The *residencia* concluded with eulogies again, mentioning his outstanding conduct and that he had collected more tribute than anyone else in his district's class.<sup>67</sup> His performance as *alcalde mayor* probably earned him the post of interim accountant of the royal tribute in 1769. Gálvez's restructuring of the tributes, one of the accomplishments of his general inspection, completely relied on Mangino's work as the visitor-general explained in his *Informe General* (final report) to Viceroy Bucareli prepared at the end of 1771.<sup>68</sup>

Since Gálvez conceived the establishment of the intendancy system in New Spain in 1768 up until the very end of 1786, when he finally managed to reorganize the entire viceroyalty into twelve intendancies (a new form of administrative territories), Mangino was instrumental to this major and long-sought reform. In 1770, visitor-general Gálvez commissioned Mangino and the then director general of tributes, Pedro Núñez de Villavicencio, to prepare a list that classified in three different levels all the *corregimientos* and *alcaldías mayores* in the viceroyalty in order to determine to which future intendancy each *alcaldía* would belong.<sup>69</sup> On the same year, Croix remitted to Spain a report prepared by Gálvez about how the intendancy territories should be

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<sup>67</sup> "Relación de mérito de Fernando José Mangino," AGI, Mexico, leg. 1161.

<sup>68</sup> José de Gálvez, *Informe general que en virtud de real orden instruyó y entregó el excelentísimo señor Marqués de Sonora siendo visitador general de este reino, al excelentísimo señor virrey don Antonio Bucarely y Ursúa con fecha 31 de diciembre de 1771* (Mexico City: Imprenta de Santiago White, 1867; facsimile with introduction by Clara Elena Suárez Argüello, Mexico City: CIESAS-Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2002), 86-98.

<sup>69</sup> Luis Navarro García, *Intendencias en Indias* (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos, 1959), 27-28 and n. 30; also, Peter Gerhard, *México en 1742*, 19 and 24.

organized; the report also proposed six functionaries to govern the planned administrative territories. Several of Gálvez's protégés were candidates and Mangino was pointed to head the tribute-rich intendancy of Oaxaca.<sup>70</sup> The 1768-1770 initial project never fully materialized, and Mangino would have to wait until 1787 to become an intendant.

Most of Gálvez's appointments during the visitation raised eyebrows in Madrid, particularly among those who opposed his reformist measures. Minister of the Indies Julián de Arriaga hinted many times at his suspicions about the performance of the Andalusian's favorites. Mangino was only *interim* accountant-general of tributes and needed an official confirmation from the Crown to receive the official title. Arriaga blocked this authorization up until the summer of 1775, so that for six years Mangino could not enjoy the full benefits of his employment.<sup>71</sup> The process in which Arriaga was eventually convinced that Mangino deserved the official title speaks of conflicting networks of patronage in the context of the Bourbon Reforms.

Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa (viceroy of New Spain from 1771 to 1779) was a friend of Arriaga and shared the minister's skepticism toward the ways in which Gálvez's had conducted the reforms during his general inspection. Pedro Nuñez de Villavicencio, the superior of Mangino at the tributes branch, also headed the mint of Mexico City. In 1773, Nuñez's health started to deteriorate and he, Bucareli, and Arriaga worried about finding a possible replacement. In June, Bucareli told Arriaga in a private letter that he had had a conversation with Nuñez who thought that Mangino was in a good position for helping him with the administration of the mint because as "accountant of

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<sup>70</sup> Ricardo Rees Jones, introduction to *Real Ordenanza para el establecimiento é instrucción de intendentes de ejército y provincia en el reino de la Nueva-España* (Facsimil edition, Mexico City: UNAM, 1984), xxi.

<sup>71</sup> Copy of title of accountant-general of Tributes for Fernando José Mangino, 18 July 1775, AGS, DGS, Inventario 24, leg. 185, fol. 136.

tributes he has this branch in the best arrangement possible and *notwithstanding the connections he had had with the* [Gálvez] Visitation, everybody recognized his abilities, his disinterest, and his *hombra de bien* [honesty].” The viceroy finished by adding that he was also satisfied with Mangino’s performance.<sup>72</sup> In his answer, written in October, Arriaga stated that “he had a very low conception of Mangino” and only because Bucareli himself had written of his “disinterest and his *hombra de bien*” he could now “think about his [future] allocation”.<sup>73</sup> Apparently, the health of Nuñez improved and Arriaga pigeonholed the matter until 1775. In this year, when the Crown finally issued the title for Mangino, Bucareli even thanked Arriaga with these words: “Mangino is grateful... he deserves [his reward] since he is skilled and serves the king well.”<sup>74</sup>

In January 1776 Arriaga died and José de Gálvez assumed his office. Not surprisingly, a rain of titles fell upon Mangino. In March he obtained the title of superintendant substitute of the mint of Mexico City, which meant that in case Nuñez de Villavicencio lost his health (or his life), Mangino would automatically assume his position, this time with a confirmed title in his hand.<sup>75</sup> A few months later he received the title of honorary minister of the *Tribunal de Cuentas*.<sup>76</sup> At one moment in the 1780s, Gálvez’s protégé was directing the following branches of the royal treasury: tributes, the Mint (since 1778),<sup>77</sup> the mercury monopoly,<sup>78</sup> and the *lanzas* and *media annata* taxes.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Bucareli to Arriaga, Mexico City, 26 Jun. 1773, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 1630, my emphasis.

<sup>73</sup> Probably by “allocation” Arriaga meant Mangino’s confirmation to the post of accountant-general of tributes and not precisely to an appointment to the Mint. Arriaga to Bucareli, San Lorenzo, 23 Oct. 1773, *ibid.*, my emphasis.

<sup>74</sup> Bucareli to Arriaga, Mexico City, 26 Nov. 1775, *ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> Title of Superintendent Substitute of the Royal Mint of Mexico City for Fernando José Mangino with options to property, 12 Mar. 1776, AGS, DGS, Inventario 24, leg. 185, fol. 153.

<sup>76</sup> Title of Honorary Minister of the Court of Audits of Mexico for Fernando José Mangino, 14 Aug. 1776, *ibid.*, fol. 143.

<sup>77</sup> In 1778, Nuñez de Villavicencio passed the Mint to the hands of Mangino.

Also, since 1777 and to enhance his authority, he enjoyed an honorary membership in the Spanish king's Treasury Council.<sup>80</sup>

It is clear that Mangino counted with the direct patronage of the powerful Minister of the Indies for obtaining his multiple jobs, but Gálvez counted with Mangino's support in personal matters. Reciprocity is one of the main characteristics of a relationship of patronage, no matter how unequal this might be. In July 1780, the Andalusian statesman issued a legal instrument to name Mangino his agent in Mexico City. Mangino's main duty, according to the power of attorney, was to draw Gálvez's annual pension of 4,000 pesos bestowed in 1779 by the newly-created Mining Tribunal. This was one of the colonial minister's most cherished sources of personal income and it is mentioned as one of the main items in his last will given in 1787 since it was a "perpetual" allowance, meaning that his descendants would receive it too.<sup>81</sup> Thus, when Gálvez died, his widow immediately issued a power of attorney in favor of Mangino to collect on her and her daughter's behalf the perpetual allowance of the Mining Tribunal.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 65, and Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de real hacienda en Nueva España*, 137.

<sup>79</sup> Gálvez to Mangino, draft, El Pardo 12 Jan. 1780, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1510, in this document the minister of the Indies addresses Mangino as judge of *media annata*.

<sup>80</sup> He was appointed "*capa y espada*" minister of the *Consejo de Hacienda*. Becoming a member of a Royal Council even if you were not physically present in Madrid was a common measure in the Spanish empire that sought to provide more legitimacy to the functionary abroad. Before embarking to New Spain in 1765, visitor-general José de Gálvez received an honorary membership *with seniority* at the Council of the Indies.

<sup>81</sup> "Poder especial y general para cobrar, otorgado por el Excelentísimo señor Don Josef de Gálvez, a favor de Don Fernando Josef Mangino. En 9 de julio de 1780," AHPM, vol. 18670, fols. 111-112, in *México en el siglo XVIII: Recopilación de Documentos Relativos a D. José de Gálvez Gallardo*, ed. Francisco Rodas de Coss (Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores-Embajada de México en Madrid-Comisión de Historia, 1983), 125-126. As Gálvez's *apoderado*, Mangino could also collect any other past, existing, or future debts in favor of the minister, represent him in a judicial trial, make payments on his name, etc.

<sup>82</sup> Gálvez's widow, the Marquesa de Sonora, granted Mangino the power to collect all the pensions and debts owed to her deceased husband and also to represent the interests of her daughter (Gálvez's only heir) in any legal suit, if necessary; see "Poder otorgado por la excelentísima señora Marquesa de Sonora a Don Fernando Mangino. En 1º de Julio de 1787," AHPM, vol. 18673, fols. 74-75, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 178-179. Mangino was also the executor of Gálvez's will in Mexico; thus he was in charge of presiding over the making and donation of an expensive silver lamp the ex-visitor-general had requested in order to

Mangino received good salaries by the standards of the times. A *Real Cédula* of 26 November 1776 confirmed that as accountant general of tributes he had to receive 4,000 pesos a year.<sup>83</sup> In 1778, Mangino earned 7,000 pesos as superintendant of the mint, the highest salary of all fiscal departments in New Spain.<sup>84</sup> The superintendancy of the mint was not a minor position in the Spanish colonial system. Francisco de Saavedra, future second intendant of Venezuela and also protégé of José de Gálvez, was conscious of the transcendental role of the Mexico City's mint for the world economy. He called it the "sanctuary of the world's wealth." When Saavedra travelled to Mexico City as Gálvez's envoy in November 1781, one of his first obligatory stops was at Mangino's mint house. In his opinion Mangino kept the mint very well ordered, but he thought that the imposing building with arched corridors surrounding a roofless patio located at *Calle de la Moneda* was of such a bad taste that it did not keep up to its universal transcendence.<sup>85</sup> The truth is that Mangino presided over a period during which the mint expanded its coinage production in part because the mines in New Spain were also producing more silver. According to another contemporary and also protégé of Gálvez, the *fiscal de real hacienda* Ramón de Posada, in 1783 alone the mint coined 24 million pesos.<sup>86</sup>

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illuminate the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe; see "Fundación hecha por el Sr. Marqués de Sonora D. José de Gálvez, para dotar de alumbrado la Colegiata de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe," Mexico City, 20 Oct. 1787, AGNM, Bienes Nacionales, v. 1906, exp. 1.

<sup>83</sup> AGNM, Réales Cédulas Originales, v. 109, exp. 10, 26 Nov. 1776.

<sup>84</sup> His predecessor at the Mint, Nuñez de Villavicencio, earned 1,000 pesos less; Arnold, *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City*, 135.

<sup>85</sup> Francisco de Saavedra, *Los decenios (autobiografía de un sevillano en la Ilustración)*, ed. Francisco Morales Padrón (Seville: Ayuntamiento de Sevilla, 1995), 251.

<sup>86</sup> Ramón de Posada to José de Gálvez, n. 170, Mexico City, 17 Jul. 1784, AGI, Mexico, leg. 2004, cited in Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de real hacienda en Nueva España*, 169.

From his position at the superintendancy of the mint, Mangino was strong enough to negotiate with the Crown the establishment of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Carlos, the fourth of four fine arts academies founded in the Spanish Empire and the only one in the Americas.<sup>87</sup> Several artists, particularly engravers, worked for Mangino at the mint. In fact, when he became superintendant in 1778, a school of drawing was founded there. The school was directed by the recently arrived, iron-fisted Jerónimo Antonio Gil, a famous engraver, member of the Fine Arts Academy of San Fernando in Madrid, and responsible for suggesting the creation of such institution in New Spain.<sup>88</sup> For its foundation, Mangino collected money from several powerful institutions like the Mining Tribunal and the Mexico City merchant guild. Finally, in November 1785, under the Viceregency of Matías de Gálvez (the minister of the Indies' older brother), he inaugurated the Academy of San Carlos and became president for life of that institution, along with co-founder Gil.<sup>89</sup>

Mangino's relationship with the arts is indeed fascinating. In a letter of 1774, Arriaga said to Bucareli that Mangino was married to a famous opera singer known as La Peruzzi, who was several years his senior.<sup>90</sup> Anna María Peruzzi was one of the prima donnas of eighteenth-century Neapolitan opera. In the 1750s she immigrated to Spain and

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<sup>87</sup> Susan Deans-Smith, "'A Natural and Voluntary Dependence': The Royal Academy of San Carlos and the Cultural Politics of Art Education in Mexico City, 1786–1797," *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 29, no. 3 (2010): 278.

<sup>88</sup> Gil became the Academy's first director. Jean Charlot, *Mexican Art and the Academy of San Carlos, 1785-1915* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962).

<sup>89</sup> Ramón de Posada substituted Mangino as president of the Academy in 1788, and kept that honor until 1794; see, Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda en Nueva España*, 49-50.

<sup>90</sup> Arriaga to Bucareli, San Lorenzo, 26 Oct. 1774, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 1630. According to one author, she was born at the "beginning of the century," indicating that she probably was thirty or twenty years older than Mangino.

performed at the court alongside other famous singers such as the *castrato* Farinelli.<sup>91</sup> Mangino was not a good husband, however, since as soon as he left Spain to work as *alcalde mayor* of Zacatlán in the 1760s, she had requested his return to her side. There was a law that protected the wives of royal functionaries from being abandoned by their husbands. Documents at the *Archivo General de la Nación* in Mexico City show multiple excuses presented on behalf of Mangino by Viceroy Croix himself. It seems that for at least fifteen years, the Croix-Gálvez duo protected Mangino from complying with this rule.<sup>92</sup>

Mangino's final rise to high power at the viceroyalty level happened late in Gálvez's life and it did not last long for natural (the minister died) and political reasons (Gálvez's detractors reversed part of his intendancies reform). In early 1787 Gálvez named Mangino *superintendente subdelegado* of the royal treasury. Under the new intendancy system established in 1786, the superintendancy of the royal treasury was the second most powerful governmental position in New Spain, just below that of the viceroy, and signified that Gálvez's favorite was now in charge of all the financial and economic affairs of the viceroyalty. In addition, Mangino would govern the central intendancy of Mexico, function as viceroyalty-wide intendant of the army, and have control over the other eleven intendants. The word "*subdelegado*" in his title meant that he would be a direct subordinate of José de Gálvez, who was the general superintendant of the royal treasury of the Indies. In all, this was the realization of one of Gálvez's chief projects. With more than twenty years of experience in the management of financial

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<sup>91</sup> Emilio Cotarelo y Mori, *Orígenes y establecimiento de la ópera en España hasta 1800* (Madrid: Tip. de la "Revista de arch., bibl., y museos," 1917).

<sup>92</sup> La Peruzzi either desisted or died in the mid-1770s since I have not found any more evidence pertaining this marital drama.



affairs in Mexico City and proven loyalty to Gálvez, lawyer Mangino was the man indicated for the position. He assumed office on 7 May 1787.

According to article 303 of the newly issued *Ordenanza de Intendentes* of 1786, Mangino's salary as *superintendente subdelegado* would reach 12,000 pesos a year. Twenty years earlier, Gálvez had received the same wage as visitor-general of New Spain. During that period, Gálvez was the best paid functionary in the viceroyalty, only below the viceroy, and Mangino was in the same situation in 1787. Gálvez also secured the enhancement of his protégé's power and prestige by getting for him the title of *capa y espada* minister *with seniority* at the Council of the Indies. At that moment, the Spanish-Genovese-Portuguese enjoyed the status of a public figure in New Spain. In December of 1786, he was chosen as godfather of the daughter of recently deceased Viceroy Bernardo Gálvez—the minister of the Indies's nephew. Mangino graciously offered the godparenthood of the child to the City Council (*cabildo*) of Mexico City who had begged for the honor. A social commentator of the time recalled how, in the solemn public baptism the “Magnífico Mangino,” as he was called, had exhibited the best carriage and clothing; he only lamented the discordant pair of glasses he was wearing!<sup>93</sup> There is a portrait of Mangino by Mexican painter Miguel de Herrera. Painted in 1783, Mangino appears as a fair-skinned, blue-eyed, double-chinned, well-built man with contrasting delicate facial features. Unfortunately he is not wearing his glasses, but his dress is *a la francesa*, with a beautifully embroidered waistcoat, and cinnamon-colored coat and breeches. Perhaps

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<sup>93</sup> Description in Isidoro Vázquez Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez y sus Alianzas* (Madrid: Vázquez Acuña, 1974), 1297. At first I thought “magnificent” was simply an adjective that the social commentator had added, but in a document of 1788 in which Mangino commissioned a clerk to interview people who knew about his family's past in the Genovese town of Nervi, the clerk refers to his employer as “Magnífico Señor Don Fernando José Mangino;” see “Pruebas Carlos III Fernando Mangino 1791,” fol. 36. “The Magnificent,” was a common honorary appellation in early-modern Italy.

alluding to his profession as bureaucrat, Mangino stands next to a tall table, on top of it there is an inkwell with three quills, and he is holding a note in his right hand.<sup>94</sup>

Twenty days after assuming his superintendancy, Mangino asked Gálvez's permission to marry.<sup>95</sup> Utterly ignoring his failed marriage with opera singer La Peruzzi, he justified his decision by pointing out that he had never married. A fifty-five-year-old Mangino intended to marry the daughter of the regent of the Mexico City Audiencia, Eusebio Sánchez de Pareja, following a known pattern of top bureaucrats marrying the daughters of fellow top bureaucrats. For an unknown reason the marriage never materialized and in 1789 he married another woman instead, Josefa García Panés, from Veracruz, thirty years his junior, and the daughter of engineer, army officer, historian, and author of "*Cronología de los virreyes de Nueva España*" and "*Teatro de la Nueva España en su gentilismo y conquista*," Diego García Panés.<sup>96</sup>

The superintendancy of the royal treasury was a great, powerful position, but it was also one that looked for trouble in relation to the viceroy. Minor but multiple jurisdictional disputes sprouted almost immediately between Mangino and interim viceroy Archbishop Alonso Nuñez de Haro (1787).<sup>97</sup> Moreover, the sudden death of Gálvez in June 1787 signified the end of Mangino's brief interlude as superintendant of finances. By October, Antonio Valdés, the new minister of the Indies, reintegrated the superintendancy's powers and functions to the prerogatives of the viceroy. In 1788, and

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<sup>94</sup> Painting reproduced in Ricardo Rees Jones, *El despotismo ilustrado y los intendentes de la Nueva España* (Mexico City: UNAM-Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1979). The painting belongs to the descendants of Mangino in Mexico (communication of the author with a descendant of Mangino, January 2011).

<sup>95</sup> Mangino to Gálvez, Mexico City, 27 May 1787, AGS, Secretaría de Guerra, leg. 7221.

<sup>96</sup> Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de real hacienda en Nueva España*, 99, n. 13 and María Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo Spínola, "Diego García Panés. Un autor olvidado," *Anuario de Estudios Hispanoamericanos* 23, 1966, 723-755.

<sup>97</sup> Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 66.

precisely because of his title of minister of the Council of the Indies, the Crown required Mangino's departure from Mexico after twenty six years of being a functionary there. He was urged to assume his position at the Council in Madrid. Mangino died in that city in 1806 at 75. His widow, Josefa Panés de Mangino, returned to Mexico where the rest of the Mangino family was still prominent in society and government.

### **Concluding Remarks (and Epilogue for Mangino)**

Several and variegated documents that reacted against José de Gálvez's actions as visitor-general of New Spain circulated Madrid in the 1770s. Authored by known detractors of Gálvez or simply anonymous, these documents decisively opposed his reformist measures and his style of governance. What is interesting is that these written shows of disapproval identified and criticized the men of Gálvez *as* a group. For example, in a highly critical letter addressed to José de Gálvez, a group of minor *dependientes* composed by Juan Manuel Viniegra, Miguel de Azanza, and Juan Antonio Gómez de Argüello, mentioned that while the visitor-general was in his expedition to the northern provinces of New Spain, his other *dependientes* "Valera and Mangino, Corres and Linares, were strolling around and having fun in Mexico City, full of satisfactions and luxuries."<sup>98</sup> Shortly after Gálvez became minister of the Indies in 1776, an interesting anonymous document criticized José Antonio de Areche.<sup>99</sup> Among the negative comments the recently appointed visitor-general of Peru and also protégé of Gálvez

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<sup>98</sup> "Y estos se han estado paseando y divirtiéndose en México llenos de satisfacciones y faustos," see Juan Manuel de Viniegra, Miguel José de Azanza, and Juan Antonio Gómez de Argüello to Gálvez, Havana, 6 Dec. 1771, reproduced in "Sobre don José de Gálvez en 1774," AHN, Estado, leg. 2845, n. 10. For the conflict between Gálvez and Viniegra, Azanza, and Gómez Argüello see n. 30 *supra*.

<sup>99</sup> See n. 6 and 7, *supra*.

received was that he belonged to the faction of “the Valeras, Correses, Manginos, Machados, Marcos, Cossíos and Ortegas,” and was first and main collaborator in “those calamities” (referring to the reforms).<sup>100</sup> These pieces of evidence show that a public receptive to the making and implementation of reform located these men clearly in the Gálvez’s side of the political arena.

As visitor-general of New Spain, José de Gálvez was an ambitious royal functionary, but he could not have initiated the relationships described in this chapter as part of a great scheme for reform that he would apply one day to the rest of the Spanish territories. He did not know that the future held for him the Ministry of Indies in 1776; in fact, at one moment during the Sonora Expedition he could not even know if he was going to live.<sup>101</sup> Yet, many of the people he met in New Spain would climb the bureaucratic ladder behind him thanks to their personal connections with the ex-visitor-general. There is also a certain voluntarism among Gálvez’s clients. What was the rationale of becoming a man of the minister? Royal patronage was a scarce resource. Gálvez’s original or foundational patronage with the king made him an attractive patron. Indeed, Gálvez’s function as a mediator of royal favors made him extremely valuable. All the minister’s men obtained jobs; Areche, Machado, and Mangino ended their lives as members of the Council of the Indies; Areche, Machado, Mangino, and Corres received at one point in their lives the honor of a Cross of the Order of Charles III;<sup>102</sup> Corres made good business as *alcalde mayor* in a rich cochineal-producing region in Oaxaca. With his

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<sup>100</sup> Anonymous, “Apuntes sucintos y prácticas de la América Española.”

<sup>101</sup> During the Sonora Expedition Gálvez suffered a life-threatening disease that lasted for almost eight months.

<sup>102</sup> The Mangino brothers, Fernando and Rafael, gained their Cross of the Order of Charles III until 1791; “Pruebas Carlos III Fernando Mangino 1791” and “Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Rafael Mangino Fernández de Lima,” 1791, AHN, Estado-Carlos III, 573.

hard and loyal work in treasury affairs, it is probable that Mangino fulfilled his more personal desire to found the Academy of Fine Arts. Gálvez then was a double agent, acting for the king in the Americas, and acting for his protégés before the king—a veritable human hinge. By 1776 Gálvez’s road toward imperial reform was well paved with a strong network of clients. Factors such as a previous association and trust (in the case of the *visita* team), and expertise and loyalty (in the case of Mangino), were bargaining chips the minister’s men traded with their patron.

The long-lasting and mutually-constituting character of the relationship between Gálvez and Mangino has tempted me many times to call it a friendship. Unfortunately, for lack of sufficient evidence—particularly the kind of evidence generated by intimacy and affection, such as private letters—the particulars of Gálvez’s personal exchanges with Mangino are enfolded in silence. The extremely deferential language used by Mangino in one letter of 1787 in which he discussed a personal matter with the minister of the Indies suggests a formal relationship of patronage more than a friendship.<sup>103</sup> In his typology of human relationships, Eric Wolf proposes the category of “instrumental friendship” to differentiate it from an emotional one. Wolf describes this relationship as one that “aims at a large and unspecified series of performances of mutual assistance.”<sup>104</sup> The Gálvez-Mangino connection seems to neatly fit in these characteristics. In any case this relationship may be described as a classic one of patronage if we define it, as Julian Pitt-Rivers simply but magisterially did, as a “lopsided friendship.”<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Mangino to Gálvez, Mexico City, 27 May 1787, AGS, Secretaría de Guerra, leg. 7221.

<sup>104</sup> Eric C. Wolf, “Kinship, Friendship, and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies,” in *Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientelism*, ed. Steffen W. Schmidt, Laura Guasti, Carl H. Landé, and James C. Scott (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1977), 173.

<sup>105</sup> Pitt-Rivers, *The People of the Sierra*, 140.

Long after Gálvez's demise, his legacy continued to cast a shadow over many of his former protégés that ended up their careers as ministers of the Council of the Indies. If we peek at Mangino's activities at the Council, we found him having common projects with other men of Gálvez, such as José García de León y Pizarro, visitor, president-regent, treasury *subdelegado*, and captain general of the *Audiencia* of Quito from the late 1770s to the early 1780s.<sup>106</sup> Furthermore, Mangino and Ramón de Posada succeeded one another at the presidency of the famous *Real Compañía de Filipinas*—a state-led world trading company created during the Gálvez era.<sup>107</sup> Yet, one may also come across contradictions in the careers of royal functionaries and there is shocking evidence about an evolution in Mangino's career after his return to Spain.

In effect, the case of Mangino opens the door to new hypotheses about Gálvez's legacy, only sketched or suggested tangentially by Stein and Stein in their recent *The Edge of Crisis* (2009).<sup>108</sup> Gálvez's stance against the Mexico City merchant guild is a well-known fact. One postulate of his commercial reforms involved the end of traditional trade monopolies like that of Cádiz, Mexico City, or Lima. Unsurprisingly, for many years the old merchant guilds (*consulados*) formed the core of the opposition to Gálvez and his restructuring of the imperial trade structures. According to Stein and Stein, however, when Mangino returned to Madrid, he worked as lobbyist *and* agent of the

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<sup>106</sup> Mangino and León y Pizarro, "Extractos Históricos y Cronológicos de Ordenes Reales, y Providencias para los Descubrimientos, Actos, y Posesiones de Costas y Navegación del Mar del Sur, especialmente del parte del Norte, y de Californias, y prohibición de Navegar los Mares de Indias a todas las Naciones extranjeras." Madrid, 18 June 1790, 201, available at the Huntington and the Newberry Libraries. For García de León y Pizarro, see Kenneth J. Andrien, *The Kingdom of Quito, 1690-1830: The State and Regional Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 192.

<sup>107</sup> Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de real hacienda en Nueva España*, 60.

<sup>108</sup> Barbara H. Stein and Stanley J. Stein, *Edge of Crisis: War and Trade in the Spanish Atlantic, 1789-1808* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009). Their information comes from sources I still have not had the opportunity to review for myself, located in the *Consulado* section of the Archive General of the Indies in Seville.

Mexico City *consulado*. He vehemently opposed the creation of a new, competing *consulado* in Veracruz.<sup>109</sup> In addition, a rumor circulated that he received 1,500 *pesos fuertes* a year from the Mexico City merchant guild.<sup>110</sup> Meanwhile, another man of Gálvez, still in New Spain, the *fiscal* Ramón de Posada, backed Viceroy Revillagigedo (in office, 1789-1794) in supporting the creation of more *consulados* in New Spain.<sup>111</sup> What is the meaning of this contradiction? Did Gálvez change his mind in relation to *consulados* during his ministry and Mangino acted accordingly? There is room to suspect this, but more evidence is needed. Or, since Gálvez was dead, did Mangino act autonomously for a new set of patrons (the powerful merchants of Mexico City)? If the latter is the case, by supporting the creation of a new *consulado* in Veracruz, Posada was only continuing Gálvez's imperial trade project and reformist legacy, but Mangino was not.

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 136-139.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 500n28.

<sup>111</sup> Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 117.

## Chapter 2

### **The Minister's Awkward Partner: the Bureaucratic Career of Merchant Pedro**

#### **Antonio de Cossío in New Spain during the Gálvez Era<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Introduction**

In the great tapestry of patron-client relationships that José de Gálvez wove during the general inspection of New Spain, one particular thread is fascinating for its long-lasting, chiaroscuro-dyed character: his relationship with Pedro Antonio de Cossío, a Spanish merchant resident in Veracruz. This dyadic connection is a central instance of the patronage relationships initiated by Gálvez during his years in Mexico. Studying it provides rich insights into the political arena of reform, or in other words, into how the new imperial policies were negotiated and contested among bureaucrats at different levels (and locations) of the Spanish American colonial administration. As evidence in Chapter One suggested, Gálvez succeeded in forming long-lasting and devoted supporters for his project, Cossío was among the most important. The merchant's bureaucratic career developed parallel to the process of colonial reform propelled by the Gálvez Visitation, and his activities are examples of acceptance and collaboration with the ambitious plan of institutional restructuring. This chapter departs from Gálvez's life history to concentrate on Cossío's, a move that offers the possibility of learning more about the people Gálvez chose to interact with, and why. I will show how the minister and the merchant initiated and maintained a relationship of trust across great distances,

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<sup>1</sup> The initial findings in this chapter can be found in my contribution, "El *socio incómodo* del ministro. La carrera burocrática del comerciante Pedro Antonio de Cossío en Nueva España durante la era Gálvez (1765-1787)," in *De la Colonia al Estado Moderno. Ruptura, cambios y continuidades*, ed. José Alfredo Uribe and Abel Padilla (Morelia, Mich: UMSNH-CONACYT, 2009), 427-442.



one that survived waves of criticisms. To the enemies of Gálvez, Cossío and his questionable actions in power became an easy target for attacks on the minister's reforms in New Spain. Finally, the question of political corruption, always pullulating in Gálvez's career and his efforts at imperial regeneration, appears at multiple points in this case. Some conclusions can be drawn from this history as to why corruption became a question with which Gálvez and his contemporaries can be seen contending both explicitly and implicitly. The overall objective is to locate not only the cortex of this relationship, but also the subcutaneous assumptions these bureaucrats shared about being in the service of the king in a moment of institutional change, and even their expectations for gain from this program of reform. All of this contributes to my general analysis of political culture in Spanish America and the Iberian world, particularly in Bourbon Mexico.

It is highly likely that José de Gálvez met Pedro Antonio de Cossío immediately on his arrival in New Spain at the port of Veracruz in the summer of 1765. Already a successful merchant, Cossío, became a collaborator of the visitor-general by the end of that year. In 1767 Gálvez nominated him to join the colonial fiscal bureaucracy as interim head of the newly established customs administration of the port. The trader-turned-into-bureaucrat held that position until 1779, when King Charles III raised him up with a triple appointment as viceregal secretary, intendant of the army, and "secret" superintendant (as will be explained later) of the royal treasury. Historian Luis Navarro García writes that with the latter position, Cossío managed to amass so much power that he became, in fact, a "viceroy in the shadows" who ruled Mexico during the viceregal mandate of Martín

Mayorga.<sup>2</sup> For Vicente Rodríguez García, Cossío was the “leading mind, the grey matter of the viceroyalty” during this period.<sup>3</sup> The merchant of Veracruz enjoyed the trust of Gálvez for almost two decades, but suddenly in late 1782, he received a rare royal order of retirement; Gálvez’s signature accompanied that of the king.

To situate Gálvez’s relationship with Cossío in its appropriate context, one must recognize that the latter was not the sole entrepreneur that became a royal functionary under the former’s aegis. As explained below, Cossío belonged to a group of merchants that supported the visitor-general with a generous act of financial cooperation at the very beginning of his official mission in Mexico in 1765. Cossío, Juan José de Echeveste, and Domingo Lardízabal, among others, donated to the Crown a significant quantity of pesos to put the state tobacco monopoly on its feet. As the Gálvez-directed restructuration of the colonial fiscal bureaucracy unraveled, the three mentioned merchants obtained bureaucratic positions in the new or reformed establishments. Thus, in 1767, Juan José Echeveste, a merchant from Mexico City, received a quadruple appointment from Gálvez. Of Basque origins, Echeveste held the offices of treasurer of two state monopolies (tobacco and playing cards, of the second fiscal branch he was also the director), the gunpowder administration, and the Sonora Expedition.<sup>4</sup> In the same year as

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<sup>2</sup> Luis Navarro García, “La crisis del reformismo borbónico bajo Carlos IV,” *Temas Americanistas*, no. 13 (1997): 2. Viceroy Martín Mayorga ruled Spain from 1779 to 1783.

<sup>3</sup> Vicente Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda en Nueva España: Don Ramón de Posada y Soto, 1781-1793* (Oviedo: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Oviedo, 1986), 72. An earlier allusion to Cossío as the “grey matter” of the viceroyalty can be found in Joaquín Real Díaz and Antonia M. Heredia Herrera, “Martín de Mayorga (1779-1783),” in *Los virreyes de Nueva España en el reinado de Carlos III*, ed. José Antonio Calderón Quijano (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos-Escuela Gráfica Salesiana, 1968), 2:44.

<sup>4</sup> The military campaign led by Gálvez to the Interior Provinces of New Spain in the 1768-1770 period, also known as the Sonora Expedition, has fascinated both writers and historians. Echeveste’s four employments stirred uproar among Gálvez’s enemies, such as Tomás Ortiz Landázuri, accountant-general of the Indies (see below, n. 19). In 1768, Ortiz Landázuri suggested that the Crown should confirm the merchant solely

Echeveste, another Basque, Domingo Lardizábal, a merchant who functioned as the main representative of the *consulado* (merchant guild) of Cádiz in Mexico City, became treasurer of the viceregal capital's customs.<sup>5</sup> A merchant outside this group that received the direct patronage of Gálvez through his friendship with the visitor-general was Pedro Lorenzo Rodríguez, who ran the meat supply business of the city. Viceroy Marqués the Croix, a political ally of Gálvez, appointed Lorenzo Rodríguez as interim *corregidor* (mayor) of Mexico City in 1766.<sup>6</sup> The main problem that needs to be addressed here is the inevitable conflict of interests generated by businessmen in power which Gálvez's enemies readily identified as a cause of concern: how could a merchant be a just official if his trade related to the office he had been appointed to? How could Lorenzo de Rodríguez, as *corregidor*, perform a fair scrutiny of the meat supply of Mexico City, if his business was the object that needed inspection? The case of Cossío, I will show, offers multiple examples of these conflicts.

The protracted Gálvez-Cossío relationship is an atypical case of patronage. As stated in the last chapter, inequality between patron and client is one of the main ingredients of patronage relationships. But this disparity need not to signify a great gulf akin to that between lord and peasant. As J. M. Bourne argues for the case of nineteenth-century England, "patronage relationships could be as important *within* classes as

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as head of the tobacco treasury; see his draft of report to (minister of the Indies) Julián de Arriaga, Madrid, 18 Nov. 1768, AGI, Indiferente General (hereafter cited as Indiferente), leg. 38. Despite the accountant-general's advice, Echeveste continued administering his multiple offices until his death in 1781; see Pedro Antonio de Cosío to José de Gálvez, Mexico City, 14 Mar. 1781, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511.

<sup>5</sup> According to Linda Salvucci, Lardizábal kept this post until his death in 1812; see her "Costumbres viejas, 'hombres nuevos': José de Gálvez y la burocracia fiscal novohispana, 1754-1800," *Historia Mexicana* 33, no. 2 (1983): 247n47. Also, Domingo de Lardizábal and Luis de Vergara to Gálvez, Mexico City, 20 Dec. 1766, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1245.

<sup>6</sup> Ortiz Landázuri to Arriaga, Madrid, 1 June 1767, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 38

between them.”<sup>7</sup> A less accentuated asymmetry between Gálvez and his client-merchants created internal dynamics that differed from Gálvez’s typical associations with bureaucrats like him. In these cases the patron and the client were powerful enough in their different spheres of influence but still, the rich merchant and the visitor-general needed each other to attain either particular or mutual benefits.<sup>8</sup> Cossío was a valuable partner because he granted loans for the Andalusian minister’s projects and toward the Crown’s war efforts against other imperial rivals. Moreover, when Gálvez left New Spain, Cossío provided him with valuable, presumably reliable information about Mexican affairs of state. Finally, Cossío showed unconditional support for the minister’s program of reform. From a subordinate bureaucratic position in relation to Gálvez, but with an extraordinary economic power, the merchant also derived benefits such as his spectacular rise within the colonial governmental structure, which undoubtedly translated into accumulated political power and social prestige. In addition, as will become apparent, his privileged situation also opened opportunities to expand his business endeavors. Another aspect to observe is how Gálvez’s bargaining position changed because his merchant follower was a particularly powerful client. Ultimately the Gálvez-Cossío connection ended in the merchant’s political disgrace.

Historians of Bourbon Mexico have paid scant and transient attention to Cossío as a historical actor.<sup>9</sup> It is striking, however, that practically all authors who deal with

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<sup>7</sup> J. M. Bourne, *Patronage and Society in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986), 6, my emphasis.

<sup>8</sup> On reciprocity and exchange as constitutive parts of patronage see chapter 1.

<sup>9</sup> A few works stand out in this respect because they have devoted at least one or two handfuls of pages (a section of their works at most) to Cossío. No doubt, Luis Navarro García was the earliest historian to transform Cossío into a subject of historical research in his first major work *Intendencias en Indias* (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos, 1959); Joaquín Real Díaz and Antonia Heredia Herrera took the task of greatly expanding and detailing the findings of Navarro in “Martin de Mayorga,” David

Cossío conclude that the merchant was either a vicious or an incompetent royal official. David Brading, for instance, describes Cossío as a “peculiarly tactless fellow” and considers that his relationship with Gálvez is proof of the powerful minister’s fallibility at the moment of choosing his men of trust.<sup>10</sup> In the same venue, Susan Deans-Smith calls Cossío “talented but erratic.”<sup>11</sup> The problems and paradoxes of his relationship not just with Gálvez, but also with administrative power more generally, have been mentioned in the historical literature, but little has been explained about the significance of the merchant-bureaucrat’s actions. Perhaps this is due to the fact that only quite recently have some historians begun to pay serious attention to those local and regional participants who cooperated and contributed in the application of the Bourbon Reforms.<sup>12</sup> This chapter analyzes a dynamic process spanning almost twenty years, and portrays a relationship nurtured by its members notwithstanding the complexity of communications across large spaces.

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Brading followed closely Navarro’s work in his classic *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico, 1763-1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971); Vicente Rodríguez García offered some twists to previous accounts in his *El fiscal de Real Hacienda en Nueva España*; and finally, Linda Arnold also provided some fresh evidence on other aspects of Cossío’s bureaucratic career in her book *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City, 1742-1835* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1988). These are all works from the Spanish and Anglophone bodies of historical literature. In the Mexican historiographical landscape, heavily dominated by the field of economic history, Cossío appears as an occasional actor in some works, see for example, Matilde Souto Mantecón, “La transformación del puerto de Veracruz en el siglo XVIII: De sitio de tránsito a sede mercantil” in *El comercio exterior de México, 1713-1850*, ed. Carmen Yuste López and Matilde Souto Mantecón (Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, 2000), 110-139, and her book *Mar abierto: la política y el comercio del consulado de Veracruz en el ocaso del sistema imperial* (México: El Colegio de México-Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora, 2001); and also Carlos Marichal’s twin works: *La bancarrota del virreinato: Nueva España y las finanzas del Imperio español, 1780-1810* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México-Fideicomiso Historia de las Américas-Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1999) and *Bankruptcy of Empire: Mexican Silver and the Wars between Spain, Britain, and France, 1760-1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>10</sup> Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico*, 61 and 63.

<sup>11</sup> Deans-Smith, *Bureaucrats, Planters, and Workers: The Making of the Tobacco Monopoly in Bourbon Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992).

<sup>12</sup> Ignacio Almada Bay and others discuss this recent interest in the regional and local participants of the Bourbon Reforms in their introduction to *Manifiesto de Eusebio Bentura Beleña* (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán-Universidad de Guadalajara-El Colegio de Sonora, 2006), 12.

### Origins and Maturation of the Cossío-Gálvez Relationship, 1765-1779

In the analysis of a relationship it is important to learn as much as possible about the two parties. Before introducing Gálvez's association with Pedro Antonio de Cossío, it is best to first draw a biographical sketch of the Veracruz merchant. David Brading identified Cossío as a *Montañés* merchant, most likely because the founders of the trade house of Cossío came from Santander province in Spain.<sup>13</sup> Matilde Souto later argued, however, that Pedro Antonio de Cossío y Cossío was Andalusian, son of the municipal magistrate (*alcalde ordinario*) of Jérez de la Frontera.<sup>14</sup> The debate whether he was Montañés or Andalusian matters considerably. It has been suggested earlier in this dissertation that during the Gálvez era, particularly after 1776, a host of Andalusians benefited from positions in the Spanish American colonial administration. For this reason it is highly plausible that Cossío's particular place of birth in this southern Spanish region became a crucial factor in obtaining José de Gálvez's favor.

The Montañés ancestry of Cossío's family is relevant too, however. His origins in Andalusia can be explained because in the early 1700s there was an important migration

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<sup>13</sup> Brading maintains that the Cossíos were Montañeses from the hamlet of Obesso in the valley of Riona; see *Miners and Merchants*, 61 and 112. Ortiz de la Tabla corrects the name of the valley to Rionansa; see Javier Ortiz de la Tabla y Ducasse, "Comercio y Comerciantes Montañeses en Veracruz (1785-1804)," in *Santander y el Nuevo Mundo. Segundo ciclo de estudios históricos de la Provincia de Santander. Octubre 1977*, ed. Centro de Estudios Montañeses (Bilbao: Institución Cultural de Cantabria-Diputación Provincial de Santander, 1979), 322. A modern Google Earth and internet search produced the following results: in the Spanish province of Cantabria, there is a Municipality of Rionansa, crossed by the Nansa River. Near the head of the municipality, there is a small village called Obeso. Also interesting is that close by there is another small community called Cossío which in our days offers for sightseers a large "Cossío House" built in 1723.

<sup>14</sup> His parents were Antonio de Cossío y de Agüera and María Josefa de Cossío y Bedoya; Matilde Souto Mantecón, *Mar abierto*, 285.

of *Montañeses* to this region.<sup>15</sup> Andalusia was experiencing important geopolitical changes at the time: in 1717 Cadiz supplanted Seville as the seat of the official monopoly of trade with the Spanish American territories. It seems that the *Montañeses* arrived at the right moment at the right place because during the eighteenth, and well into the nineteenth centuries these families formed a tight-knitted merchant community in Cadiz.<sup>16</sup> Immigrant *Montañeses* (and Basques) also dominated the elite commercial landscape in eighteenth-century colonial Mexico.<sup>17</sup>

Carlos Marichal calls Pedro Antonio de Cossío a “respected member of one of the oldest mercantile dynasties of the [Mexican] viceroyalty.”<sup>18</sup> In a context where great commercial fortunes waxed and waned in a matter of one or two generations, it is surprising that the House of Cossío survived for so many years. Indeed, in the mid-seventeenth century, Mateo González de Cossío had already established the family’s mercantile house in Veracruz. Pedro Antonio arrived in that port as an adolescent in 1736; he belonged to the third generation of the Cossío family to settle in the Americas.

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<sup>15</sup> This migration acquired historical relevance very soon as the 1803 *Ordinances for the Montañés Guild in Cadiz* demonstrates. The first line of the document reads: “As the natives of the Mountains of Burgos and Santander observed at the beginning of the eighteenth century that their country did not offer them resources to support themselves, they decided to move to the kingdom of Andalusia in order to employ themselves in honest establishments and occupations, which would pay for the support necessary and convenient for the development of their families;” see complete ordinances in Ma. Luisa de Vitoria, “Ordenanzas para el gremio de Montañeses en Cádiz (1803-1832),” *Altamira: Revista del Centro de Estudios Montañeses*, no. 54, (1998): 225-251.

<sup>16</sup> María Concepción Gavira Márquez, “El comercio de los montañeses con América. La Casa Gutiérrez a fines del siglo XVIII” in *Redes Sociales e instituciones comerciales en el imperio español, siglos XVII a XIX*, eds. Antonio Ibarra and Guillermina del Valle Pavón (México: UNAM-Instituto Mora, 2007), 161-186.

<sup>17</sup> Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, part II, chapter 1. An anecdote came to my mind from a study of Spanish migration to Argentina from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century. In this episode, Argentine dictator Juan Manuel Rosas asked musician Fermín Gambín if he was Galician (most Spanish immigrants to Argentina came from the province of Galicia), the musician responded “no Sir, I was born in Cádiz” and the dictator answered impatiently: “OK, you are a Galician from Cádiz.” We could say that Pedro Antonio de Cossío was a *Montañés from Andalusia*. Read the anecdote in: José C. Moya, *Primos y Extranjeros. La inmigración española en Buenos Aires, 1850-1930*, trans. María Teresa La Valle (Buenos Aires: Emecé, 2004), 27.

<sup>18</sup> Marichal, *Bankruptcy of Empire*, 99.

Following a basic Montañés pattern to preserve family fortunes, he first served as apprentice of Juan Domingo de Cossío, his uncle and head of the business. In 1752 Pedro Antonio married Ana María Dominga de Cossío, a widowed older cousin, daughter of Juan Domingo.<sup>19</sup> Eventually, in 1770, Pedro Antonio succeeded his uncle as head of a firmly established trade company.<sup>20</sup>

There is scarce information about the actual business of the mercantile house of Cossío, and the data I have gathered comes from the times when Pedro Antonio was the patriarch. The Cossíos were exporters of the few commercial crops New Spain sent to the Old World: dyes like cochineal and Guatemalan indigo, and vanilla.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, during the 1760s and 1770s, the house participated actively in the cochineal dye trade, New Spain's second most valuable export after silver.<sup>22</sup> From more fragmented and scattered evidence, it is possible to infer that the Cossíos and their closest associates participated in the wheat flour business developed in the Puebla-Veracruz region; it is not clear whether they were wheat producers, but at least their commercial house and business partners were

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<sup>19</sup> According to Souto, in Veracruz, on 29 January 1719, Ana María Domingo married José de Huelgo y Campillo, infantry captain of the viceregal palace in Mexico City; see Souto, *Mar abierto*, 286. See similar life stories for the case of the merchant Gutiérrez family in Gavira, "El comercio de los montañeses con América." For this pattern of intra-familial marriages, see also Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 103.

<sup>20</sup> Information on Cossío's background comes from Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 112; Souto, *Mar abierto*, 285-286; Ortiz de la Tabla, "Comercio y Comerciantes Montañeses en Veracruz," 322 and Jackie R. Booker, *Veracruz Merchants, 1770-1829. A Mercantile Elite in Late Bourbon and Early Independent Mexico* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 103.

<sup>21</sup> Brian Hamnett, *Politics and Trade in Southern Mexico 1750-1821* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 36-37 and 61. This author also suggests that the merchant house had business partners outside Veracruz like Mexico City merchant, Pedro Alonso de Ayes, who delivered cochineal to the port for the Cossíos.

<sup>22</sup> Booker, *Veracruz Merchants*, 64. The trade of cochineal in terms of pounds exported to Spain peaked in 1774, around the same time when the House of Cossío was involved in the business; for more on cochineal trade and production, see Jeremy Baskes, *Indians, Merchants, and Markets. A Reinterpretation of the Repartimiento and Spanish-Indian Economic Relations in Colonial Oaxaca, 1750-1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).



intermediaries in this trade.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the Cossíos functioned as agents of powerful individuals and corporations in the Spanish imperial system such as the Duke of Veragua and Berwick, the Duke of Atrisco (or Atlixco), the *consulado* of Cádiz, and the Royal Company of the Philippines (established in 1785).<sup>24</sup> Showing their leadership among the merchant community in Veracruz, in 1785, when Pedro Antonio was no longer a bureaucrat, the Cossío House spearheaded the campaign for the establishment of a *consulado* (merchant guild) in the port that would compete with their powerful Mexico City counterpart.<sup>25</sup> In this context it is not surprising that before the Gálvez Visitation, Cossío already had held positions of local influence. In 1751 he became town councilor (*regidor*) of Veracruz and a title of district magistrate (*alcalde mayor*) of the old city of Veracruz was issued in his name in February of 1761. The title highlights Pedro Antonio de Cossío's performance at the town council in various commissions he had served: accountant, attorney general, and *alcalde ordinario*. The document also mentions the salary he would get as *alcalde mayor* (500 pesos a year) and shows one of Cossío's typical activities throughout his bureaucratic career: lending money to the Crown. In 1757, during the Seven Year's War he entered 80,000 pesos into the king's coffers at Veracruz in the form of a loan.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Pedro Antonio de Cossío and his brother Joaquín participated in the provision of flour, biscuits, and hardtack to the Spanish troops in the Caribbean from 1768 to 1782, approximately. I examine this case below.

<sup>24</sup> The duchy of Veragua belonged to the descendants of Christopher Columbus and the Cossíos were in charge of collecting their rents in the island of Santo Domingo, and also of channeling to them monies from the sales tax of Veracruz. The heirs of Aztec emperor Moctezuma were the dukes of Atrisco (or Atlixco) and they had possessions in New Spain, particularly in the region surrounding the city of Puebla.

<sup>25</sup> Souto, *Mar abierto*.

<sup>26</sup> Copy of title of *alcalde mayor* of Veracruz for Pedro Antonio de Cossío, 22 Feb. 1761, AGS, Dirección General del Tesoro, Inventario 24, leg. 183, fol. 807. Real and Heredia maintain that Cossío took office in 1763 but resigned two months later, see their "Martin de Mayorga," 44.

Gálvez met Pedro Antonio de Cossío in Veracruz around July 1765.<sup>27</sup> Veracruz was the main port of New Spain and Gálvez and his contemporaries considered it “the throat of the realm,” and also the “key to the country.”<sup>28</sup> Yet, in the mid-1760s the port-city was a backward, insalubrious place that did not offer the comforts of other urban centers like Mexico City or Puebla.<sup>29</sup> Souto explains that from the sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, the passengers and merchandise that arrived in Veracruz hurriedly left the port in order to reach more benign and populated parts of Mexico. During most part of the year, therefore, the city and its inhabitants sank into lethargy. However, when the Atlantic merchant fleet arrived, Veracruz suddenly came to life for a few weeks.<sup>30</sup>

The history of reform that I am telling in this chapter (and dissertation) played an important role in the future development of Veracruz and its consolidation as a city of political and economic importance.

It is interesting to note that Gálvez and Cossío belonged to the same generation.

Born in 1723, Cossío was 42 years old when a 45-year-old Gálvez arrived in New Spain,

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<sup>27</sup> Gálvez landed in Veracruz on 18 July 1765 and left that port for Mexico City in early August. Around the same time Gálvez set foot in Havana on 4 July, waiting for his passage to Veracruz, a homonymous of Cossío was there too. Indeed, some authors have confused Pedro Antonio de Cossío y Cossío, the merchant, with another Pedro Antonio de Cossío, in charge of the mail reform of Lima in the Americas from 1765 to 1770, see for example, Real and Heredia, “Martin de Mayorga,” 44. José Antonio de Armona, director of the royal mail in Havana, mentions in his memoirs that he met José de Gálvez in that Cuban city when the visitor was in transit to New Spain and from then on, corresponded with him; following that information he refers to his encounter with a Pedro Antonio de Cossío, who was an extravagant figure who had traveled around the world. He probably referred to the man that left for the Viceroyalty of Peru; see José Antonio de Armona, “Noticias privadas de casa, útiles para mis hijos: recuerdos históricos de mi carrera ministerial en España y América,” 1787, BNE, Fondo Antiguo, Mss. 23088.

<sup>28</sup> Summary of Gálvez to Arriaga, 8 April 1768, in Consejo de Indias, “Extracto de los autos de visita de cajas reales y ramos de Real Hacienda de la ciudad y puerto de la Nueva Veracruz” (hereafter cited as “Extracto de los autos de visita”), 1770, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1250 and Marqués de Croix, instructions to his successor Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa, Mexico City, 1 Sep. 1771, in Charles-François de Croix, *Correspondance du marquis de Croix, capitaine général des armées de S.M.C., vice-roi du Mexique 1737-1786* (Nantes: É. Grimaud, 1891), 286.

<sup>29</sup> The Marqués de Croix arrived to Veracruz exactly a year after Gálvez and he remarked its burning and unhealthy climate. Croix to (his brother) Marquis de Heuchin, Veracruz, 18 July 1766 in Croix, *Correspondance du marquis de Croix*, 199.

<sup>30</sup> Souto, “La transformación del puerto de Veracruz,” 110-113.

perhaps an additional factor that favored cooperation between the two men.<sup>31</sup> Shortly after Gálvez's arrival in Bourbon Mexico, Cossío started sending signals that he desired to become the visitor-general's associate. The earliest news of collaboration between them relates to the reorganization of the recently established state tobacco monopoly undertaken by the visitor-general as soon as he arrived in Mexico City in late August. By then the project had existed for a year or so, but when Gálvez reviewed it he found it floundering. The first measure taken for the monopoly's re-launching was a recapitalization, for which Gálvez negotiated loans and donations from merchants of Spain, Mexico City, and Veracruz. During the negotiation, the visitor-general faced many problems (among them, the opposition of Viceroy Marqués de Cruillas), but he already had an ally in Cossío. In November, Pedro Antonio de Cossío wrote a letter to Gálvez and "offered whatever financial help his merchant house could provide."<sup>32</sup> In December the visitor-general informed the minister of Treasury and War, the Marqués de Esquilache, that five entrepreneurs had been key in the successful refinancing of the monopoly: Cossío, Juan José Echeveste, Domingo Lardizábal, Manuel Marco, and Fernando Bustillo, who together donated 1,200,000 pesos.<sup>33</sup>

From this initial moment of cooperation on, Gálvez's relationship with Cossío elicited a series of expressions of disapproval at different levels of the colonial government that would span many years. Thus, in late 1768 Tomás Ortiz Landázuri, the

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<sup>31</sup> Cossío figured as the first person in a list of witnesses in a fraud investigation against the employees of the royal treasury of Veracruz carried out between January and August 1766—an inquiry initiated as a consequence of the *visita general* of Gálvez. According to this list, Cossío was 43 years old; hence, he must have been born *ca.* 1723. See Consejo de Indias, "Extracto de los autos de visita."

<sup>32</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, 23 Nov. 1765, AGI, Mexico, leg. 2256, cited in Deans-Smith, *Bureaucrats, Planters, and Workers*, 19.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

accountant-general of the Indies,<sup>34</sup> reminded Minister of the Indies Julián de Arriaga that it was “well known” that Cossío, Echeveste, Lardizábal, Marco, and Bustillo had “generously supplied the visitor-general with great sums of money without interest to buy tobacco during the planning of the monopoly.” Moreover, he recalled, Gálvez had informed the king about the munificence of these individuals and proposed to reward them with *mercedes de hábito*, memberships as knights of a military religious order. Charles III acceded to Gálvez’ request<sup>35</sup> and Ortiz Landázuri concluded that “from this follows the marked protection that the visitor-general has given them, by offering *the lucrative employments* that each one is exercising.”<sup>36</sup> For some scholars it is obvious that Cossío’s assistance in the tobacco monopoly earned him the office of director of customs at Veracruz in 1767. But the merchant had collaborated with the visitor-general on other fronts too. Cossío financially backed one of Gálvez’s main projects during the visitation, the Sonora Expedition: he figured among the first individual contributors to the military campaign with 1,000 pesos.<sup>37</sup>

In the Gálvez Visitation, the inspection of Veracruz embodied the pilot program of fiscal reform for the entire viceroyalty. Metropolitan authorities in Spain subjected José de Gálvez’s guidelines in that city to strict supervision, not only because it was the

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<sup>34</sup> The General Accountancy of the Indies (*Contaduría General de Indias*) was an organ of the Council of the Indies, but it could report directly to the Minister of the Indies. Its consultative functions related to financial matters in Spanish America.

<sup>35</sup> Gálvez’s nominated Cossío for the habit of a religious order in 1766 (Souto, *Mar abierto*, 285); years later, the merchant thanked Arriaga and the king for his habit—presumably the order of Santiago, since his signature included the characteristic cross—saying that it represented too great an honor in exchange for the simple “supplement” he had donated for the establishment of the tobacco monopoly; Cossío to Arriaga, Veracruz, 20 Mar. 1770, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1250.

<sup>36</sup> Ortiz Landázuri to Arriaga, draft, Madrid, 18 Nov. 1768, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 38, my emphasis.

<sup>37</sup> Luis Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez y la Comandancia General de las Provincias Internas del norte de Nueva España* (Seville: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1964), 149.

main port of the richest “tax colony” of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world,<sup>38</sup> but also because it was one of the boldest reforms the visitor-general introduced during the entire inspection of New Spain. Indeed, Veracruz became the first site of what was called an administration *en pie de aduana* (on the customs’ foot, literally) which in the broadest sense meant a renewed way of handling the royal treasury in which the state would manage the customs directly and centralize all economic affairs, from trade-related matters to the collection of taxes. The first movement toward this new form of administration began in late 1765 when Gálvez’s *visita* team made accusations of embezzlement against three senior treasury officials at the port who had appropriated 15,000 pesos.<sup>39</sup> From this moment on, it is possible to observe Pedro Antonio de Cossío cooperating with the official inspection of Veracruz, since he figured as the first listed witness of the fraud investigation that ensued next year.<sup>40</sup> In February 1767 Gálvez decreed the new administration *en pie de aduana* to be ruled by his plan, *Instrucción provisional para el arreglo en la administración y manejo de las rentas y derechos de su majestad en la nueva ciudad de Veracruz*.<sup>41</sup> The visitor-general justified the reform based

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<sup>38</sup> For the concept of “tax colony,” see Marichal, *Bankruptcy of Empire*, 4.

<sup>39</sup> The team designed by Gálvez to conduct the *visita* of Veracruz was integrated by lawyer Bartolomé Ortega y Montenegro, accountant Francisco Xavier de Corres, and clerk, Salvador Vicente Barrachina (more information on these men in chapter 2). The three accused senior officials were dismissed on 16 February 1767. A summary of this case can be found in “Abstract of enquiry of the Council of the Indies of 1 February 1768 relative to the proceedings caused by the new workforce of the Administration of the Royal Treasury by visitor Galvez in New Spain” (hereafter cited as “Enquiry of the Council of the Indies”), 1767-1771, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1245 and for the complete record of the Veracruz *visita*, refer to AHN, Consejos, leg. 21463.

<sup>40</sup> See n. 31 *supra*.

<sup>41</sup> *Provisional instruction for the administration and management of the revenues and duties of His Majesty in the New City of Veracruz*. In addition of state centralization of customs’ functions, the *Instrucción* involved other measures such as: the lowering of sales taxes, the reduction of taxes applied to flours and wine (revenues usually employed for fortifications), and the permission to trade directly (with other provinces of New Spain) some Spanish products (*caldos y géneros*, alcoholic beverages and cloth) that arrived in Veracruz.

on the original case of embezzlement but also as a solution against other corrupt practices such as contraband.<sup>42</sup>

After the removal of royal functionaries and the creation of the customs administration the need for a new workforce (*planta*) naturally emerged. In addition to the accused, other officials were also suspended, but at least two kept their jobs and they would eventually become Cossío's subaltern officials: accountant José Fajardo Covarrubias and cashier Pedro Ildefonso Trujillo. For the main office of "general administrator of the Royal Treasury and new Customs of Veracruz" Gálvez proposed Martín José de Alegría, whom he considered an individual of "accredited conduct." This selection created an immediate problem: Alegría was a royal official in Havana and it would take time to arrange his relocation.<sup>43</sup> Gálvez decided to create the position of "interim administrator," therefore, and chose for it Pedro Antonio de Cossío, whom he described simply as a "*vecino* [resident] of Veracruz, a hard-working man, honest, and able."<sup>44</sup> In this way, thanks to an express recommendation by the visitor-general, Cossío obtained his first, not inconsiderable job in the colonial bureaucracy. He stayed in that position from February 1767 until his next official appointment in 1779, with a brief interlude out of office between September 1769 and late 1770.<sup>45</sup>

From his office of customs administrator of Veracruz, Cossío became a defender, a veritable bulwark, against hundreds of attacks against the *Instrucción provisional*.

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<sup>42</sup> Change was necessary and expedient because, according to Gálvez, "fraudulent introductions [of contraband products] happened through the most unimaginable means;" Gálvez to Arriaga, Mexico City, 27 Feb. 1767, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1245.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Gálvez cited by Ortiz Landázuri in his report, Madrid, 16 Oct. 1767, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1245.

<sup>45</sup> Apparently in the second period from 1770-1779 Cossío was no longer "interim" but the administrator on a permanent basis. In a letter of 1775, however, Minister of the Indies Julián de Arriaga still called Cossío "interim" administrator of Veracruz, see Arriaga to Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa, draft, Madrid, 9 Dec. 1775, *ibid*.

These complaints originated on diverse fronts and focused either on the rules of the new administration *en pie de aduana*, or on Cossío's performance as administrator. Merchants of the *consulados* of Mexico City and Cádiz, particularly opposed the new state interventionism in commercial and fiscal matters. Most of the attacks finished up in the same office in Madrid: the *Contaduría General de Indias*.<sup>46</sup> In other words, no matter if the grievances came from Veracruz, Mexico City, or Spain; or if institutions like the customs administration of Veracruz itself, or the merchant guilds of Mexico City and Cádiz, or the *Tribunal de Cuentas* (the court of audits in Mexico City) initiated them, sooner or later they reached the Ministry of the Indies, and Julián de Arriaga always asked the analysis and opinion of accountant-general Ortiz Landázuri, who ended up gathering and systematizing the negative views on the reformist activities of José de Gálvez.<sup>47</sup>

Actually, it is possible to trace Gálvez's relationship with Cossío through Ortiz Landázuri's reports. In multiple written accounts the accountant-general of the Indies displayed forceful arguments to cast doubt on the effectiveness of Gálvez's reforms in Veracruz. Pedro Antonio de Cossío was an ubiquitous target for Ortiz Landázuri, who centered most of his attacks on the inappropriate fact that a merchant, with obvious vested interests, dealt with monies of the royal treasury. Among many criticisms, one of particular importance was that Cossío had moved the site of the newly established customs administration to his own residence. Ortiz Landázuri noted this repeatedly in his reports, indicating the disadvantages of the arrangement: the merchant charged rent to the

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<sup>46</sup> See comments on the *Contaduría*'s functions *supra*, n. 34.

<sup>47</sup> The Arriaga-Ortiz Landázuri duo functioned as one of the main adversaries of the restructuring of New Spain's treasury affairs since both officials were sympathetic to the traditional monopolistic interests that the reforms were targeting: those of the powerful *consulados* of Mexico City and Cádiz.

Crown for the use of his house; he had moved the customs archives to his personal office, and controlled the access to official documents, among other things.<sup>48</sup>

Ortiz Landázuri frequently accused Cossío for having favored members of his own family with jobs in the administration. For example, in July 1767 Viceroy Marqués de Croix appointed Gaspar de Cossío to the minor post of *alcaide* in the new customs house of Veracruz.<sup>49</sup> In October, the *Tribunal de Cuentas* sent to Spain the news of this designation, qualifying it as irregular, even more so, perhaps, because the relative of Pedro Antonio de Cossío had received a salary from the date of his appointment, a few months before actually occupying his position. Ortiz Landázuri repudiated the viceroy's action as a clear transgression of the law. For the accountant-general this was an "irregular," "extraordinary," and unprecedented practice and he recommended that the customs *alcaide*, Gaspar, should return to the royal coffers the whole salary he had received from his designation to the date he took office.<sup>50</sup> Even more striking is that around the same time that Pedro Antonio obtained his own job in Veracruz, his brother Joaquín de Cossío assumed the office of customs administrator of Puebla.<sup>51</sup> In addition, Joaquín became the purveyor general of supplies for the army, and of food supplies for Havana.<sup>52</sup> From this commission it is possible to infer that the Cossío family participated

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<sup>48</sup> Ortiz Landázuri to Arriaga, draft report, Madrid, 25 Sep. 1771, AGI, Indiferente 39. What is clear is that the Crown did not take measures to remedy this situation until 1784, when the merchant was no longer a bureaucrat. Indeed, the customs of Veracruz remained in Cossío's house until Viceroy Matías de Gálvez ordered its change to a different location; see Rodríguez, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 263.

<sup>49</sup> I still need to find out what the functions of this position were and who Gaspar de Cossío was.

<sup>50</sup> Ortiz Landázuri to Arriaga, draft report, Madrid, 23 Feb. 1768, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 38.

<sup>51</sup> It is not clear under what conditions or exactly when Joaquín de Cossío obtained his job but as Deans-Smith rightly points out: "Two brothers were placed in the two most strategic customs offices in Mexico for internal and external commerce, Puebla and Veracruz;" Deans-Smith, *Bureaucrats, Planters, and Workers*, 284n42. Let us remember that Puebla was a region rich in wheat haciendas.

<sup>52</sup> Souto, "La transformación del puerto de Veracruz," and Johanna von Grafenstein Gareis, "El abasto de la escuadra y las plazas militares del Gran Caribe, con harinas y víveres novohispanos, 1755-1779," in *El*



in the flour business, an activity that would later become an obstacle in the bureaucratic career of Pedro Antonio, as I will explain later.

Therefore, merchant-bureaucrat Pedro Antonio de Cossío, like Gálvez himself, headed his own network of relatives in government. The coincidence with Gálvez's own strategies of governance has even led historians to make somewhat problematic assertions, such as that "Cossío *could have inherited* one of the more distinctive behaviors of the actions of the visitor-general in Mexico: the practice of nepotism."<sup>53</sup> The truth is that Cossío maintained these nepotistic traits throughout his career in government. Take for instance some of the private letters that Cossío addressed to Gálvez when he was superintendant of the royal treasury in the 1779-1782 period. In late 1780 and early 1781 Cossío tried to convince Gálvez to send one Mexico City official named Francisco de la Rocha to the administration of the treasury of Acapulco. Cossío claimed that in that "ugly position" Rocha would be closely surveyed by a man of "tested conduct," Francisco de Cossío Velarde, no doubt one of his relatives, who was already working in the customs administration of that port in the Pacific.<sup>54</sup>

Pedro Antonio de Cossío had to leave his post of interim general administrator of the customs of Veracruz, when the original appointee, Martín José de Alegría, finally arrived from Havana to assume his position in late 1769. Alegría and Cossío's ex-

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*comercio exterior de México*, 46 and 60. After Pedro Antonio's fall from power, his brother Joaquín continued to be administrator of *alcabalas* (sales taxes) in Puebla. In 1783, Viceroy Matías de Gálvez requested the minister of the Indies, the admission of Joaquín de Cossío in the retirement fund for royal officials. See Matías de Gálvez to Gálvez, 28 Oct. 1783, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1401, cited in Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 255.

<sup>53</sup> Josep María Delgado Ribas, *Dinámicas imperiales (1650-1796): España, América y Europa en el cambio institucional del sistema colonial español* (Barcelona: Bellaterra, 2007), 324n12, my emphasis.

<sup>54</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 26 Nov. 1780, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511. I have not been able to determine what office Rocha occupied and why Cossío wanted to oust him from Mexico City.

collaborator, José Fajardo Cobarrubias, quickly began to criticize the former interim director. This situation revealed that the first offensive line against Cossío's performance as administrator had been located *inside* the customs house. To be sure, in 1770 accountant José Fajardo Covarrubias *reminded* Arriaga that since 1767 he had been sending representations to Spain denouncing Cossío's disorderly management of the customs.<sup>55</sup> The accountant's comments contrasted ironically with the merchant's rosy account of 1768, when he described to Viceroy Marqués de Croix that the working relationships at the customs administration were cordial, adding that this was due to his "own natural propensity to harmony."<sup>56</sup> Certainly, when Cossío left office all traces of cordiality among coworkers disappeared. Another controversy that emerged during the period was that Cossío allowed limited access, sometimes even denying it, to the original documents generated by the customs during his administration, papers that he zealously kept by his side. Alegría and Fajardo Covarrubias issued a complaint to Croix, asking him to order Cossío to give them the original papers and not just certified copies.<sup>57</sup> Always allied with Gálvez's causes, the viceroy, elbowed this request aside.<sup>58</sup>

Cossío's return to private life after his interim office in Veracruz coincided with a two-year absence of José de Gálvez from the center of political power, Mexico City. In April 1768 the visitor-general left the capital for the Sonora military expedition in the

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<sup>55</sup> Note that Fajardo Covarrubias was a royal officer of the treasury of Veracruz who traversed the pre-reform, Cossío, and brief post-Cossío periods; see José Fajardo Covarrubias to Arriaga, Veracruz, 31 May 1770, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 39.

<sup>56</sup> Copy of Cossío to Croix, Veracruz, 30 April 1768, AGNM, Correspondencia de Virreyes, 2da. serie, vol. 16, fol. 192.

<sup>57</sup> Martín José Alegría and Fajardo Covarrubias to Arriaga, Veracruz, 2 June 1770, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 39. It is unknown if, during the Alegría administration, the offices of the Veracruz customs continued to be in Cossío's residence. This would mean that the merchant kept the original papers in a private archive under the same roof.

<sup>58</sup> Copy of Croix to Governor and Royal Officers of Veracruz, Mexico City, 4 Mar. 1770, *ibid*.

northwestern provinces of New Spain, and he would not return until May 1770. Moreover, in late 1769 and early 1770, news of the deteriorating health of the visitor-general had reached Mexico City and Madrid: Gálvez's power was ebbing. It was a strategic moment for the enemies of his reforms, who unleashed a veritable acid rain of criticisms upon Gálvez and his favorite Cossío, who by that time had proved to be a key piece in the plan of colonial restructuring. It seems that accountant Fajardo Covarrubias was determined to bring Cossío down, so in May 1770 he wrote to Arriaga saying that the merchant had exercised his job "with total ignorance of what the administration of the royal treasury really was."<sup>59</sup> Cossío, according to Fajardo, "was obsessed with the extinction of the former method" (the pre-*instrucción provisional* way of doing things in the customs of Veracruz), but at the same time he did not follow the new instructions: "He interpreted some rules freely, without subjection to practices, methods, and even reason... his own will was his only guide." Worse yet, Cossío had suppressed the public announcement (*pregones*) of government contracts (*contratas y asiento*) in order to benefit his preferred bidders.<sup>60</sup>

For his part, in several pieces of correspondence, Cossío maintained that the royal treasury had benefited enormously from the reforms introduced by Gálvez. In March 1770 he wrote to Arriaga boasting that during his tenure the Crown's revenue at the port had increased 450,000 pesos annually.<sup>61</sup> But conflict was in the air and Cossío's detractors always challenged the numbers he presented to imperial authorities. Cossío's

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<sup>59</sup> "Con total ignorancia de lo que es administración, cuenta y razón de Real Hacienda," Fajardo Covarrubias to Arriaga, Veracruz, 31 May 1770, *ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Cossío to Arriaga, Veracruz, 20 March 1770 and copy of certificates by treasurer Pedro Ildefonso Trujillo and lieutenant accountant Andrés de Quintela, Veracruz, 7 Sep. 1769, both in AGI, Mexico, leg. 1250.

account balance of the Veracruz treasury for the year 1768 provoked a frontal clash between the Alegría-Fajardo duo, the *Tribunal de Cuentas*, and accountant-general Ortiz Landázuri on the one side, and Cossío and Viceroy Croix on the other. The 1768 balance controversy also provides a single, but revealing example of the effects that Ortiz Landázuri's reports could produce when they reached Bourbon Mexico. Problems began when Alegría sent Cossío's accounts to New Spain's court of audits, noting irregularities and errors. The *Tribunal* informed the minister of the Indies, who in turn asked for the analysis of the *Contaduría General* in Madrid. In his report of June 1769 Ortiz Landázuri displayed all his argumentative weapons and ranted against Cossío.<sup>62</sup> The report of the accountant-general reached Veracruz in early 1770. Undaunted and even offended by Ortiz Landázuri's *informe*, Cossío went to Mexico City to address this matter personally with the viceroy. The available records show a silent José de Gálvez, but we know that by this time he had just returned to Mexico City and Cossío probably also used his trip to pay his respects to the visitor-general. Croix sided completely with Cossío. The viceroy's long, impassioned letter to Arriaga in late August defended the merchant, whom he considered had been an honorable, loyal, disinterested, exact, and hardworking officer. Croix framed the debate in political (anti-reformist against reformist) terms: according to him, no doubt the affair was an "operation to minimize the advantages of the new *planta* in Veracruz, the merits of don Pedro Antonio Cossío, and to contravene in part my own and the visitor-general's rulings." The letter painstakingly detailed how the *Tribunal de Cuentas* had recognized the 1768 account balance as accurate; it also asserted that the royal officers in Veracruz were wrong in accusing Cossío of producing defective

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<sup>62</sup> I found references to this document of 22 June 1769 in Ortiz Landázuri to Arriaga, draft report, Madrid, 1 Nov. 1770, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 39.

numbers.<sup>63</sup> In November, however, Ortiz Landázuri informed Arriaga of a representation from Fajardo Covarrubias (the same cited above, a document that arrived in Spain in September) in which the accountant of Veracruz demonstrated that the defects in the balance of 1768 were “true and truthful.” Notwithstanding that Fajardo Covarrubias had worked with Cossío that year (that is to say, he also helped to craft that balance), he thought the 1768 accounts were “obscure and confused,” and the Veracruz accountant demonstrated that the office of Ortiz Landázuri had showed the “legitimate and truthful” results after separating out the debts of 1767 that had been paid in 1768.<sup>64</sup> In fact, for Fajardo, Cossío’s attitude of not sharing the original documents of his administration with him and Alegría only demonstrated that he wanted to hide the “artifices” he had used to fabricate increases in the royal treasury.<sup>65</sup> I am not sure about how this crisis ended, but it is obvious that the Gálvez-Croix due won the battle against Ortiz Landázuri’s reports because Martín José de Alegría was transferred to another employment in the colonial administration and in 1770 Cossío returned to his position of general administrator of the royal treasury in Veracruz.

After Gálvez completed his *visita* in 1771 and returned to Spain early the following year, the complaints against Cossío continued to flow from both sides of the

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<sup>63</sup> Croix to Arriaga, Mexico City, 25 Aug. 1770, AGNM, Correspondencia de Virreyes, 2da. serie, vol. 15, fols. 253-284. In his letter Croix mentions Cossío’s trip to Mexico City. The merchant had brought all the necessary papers to prove that his 1768 account balance was right, but the viceroy said: “don Pedro Antonio” took “the road to this capital, bringing the papers *that by curiosidad [chance] he kept* since the time of his administration and the papers that those ministers [the royal officers of Veracruz] gave him in virtue of my orders” (my emphasis). It is interesting that the affair of the documents Cossío concealed from Alegría and Fajardo kept resounding—a problem that the viceroy’s words softened by attributing the matter to “curiosity” or chance. After returning to Spain in 1772, Croix maintained correspondence with Cossío as the latter’s letters to Gálvez show; see especially Cossío to Gálvez, Veracruz, 30 Jan. and 28 Feb. 1777, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511.

<sup>64</sup> Ortiz Landázuri to Arriaga, draft report, Madrid, 1 Nov. 1770, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 39.

<sup>65</sup> Fajardo Covarrubias to Arriaga, Veracruz, 31 May 1770, *ibid.*

Atlantic. Minister Arriaga and Viceroy Antonio María de Bucareli (1771-1779) shared a great distaste for the customs administrator, because they viewed him as a political creature of Gálvez, whose reforms and style of governance they both opposed. In their personal letters, they referred to the same questions that Ortiz Landázuri had reported for years. In December 1774, Minister Julián de Arriaga wrote in a private letter to Bucareli that day by day it was becoming “more and more” clear that it had been a mistake to put a merchant in charge of the Veracruz customs; the *Tribunal de Cuentas* had verified “excessive” payments to Cossío’s personal accounts, by reason of commissions.<sup>66</sup>

Arriaga trusted that soon this case could be resolved, including the amalgamation of “so many relatives” of Cossío’s in the management of the customs. This matter had worried Arriaga since October, when he promised Bucareli that in his next letter he would send a project for a general enquiry (*antecedente de consulta general*) on the prohibition of this (nepotistic) practice so as “to put a stop to such inconvenience.”<sup>67</sup> The letters of 1775 express even more directly that Arriaga and Bucareli were trying to orchestrate the dismissal of Cossío. On 24 February 1775, Bucareli wrote Arriaga that he was entirely convinced that Cossío’s removal from office was necessary; this was the only way in which the orders from Arriaga could be executed strictly in Veracruz.<sup>68</sup> On 9 December 1775, Arriaga prompted the viceroy “one more time [...] to resolve all the matters with Pedro Antonio de Cossío.” The minister was cautious and warned Bucareli that, even if his findings merited the customs administrator’s dismissal, he must not proceed to do so

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<sup>66</sup> Arriaga to Bucareli, Madrid, 24 Dec. 1774, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 1630. Unfortunately he did not explain the nature of the “commissions.”

<sup>67</sup> Arriaga to Bucareli, San Lorenzo del Escorial, 26 Oct. 1774, *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Abstract of Bucareli to Arriaga, 28 Sep. 1775, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1245.

without informing the king in advance with the correct legal procedures (*autos*).<sup>69</sup> While Arriaga and Bucareli conspired against him, Cossío did not rest on his oars, since between 1773 and 1775 he repeatedly informed the Spanish minister of the Treasury, Miguel Muzquiz, that he was the object of defamation campaigns, and that the yearly accounts the viceregal government of New Spain presented to the king had been manipulated in order to conceal the real advantages of the new administrative system in Veracruz, positive changes effected under the aegis of José de Gálvez.<sup>70</sup>

The flotsam of criticisms finally submerged in the deep waters of the Atlantic Ocean when Gálvez became minister of the Indies in early 1776, after the death of Arriaga in January. But even in 1777 echoes of opposition to Cossío still resounded. In Madrid, some anonymous observers pointed fingers at how the “minister’s creatures” in charge of Veracruz, instead of preventing contraband had created more of it.<sup>71</sup> In the light of all these claims, the actions of Cossío in power look incompetent, illegal and, as I will show below, they contradict the merchant’s own discourse. Unfortunately, evidence of Gálvez’s reactions is scarce, but Cossío’s spectacular bureaucratic promotion in 1779 shows that the ex-visitor-general was still satisfied with him and his work at the Veracruz customs. Two letters from 1777 belonging to a collection of eleven private letters from Cossío to Gálvez, spanning from that year to 1782, reflect the Andalusian minister’s approval.<sup>72</sup> Dated in January and February, these are the only two in the series of letters that Cossío wrote from Veracruz; they provide a window to the sort of information the

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<sup>69</sup> Arriaga to Bucareli, draft, Madrid, 9 Dec. 1775, *ibid*.

<sup>70</sup> Delgado Ribas, *Dinámicas imperiales*, 324.

<sup>71</sup> Anonymous, “Apuntes sucintos y prácticos de la América Española para quien más interesa en su mejor Gobierno,” *ca.* 1777, AGI, Estado, leg. 42, no. 3.

<sup>72</sup> The letters are preserved in AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511. Unless otherwise noted, the next primary source citations come from this *legajo*.

general customs administrator could provide to his patron José de Gálvez. Although the *Instrucción provisional* had been introduced a decade earlier, in 1777 Cossío reported that their project was in constant danger. Without bringing up particular names, he asserted that there was an ongoing crusade against the reforms in Veracruz, and in consequence against him; he claimed that there was a great chain of harms suffered by the royal treasury due to the persecution he had suffered, “persecutions... that have tried to destroy these establishments and, as it is often said, *to return the nuts to the jug*” (that is, to revive a dispute or argument supposed already to be settled).<sup>73</sup>

The most striking feature of the customs administrator’s communications with Gálvez is that they show a merchant-bureaucrat with an acute case of *psychose de fraude*—the phenomenon described by Pierre and Huguette Chaunu for the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Atlantic trade.<sup>74</sup> We know from the dissertation’s introduction that it was a “disease” that affected Gálvez too; one has only to remember that in one of the visitor-general’s first letters about the reform of Veracruz he mentioned the word “fraud” an unbelievable number of times.<sup>75</sup> In his letters Cossío wrote in great detail about frauds and contraband against the royal treasury. For example, in early 1777 he told Gálvez that, “the vice of contraband in sailors is an evil that is not easy to extinguish,” he then added, “functionaries serve as a cover up of these frauds.”<sup>76</sup> The administrator’s words were

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<sup>73</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Veracruz, 28 Feb. 1777, my emphasis. For the proverb translation see Sara Cary Becker and Federico Mora, eds., *Spanish Idioms with Their English Equivalents Embracing Nearly Ten Thousand Phrases* (Boston: Gin and Company, 1886), 257.

<sup>74</sup> Pierre Chaunu and Huguette Chaunu, *Seville et l’Atlantique 1504-1650*, 2 vols. (Paris: Colin, 1955-1959).

<sup>75</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, Mexico City, 27 May 1767, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1250.

<sup>76</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Veracruz, 28 Feb. 1777.



music for Gálvez's ears since they confirmed the Andalusian minister's own perceptions about the Spanish colonial system and its problems.

### **The “Honeymoon” in the Relationship: Cossío Becomes Superintendant, 1779-1782**

In the spring of 1779 Viceroy Bucareli died in office and the incumbent captain-general of Guatemala, Martín Mayorga, “inherited” the viceroyalty.<sup>77</sup> In June war broke out against England. At this critical juncture, Gálvez decided it was time to insert his long-time protégé Cossío into the very heart of New Spain's power structure. In August 1779, the king designated Pedro Antonio de Cossío as chamber secretary of the viceroy of New Spain, army intendant, and superintendant of the royal treasury, offices he occupied from March 1780 until his fall in early 1783 (his retirement had been decided in Spain in late 1782). The first two positions in the viceregal government were official and public, the third secret (*reservada*); only Cossío and Viceroy Mayorga knew about this in Mexico, and only Charles III and Gálvez in Spain. As superintendant, Cossío would make all decisions related to the treasury and the viceroy would only ratify them with his signature; additionally, the merchant-bureaucrat had to keep Gálvez informed of everything related to the viceroyalty's finances. When Gálvez suggested to the king the creation of this secret position, he described the profile of the person who should occupy it—without ever mentioning Cossío's name—as “an intelligent subject with practical knowledge of the revenues of the Indies and the particular constitution of those dominions.”<sup>78</sup> Three days later, in a rapid response to this consultation (*consulta*) of 11 August 1779, Charles III granted the three offices mentioned above to Pedro Antonio de

<sup>77</sup> Read more about Bucareli's succession in chapter 3.

<sup>78</sup> Gálvez to King, San Ildefonso, 11 Aug. 1779, cited in Real and Heredia, “Martin Mayorga,” 40.

Cossío. Clearly, Gálvez justified his proposal of the candidate by underlining the valuable expertise of the subject he had in mind.

In the following paragraphs I rely heavily on the analysis of nine of the eleven private letters from Cossío to Gálvez mentioned above. Detailed commentary upon these letters is necessary, because they are a reliable source from which to explore the nature of the relationship. Most of them held more than ten folios, while a couple of them have almost forty pages. Historians have used them as sources but there has been no serious commentary. For example, Brading highlights Cossío's colloquial language but notes that the letters were "saturated by wild claims" against different officials, complaints that showed Cossío's minimal understanding of his "peculiar situation."<sup>79</sup> Cossío sent his correspondence to Gálvez by confidential mail, the so-called "*vía reservada*," but with his penchant for hyperbole, the merchant marked his letters with the word "*reservadísima*" (extremely secret), and one of them is even "*reservadísima muy mucho*" (very much extremely secret). This conveys an idea that Cossío was exchanging crucial information with his patron. The "extremely secret" letters show a personal connection between Cossío and Gálvez too—one of the characteristics of patronage relationships—because the merchant did not hesitate to send his respects to Gálvez's young wife and the couple's daughter, and he also referred to Fernando José Mangino, another man in Gálvez's confidence, as "our Mangino." The typical asymmetry of patron-client

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<sup>79</sup> Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 61. The multiple sayings or proverbs used by Cossío in his letters reflect how people spoke at the time. This kind of language, however, was typically kept to a minimum in official letters. For this reason, Cossío's colloquial style in these private official missives is special and should be of interest for linguists.

relationships is shown in Cossío's deference toward Gálvez to whom he addressed as his "dearest favorer and honorer."<sup>80</sup>

It is crucial to note that this correspondence has a uniform character in terms of content. One of the main characteristics, in consonance with Cossío's previous work as director of the Veracruz customs, is that he shows himself an undisputable follower of Gálvez's reforms, such as the implanting of the intendancies. Established in 1786 in New Spain, the intendancy system was conceived as a solution for the problems in local administration in charge of district magistrates known as *alcaldes mayores*. In the original proposal of this system, authored by Gálvez and the Marqués de Croix in 1768, they characterized the *alcaldes mayores* as a "ruinous plague of more than 150 men" that enriched themselves "at the expense of the miserable Indians [and] the royal tribute of which the King loses nearly half owing to the usurpations and illicit pacts of the *alcaldes*."<sup>81</sup> In one of his letters, Cossío championed the system of intendancies, using almost the same terms that Gálvez and Croix had employed more than a decade before. Indeed, Cossío shared with Gálvez an aversion to *alcaldes mayores*. In 1781 there was a revolt in Izúcar, a town close to the city of Puebla. According to Cossío, the *alcalde mayor* Francisco de Paula had caused the commotion since "he had been living as a Heliogabalus" (a Roman emperor, epitome of moral corruption). He added,

Your Excellency knows very well there are many *alcaldes mayores* in this kingdom. They treat the inhabitants of their provinces without compassion and commit other

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<sup>80</sup> It is true that in eighteenth-century letters, this type of opening was not particularly strange, but it was reserved to correspondence between close collaborators, not to official letters.

<sup>81</sup> Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 45.

atrocities... A remedy for this problem could be found in the establishment of the intendancies—if they are staffed with the right men.<sup>82</sup>

In closing one of his letters in the same vein, Cossío related completely to Gálvez's reformist endeavors: "[I wish] God keeps you alive for the many years I need, because if I attend to all that *we have to do, we will not finish in two hundred years.*"<sup>83</sup>

The missives Cossío wrote from Mexico City demonstrate the diversity and multiplicity of affairs he dealt with from his tripartite office, and therefore offer a unique window into the inner workings of the colonial state. Or perhaps it would be better to say that Cossío's letters are a privileged balcony from which to observe the *malfunctioning* of the colonial state. Again, the main topics he discussed related to forms of corruption (fraud, contraband, embezzlement, favoritism) and other bureaucratic inefficiencies (excessive salaries, defective management of the different fiscal departments, and instances of officers who contradicted superior orders). As did his patron José de Gálvez, Cossío continued to worry about how the dishonest practices of officials could potentially undermine the operation of the colonial government in this moment of reforms. What David Brading dismisses as Cossío's "wild claims" are in fact plausible, even fascinating accounts of inefficient and immoral bureaucratic behavior. Take, for instance, Cossío's report to Gálvez about problems in the department of the royal lottery: he mentioned that the lottery's functionaries formed thick and confused bureaucratic records to bog down the original dispositions, thus contravening royal orders. Cossío's denunciation in this

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<sup>82</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 17 Nov. 1781. Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, also known as Elagabalus or Heliogabalus, scandalized Rome from 218 to 222 with his disregard for government and his decadent behavior, especially with regard to his religious rites, which were orgiastic and which the emperor promoted manically.

<sup>83</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 20 Feb. 1781, my emphasis

case reveals the everyday strategies of minor bureaucrats to disobey the mandates from Spain.<sup>84</sup>

From his position as superintendant, Cossío attacked other fiscal agencies, like the administration of sales taxes (*alcabalas*) and the tobacco monopoly. According to the merchant-bureaucrat, these offices were in a state of complete disorder, which provoked great losses for the royal treasury. The men in charge of them did not heed the viceroy's recent orders, and acted as if they were the "owners" of their administrations. Cossío only hoped to receive a royal order that would allow him to restructure these fiscal branches in such a way that the directors and their constant opposition could not act as "*remoras*" (delays) upon him anymore.<sup>85</sup> The salaries in the fiscal bureaucracy of Mexico City became one of Cossío's major concerns. He particularly criticized Miguel Páez and Juan Navarro, in charge of the administration of sales taxes, when they complained bitterly of their yearly salaries of 5,500 pesos. Cossío said to Gálvez: "Never, as administrator of the royal treasury in Veracruz, did I earn more than 4,000 pesos. I did not use a carriage, and here they use trains of carriages and magnificent coupés, that Your Excellency did not use when you were here." Cossío also argued that he disagreed with the travel allowances and bonuses received by those officers who already enjoyed high salaries. He mentioned that Páez in fact earned a total of 7,000 pesos a year. Cossío added ominously that "these weeds have grown and grow every day to infinity in all tribunals and offices since you left this kingdom."<sup>86</sup> In 1782, therefore, the secret superintendant proposed to Gálvez that

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<sup>84</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 26 Nov. 1780.

<sup>85</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 17 Nov. 1781.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. In May 1782, Cossío said that Páez earned not 7,000 but 7,500 pesos a year, see Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 16 May 1782, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511. To elucidate the origins of Cossío's critical stance regarding salary policies it is perhaps worth mentioning that in one letter from 1770, he mentioned that he

they could use the war with England as a pretext to cut these unnecessary administrative expenses.<sup>87</sup> Cossío found it amazing that even if he was heading (albeit secretly) the royal treasury of New Spain, he did not know the yearly salaries of his employees in the capital. He had tried hard, but without effect, to get this information, even resorting to what he called “*exquisitas diligencias mañosas*” (“exquisitely cunning proceedings”). The merchant-bureaucrat designed a plan to render the payment of salaries for Mexico City bureaucrats more efficient, given that the current system seemed to him both chaotic and obscure. He suggested following Veracruz as a model because in his opinion royal officers there received lower payments and worked comparatively better, notwithstanding that the cost of life at the port was higher.<sup>88</sup> He noticed that bureaucrats in Mexico City must visit several offices to pick up pieces of their salaries; hence, he proposed the crafting of a list of all the royal treasury employees that included their assigned “salaries, extra payments, and bonuses;” then, following this roster, his office could be in charge of making all the necessary payments in a more efficient, centralized way.<sup>89</sup>

Finally, and rather ironically, Cossío pronounced himself against favoring relatives with government jobs (or perhaps he simply repudiated hiring *inefficient* relatives?). He pointed his finger at several functionaries, among them *Audiencia* judge Baltazar Ladrón de Guevara. Cossío said that the *oidor* was in a predicament because one of his sons was working at the Mint House, and by late 1780 the young Ladrón de

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had served “office without interest of salary... with any other interest than to render visible my fidelity to Charles III” and this suggests one of two things: either that he worked as customs administrator of Veracruz without receiving a wage or that his salary was very modest; see: Cossío to Arriaga, 20 March 1770, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1250.

<sup>87</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 16 May 1782.

<sup>88</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 26 Nov. 1781.

<sup>89</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 16 May 1782. I do not know if Cossío’s plan for centralizing salary payments was ever implemented.

Guevara owed more than 20,000 pesos to the royal treasury. No better off than his brother-in-law was the husband of Ladrón de Gevara's daughter, who owed 24,000 pesos to the *Temporalidades* department (i.e. office which administered the ex-Jesuit estates), where he worked. A story of nepotism closer to Cossío's life experience that drew his attention played out in 1782. First, the superintendant argued that the current governor of Veracruz was "a locust" whom it was essential to send back to Spain after his five-year period in office ended. The governor would not leave New Spain with full pockets, however, since he had already "consumed a lot in vanities," helped by his two "highly vicious" sons who, in Cossío's opinion, could well be sons of the devil. They were military officers whom the father himself had attempted to promote to higher ranks in the army. When the governor realized this was impossible, he had "squeezed them" into Francisco de Saavedra's retinue, and now they served in Louisiana under the command of Bernardo de Gálvez—the minister of the Indies's nephew.<sup>90</sup>

Under accusations by his enemies of dishonesty for years, Cossío answered by brandishing the same sword. As Fernando Escalante Gonzalbo suggests, one of the problems in the study of corruption is that usually accusations are answered with counter-accusations of the same dishonest practices; in this way, denunciations of corruption are just a weapon used by political rivals and rarely reveal more prosaic realities of actual practice.<sup>91</sup> In his last letter in the collection, Cossío addressed this phenomenon. The secret superintendant told Gálvez that in order "to preserve the disorderly state of things,"

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid. Francisco de Saavedra was one of Bernardo de Gálvez's closest collaborators in his military campaigns during the 1779-1783 war against England. More on Saavedra in chapter 3.

<sup>91</sup> Fernando Escalante Gonzalbo, *Ciudadanos Imaginarios. Memorial de los afanes y desventuras de la virtud y apología del vicio triunfante en la República Mexicana – Tratado de Moral Pública* – (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, México, 1992), 238.

the “bad vassals of the king” united to cover up for each other in judicial proceedings against them. Corrupt functionaries united despite the fact some of them were enemies, in a strategy to stop Cossío and other honest functionaries from discovering “more mischief.”<sup>92</sup> Even if Cossío’s accusations became more and more acid over time, and that he pointed fingers at everyone who surrounded him, he assured the minister of the Indies that

I treat everybody politely and tenderly, yet those who are bunglers live in fear knowing that the time of perks is coming to an end... I do not pride myself of remedying much, because there is a lot of undergrowth in this forest and it has profound roots<sup>93</sup>

Evidence indicates that Cossío was doing a good job as secret head of the viceroyalty’s treasury. The merchant-bureaucrat’s letters describe the enormous support that New Spain was giving to the war effort in the Caribbean and Central America, where José de Gálvez’s brother and nephew, Matías and Bernardo, were respectively engaging in great, successful battles against the British Empire. Cossío invariably mentioned that everything that Guatemala (Matías) and Louisiana (Bernardo) asked for would be provided.<sup>94</sup> Cossío practically outdid himself with the mission assigned to him of gathering financial resources for the war effort against England. The Spanish crown asked for two different types of monetary donations: “gracious” (*donativos gracious*—without refund) and loans. In the so-called universal donation of 1781, gathered from every head of family in New Spain, the imperial government amassed 800,000 pesos of which Cossío “gave for himself and the dependents of the said [the viceroyalty’s

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<sup>92</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 16 May 1782.

<sup>93</sup> “A todos trato con mucha política y dulzura pero viven azorados ya los que son maletas conociendo que se va acabando el tiempo de la cucaña. No por esto me lisonjeo de remediar mucho porque es muchísima la maleza de este bosque y tiene muy profundas las raíces;” Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 26 Nov. 1780.

<sup>94</sup> See for example, *ibid.*



secretariat] office, the sum of one thousand pesos.”<sup>95</sup> For the second form of gathering funds (the loans), Cossío organized the acquisition of short-term credits in 1781 from New Spain’s commercial elite. By order of Viceroy Mayorga, in March he called for a meeting at the viceroy’s palace that the members of the Mexico City *consulado* had to attend. The meeting was a success: the majority of the merchants agreed to make contributions, with just four individuals delivering around a quarter of the sum among themselves. Later the viceroy’s secretary also met with Veracruz and Xalapa merchants. In the end, Cossío obtained a loan for the Crown (without interest) of 1,655,415 pesos, a sum superior to the 1.5 million the authorities in Spain had originally asked for. Coinciding with the war and with the years of Cossío’s superintendancy, from 1779 to 1783, the fiscal remittances (*situados*) of New Spain to the Caribbean treasuries reached their highest historical level. Being not only witness but orchestrator of all these “streams of silver and food supplies that were leaving the kingdom” of New Spain, Cossío, candidly, commented to Gálvez in February of 1781 that he considered the universal donation to be not necessary.<sup>96</sup> Notwithstanding his well-known services to the Crown, Cossío was to fall from power in an abrupt manner.

### **End of the Symbiosis: Multiple Hypotheses for the Fall of Cossío.**

In March of 1782, José de Gálvez issued a royal order “*muy reservada*” (extremely secret) to Cossío which was unusually harsh.<sup>97</sup> The order said that an infinite

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<sup>95</sup> AGNM, Donativos y Préstamos, vol. 17, cited in Marichal, *Bankruptcy of Empire*, 93.

<sup>96</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 20 Feb. 1781.

<sup>97</sup> One of the main findings in this research is that proven cases of corruption did not receive harsh sentences. Even Cossío in his accusations against other functionaries proposed to Gálvez mild punishments for corrupt officials.

number of complaints had reached the king's desk, all related to the despotism, harshness, and ill treatment received from the viceregal government since Cossío had assumed the secret superintendancy of the royal treasury. The royal order maintained that records sent from New Spain confirmed these complaints. Charles III directed Cossío to change his behavior completely since he was accused of favoring his relatives and "other subjects, enemies of the men of honor."<sup>98</sup> This severe reprimand originated in an investigation by *the fiscal de Real Hacienda* (royal attorney for exchequer affairs), the new man of confidence of José de Gálvez, Ramón de Posada y Soto.<sup>99</sup> Some months later, on 11 October 1782, Gálvez penned a royal order of retirement for Cossío. In her book on the Mexico City bureaucracy from 1742 to 1835, Linda Arnold says that this was "the only such order for a healthy senior official that the Crown issued" during the entire period under study.<sup>100</sup> Several years later, after Cossío found out that Gálvez had died in June 1787, he hurriedly wrote a brief note to the new minister of the Indies, Antonio Valdés, in which he claimed his innocence, saying that all the accusations against him had been unjust.<sup>101</sup> Pedro Antonio de Cossío died in Veracruz in 1791, while his trading firm continued to enjoy great prosperity.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Royal order to Cossío, El Pardo, 21 Mar. 1782, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1878 in Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 74n3.

<sup>99</sup> Irony of ironies, Ramón de Posada, married to the niece of the wife of Matías de Gálvez, older brother of José de Gálvez, slowly assumed the functions of Cossío as superintendant of the royal treasury. In addition, Francisco Fernández de Córdoba, nephew of Matías de Gálvez, substituted Cossío as chamber secretary of the viceroyalty in August 1783. In chapter 3 I analyze these office transitions and the career of these bureaucrats.

<sup>100</sup> Arnold, *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City*, 86.

<sup>101</sup> See Rodríguez, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 77n50.

<sup>102</sup> During the 1780s the House of Cossío was sufficiently prosperous to lead the drives toward the establishment of the Veracruz merchant guild, a goal finally attained in 1795. Even more surprising is that Cossío's great grandson, Ignacio María del Castillo y Gil de la Torre Bustamante y Cossío (b. 1817 Veracruz, d. 1893, Madrid) became Conde de Bilbao in 1887, one of the *grandees* of Spain; by that time he had been senator, hero of the Third Carlist War (1872-1876), governor of Cuba (1883-84), and Minister of War (1886-1887).

It is ironic that Cossío fell from Gálvez's and the king's grace under the same sort of accusations that his enemies had been making for years, ever since he had assumed the directorship of the customs of Veracruz: claims that characterized him as authoritarian, nepotistic, and author of practices less than transparent for the benefit of his business. In a Rashomon-like divergence of views, scholars who have attempted to explain Cossío's fall from power have reached different conclusions. I have identified five hypotheses that might explain the sudden and unexpected end of the long-term relationship between Cossío and José de Gálvez. I have baptized these hypothesis as the Flour Scandal; the Cossío-Corres connection against the court of audits; Cossío's despotism; my own, the Mayorga Affair; and finally, the most plausible and ironic of all, the Francisco del Real Affair. Even if, on the surface, they look like very different stories, they are in fact not mutually exclusive, but part of a typical snowball effect of accumulated grievances.

1) The Flour Scandal: Cossío fell because he used the advantages of his office to benefit inappropriately from the distribution of flour supplies.

A classic historian of corruption, Jacob Van Klaveren, argued that

a corrupt civil servant regards his public office as a business, the income of which he will... seek to maximize. The office then becomes a "maximizing unit." The size of his income depends ... upon the market situation and his talents for finding the point of maximal gain on the public's demand curve<sup>103</sup>

In the Flour Scandal this perspective seems to apply to Cossío. As stated above, Pedro Antonio's brother, Joaquín de Cossío, directed the customs of Puebla and at the same time functioned as purveyor general of food supplies for the army in New Spain and for

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<sup>103</sup> Klaveren cited in Arnold Heidenheimer, *Political Corruption: Readings in Comparative Analysis* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 5.

Havana.<sup>104</sup> Pedro Antonio himself, however, had participated in New Spain's supply of flour, biscuits, and hardtack (*galleta* and *bizcocho*) for the Spanish Caribbean island military forces since the years of the Gálvez Visitation (1765-1772). In 1770, Cossío explained to Arriaga that a year earlier, *as a private businessman* doing a service for the Bakers Guild, he donated the cloth bags for the transport of flour to Havana (on the king's account). Praising his own efficiency as customs administrator, Cossío also mentioned that in the same year he had made sure that the statement (*extracto*) of biscuit prices for merchant ships reached an "equity never experienced before." Moreover, in April 1768 he had given an "advantageous contract" for the provision of biscuits for the king's warships that had produced savings for the royal treasury.<sup>105</sup> The advantageous contract Cossío had negotiated had gone in fact to his *compadre* Manuel de Lebrija y Pruna.<sup>106</sup> Matilde Souto argues that the royal warehouses of Puebla administered by Pedro Antonio de Cossío's brother, Joaquín, provided the flour used by Lebrija to bake the biscuits.<sup>107</sup> In 1776-1777 Lebrija lost his contract. In February 1777 Cossío interpreted this loss as a link in the chain of damages the royal treasury was suffering at the time, and as part of the persecutions *he* was enduring. Apparently, there was a new purveyor of food supplies in Puebla who, according to Cossío, had "powerful protectors" and had taken over Lebrija's job.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Let us remember too that the House of Cossío functioned as agent of the Atrisco Dukes. Atrixco was a rich wheat production region outside the city of Puebla.

<sup>105</sup> Cossío to Arriaga, Veracruz, 20 March 1770 and certificate Trujillo and Quintela, Veracruz, 7 Sept. 1769, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1250.

<sup>106</sup> According to Souto, the wife of Lebrija y Pruna had grew up with the family of Cossío, see Cossío to Mayorga, 5 January 1780, AGNM, Marina, vol. 43, fol. 1-27, cited in Souto, "La transformación del puerto de Veracruz," 124n32.

<sup>107</sup> Souto, "La transformación del puerto de Veracruz," 124.

<sup>108</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Veracruz, 28 Feb. 1777. From this, it seems that Joaquín de Cossío was not the purveyor general of food supplies for the army anymore.

But there was more trouble on this floury horizon. At the outset of the war of 1779-1783, and apparently even before Mayorga assumed office, the Governing *Audiencia* named Pedro Antonio de Cossío director of the collection of supplies for Havana. In early 1781 Cossío explained to José de Gálvez that before his appointment, supplies only arrived from Puebla (his brother's job), and the quantities were usually sufficient for the needs of the Caribbean port. In the current context of war, he had proposed to stock and remit food supplies from both Puebla and Mexico City to avoid a raise in prices. He added that Mayorga had written to bishops and archbishops ordering them to send the wheat gathered as tithes by their cathedrals to the mills in Mexico City and Puebla for the king's use, leaving the prices to their discretion. The mining millionaire, the Conde de Regla, and the Augustine order in Michoacán had followed suit, sending wheat from their haciendas, too. In short, Cossío had managed a sufficient provision without a rise in the price of bread. Cossío informed his patron that the frigates recently arrived from New Orleans, where Bernardo de Gálvez was commanding the fighting, had been well attended and quickly shipped back with the flour they asked for.<sup>109</sup>

The rose-colored story began to change its shade quickly, however. In March 1781 Cossío asserted that the intendant of Havana had complained without foundation that New Spain had only sent scarce resources. Cossío told Gálvez that he was remitting a statement of all the supplies that had been extracted during the war for Havana and other locations. He insisted that the quantities were not higher only because there were not enough mules to take the collected supplies that remained stocked in Mexico City and

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<sup>109</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 20 Feb. 1781. Cossío began his letter of 11 March of the same year informing of ships loaded with food supplies on their way to Havana.

Puebla. For that reason he was working in building carts and leveling roads to get the flour to Veracruz faster.<sup>110</sup> A year later, in 1782, the flow of flour was continuing from the inland cities to New Spain's main port, but Havana reported that it was only receiving cash remittances from Mexico, not food. Cossío explained that this was due to a lack of ships, and further acknowledged that five thousand *tercios* of spoiled flour had been thrown into the sea due to Veracruz's hot climate. The merchant-bureaucrat attributed the shortage in transport to the "vice of sailors" who were using the king's warships for trading instead of employing them to move the necessary flour.<sup>111</sup>

According to Vicente Rodríguez, Cossío had created (in practice) a veritable "royal monopoly" in the supply of flour that curtailed the participation of other merchants in the (in principle) free trade of wheat in New Spain.<sup>112</sup> For Souto, he was responsible for organizing "a system that had encouraged the speculative trade of flour" in which "usurer merchants" bought the flour at low fixed prices and resold it at higher prices, especially at those critical moments in which the flour was stocked in Veracruz on the verge of rotting.<sup>113</sup> Apparently, Cossío responded that these "*negociaciones ilícitas usurarias*" ("illicit usurious negotiations") had nothing to do with him and that the members of the Veracruz *cabildo* (city council) were responsible.<sup>114</sup> In June 1782, *fiscal* Ramón de Posada wrote to Gálvez informing him that the viceregal government had sent spoiled flour to Havana, and adding that Cossío and the interim administrator of the Veracruz customs, the merchant's "creature," had been little scrupulous in sending flour

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<sup>110</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 11 March 1781.

<sup>111</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 16 May 1782. A *tercio* represented approximately 200 pounds of flour. That is to say, one million pounds (or 453 tons) of flour ended up in the sea in 1782.

<sup>112</sup> Rodríguez, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 150.

<sup>113</sup> Souto, "La transformación del puerto de Veracruz," 124-125.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

“full of maggots and insects.”<sup>115</sup> Indeed, according to the Flour Scandal hypothesis, for years Gálvez had been willing to dismiss all accusations against Cossío in return for an alliance with the powerful merchant, but given the delicate nature of the inadequacy of flour supplies in times of war, he could not afford this relationship of patronage anymore. Not surprisingly, Gálvez decreed free commerce of wheat and flour on the same month he dismissed Cossío.

2) The Cossío-Corres connection against the court of audits: Cossío fell because he excessively criticized his long time enemy institution, the *Tribunal de Cuentas*.

Linda Arnold’s hypothesis for the fall of Cossío (or, as she calls it, the “Cossío Affair”) is related to the complex task set by José de Gálvez of restructuring the court of audits, an institution that had proved to be a long-time enemy of both his reforms and his ally, Pedro Antonio de Cossío. According to Arnold, in 1780 the senior officials of the *Tribunal* asked for an increase in their salaries. Cossío received their petition at an inauspicious moment, however, when an investigation of this court was already underway. The inspection originated in an order from Gálvez by virtue of which the superintendant had to “make recommendations to correct any abuses, and propose ways to improve [the court’s] performance.”<sup>116</sup> Francisco Xavier de Corres was Cossío’s special aide in this task. It is important to consider some puzzling antecedents of this case before tracing it to its conclusion. Chapter 1 presented Corres as a member of the Gálvez Visitation team of bureaucrats. He was the general inspection’s accountant who in 1774

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<sup>115</sup> Posada to Gálvez, Mexico City, 10 July 1782, AGI, Mexico, leg 2523, cited in Rodríguez, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 151.

<sup>116</sup> Arnold, *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City*, 84.

received, most probably as a reward, the *alcaldía mayor* of Miahuatlán, located in Oaxaca's Southern Sierra, one of the richest districts of New Spain in terms of cochineal production. Scattered pieces of evidence show some type of business relationship going on between *alcalde mayor* Corres and merchant-bureaucrat Cossío related to the trade of cochineal in the 1777-1778 period.<sup>117</sup> Yet, Cossío informed Gálvez in 1776, that Corres had left his *alcaldía* for Mexico City to begin the reform of the *Tribunal de Cuentas*.<sup>118</sup>

Cossío had a low opinion of the court of audits; let us remember that many of the complaints against his performance as customs administrator of Veracruz originated in the *Tribunal*. In 1777 he described it as an institution that “intrigued infamously” with the royal treasury's accounts.<sup>119</sup> From Cossío's letters it is possible to conclude that the pace of this reform was really slow. In early 1781 Cossío told Gálvez that he was sending him a proposal from the viceroy with ideas for a “new method” for the *Tribunal*, adding the contemptuous description of it as “[a court] where there are no more than *aperadores de cortijo* [ranch foremen], ignorant of their ministry, that receive more than 4,400 pesos in yearly salaries.” He also mentioned that the regent of the *Tribunal* had recently died, opening an opportunity to introduce changes, and ended with the statement that “truly, for reforming [the court, Francisco Xavier de] Corres seems to me perfect and the viceroy supports the idea.”<sup>120</sup> Only in May 1782 did Cossío reveal that he and Corres had just began to “enter the forest” of the *Tribunal de Cuentas*.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Please refer to Chapter One.

<sup>118</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 28 Feb. 1777. I imagine that *alcalde* Corres was coordinating the cochineal trade from his district to Veracruz from Mexico City.

<sup>119</sup> In Spanish Cossío used a pun to show his opinion of the court of audits. He talked about Corres leaving his *alcaldía* for Mexico City with the objective of carrying out “su comisión sobre *las cuentas en que el tribunal de ellas ha cabiloseado tan infamemente*,” *ibid.*, my emphasis.

<sup>120</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 20 Feb. 1781. According to Linda Arnold, the senior officials and auditors of the court earned between 3,500 and 4,000 pesos a year, and that is why they requested a raise in



Cossío and Corres finally wrote a report in July 1782. In this highly critical document, they rejected the senior auditor's 1780 request for increased salaries, proposing in addition the abolition of the *Tribunal* and its transformation into "a general accounting office staffed by lesser-paid auditors."<sup>122</sup> They pointed especially at the great number of unaudited files the court had accumulated over the years. In addition, they made up specific, personal attacks against the court's ministers. In their own defense, the auditors of the *Tribunal de Cuentas* stated that "the Cossio-Corres plan criticized individuals in the system rather than the system itself," and that a serious reform should not begin with a "flippant tirade against royal officials," but from reflection and analysis. They themselves employed the same *ad hominem* attacks when they argued that Cossío "lacked understanding of the imperial system of governance," asserting that Corres had "then worked in the tribunal for one month at Cossío's request [...and] his talents as an auditor left much to be desired."<sup>123</sup> On 14 August 1782, exactly three years after the king appointed Cossío to the secret superintendancy, *fiscal* Ramón de Posada wrote to Gálvez supporting the auditors' defensive representation and clearly detailing Cossío's flawed procedures in the inspection of the court. The *Tribunal de Cuentas* itself initiated an investigation of Cossío's "methods, procedures, and use of authority."<sup>124</sup> It seems that the Cossío-Corres connection had produced a short circuit and that for the first time the opinion of the court of audits, combined with Posada's key support, made an impression

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1780. In Chapter 1, I explained that 1776 was an especially important year in the bureaucratic career of José de Gálvez, not only because he reached the high office of minister of the Indies, but also because of the many changes he introduced in imperial administration, one of these being substantially higher salaries to officials in Spanish America. Apparently, only *some* officers had enjoyed a raise in their salaries.

<sup>121</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 16 May 1782.

<sup>122</sup> Arnold, *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City*, 84.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 85, citing from Tribunal de Cuentas to Gálvez, Mexico City, 31 July 1782, AGI, Mexico 1989.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 85-86.

on Gálvez. Cossío ended up ousted from the administrative system and apparently Corres returned to Oaxaca to continue profiting from his rich *alcaldía*.<sup>125</sup>

3) Cossío's "despotism:" Cossío was extremely authoritarian and this had to come to an end.

Perhaps the most plausible explanation for Cossío's fall from the eighteenth-century political actors' point of view was related to his "despotism." After all, as the secret royal order of March 1782 said:

[A]n infinite number of complaints from all sorts of people has arrived from that kingdom regarding the *despotism, duress, and ill treatment* used by that government since you occupied the secretary of the viceroyalty and the secret superintendancy of the royal treasury.<sup>126</sup>

During his tenure, and rather symptomatically, superintendant Cossío asked Gálvez to widen his powers. He thought that to clear the "disorder" that pervaded in the viceroyalty's royal treasury he needed to concentrate functions in his office, as exemplified in the case of the salaries of Mexico City's bureaucrats cited above.

One of Cossío's favorite accusations against other officers in the royal treasury was that they behaved like despots, an attitude that he claimed produced opacity in the administration; that is, he complained that from his office he could not scrutinize their performance. Thus, for example, in November of 1780 he wrote to Gálvez:

I see that everyone here behaves as *an absolutist* and for that reason they suffocate the viceregal government. They want to prevent us from

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<sup>125</sup> For Corres refer to chapter 1.

<sup>126</sup> Royal order to Cossío, El Pardo, 21 Mar. 1782, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1878 reproduced in Rodríguez, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 74n3.

knowing what they are doing; but I am working against this, soon you will start perceiving some [positive] results.<sup>127</sup>

Cossío began his letter of January 1782 voicing the same frustration: “The heads of other treasury departments proceed *with absolute dominion* without taking into account the authority of the superintendancy.”<sup>128</sup> Then he criticized the gunpowder department, where every employee wanted “to be absolute in command and pillage.”<sup>129</sup> Cossío usually ended his habitual attacks against other members of the treasury administration of New Spain with some kind of statement conveying that he could tell all of this to Gálvez because he trusted the minister would support him as being a loyal subject of the king. Cossío understood his secret commission as a step toward a more efficient, centralized system, which was precisely what Gálvez wanted, and what he obtained in 1787 when he established an official superintendancy.

Cossío’s actions and attitudes seem to be informed by traditional ways, a pervasive informal order in which this merchant was behaving like the head of a trade house instead of conducting himself as a “modern statesman,” observant of administrative rules. As Concepción Gavira explains, when Montañés merchants migrated to Andalusia at the beginning of the eighteenth century, they organized their transatlantic businesses based on authoritarian and patriarchal principles.<sup>130</sup> Moreover, Mexican historian Lucas Alamán described Montañés merchants in New Spain as

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<sup>127</sup> “*Todos aquí veo que están hechos a ser absolutos con cuyo motivo sofocan al Superior Gobierno, queriéndole privarle de que tome conocimientos, pero contra esto se va trabajando y allá irá viendo las results.*” Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 26 Nov. 1780, my emphasis.

<sup>128</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 16 Jan. 1782, my emphasis.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Gavira, “El comercio de los montañeses con América,” 180.

extremely hard workers, generally austere, almost monastic.<sup>131</sup> There is no doubt that Cossío was a hard worker. In March 1781 he commented to Gálvez that he was no friend of idleness, unlike others:

they complaint that I lock up myself to work; without it, it would be impossible to get things done, even more in this country where those that should be more occupied in carrying out their obligations are those who are the most idle, [always] searching for conversations and social gatherings. They would like that I attend [these gatherings] in order to become as useless and disloyal to the king as they are.<sup>132</sup>

Although Cossío was extremely rich, that did not mean he lived lavishly or ostentatiously. His austerity could explain his negative attitude toward the high salaries (and self-indulgence in riding the streets of Mexico City in “magnificent coupés”) of other treasury officials. In fact, this seemingly traditional behavior in Cossío composed of patriarchalism, authoritarianism, hard work, and austerity could be a sign of a modern attitude toward business, work, and life. In her book on the religious sensibilities of late-eighteenth, early-nineteenth-century merchants of Veracruz, Pamela Voekel demonstrates that the elite of that port-city, the members of the *consulado*, had anti-Baroque Catholic mentalities, more prone to austerity and interiorized piety, and ultimately resembled modern nineteenth-century liberals.<sup>133</sup> The truth is that in September of 1782 Gálvez seems to have tired of Cossío’s attitudes, referring in a note to the “*regular altanería y conocida ojeriza de Cossío*” (the “regular haughtiness and known ill will of Cossío”).<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Cited in Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico*, 109-110.

<sup>132</sup> “*Se quejan de que me encierro sin lo cual bien conoce V.E. que sería imposible trabajar y más en este País que los que debieran estar más ocupados para desempeñar sus obligaciones son los más ociosos buscando conversaciones y tertulias a que quisieran concurrirse yo para ser tan inútil y tan infiel al rey como ellos,*” Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 11 March 1781.

<sup>133</sup> Pamela Voekel, *Alone Before God: The Religious Origins of Modernity in Mexico* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002).

<sup>134</sup> Note dated in 2 September 1782, from AGI, Mexico, leg. 1510, cited in Navarro García, *Intendencias de indias*, 58.

4) The Mayorga Affair: Gálvez dismissed Cossío because the merchant had sympathy for Viceroy Mayorga.

There is a general belief among historians that the minister of the Indies disliked Viceroy Mayorga. There is plenty of evidence available to sustain this conclusion, the most salient of all being the placement of Cossío as superintendant of the royal treasury, stripping Mayorga of one of the viceroy's main functions.<sup>135</sup> Mayorga always had an official appointment as interim viceroy and therefore received half of the salary assigned to that office. Numerous times he asked the Crown for "confirmation" in his post in order to receive his full pay, but Gálvez denied his requests. Linda Arnold argues that Pedro Antonio de Cossío had "major disputes with the viceroy,"<sup>136</sup> but from his letters to the minister of the Indies a contrasting image emerges: that he actually was very fond of Mayorga. Cossío's letters from Mexico City invariably touch this subject. What could be considered his "most personal letter," noteworthy because it was marked with the "very much extremely reserved" (*reservadísima muy mucho*) warning, is unique because it is completely devoted to the merchant's point of view regarding the viceroy's plight.<sup>137</sup> It is obvious that Cossío was conscious that his own position as secret superintendant undermined the power of the viceroy. Cossío even worried about the people who

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<sup>135</sup> Mayorga died crossing the Atlantic when he was returning to Spain in 1783. In nineteenth-century accounts of Gálvez's life it was said that the ex-viceroy did not pass away from natural causes, but that he may have been assassinated by Gálvez's agents; Carlos María Bustamante, *Suplemento to Andrés Cavo, Los tres siglos de México bajo el gobierno español hasta la entrada del ejército trigarante* (Jalapa, 1870) cited in Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 10.

<sup>136</sup> Arnold, *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City*, 32.

<sup>137</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 28 Feb. 1781.

belonged to the closest social circle of the viceroy. He thought they were malign influences. Cossío asked Gálvez to do everything in his power to change both situations.

In November 1780, the secret superintendant noted that the viceroyalty should be confirmed to Mayorga at least during the duration of the war. Cossío requested a full salary for Mayorga salary, in addition to a promotion in rank to lieutenant general. He argued that the viceroy felt slighted for having a military rank inferior to that of Lieutenant General Pascual Cisneros, who at the time was in charge of inspecting the army.<sup>138</sup> In February 1781, Cossío mentioned that “the Devil wanted gossip,” citing rumors that had strained even more the relations between the viceroy and Cisneros. Cossío urged Gálvez to soften his position because Mayorga was living unhappily, did not trust anybody, and everything “caused him discomfort.” He added, “with his complete salary, [Mayorga] would be ready to execute everything mandated from Spain.”<sup>139</sup> In his most secret letter of 28 February 1781, Cossío voiced his worries regarding the viceroy’s feeble position of power. The merchant said he felt pity for Mayorga, “enslaved” by the people who surrounded him.<sup>140</sup> I sense that Cossío knew of Gálvez’s plans to create an official (that is, not secret) superintendancy and he probably thought this would ameliorate his own irregular situation in power. Thus, Cossío wrote that, in his opinion, the elevation to the rank of lieutenant general, a complete salary, and

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<sup>138</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 26 Nov. 1781.

<sup>139</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 20 Feb. 1781.

<sup>140</sup> According to Cossío, Mayorga was under the harmful influence of his majordomo, Guillermo Bargigli, who “abused the high respects of his Excellency [the viceroy].” Cossío even sent an anonymous popular verse that was circulating in Mexico City that talked about this situation, entitled “El Virrey Enguillermado” or, in an extremely liberal translation, the “A Williamized Viceroy.” Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 26 Nov. 1781. The verse goes like this (in Spanish): “*Un Virrey Enguillermado/una Arzobispa ambiciosa/y una Justicia viciosa/tienen al Reino asolado. /Lo Divino profanado/lo Secular abatido/a nuestro Rey ofendido/al Príncipe muy airado/al Ministro ensangrentado/y a Dios en un sumo olvido.*”

“one of those letters that your Excellency knows how to write” would make Mayorga happy. The viceroy would then have “good will to [officially] separate [from the prerogatives of his office] the superintendancy” since he had “agreed to this novelty without repugnancy,” when he had learned that the viceroyalty of Peru had already an official superintendancy. Overall, Cossío thought that if the establishment of the official superintendancy had to be done, it was better if Mayorga did it right away.<sup>141</sup> Cossío was pressuring Gálvez to accelerate the establishment of what would be the Andalusian minister’s most transcendental reform, the intendancy system. But Gálvez failed to heed this advice from his long-time partner Cossío, and delayed the intendancy system until his brother Matías, and then his nephew Bernardo, occupied the highest viceregal office.

Some years after he fell from power, living in retirement in Veracruz, an elderly Pedro Antonio Cossío lamented that he had been called to Mexico City to testify in the posthumous *residencia* trial of Viceroy Mayorga. In fact, the Crown forced him to respond to all potential charges raised against the viceroy’s performance during his term in office. Cossío asked the Ministry of the Indies to issue a permission that would spare him the difficult journey to the capital of New Spain; his request was denied.<sup>142</sup> Cossío found himself out of the system; it was clear that the “political space” was closed to him when he could no longer negotiate with Gálvez. Notwithstanding this, as I mentioned earlier, his “economic space” was still open and the business of his trade house continued to expand.

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<sup>141</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 28 Feb. 1781.

<sup>142</sup> *Residencia* trial of Martín Mayorga, AHN, Consejos, leg 20721.

5) The Francisco del Real Affair: Cossío meddled with the interests of a personal friend of José de Gálvez.

We know little about what Gálvez's had to say in the matters discussed above, but in this instance, it is possible to glimpse how angry the Andalusian minister was at Cossío's actions. This is perhaps the most ironic explanation for Cossío's fall, and it all relates to his probable alliance with the enemies of Francisco del Real. Real was a merchant resident in Mexico City; he came from Jerez<sup>143</sup> and was a personal friend of José de Gálvez.<sup>144</sup> In the fall of 1765, when the visitor-general decided to preside over the trade fair of Xalapa, he took Real with him, appointing him "inspector-general" of the tobacco monopoly. His functions included the collection of tobacco and commanding the revenue guard *in situ*; that is to say, his area of operation was to embrace the tobacco-producing region of Orizaba and Córdoba. He married into a family of powerful planters in Cordoba and eventually became *regidor* of the Orizaba *cabildo*.<sup>145</sup> In his position as inspector-general Real got himself into trouble with the wealthiest tobacco planters for three main reasons. First, he turned a deaf ear to their demands for the increase of prices; second, he supported the project of state-owned plantations; and third, the planters opposed the 1777 change in the policies of contracting, in which the state was thenceforth going to negotiate individual contracts with each planter instead of treating them as a collective body. In 1780 Viceroy Mayorga removed Francisco del Real from his long-

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<sup>143</sup> Probably Jerez de la Frontera, the same city where Cossío was born; there is a town named Jerez de los Caballeros in Extremadura province, however.

<sup>144</sup> This comes from Deans-Smith, *Bureaucrats, Planters, and Workers*, 42 and 85; she does not delve into where or when could they have met. Francisco del Real appears as Francisco González del Real in Rodríguez's *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 110.

<sup>145</sup> Gálvez appointed Real to this position, and shortly his decision was confirmed in Spain by the Marqués de Esquilache; see Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 149.



held office and Pedro Antonio de Cossío replaced him in order to negotiate new general contracts with the tobacco planters.<sup>146</sup> Cossío travelled to Orizaba and Córdoba, expeditiously negotiating contracts that clearly favored the planters, particularly because they stipulated higher prices for tobacco while ending (by the sale to private hands) the state-owned plantations regime. The viceregal government justified Real's removal because of pending accusations of maltreatment of Indian workers and embezzlement of about 70,000 pesos through the mismanagement of state-owned plantations, a project he had supported wholeheartedly. The Crown approved the new contracts by royal order of October 1781, but stipulated that Real should be reinstated in his office. In March 1782, after the celebration of a second, similar contract, the Crown approved it a second time but again insisted that Real had to return to his position.

In the midst of this, and intervening yet again, the *fiscal de Real Hacienda*, Ramón de Posada, reviewed the case. He thought that Real had been treated unfairly and stressed that Cossío had not obeyed the royal order of October 1781 because, in reality, he desired a permanent appointment as inspector-general of the tobacco-monopoly. Posada found that Cossío had persuaded the planters to put a condition to the Crown: they would break the 1781 contracts unless they obtained the definitive removal of Real first. The planters' rebellion could damage the royal treasury's revenue, concluded Posada, since tobacco production for 1781-1782 was in danger, if the planters rescinded their contracts and there were no state-owned plantations anymore, who was going to plant and harvest the tobacco? The minister of the Indies reacted to Posada's report and noted instructions for his subordinates in the margin:

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<sup>146</sup> AGNM, Hacienda, caja 49, vol. 442.

[Do a]s this minister [Posada] proposes, give the corresponding order to the viceroy in decisive terms so he can make the contradictors understand how His Majesty heard with utmost displeasure that some of his vassals have the temerity to contradict the authority of his inspector.

Gálvez added:

Let Cossío know that from now on the king is making him responsible if the contracts are not fulfilled, [because] now the king and I know that he is the real reason behind the failures to comply and behind the punishable disobediences of those ungrateful and unrecognizable vassals.<sup>147</sup>

Even weak Viceroy Mayorga had to react to the situation. According to Deans-Smith it was Cossío's effectiveness in generating consecutive contracts that produced Mayorga's suspicions that he "was pandering to local vested interests and [...] favoring the regional interests of Veracruz at the expense of those of the Crown."<sup>148</sup> In his letter, also dated in March 1782, Mayorga accepted the opinion of Posada and officially dismissed the planters' ultimatum aimed at Del Real and the 1781 contracts. Informed of the viceroy's decision, the planters called for a meeting in Orizaba in which they decided to continue their protest and asked for the definitive cancellation of their contracts with the Crown. Viceroy Mayorga did not respond and limited himself to informing Gálvez of this meeting.

Gálvez read Mayorga's letter on 10 November 1782 and noted in the margin:

This ruling must run without delay, it would have been better if it had not been postponed by this letter from Mayorga, which is another proof of his weakness and of the despicable alliance between Cossío and the insolent Montañés planters.<sup>149</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Gálvez's note in the margin of Posada to Gálvez, Mexico City, 20 March 1782, AGI, Mexico, leg. 2262, in Rodríguez, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 110.

<sup>148</sup> Deans-Smith, *Bureaucrats, Planters, and Workers*, 86.

<sup>149</sup> Gálvez's comment dated 10 Nov. 1782 on Mayorga to Gálvez, no. 1672, Mexico City, 25 May 1782, AGI, Mexico, 2262, cited in Real and Heredia, "Mayorga", 66n56, mentioned without linking it to the Del Real case. Also cited in Deans-Smith, *Bureaucrats, Planters, and Workers*, 86 and Rodríguez, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda en Nueva España*, 110.

With these words Gálvez was killing two birds with one stone. On the one hand, it reflects Gálvez's personal aversion toward Mayorga (even in this case in which the viceroy was cooperating), and on the other hand it shows his complete disappointment with Cossío, a disenchantment the minister even framed in terms of place of origin, bringing the Montañés origins of Cossío to the fore. On that date Gálvez sent two royal orders for New Spain, one for the viceroy, the other for Cossío with an emphatic warning: "In virtue of the merciful heart of his majesty, the corresponding punishment of such bastard behaviors have been suspended; but I warn you that if these are not amended, the arm of justice will subdue you and your favorite planters to comply with your obligations."<sup>150</sup>

The viceregal government exonerated Francisco del Real from all charges and restored him to his post; in 1784 he even promoted an official request of redress for the calumny he had suffered from the planters of the Orizaba-Córdoba region.<sup>151</sup> Posada had absolved him of the accusations of embezzlement in July 1782, arguing that it was very difficult to prove Real had committed fraud because the event had occurred four years earlier, and the royal treasury would incur useless costs in trying to illuminate a matter that would always remain uncertain at best.<sup>152</sup> Cossío did not survive his bold attack against Gálvez's personal friend. The affair is not alluded to in his correspondence at all. In the last letter of the collection, however, dated 16 May 1782, Cossío mentioned to Gálvez that their common friend Mangino had not visited him in a month, which was very unusual; it seemed to Cossío that Mangino was avoiding him for some reason. He

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<sup>150</sup> Royal order to Cossío, San Lorenzo, 10 Nov 1782, in Rodríguez, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 110n66.

<sup>151</sup> AGNM, Cédulas Originales, vol. 127, exp. 183.

<sup>152</sup> Rodríguez, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 112.

attributed this to Mangino's annoyance at Cossío's recently having reviewed some mercury business under his jurisdiction. In my opinion, Mangino, a man who never lost Gálvez's trust, already knew that Cossío's end was near, and was giving the corpse a wide berth.<sup>153</sup>

### **Conclusion: Understanding the Paradox**

There is no doubt that up until the final two years of the relationship, Cossío was a valuable, faithful partner of José de Gálvez. First, for a decade at the customs administration in Veracruz he navigated against a storm of constant criticism directed at him largely as a proxy for his powerful patron. Second, his letters of the 1777-1782 period demonstrate pure, unadulterated loyalty. His reports kept Gálvez abreast of what was going on in the most important viceroyalty in the Americas. Moreover, Cossío was ready to donate and/or lend money to the Crown every time Gálvez asked for it. How can we explain the end of Cossío's bureaucratic career under the shadow of Gálvez? Was Cossío a cynic? That is, did he just write the words Gálvez wanted to hear and do everything in his power to expand his family's economic interests? Or, was Cossío a convinced advocate of reform? Perhaps he was, and his problems began when he inadvertently transgressed a moral economy-like limit—a frontier of norms and expectations so invisible that he did not notice the snowball that his actions at the shadowy superintendancy were forming behind his back. At the same time, there is no doubt that his extensive family business benefited while he was in power, as hypotheses one (wheat), two (cochineal business with Corres), and five (tobacco) show.

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<sup>153</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 16 May 1782.

Hypotheses one, two, and five also suggest a frank and open attack by *fiscal* Ramón Posada against Cossío. It almost seems that he had the mission of bringing him down. In 1780 Gálvez named Ramón de Posada *fiscal de Real Hacienda* of New Spain. He was an Asturian lawyer, nephew by marriage of Gálvez's brother Matías. Posada became renowned for his honesty. Perhaps, then, Cossío was a victim of Gálvez's nepotistic style in governance. Gálvez could not advance the intendancy reforms during Mayorga's tenure, as Cossío encouraged him to do; he was waiting for his brother Matías to arrive in power. As hypothesis four shows, Cossío befriended Viceroy Mayorga, who was not a member of the extended Gálvez clan. Even worst, notwithstanding the merchant was born in Andalusia, he was still identified as a Montañés. Thus, he became a disposable ally in Gálvez's strategic thinking.

What about corruption? Was he a corrupt officer, as his enemies claimed for many years? If so, why at the same time did he see corruption everywhere he looked? The Bourbon Reforms entailed a massive redistribution of power designed to increase state centralization and fiscal revenues, which in the end aimed at achieving a general revival of the Crown's authority in her American dominions. One relatively unexplored side of these reforms was their attempt to stamp out corruption. Gálvez directed this effort and Cossío supported him. Early modern European minds recognized corruption as an undesirable practice in state administration, but failed to interpret it as politically subversive (or system-threatening).<sup>154</sup> In late 1781, however, Cossío wrote to the minister of the Indies: "Your Excellency also knows that where excesses are stronger than laws,

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<sup>154</sup> Jean-Claude Waquet, *Corruption: Ethics and Power in Florence, 1600-1770* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 95.

soon vassals will have more power than kings.”<sup>155</sup> This phrase—a playful rhyme in Spanish—constitutes an unusual observation for an eighteenth-century official precisely because it denotes not just a concern but also a very basic problematization of the ways in which corruption eroded the authority of the Spanish crown in her American dominions. The study of the relationship between merchant Cossío and his long-time patron Gálvez shows their constant, seemingly coordinated attempt to dramatize the cases of corruption in the fiscal administration of colonial Mexico as a venue to introduce and justify the agenda of innovations that were part of the Bourbon Reforms. In this context it is possible to observe an early interpretation of corruption as a socio-political problem grown crucial, which markedly differed from the then widespread views of this phenomenon as the immoral behavior of devious individuals in government. Ironically, the prevalence of the latter understanding of corruption seems to have contributed to Cossío’s fall from political power. After all, if we give credit to hypotheses two, five, and maybe three, his penchant for personal attacks brought Cossío down.

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<sup>155</sup> “También sabe Vuestra Excelencia que donde los excesos pueden más que las leyes, presto podrán los vasallos más que los reyes,” Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 17 Nov. 1781.

## Chapter 3

### **The Art of Nepotism and Hometown Favoritism**

#### **Introduction**

One of the most conspicuous aspects of José de Gálvez's bureaucratic career, one which provoked this research in the first place, was his marked preference for placing members of his family in government positions in both Spain and the Americas. Nepotism brought me into this dissertation. My interest in nepotism resides in a personal fascination with what my meritocratic mind considers an unjust practice. Every time I read news, such as "contractor X is in fact the brother-in-law of politician Y, who is in charge of assigning government contracts" or that "senator A is the sister of minister B," or even when I learn that "historian N is the daughter of historian M" an acute sense of bewilderment invades me. Adam Bellow, author of one of the few books that deal exclusively with the topic, reminds us that "nepotism is often said to reek, as though it were a pile of dirty laundry."<sup>1</sup> I bear no doubts that my sense of smell is highly developed in relation to nepotism.

In its broadest sense nepotism means the favored treatment of one's relatives, but in politics it usually refers to the positioning of family members in government jobs. Nepotism is often identified as a type of political corruption. In his *Diccionario de política*, Gianfranco Pasquino identifies three types of political corruption: bribery or the intent to influence the judgment of a state official; nepotism or the conferral of public offices or public works on the basis of kinship and not by merit; and, embezzlement or

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<sup>1</sup> Adam Bellow, *In Praise of Nepotism: A Natural History* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 4.

the appropriation of public funds by a functionary.<sup>2</sup> Within a list of behavioral forms of corruption, Joseph Nye offers a similar definition of nepotism as “bestowal of patronage by reason of ascriptive relationship rather than merit.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, according to these authors patronage and nepotism overlap and nepotism can be identified as a form of political corruption if it means a breach in the law by a public officer in order to obtain a private gain. On the aspect of merit, however, Pasquino’s and Nye’s definitions are rather problematic. The phenomenon of nepotism is so complex that it is not entirely divorced from what we would think is its opposite: merit. In fact, the inclusion of “merit” in their definition of corruption is not surprising as it simply reflects a widespread belief in the association of nepotism with the hiring of “grossly incompetent” relatives.<sup>4</sup> Reality is more complicated than that. Among José de Gálvez’s most nakedly nepotistic moves—or among his “acts of nepotistic chutzpah” as Bellow would put it—was the positioning of his brother Matías and then his nephew Bernardo in one of the highest offices in the Empire: as viceroys of New Spain, the richest of the Spanish overseas possessions. Both had impressive military careers and became efficient and unexpectedly wildly popular rulers.

Historian María Soledad Santos Arrebola argues that the main problem of nepotism, as practiced by Gálvez, was that “it excluded from positions of power those figures that were capacitated by their noble lineage or their professional training.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Gianfranco Pasquino, “Corrupción,” *Diccionario de política*, ed. Norberto Bobbio, Nicola Matteucci, and Gianfranco Pasquino, (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno, 1988), s.v. “corrupción.”

<sup>3</sup> Joseph S. Nye, “Corruption and Political Development: A Cost-Benefit Analysis” in *Political Corruption: Readings in Comparative Analysis*, ed. Arnold Heidenheimer (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 567.

<sup>4</sup> “Grossly incompetent” wording borrowed from Bellow, *In Praise of Nepotism*, 11.

<sup>5</sup> María Soledad Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado en Málaga: José de Gálvez* (Málaga: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Málaga-Obra Social y Cultural Caja Sur, 1999), 43.



Indeed, nepotism has the capacity to “displace” other job candidates because it creates an unfair ground for competition. Commenting on an op-ed that criticized the 2001 appointment of Michael Powell, son of U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, to the office of chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, Bellow suggests that the young Powell’s qualifications were not in doubt, but the real question was “whether he had gotten his job over the heads of other qualified applicants on the strength of his family ties.”<sup>6</sup>

The references to Gálvez’s nepotism in historiography are as numerous as they are inevitable; sometimes they are accusatory in character, at other times apologetic. The first allusion that left a profound impression on me was David Brading’s argument that when Gálvez took over the office of minister of the Indies, he “soon became renowned... for his persistent favoritism toward his compatriots, the Malagueños, and for his implacable nepotism.”<sup>7</sup> One of the oldest references in historiography comes from Jacobo de la Pezuela, a nineteenth-century Spanish historian, who after praising Gálvez’s iron-willed character and determination, comments “only *one defect* blemished [the bureaucratic career of] this statesman, his eagerness of exalting everyone in his family” and then affirms that “any Gálvez [who was] able to read and write” benefited from a position in government.<sup>8</sup> H. I. Priestley expresses the idea in elegant terms when he writes that Gálvez was not “*unmindful of his relatives...* indeed his activity for them

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<sup>6</sup> Bellow, *In Praise of Nepotism*, 4; the op-ed is Andrew Sullivan’s “Hot Heir,” *The New Republic*, 5 Feb. 2001, 6.

<sup>7</sup> David Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico, 1763-1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 37.

<sup>8</sup> Jacobo de la Pezuela, *Historia de la isla de Cuba* (Madrid: Carlos Bailly-Bailliere, 1878), 3:135n3.

savors of what we should call today the rankest nepotism.”<sup>9</sup> In her book about José de Gálvez’s development projects in the province of Málaga, Santos Arrebola deemed it necessary to use “Nepotism” as a subtitle in her first chapter.<sup>10</sup> Malagueño historians do not seem to agree as to what adjective describes Gálvez’s practices best: if “manifest” (María Isabel Pérez de la Colosía), or “blatant” and “evident” nepotism (Leonardo Molina García). This line of scholars, however, is also ready to introduce exonerative and defensive arguments. Pérez de Colosía highlights merit when she writes that Gálvez’s “brothers were capable and able men;” Molina García prefers to talk about a “really close solidarity among brothers;” and Santos Arrebola introduces an external agent when she indicates that Gálvez’s enemies branded him as being nepotistic.<sup>11</sup> The essence of the latter argument is true as the conclusions in this chapter will demonstrate, but technically, or linguistically speaking, it is incorrect: “nepotism” was not a word in use in the eighteenth-century Spanish world. Gálvez’s contemporaries could not simply “label” his actions as nepotistic. The term did not appear for the first time in the Royal Academy Spanish Dictionary until 1843.<sup>12</sup> “Nepotism” as such was already used in other

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<sup>9</sup> H. I. Priestley, *José de Gálvez, Visitor-general of New Spain (1765-1771)* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1980; first published 1916 by University of California Press), 9, my emphasis.

<sup>10</sup> María Soledad Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 41-44. In his short study on Matías de Gálvez, another Spanish historian writing in the 1930s also included as subtitle, “Nepotismo de José de Gálvez, ministro universal de Indias;” see Francisco Morote Chapa, *Notas y noticias sobre don Matías de Gálvez, virrey de Nueva España* (Valencia: Instituto Nacional de 2da. Enseñanza de Valencia, 1930), 6.

<sup>11</sup> María Isabel Pérez de Colosía Rodríguez, “Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada,” in *Los Gálvez de Macharaviaya*, ed. José Miguel Morales Folgera, María Isabel Pérez de Colosía Rodríguez, Marion Reder Gadow, and Siro Villas Tinoco (Málaga: Junta de Andalucía-Consejería de Cultura y Medio Ambiente-Asesoría Quinto Centenario-Benedito Editores, 1991), 60; Leonardo Molina García, *Historia de la Villa de Macharaviaya* (Málaga: Diputación Provincial, 1997), 39 and 71; Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 41.

<sup>12</sup> “Nepote: adj. Lo mismo que sobrino: es voz tomada del italiano, y se aplica especialmente al que suele preferir el Papa,” and “Nepotismo: m. Voz del mismo origen que denota la desmedida preferencia que algunos dan á sus parientes para las gracias ó empleos públicos;” Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de*

languages, however. Its origins are found in the Latin *nepos* and in the Italian *nipote* that mean grandchildren or nieces and nephews. The Italian word in plural, *nipoti* has the broader meaning of “descendants.” *Nipote* evolved into *nepotismo* around the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to signal a common practice among popes who used to reward their relatives handsomely with high posts in the church and other privileges, such as land.<sup>13</sup>

Praising the values of brotherhood and solidarity among the Galveces, Leonardo Molina García ventures to say that Ana Gallardo, the widowed mother that raised José de Gálvez and his brothers, was responsible for keeping her children united.<sup>14</sup> Molina García, historian and parish priest in Macharaviaya (Gálvez’s natal village) in the 1990s, affirmed this most probably because of his own beliefs that the role of a good mother includes the instilling of feelings of closeness and solidarity among her children. If we follow these lines and agree to assign this role to Gallardo, we may think that by doing that she was securing the survival not only of the individual family members but of the kinship unit as a whole.

The family is an extraordinarily cost-effective unit. According to Eric Wolf, it provides maximum efficiency for the least amount of cost in providing economic survival, socialization, exchange of sexual services, and affection. The anthropologist characterizes kin filiation as a resource that gives advantages to an individual acting

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*la lengua castellana por la Real Academia Española*, 9th ed. (Madrid: Imprenta de D. Francisco María Fernández, 1843), s.v. “nepote” and “nepotismo.”

<sup>13</sup> One of the first writings about nepotism as a problem in itself was Gregorio Leti’s *Il nepotismo di Roma o vero relatione delle raggioni che muovono i pontifici all’aggradimento de Nipoti* (Roma: 1667); for the English translation see Gregorio Leti, *Il nipotismo di Roma, or, The History of the Popes Nephews from the Time of Sixtus the IV to the Death of the Last Pope Alexander the VII in Two Parts* (London: Printed for John Starkey, 1669).

<sup>14</sup> Molina García, *Historia de la Villa de Macharaviaya*, 37.

outside the family realm. The years of socialization engender trust and “the private relation of trust may thus be translated into cooperation in the public realm.”<sup>15</sup> In politics nepotism is not necessary, but it can be useful. In his study of the Renaissance Church, Richard Hilary writes that “the expediency of nepotistic appointments *to solidify reliable control of church government and to initiate and execute policy* was a factor accepted and adopted by every pope.”<sup>16</sup> In this chapter I claim that through nepotism Gálvez and his brothers advanced their careers in government and, thus, in a way, enhanced the family unit in terms of honor and wealth. At the same time, the Andalusian minister’s bias in favor of his relatives became a reliable instrument to execute policies in a context of opposition to reform at the local and imperial levels. As the representative of a state that was actively working toward gaining more access into the everyday lives of the colonial peoples to increase its revenue, Gálvez was in an exposed position. In this sense, Wolf maintains that “the relation of kin in non-kin operations... implies a clear balance of gains and costs, in which the gains outweigh the costs only when cooperation with non-kin is clearly more hazardous and disadvantageous.”<sup>17</sup>

A simple search in Jstor reveals that nepotism is a more popular research theme in the natural sciences than in the social sciences and the humanities. Studies on nepotism among bees, wasps, ants, certain kinds of social spiders, and squirrels, abound. It is precisely the “natural” or primeval character of nepotism that explains this academic bias. As it turns out, nepotism is the main characteristic of the so-called “social species” in the

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<sup>15</sup> Eric C. Wolf, “Kinship, Friendship, and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies,” in *Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientelism*, ed. Steffen W. Schmidt, Laura Guasti, Carl H. Landé, and James C. Scott (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 170-171.

<sup>16</sup> Richard B. Hilary, “The Nepotism of Pope Pius II, 1458-1464,” *The Catholic Historical Review* 64, no. 1 (1978): 33-35, my emphasis.

<sup>17</sup> Wolf, “Kinship, Friendship, and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies,” 171.

animal kingdom. In his book Adam Bellow tries to demonstrate that “meritocracy” is a fairly recent human goal, and therefore it is an artificial social construct that contrasts with the “natural” character of nepotism. He considers that, differently from animals, humans can give a cultural twist to this nepotism and “altruism to people who are not biological relatives.”<sup>18</sup> We observed precisely that phenomenon occurring within the networks of patronage created by José de Gálvez studied in chapters one and two. In this chapter I introduce concepts, such as “hometown favoritism” and “extended nepotism,” characterized as variations of Gálvez’s basic favoritism toward his immediate family unit composed of his brothers (Matías, Miguel, and Antonio) and his nephew (Bernardo). My examination relies more on secondary literature, but nevertheless I hope to add new insights into one of the most controversial aspects of Gálvez’s biography, one that has been widely commented but never before analyzed in depth.

### **Family Support of the Visitor-General and José de Gálvez’s First Nepotistic Strokes**

The general inspection of New Spain was a foundational experience for the architect of the Bourbon Reforms and it also illustrates the early developments of José de Gálvez’s “notorious nepotism,” as John Lynch calls it.<sup>19</sup> What is interesting to note, however, is that in this period the Andalusian minister used his family less as an instrument of power (as he would do after 1776) and more as a source of support to advance his administrative career. The first sign of Gálvez’s close relationship and reliance on his brothers appears in the last will he dictated in March 1765 before leaving

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<sup>18</sup> Bellow, *In Praise of Nepotism*, 53.

<sup>19</sup> John Lynch, *Spanish Colonial Administration, 1782-1810: The Intendant System in the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata* (London: University of London Press, 1958), 73.

for New Spain to accomplish his official commission. In his testament he named two of his brothers, Matías and Miguel, as executors. In addition, Gálvez chose his younger brother Miguel as his only heir.<sup>20</sup> By then, he had been a widower for more than a decade and had no descendants. The appointed visitor-general justified his decision noting that he loved his brother very much and that he had reared him.<sup>21</sup> Miguel de Gálvez was only five years José's junior and I have not found evidence indicating the kind of "rearing activities" the older brother could have performed; it is likely, however, that he was referring to support in the professional sense. Born in 1725, the third child of the Gálvez-Gallardo marriage followed José into a career in law. It is peculiar that Miguel's earliest documented activity is a legal amendment to his baptismal certificate done when he was 22 years old to officially change his given name, Andrés Luis.<sup>22</sup> José de Gálvez's designated heir was a graduate of the University of Alcalá de Henares<sup>23</sup> who by 1765 had already achieved a respectable bureaucratic career: he was *alcalde de hijosdalgo* of the royal *chancillería* of Valladolid and auditor of war of the army and principality of

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<sup>20</sup> Matías and Miguel de Gálvez were the two first-mentioned will executors out of a list of seven individuals; see "Testamento del señor don Joseph de Gálvez Gallardo, otorgado por su señoría en esta corte en 6 de marzo de 1765," AHPM, vol. 18469, fols. 374-377 (hereafter cited as "Testamento 1765"), in *México en el siglo XVIII: Recopilación de Documentos Relativos a D. José de Gálvez Gallardo*, ed. Francisco Rodas de Coss (Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores-Embajada de México en Madrid-Comisión de Historia, 1983), 5.

<sup>21</sup> "Por el mucho amor que le tengo, haberle criado, y no tener yo herederos forzosos algunos;" *ibid.*, 5.

<sup>22</sup> Miguel de Gálvez (née Andres Luis de Gálvez) was born on 30 Nov. 1725 and baptized on 1 Dec. His baptism certificate mentioned that his godfather had been his uncle Juan de Gálvez. The certificate had an addendum that changed his name to Miguel dated on 23 Nov. 1747. The document also rectified that in addition to Juan de Gálvez, Miguel Pérez de Saavedra had been his godfather too. Perhaps he took his new name from his godfather; see "Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Miguel de Gálvez," 1779 (hereafter "Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779"), AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp. 60 fols. 7v-8.

<sup>23</sup> Isidoro Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez y sus alianzas* (Madrid: Isidoro Vázquez de Acuña-Villena Artes Gráficas, 1974), 1138. A eulogy of Miguel de Gálvez written in 1793 affirmed that he began his college degree in Alcalá de Henares but finished it at the prestigious University of Salamanca; see eulogy authored by Miguel María López Pinilla, originally delivered on 19 Aug. 1793 (hereafter "Eulogy of Miguel de Gálvez"), in "Ojeada retrospectiva sobre la Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País de Málaga," *Boletín de la Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País de Málaga*, year 1, no. 9., 30 Sep. 1861, 3.

Catalonia.<sup>24</sup> In July 1770, while his brother was still in the Americas, Miguel obtained the position of *alcalde de casa y corte* in Madrid, the same that José had occupied briefly from December 1764 to February of 1765 and from which his road to administrative stardom had initiated.<sup>25</sup>

No doubt Miguel was the Andalusian minister's favorite sibling and he relied on him to resolve sensitive issues.<sup>26</sup> When the visitor-general arrived in Mexico City after his two-year military expedition to the northwestern provinces of New Spain, his health was still frail. In the summer of 1770, he decided to request the Crown's approval for his return to Spain, if possible, during the next spring. To support his case, he used the intercession of his younger brother before his immediate superior, the minister of the Indies, Julián de Arriaga. In October 1770, Miguel de Gálvez wrote a short letter to Arriaga that served as cover letter for a plea (*representación*) written by José in which the visitor-general asked the king for authorization to return as soon as he finished his commission's affairs.<sup>27</sup> The minister's vague response to the brothers' petition—to

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<sup>24</sup> In his will José de Gálvez also indicated that Miguel belonged to the Council of His Majesty, but he did not explain to which collegiate body (Castile, Indies, War, or Treasury); Gálvez, "Testamento 1765," 5. I surmise he was a member of the Council of Castile since the royal *chancillería* courts of Granada and Valladolid had that institution as the final instance for appeals. Both *chancillerías* had two *alcaldes de hijosdalgo* in charge of *pleitos de hidalguía* (suits and civil legal proceedings related to the nobility).

<sup>25</sup> Miguel de Gálvez took possession of his post on 20 July 1770. He was promoted to the "*audiencia de lo civil*" within the same court in 1771. For the hiring, promotions, and vacancies of *alcalde de casa y corte* positions see "Toma de razón de los señores ministros de la sala y subalternos de primera clase principia en el año de 1668," AHN, Consejos, bk. 1170; Miguel de Gálvez is mentioned in fols. 360v, 363v, and 370-370v.

<sup>26</sup> Multiple times in her *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado* Santos Arrebola identifies Miguel de Gálvez as the minister's "right hand man."

<sup>27</sup> In his letter to Arriaga and attached *representación* to the king, José de Gálvez's claims were truly pathetic: he was sure that the environmental conditions (*clima*) of New Spain were killing him and that he was in danger of suffering more relapses. The visitor-general was also certain that the monarch would not allow him to "die in a region that was mortal" for him; see Gálvez to Julián de Arriaga, Mexico City, 26 Jul. 1770, and Gálvez to Charles III, *representación*, Mexico City, 27 Jul. 1770. For his part, Miguel de Gálvez mentioned that he wished he could present this petition in person but his own commissions did not allow him to leave his office. M. de Gálvez to Arriaga, Madrid, 30 Oct. 1770, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246.

Miguel, he promised to notify the monarch, and to Gálvez, that Charles III would resolve his request and felt sorry for his health problems—prompted Miguel to remind Arriaga in May 1771 about the visitor-general's original plea. The *alcalde de casa y corte* substantiated his new letter with José de Gálvez's claim that he had finished his inspection's duties on the last day of January.<sup>28</sup> The joint efforts of the Gálvez brothers were successful this time but success by no means equaled a complete victory for the visitor-general. Arriaga permitted him to embark on his transatlantic voyage under the condition that Gálvez thoroughly informed the newly appointed viceroy, Antonio Bucareli y Ursúa, of all the important affairs of state transpiring in New Spain after the visitation. The minister of the Indies calculated a two- to three-month delay in the inspector's departure after Bucareli's arrival in Mexico City.<sup>29</sup>

It is in this period after the Sonora Expedition that José de Gálvez's nepotistic nerve began to glow, if still dimly, at the Spanish court. Alejandro O'Reilly, ex-governor of Louisiana that had just returned to Spain at the end of 1770, mentioned in a letter to his friend Bucareli (by then, still governor of Cuba) that Gálvez had been asking for his return for quite a while and had even suggested that Matías, his older brother, could replace him as visitor-general. Instead, O'Reilly noted, the Crown had decided to bring the *visita general* to a conclusion.<sup>30</sup> The significance of Miguel de Gálvez's support of his brother's pleas and of José's proposal of Matías as his substitute at this point in time

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<sup>28</sup> For the mild response of Arriaga to the original request, see Arriaga to M. de Gálvez, San Lorenzo, 29 Oct. 1770 and Arriaga to Gálvez, San Lorenzo, 3 Nov. 1770. For Miguel de Gálvez's second effort: M. de Gálvez to Arriaga, Madrid, 11 May 1771, *ibid*.

<sup>29</sup> Arriaga to Gálvez, draft, Madrid, 24 May 1771, *ibid*.

<sup>30</sup> I will introduce Matías de Gálvez later in the chapter. Alejandro O'Reilly to Antonio María de Bucareli y Ursúa, letter, 17 May 1771, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1242, cited in Bernard E. Bobb, *The Viceregency of Antonio María Bucareli in New Spain, 1771-1779* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962), 21.



resides in the fact that it was becoming obvious that the Gálvez brothers were acting as a unity. Both the ministers of state and the king of Spain were learning that dealing with José de Gálvez meant a bargain that included his brothers.

Another member of the family, destined to be the most célèbre of the Gálvezes in history as we shall see, was slowly making a name for himself under the shadow of the visitor-general of New Spain: Bernardo, the only surviving child of Matías de Gálvez, the Andalusian minister's older brother. Born on 23 July 1746 and named after the patron-saint of Macharaviaya, young Bernardo de Gálvez was in the Mexican viceroyalty exactly at the same time as his uncle, that is, from 1765 to 1772. It was his first time in the Americas,<sup>31</sup> and arguably, the reason for his first stay in New Spain had nothing to do with his uncle's appointment. A man of arms like his father, in 1765 he crossed the Atlantic under the command of Lieutenant General Juan de Villalba, who was in charge of reforming the army of New Spain.<sup>32</sup>

It did not take long before the military activities of Bernardo intersected with those of his powerful uncle.<sup>33</sup> As member of the army, he participated in the 1767

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<sup>31</sup> At the end of his short, wondrous life (he died when he was 40 years old), he would become the most seasoned transatlantic traveler among his relatives. No other member of the Gálvez's clan crossed the Atlantic as much as he.

<sup>32</sup> New Spain was not Bernardo de Gálvez's first military experience abroad: in 1762, he served as first *teniente de cazadores* in a campaign in Portugal during the Seven Years War; Luis Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez y la Comandancia General de las Provincias Internas del norte de Nueva España* (Sevilla: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1964), 192n150. According to Pérez de Colosía, Bernardo de Gálvez was captain of an infantry regiment under Villalba, see "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 92. For the reforms of Juan de Villalba; see Christon I. Archer, *The Army in Bourbon Mexico, 1760-1810* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1977).

<sup>33</sup> José de Gálvez was a lawyer, but during the visitation he also assumed military roles. This was perhaps related to his original "appointment package," which included the post of Intendant of the Army. He led troops and organized militias to quell the insurrections of 1767 in the cities of San Luis Potosí, Guanajuato, and Valladolid. In addition, he headed the two-year military expedition to the provinces of California, Sinaloa, and Sonora of 1768-1770.

suppression of the Jesuit order.<sup>34</sup> While José de Gálvez was in the middle of his two-year expedition to the northern provinces of New Spain (California, Sonora, and Sinaloa), Bernardo joined a parallel military campaign against Apache Indians in neighboring New Biscay. Indeed, at the younger Gálvez's request, Viceroy Croix sent him to support the activities of Lope de Cuéllar, captain of the infantry *regimiento de la Corona* and newly assigned *comandante de las fronteras de Chihuahua*.<sup>35</sup> In April 1769, Bernardo reached Chihuahua and Cuéllar named him captain of one of four *compañías* under his command. Operating from Sonora, José de Gálvez was well-acquainted with the campaign preparations in New Biscay and expressed disagreement about the high responsibilities given to his young and inexperienced nephew. The visitor-general suggested a more skilled dragoon lieutenant, Diego Becerril, to head the first *compañía*, with Bernardo following his orders.<sup>36</sup>

Just as the uncle looked after the safety of his nephew, when the visitor-general fell terribly ill, Bernardo visited him at the Pitic barracks and the mission of Ures in Sonora. He engaged in the discussions surrounding José de Gálvez's condition with the people that surrounded and had taken care of him. When Croix ordered the inspector's return to Mexico City, Bernardo decided to travel by his side.<sup>37</sup> Thus, uncle and nephew

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<sup>34</sup> Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1238. The author does not mention the nature or level of Bernardo de Gálvez's participation in the suppression of the Jesuits.

<sup>35</sup> Croix justified his decision before the Spanish minister of war commenting on Bernardo de Gálvez's merits, those of his uncle, and the fact that from his own pocket, the young Gálvez was paying the living expenses of two armed men; Croix to Gregorio Muniain, Mexico City, 5 Mar. 1769, AGI, Mexico, leg. 2429 cited in Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez*, 192n150.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 192n150. Unfortunately, there is no space to tell the details of Gálvez's disease drama. A Bethlehemite friar who took charge of Gálvez's health, and whom the visitor-general considered his savior, asked Bernardo de Gálvez to go from Chihuahua to Mexico City to deny the health crisis of his uncle. When the young captain refused to lie there was tension between the men; see Juan Manuel Viniegra,

were reunited during those difficult months marked by disease and long-distance travel. These circumstances seem to have reinforced José de Gálvez's trust in his nephew, because as soon as he returned to the capital of the viceroyalty, he began actively to promote Bernardo's military career.

In 1770, Croix deposed Lope de Cuéllar from his *comandancia*. The deterioration of the situation in the north due to the constant attacks by different indigenous groups on Spanish populations and roads described by the governor of New Biscay, José Faini, prompted José de Gálvez to propose his nephew as Cuéllar's replacement. The cautious uncle of 1769 had become a "pushy" one a year later, now ready to deploy Bernardo to the frontline of the frontier wars. The 24-year-old returned to Chihuahua with the rank Cuéllar had held as captain of the infantry *regimiento de la Corona* and the title of *comandante de las fronteras* of Sonora and New Biscay. He headed three military campaigns against the Apaches. In the first one he showed his rethorical powers when at the rim of the Río Grande, he convinced his demoralized men to continue going north in their fruitless search. With the help of indigenous allies, he achieved his fist victory and gathered valuable booty after a skirmish against an unguarded group of Apaches. In less than a week, however, his Apache enemies performed a series of spectacular attacks that devastated Spanish villages and roads. Against the will of Governor Faini, who wanted to concentrate on defense, Croix supported Bernardo de Gálvez's second campaign which produced some positive results in the spring of 1771. A setback followed every success, however. Apaches always responded with more violent assaults and cattle rustling. Luis Navarro García argues that while Faini criticized the futility of the war against the

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Miguel José de Azanza, and Juan Antonio Gómez de Argüello to José de Gálvez, Havana, 6 Feb. 1771, in "Sobre don José de Gálvez en 1774," AHN, Estado, 2845, no. 10, fols. 20-21.

Indians, Croix extolled Bernardo de Gálvez's military virtues and asked for his elevation in rank to lieutenant colonel.<sup>38</sup> The third campaign of the visitor-general's nephew, in which he employed more auxiliary Indian troops than Spanish soldiers, achieved almost nothing. In October 1771, the young Gálvez was in the city of Chihuahua when he was told of an Apache raid happening close by. He went alone to confront the assailants and suffered an arrow wound on one arm and two from a spear on the chest. Bernardo de Gálvez attempted a fourth campaign, but early on he had suffered a bad fall from a horse that aggravated his still convalescent condition.<sup>39</sup>

It was obvious that captain Gálvez was not solving the Apache problem in Chihuahua, but his uncle in Mexico City created official propaganda on behalf of his nephew's campaigns in the north, as well as, of course, for his own actions while he was in Sonora. In the summer of 1771, Gálvez and Croix printed and published the *Noticia breve de la Expedición Militar de Sonora y Sinaloa, su éxito feliz y ventajoso estado en que por consecuencia de ella se han puesto ambas provincias*. The document announced in a triumphant tone that Bernardo de Gálvez had defeated the Apaches, and that New Biscay had had three months of peace without any Indian attacks.<sup>40</sup> The *Noticia's*

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<sup>38</sup> Croix to Arriaga, no. 1028, Mexico City, 17 Jun. 1771, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1269 in Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez*, 195.

<sup>39</sup> Account in Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1238-1240.

<sup>40</sup> Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez*, 201. Gálvez sent a copy of the *Noticia* to Spain, accompanied with a letter in which he supported the promotion of his nephew to lieutenant colonel. The document was the second of a series of three published by Gálvez and Croix to promote the northern enterprise: the first was the proposal of a private colonization company; the second was a plan to establish a "*cordón de presidios*" (a defensive line of presidios). In his book, Navarro García discusses Croix's and Gálvez's motives behind the launching of this publicity campaign: (1) to promote the idea that their projects were working as planned in the northern frontier; (2) to account for an enterprise that had been founded mainly by private hands; (3) to make sure the public and the authorities in Spain knew that the visitor-general had attained his ambitious objectives, with Croix's help; see *ibid.*, 202-203. For his part Governor Faini communicated to Arriaga that Apache raids continued and he argued, "these are news I had to tell you, even though they are not in accordance with a publication printed in Mexico City that I have read here;" Faini to Arriaga, Durango, 12. Aug 1771, AGI, Guadalajara, leg. 512, in *ibid.*, 203.

affirmations were far from the truth, but coming from such high sources of information (the visitor-general and the viceroy) as they did, the general public must have given them credence.

In August 1771, immediately after receiving the Crown's authorization to return to Spain, Gálvez asked for a permit that would allow his nephew to travel with him.<sup>41</sup> Over the next month, Croix considered who should replace Bernardo de Gálvez and issued the title of *comandante de las fronteras* on behalf of Hugo O'Connor.<sup>42</sup> The wounded young captain turned the frontier's *comandancia* over to his successor in mid-December and reached Mexico City two months later, on 10 February 1772. Although Arriaga had accepted José de Gálvez's petition at the end of the previous year, when Gálvez left Mexico City for Veracruz in early 1772, he had not yet received the approval. At the end of February, Viceroy Bucareli wrote a letter informing the minister of the Indies that he had given Bernardo de Gálvez permission to join the visitor-general in his transatlantic voyage. He had come to this decision, Bucareli told Arriaga, after José de Gálvez had insisted upon the issue and had even sent him a reminder from Veracruz.<sup>43</sup> Bucareli had a personal point of view of the situation that he wrote in a letter addressed to his friend Alejandro O'Reilly. First, he acknowledged the general belief that the visitor-general's nephew had a brave "spirit," but he confessed his doubts about the suitability of a person in his twenties leading a Spanish army against the elusive enemies of the

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<sup>41</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, no. 80, Mexico City, 3 Aug. 1771, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246.

<sup>42</sup> Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez*, 202.

<sup>43</sup> Gálvez reminded Bucareli as soon as he found out his nephew was in Mexico City, see Bucareli to Arriaga, no. 213, Mexico City, 24, Feb. 1772, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246. Gálvez's motive was the safety of his nephew, he told Bucareli, because "in this way I will have the consolation to take him with me from there [Havana], and the relief that Father Joaquín [de la Trinidad—Gálvez's personal physician and counselor] will help him with medications during the navigation which maybe will allow him to reach Spain alive;" Gálvez to Bucareli, Veracruz, 17 Feb. 1772 cited in Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 85.

Chihuahua frontier. He was happy to be relieved from that worry after allowing Bernardo de Gálvez's departure for Spain.<sup>44</sup> In April, the head of the Veracruz customs, Pedro Antonio de Cossío, informed Arriaga that the visitor-general's nephew had embarked on his way to Havana; the young Gálvez joined his uncle at the Cuban port.<sup>45</sup>

### **An Inevitable Call: The Search for Nobility**

Recall that in Chapter One, José de Gálvez's professional success as a product of patronage occurred precisely at a time characterized by social mobility among the impoverished members of the lower nobility. University training became one road to reach the top ministries and councils of state that had been the traditional bastion of the high nobility headed by the *Grandees of Spain*. Professional merit, with the correct doses of patronage, was thus the driving force behind the widespread phenomenon of upward social mobility during the reign of Charles III. This class of professionals, however, was deeply worried about its social status and invested considerable time and money to be publicly recognized as noblemen. Its members hoped to be taken as members of the high nobility or at least to blend with it as much as possible. While José de Gálvez augmented his merits by leaps and bounds in New Spain, his brothers team-worked to raise the family's reputation. Miguel de Gálvez was the leader and coordinator of their joint effort to prove their noble origins.

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<sup>44</sup> Bucareli to O'Reilly, Mexico City, confidential, 27 Oct. 1771, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1242, cited in Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez*, 211.

<sup>45</sup> Pedro Antonio de Cossío and Pedro Ildefonso Trujillo to Arriaga, Veracruz, 11 Apr. 1772, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246. Bernardo de Gálvez returned with two apaches he had captured in his first campaign named Quitachín and Piticagán who became his friends and were known later as "Matías" and "José;" according to his "Noticias y reflexiones sobre la guerra que se tiene con los apaches en el norte de Nueva España," undated, Museo Naval de Madrid, cited in Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez*, 197n164.

The lawyer began to collect information in 1770.<sup>46</sup> By the end of the next year he had sufficient proof that linked the lineage of the Gálvez of the village of Macharaviaya to a noble and glorious past rooted in the Spanish *Reconquista* over the Muslim kingdoms that once dominated the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>47</sup> Originally of Basque blood, in the thirteenth century the Gálvezes arrived in Andalusia as members of the Castilian army of King Ferdinand III (future Ferdinand the Saint). They had a prominent role in the conquest of Santaella, a village in the province of Córdoba, where they established their residence. More than two hundred years later, in the emblematic year of 1492, the family gained prominence as Antón de Gálvez helped the Catholic Kings to conquer Granada. In return, he received rights that only the nobility enjoyed, such as a privileged burial site at the local church for him and his descendants, in addition to a private, preferential seat—a sort of “VIP” bench—also in the main church of their town of residence. Antón was the illustrious source from which the Gálvez of Macharaviaya’s *hidalguía* emanated.<sup>48</sup>

The genealogical branch to which José de Gálvez and his brothers belonged settled in the province of Málaga in the sixteenth century as a result of another armed conflict, the Rebellion of the Alpujarras, a three-year war fought between 1568 and 1571 by Morisco (Muslims converts to Christianity) rebels against an increasingly intolerant

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<sup>46</sup> No evidence suggests that Miguel de Gálvez performed this genealogical research himself. In these situations, it was usual to assign an agent who would go to the villages’ local parochial archives, interview witnesses, process all the necessary permits, and collect signatures.

<sup>47</sup> It is interesting that the origins of the Gálvez family can be linked to the *Reconquista* because fiction writer Manuel Villa Raso refers to José de Gálvez as “the last conquistador.” Spanish historiography has also disseminated this idea by portraying the Andalusian minister’s activities of war and colonization in the north of New Spain as the last show of Spanish imperial expansionism; see, Manuel Villar Raso, *El último conquistador* (Barcelona: Luis de Caralt, 1992), and Mario Hernández Sánchez-Barba, *La última expansión española en América* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1957).

<sup>48</sup> Ramón Zazo y Ortega, *Blasón y genealogía de la Casa de los Gálvez de Macharaviaya*, Madrid, 12 Dec. 1771 (Facsimile edition, Málaga: Instituto de Cultura de la Exma. Diputación Provincial de Málaga, 1972). There is an original edition of Zazo’s *Blasón* attached to “Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779.”

Spanish monarchy. Several members of the family, including the direct ancestor of the Gálvez's brothers and hero of the war, Alonso "El Rubio," received land grants from estates expropriated from the Moriscos. Located in the twin villages of Macharaviaya and Benaque, the properties included 90 homes, mills, and even confiscated silk.<sup>49</sup> Alonso de Gálvez became *regidor* and *alcalde* of the village in 1612. According to Vázquez Acuña, the Macharatungo (that is, from Macharaviaya) and Santaellano branches of the Gálvez's family continued close to each other with episodes of inter-marriage.<sup>50</sup>

The older brother, Matías de Gálvez, whom I will introduce later in detail, also helped to advance the family's interests, when he applied for a letter patent of nobility (*ejecutoria de hidalguía*) at the Royal Chancillería of Granada that would prove their noble lineage and purity of blood.<sup>51</sup> The brothers needed to establish a clear link with their ancestor Antón de Gálvez of Santaella. The *ejecutoria* mentions that Matías and his youngest brother, Antonio de Gálvez, were "*hacendados*" of the village of Santaella. Thus, even though at the time Matías was captain of artillery in the Canary Islands, it seems that he and Antonio managed to establish their residence in that village through the purchase of property, and as *vecinos* they were entitled to apply for the letter patent of nobility. As a result of an investigation at the instance of Miguel de Gálvez, and through

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<sup>49</sup> Sixty per cent of the grant was uncultivated land. Vines and a few olive and almond trees composed the arable land. Thirty-three Old Christians replaced sixty Moriscos and joined fifty Catholics already living there. This information is found in the "*Libro de Repartimiento de Benaque y Macharaviaya*" dated in 1579. The original book was lost and a copy made in the eighteenth century survived at the Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Granada; see Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 22 and 25.

<sup>50</sup> Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1117.

<sup>51</sup> It seems that Matías de Gálvez initiated this paperwork in order to be admitted as member of a *cofradía*, the Real Congregación del Dulce Nombre de Jesús of Vélez-Málaga, created in 1768 and that was a noblemen-only organization; see *ibid.*, 1213 and for his and Bernardo's certificate of admission dated on 18 Mar. 1771 see "Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Bernardo de Gálvez," 1777 (hereafter "Pruebas Carlos III Bernardo de Gálvez 1777"), AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp. 49, 45-47.



Matías's request, on 13 July 1770 the town council of Santaella ratified the four brothers as *hijosdalgo de sangre* and accredited their noble ascendancy for 250 years in their village, Macharaviaya, and neighboring Benaque. After reviewing the case, the Chancillería of Granada issued the royal provision and *ejecutoria* on 18 September 1771.<sup>52</sup>

At the end of the same year, Miguel de Gálvez obtained a 90-page printed certificate that traced four lines of noble descent distinguishing the male lines (*varonías*) of Gálvez and García on the paternal side, and of Madrid and Cabrera on the maternal side. Chronicler and King of Arms Ramón Zazo y Ortega issued the document entitled *Blasón y genealogía de la casa de los Gálvez de Macharaviaya* after examining 89 exhibits (*instrumentos*) that Miguel de Gálvez had submitted for his consideration.<sup>53</sup> Zazo's *Blasón* allowed the Gálvez brothers (and Bernardo de Gálvez, too) to display their armorial bearings in any accustomed way they wanted. The genealogy expert dictated that the most elaborated coat of arms would correspond to José de Gálvez because of "his military rank."<sup>54</sup> Let us make the point again that Gálvez was not a man of arms, but his high administrative position was sufficient to outrank his brothers.

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<sup>52</sup> I have not found the *ejecutoria* but it is summarized in Zazo's *Blasón*, 20-23. In "Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779" (fol. 38), it says that a copy of the patent letter was admitted into the books of the town council (*cabildo*) of Málaga in December 1771. Bernardo de Gálvez's application for a cross of the order of Charles III also mentions the *ejecutoria* and that his father Matías de Gálvez requested it after establishing his *residencia* in Santaella; see "Pruebas Carlos III Bernardo de Gálvez 1777," fols. 58-62v.

<sup>53</sup> The *instrumentos* were a variety of official documents such as baptism and marriage certificates, testaments, *ejecutorias*, deeds of sale and donation, powers of attorney etc. The King of Arms reveals that Miguel de Gálvez had been busy gathering information in both Santaella and Macharaviaya since 1770; see Zazo, *Blasón*, 16-20. In 1779, when he was applying for a cross of the Order of Charles III, Miguel de Gálvez showed these 89 exhibits which, according to the notary, he kept bound in leather; see "Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779," fols. 84v-85.

<sup>54</sup> Zazo, *Blasón*, 88.

The Chancillería's *ejecutoria* and Zazo's certificate were central pieces of evidence in Bernardo's, Miguel's, and Antonio's future applications for crosses of pensioned knight (*caballero pensionista*) of the royal order of Charles III, obtained in 1777, 1779, and 1783 respectively.<sup>55</sup> Their brother and uncle José had already been awarded with this honor, and at a higher rank. Indeed, when Gálvez returned from New Spain he was named *Caballero Gran Cruz* of the recently-created order; he must have used the *ejecutoria* and the King of Arms' *Blasón* collected by his brothers to prove his *hidalguía*.<sup>56</sup> I found surprising that in both Zazo's certificate and the Gálvez brothers' and nephew's applications for knighthood in the order of Charles III, the preferential seat and burial site at the local church granted by the Catholic Kings to ancestor Antón de Gálvez was an issue of considerable weight.<sup>57</sup> This occurred because the honor could be passed on to his descendants and was valid in whatever town they resided. The documents thus cited a seventeenth-century judicial suit (*pleito*) before the ecclesiastical tribunal of the city of Málaga between Ana del Póstigo y Gálvez (representing her cousin and nephews, Simón, Francisco, and Martín de Gálvez)<sup>58</sup> against the parish priest of Macharaviaya and Benaque, who had questioned her family's right to the privileged seat. The original written concession (the *real merced*) had been lost in a fire at the house of Diego de

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<sup>55</sup> See "Pruebas Carlos III Bernardo de Gálvez 1777," "Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779," and "Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Antonio de Gálvez," 1783, AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp. 165.

<sup>56</sup> Unfortunately, I have not found in the archives a similar "book of proofs" (as the applications were called) for José de Gálvez's "great cross" of the order of Charles III.

<sup>57</sup> Zazo, *Blasón*, 19.

<sup>58</sup> Francisco de Gálvez was the grandfather of Matías, José, Miguel, and Antonio. His brother Martín and his uncle Simón paid 1,800 *reales de vellón* to Ana del Póstigo for her services of representation according to an *escritura de obligación* dated on 20 December 1680; see "Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779," fol. 32.

Gálvez (grandfather of Francisco de Gálvez) decades ago in the “year of the contagion.”<sup>59</sup> In January of 1677, the general vicar of the bishopric of Málaga resolved that the family could maintain the possession of the “*banco decente arrimado a un entierro y sepultura*” because they were the legitimate heirs of Antón de Gálvez. In 1773 José de Gálvez paid for the restoration of the seat and burial vault. In a public ceremony celebrated in July, his youngest brother, Antonio de Gálvez, “took possession” of the family’s exclusive privilege in representation of his siblings, ancestors, and descendants. A testimony of 1777 described the special bench as located below the second arch of the church, at the transept’s crossing, and it was attached to the columns by iron rings and locks. Both the bench and the burial place beneath it had the family’s coat of arms engraved.<sup>60</sup>

### **More than the Family: Hometown Favoritism after 1776**

José de Gálvez let his nepotistic instincts break loose when he replaced Julián de Arriaga at the Ministry of the Indies. Around 1776, however, more than promoting the career of his relatives, he concentrated on favoring Málaga and his natal village, Macharaviaya. Through Gálvez’s protection and promotion, the economies of the port city of Málaga, its hinterland, and his hometown boomed and were transformed into nodes connected in formerly unthinkable ways to the Spanish Empire and to the larger world as well. In his study of Pope Pius II (1458-1464), Richard Hilary explains that the

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<sup>59</sup> Around 1613-1617, there was an epidemic in the town of Macharaviaya that one of the documents calls a “*peste*.” In the disruption of the village’s life created by the disease, several houses burned to the ground, including Diego de Gálvez’s and the residence of the parish priest. Thus, the baptism and marriage certificates issued before 1617 of the Macharatungo ancestors of the Gálvez’s brothers were lost in the fire; see references to the epidemic in *ibid.*, fol. 16v and Zazo, *Blasón*, 32.

<sup>60</sup> “Pruebas Carlos III Bernardo de Gálvez 1777,” fol. 35v, and testimony from 13 Mar. 1777 signed by Pedro de Burgos, Clemente Cabrera, Santiago González, and clerk Antonio Castillo y León in *ibid.*, fol. 29. A similar testimony dated on 21 Apr. 1779 can be found in “Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779,” fols. 31-31v.

high prelate's favoritism toward his place of birth, the village of Corsignano (renamed Pienza in the pope's honor), and Siena (the main city of Corsignano's region) calls for "an extension of the concept of nepotism to include Pius' Sienese compatriots as well as his relatives."<sup>61</sup> I would consider not only the addition of the compatriots but of the actual towns as well. Indeed, hometown favoritism, as I decided to call this phenomenon, resembles nepotism in the sense that office holders display a marked preference for the natal town, its region, and its inhabitants at the moment of assigning development projects, implementing new policies, or distributing employments. The number and quality of benefits for the town is expected to increase as the fellow citizen climbs to higher positions in government. In 1777, for example, a chronicler from the Canary Islands heralded good times for the archipelago given that José de Gálvez was at the Ministry of the Indies, his brother Matías was the second-in-command in Tenerife, and fellow Canarian Francisco Xavier Machado (Gálvez's secretary during the *visita general*) had been appointed as accountant-general at the Council of the Indies. It was the best time to ask for "any favor" on behalf of the islands, the chronicler wrote.<sup>62</sup>

Eric Van Young identifies allegiance to the native village as "the primordial element in the social and political identity of rural people in late colonial Mexico, specifically of indigenous peasants."<sup>63</sup> One could extend this argument for eighteenth-

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<sup>61</sup> Hilary, "The Nepotism of Pope Pius II," 34.

<sup>62</sup> Lope de Antonio de la Guerra y Peña, *Memorias: Tenerife en la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII*, ed. Enrique Roméu Palazuelos (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Ediciones del Cabildo de Gran Canaria, 2002), 425. Even today, in contemporary Mexico or Spain, people anticipate good times for their *pueblo*, city, province, or state if the country's president was born there. Before the 2006 Mexican presidential elections, I remember having conversations with many Morelianos who expressed their intention to vote for Felipe Calderón (a native of Morelia, Michoacán) because they believed his presidency would assure better days for the city in terms of development and jobs.

<sup>63</sup> Eric Van Young, *The Other Rebellion: Popular Violence, Ideology, and the Mexican Struggle for Independence, 1810-1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 28.

century Andalusia, and for that matter to the Spanish world and across time all the way to include contemporary immigrant communities of Latin American origin in the United States, where an “intense love” and “unshakable loyalty” for the so-called *patria chica* was and is conspicuous.<sup>64</sup> Thinking about Van Young’s book about indigenous participation in the Mexican wars for independence and the individual willingness to die defending one’s community, there is space to concoct a contra-factual statement: what would have happened if a lower-level insurgent leader of indigenous ethnicity, for one reason or another, had reached a position of relevance in the newly independent Mexican government? For sure, he would have benefited his community above other towns. In this chapter, hometown favoritism originates in a widespread cultural allegiance to the place of birth and is intimately related to political power.

### 1) Macharaviaya

Located 771 feet above sea level, Macharaviaya is a tiny village nested on top of an elongated steep hill, the Iberos ravine flanks its left side, and more hills and small valleys surround it.<sup>65</sup> A document of the sixteenth century described its geographic location as four leagues to the *levante* (east) of Málaga and one league away from the sea.<sup>66</sup> In our days a 16-mile drive is sufficient to reach the town from the port of Málaga. Macharaviaya’s twin village, Benaque is only a mile north and rests in a valley. Both belong to the Axarquía *comarca*.<sup>67</sup> The dominant landscape of this region is arid, with

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<sup>64</sup> Richard Nostrand and Lawrence E. Estaville, *Homelands: A Geography of Culture and Place across America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 164.

<sup>65</sup> The name of Macharaviaya derives from the Arabic “maschar Abu Yahya,” that means farmstead (*alquería*) of Abu Yahya; see Molina García, *Historia de la villa de Macharaviaya*, 9.

<sup>66</sup> Eighteenth-century copy of the *Libro de repartimiento de Benaque y Macharaviaya* (1576) cited in Pérez de Colosía, “Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada,” 22.

<sup>67</sup> The Axarquía’s capital is Vélez-Málaga. *Comarcas* did not have administrative powers.

dust and dry vegetation. Its proximity to the ocean makes this location good for wine, particularly the Malagueño wine, which is sweet and strong. In Gálvez's times the landscape was livelier, dotted with the green of the Muscat vines. A British traveler touring the region between 1786 and 1787 described his trip through the Vélez-Málaga hinterland on his way from Málaga to Granada as a delightful ride in which he saw pointed hills "all rich and cultivated to their very summits with the vine."<sup>68</sup> In the second half of the nineteenth century, a plague of the North American insect phylloxera wreaked havoc across the vineyards of Europe. Toward the 1870s, the blight hit the Axarquía in a brutal way, devastating the economy and leaving the region with its still visible barren-land character. Today, Macharaviaya is home to some artists and it also offers rooms and houses for rent to sun-starved visitors from Northern Europe who wish to have a taste of rural Andalusia.<sup>69</sup>

Formerly an indistinguishable village of impoverished wine farmers in the Malaguenian sierra, Gálvez's place of birth became known at the end of the eighteenth century as "Little Madrid" for the prosperity it reached under his and his brother's patronage. According to a document written in 1793, before the Gálvezes' patronage, Macharaviaya was a village of 57 scattered homes that the author described as "wretched *albergues* that could not even be considered *casas*." After the favors of the Gálvez brothers, Macharaviaya had 332 well-ordered homes.<sup>70</sup> Thus, under their auspices, the

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<sup>68</sup> Joseph Townsend, *A Journey Through Spain in the Years 1786 and 1787; with Particular Attention to the Agriculture, Manufactures, Commerce, Population, Taxes, and Revenue of that Country; and Remarks in Passing Through a Part of France* (London: C. Dilly, 1791), 3:44.

<sup>69</sup> Indeed, Macharaviaya remains tiny but well maintained. There have been many efforts by the town council to restore the Gálvez family-related landmarks. I visited the village with a couple of scholars interested in Gálvez in 2006 and the mayor gave us a tour of the whole town.

<sup>70</sup> "Eulogy of Miguel de Gálvez," 7-8.

transformation of Macharaviaya occurred rapidly, one change after the other. Their policies of favoritism toward their own town centered on three main aspects: productivity, education, and infrastructure (both civil and religious). Immediately after assuming his office at the Ministry of the Indies, Gálvez designed an ambitious plan to offer the Macharatungo population an alternative way to earn their living. The crucial development that connected Macharaviaya with the rest of the Spanish Empire was the establishment of a playing cards manufactory. It was not just “any factory.” the Andalusian minister transformed his hometown into the exclusive supplier of official playing cards for all the Spanish colonial possessions.

The Spanish Crown established a state-run monopoly to manage the production and sale of cards in the colonies in the mid-sixteenth century. Local workshops printed, wrapped in paper and duly stamped with the royal seal the needed decks of cards. In 1578 there was already talk of a card factory in Mexico City.<sup>71</sup> Gálvez’s project changed the two-century-old system. On 12 August 1776, Charles III ordered the establishment of a playing card manufactory in the Andalusian minister’s place of birth. The origins of José de Gálvez’s keen interest in the playing cards state monopoly can be traced back to the *visita general* of New Spain, specifically to the reports written for Julián de Arriaga by accountant-general of the Indies, Tomás Ortiz Landázuri.<sup>72</sup>

During his first month in Mexico City, in September 1765, Gálvez created a centralized administration in charge of managing the viceroyalty’s playing card

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<sup>71</sup> For a history of the playing cards department of the royal treasury see María de los Ángeles Cuello Martinell, “La renta de los naipes en Nueva España,” *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 22, (1965): 231-335.

<sup>72</sup> Tomás Ortiz Landázuri to Julián de Arriaga, report, draft, Madrid, 24 Sep. and 20 Nov. 1768, AGI, Indiferente General (hereafter Indiferente), leg. 38, and Madrid, 12 Feb. 1770, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 39.

monopoly. He took this measure after finding out that a protégé (*criado*) of Viceroy Cruillas was leasing the playing cards department (*ramo*). The visitor-general rescinded the contract due to the “*vicioso e irritante*” state of the leased *ramo*.<sup>73</sup> The Crown approved his actions in 1766 and by mid 1767, it asked for some results. Gálvez had chosen merchant Juan José Echeveste as director-treasurer of the playing cards administration. In January 1768, the merchant-bureaucrat sent a report to Arriaga. The document painted in clear strokes the card market situation.<sup>74</sup> Despite the official prohibition of games of chance (*juegos de suerte y envite*), it recalled, there was a viceroyalty-wide consumption of approximately 100,000 card decks a year. Smuggled and forged cards were a serious problem that took up one third of the market. The difference in prices was alarming and damaging to the Crown monopoly: decks of cards acquired through illicit venues cost two or two and a half *reales*, while those produced by the state were more expensive (8 *reales* or 1 peso) and had a very low quality. This report, fully backed by Gálvez, proposed the elimination of the local factory and the importation of “fine playing-cards” (“*baraja fina*”) from Spain produced in the factories of Barcelona and San Sebastián. In the first years of the new policy, it proposed, the cards made in Spain had to be offered at the same price as smuggled cards. Overtime, the quality and price of the imported cards would be enough to banish the playing cards contraband.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> According to Ortiz Landázuri’s reports on the matter, Cruilla’s *criado* initiated a law suit against the authorities for the breaking of his leasing contract. The accountant-general disapproved Gálvez’s quick movements and thought the visitor-general thus demonstrated his poor grasp of crucial matters such as how the *ramo* had been administered over time and its historical yields.

<sup>74</sup> For Juan José de Echeveste please refer to chapter 1.

<sup>75</sup> Ortiz de Landázuri dismissed the idea of importing cards from Spain and advised that the best thing to do was to return to the leasing system or at least to a non-centralized mode of administration run by local authorities.



The idea of flooding the American markets with cards of (arguably) better quality made in Spain materialized with Gálvez's project for Macharaviaya.<sup>76</sup> The proposed system incorporated the private sector. The royal *cédula* of 12 August 1776 was in fact a ten-year contract with Félix Solesio, a Genoan card maker resident of the village of La Adrada in the province of Ávila. According to the edict, every aspect of the production fell under the Italian's care: within the next six months, Solesio had to set up a factory with the appropriate equipment and workers; in the following four months, the first 20,000 decks of cards had to be ready for shipping in the port of Málaga; from then on, the Italian had to produce 30,000 decks every quarter.<sup>77</sup> The *cédula* also ordered Solesio to set up paper mills to supply the manufactory.<sup>78</sup> In return, the Crown would buy all the cards Solesio delivered at the ports of Málaga or Cádiz. Charles III and Gálvez justified the measure as necessary and beneficial to the public and the state because it would curtail excessive foreign contraband and would end the lack of supply of official cards in

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<sup>76</sup> Another reason for this reform, according to Cuello, was the shortage and high price of paper in New Spain that in turn elevated the selling price of cards; see Cuello, "La renta de los naipes en Nueva España," 311.

<sup>77</sup> Charles III and José de Gálvez, royal *cédula* for the establishment of a playing card factory in Macharaviaya, San Ildefonso, 12 Aug. 1776, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 1750. The 1793 eulogy of Miguel de Gálvez, attributed to the minister's brother the start of business negotiations with Solesio since 1775; see "Eulogy of Miguel de Gálvez," 8. Solesio did not have sufficient money at the time of the contract. At the end of August 1776, he formed a company with two investors from Madrid, Manuel de Palacios and Francisco Suárez, that would only provide the capital (274,541 *reales de vellón*), and therefore would not get involved in the playing cards production process. Solesio would give half of the profits to his financial partners. In September 1777, the company dissolved at the offices of José de Gálvez's favorite notary, Antonio Ruseco. To pay his debt, Solesio promised to pay 24 *maravedíes de vellón* for each deck of cards shipped to the Americas from the city of Málaga. In July 1784 Solesio paid off his debt; see "Escritura de sesión que otorgaron don Manuel de Palacios y don Joseph Ignacio de Mendoza en favor del señor don Francisco Suárez Valdés, marzo 17 de 1779," AHPM, vol. 20451, fols. 618-620, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 119-121. I have not found documents that relate Solesio (or Palacios and Suárez) to Gálvez in an extra-official way, but the use of the Andalusian minister's notary in this private transaction could be an indicator of something.

<sup>78</sup> In 1784, Solesio bought a spacious country house and lands by the sea, relatively close to the city of Málaga, specifically in a place known as "Arroyo de Miel." He designed the property for the production of paper for the card manufactory. When British traveler Joseph Townsend visited Solesio in the second half of the 1780s, he calculated 12,000 acres of land and observed thousands of recently planted trees, and one paper mill; see his *A Journey through Spain in the Years 1786 and 1787*, 3:35-39.

the Americas. Lastly, the factory would remain under the sole protection and supervision of the minister of the Indies, who would name two officials: one direct subdelegate in charge of all the judicial aspects related to the plant and its employees, and one inspector (or *interventor*) to make sure the cards had a secret security marks, and the decks official seals, as well as to prevent the sale of Macharaviaya-made playing cards in Spain.<sup>79</sup>

On 25 October 1777 the Crown shipped to Mexico the first 15,000 sets of cards printed in the minister of the Indies' hometown; an annexed royal order mandated that, from then on, the viceroyalty had to stock up on playing cards made in Spain, forcing the factory in Mexico City to close. Bucareli executed the order in early 1778.<sup>80</sup> According to Santos Arrebola, the implementation of José de Gálvez's playing card factory project was beset with difficulties of every kind.<sup>81</sup> As Macharatungo cards began to arrive in the Americas, complaints returned to Spain about defects in manufacturing and low-quality material. Moreover, official retailers in the Indies soon accumulated stocks of unsold and defective card sets. A dismayed Gálvez requested the dispatch of samples to the Court. He proved the inferior quality of the paper employed and the poor printing. When the minister questioned Solesio, he asked for 3,000 arrobas of charcoal a year, sold to him at

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<sup>79</sup> As his subdelegate, Gálvez chose the governor of Málaga and as *interventor* he named José de Madrid. Santos Arrebola also mentions the appointment of a *comisario* in charge of receiving the cards in the port city of Málaga; see her *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 298. José de Madrid was a neighbor in Macharaviaya. After his appointment as *interventor* of the playing cards manufactory, in 1781, Gálvez signed a proxy letter that gave Madrid powers to administer his "haciendas, houses, and other real estate" in the village; see "El excelentísimo señor don Josef de Gálvez a don Josef de Madrid, para administrar en 19 de junio de 1781," Aranjuez, 19 Jun. 1781, AHPM, vol. 29412, fols. 245-246, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 128-129.

<sup>80</sup> Fabián de Fonseca and Carlos de Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda escrita por D. Fabian de Fonseca y D. Carlos de Urrutia, por orden del virey, Conde de Revillagigedo* (Mexico City: Imprenta de Vicente García Torres, 1849), 2:313-314. Cuello argues that New Spain kept producing cards but given that it was now mandatory to buy a great amount of Macharatungo sets, the majority of cards circulating in the market came from Spain; Cuello, "La renta de los naipes en Nueva España," 21.

<sup>81</sup> The rest of this paragraph and the entire next one are based on Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 299-301.

a good price, and from close to the location, in order to improve his production standards. Gálvez acquiesced to his request, but his decision fueled protests by the municipalities that surrounded Macharaviaya because they began to suffer an acute drop in their charcoal and firewood balance.<sup>82</sup>

As for the overstock of defective card sets, José de Gálvez ordered that they be sold at a lower price. In 1781, he requested a report from all the governments of the Indies about the conditions in which the cards arrived in the Americas. The survey results repeated the same old song: bad paper quality, defects of fabrication, and damages during transportation. Eventually, there was a glut of card packages at the ports of Málaga and Cádiz, too. Gálvez then ordered a study of the consumption patterns in each Spanish American region that revealed a problem in prices. Although each audiencia and viceroyalty managed different prices, these were always higher than those of smuggled cards. José de Gálvez held Solesio, and the other minor authorities in the monopoly, answerable for the disorder. Perhaps hoping that new measures would resolve everything, the Crown renewed Solesio's contract in 1781, and again in 1789, and 1798. Almost two decades later, in 1815, the Italian's sons, who were suffering the consequences of the Spanish American wars of independence, and were plagued by debts, received a royal order that opened the playing cards market, and therefore suppressed the state monopoly. The Solesios closed the factory, and it was sold in public auction. A British traveler, Joseph Townsend, touring the Málaga region in the 1780s, summed up the terms of Solesio's "advantageous contract," as well as some of the difficulties confronted by the system designed by Gálvez:

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<sup>82</sup> The original *cédula* had ordered Solesio to negotiate with the appropriate jurisdictions in order to get charcoal and firewood from their communal lands (the *montes de sus communes*).

In his [Solesio's] card manufactory, in honor of the Marquis of Sonora, he employs two hundred people, to fulfill his engagements with the minister, being bound to supply a given quantity for the service of the colonies. There he delivers at two reals the pack, and government sells them in America for twenty, that is, for a dollar, or four schillings sterling, although better might be had for less than two pence half-penny, or one real. In consequence of this extortion, the demand falls so short, that there remain undisposed of four thousand boxes, each containing four thousand packs, yet the contractor continues to deliver the same quantity as usual, receiving monthly on account, through [merchant José] Martinis of Málaga, one hundred and fifteenth thousand reals, or eleven hundred and fifty pounds.<sup>83</sup>

In spite of the mountains of useless cards rotting in the Spanish ports and inside the monopoly warehouses in the Americas, of colonial consumers buying low-quality products at high prices, and of the charcoal shortages in Macharaviaya's neighboring towns, the remittances to Spain generated by the playing card *ramo* in its overseas possessions increased over the years.<sup>84</sup> For the Andalusian minister's place of birth, the playing card plant was a great success in terms of employment. Townsend reported of 200 workers. The truth is that initially 60 skilled foreign families (around 200 individuals) immigrated to the town to take care of the manufactory operations while the locals learned the trade. In the mid-twentieth century local people still talked about how Italian artists had come to teach their ancestors the card making techniques.<sup>85</sup> By 1793, however, only two foreigners were left at Macharaviaya, meaning that the plant had achieved the desired native majority in a workforce that benefitted in salaries and wages

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<sup>83</sup> Townsend, *A Journey Through Spain in the Years 1786 and 1787*, 3:39-40.

<sup>84</sup> See Cuello's numbers for New Spain in her "La renta de los naipes en Nueva España," 327-328.

<sup>85</sup> Ángeles Rubio Argüelles after visiting the town in the 1940s; see her *Un ministro de Carlos III: D. José de Gálvez y Gallardo, Marqués de la Sonora, ministro general de Indias, visitador de Nueva España* (Málaga: Diputación Provincial, 1949), 10.

with 15,000 to 18,000 reales distributed every week.<sup>86</sup> After the Crown closed the factory momentarily in 1791, and then in 1815, when it shutdown entirely, there were protests in Macharaviaya against the threat of unemployment.<sup>87</sup> Gálvez had successfully used his power to incorporate his village into the Atlantic economy. His and his brothers' patronage did not stop there. The other examples had no external repercussions, however, as they were purely local in nature.

Macharatungos attested notable changes in their village's civil and religious infrastructure during the few years the Gálvez family was powerful. Just outside the town, a small, square tower-like structure has a commemorative plaque dated January 1786.<sup>88</sup> The sign reminds the passer-by that after forty years of absence, in 1785, Miguel de Gálvez returned to his "*patria*" in an effort to recover his health. Indeed by that year, the lawyer had been working as *togado* minister at the Council of War for a little more than a decade.<sup>89</sup> His 80-day stay at his place of birth turned him into Macharaviaya's greatest patron. While there, the inscription attests, the brother of the minister of the Indies presided over the conclusion of the works on the parochial church; embellished the town with three public fountains, a laundry with roof, and a butcher shop; in addition, he paved all the streets which were now suitable for the transit of carriages; finally, two new

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<sup>86</sup> "Eulogy of Miguel de Gálvez," 8. The royal *cédula* for the establishment of the factory allowed Solesio to choose his employees freely, under the condition that they were Spaniards, particularly from Macharaviaya.

<sup>87</sup> Molina García, *Historia de la villa de Macharaviaya*, 59 and Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 301.

<sup>88</sup> The majority of authors agree that this monument is a *calvario* (a station of the cross) used for religious purposes. Pictures from Holy Week celebrations in the 1920s show a religious procession stopping next to it. Priest Molina García, however, rightly points out the non-religious nature of the inscription in the plaque, signaling, therefore, that it was just a civil commemorative monument to celebrate the Gálvez family's patronage. For a full transcription of the inscription see Molina García, *Historia de la villa de Macharaviaya*, 88-89, and 69 for the picture of 1920s.

<sup>89</sup> Indeed, Miguel de Gálvez left his job as *alcalde de casa y corte* to join the Council of War in January 1774; "Toma de razón de los señores ministros de la sala y subalternos de primera clase principia en el año de 1668," AHN, Consejos, bk. 1170, fols. 370-370v.

roads had been built, one for horses and the other for carriages, both connected Macharaviaya with the “general road” to Málaga. In a town that suffered from chronic thirst—the Iberos ravine at the foot of the town’s hill did not carry water during the summer—<sup>90</sup> the three fountains with their aqueducts were surely a great benefit, but perhaps the public work that brought greater joy for the population was the complete renovation of the local parochial church of San Jacinto under the auspices of Matías, José, Miguel, Antonio, and Bernardo de Gálvez.<sup>91</sup>

The brothers commissioned a friend-priest, José Ortega y Monroy, to direct and administer the entire project. For the design, Ortega hired Miguel del Castillo, a prominent Malaguenian architect at the time.<sup>92</sup> A marble plaque inside the church, dated in 1785, mentions that the funds to build the church came from the playing card factory and the personal wealth (*caudal*) of the *señores* Gálvez.<sup>93</sup> Molina García reveals, however, that the project had additional benefactors. The Bishop of Málaga, José Molina Larios, donated 300,000 *reales*. In addition, the Crown also contributed through the reallocation of funds from the cathedral chapter of the city of Málaga. A royal order communicated by José de Gálvez asked this religious corporation to contribute with 6,000 *reales* every month, starting in January 1784 up to the completion of the church (achieved the following year).<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Pérez de Colosía, “Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada,” 23. According to the “Eulogy of Miguel de Gálvez” (8), before the construction of the public fountains and laundry, women had to carry water from a distant well and walk to the deepest point of a valley to wash their family’s clothes.

<sup>91</sup> It seems that the new church completely replaced the older, smaller religious building, where the privileged —“VIP”— seat of the Gálvez family (discussed above) was located.

<sup>92</sup> The praise on Castillo comes from Molina García, *Historia de la villa de Macharaviaya*, 71n66.

<sup>93</sup> Marble commemorative plaque inside the church dated in 1785, my photograph.

<sup>94</sup> Molina García, *Historia de la villa de Macharaviaya*, 67-68. The author also reproduces José de Gálvez’s royal order dated at El Pardo on 22 Mar. 1784 and the cathedral chapter’s response. In his letter the minister reminds the *cabildo catedralicio* that he, his brothers, and nephew had sponsored the church

Santos Arrebola remarks that the new religious building had the dimensions of a cathedral if put in perspective with the number of inhabitants in the village.<sup>95</sup>

Demonstrating the *regalismo* of the times, a royal coat of arms of Charles III crowns the church's entrance. In the past, eight statues representing the Gálvez brothers, their mother, and two unidentified relatives stood in the small atrium. The white marble sculptures rest today inside and outside the family's burial chamber.<sup>96</sup> The Gálvez brothers also financed the construction of a crypt below the church's main floor. The large burial site (its size almost equals the church's surface above) has a division to separate the vestibule from the family's private final resting place. José de Gálvez tomb and his mother's niche, both located on the right of the main altar, are the chamber's emblematic monuments.<sup>97</sup> The sobriety, simplicity, and gloomy atmosphere of the crypt must have contrasted with the originally sumptuous decoration of the church's interior, which is spacious and well illuminated. The original ornamentation included a variety of objects made of precious metals, rich textiles, and, arguably, paintings from seventeenth-century master Bartolomé Murillo. Each of the Gálvez brothers dedicated and financed an altar in honor of the saints after whom they were named (Saint Michael, Saint Matthew, Saint Anthony, and, of course, Saint Joseph). Bernardo de Gálvez seems to have donated a number of religious objects of gold and silver. During the Liberal Triennium (1820-1823), the Crown confiscated many of these treasures to finance the

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project with their own money. The Malagueño corporation readily complied with the order and thanked Gálvez for being a "*padre y protector de esta patria*" (dated on 16 Apr. 1784).

<sup>95</sup> Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 294-295.

<sup>96</sup> The statues show the Gálvezes from their hips up. The mayor of the town told me in 2006 that in his youth, children played with the unattached heads. Who knows, he wondered, if the persons in charge of the restoration of the statues attached the right head to the right body.

<sup>97</sup> The size of the Gálvez crypt and its prominence in the whole church complex earned the nickname of "Macharatumbos" to the inhabitants of the town, according to Molina García, *Historia de la villa de Macharaviaya*, 19.

Spanish army's efforts to keep the Americas attached to the Empire. The greatest damage to the church's decorative and artistic treasures, however, occurred in the twentieth century during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). An anticlerical group ransacked the church; practically all the original objects of devotion and decoration were destroyed or lost.<sup>98</sup>

The final example of hometown favoritism on behalf of Macharaviaya performed by José de Gálvez and his brothers was the founding of two elementary schools (*escuelas de primeras letras*), one for boys and the other for girls. In 1783 a royal *cédula* authorized the institutions' establishment and approved the related norms.<sup>99</sup> With his signature, the king was only confirming a *fait accompli*. The *cédula* itself narrated that for some years José de Gálvez had been supplying funds for such a school for boys. Some students had graduated successfully and, in consequence, the minister, his relatives, and other village notables organized a foundation to secure the school's permanence, create another one for girls, and give monthly awards to stimulate the children's learning. The organization could be joined by public, voluntary subscription.<sup>100</sup> For "some time," the royal document continued, all the boys and girls from Macharaviaya and its neighboring towns attended "these schools" (implying, therefore, that the school for girls had been opened, too). Despite the royal *cédula*'s praise for the central role of José de

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 76. Molina García includes an inventory of the original church's treasures in 92-93. Another victim of the Spanish Civil War was the parochial archive.

<sup>99</sup> Charles III and José de Gálvez, "Real cédula y reglamento para las escuelas, premios y socorros establecidos en la villa de Macharaviaya," Madrid, 6 Jan. 1783, reproduced in Rubio Argüelles, *Un ministro de Carlos III*, appendix 1, 49-58.

<sup>100</sup> According to Santos Arrebola each Gálvez and twenty other contributors paid eight annual pesos to support the school. The foundation's number of contributors varied each year. The Malagueño historian identifies 1782 as the year with more subscriptions, that included a donation of 250 pesos by Pablo Ortega, district magistrate (*alcalde mayor*) of Villa Alta, in Oaxaca. Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 304.



Gálvez in the schooling project, Malagueño historians and a 1793 biography of Miguel de Gálvez maintain that the minister at the Council of War was in fact the chief architect and manager of the school project.<sup>101</sup> Surprisingly, the youngest sibling of Miguel and José, Antonio, was the main benefactor in terms of money as he had given from his personal funds 300,000 *reales* (15,000 *pesos fuertes*).<sup>102</sup>

The king's aid for both elementary schools came from the royal playing cards factory, which had to participate with 300 *ducados* (approximately 413 *pesos*) a year. It is interesting to note how the different development projects in the village complemented each other: the schools promised to provide regular maintenance to the town's fountains and water pipes that not only benefited the villagers but also were essential for the production of the manufactory. The *cédula* gave ample powers to a board (*junta*) to administer the school resources, employed to pay the salaries of the two teachers (one man and one woman), supplies, and the student monthly awards.<sup>103</sup> If at the end of the year, there were enough funds, the elementary schools turned into an "agricultural bank" that could extend low-interest loans to peasants in need. Finally, if the project progressed as was expected, the schools of Macharaviaya would pay college scholarships for poor pupils interested in pursuing a professional career in law, commerce, the military, or the

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid. and "Eulogy of Miguel de Gálvez," 8.

<sup>102</sup> In the *cédula* the amount of Antonio de Gálvez's donation was not disclosed, it only acknowledged that it had been "generous." Santos Arrebola provides the 300,000 *reales* number in her, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 311.

<sup>103</sup> The schools' director, the mayors of the villages of Macharaviaya and Benaque, the parochial priest (alternating yearly with a *beneficiado*, a non-parish priest), the *síndico del común*, an accountant (the *interventor* of the playing cards manufactory), and a secretary (the male teacher) integrated the *junta*. According to the rules outlined by the 1783 royal *cédula*, the director could be elected in a popular vote, *but* the candidate had to be a native of Macharaviaya, *and* a member of the Gálvez family was preferred. The first director was, not surprisingly, Miguel de Gálvez and the mayor of Macharaviaya presided over the meetings in his absence. Every first Sunday of the month, the board had to meet to address the schools' needs and to examine and give prizes for boys and girls.

arts. Around 1793, 150 to 200 children from Macharaviaya and its neighboring villages attended the schools and, even more interesting for this research, 47 graduated young men had gone to “different honorable *destinos* (jobs) in Spain and *the Americas*.”<sup>104</sup>

No doubt being a Macharatungo became an asset in those times. I have found evidence that José de Gálvez benefitted with a variety of positions all kinds of his fellow countrymen. In his study of Pope Pius II, Hilary found that 14.9% of 820 appointments recorded in bulls during his tenure corresponded to the prelate’s Sienese compatriots and relatives.<sup>105</sup> Unfortunately I do not have reliable numbers on the totality of positions in government distributed by José de Gálvez or his brothers to Macharatungos but there is evidence sprinkled here and there, such as the school graduates mentioned above. In another example, the register of passengers to the Indies shows that a lad from Macharaviaya, Matías Fernández Gallardo, traveled in the retinue of the newly-appointed Bishop of Sonora (Fray Antonio de los Reyes, a man of Gálvez from the visitation) to work as his page.<sup>106</sup> To cite one more case, architect José Gutiérrez, director of the construction of Guadalajara’s massive Casa de la Misericordia (today popularly known as Hospicio Cabañas, and officially named Instituto Cultural Cabañas), was born in Benaque and crossed the Atlantic as a child under the protection of Matías de Gálvez.<sup>107</sup>

## 2) Málaga

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<sup>104</sup> “Eulogy of Miguel de Gálvez,” 9, my emphasis.

<sup>105</sup> Hilary, “The Nepotism of Pope Pius II,” 34.

<sup>106</sup> “Expediente de información y licencia de pasajero a Indias de personas al servicio de fray Antonio [de los Reyes], obispo de Sonora, a Sonora,” AGI, Contratación, leg. 5525, n. 8, r. 5.

<sup>107</sup> According to two articles delving on the work of art historian Adriana Ruiz Razura; see “Macharatungo y padre del neoclásico mexicano,” *YMalaga.com Periódico Digital*, 25 Jun. 2010, available online at: <http://www.ymalaga.com/somos+101//andalucia-malaga-una-conferencia-destacara-la-figura-del-arquitecto.43214.html>, and Celia Durán, “Un libro devela al discreto artífice de la arquitectura tapatía del siglo XIX,” *La Jornada Jalisco*, 18 Aug. 2011, available online at: <http://archivo.lajornadajalisco.com.mx/2011/08/18/index.php?section=opinion&article=002a1pol>

The extension of José de Gálvez's *patria chica* was larger than Macharaviaya: it embraced the totality of the province of Málaga and its coastal capital. The port city benefited enormously from the Andalusian minister's favoritism. Santos Arrebola's *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado en Málaga* (1999) is entirely devoted to the topic. Before pursuing his career in law, Gálvez attended the seminar in Málaga. As an attorney in Madrid, from the mid-1740s to the late 1750s, he represented the city's *cabildo* (town council) and the interests of Malagueños in a number of judicial cases.<sup>108</sup> 1776 witnessed a veritable ballet of favors exchanged between the city and José de Gálvez and his brother Miguel. What bears attention is that the ex-visitor-general's first accomplishment on behalf of Málaga occurred on 11 January 1776, just a few weeks before occupying the office of minister of the Indies.<sup>109</sup> On that date, the king issued a royal *cédula* creating the so-called *Montepío de Viñeros*, a fund to support the productive activities of Malagueño farmers (mainly wine growers) with low-interest loans. The early timing suggests that José and Miguel had been preparing the project from their respective offices at the Councils of War and the Indies and War.<sup>110</sup> Grape vines were the chief crop of the province and wine was the most important export, while Northern Europe was the port's leading market.<sup>111</sup> Chronic debt and lack of export venues in times of war constituted the local producers' foremost difficulties. The *Montepío* targeted the first problem by

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<sup>108</sup> Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 47-50.

<sup>109</sup> Julián de Arriaga died in office on 28 Jan. 1776; Gálvez replaced him a few days later, on 30 January.

<sup>110</sup> Indeed, Santos Arrebola cites two regents of the Málaga's town council writing in early 1776 that the city was well aware of the "*incansable desvelo, constancia y celo patriótico*" of the Gálvez siblings for the attainment of the *Montepío*'s grace; *ibid.*, 120-121.

<sup>111</sup> The *Montepío*'s complete name gives a good idea of the variety of crops produced in Málaga: *Real Montepío de Socorro a los cosecheros de vinos, aguardiente, pasas, higos, almendra y aceite del Obispado de Málaga*.

disbursing four million *reales de vellón* a year in loans.<sup>112</sup> As we shall see later, José de Gálvez took on the task of diversifying the market for the provinces' products.

The *Montepío* was established in January, a month later the Malagueño authorities hurried to grant the new minister of the Indies and his brother Miguel the position of *regidores vitalicios* (regents for life) of the port city, with the highest honorific seats at the town council's meetings.<sup>113</sup> Three years later, in 1779, and as the sibling's favors for the city increased, José and Miguel de Gálvez went from *regidores vitalicios* to *perpetuos*, indicating that they could pass on their positions to their descendants. From the time of the original appointment, it was obvious that they could not attend the *cabildo* meetings—Miguel lived in Madrid and José followed Charles III's peripatetic court. In May 1776, therefore, the brothers named Joaquín Pizarro y Despital, a *regidor perpetuo* already, as their representative in Málaga.<sup>114</sup> From their residence at the Spanish court, however, the Gálvez brothers attended the city's needs and concerns.

The Malagueño *cabildo* memorialized the creation of the wine grower's *Montepío* with a painting and the minting of eight gold and silver medals. Designed by Jerónimo Antonio Gil,<sup>115</sup> the commemorative medals were such a success that more had to be coined. Joaquín de Inza's painting depicts the moment in which the Gálvez brothers present the royal *cédula* before the king. Charles III is seated high at the throne. Two

<sup>112</sup> According to "Eulogy of Miguel de Gálvez," 6.

<sup>113</sup> The king approved the brothers' appointment on 30 Apr. 1776. The seats were located to the right (José de Gálvez) and the left (Miguel) of the provincial governor; Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 121.

<sup>114</sup> "Poder otorgado por el ilustrísimo señor don Josef y el señor don Miguel de Gálvez para tomar una posesión en 6 de mayo de 1776," AHPM, vol. 18668, fols. 70-71 in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 117-118. In his youth, Gálvez had collaborated with Pizarro's father, José Pizarro y Eslava. Pizarro y Eslava was the agent of the port city's *cabildo* in Madrid and he assigned young lawyer José de Gálvez his first important judicial cases; see Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 48.

<sup>115</sup> We met Jerónimo Antonio Gil in chapter 1. Let us remember that, in the early 1780s, he became the first director of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Carlos in Mexico City.

Greek nymphs are at his feet: one represents Málaga and the other the city's agricultural hinterland. Facing this group, Miguel de Gálvez, dressed with the black robe of a lawyer, holds a box containing the *Montepío* medals with his left hand and with the right he leads the way to the monarch to his brother. José, wearing a full military red outfit, is holding the royal *cédula* that Charles III is about to sign. The siblings are surrounded by kneeling male and female peasants symbolizing gratitude from the Malagueño people.<sup>116</sup>

José de Gálvez's plan to diversify the available markets for Spain's exports in general, and Málaga's wines in particular, was his famous *Reglamento de Comercio Libre* of 1778. With the opening of a number of Spanish ports to trade with all the Spanish American colonies (with the exception of New Spain), more than two hundred years of a fleet system monopolized by the merchants of Seville and Cádiz came to an end. Málaga, along with Alicante, Barcelona, Cartagena, Gijón, La Coruña, Los Alfaques de Tortosa, Palma de Mallorca, Santander, and Santa Cruz de Tenerife, joined Cádiz's and Seville's exclusive club of imperial commercial exchange.

From the first *comercio libre* laws of 1765 that opened several Spanish ports to Caribbean trade, the idea of expanding commercial freedom in Málaga had been in the air and in actual petitions to the Crown.<sup>117</sup> Even before becoming visitor-general of New Spain, in the late 1750s and early 1760s, José de Gálvez discussed the problem in his

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<sup>116</sup> According to a chronicler from the Canary Islands, the ceremony in which Miguel and José de Gálvez presented the *Montepío* medals to the king occurred on 8 March 1777; Guerra y Peña, *Memorias*, 418. Santos Arrebola includes the original written description of both the painting and the medal, and the sketches and black and white pictures of both in her, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 115 and 359-362. The painting decorates the book cover of José Miguel Morales Folguera's, María Isabel Pérez de Colosía Rodríguez's, Marion Reder Gadow's, and Siro Villas Tinoco's *Los Gálvez de Macharaviaya* (1991). In the painting, José de Gálvez seems to have strabismus, but I have not found any reference that indicates this was the case.

<sup>117</sup> Santos Arrebola writes that the impact of the 1765 free trade law in Málaga's export economy was negligible and for that reason Malagueños were interested in exploring other markets; see her *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 144.

*Discurso y reflexiones de un vasallo sobre la decadencia de nuestras Indias españolas*. In his treatise, he used Málaga as a case-study to argue against Spain's restrictive commercial policies represented by Cádiz's commercial monopoly, and in favor of the opening of alternative ports. Allowing Málaga to export its products to the Indies, Gálvez wrote, would benefit not only the wine growers and other exporters, but would stimulate the creation of a silk and taffeta industry. He condemned the fact that foreigners controlled Cádiz's trade and argued in favor of bringing back commerce to Spanish hands.<sup>118</sup>

Santos Arrebola provides a fascinating account of how the minister of the Indies carefully guided the Malagueño town council in its writing of free trade petitions to the Crown during the couple of years that preceded the October 1778 *Reglamento de Comercio Libre*.<sup>119</sup> José de Gálvez offered advice in terms of the topics that their pleas should cover, criticized and returned drafts, and even sent reference materials written by more powerful merchant communities in Spain, such as that of Santander. The more effective petitions reached the desk of the Andalusian minister, the best chances to get the king's approval of his projected reform. Moreover, the close partnership between Gálvez and the town council allowed the creation of a merchant mining guild in Málaga. The 1778 *Reglamento* suggested the creation of *consulados* in the newly "habilitated ports"—as the free trade ports were called—in order to advance local agriculture and industry, as well as to extend the knowledge and skills necessary for a successful transoceanic

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<sup>118</sup> José de Gálvez, "Discurso y reflexiones de un vasallo sobre la decadencia de nuestras Indias españolas," *La política americana de José de Gálvez: según su "Discurso y Reflexiones de un Vasallo,"* ed. Luis Navarro García (Málaga: Algazara, 1998), 146-147. For more about Gálvez's *opera prima* refer to chapter 5, n. 62.

<sup>119</sup> Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 146-149.

exchange with the colonies. To attain this objective, José de Gálvez first recommended that the *cabildo* write a report covering the history of an old merchant guild funded in the 1630s that had failed to survive in the Andalusian port city. After the approval of the 1778 *Reglamento*, the minister ordered the Malagueño town council to write a draft of the ordinances that would rule the internal life of the city's merchant guild.<sup>120</sup> The royal *cédula* for the creation of the merchant corporation did not materialize until 1785, however.<sup>121</sup>

Also related to the new status of Málaga as a “habilitated port” in the Atlantic trade economy, Gálvez supported the creation of a joint-stock merchant company and a school of maritime pilots. The idea of a merchant company responded to the shipping needs of the playing card factory in Macharaviaya. In 1779, the minister of the Indies signed a contract between the Crown and the trading company of San Ginés, a thriving merchant house from Cádiz which had recently established a branch in Málaga. The five-year agreement granted the company the monopoly of the shipping not only of Macharaviaya's cards but also of paper for the tobacco factories in New Spain.<sup>122</sup> When the exclusive contract ended, Gálvez supported the creation of the *Compañía de Navieros de Málaga*. Financed by local stockholders, it enjoyed the cards and paper transportation

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 181-184.

<sup>121</sup> According to the statutes of the new *consulado*, the minister of the Indies was the ultimate authority if grave matters transpired; no doubt, Gálvez wanted to have influence in the internal matters of the institution. Interestingly enough, the old Jesuit complex housed the initial offices of the guild, together with those of the wine grower's *Montepío*, and the *Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País*—an organization in which Miguel de Gálvez was very active; *ibid.*, 191-192 and 201.

<sup>122</sup> Aurora Gámez Amián writes that the owner of San Ginés was a personal friend of Gálvez who in return promised to establish two factories in Macharaviaya, one of hats and the other of stockings. Apparently, these additional manufactories never came into being, but, as Gámez Amián ventures to say, it would have made tiny Macharaviaya the most industrialized town in Spain in per capita terms; see her “Las grandes compañías malagueñas para el comercio con América (1785-1794),” *Revista de Indias* 51, no. 191 (1991): 62.

monopoly until 1790.<sup>123</sup> Finally, almost at the end of his life, in March 1787, José de Gálvez obtained Charles III's approval for the founding of the San Telmo Royal College for the training of maritime pilots in Málaga.<sup>124</sup> The college's royal *cédula* sustained there was a great need for navigation specialists after the opening of trade with the Indies in 1778. San Telmo had the capacity to recruit one hundred and fifty young students.<sup>125</sup> The first director of the school was a friend of the Gálvez family, the same person that had directed the construction works of the parochial church in Macharaviaya, priest José Ortega y Monroy.<sup>126</sup>

Infrastructural works with the Gálvez's signature on them proliferated in Málaga, as well. In 1782 Bishop José de Molina Lario sponsored the building of the aqueduct of San Telmo to bring water to the city. It was finished in 1784, when Molina had died. José de Gálvez contributed with 4,000 reales from his pocket to add watermills to the aqueduct in order to guarantee the port's flour supply.<sup>127</sup> Again, Málaga's new status as an Atlantic port demanded better roads to communicate with satellite cities interested in exporting their products to the Americas, such as Antequera and Vélez-Málaga. The funds allocated for the Antequera road must have been meager because they evaporated in the project design. After the Malagueño *cabildo* received the bad news, Miguel de

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<sup>123</sup> Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 207.

<sup>124</sup> Charles III and José de Gálvez, "Real Cédula de S.M. expedida en el Pardo a 19 de marzo de 1787, para la fundación de este Real Colegio de San Telmo y señalamiento de la consignación de 250 mil reales de vellón anuales para su subsistencia," reproduced in Rubio Argüelles, *Un ministro de Carlos III*, appendix 4, 100-102 and 109-156 for the ordinances. There was a navigation college with the same name in Seville. According to the royal *cédula* of 1787, the Málaga San Telmo college would enjoy the same privileges as its sister institution.

<sup>125</sup> A hundred of the students recruited had to be orphans, or children from poor families (preferably the sons of pilots); the final third of the pupils could come from well-to-do families who had to pay a school fee of four *reales* a day; Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 206-207 and 213.

<sup>126</sup> Pedro Ortega y Monroy, his brother, was a man of José de Gálvez as we shall see in chapter 5, n. 174.

<sup>127</sup> Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 259-260. A plaque written in Latin attached to a water distribution point in the aqueduct recognizes Gálvez's patronage.



Gálvez came out with the idea of organizing a public subscription and expressed his confidence in “the generosity and spirit of his beloved compatriots that would never let the Gálvezes down.”<sup>128</sup> Next, the minister of the Indies sent a circular-letter to all the towns that would benefit from the road, prompting them to participate voluntarily in cash, kind, or with laborers.<sup>129</sup> The works began in the early 1780s, but the road could not be completed until 1788.

Miguel de Gálvez also devised an astute plan to finance the Vélez-Málaga route that included the branches to Macharaviaya (mentioned above).<sup>130</sup> Again, it is possible to observe how the different Gálvez-made institutions supported each other: the *Montepío de Viñeros*’ mission statement included the promotion of roads to transport the wine grower’s products to Málaga. The brother of the minister of the Indies thus proposed to strip the *Malagueño* cathedral chapter from one of its sources of funding: a Crown concession of one fourth of a real (a *cuartillo*) for each *arroba* of wine, raisins, or oil shipped out of the province. Gálvez suggested that the *cuartillo* grant should go instead to the *Montepío*’s road fund. In July 1782, the monarch approved the proposal and allocated the concession “in perpetuity” to the *Montepío* despite complaints from the cathedral chapter. According to the plan, when the road was completed, the funds would be used

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<sup>128</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, 262.

<sup>129</sup> The town council of Málaga contributed with 300,000 *reales*; the wine growers’ *Montepío*, 100,000; Antequera, 66,000; Bishop Molina Larios donated 90,000 distributed in three payments; and the cathedral chapter of Málaga loaned 45,000; *ibid.*, 262-263.

<sup>130</sup> Soledad Santos Arrebola affirms that the real motive for building the road branches to Macharaviaya was Félix Solesio’s request for better infrastructure to transport his loads of playing cards and materials to and from Málaga; *ibid.*, 302.

for its maintenance. At the end of 1787 the route that communicated Vélez-Málaga, Macharaviaya, and the provincial capital was ready.<sup>131</sup>

In the city of Málaga itself Miguel de Gálvez promoted, at the residents' request, a park for promenades (an *alameda*) to embellish the city. The funding for this project was again very ingenious: a voluntary public subscription among the neighbors that would benefit from the development added to the rent of new snack, fruit, and fish stands for sellers who previously sold their products in scattered huts on the beach.<sup>132</sup> Finally, the Gálvez brothers also lobbied for Crown support in infrastructural projects addressed to improve the capacity of the port of Málaga, such as the dredging of the port—a serious problem due to the sediment deposited by the river Guadalmedina.<sup>133</sup> The patronage exhibited by José and Miguel de Gálvez on behalf of Málaga was impressive; it was different, however, from the hometown favoritism exerted over their natal village. With the exception of the creation of the *Montepío de Viñeros* in early 1776, which clearly looks like a case of favoritism extended to their home region, it is likely that the rest of the Gálvez brothers' activities in favor of Málaga were part of their job as *regidores*

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<sup>131</sup> Another source of funding to build the road to Vélez-Málaga that Miguel de Gálvez proposed was the initiation of a housing development in reclaimed land in Málaga (the barrio of La Caleta is located there today). For all the road financing issues see *ibid.*, 206, 270, 281-283 and 302. The cathedral of Málaga is famous for its unfinished state. Malagueños affectionately call it "*La Manquita*" ("The One-Armed Lady") because, despite its massive construction, it only has one tower. I have a hypothesis: that the Gálvez brothers are responsible for the uncompleted state of the cathedral. Works stopped in 1782 and a plaque at the base of the unfinished second tower reads that it was never built because the funds were used to help the United States obtain independence from the British. Modern Malagueño historians argue, however, that the greatest loss of cathedral construction funding came from the diversion of resources to the road works of Antequera and Vélez-Málaga. According to Santos Arrebola, the *cuartillo* concession on provincial exports was precisely an endowment assigned for the completion of the cathedral; *ibid.* 281-282. The road to Vélez-Málaga, with its Macharatungo branches, was crucial for the development plans the Gálvez sibling's had for their hometown. Perhaps to silence critics, in 1784 José de Gálvez ordered engravings of the cathedral to be sold to the public in New Spain in order to collect funds to finish it; this happened exactly when his brother Matías was the viceroy in Mexico; *ibid.*, 283.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 267. The Alameda of Málaga is actually a tree-lined avenue today.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 270-275.

*perpetuos*. Santos Arrebola writes that during the first two years after their designation, the *cabildo* assigned “everyday” (or “normal,” if you wish) tasks to José and Miguel de Gálvez as if they were councilmen residing in Málaga. In 1778 their specific assignments disappeared, and therefore she argues that their appointments became purely honorific in nature from that time on. Yet, she concedes, both Gálvezes were well aware of the city’s problems and “they addressed them directly and tried to find solutions.”<sup>134</sup> I would say that, through very informal channels if you wish (that is, perhaps not following the long-established *cabildo* protocols), José and Miguel de Gálvez were simply carrying out typical *regidor* duties. One final point on the 1778 *Reglamento de Comercio Libre*: this case is also different because José de Gálvez pressured the *cabildo* to produce a high-quality petition of free trade that would help him advance the Empire-wide new policy.

### **The Ascending Career of Matías de Gálvez and Nineteenth-Century Accusations of Nepotism against His Powerful Brother**

Permit me to return to the issue of nepotism after a long digression on hometown favoritism. No doubt Matías de Galvez and his descendants were the side of the family that thrived most under the minister of the Indies’ protection. The oldest brother, Matías Diego was born on 24 July 1717.<sup>135</sup> During the second half of the 1740s, when José and Miguel had already left Macharaviaya to pursue their law careers, he was still living there. In October 1745 he married a relative (his *prima segunda y tercera*), María Josefa de Madrid, and their first child Bernardo de Gálvez y Madrid was born in the same village a year later. In 1748, María Josefa died while giving birth to their second son,

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>135</sup> He was named after his maternal grandfather, Matías Gallardo y Eslava.

José.<sup>136</sup> The widowed primogenitor of the Gálvez family re-married in 1750. Matías's new wife, Ana de Zayas y Ramos, was also his relative.<sup>137</sup> When his younger son José died in 1756, Gálvez and Zayas were living in Madrid; the couple's only child did not survive infancy either.<sup>138</sup> Zayas, she declared years later, raised Bernardo as her own son.<sup>139</sup>

Matías de Gálvez's contributions to the glory of his family in the late 1770s and early 1780s occurred in the military arena. Usually, a career in the armed forces began very early in life but it is hard to determine exactly when Matías initiated his. His martial credentials do not figure in his first recorded occupation. In 1757, aged forty years, he began to work as administrator (*mayordomo*) of the hacienda *La Gorvorana* in the isle of Tenerife.<sup>140</sup> For the next twenty years (up to 1778), most of his life elapsed in the Canary Islands. His promotions in the army, as well as in the bureaucracy, occurred there. In 1771, he obtained the coveted employment of "principal administrator" of the tobacco revenue and also rose to the rank of captain of artillery of the provincial militias.<sup>141</sup> In early 1775, Matías traveled to the Iberian Peninsula and a ship sailing from Málaga

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<sup>136</sup> Copy of marriage certificate of Matías de Gálvez and Josefa Gallardo, Macharaviaya, 20 Oct. 1745; and last will of Matías de Gálvez, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 18 Mar. 1775, both in "Pruebas Carlos III Bernardo de Gálvez 1777," fols. 12-12v and 32. In the marriage certificate, Matías de Gálvez and his wife appear as relatives of "tercer" and "cuarto grado."

<sup>137</sup> Ana de Zayas was his "*pariente en doble grado de consanguinidad*" according to Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1235.

<sup>138</sup> Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 34.

<sup>139</sup> "Copia del testamento de la Excelentísima Señora Doña Ana de Zayas, Virreina de México" (hereafter "Zayas 1785 Testament"), Mexico City, 23 Dec. 1785, reproduced in Rubio Argüelles, *Un ministro de Carlos III*, appendix 9, 193-195.

<sup>140</sup> *La Gorvorana* belonged to the Marquisate of Breña (descendants of the first conquistadors of the Canary Islands). Matías de Gálvez was pretty old by the time of his first recorded occupation. Perhaps he obtained this job through his brother's patronage.

<sup>141</sup> According to Canarian chronicler Lope Antonio de la Guerra y Peña, this position had such a good salary that it beat the income received by many *mayorazgo*-holders in the island; Guerra y Peña, *Memorias*, 282-283. Thanks to this valuable source (Guerra y Peña's *Memorias*), I am offering entirely new evidence on the life of Matías de Gálvez in the Canary Islands.

brought him back to Tenerife in December.<sup>142</sup> He returned with the appointment of governor of Santa Cruz's Paso Alto fortress and the higher rank of lieutenant colonel of infantry. Canarian chronicler, Lope Antonio de la Guerra y Peña, explained that when the former fortress governor died, members of the islander elite presented their merit and nobility certificates to the Crown to apply for the job, yet Matías had got it thanks to the "protection of his brothers," the councilors of War and Indies, Miguel and José. Nevertheless, De la Guerra added, people loved Matías because, in his times as *mayordomo* of La Gorvorana, he had taught the locals how to cultivate grapevines and, in 1775, had carried with him good quality vine shoots and the first stocking-loom of the Canary Islands.<sup>143</sup> In November 1776, when José de Gálvez already occupied his office at the Ministry of the Indies, his older brother received the appointments of King's Lieutenant and sub-inspector of militias. Five months later, he earned the rank of colonel.<sup>144</sup>

The Central American phase of Matías de Gálvez's military and administrative career, from 1778 to 1783, developed under the shadow of his powerful brother. Affirmations, such as that of Pérez de Colosía, who writes that José de Gálvez "programmed" the appointment of Matías as second commandant-in-chief and inspector

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<sup>142</sup> H.I. Priestley reports that José de Gálvez begged for a two-month "vacation" in June 1775 because of "fevers in his head;" Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 6. I wonder if he visited the Málaga province and saw his brother Matías there, perhaps for the last time.

<sup>143</sup> Guerra y Peña, *Memorias*, 364-365.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 391 and 418. The new title included a salary of 150 *escudos* a month and 50 more during times of troop review. Mariana Rodríguez and Ángeles Conejo write that Matías de Gálvez was the first appointed King's Lieutenant of the Canary Islands; see their Mariana Rodríguez del Valle and Ángeles Conejo Díez de la Cortina, "Matías de Gálvez (1783-1784)," in *Los virreyes de Nueva España en el reinado de Carlos III*, ed. José Antonio Calderón Quijano (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos-Escuela Gráfica Salesiana, 1967), 2:227.

general of troops and militias of Guatemala, should not surprise us.<sup>145</sup> A military inspector was necessary at the time in Central America because in 1777, José de Gálvez had sent additional troops to protect the Spanish possessions in the region that were at risk from a British attack from the start of the American Revolution.<sup>146</sup> On 25 April 1778, the ship taking Matías de Gálvez and his family to the Americas left the port of Santa Cruz. By mid-June, he was in Guatemala.<sup>147</sup>

Martín de Mayorga (1721-1783) had been captain-general, governor, and president of the *Audiencia* of Guatemala since 1773.<sup>148</sup> Far from his wife and children, and with his health broken, Mayorga petitioned to be relieved from his post in early 1778. In January 1779, the minister of the Indies informed the captain-general that the monarch had named Matías de Gálvez as his replacement and that he was free to return to Spain. On 6 April, Mayorga thanked the minister, adding that on the 4<sup>th</sup> he had turned power over to Matías, and that he was already preparing his trip to return home as soon as possible. Three days later, however, Viceroy Bucareli died in office in New Spain. On 24 April Mayorga found out that he had been designated as his successor. This rapid sequence of events gave rise to a story used by historians since the nineteenth century to demonstrate the unbridled character of José de Gálvez's nepotistic impulses. Allow me to introduce the legend first and then talk about how it was discredited in the mid-twentieth century.

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<sup>145</sup> Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 34.

<sup>146</sup> Light Townsend Cummins, "The Gálvez Family and Spanish Participation in the Independence of the United States of America," *Revista Complutense de Historia de América*, no. 32 (2006): 185.

<sup>147</sup> Guerra y Peña, *Memorias*, 451, and José Joaquín Real Díaz and Antonia M. Heredia Herrera, "Martín de Mayorga (1779-1783)," in *Los virreyes de Nueva España en el reinado de Carlos III*, 2: 28 and 31.

<sup>148</sup> Mayorga had been appointed on 11 May 1772. He assumed office on 12 June 1773 and seventeen days later, on 29 June, there was a horrendous earthquake that completely devastated the city of Guatemala; see *ibid.*, 2:28.

Mexican historians in the nineteenth century, such as Carlos María Bustamante, Lucas Alamán, Manuel Rivera Cambas, and Vicente Riva Palacio, argued that the minister of the Indies wanted his brother to replace Bucareli in the office of viceroy of New Spain, but chance—“*una casualidad*” (Alamán) and even “*una rara casualidad*” (Rivera Cambas)—prevented the realization of the complicated scheme he had designed to achieve his nepotistic end.<sup>149</sup> The chief protagonist in this story was a paper called *pliego de providencia* or *pliego de mortaja*. It was a secret parcel of three separate, sealed documents each containing the name of a potential interim successor in case the viceroy died in office, or a disease or accident impaired his rule. The *Audiencia* kept the sealed *pliegos* marked “one,” “two,” and, “three” to indicate the king’s order of preference: if the first named person happened not to be in New Spain or its adjacent territories, or if he was already dead, the *oidores* opened the second *pliego*, and they could break the seal of the third one in the case that the second elected person was not available either. Obviously, the monarch designated the three candidates *but* he did it with the advice of the minister of the Indies.<sup>150</sup>

Usually, Spanish monarchs appointed viceroys for a period of five years. Bucareli became ruler of colonial Mexico in 1771, but Charles III asked him to stay in power past his normative period, despite the repeated requests of the viceroy who wished to return to

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<sup>149</sup> Carlos María de Bustamante, *Suplemento a la Historia de los tres siglos de México durante el gobierno español escrita por el padre Andrés Cavo*, vol. 3 (Mexico City: Imprenta de la Testamentaria de D. Alejandro Valdés, 1836); Lucas Alamán, appendix of his *Disertaciones sobre la historia de la República Mejicana desde la época de la conquista que los españoles hicieron a fines del siglo XV y principios del XVI, de las islas y continente americano hasta la independencia*, vol. 3 (Mexico City: Imprenta de Lara, 1849), 71-72; Manuel Rivera Cambas, *Los gobernantes de México*, vol. 3 (Mexico City: Citlaltépetl, 1964; first published 1872); and Vicente Riva Palacios, *México a través de los siglos* (Barcelona: n.e., n.y.), 2:855 cited by Díaz and Heredia, “Martín de Mayorga,” 24n10.

<sup>150</sup> The interim position could become a “full” appointment of viceroy if the Crown so approved after the successor elected by the *pliego de mortaja* assumed office. The whole process is well explained in *ibid.*, 19-21.

Spain. If Bucareli died before being relieved from his post (a big possibility since he was born in 1717, was in his sixties, and his health was not strong), the *pliego de mortaja* system would allow José de Gálvez to indirectly choose “his first viceroy.”<sup>151</sup> Moreover, many historians have pointed out that the Andalusian minister felt frustrated with Bucareli because he had repeatedly blocked many of his reformist initiatives, notably the establishment of the intendancy system in New Spain.<sup>152</sup> Moreover, his experience as visitor-general had taught Gálvez that in order to advance profound reforms, an ally in the viceroy’s seat was absolutely necessary.<sup>153</sup> In other areas of the Empire, the changes driven by the Spanish colonial office were advancing at a great pace: in 1778 Gálvez began to introduce the intendancies without any major opposition in a viceroyalty he had created, the Río de la Plata; and in Perú his ally José Antonio de Areche was conducting his general inspection. Stakes were high and the viceroy’s succession in New Spain could become the opportunity Gálvez was waiting for to introduce changes in the viceroyalty.

In June 1773 the Mexican *Audiencia* received Bucareli’s *pliego de mortaja*, with candidates suggested by the then minister of the Indies, Julián de Arriaga. In late 1777, Charles III approved three new nominees, this time recommended by José de Gálvez. The

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<sup>151</sup> I borrowed “Gálvez’s first viceroy” idea from *ibid.*, 9.

<sup>152</sup> I briefly explore how Bucareli delayed Gálvez’s plan for establishing the intendancy system in my paper: “The Territorial Reconfiguration of the Spanish Empire during the Gálvez Era (1765-1787): A First Approach,” presented at the *127th Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association*, New Orleans, LA, 3 Jan. 2013; see also, Luis Navarro García, *Intendencias en Indias* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos, 1959). John Lynch talks about a veritable “paralysis” of José de Gálvez’s intendancy project orchestrated by the Arriaga-Bucareli duo; see his *Spanish Colonial Administration*, 55-56.

<sup>153</sup> Indeed, Gálvez’s first six months in the position of visitor-general were miserable. He had encountered numerous jurisdictional problems with Viceroy Marqués de Cruillas, who simply blocked every attempt to introduce reforms initiated by the visitor-general. In December 1765 Gálvez described his situation to Arriaga in poignant words; he even asked for his immediate return if the Crown did not offer him immediate solutions. When the Marqués de Croix replaced Cruillas in 1766 the political landscape of the visitor-general improved dramatically because the Belgium-born viceroy was willing to cooperate with him. For a detailed account of Gálvez’s controversies with the Marqués of Cruillas refer to Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, chapter 4; and for the visitor-general’s letter referred above, see summary of Gálvez to Arriaga, Veracruz, 20 Dec. 1765, AGI, México, leg. 1245.



minister sent the new *pliego* to New Spain and the *Audiencia* acknowledged its reception in February 1778. The judicial body sent the sealed 1773 *pliego*, now invalidated, to Spain and placed the new one in an *alacena* containing the secret archive protected by four locks and keys.<sup>154</sup> Given all the above mentioned circumstances, the story created by nineteenth-century historians in Mexico makes a lot of sense. Bustamante writes, for example, that after the death of Bucareli, the *Audiencia* judges opened in a solemn meeting the *pliego de providencia* that “minister Gálvez had sent in the last days” of the viceroy. The document named “the President of Guatemala” as interim viceroy. Gálvez had made this decision, the historian argued, “thinking that his brother Matías de Gálvez would obtain the employment.” Instead, what occurred was that the minister “was sorely disappointed” (“*se llevó un chasco*”) because his relative had not arrived in Guatemala on time, and therefore Mayorga, who was still the president of the *Audiencia*, became viceroy of New Spain.<sup>155</sup> In the appendix of his famous *Disertaciones sobre la historia de la República Mejicana* (1844-1849), Alamán suggested that Gálvez had chosen the “president of Guatemala” option so that his brother “*pasase a México sin llamar la atención*.” The Mexican historian and statesman added that the Andalusian postman in charge of carrying the news of the appointment rode the 400 *leguas* between Mexico City and Guatemala so fast (in only seven days), that his name ended up in the historical record (F. Varo), but left Matías out of the viceregal throne.<sup>156</sup> Riva Palacio attributed the whole incident to the “stain” of Gálvez’s “unbridled nepotism.”<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> It was mandatory to return to Spain unused, still unopened *pliegos de providencia*; Real and Heredia, “Martín de Mayorga,” 21-22.

<sup>155</sup> Bustamante, *Suplemento a la Historia de los tres siglos de México*, 3:29.

<sup>156</sup> Alamán, appendix of *Disertaciones*, 71. In 1916, Priestley picked up the story and changed it quite a bit: “when Antonio Bucarely, successor of the Marqués de Croix, died in 1779, an order was issued conferring

In the 1960s, José Joaquín Real Díaz and Antonia M. Heredia Herrera debunked the myth.<sup>158</sup> First, they noticed, Matías de Gálvez was already in Guatemala working as inspector-general of the troops by the time the news of Bucareli's death reached Mayorga; in addition, the latter had already transferred power to the minister's brother on 4 April. Then, Real and Heredia analyzed a copy of Bucareli's *pliego de mortaja* and they also broke the seals of the papers containing the names of nominees "two" and "three" that were never opened and had been duly returned to Spain.<sup>159</sup> The first surprise was that the *pliego* containing the king's number one option did not grant the position of interim viceroy to "the president of Guatemala," as the nineteenth-century historians had argued, but simply to "Martín de Mayorga," without even mentioning the title of his position or the fact that he was in Central America. The other two candidates were Diego de Navarro (captain-general of Cuba), and Teodoro de Croix (nephew of former Viceroy Marqués de Croix, commandant general of the *Provincias Internas*, and future viceroy of Peru). The Andalusian minister's sibling did not figure at all. I believe that, in the late 1770s, José de Gálvez's plans for his brother were more related to the war that loomed on the horizon since the thirteen United States of America declared independence. Before Spain declared hostilities against Britain in 1779, it seems that Gálvez was preparing the warfare scenario in the Americas and conferring the leading roles on his relatives.

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succession to the post of viceroy upon 'the President of Guatemala.' Matías de Gálvez had just been appointed to succeed Mayorga as President of Guatemala, and was *en route* thither. The expectation of the Minister of the Indies undoubtedly was that Matías would become possessed of the presidency before the order appointing a successor to Bucarely would be received. But by an unusually quick transit of the Atlantic the appointment outdistanced the elder Gálvez, and Mayorga was thus fortuitously named viceroy;" see Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 9-10.

<sup>157</sup> Riva Palacio, *México a través de los siglos*, vol. 2, cited in Real and Heredia, "Martín de Mayorga," 24-25n10.

<sup>158</sup> Many historians continued to use the story, however; see for example, Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 38, and Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 217.

<sup>159</sup> Real and Heredia, "Martín de Mayorga," 23-26.

## The Wonder Years of Military Glory

There is a general belief among historians that José de Gálvez reached the zenith of his power during the Anglo-Spanish War of 1779-1783.<sup>160</sup> His admission to the Council of State (the king's top advisory body) in 1780 was a reflection of his amplified influence. In fact, at one moment, there was serious speculation that the Andalusian minister could succeed the Conde de Floridablanca at the Ministry of State.<sup>161</sup> The war against Britain provided a context in which Gálvez and his relatives shone. According to Light Townsend Cummings, 1776 and the advent of the American Revolution split the Spanish ministers in two factions. One side, led by the Conde de Aranda, argued in favor of an immediate declaration of war against the British. The other group, which included successive ministers of State (the Marqués de Grimaldi and Floridablanca) and also José de Gálvez, considered that Spain needed time to mobilize its troops in key positions in Europe and the Americas.<sup>162</sup> The second point of view prevailed in the end. In the 1776-1779 period, therefore, the minister of the Indies placed his nephew and brother in strategic Louisiana and Guatemala. As noted in Chapter Two, just as the war started, in August 1779, he also created the "secret superintendancy" of the royal treasury in New Spain to be occupied by his ally Pedro Antonio de Cossío in order to secure that sufficient money and supplies would reach Matías and Bernardo de Gálvez. No doubt their brilliant victories on the battlefields of Central and North America increased the

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<sup>160</sup> Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 7-8.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., for the speculation. Gálvez functioned as an honorary member of the Council of State since 1777.

<sup>162</sup> Cummings, "The Gálvez Family," 182.

collective prestige of the family and the individual influence of José de Gálvez at the Spanish court.

Bernardo de Gálvez returned to the New World in 1776 and in a short period of time, as he became a hero of the American Revolution, he earned his place as the most popular Gálvez in history. There are several portraits of him that show he was a little bit overweight, which is odd because his biography exudes sweat and energy.<sup>163</sup> At his return to Spain in 1772, he served for some time in the Cantabria regiment in Pau, France.<sup>164</sup> In 1775, when he was captain of an army regiment in Seville, he began a long-life friendship with Francisco de Saavedra y Sangronis (1746-1819), a lawyer who had joined the military and would become one of José de Gálvez's favorite protégés, as well as, a prominent Spanish statesman in the 1790s and early 1800s. In his memoirs, Saavedra wrote that he and the young Gálvez rode together to Madrid in order to put themselves under the orders of Alejandro O'Reilly, in charge of preparing a military expedition to capture the North African city of Algiers. Both had the same age, they were 29 years old, but at the time Francisco thought that Bernardo's life had passages that belonged to a work of fiction.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> As we shall see, he lost weight at the end of his life because of a gastrointestinal disease. The most remarkable visual representation of Bernardo de Gálvez, however, is an equestrian portrait found at the *Museo Nacional de Historia* housed in the Chapultepec Castle in Mexico City. It is an emblematic work of Mexican colonial art, as well as an enigmatic painting in itself. Bernardo de Gálvez appears on top of his horse but only his head, his hands, his hat, the ruffles of his white shirt, a medal, the head of a little dog (coming out of a bag?), and the base of a staff of office are painted, the remainder of the composition (the rest of his body and clothes, his horse, the bridle, the saddle etc) is a complex design of white lines over a black background. The lines seem like scribbles; they are also reminiscent of an intricate Baroque iron work.

<sup>164</sup> Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 92.

<sup>165</sup> Francisco de Saavedra, *Los decenios (autobiografía de un sevillano en la Ilustración)*, ed. Francisco Morales Padrón (Seville: Ayuntamiento de Sevilla, 1995), 81.

After Bernardo de Gálvez participated in what turned out to be the disastrous Algiers Expedition,<sup>166</sup> he served shortly as professor of the recently-created Royal Military School of Ávila. After promoting him to the rank of colonel, the king appointed Bernardo as commander of the regiment of New Orleans and governor of the province of Louisiana. He assumed office on 1 January 1777. Very skillfully, in cooperation with merchant Oliver Pollock, and without compromising Spain's neutrality, Bernardo de Gálvez transformed New Orleans into an important source of supplies for the American rebels.<sup>167</sup> On 21 June 1779, Spain finally declared war on Britain. Bernardo de Gálvez headed three important campaigns in which he conquered Baton Rouge and Natchez (1779), Mobile (1780), and the crowning jewel in his military career, Pensacola (1781). From his office at the Spanish court, José de Gálvez followed these developments. To be absolutely certain that his nephew was receiving adequate support, he convinced Charles III and the Conde de Floridablanca to send one of his officials at the Ministry of the Indies, Francisco de Saavedra, as king's emissary to Cuba, Mexico City, and New Orleans. Saavedra is a model of what I call the "extended nepotism" of José de Gálvez. The story of how the Andalusian minister recruited him is one of the most revealing of how the Gálvez's patronage machinery operated.

In Seville, in late January 1776, Bernardo de Gálvez informed his friend Saavedra that his uncle had replaced Arriaga as head of the Spanish colonial office and he

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<sup>166</sup> L. T. Cummings argues that the 1775 expedition led by O'Reilly ranks "as one of Spain's greatest military failures of the era;" see his "The Gálvez Family," 187. According to Eric Beerman, Spain prepared a fleet of a hundred Spanish warships. O'Reilly directed the landing of 22,000 soldiers on a small rocky beach where Algerians awaited patiently because they had been warned of the attack. 2,000 Spanish lost their lives, and thousands, like Bernardo de Gálvez, were hurt; Eric Beerman, "'Yo solo' not 'solo': Juan Antonio de Riaño," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 58, no. 2 (1979): 176. Indeed Bernardo was wounded in combat on one leg; Saavedra, *Los decenios*, 97.

<sup>167</sup> Cummings, "The Gálvez Family," 187-188.

promised to introduce him to the minister at the first opportunity. A few months later, Bernardo invited his friend to Miguel de Gálvez's house in Madrid and finally, when the itinerant court was at the city, the friends dined twice at the José de Gálvez's home.<sup>168</sup> In mid 1778, the Conde de Fernán Nuñez invited Saavedra to join him as his secretary at the Spanish embassy in Portugal. A day after the young man told Miguel de Gálvez about his job offer, the councilor of War called on Saavedra to inform him that his brother José had spoken with the king about him and Charles III had approved his appointment as “*oficial cuarto*” at the Ministry of the Indies. Saavedra accepted the job immediately.<sup>169</sup> The Andalusian minister trusted his new protégé with the polishing of the *Reglamento de Comercio Libre* and the subsequent policies linked to its implementation.<sup>170</sup> Two years later, Gálvez selected Saavedra as the Crown's representative in the Americas. One of his tasks was to help Bernardo de Gálvez to capture Pensacola, a notorious center of British smuggling in the Gulf of Mexico.<sup>171</sup> José de Gálvez's nepotism could extend enough to cover also the friends of his relatives, forming a relationship that was more intimate and personal than the patronage described in chapters one and two.

The appearance of Saavedra in the war scenario in early 1781 meant that Bernardo de Gálvez now had the Crown's full support for his undertaking. After a great show of bravery that included taking command of a frigate and sailing it through a dangerous strait under heavy fire from British guns to invade the bay, the young Gálvez

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<sup>168</sup> Saavedra, *Los decenios*, 99 and 102.

<sup>169</sup> Please refer to chapter 5, for the functioning and number of *oficiales* at the ministry of the Indies.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 109-110.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 118-119.

conquered Pensacola in May 1781.<sup>172</sup> For this achievement, the minister of the Indies' nephew earned the first title of Castile for his family after the monarch named him first Conde de Gálvez.<sup>173</sup> Bernardo also received the *encomienda de Bolaños* of the military order of Calatrava.<sup>174</sup> His father, Matías de Gálvez, was also busy routing the British out of Central America. José de Gálvez's concern for the presence of foreign powers (and smugglers) in the isthmus dated back to the late 1750s when he wrote his *Discurso y reflexiones de un vasallo*. In a way, the elder Gálvez accomplished what his brother had envisioned for that region of the Empire decades ago. Although fighting in a remote tropical region, Matías de Gálvez did not suffer from neglect from the Crown. The minister of the Indies pressured viceroy Mayorga (and secret superintendant Cossío) to send all the help requested by the captain-general of Guatemala.<sup>175</sup> In 1780, José de Gálvez also instructed Saavedra "to help the president of Guatemala to expel the enemies from various coastal zones occupied in that kingdom."<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> According to Cummins, the Siege and Battle of Pensacola was crucial in the history of the American Revolution and one of "the last major military victories for Spanish arms during the long history of Spain's colonial empire of the Americas;" see his "The Gálvez Family," 190-191.

<sup>173</sup> Charles III allowed the Conde de Gálvez to include in his coat of arms a ship weaving a flag that said "Yo solo" commemorating his bravado during the Siege of Pensacola. The Crown issued the title on 20 May 1783; see "Bernardo de Gálvez, Conde de Gálvez, asiento por lanzas de la merced de título de Castilla que S.M. le concedió..." Contaduría General de Valores, Madrid, 1783-1837, AHN, FCM Hacienda, leg. 7306/2. Some authors have mistakenly assigned the Conde de Gálvez's denomination to José de Gálvez; see for example Alexander von Humboldt, *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, trans. John Black (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1811), 1:220.

<sup>174</sup> The military order of Calatrava established an *encomienda* in the town of Bolaños de Calatrava (in the Castilla-La Mancha province today) in the 1530s-1540s. In this quasi-feudal institution the *comendador* was in charge of the administration of its castle, church, urban nucleus, and lands. For Bernardo de Gálvez it basically meant a source of income because he put it on a lease according to Gálvez to Conde de Floridablanca, Aranjuez, 15 Apr. 1787, AGI, Estado, leg. 40, n. 4.

<sup>175</sup> At one point, Matías de Gálvez wrote to Mayorga not to send any more money because he thought the 600,000 pesos he had received were enough; Mayorga to José de Gálvez, Mexico City, 8 May 1780, AGI, Mexico, leg. 2422 cited in Rodríguez and Conejo, "Matías de Gálvez," 230-231n32.

<sup>176</sup> Saavedra, *Los decenios*, 119. In late 1780, when Saavedra was in Havana and found out that all the generals of the region asked for his help, he decided to prioritize his concerns as follows: Pensacola, Guatemala, and the prompt dispatch of the fleet from Veracruz with remittances to Spain; *ibid.*, 140-141.

Before succeeding Mayorga at the captaincy-general, Matías de Gálvez inspected the presidio of Omoa (in modern Honduras), conducted reforms in the militia structure, and formed bodies of infantry and cavalry in various towns throughout Central America.<sup>177</sup> He assembled an impressive force of 15,000 troops.<sup>178</sup> After assuming the presidency of Guatemala he began to prepare his first attack against the British in Belize with the larger objective of capturing the Gulf of Honduras for the Spanish. Yet, the enemy struck first with a successful expedition against the fortress of Omoa in October 1779. According to Cummings, after Matías de Gálvez learned about the fall of the presidio, he “personally led one of the most daring forced marches” of the Anglo-Spanish war. With 1,000 men he traversed rainforests and mountain ranges and managed to reconquer Omoa after a short siege in late November.<sup>179</sup> Then Gálvez concentrated his efforts upon defending Nicaragua and its lakes. In April 1780, the British attacked the Spanish fort of Inmaculada Concepción in the mouth of the San Juan River that today separates Nicaragua from Costa Rica. The minister of the Indies’ brother built another fort upriver, at the entrance of Lake Nicaragua, and from there, he recovered Inmaculada Concepción.<sup>180</sup> As a reward, Charles III promoted Matías de Gálvez to the prestigious

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<sup>177</sup> Most of the information on Matías in Guatemala comes from Cummings, “The Gálvez Family,” 185-186, and Rodríguez and Conejo, “Matías de Gálvez,” 227-232.

<sup>178</sup> Rodríguez and Conejo, “Matías de Gálvez,” 229. Cummings, however, elevates the number of enlisted men to 30,000 in his “The Gálvez Family,” 185.

<sup>179</sup> Cummings, “The Gálvez Family,” 186. Historian José Antonio Calderón Quijano considers that the fall of Omoa into British hands greatly embarrassed Matías and the real motive of the amazing forced march to recuperate it was to avoid that the bad news would reach and disappoint his powerful brother; cited in Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1214.

<sup>180</sup> It is also interesting that José de Gálvez instructed his brother Matías to explore if a canal communicating Lake Nicaragua with the Pacific Ocean could be built. In 1781 an engineer performed a study, and determined it was impossible; see Pérez de Colosía, “Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada,” 35-36. In cooperation with the Conde de Aranda (then ambassador of Spain in Paris), in 1786 Gálvez studied the possibility of building an inter-oceanic canal in Panama; see my paper “The History of the Panama Canal: An Imperial/Latin American Counterpoint,” presented at the *92nd Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Pacific Division*, San Diego, CA, 13 Jun. 2011.



rank of field marshal. Finally, in May 1782, his forces captured the British-occupied island of Roatán. Spain's dominion over the Gulf of Honduras did not last long but at least Matías de Gálvez's military activities gave him great fame and added more to the prestige of his family.<sup>181</sup>

### **Matías de Gálvez at the Viceroyalty of New Spain and the Gálvezes' interest on the *Banco Nacional de San Carlos***

In February 1783, Matías de Gálvez received a royal order signed in October that named him interim viceroy of New Spain.<sup>182</sup> Spain had just signed a peace treaty with Great Britain at Paris; the war was over. It has been mentioned earlier that José de Gálvez did not have the intention of replacing Bucareli with his brother. It seems that he was more interested in placing Matías de Gálvez in an area that would be a war scenario and that he was confident his brother would advance the interests of Spain. By replacing Bucareli with Mayorga from Guatemala, however, he was perhaps establishing a precedent for the future succession of the Mexican viceroyalty: new viceroys come from Guatemala and, by the way, my brother happened to be there. Accompanied by his family and retinue, in 52 days, Matías de Gálvez travelled from Guatemala City to the capital of New Spain. For the second time in their lives Matías received a staff of office from Mayorga. While Mayorga kept his status of interim viceroy during his whole tenure, the

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<sup>181</sup> The royal *cédula* that bestowed the title of Conde de Gálvez on Bernardo de Gálvez listed and celebrated his father's military accomplishments; see *Reales Cédulas en que el Rey se sirve hacer merced de Título de Castilla, con la denominación de Conde de Gálvez... al Teniente General de los Reales Ejércitos Don Bernardo de Gálvez, etc.* (Madrid: Imp. de Don Pedro Marín, 1783), fols. 1-2, cited in Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 37-38.

<sup>182</sup> The *cabildo* of Málaga did not lose the opportunity to congratulate Miguel de Gálvez, for his brother's appointment as viceroy of New Spain and asked him to extend the felicitations to José, Antonio, and Bernardo; Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 38.

Andalusian minister's brother earned his office's "property" (as it was called) in August 1783. As full viceroy he was entitled to an annual salary of 60,000 pesos, applied retroactively to the date he assumed office.<sup>183</sup>

On 29 April, Matías de Gálvez entered Mexico City and took possession of his office. Nineteenth-century historian, Carlos María de Bustamante wrote that the capital of New Spain welcomed Matías with shows of "refined flattery out of respect for his brother the minister, who ruled the Americas at pleasure."<sup>184</sup> He was right. On 8 February 1784 the city organized a grandiose and expensive entry ceremony to receive the "new" viceroy. During the Bourbon period in New Spain, Linda Curcio-Nagy calculates, the average entry ceremony for viceroys cost around 19,000 pesos. Matías de Gálvez's reached the outstanding sum of 60,350 pesos.<sup>185</sup> The "excess of celebrations" pitted the Mexico City *cabildo* and the viceroyalty's *Audiencia* against each other. The latter body even proposed to abolish "solemn entries" or at least to have just one celebration—the public had received Viceroy Gálvez twice, when he first entered the city with his interim appointment, and then in the lavish ceremony organized after he received his full

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<sup>183</sup> I do not know if this "retroactivity" was normal, but he was also spared to pay the half *annata* tax as a way to cover his traveling expenses; Rodríguez and Conejo, "Matías de Gálvez," 234. Matías received his full title of viceroy on 19 November 1783, according to José Gómez, *Diario de sucesos de México del alabardero José Gómez (1776-1798)*, ed. Ignacio González-Polo y Acosta (Mexico City: UNAM, 2008), 114.

<sup>184</sup> Bustamante, *Suplemento a la Historia de los tres siglos de México*, 3:56. Rivera Cambas practically transcribes word by word Bustamante's phrase, but instead of saying that the people of Mexico City did it "for respect to the minister," he argues that they did it "just for being the brother of the minister that ruled the Americas at pleasure"—nice language inflexion that reveals Rivera Cambas' stance on the issue of nepotism; see his *Los gobernantes de México*, 3:30.

<sup>185</sup> Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals of Colonial Mexico City: Performing Power and Identity* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 82. We would say in Spanish that the authorities in Mexico City "*tiraron la casa por la ventana*" to please the Andalusian minister. For a description of the tremendous ceremony see Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1218-1219; and for a witness that was disappointed about the celebration's fireworks (especially after so many expectations about their spectacular nature had been bred for weeks), Gómez, *Diario de sucesos*, 124.

position—and to stick with the budget allowed by the law (8,000 pesos for these ceremonies).<sup>186</sup>

It seems that Matías, Miguel, and José de Gálvez had a penchant for works of infrastructure. I already mentioned how Miguel and José changed the infrastructural faces of Málaga and tiny Macharaviaya. Matías did the same in Guatemala and Mexico City. According to Pérez de Colosía, Guatemalans named him one of the country's Founding Fathers because of his contributions to the establishment of the new Guatemala City.<sup>187</sup> After an earthquake destroyed the capital in 1773, the Crown mandated the foundation of a new city in 1775, but the archbishop and other vested interests blocked the order's implementation. After five months in power, the elder Gálvez expelled the opposing prelate and the works to build the new city began. As captain-general of Guatemala, he built a Mint House and on 25 July 1782, he placed the first stone of the new cathedral that years later would become the impressive massive building we see today. In New Spain, his public works record is similarly remarkable, particularly in Mexico City where streets were lighted, cleaned, paved, connected with bridges, and drainage systems were installed. Matías de Gálvez obtained funding from the powerful merchant guild and the Crown to reconstruct the Chapultepec Castle as a recreational villa for viceroys and to rehabilitate its surrounding forest. Finally, he contributed with an additional initiative for the drainage of Mexico City's lakes. Under his aegis, the cultural life of the capital benefited with the royal approval for the establishment of the Royal Academy of Fine

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<sup>186</sup> In 1785, the king approved the *Audiencia*'s proposal of having just one entry ceremony adjusted to the assigned budget; Rodríguez and Conejo, "Matías de Gálvez," 234.

<sup>187</sup> Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 35.

Arts of San Carlos (generous endowment included), and the publication of the government-funded *Gazeta de México*, Mexico's first official newspaper.<sup>188</sup>

During their elder brother eighteen-month administration of New Spain, the Gálvez siblings joined efforts to promote a novel institution in the Spanish world: the *Banco Nacional de San Carlos*, the direct ancestor of Spain's National Bank. Francisco de Cabarrús, a French-born, creative businessman conceived the bank and received the Crown's approval to found it in June 1782. Surprisingly, the new institution essentially shared the same business structure that the playing cards factory of Macharaviaya: it was established "under royal protection" but was privately owned. The difference was, of course, that the bank's owners were its stockholders. Holders of 25 or more shares could attend the annual meetings and cast one vote regardless of the number of stocks they had purchased. Anyone could become a stockholder: the Crown, individuals of all classes in Spain and the colonies, towns, businesses, religious orders, and even foreigners. The yearly conventions became "massive" events of 300 to 600 attendants.<sup>189</sup> Initially, the bank issued 150,000 shares with a value of 2,000 *reales de vellón* each. 75,000 shares were going to be offered in the Indies. From his privileged seat, José de Gálvez closely followed the establishment of the institution and he was an enthusiast shareholder right from the beginning. In December 1782 his brother Miguel, who also owned stocks,

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<sup>188</sup> In the 1930s, Francisco Morote Chapa wrote a short history of Matías de Gálvez's rule at the viceroyalty of New Spain just by listing and classifying in topics the *Gazeta de México*'s news on his accomplishments; see his *Notas y noticias sobre don Matías de Gálvez*, 5-18.

<sup>189</sup> Earl J. Hamilton, "The Foundation of the Bank of Spain," *Journal of Political Economy* 53, no. 2 (1945): 97-114.

became his proxy to attend the bank's annual shareholders meetings and to cast votes on his behalf.<sup>190</sup>

In spite of an aggressive official publicity to promote the bank, the shares did not have an enthusiastic reception in both Spain and its colonies. For the case of the Americas, the Crown urged colonial authorities "to use all their influence and power... to induce businessmen and other residents to subscribe to the bank stock."<sup>191</sup> Through advertisements and, most importantly, actual governmental pressure on indigenous communities, Matías de Gálvez and his right-hand man, the *fiscal de real hacienda* Ramón de Posada, positioned New Spain at the top of the Spanish overseas possessions in terms of investments in the San Carlos National Bank.<sup>192</sup> In January 1784, Viceroy Gálvez took 50,000 pesos out of his own pocket to buy shares in order to set the example or, in his words published in the *Gazeta de México*, "*para dar un testimonio público de la eficacia con que procuro el fomento de este importante establecimiento.*"<sup>193</sup> Almost at the same time, Indian communities began to purchase stocks; eventually twenty town

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<sup>190</sup> "Poder otorgado por el excelentísimo señor don Josef de Gálvez Gallardo en 15 de diciembre de 1782," Madrid, 15 Dec. 1782, AHPM, vol. 18671, fols. 357-358, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 135-136. Gálvez's signed the proxy letter right on time because the first meeting of shareholders took place on 20 Dec. 1785. In 1787, José de Gálvez's last will mentioned that he incorporated into his daughter's *mayorazgo* his shares at the San Carlos National Bank; "Testamento otorgado por el Excelentísimo Señor Marqués de Sonora en 10 de abril de 1787," Madrid, 10 Apr. 1787, AHPM, vol. 18673, fols. 34-41 (hereafter "Gálvez's testament 1787"), in *ibid.*, 170.

<sup>191</sup> Hamilton, "The Foundation of the Bank of Spain," 110.

<sup>192</sup> Calderón Quijano devotes an entire section of a chapter to outline Posada's pressures on indigenous communities; see his *El Banco de San Carlos y las Comunidades de Indios de Nueva España* (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos, 1963), 27-30. Likewise, as an example of Posada's support for innovation in economic policy, Stanley Stein and Barbara Stein cite "he pressured Native American communities to divert funds retained in their *cajas de comunidad* to investment in shares in the Banco de San Carlos (1783)," see their *Edge of Crisis: War and Trade in the Spanish Atlantic, 1789-1808* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 110.

<sup>193</sup> Matías de Gálvez to *Consulado*, Mexico City, 21 Jan. 1784; Matías wrote to the editor of the *Gazeta* that he was sending copies of a royal order and his letter to the merchant guild "*para que Vm. las inserte en la próxima Gazeta y el Público tenga en mi espíritu nacional un ejemplo, y una viva y eficaz exhortación,*" Matías de Gálvez to Manuel Antonio Valdés, Mexico City, 22 Jan. 1784, both documents reproduced in *Gazeta de México*, 28 Jan. 1784, 16.

associations (for example, 73 Oaxacan pueblos bought 189 assets together) owned a total of 1,343 shares.<sup>194</sup> In Spain, the king appointed Melchor Gaspar de Jovellanos as the agent (or trustee) of these communities. Beginning in 1785, when the accounts of the Mexican villages began to generate yields, Jovellanos and José de Gálvez initiated a voluminous correspondence on how to return the profits to the investing villages.<sup>195</sup> Hence, the minister of the Indies became the mediator between Indian (and also Spanish) stockholders in the Americas and their proxies and bank authorities in Madrid. The relative success of the *Banco Nacional de San Carlos* in New Spain was possible through active cooperation among the Gálvez brothers whom, as investors, also desired the success of the infant institution.

An extremely expressive, raised right eyebrow was the distinctive feature of Matías de Gálvez's face. In a painting at the *Museo de América* in Madrid, he appears as an elderly statesman, seated in front of his desk, right hand tucked inside his vest, and holding a paper on his left.<sup>196</sup> Matías was almost 66 years old when he became viceroy of New Spain and he was already very sick. He had gout that he arguably acquired during

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<sup>194</sup> Hamilton, "The Foundation of the Bank of Spain," 110; Calderón Quijano, *El Banco de San Carlos*, 113. After writing that at least 63 communities in Oaxaca bought stocks, Bustamante gives his point of view that the entire banking scheme was a cruel joke (a "*burla*") played upon the Indian peoples; Bustamante, *Suplemento a la Historia de los tres siglos de México*, 3:51.

<sup>195</sup> As trustee, Jovellano was entitled to receive 2 percent of the yields produced by the Indian communities' stocks; Calderón Quijano, *El Banco de San Carlos*, chapter 3.

<sup>196</sup> This depiction painted by Ramón Torres and dated in 1783 sharply contrasts with the half-length portrait (*ca.* 1783) belonging to the viceroy portrait gallery currently at the *Museo Nacional de Historia* in Mexico City and the posthumous full-length portrait (*ca.* 1790) to celebrate his patronage of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Carlos, both painted by Andrés López. In López's paintings Matías de Gálvez appears as a younger vigorous man; for an analysis of these paintings, see Michael A. Brown, "Portraiture in New Spain, 1600-1800: Painters, Patrons and Politics in Viceregal Mexico" (PhD diss., New York University, 2011), 169- 177. Brown points out that the painting of the *Museo de América* in Madrid and the two works by López bear no resemblance, but I disagree because both have the raised eyebrow.

his famous forced march to conquer the Omoa fortress in 1779.<sup>197</sup> By mid-September 1784, his health deteriorated to the degree that the *Audiencia* allowed him to use a stamp to sign his official documents. Within a month, he transferred power to the high court, and he died on 3 November 1784.

Obviously, the death of his brother must have been painful to José de Gálvez. As happens with networks of patronage, nepotism runs through informal structures and disregards the modernizing state's efforts to develop "impersonal bureaucratic processes."<sup>198</sup> Ironically, Gálvez belonged to a group of eighteenth-century state reformists that were trying to increase the "professionalization" of the royal service, and therefore it is very telling that the minister of the Indies always kept his bureaucratic manners in line and never, ever slipped a word of affection in his official correspondence with his viceroy brother (or later, with his nephew).<sup>199</sup> No doubt brotherly love was in the air, however, because José de Gálvez persuaded the king to issue a royal order that spared Matías from a posthumous *residencia* trial based on the "purity, rectitude, and prudence" he had displayed as a ruler.<sup>200</sup> Nevertheless, the edict allowed for a call for witnesses who wished to declare in favor or against the late viceroy, a feature typical in *residencia* procedures but this time the reason was Charles III's desire to learn about how Matías de Gálvez had served him. The resulting witnesses' declarations were all cream over roses, a

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<sup>197</sup> Or, at least that is what the bishop of Valladolid, Fray Antonio de San Miguel said, cited in Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1214-1215 and Morote, *Notas y noticias sobre don Matías de Gálvez*,

<sup>198</sup> Susan Rose-Ackerman, "Corruption: Greed, Culture, and the State," *The Yale Law Journal Online* 120, no. 125 (2010): 128.

<sup>199</sup> See for example, diverse correspondence between Matías de Gálvez, viceroy of New Spain, and José de Gálvez in 1784 in AGI, Mexico, leg. 1409. In their letters they addressed each other as "Mr. Minister Gálvez" and "Mr. Viceroy Gálvez."

<sup>200</sup> Gálvez to Eusebio Bentura Beleña (regent of the *Audiencia*), Madrid, 26 Mar. 1785, reproduced in Morote, *Notas y noticias sobre don Matías de Gálvez*, 27; see also Rodríguez and Conejo, "Matías de Gálvez," 303-304.

symphony that extolled the virtues of the elder Gálvez. To cite only one example, the *Tribunal de Cuentas* declared that never before had New Spain sent so many remittances to the metropole as under Viceroy Gálvez.<sup>201</sup> The Andalusian minister also took care of protecting his widowed sister-in-law, the *virreina* Ana de Zayas. First, he secured for her a one-time payment of half the annual salary of Matías de Gálvez (that is, 30,000 pesos) to pay the expenses of her trip back to Spain. In addition, he got her a lifetime pension from the yields generated by her late husband's stocks at the *Banco Nacional de San Carlos*.<sup>202</sup>

### **Extended Nepotism: the Political Family of Matías de Gálvez**

The power acquired by the Matías side of the Gálvez family was not constrained to his son Bernardo de Gálvez, who succeeded his father as viceroy of New Spain. The family of Ana de Zayas was the source of two crucial examples of José de Gálvez's "extended nepotism." Dorotea de Zayas y Ramos was the older sister of Ana. In 1752, when she was living in Macharaviaya, she married José Fernández de Córdoba y Ortega (a resident of the town of Almogía, also in the province of Málaga).<sup>203</sup> The couple had three children: María Josefa, Francisco, and Ana María. For an undetermined reason, Matías de Gálvez and Ana de Zayas took two Fernández de Córdoba y Zayas siblings

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<sup>201</sup> At the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid, other contemporary viceroy *residencia* trials are usually just bundles of paper, but the "mock" *residencia* of Matías de Gálvez is beautifully bound in leather; see AHN, Consejos, leg. 20722.

<sup>202</sup> Ana de Zayas wrote a testament before returning to Spain. In her last will she renounced her inheritance from the joint assets earned in marriage in favor of her step-son Bernardo de Gálvez and declared she was satisfied with a lifetime pension granted by the king on the interests of the 50,000 pesos her husband had deposited in the *Banco Nacional de San Carlos*, "as long as this was convenient and the collection was not delayed," "Zayas 1785 Testament," 194.

<sup>203</sup> "Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Francisco Fernández de Córdoba y Zayas," 1786 (hereafter "Pruebas Carlos III Fernández de Córdoba 1786"), AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp. 246, fols. 60-61. Matías de Gálvez signed as witness at the Zayas y Fernández de Córdoba wedding.



under their care: a nephew and a niece which were living with them in the Canary Islands around 1775.<sup>204</sup> One for sure was Francisco and the other must have been Ana María because María Josefa married Antonio de Mora y Peisal, a regent in the *cabildo* of Málaga and future intendant of Oaxaca.

The nephew of Ana de Zayas advanced his bureaucratic career under the Gálvez brothers' patronage. Francisco Fernández de Córdoba was born in 1756 in the village of his father, Almogía. He had a military background and it is not clear when, but at some point after 1776 José de Gálvez appointed his political nephew as one of his *oficiales* at the Ministry of the Indies. On 3 August 1783, the Andalusian minister designated Fernández de Córdoba to the position of chamber secretary of the viceroy of New Spain in order to fill the vacancy caused by the forced retirement of merchant-bureaucrat Pedro Antonio de Cossío.<sup>205</sup> Fernández de Córdoba took possession of his new office on the first day of February 1784. At that time he was lieutenant colonel and "*oficial cuarto*" in José de Gálvez's ministry.<sup>206</sup> When the *Audiencia* ruled in favor of allowing Matías de Gálvez to sign his official documents with a stamp, they did it under the provision that to validate each print, it had to have Francisco Fernández de Córdoba's signature below.<sup>207</sup> What seems truly extraordinary about Zayas' nephew case is that, at the same time he

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<sup>204</sup> In 1775, when the elder Gálvez traveled from Málaga to Santa Cruz, Tenerife to begin his appointment as governor of the Paso Alto Castle, Lope Antonio de la Guerra y Peña reported that his wife, a nephew and a niece were accompanying him; Guerra y Peña, *Memorias*, 364.

<sup>205</sup> Vicente Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda en Nueva España: Don Ramón de Posada y Soto, 1781-1793* (Oviedo: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Oviedo, 1986), 40n93.

<sup>206</sup> *Gazeta de México*, 11 Feb. 1784, 21. The newspaper dates his entrance to Mexico City on 31 January, while the memoirs of José Gómez say it was a day earlier. The latter source mentions that Fernández de Córdoba was coming from Lima, where he had been secretary of the visitor-general; Gómez, *Diario de sucesos*, 123. In her study of the viceroyalty's secretariat, Linda Arnold identifies Fernández de Córdoba as "a young clerk on the staff of the Council of the Indies who had also served as director of royal revenues in Santa Fé de Bogotá;" see her *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City, 1742-1835* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1988), 30.

<sup>207</sup> Rodríguez and Conejo, "Matías de Gálvez," 300.

was working as secretary of the viceroy of New Spain, José de Gálvez was giving him promotions within the Ministry of the Indies. I found that in October 1785 he went from “*oficial tercero segundo*” to “*tercero primero*.”<sup>208</sup> In the Bourbon Spanish Empire it was common to hold two (even three and four) positions in government at the same time, but usually double-office holding occurred within the same geographical location.<sup>209</sup> The last promotion of Fernández de Córdoba under José de Gálvez’s aegis happened in the first half of 1787, when he substituted as head of the Mexico City Mint another protégé of the minister, Fernando José Mangino, who had become superintendant of the royal treasury.<sup>210</sup>

Francisco’s sister, Ana Fernández de Córdoba, married Ramón de Posada y Soto.<sup>211</sup> In chapter three we read that the *fiscal de real hacienda* Posada built two or three cases that eventually led to the “dismissal” of merchant-bureaucrat Pedro Antonio de

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<sup>208</sup> This means that between February 1784 and October 1785 he had already advanced from “*oficial cuarto*” to “*oficial segundo tercero*,” copy of title of *oficial mayor* of the Ministry of the Indies given by Charles III and signed by José de Gálvez to Francisco Fernández de Córdoba, 28 Oct. 1785, AGS, Dirección General del Tesoro, Inventario 2, leg. 69.

<sup>209</sup> Granted, when José de Gálvez was visitor-general of New Spain he also held a position at the Council of the Indies and during his years in Mexico he was promoted within the structure of the advising body. Nevertheless, the Crown justified his appointment on the grounds that it would increase Gálvez’s prestige and would give him more authority and legitimacy to execute new policies at the viceroyalty. We are left to wonder if Fernández de Córdoba’s title of “*oficial*” at the ministry of the Indies was enough to give him more credibility in his job as secretary of the viceroy.

<sup>210</sup> Arnold puts a “Fernando Fernández de Córdoba” substituting Francisco Fernández de Córdoba as chamber secretary of the viceroy. José de Gómez’s memoirs, however, mention a “Captain Fernando de Córdoba” taking that position on 19 May 1787; Arnold, *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City*, 31; and Gómez, *Diario de sucesos*, 177.

<sup>211</sup> Vicente Rodríguez García’s *El fiscal de Real Hacienda en Nueva España (Don Ramón de Posada y Soto, 1781-1793)* (1985) is entirely devoted to the years of Posada as *fiscal* in New Spain. In addition to his marriage connection with the family of Matías de Gálvez, Posada was second cousin of the regent of the Mexican *Audiencia*, Vicente de Herrera y Rivero (1782-1786) because his father was cousin of the *regente*’s mother. Moreover, his oldest brother, Sebastián, married with Juana Jacinta de Jovellanos, sister of célèbre Spanish statesman Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos; Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de real hacienda*, 40-41. According to Stein and Stein, Posada was also related to Jovellanos through his grandmother’s side. These authors also argue that Posada interchanged a lot of correspondence with Jovellanos when the latter was writing his famous proposal for agrarian reform, *Informe de la Sociedad Económica de esta Corte al Real y Supremo Consejo de Castilla en el expediente de ley agraria of 1795*; Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 110.

Cossío. No doubt he earned the reputation of being a scrupulous, efficient bureaucrat that conducted himself with integrity. Barbara and Stanley Stein cite a document issued at the offices of the Cádiz *consulado* uttering “once an issue is assigned to Sr. Posada, there will be a prolonged examination.”<sup>212</sup> Even Fray Servando Teresa de Mier, a famous creole ideologue of Mexican patriotism, future participant in the independence movement, and fierce critic of the “corrupt” Spanish bureaucracy, praised him for his honesty.<sup>213</sup> Posada was born on 3 January 1746 in Cangas de Onís in Oviedo, Asturias. He was a lawyer by training and in 1774 he initiated his career in the colonial administration as judge (*oidor*) of the *Audiencia* of Guatemala.<sup>214</sup> Posada lived in Central America when Matías and his family arrived. In June 1779 he was appointed *alcalde del crimen* of the high court of Lima,<sup>215</sup> but before leaving for Peru he was named to another position, this time as *fiscal de real hacienda* of the Mexico City *Audiencia*. Matías de Gálvez’s kept him by his side a few months and he did not occupy his new office until January 1781.

In the position of *fiscal*, as Vicente Rodríguez García argues in his book on Posada, the Asturian earned the trust of José de Gálvez and became the eyes and ears of the colonial minister in New Spain. Not surprisingly, once he secured the favor of his boss, Posada asked Gálvez for a better job for his brother Joaquín. He told him that he did this “*cumpliendo los deberes de la naturaleza y de la sangre*”—principles that were

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<sup>212</sup> Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 110.

<sup>213</sup> Fray Servando Teresa de Mier, *Memorias* (Mexico City: Porrúa, 1946), 1: 235, 259, and 275.

<sup>214</sup> Since his years as *oidor* in the Guatemalan *Audiencia*, Posada collected copies of relevant documents on diverse administrative and political issues that today form a good collection for archival research at the Biblioteca de Castilla-La Mancha in Toledo, Spain.

<sup>215</sup> Stein and Stein argue that he was a protégé of the visitor-general of Peru, José Antonio de Areche in their *Edge of Crisis*, 110.

perhaps too familiar to the Andalusian minister. Moreover, Matías and José de Gálvez enthusiastically supported Posada's application on behalf of his toddler son to serve as a cadet of the infantry regiment of Zamora.<sup>216</sup>

Like other men of Gálvez who were his protégés but not his relatives—Mangino, José Antonio de Areche, José García de León y Pizarro—Posada spent his post-Gálvez era years at the Council of the Indies. He obtained the position of *fiscal* of the advising body in 1793. Once in Spain, around 1794, Francisco de Goya painted a beautiful portrait of Posada. Encircled by an oval canvas, the bureaucrat is seated against a dark, neutral background. His clothes already herald the early nineteenth-century fashion. In the three-quarter-view portrait, Posada has expressive dark eyes fixed at the spectator and crowned by thick black eyebrows that contrast with his one-curved grey wig.<sup>217</sup> Toward the end of his life, in 1806, he replaced Mangino as vice-president of the trade company of the Philippines—a state-run firm that their mentor, José de Gálvez, had created in the 1780s.<sup>218</sup> Posada died in 1815.

It is interesting to note that in the summer of 1785, José de Gálvez rewarded both Posada and Fernández de Córdoba, his relatives, with a cross of the Order of Charles

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<sup>216</sup> In 1782, Posada's brother, Joaquín, worked at a royal treasury office in Tegicigalpa. He was a man of arms and had participated in Matías de Gálvez's daring expedition to conquer the Omoa fortress. Ramón Posada requested for his sibling one of the vacant positions available: the profitable *alcaldía mayor* of Miahuatlán (which was technically not vacant because Francisco Xavier de Corres, a man of Gálvez, had it even though he was at the time in Mexico City), the direction of the lottery, or the *alcabala* collection office in Guanajuato; see Posada a Gálvez, n. 31, Mexico City, 9 Mar. 1782, AGI, Mexico, 1868 cited in Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de Real Hacienda*, 35-36 and 41. In the end, Joaquín de Posada obtained the rank of coronel and, in late 1783, the governorship of the San Carlos fortress in Perote, Veracruz. In 1785, the *fiscal*'s sibling was in Mexico City because, Joaquín de Posada y Soto signed as witness in Ana de Zayas's last will of 22 Dec. 1785; "Zayas 1785 Testament," 195.

<sup>217</sup> This painting is part of the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum collection in San Francisco.

<sup>218</sup> For José de Gálvez's participation in the creation of the *Compañía de Filipinas*, see María de Lourdes Díaz Trechuelo Spinola, *La Real Compañía de Filipinas* (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos, 1965).

III.<sup>219</sup> In addition, both participated in the administration of Matías de Gálvez's pet institution, the Academy of Fine Arts of San Carlos. In 1788 the Crown asked superintendant Mangino to return to Spain to occupy an office at the Council of the Indies. Posada took over the directorship of the Academy at that time. Following this pattern, when Posada obtained the appointment of *fiscal* at the Council in Madrid, Fernandez de Córdoba became the art school director in 1793. In this way, they secured continuity and control over their political uncle's cultural legacy.

### **The Brief Rule of Bernárdo de Gálvez in New Spain**

Without male descendants of his own, José de Gálvez hoped that the prestige of his family name would reach posterity through his nephew Bernardo. Francisco de Saavedra wrote in his memoirs that the son of Matías was the Andalusian minister's "*ídolo de su afecto, y en quien cifraba las esperanzas de su posteridad.*"<sup>220</sup> The end of the 1779-1783 war caught the new Conde de Gálvez in Guárico (in modern Venezuela) in the middle of planning an invasion of Jamaica that never happened. His second son, Miguel de Gálvez Saint-Maxent, was born there. In 1777, in Louisiana, Bernardo de Gálvez had

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<sup>219</sup> Gálvez's intermediation was obvious in both cases. According to Rodríguez García, the minister of the Indies submitted seven candidacies for (non-pensioned) crosses of the order of Charles III in mid-1785. Posada's was one of the candidates and the rest were diverse functionaries with jobs related to the imperial administration; see Rodríguez García, *El fiscal de real hacienda*, 54n178. The king approved Gálvez's suggestions *en masse* at the end of July. For the case of Fernández de Córdoba, his candidacy was presented from his position of *oficial* of the Ministry of the Indies. His cross was announced in December 1785, but according to his file, the Crown approved it until the end of 1786. José de Gómez wrote in his memoirs that the regent of the *Audiencia* condecorated Fernández de Córdoba on 30 January 1787; "Pruebas Carlos III Fernández de Córdoba 1786;" and Gómez, *Diario de sucesos*, 168-169.

<sup>220</sup> Saavedra, *Los decenios*, 278. In another passage Saavedra comments that José de Gálvez loved his nephew "*con una especie de idolatría*," *ibid.*, 275.

married a young, beautiful widow named Felícitas de Saint-Maxent, a creole.<sup>221</sup> The first daughter of the couple, Matilde, was born in New Orleans in 1778. The Count and his family returned to Spain after the war, but very soon he asked for another commission in the Americas. In June 1784, the king appointed him governor and captain-general of Cuba. In his transatlantic trip he stopped at La Guaira to greet his dear friend Saavedra, appointed by José de Gálvez as intendant of Venezuela. He learned about his father's delicate health there and left immediately to take possession of his office in Havana.<sup>222</sup> He was captain-general of Cuba for only a few months because news that promoted him to the viceroyalty of New Spain reached the island very soon. He left Havana in early May and entered Mexico City in June 1785. His government lasted seventeen months, one month less than Matías' because he died on 30 November 1786.

Many hypotheses have been offered to explain why Bernardo de Gálvez died so young. Some historians even argue that the wounds from Apache arrows and spears he received in his youth never healed. Others maintain that the immediate cause was a bad fall off his horse. The truth is that he was very sick. A chronicler of the viceregal court, José de Gómez, reported that the health of the viceroy began to seriously decline in July

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<sup>221</sup> Felícitas Saint-Maxent's late husband was a merchant, who brought the first sugar mill to New Orleans. She had a daughter from her first marriage, María Adelaida de Estrehan. Governor of Louisiana Bernardo de Gálvez married Saint-Maxent secretly because two rules played against him: the Crown's prohibition for functionaries to marry locals and the principle that all members of the military required an official permit to marry. Years later, he obtained the required, after-the-fact authorizations; Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 95-96.

<sup>222</sup> Saavedra, *Los decenios*, 254-255. Nineteenth-century historian Jacobo de la Pezuela affirms that in Spain, Bernardo had been told that he would succeed his father at the Mexican viceroyalty; perhaps this explains why he decided to hurry his trip; see Pezuela, *Historia de la isla de Cuba*, 3:199.

1786. Francisco de Saavedra wrote in his diary that his friend had died from a gastrointestinal illness acquired years earlier in Guárico. He identified it as dysentery.<sup>223</sup>

Matías was a very well-liked viceroy, but his son Bernardo was wildly popular. The elder Gálvez was famous for his humility and candor,<sup>224</sup> and Bernardo for his festive character, and for his active role in palliating the horrors of the acute humanitarian crisis caused by the early frosts of August 1785 that destroyed that year's corn harvest and unleashed hunger and disease. In our days both Gálvezes would have been labeled as populists, given the numerous fascinating anecdotes there are about their rules. They include Matías de Gálvez walking the streets and praising the quality of an artisan's leather work or tasting the prisoners' food at the infamous prison of La Acordada to make sure the inmates were receiving adequate meals. For the case of the Conde de Gálvez, remarkable passages in his rule are his pardoning of a death sentence for three condemned prisoners, an episode that ended up in public acclamations across Mexico City; when he sang the prayers at the celebration of a death mass on behalf of a poor indigenous family who could not afford one; in fiesta days, his arrivals to the bullring driving a small chariot with the beautiful *virreina* at his side, or him throwing all the handkerchiefs of his family to the ring to celebrate an excellent bullfighter's performance; and finally, the Count openly shedding tears for the people when he was told there was no more corn available at the public silo. Bernardo de Gálvez's popularity

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<sup>223</sup> Gómez, *Diario de sucesos*, 162. In his diary Saavedra wrote that while in Guárico (1782-1783), Bernardo de Gálvez acquired the illness, then, in Spain he could not cure it and when he returned to La Guaira in 1785 he was "very thin and looked bad (*desemejado*).” Saavedra also expressed his worry about the Conde de Gálvez's future in Mexico that was "*un país no el más propósito para especie de disentería que padecía, y a mi modo de entender la tenía muy radicada*;" Saavedra, *Los decenios*, 254, 257, 269-270. It must have been a chronic case of dysentery.

<sup>224</sup> Several authors concur in these characteristics but the above adjectives are from Bustamante, *Suplemento a la Historia de los tres siglos de México*, 3:52.

and his continuance of his father's project of building a recreational house for viceroys in Chapultepec, but adding to it some fortress-like characteristics, gave way to rumors among Mexicans, that he harbored a secret plan to turn New Spain into an independent kingdom. That would have been the ultimate twist of the story of José de Gálvez's nepotistic activities, but in the early-nineteenth century the great German explorer, Alexander von Humboldt weighted the evidence against these accusations enough to leave them without any credibility.<sup>225</sup>

The *virreina* Felícitas de Saint-Maxent gave birth to a girl less than two weeks after the death of her husband. The posthumous daughter of Bernardo de Gálvez had a lavish public baptism, briefly mentioned in chapter one, that can be interpreted as one more effort by the authorities of Mexico City to please the minister of the Indies with a show of unstinted praise for his family.<sup>226</sup> Again, José de Gálvez did everything in his power to protect his nephew's widow and children. He obtained the approval of 30,000 pesos for their trip back to Spain. Moreover, the Crown awarded Saint-Maxent with a life pension of 2,500 pesos (50,000 *reales de vellón*) a year; her son Miguel obtained the

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<sup>225</sup> Humboldt, *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, 3rd ed. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1822), 2:77-79. The explorer wrote that men of respectability held that theory but he, in his role as historian did not give credence to accusations of such a grave nature. Nevertheless, Bustamante argued in favor of the rumor and added that the king was greatly upset with both the nephew and the uncle as many complaints about Bernardo de Gálvez's intentions reached his office; see his *Suplemento a la Historia de los tres siglos de México*, 3:61-65 and 75. For Lucas Alamán, the Crown's disapproval of his rulings caused the Count of Gálvez such a distress that he fell ill and died; see his appendix to *Disertaciones*, 76.

<sup>226</sup> For a description of the lavish baptism of Bernardo de Gálvez's posthumous daughter, see Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1296-1297; see also Gómez, *Diario de sucesos*, 167. Felícitas Saint-Maxent named her daughter María Guadalupe, in honor of the virgin and patroness of New Spain.



rents from his father's *encomienda de Bolaños*; the daughter Matilde got 300 pesos; and the new baby, 200 pesos.<sup>227</sup>

In a pattern reminiscent of the cases of “extended nepotism” toward the family of the *virreina* Ana de Zayas, the relatives of Felícitas de Saint-Maxent also benefited through the patronage of the Gálvezes. Bernardo de Gálvez's father-in-law, Gilbert Antoine de Saint-Maxent, was a wealthy French merchant specialized in Indian trade along the Mississippi basin. He had supported the Spanish government since the transfer of sovereignty from France in 1765. Saint-Maxent served as captain of militias and married his oldest daughter, Isabel, to Governor Luis de Unzaga (1770-1776). During Bernardo de Gálvez's governorship, the Crown initiated a colonization project for Louisiana with people from the Canary Islands—not surprisingly, while Matías de Gálvez was stationed in the archipelago. At least two of the Canarian-settled towns received “Galvecian” names: Galveztown and Valenzuela (in honor of José de Gálvez's wife). Gilbert Saint-Maxent and later one of his sons were involved to a considerable degree in the establishment of the first settlement.<sup>228</sup> Bernardo de Gálvez's father-in-law also conducted espionage on behalf of the Spanish government in British towns and fought at his side in the captures of Mobile and Pensacola. The Crown awarded Saint-Maxent with the appointment of lieutenant governor in charge of Indian affairs, an *ad hoc* position invented by the minister of the Indies. In 1781-1782 he traveled to Europe. In

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<sup>227</sup> Gómez, *Diario de sucesos*, 175. José Gómez does not specify that the 2,500 pesos that Saint-Maxent would receive were a yearly income but I could confirm it in Condesa de Gálvez to Floridablanca, Mexico City, 23 May 1787, AGI, Estado, Leg. 40, n. 4. For José de Gálvez's successful negotiations to obtain better terms on behalf of his great-nephew Miguel regarding the succession of Bernardo de Gálvez's *encomienda de Bolaños*, see Gálvez to Floridablanca, Aranjuez, 15 Apr. and 22 Apr. 1787, *ibid*.

<sup>228</sup> Galveztown is now called Galvez, LA, an unincorporated community south of Baton Rouge. In 1785 Bernardo de Gálvez ordered José Antonio de Evia to explore and draw a map of the coast of the Gulf of Mexico; Evia gave the name of Galveztown to the island that is now Galveston, TX.

Paris he showed a map to the Conde de Aranda that established the border between the United States and the Spanish Empire as a straight line dividing the Appalachians from the Mississippi basin. The proposed territory included the newly founded towns—Galvestown, Valenzuela, New Iberia, etc—and the Bay of Pensacola had the name of the Bay of Galvez. In an interesting development, at the end of 1783, Bernardo de Gálvez issued an order of arrest against his father-in-law on smuggling charges that were not solved until 1799.<sup>229</sup> Thus, after his triumphant tour through France and Europe in which he practically proposed the foundation of a Gálvez-themed territory in North America, Gilbert Saint-Maxent ended up out of the system of favoritism that revolved around the Andalusian minister. Beside Felícitas Saint-Maxent, other members of this New Orleanian family continued to receive benefits from this system, however, as will be seen shortly.

### **The First Intendants of New Spain**

The establishment of the intendancy system in practically the totality of the Spanish Empire, with the major exception of the viceroyalty of New Granada, was José de Gálvez's central administrative reform. This project occupied the Andalusian minister's mind from the times of the *visita general* of New Spain. In 1768, together with

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<sup>229</sup> The new governor of Louisiana, Esteban Miró seized the Saint-Maxent estate in New Orleans which had the significant value of 248,125 pesos. According to the investigation, Saint-Maxent participated in a smuggling ring along with Francisco de Miranda, the future precursor of Venezuelan independence. The case took years to resolve and Saint-Maxent was found guilty in 1799. He had to pay around 22,000 pesos or face the seizure of his property. He had died by that time. When the authorities asked his heirs, at that time represented by the Conde de Castro-Terreño, the husband of José de Gálvez's daughter, they denied any knowledge on the matter and an order was sent to the governor of Louisiana to see if he could cash the sum. Practically all the above information on Gilbert de Saint Maixent comes from Ramón Ezquerro, "Un patricio colonial: Gilberto de Saint Maxent, teniente gobernador de Luisiana," *Revista de Indias* 10, (1950): 97-170.

Viceroy Marqués de Croix, he designed a general plan to introduce the intendency system in New Spain, a scheme that the Crown applauded and promptly approved.<sup>230</sup> In a few words, an intendency was an intermediate provincial jurisdiction that originated in seventeenth-century France. When the Bourbon dynasty occupied the Iberian throne, the intendancies advanced slowly over the Spanish territory. In the road toward its full implementation in Spain, the system faced many obstacles and, at some points during the first half of the eighteenth century, it even suffered reversals.<sup>231</sup> Under the direction of the dynamic Marqués de Esquilache (minister of War and Finances in the 1759-1766 period), the intendancies finally reached the Americas.

The first intendency set up in Cuba had the fiscal functions attributed to this type of provincial administration in Spain but it did not have any significance in terms of space since the Havana intendency simply meant an office in charge of administering finances without any particular territorial jurisdiction.<sup>232</sup> The spatial dimension of the colonial intendancies began to take shape with the Gálvez-Croix plan of 1768, because it proposed the division of the viceroyalty of New Spain into eleven new provinces.<sup>233</sup>

What is important to note here is that despite the success of Gálvez's plan after its initial formulation—the king approved it in 1769—the Andalusian minister could not implement it until 1787. In fact, the new Río de la Plata viceroyalty and then Peru had

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<sup>230</sup> “Informe y plan de intendencias para el reino de Nueva España presentado por el Visitador D. José de Gálvez y el Virrey Marqués de Croix, y recomendado por el Obispo de Puebla y el Arzobispo de México,” Mexico City, 16, 20, and 21 Jan. 1768, reproduced in Navarro García, *Intendencias en Indias*, appendix 2, 164-181. Charles III approved the plan in August 1769 according to *ibid.*, 39.

<sup>231</sup> For the pre-history of the intendancies in the Spanish Empire consult *ibid.*, chapter 1; Ricardo Rees Jones, *El despotismo ilustrado y los intendentes de la Nueva España* (Mexico City: UNAM-Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1979), 47-73; and Lynch, *Spanish Colonial Administration*, chapter 3.

<sup>232</sup> Navarro García, *Intendencias en Indias*, 4 and Lynch, *Spanish Colonial Administration*, 51. Later Cuba was divided in three intendancies, thus adding the spatial dimension.

<sup>233</sup> The 1768 plan proposed a general intendency in Mexico City and the rest in Puebla, Oaxaca, Mérida or Campeche, Valladolid, Guanajuato, San Luis de Potosí, Guadalajara, Durango, Sonora, and California.

their intendancy system established before New Spain, in 1782 and 1784, respectively. This happened because the spatial reconfiguration of the Spanish Empire during the Gálvez era was not a simple process of decree and execution. It has already been mentioned how viceroy Bucareli blocked the Andalusian minister's attempts to introduce the new administrative divisions. In key areas of the Empire, such as New Spain, the establishment of the intendancy system involved step-by-step developments, sometimes slowed by negotiations and by weighing the opinion, the pros and cons, of many experts. Indeed, the fact that the Ordinance of Intendants of 1782 (that is, the definitive legislation on how to run the intendancies, originally conceived for application in New Spain) was first adapted to the viceroyalty of Río de la Plata reveals that in areas with less powerful local elites, the Crown had more leverage to advance this type of decrees that changed the distribution of power toward new regional centers of power.<sup>234</sup>

Gálvez wanted to have his brother, and then his nephew, at the highest office of New Spain not just to increase his family's prestige and privileges but to be able to finally introduce the new administrative system in the richest colonial territory with the help of the individuals he trusted most. Many scholars have argued that if there is a thread that runs throughout the majority of Gálvez's reforms, this would be his concerted attempt at reducing the power of the viceroy.<sup>235</sup> For example, the intendancy system as developed by Gálvez during his tenure of the Ministry of the Indies included the figure of the superintendant general of the royal treasury which, as we read in Chapters One and

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<sup>234</sup> But even in this new viceroyalty, the developments of the system advanced by trial and error and by following recommendations from royal officials located in the regions subject to change. Such are the cases of the province of Tucumán and Puno in Río de la Plata and Peru that I mentioned in my presentation: Zepeda Cortés, "The Territorial Reconfiguration."

<sup>235</sup> See for example, D. A. Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico*, 44. The author even suggests Gálvez's desire to abolish the institution altogether.

Two, stripped from the viceroy his power to exercise control over the financial affairs of the colony. It is thus ironic that Gálvez launched his definitive attack on the viceroyalty precisely after his brother and nephew assumed this position.

The great tragedy of José de Gálvez's career as a reformist was the seemingly contagious fatality that besieged his family and himself eventually. The Ordinances for the establishment of intendancies in New Spain were a development of a similar document approved for the viceroyalty of Río de la Plata in 1782.<sup>236</sup> Gálvez expected that this set of rules would become the ultimate reference for the rest of the new provincial administrations in the Empire. The death of his brother must have delayed the ordinances' publication but the minister of the Indies still had the resource of his nephew Bernardo to execute them. The Ordinances were published on 4 December 1786, exactly five days after the Conde de Gálvez's demise. As Eric Wolf noted, "a reliance on kin may also entail liabilities to one or the other member of the partnership."<sup>237</sup> In such an entrenched nepotistic network, death of one member was no doubt a liability for the functioning of the whole system. Yet, Gálvez might have succeeded in implementing his intendancy plan even without his relatives ruling New Spain. If the Andalusian minister had not died on 17 June 1787 there would still have been a chance that the intendancies as designed by him would work because of his network of protégés, from the beginning an intrinsic part of the system.<sup>238</sup> Intendancies characterized the last decades of the Spanish imperial administration in the American continent. The death of José de Gálvez

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<sup>236</sup> *Real Ordenanza para el establecimiento é instrucción de intendentes de ejército y provincia en el reino de la Nueva-España*, Madrid, 1786 (Facsimile of the first edition with introduction by Ricardo Rees Jones; México: UNAM, 1984).

<sup>237</sup> Wolf, "Kinship, Friendship, and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies," 171.

<sup>238</sup> Since 1770 he had suggested men he could trust, such as Cossío and Mangino, to occupy the offices of provincial intendants.

in June 1787, however, allowed his successors in the ministries of state and at the viceroyalty seats to adapt many of the Ordinances' most radical features. Ultimately, Gálvez's legacy survived through his many protégés that became intendants.

David Brading writes that in the definitive establishment of the intendancy system in the second half of the 1780s, Gálvez only appointed one Creole as intendante and "for the rest he turned to his family, to Málaga and to his dependents;" thus, in the end at least four of the twelve *intendentes* were relatives of Gálvez.<sup>239</sup> Nineteenth-century statesman and historian Lucas Alamán first noticed this type of "extended nepotism" (as I call the phenomenon) when he recognized an existing kinship relationship between Bernardo de Gálvez and two of the intendants—Juan Antonio de Riaño and Manuel de Flon, appointed to Valladolid and Puebla, respectively—through the New Orleanian Saint-Maxent family.<sup>240</sup> Brading also identifies Riaño and Flon but does not mention who the other two relatives were or the rest of the Andalusian minister's protégés appointed to the intendancies. Allow me first to explain the relationship between the Conde de Gálvez, Riaño, and Flon.

Riaño and Flon were Bernardo de Gálvez's friends and they also got married with daughters of Gilbert de Saint-Maxent. Let us remember that the minister of the Indies' nephew and his friend Francisco de Saavedra participated in the disastrous 1775 Algiers Expedition under the command of Alejandro O'Reilly. The ties of camaraderie created among the second-generation Gálvez and his peers in this North African military adventure were going to be crucial for his uncle's future "extended nepotism." Eleven

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<sup>239</sup> Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico*, 64.

<sup>240</sup> Alamán, *Historia de Méjico desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año de 1808 hasta la época presente* (Mexico City: Imprenta de Lara, 1849), 1:75-76.

years younger than Bernardo de Gálvez and Saavedra, Juan Antonio Riaño also participated in O'Reilly's disastrous expedition. Years later, naval lieutenant Riaño fought side by side with the Andalusian minister's nephew in the capture of Pensacola.<sup>241</sup> Showing his new rank of lieutenant commander, Riaño married Victoria de Saint-Maxent in New Orleans. He then returned to Spain but soon he asked for transfer to the army to serve under Viceroy Bernardo de Gálvez. Unfortunately, Riaño arrived just in time to attend his friend's funeral. The Crown issued his appointment as intendant of Valladolid on 26 October 1786. He assumed his office in 1787 and five years later he became intendant of Guanajuato and had a brilliant career as administrator there. He died, along with his son, during the siege of that city by the rebel army of Father Miguel Hidalgo in 1810. For his part, Manuel de Flon, the Conde de la Cadena, had also participated in the siege of Pensacola. He was captain of the infantry regiment of Navarra. He attended the Saint-Maxent/Riaño wedding and later he also married a daughter of the French merchant: Mariana. His title of intendant of Puebla dated from 19 October 1785. He had a place of honor next to Riaño at Bernardo de Gálvez's funeral. Oddly enough, he suffered the same fate as Riaño: he died in the wars of Independence, although later, in 1811, and therefore had a chance of becoming an active participant of the royalist forces for some months. In his prosopographical study of the intendants of New Spain, Luis Navarro García classifies Riaño and Flon in the category of "distinguished intendants."<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> According to Eric Beerman, Riaño was following Bernardo de Gálvez in another smaller ship in the dangerous sailing across a sandbar to enter the Bay of Pensacola under the fire of the British guns. Humorously, Beerman suggests that Bernardo de Gálvez motto of "Yo solo" should be changed for "I alone, accompanied by my brother-in-law;" see Beerman, "'Yo solo' not 'solo:'"

<sup>242</sup> Luis Navarro García, *Servidores del rey: los intendentes de Nueva España* (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2009), 62. Navarro argues this despite the fact that Flon and Riaño were not colonels at the time of their appointments to the intendancies, even though José de Gálvez had suggested that intendants coming from the army should had a rank equal or bigger than colonels; see *ibid.*, 49-50.

The other two of the “four Gálvez relatives” mentioned by Brading must have been Antonio de Mora y Peisal and Lucas de Gálvez, appointed to Oaxaca and Yucatán, respectively.<sup>243</sup> Unlike Riaño and Flon, they had been commissioned to fill these offices after the publication of the 1786 Ordinances: Mora on 21 February and Gálvez on 15 April 1787. I mentioned Antonio de Mora above because he was married to María Josefa Fernández de Córdoba y Zayas, sister of Ana and Francisco, Matías de Gálvez’s favorite political niece and nephew. At the extraordinary age of 15, in 1776, Mora bought the position of regent for life in Málaga’s town council and took possession of his office in late 1777. In the 1790s, Viceroy Braciforte wrote about his probity and efficiency as intendant of Oaxaca. He held this post for 21 years and died in office in 1808. Mora and his wife María Josefa had nine children and, according to the *cabildo* of Oaxaca, they were poor when he passed away.<sup>244</sup> The fourth relative was a distant cousin of the family, Lucas de Gálvez, native of Écija, in the province of Seville. He was an old sea dog of the

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<sup>243</sup> What about the other intendants that, as Brading suggested, also had a relationship of some sort with Gálvez? 1) In chapter one, we met Fernando José Mangino (appointed as superintendent of the royal treasury and intendant of Mexico on 22 Jan. 1787). 2) When Matías de Gálvez left the Canary Islands for Guatemala, army engineer Andrés Amat de Tortosa directed the recruitment campaigns in the archipelago to bring colonists to Louisiana (commissioned to rule the intendancy of Guanajuato in Feb. 1787). 3) Bernardo de Gálvez named Enrique Grimarest as governor of the castle of Mobile after the capture of that port in 1780 (later, in March 1787, José de Gálvez assigned him the government of the province of Sonora). 4) Felipe Cleere was working at the royal treasury of San Luis Potosí in 1767 when visitor-general Gálvez arrived in the city to subdue the popular revolt initiated after the suppression of the Jesuit order; in 1776 Gálvez promoted him to accountant-general of the *alcabala* and *pulque* administrations in Mexico City; in February 1787 he received the office of intendant of Zacatecas, but he did not like the job and the Crown allowed him to return to the Mexico City’s customs administration in 1792. 5) Pedro Corbalán was also a man of Gálvez since the visitation. He was the first intendant of the first administration of such kind established in the viceroyalty (the Intendancy of Sonora, 1770). Also in February 1787, the minister of the Indies elected him to rule the province of Veracruz. 6) There is no clear connection between Gálvez and Bruno Díaz Salcedo (appointed to San Luis Potosí in March 1787), except perhaps the fact that he was a lawyer, who had been attorney of the royal councils in 1765, and directed a college in Málaga (but he was from a village in the province of Toledo). Finally, I could not establish a relationship with Felipe Díaz de Ortega (intendant of Durango, named in 1785) and the Creole Antonio de Villaurrutia (Guadalajara intendency, appointed in March 1787). Most of the information in this paragraph comes from *ibid.* 67-156.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, 132-133. Navarro classifies Mora in the category of “distinguished intendants,” along with Riaño and Flon; *ibid.*, 62-63.



Spanish navy born in 1739. Gálvez also accomplished several missions as a corsair. He occupied the office of intendant of Yucatán until 1788; a year later, the Crown promoted him to the governorship. He was doing an impressive work in the peninsula but on 22 July 1792, a man in a disguise murdered him. Lucas de Gálvez became the victim of one of the most interesting crime thrillers in Mexico during the Bourbon period.<sup>245</sup>

### **The “*Hermano Incómodo*”: Antonio de Gálvez.**

The death of his brother and beloved nephew devastated José de Gálvez. After learning about Bernardo demise's, he promptly dictated his last will on 10 April 1787. At that time, Miguel, the Andalusian minister's right-hand man for years, had departed to Prussia appointed as Spanish ambassador.<sup>246</sup> All these blows accelerated the death of the minister of the Indies. Francisco de Saavedra commented in his memoirs that he could almost visualize the minister's depression (“*ánimo abatido*”) in the confidential correspondence they maintained.<sup>247</sup> Gálvez still had a brother to count on, but it seems that at that fateful time, Antonio was more a source of trouble than support for him: he was the “*hermano incómodo*” (an inconvenient brother). In contemporary Mexico, this expression refers to the relative (usually a sibling) of a ruler, empowered through nepotism, and which becomes a source of embarrassment because his or her behavior in

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid., 106-108; and Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1339 and 1341-1342. There are books about Lucas de Gálvez's murder, see for example Ángeles Rubio Argüelles, *Asesinato en Yucatán* ((Málaga: Ediciones A.R.A., 1956) and a thesis of the same name written by Mark Lentz: *Assassination in Yucatan: Crime and Society, 1792-1812* (Ph.D. Diss., Tulane University, 2009).

<sup>246</sup> He became ambassador in Prussia in 1786. Later, Miguel de Gálvez held the same post but in Russia, at the court of Catherine the Great, where he kept promoting Málaga's wine until 1792. In that year, Charles IV allowed him to return to Spain but he died on his way back home, in Gotha, on 14 July 1792, aged 66.

<sup>247</sup> Saavedra, *Los decenios*, 278.

government is reprehensible.<sup>248</sup> Although usually ignored by historians, Antonio de Gálvez also played a crucial role in the functioning of the “Galvecian” networks of patronage, favoritism, and power.

The biography of the youngest Gálvez brother is the most fragmented, but it is no less extraordinary. Historians characterize him as the “black sheep” in the family. Unlike his siblings’ and nephew’s broad areas of operation, his primary location was the Andalusian coast; for this reason he has been mainly the subject of study of Malagueño historians. Pérez de Colosía characterizes him as: “proud and a little bit of a troublemaker;” “thirsty for power;” and “obstinate and intransigent.” For Santos Arrebola, Antonio de Gálvez was a “despotic man and a troublemaker.”<sup>249</sup> Authors that are initially apologetic of José de Gálvez’s brand of nepotism given the meritorious careers of Matías, Miguel, and Bernardo find an anomaly in Antonio. As we shall see, his life story has many interesting twists in which the links of kinship play a prominent role.

Baptized as Antonio Miguel Joaquín de Gálvez, he was born on 29 September 1728, after the demise of his father (also named Antonio). In 1750, he married Mariana Ramírez de Velasco, daughter of a local functionary (an *alférez mayor*) in Macharaviaya and Benaque. The couple did not have descendants but they adopted a girl that was born ca. 1768: María Rosa de Gálvez. Rumors abound on the biological origins of María Rosa, from the possibility that she was the illegitimate daughter of Antonio to the improbability

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<sup>248</sup> Mexicans associate the expression “*hermano incómodo*” with corruption and nepotism. The phrase originated in the mid-1990s, when Raúl, older brother of ex-President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994), was the protagonist of a series of embezzlement and murder scandals that ended up in his imprisonment for over a decade.

<sup>249</sup> Pérez de Colosía, “*Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada*,” 74, 76, and 84; Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 42.

that Charles III himself was her real father.<sup>250</sup> In a joint last will that Gálvez and Ramírez dictated on 23 July 1787, however, they declared to have reared and educated María Rosa since her childhood, treating her like their own daughter and they added, “because we know her parents are distinguished and illustrious, but we cannot mention their names because *just causes prevent us* from doing so.”<sup>251</sup> There is no doubt that they were not lying about giving their adoptive daughter an education, since María Rosa de Gálvez became a writer and is now considered a representative of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Spanish neoclassical literature. She married her cousin José de Cabrera y Ramírez, captain of militias in Málaga.<sup>252</sup> Documents attest that they had a stormy marriage and that he had a gambling addiction. When María Rosa de Gálvez and her husband moved to Madrid, they lived in separate houses and she became a protégé—some say mistress—of Manuel Godoy, minister of State, and favorite of Queen María Luisa. The Royal Print published Gálvez’s works (poems, tragedies, comedies, and a zarzuela) and her plays premiered in the capital’s theaters. Through Godoy and “the Gálvez family’s” (probably of José de Gálvez’s widow and daughter) influence, the Crown sent José de Cabrera to the United States as attaché of the Spanish delegation in 1803. María Rosa was now free, but she died in 1806.<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> Pérez de Colosía, “Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada,” 71.

<sup>251</sup> Last will of Antonio de Gálvez and Mariana Ramírez de Velasco (selected passage), Málaga, 23 Jul. 1787, in *Testamentos, capillas, enterramientos, fundaciones, gremios, donaciones*, ed. Andrés Llordén Simón (Málaga: Colegio de Abogados de Málaga, 1990), 79, my emphasis.

<sup>252</sup> José de Cabrera y Ramírez was born in 1771 in Vélez-Málaga and was the son of Clemente de Cabrera y Peinado; José Luis Cabrera Ortiz, “Los excesos de Don José Cabrera,” *Isla de Arriarán: revista cultural y científica*, no. 27 (2006), 93-107. Clemente de Cabrera y Peinado, treasury administrator of Vélez-Málaga, had been in charge of collecting Bernardo and Miguel de Gálvez’s proofs of nobility and purity of blood in Macharaviaya and Málaga when they applied for a cross of the order of Charles III; see “Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779” and “Pruebas Carlos III Bernardo de Gálvez 1777.”

<sup>253</sup> Pérez de Colosía, “Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada,” 72-74. Also “Gálvez de Cabrera, María Rosa (1768-1806),” *The Feminist Encyclopedia of Spanish Literature*, ed. Janet Pérez (Westport, CT:

Antonio de Gálvez, like his elder brother Matías, followed a career in the military, but there is no information as to his participation in any of the many Spanish wars or expeditions of those times. In fact, in 1793, when his widow claimed her inheritance rights from her husband's family, she mentioned that the youngest Gálvez sibling was never deployed for military action, and that his ranks were only honorary.<sup>254</sup> Antonio de Gálvez's real vocation was the fiscal administration. In 1768 he was inspector of the state tobacco monopoly in the province of Málaga.<sup>255</sup> In *Blasón y genealogía de la casa de los Gálvez de Macharaviaya* (1771), King of Arms Zazo y Ortega mentions that Antonio de Gálvez was then visitor-general of the royal revenue service of the kingdom of Granada.<sup>256</sup> Let us remember that from 1771 to at least 1775, Matías de Gálvez enjoyed the well-paid office of tobacco administrator of the Canary Islands. In January 1777, his brother Antonio arrived in Santa Cruz to succeed him in that position. Five months later, however, he embarked on a warship sailing to Spain. Apparently, he told no one about his trip except the archipelago's commandant-general (who, according to an eighteenth-century chronicler, gave him permission thinking that perhaps Antonio could intercede on

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Greenwood Press, 2002), 1:261. In the United States the diplomatic career of Maria Rosa de Gálvez's husband was a total disaster: Cabrera stole 32,000 *reales de vellón* from the Bank of Pennsylvania by forging the Spanish ambassador's signature. His trial became a cause célèbre in Philadelphia. He was condemned and sent to jail but the governor of Pennsylvania, who was the father-in-law of the Spanish Ambassador, granted him a pardon. He returned to Spain and apparently he could not claim any of the inheritance left by his wife; Cabrera Ortiz, "Los excesos de Don José Cabrera," 101-106.

<sup>254</sup> Mariana Ramírez de Velasco said of her late husband that he "*nunca obtuvo en el ejército destino alguno, ni más que el grado de coronel ad honorem*;" Last will of Mariana Ramírez Velasco (selected passages, hereafter "Ramírez will 1793"), Málaga, 3 Oct. 1793, in *Testamentos, capillas, enterramientos*, 97.

<sup>255</sup> Stein and Stein, *Edge of Crisis*, 201.

<sup>256</sup> Zazo, *Blasón*, 21. Granada's jurisdiction was called a kingdom until 1831 based on the principle that the crown of Castille was composed of various kingdoms. The province of Málaga belonged to that jurisdiction.

his behalf before his brothers in the future). An extremely bizarre series of events followed this insubordination.<sup>257</sup>

When Antonio de Gálvez's older brothers found out that he had returned to the Peninsula without any serious reason, they sent him back to Tenerife. On his way to the Canary Islands, however, his ship was captured by Moroccan corsair Alí Pérez. The corsairs and their prize dropped anchor in Salé. At the instance of the captain of his ship, Antonio de Gálvez resorted to wearing sailor clothes in order to go unnoticed. Eventually, writes Pérez de Colosía, "his pride" broke his anonymity. Gálvez put his "elegant clothes" back on and threatened the corsair with a Spanish declaration of war against Morocco, because his brother was the minister of the Indies.<sup>258</sup> From Salé, he wrote a letter to Sultan Mohamed ben Abdallah requesting the immediate release of the captured ship and its crew, and fashioned himself as a diplomatic agent with a treaty of peace proposal that would benefit trade. The truth was that both were rival, aggressive nations but Spain and Morocco were nominally at peace at this time. In addition, a Franciscan friar named José de Boltas was already conducting diplomatic negotiations on behalf of Charles III. A flabbergasted Boltas witnessed how Antonio de Gálvez managed to get a letter and gifts (a lioness and a magnificent Arabian horse) from the Moroccan sultan to the Spanish king. After spending two months in Africa, he returned triumphantly to Spain, and the Crown, most probably at his brother's instance, awarded

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<sup>257</sup> Guerra y Peña, *Memorias*, 458 and Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 74-78.

<sup>258</sup> According to Guerra y Peña, Antonio de Gálvez decided to stay in Morocco "claiming he wanted to redress the offense perpetrated against the Spanish flag;" see his *Memorias*, 458.

him with the position of interim (later, full) commandant of customs guards (*resguardo*) of the most important port in the Iberian Atlantic World: Cádiz.<sup>259</sup>

Pérez de Colosía maintains that Antonio de Gálvez must have spent his life finding ways to increase his personal wealth.<sup>260</sup> Indeed, he amassed an impressive quantity of real estate property in Andalusia, particularly in Puerto Real (Cádiz) and Málaga. Moreover, in some of the documents used to prove the nobility and purity of blood of the Gálvez brothers, he appears as the only sibling to own houses in Macharaviaya and, along with Matías, let us remember, it seems that he also possessed a hacienda in Santaella, Córdoba.<sup>261</sup> In 1789, the value of María Rosa de Gálvez's dowry amounted to 1.2 million *reales de vellón* distributed in eight haciendas, two olive groves, and one inn (*mesón*) in Puerto Real (near Cádiz). A year later, Antonio de Gálvez and Mariana Ramírez reformatted their daughter's dowry to substitute the Gaditano real estate with an assortment of rural properties in the province of Málaga that had the still significant value of 366,836 *reales de vellón*. Thus, the total value of Antonio de Gálvez's properties included in his daughter's two dowries amounted to approximately 1.5 million *reales de vellón*.<sup>262</sup>

Antonio de Gálvez also invested part of his fortune in his hometown. In 1790, he and his wife founded the chapel of Our Lady of El Rosario; the shrine does not exist

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<sup>259</sup> Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 74-79. The author also writes that, as commandant of the Bay of Cádiz, Antonio de Gálvez tried to support the businesses of Moroccan traders.

<sup>260</sup> "Su vida debió pasarla medrando con el fin de enriquecerse," *ibid.*, 82.

<sup>261</sup> See for example, "Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779," fols. 28 and 31.

<sup>262</sup> María Rosa de Gálvez married José de Cabrera on 2 July 1789. In March 1790, the new couple decided to return the properties in Gálvez's dowry to her parents because they did not intend to live in Puerto Real (where the haciendas were located). Then, Antonio de Gálvez and Mariana Ramírez reformatted their daughter's dowry; see Two deeds of dowry of María Rosa de Gálvez (selected passages), 1789 and 1790, in *Testamentos, capillas, enterramientos*, 80-85. The total value of Antonio de Gálvez's real estate as described in his daughter's dowries is comparable to the mid-nineteenth century sale value of a palace built by José de Gálvez's wife in Madrid, see chapter five, n. 4, *infra*.

today but it was located just outside the village of Macharaviaya.<sup>263</sup> The Andalusian minister's youngest brother also gave an important donation of 300,000 *reales de vellón* for the establishment of the elementary schools for boys and girls in his natal village. It was Antonio de Gálvez's idea to use the schools' surplus funds to offer low interest loans to peasants in need.<sup>264</sup>

Soledad Santos Arrebola writes that after Miguel de Gálvez left for his diplomatic appointments in Northern and Eastern Europe, and the minister of the Indies died, Antonio de Gálvez took control of the schools. He immediately cancelled the classes for girls and used their classroom to establish a silk factory with money from the schools' endowment. He also suppressed the monthly student awards and stopped the flow of resources for the college fellowships that had already been granted to outstanding students. The laid off girls' school teacher, Ana García, wrote to Miguel de Gálvez denouncing the situation. Miguel ordered the immediate reopening of the school for girls, the reinstatement of the periodical prizes and, finally, out of his own resources he paid the university scholarships. He accused the schools' governing *junta* of the mismanagement and threatened to send an official board of inspectors. The governor of Málaga also received an order from the Crown to conduct an investigation. Fortunately for the schools, perhaps, Antonio de Gálvez died in Madrid on 29 December 1792, at the age of 64. The new director, José de Madrid, asked his widow to reintegrate 30,882 misappropriated *reales* to the schools foundation.<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Molina García, *Historia de la villa de Macharaviaya*, 87.

<sup>264</sup> Santos Arrebola, *La proyección de un ministro ilustrado*, 305.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid., 310-311. In Antonio de Gálvez's and Mariana Ramírez's last will of Apr. 1787, José de Madrid appears as his will executor and mentions that he was working as an inspector (*vista*) of the customs house of Cádiz; see Last will of Antonio de Gálvez and Mariana Ramírez de Velasco (selected passages), Málaga,

José de Gálvez's brother enjoyed the significant annual salary of 75,000 *reales de vellón* in his position of commandant of the Bay of Cádiz's customs guards.

Nevertheless, Pérez de Colosía found out that at his death he owed 21,148 *reales* to the *Montepío de Reales Oficinas* (the mutual assistance fund for royal officers). Moreover, his heirs—his daughter and his niece (the Andalusian minister's daughter), most probably—litigated against the payment of this debt, but ended up reimbursing the amount in 1803.<sup>266</sup> Up to now we can think of Antonio de Gálvez as a sort of parasite within the Galvecian system: rebelling against his brothers (the Canary Islands incident) but also eager to flaunt his family ties; acquiring his dream job after playing a diplomatic charade upon the sultan of Morocco; destroying the family's project of a school for women; immensely rich, but a debtor, nonetheless. According to Wolf, "kinsmen may become parasitic upon one another, thus limiting the capacity of any one member to advance his wealth or power."<sup>267</sup> But Antonio de Gálvez was no parasite at all; he also played a part in increasing the power, and probably the wealth as well, of his brother, the minister.

Antonio de Gálvez took care of the Cádiz custom inspections in a context of flourishing Atlantic trade after the passing of the 1778 *Reglamento de Comercio Libre*. Stanley and Barbara Stein discovered a case brought before Minister of the Treasury Pedro de Lerena against Antonio de Gálvez. The investigation was initiated in 1785, that

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4 Apr. 1787 (hereafter "Antonio de Gálvez's and Mariana Ramirez's testament of April 1787," in *Testamentos, capillas, enterramientos*, 77. See more on José de Madrid as *interventor* of the Royal Factory of Playing Cards in Macharaviaya and as José de Gálvez's proxy in his natal village in n. 79, *supra*.

<sup>266</sup> Pérez de Colosía, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," 82.

<sup>267</sup> Wolf, "Kinship, Friendship, and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies," 171.



is, when José de Gálvez was still alive.<sup>268</sup> The whistleblower was Manuel María de Heredia, an official of the *Contaduría del Comercio Libre de Indias*, who accused the *resguardo* commandant of “openly tolerating if not colluding with Gaditano smuggling rings.” In his defense, the minister of the Indies’ brother readily accused “people of power and standing” with the charges brought against him. Lerena named an *alcalde de casa y corte*, Francisco Pérez Mesía, as visitor-general of Cádiz to conduct an investigation that began with the prompt dismissal of the customs administrator (not Antonio de Gálvez, since he was the head of the customs guards). Stein and Stein argue that just before Mesía’s appointment, Antonio de Gálvez asked for his retirement “confessing [to Lerena] that smuggling was beyond his control.” In his letter, he characterized smuggling as “a monster” that controlled Cádiz and himself as drained in strength and health due to his years of service. Then he took a leave of absence and left for Málaga but, for one reason or another, he returned quickly to his Gaditano office.<sup>269</sup>

Mesía issued his final report in August 1789, two years after José de Gálvez’s demise. In it, the visitor-general of Cádiz offered an impressive account of the poor and corrupt management of the port’s customs. He argued that Antonio de Gálvez was responsible for the institution of a system in which, instead of forcing merchants to deposit their full cargos at the customs for inspection and duty payments, the traders were allowed to deposit “samples” (“*muestras*”). Merchants could pass the rest of their cargo

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<sup>268</sup> The following is an account, with citations, from Stein and Stein, *Apogee of Empire: Spain and New Spain in the Age of Charles III, 1759-1789* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 200-203.

<sup>269</sup> Stein and Stein argue that Antonio de Gálvez returned to Cádiz as soon as he learned that Pedro Corbalán, also a creature of his brother, had been designated as his interim replacement. The reason sounds unlikely because, as we learned in n. 243 *supra*, at that time Corbalán was the long-time intendant of Sonora, soon to be appointed (February 1787) head of the intendancy of Veracruz.

without paying duties and without being inspected. On top of that, the “samples” had disorderly accounts. Mesía informed Lerena that “with these tactics, Antonio de Gálvez had enriched himself, bought properties in Puerto Real and in Málaga, as well as ships managed under the cover name of ‘Pablo Mayo’.”<sup>270</sup> Moreover, he had done this under “high protection at court.” In spite of the frankness of his accusations, the Steins indicate, Mesía had to be careful because the late commandant’s brother still had friends in Madrid, thereby he only “*obliquely charged* [Antonio de Gálvez] with open collusion” with Cádiz’s untrustworthy merchant community. The Crown responded with an order of retirement for Antonio de Gálvez, granting him an annual pension of 20,000 *reales de vellón*.

José de Gálvez’s youngest brother headed the *resguardo* in Cádiz at least from 1778. It is doubtful that the Andalusian minister did not know about Antonio’s enrichment, particularly since the first reports of his shenanigans began in 1785. Moreover, it seems that Minister Lerena and Antonio de Gálvez were former enemies. According to Francisco Saavedra, the arrival of Lerena to the Ministry of the Treasury had contributed to José de Gálvez’s depressing situation at the end of his life because at some point in the past, when Lerena had been in Seville, he had had scandalous disagreements (“*ruidosas desavenencias*”) with the commandant of the *resguardo* in Cádiz.<sup>271</sup> I have mentioned that the Andalusian minister dictated his last will on 10 April 1787, and precisely in that year, Antonio also issued two joint testaments with his wife, one on 4 April and the other on 23 July, a month after the demise of his powerful brother.

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<sup>270</sup> Mesía, “Relación”, Madrid, 20 Aug. 1789, AGS, Dirección General de Rentas, 2da. remesa, leg. 451 cited in *ibid.*, 203.

<sup>271</sup> Saavedra, *Los decenios*, 278. José de Gálvez, however, named Lerena as one of his last will executors in April 1787; see “Gálvez’s testament 1787,” 172.

Unfortunately, I do not have a complete copy of the latter document, but Antonio de Gálvez's last will of 4 July 1787 is a wonderful window into the mind of the Bay of Cádiz's commandant.

Antonio de Gálvez and Mariana Rodríguez declared that they would split their inheritance in half between their daughter María Rosa and their niece María Josefa de Gálvez, the child of the minister of the Indies. Antonio felt he had to justify this unusual decision and said: "in recognition and consideration" to Josefa de Gálvez's father for "I owe to his authority and protection the employments I have had and enjoyed; I have acquired and augmented everything I possess thanks to his favors and his intercessions on my behalf to obtain the favor of His Majesty." Let us remember that the Mesía investigation was already on its way, and therefore Gálvez added in his will that he had reciprocated these favors with "his efforts (*desvelos*) and hard work" to secure and augment the income of the royal treasury as the Royal *Contadurías* and Treasuries would demonstrate. Antonio de Gálvez had augmented his own wealth by capturing large and valuable smuggled cargoes (*comisos*), risking his life numerous times in the "dangers of the sea."<sup>272</sup> The youngest Gálvez sibling concluded by stating that he wanted the public to know ("*que se sepa*") that he possessed and enjoyed his wealth with "honor and clear conscience (*segura conciencia*)."<sup>272</sup> He had earned it through his zealous and disinterested service to the king, his will stated, without ever defrauding the royal accounts, sometimes even using his own money to serve the King better. He had kept documents to prove this

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<sup>272</sup> The second part of chapter five is all devoted to the policy of *comisos* as designed by José de Gálvez.

and also for his safety against “*cualquier desgraciado acontecimiento que pueda ocasionar la envidia.*”<sup>273</sup>

In May 1793, the heirs of Antonio de Gálvez—his widow, his adoptive daughter and her husband José de Cabrera, and the Conde de Castro-Terreño (on behalf of his wife, José de Gálvez’s daughter)—met in Málaga to divide his assets according to his will of July 1787. His wealth amounted to the outstanding amount of five million *reales de vellón* (around 250,000 pesos), the majority in the form of real estate. After the distribution, the widow obtained 1.2 million, the daughter 1.92 and, ironically, the niece 1.96 million *reales de vellón*.<sup>274</sup> In October of the same year, widowed Mariana Ramírez dictated her last will, a very bitter manifesto in which he blamed her husband and accused her political family of a “cruel despoliation (“*despojo*”) of her rights as widow. Ramírez said that when she and her husband dictated their joint testaments in 1787, Antonio had coerced her into leaving half their estate, earned during their matrimony, to Josefa de Gálvez. She had signed the document because she feared violence from her bad-tempered husband. As a widow, she was entitled to receive half of the marriage’s profits but because of her own ignorance she was swindled to give away what was rightfully hers. To make matters worse, earlier that year, she had been tricked once again by her political family during the division of her husband’s assets. She believed the heirs of José de Gálvez had exhibited “*una codicia la más delincuente y criminal.*” Josefa de Gálvez and her husband had taken away from her what she had earned in “a painful long career (*carrera*) of more than 40 years of marriage.”

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<sup>273</sup> “Antonio de Gálvez’s and Mariana Ramirez’s testament of April 1787,” 78.

<sup>274</sup> “Concordia celebrada entre los señores Mariana Ramírez de Velasco, don Pedro Ortega, don José de Cabrera y doña María Rosa de Gálvez,” Málaga, 27 Mar. 1993 and “Partición y adjudicación de bienes,” Málaga, 22 May 1793, in *Testamentos, capillas, enterramientos*, 86-94.

Mariana Ramirez argued that she had received legal advice and that now she was determined to dispute the content of the 1787 will with the exception of those clauses that benefited her daughter. She closed her testament-manifesto recognizing that she was old and sick, and that she expected to face many obstacles laid by her “evil and powerful” enemies. As a precaution, and before her assets ended up in the hands of her political niece, she assigned new universal heirs that, in addition to her daughter María Rosa, included many nephews and nieces from the Velasco family, and even some relatives with the Gálvez last name. She insisted that her political family had no need to augment their wealth and “known opulence” with what was rightfully hers, assets that would serve, after her death, “to give subsistence to an immense proportion of poor families.”<sup>275</sup> Mariana Ramírez was fighting a lost battle; she died three months later, on 13 December 1793. With the exception of the *reales* she left to her poorer nephews and nieces, her daughter must have inherited Ramirez’s state and when the female poet and writer died in 1806, she left all her fortune to none other than José de Gálvez’s daughter, Josefa.<sup>276</sup>

The question is: why did Antonio de Gálvez bequeath half of his fortune to his niece in April 1787? Did his powerful brother, who at the same time was preparing his own testament, pressure him? In late 1783, when Francisco de Saavedra went to Cádiz to prepare his trip to Venezuela in order to occupy his office of intendant, he interacted closely with the minister of the Indies’ brother. In Saavedra’s memoirs, Antonio de Gálvez appears simply doing his job to support the interests of his family as protagonists

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<sup>275</sup> “Ramírez will 1793,” 94-99. No doubt, Antonio de Gálvez’s last will execution was a nasty family affair. According to José Luis Cabrera Ortiz, at one moment, and for a brief period of time, the Count of Castro-Terreño put José de Cabrera (María Rosa de Gálvez’s husband) into jail after receiving threats from him; see his “Los excesos de Don José Cabrera,” 94.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 104.

in the war scenario: arranging the reception of a French squadron; offering his home in Puerto Real for Saavedra's talks with the French admiral, the Comte d'Estaing; and dispatching news about the recently-signed peace treaty to Guaricó, where his nephew Bernardo was.<sup>277</sup> A few years later intendant Saavedra had a problem with one of Antonio de Gálvez's protégés who had gone to Caracas to establish a new customs guard. The man was difficult to get on with because of his "infatuation" with the "*predominio casi absoluto que por su carácter irresistible y su conexión con el Ministro de Indias ejercía en Cádiz Don Antonio de Galvez en todos los ramos de la Hacienda.*"<sup>278</sup> There is no doubt that the Andalusian minister had placed his brother in the neuralgic center of the Spanish imperial economy, the question remains: did the brothers agree to split the profits?

### **Conclusion (with Evidence)**

In his *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, Humboldt wrote that Bernardo de Gálvez belonged "to a family that King Charles III had quickly elevated to an extraordinary degree of wealth and power".<sup>279</sup> The story of the "Gálvezes of Macharaviaya" is extraordinary indeed, a rags-to-riches drama with Cinderella undertones. Orphaned by their father, but with a strong-willed mother, these shepherd boys became ambassadors, knights of the order of Charles III, commandants of the busiest port in the Iberian world, ministers of state, viceroys of the richest Spanish colony, Counts, and Marquises. There was no magic; they climbed the meritocratic social

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<sup>277</sup> Saavedra, *Los decenios*, 219-225.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>279</sup> Humboldt, *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, 3rd ed., 2:22.

staircase, ascending via their successful legal and military careers. Along with the ecclesiastical career (which for one reason or the other the Gálvez clan avoided), these were the traditional means for upward mobility in the early modern era. Their contemporaries knew their story and a Malagueño author even wrote a play in their honor in 1787, entitled “*Los pastores de Macharaviaya*.”<sup>280</sup> This chapter has demonstrated, however, that a red carpet of nepotism defined in its most primeval form as “kin bias in behavior” lined the Gálvezes’ staircase. It also showed that the Gálvez brothers’ passage from obscurity to fame was firmly entrenched in a context of empire, of imperial competition and war, and more importantly, of large-scale state transformation and reform that they themselves were pushing. Even though they were not a prolific family, their nepotism extended to form an amazing system functioning with the oil of blood, loyalty, and *patria*. José de Gálvez was the brain of the whole operation but what I found truly fascinating is that his three brothers and nephew advanced their careers in the Spanish administration almost simultaneously with him. They could always count on him but they were there to support him, as well. Even Antonio de Gálvez, the “rebel” of the family, would not let his brother down and was performing a function in the system, as his unconventional split of his wealth in his last will suggests.

Adam Bellow distinguished between “old nepotism” and “new nepotism” in terms of the direction in which the nepotistic impulses flow. He says that in the “old” type, the nepotistic stream runs from parents to their offspring: they either hire their children or find jobs on their behalf. In the “new nepotism,” far more common in our days, Bellow argues, the younger generation has the willingness to take advantage of their parents’

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<sup>280</sup> It was published by Martínez de Aguilar in Málaga and apparently no copy exists today.

connections and it is more akin to opportunism.<sup>281</sup> In the case of the Gálvez family, the expert on nepotism would be surprised at the old, new, and multidirectional character of the kin and hometown favoritism they practiced. Adam Bellow writes that “the period between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe was *a golden age for nepotism*, in which the constraints of feudal society had been largely removed while the legal and bureaucratic rules of the modern state had yet to be imposed,” adding: “Europe was therefore an open field for dynastic ambition.”<sup>282</sup> For his part, Wolfgang Reinhard points out that this phenomenon was precisely part of the growth of the modern state. He gives an example: “From 1680 to 1700 the closest circle of ministers around Louis XIV of France consisted, with one exception, exclusively of members of the [rival] family clans of Colbert and LeTellier-Louvois.”<sup>283</sup> The phenomenon was not uncommon in the Iberian world, either. Floridablanca’s brother, Francisco de Moñino, was a member of the Council of the Indies and Spanish ambassador to Portugal. *Honnête homme* Ramón Posada y Soto was not shy of asking Gálvez for a promotion for his brother or a military honor for his toddler. Nepotism as the distribution of government posts based on kinship was a socially accepted practice. If such is the case, if favoritism toward one’s relatives or one’s hometown was part of the political horizon of the times, if it was everywhere and it seemed natural, why should we bother to study Gálvez’s nepotistic feats? What makes Gálvez’s case unique is that his practices deeply troubled his contemporaries.

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<sup>281</sup> Bellow, *In Praise of Nepotism*, 10 and more in 14-15.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

<sup>283</sup> Wolfgang Reinhard, “Introduction: Power Elites, State Servants, Ruling Classes, and the Growth of State Power,” in *Power Elites and State Building*, ed. Wolfgang Reinhard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 8.



Juan Manuel Viniegra had been secretary for José de Gálvez during the 1768-1770 Sonora military expedition. He informed the viceroy of New Spain and other relevant authorities about the delicate health of the visitor-general when Gálvez got sick and went mad in the Sonoran desert. When the recovered inspector was returning to Mexico City, a higher member of the *visita* team arrested Viniegra and two other minor functionaries on charges of “stealing” or “hiding” some official documents. Later Gálvez’s ex-secretary wrote an account in his defense that described what had really happened. In his opinion, the visitor-general wanted to hide the truth of his disease and they had been imprisoned for having done their job. At one point Viniegra reflected on the fact that Bernardo de Gálvez had also witnessed *and reported on* his uncle’s disease and asked:

*¿Cómo se podrá salvar la insufrible distinción de dejar en plena libertad a otros que tenían el mismo supuesto delito que nosotros mientras que ningún rigor pareció excesivo para mortificar nuestras personas? ¿Qué privilegio eximió a don Matías de Armona a quien V.I. [Vuestra Ilustrísima, Gálvez] llamaba “jefe de la conjuración” y a don Bernardo Gálvez, sobrino de V.I., que firmaron con nosotros los principales informes remitidos a S.E.[Su Excelencia, the viceroy] para haber estado el uno en su gobierno de California y el otro mandando la expedición militar de la Nueva Vizcaya cuando nosotros nos hallábamos encerrados miserablemente en Zacatecas y Tepozotlán? ¿La justicia económica daba margen para que el grado militar o el parentesco produzcan tan notables diferencias?*

The plan for the defense and colonization of Louisiana with soldiers and settlers from the Canary Islands executed by the Gálvezes in the late 1770s infuriated the highest authority in the archipelago, Governor Eugenio Fernández de Alvarado, the Marqués de Tabalosos. In October 1777, King’s lieutenant Matías de Gálvez received the order of raising a battalion for the province of Louisiana ruled by his son. Tabalosos opposed the

idea and declared that “if the Gálvezes wanted to make their fortune at the King’s expenses, he would not allow it, nor would he release any money from the treasury toward that end.” With the help of the Santa Cruz *cabildo*, Matías got Tabalosos’ consent, explaining to him that the Canarians would become settlers in Louisiana, not just recruits.<sup>284</sup>

Another telling passage comes from South America, a scenario that I could not include in this dissertation. It offers insights into the extent of awareness of Gálvez’s brand of nepotism. In a letter addressed to the bishop of Quito, Blas Sobrino y Minayo (1776-1788), reproduced in a chronicle of the Tupac Amaru rebellion, the anonymous author complained about the establishment of a custom house and talked about the “*perverso ánimo*” of José de Gálvez who had been “elevated to the ministry, for the disgrace of these Indies.” Then the author added, “*así se ven regentes, y aumentando número de ministros en estas audiencias, todos consanguíneos, deudos y dependientes de Gálvez. Los ha empleado remediando su indigencia y disimulando su ignorancia...*”<sup>285</sup>

Cathedral dean and historian, Gregorio Funes of Córdoba (1749-1829), cited by David Brading, complained,

for all American clerics the gate was shut, not merely for bishoprics but even for appointment to the seats of the cathedral chapters... never were the remaining civil and military positions distributed with such a one-sided prepossession in favor of the European Spaniards... to the point where every Spaniard, especially if he were Andaluz or Malagueño, simply for being so, was accredited with merit and capacity.<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Guerra y Peña, *Memorias*, 425-426.

<sup>285</sup> Anonymous letter signed as “*sus miserables súbditos*” to Bishop of Quito Blas Sobrino Moyano, in Melchor Paz, *Guerra separatist; Rebeliones de indios en Sur América; La sublevación de Tupac Amaru*, ed. Luis Antonio Eguiguren (Lima: Imprenta Torres Aguirre, 1952), 2:131.

<sup>286</sup> Gregorio Funes, *Ensayo de la historia civil de Buenos Aires, Tucumán y Paraguay* (Buenos Aires: 1856), 2:211, cited in Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico*, 38.

Gálvez's nepotistic practices elicited strong criticisms by his contemporaries because he represented change. He not only embodied Spain's efforts to modernize its empire, but new state powers that meddled in people's everyday lives. Gálvez's case had a slightly earlier parallel in Portugal: the prime minister of Joseph I, Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, the famous Marquês de Pombal (1699-1782). He also personified large-scale reform, both at the local and the imperial levels. Carvalho e Melo was also a scion of a family from the lower nobility. It almost seems as if Gálvez had followed word by word a script written by Pombal on how to rise to power: his family provided him with patronage and material support in his earlier years, and with collaborators when he became minister. The marquis appointed one of his brothers as head of the Portuguese colonial office and the other as governor of the province of Para in Brazil. Not surprisingly, the Pombal family became one of the wealthiest in Portugal.<sup>287</sup> It would be fascinating to write a serious comparative study of Gálvez and Pombal. Thus, nepotism became a problem in the early modern era when it was associated with state power and the problem of Gálvez is that he controlled the Spanish Empire. The Conde de Aranda was well aware of that.

In a letter to the Conde de Floridablanca written from Paris, the Spanish ambassador discussed the problem of having only one office, that of the Indies, in charge of all the affairs of government in the colonial possessions. He proposed to divide the imperial administration into different departments in order to expedite orders, to have checks and balances exerted between the departments themselves, and better employees—"many leeches have gone there," the Count wrote—who were experienced

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<sup>287</sup> On Pombal, see for example, Kenneth Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

and could be rewarded upon their return to Spain. On the prevalence of nepotism as part of the political culture, and the problem of Gálvez's particular type of kin favoritism and patronage, Aranda commented:

*Aunque cada ministro emplee sus parientes y paniaguados, podrá un ramo caer en una familia de sangre, o adoptiva, pero no todos en la misma, sino en cuatro o seis diversas, cuando en una sola mano aquel imperio, todos se llaman de un nombre bien sea por linaje, o por adopción, ¿y qué perjuicio no se sigue de esto al soberano y a los demás vasallos reducidos a un solo partido? Al menos siendo cuatro o seis hay mas caminos y más puertas abiertas*<sup>288</sup>

Luckily for Aranda, and for those dissatisfied with the Andalusian's minister style of governance, and with his amassed power and wealth, Gálvez and his closer relatives died one after the other, in a falling-domino effect, in the matter of a few years. The poor fertility of the family and the predominance of female heirs also contributed to their sudden vanishing. A popular *décima* celebrated:

*Un poco limpio accidente  
La vida a Gálvez quitó,  
Ya su poder acabó  
Mas la nación no lo siente;  
Málaga tan solamente  
Llorará por su paisano,  
Mas ríe el americano  
Y europeo comerciante,  
Pues ya tiene el navegante  
El mar libre de un tirano*

...

*Con ambiciosos furores  
El comercio disipó  
y América destruyó  
Por dar a su casa honores.  
Estos mentidos favores  
Como éran tan desiguales  
Tuvieron fines fatales*

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<sup>288</sup> Conde de Aranda to Floridablanca, Paris, 12 Mar. 1786, AGS, Estado, Leg. 4615, fol. 174.

*Pues se llevó ¡trance fuerte!  
 En poco tiempo la muerte  
 Dos virreyes generales*

....

*Los Gálvez se deshicieron  
 Como la sal en el agua,  
 Y como chispas de fraguas  
 Fósforos desaparecieron.  
 Bajaron como subieron  
 A modo de exhalación;  
 Dios le concede el perdón,  
 Sin que olvidemos de paso,  
 Que este mundo da cañazo  
 A quien le da adoración.<sup>289</sup>*

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<sup>289</sup> Selection of verses of *A la repentina muerte de D. José de Gálvez, ministro de Indias*, décimas, in Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 12.

Part Two

**How to Reform an Empire (and Make a Fortune in the Process): An Analysis of**

**José de Gálvez's Material Life and Sources of Personal Income**

## Chapter 4

### **There and Back Again: Gálvez's Material Life before and after the Visita General**

J'aime le luxe, et même la mollesse  
Tous les plaisirs, les arts de toute espèce,  
La propreté, le gout, les ornements:  
Tout honnête homme a de tels sentiments.<sup>1</sup>  
Voltaire, *Le Mondain* (1736)

### **Introduction to Part Two**

It is a truth universally acknowledged in the Iberian world that an individual appointed to an office in government will (and even must) increase his material wealth exponentially. Perhaps only a minority of public officials would openly accept this axiom today but its practice is not only a belief that society continues to have but also, time and again, a reality among bureaucrats and politicians at all levels in Latin America. Indeed, it is the height of folly to end one's term with less material wealth than you had at the beginning. To accrue a substantial personal fortune while holding a public position is part of the Iberian political culture. In the mid-eighteenth century, José de Gálvez was no stranger to this adage: during his bureaucratic career he managed to accumulate significant amounts of wealth, most of which was related to his specialization in colonial affairs and therefore originated in the New World. It is time to explore the Andalusian minister's material life and sources of personal income with a bird's eye view and ask how did he become a rich man in the first place? How did the general inspection experience affect his private fortune? What eventually happened to his money, including how did he spend it? After this, in the final chapter, I focus on personal funds derived from his specialization as colonial minister after 1776 such as his salaries and life

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<sup>1</sup> "I love luxury and even indulgence, all the pleasures, all the arts, cleanliness, taste, decoration; and so does every honest man."

pensions and pay particular attention to a specific source of income he, his widow, and his daughter acquired from a type of anti-smuggling imperial policy called *comisos*. Most of the materials in that chapter, particularly those related to contraband, are unedited to my knowledge.

The OED defines wealth as an abundance of valuable possessions or money. Beyond its personal dimension, wealth or material wealth may be an indicator of political strength, together with the size the Spanish Empire's budget, institutions, and positions that Galvez controlled. As I have argued earlier, political tensions fraught the period of imperial reform. In discourse, Gálvez and his supporters formed around him an aura of honesty, zealousness, and abnegation, the image of a royal functionary that never asked something for himself. On the other hand, political enemies portrayed Gálvez as an official who cut unjustifiable slabs of revenue from the royal treasury for his and his family's happy pockets. As with the case of nepotism discussed in the last section of the dissertation, the question of merit rises again. Gálvez advanced the Spanish Empire's reformist goals and it seems perfectly fine that he demanded a reward comparable to his merit and achievements. The matter that inevitably comes to mind is whether the wealth accumulated at the end of his life was decoupled somehow from his achievements. Merit and Gálvez's material prosperity were more or less entwined. Moreover, there is no doubt that the Andalusian took merit seriously and that one of the principles of his administration was that well paid, rewarded bureaucrats can perform a better job and are more trustworthy than those harassed by the prospect (or reality) of poverty. Some pieces of evidence, however, do cast a shadow over the deserving quality of Gálvez's income because these reveal an ambitious man, perhaps too worried for his and his family's



material well-being and always ready to request additional benefits. He was a minister who requested extraordinary rewards for what *he* deemed extraordinary services to the Crown.

Although this is a dissertation dominated by the male historical actors who populated the landscape of the colonial bureaucracy, women appear in this section linked in significant ways to Gálvez's material wealth. I offer a panorama that goes from his mother, Ana Gallardo, head of the Gálvez family, to his French wife, Lucía Romet y Pichelin, to his third wife, Concepción de Valenzuela the Marquesa de Sonora, to his only daughter, Josefa de Gálvez, and to the final heir of all the Gálvezes's private fortunes, Matilde de Gálvez, third Condesa de Gálvez, third Marquesa de Sonora, and daughter of Bernardo de Gálvez, a woman who married into a noble Italian family and moved the Gálvez family fortune to Naples. Narratives about women looking for resources, bequeathing property, gathering inheritances, and also enjoying the acquired wealth of their husbands and relatives will populate the center stage in this part.

My analysis also provides models of capital accumulation among the Spanish imperial bureaucracy. Despite Gálvez's lifelong general love for order and concern for the proper keeping of records, he did not leave, like his disciple Francisco de Saavedra, a detailed account of his personal income and expenses throughout his life.<sup>2</sup> Saavedra's *Memoria Testamentaria*, however, may serve as a point of comparison to analyze the fragmented evidence gathered in Gálvez's case and to distinguish patterns among

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<sup>2</sup> Francisco de Saavedra (1746-1819), an extraordinary historical figure in his own right, met José de Gálvez through the minister's nephew, Bernardo. He became one of José de Gálvez's men of trust in the early 1780s and he would work as intendant of Caracas under Gálvez's aegis. Find more on Francisco de Saavedra in chapter 3.

bureaucrats.<sup>3</sup> Yet, more than looking for a grand explanation and generalities, this section will take us closer to the details and intimacy of José de Gálvez's biography.

### **Before the New World: From Poor Shepherd to Affluent Widower**

When her husband died in the second half of 1728, Ana Gallardo was pregnant with her last son. At 27, she had to support the new baby and three other male children without the help of Antonio de Gálvez.<sup>4</sup> They had been married for twelve years and both spouses came from noble, old families in the village of Macharaviaya. They enjoyed local honors such as a preferential seat at the church, but the Gálvez-Gallardo family had not prospered economically.<sup>5</sup> In this sense, it is worth noting that the genealogical documentation prepared by the Gálvez brothers to confirm their *hidalguía* (nobility) in the 1770s refrains from mentioning their father's occupation.<sup>6</sup> Since H. I. Priestley's

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<sup>3</sup> Francisco de Saavedra, "Memoria testamentaria del Excmo. Señor D. Francisco de Saavedra," Seville, 6 Mar. 1814 (hereafter "Memoria testamentaria"), in *Sevilla en 1808*, ed. Manuel Gómez Imaz (Seville: Imprenta de Francisco de P. Díaz, 1908), 265-289.

<sup>4</sup> Baptized in Macharaviaya in July 1699, Ana Gallardo gave birth to five sons but records indicate that Andrés Luis died at young age. On 9 August 1728 her husband Antonio de Gálvez (born in 1691) signed his last will; Ramón Zazo y Ortega, *Blasón, y genealogía de la Casa de los Gálvez de Macharaviaya*, Madrid, 12 Dec. 1771 (facsimile of the first edition; Málaga: Instituto de Cultura de la Exma. Diputación Provincial de Málaga, 1972), 53 and Ana's last son, also named Antonio de Gálvez, was born on 29 September; see "Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Antonio Gálvez y Madrid Carvajal y Cabrera," 1783, AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp. 165.

<sup>5</sup> Ana and Antonio married in June 1716. According to a certificate written in 1772, the Gálvez family inhabited Macharaviaya and the twin village of Benaque for at least 200 years; "Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Miguel de Gálvez," 1779 (hereafter "Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779"), AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp. 60.

<sup>6</sup> Zazo, *Blasón*, and "Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779." The Gálvez brothers' great grandfather, Diego de Gálvez is the only person mentioned with an occupation on the Gálvez side: he had been mayor of Macharaviaya. On the Gallardo side, it is possible to find a more interesting story: Ana's father, Matías Gallardo, was *alcalde* of Macharaviaya and on his last will, he mentioned that his oldest son, José, was working on the Royal Service (no specifications); Isidoro Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez y sus alianzas* (Madrid: Isidoro Vázquez de Acuña-Villena Artes Gráficas, 1974), 1130 and Will of Matías Gallardo, Macharaviaya, 28 Nov. 1724 in "Pruebas Carlos III Miguel de Gálvez 1779," fols. 19v-21). According to Jacobo de la Pezuela, a nineteenth-century historian, the Conde de Fernán Nuñez, a contemporary of José de Gálvez, wrote in his "memorias inéditas" that Gálvez's father was a *labrador* (a peasant) in Macharaviaya that worked hard to support the career of his son. This does not correspond with

biographical sketch of 1916, it is customary to point out that José de Gálvez and his brothers were so poor that they had to take care of their own sheep when they were children.<sup>7</sup> An anecdote from the 1780s exposes the Gálvezes's relation to farming activities. One day in the 1783-1784 period, while supervising the paving works in Mexico City, Ana's oldest son, Matías de Gálvez, then viceroy of New Spain, stopped to talk with a leather tanner and asked him about his technique; he remarked that this leather was better prepared than the one he utilized when he used to cultivate his fields in Macharaviaya.<sup>8</sup> It is probable that the Gálvez-Gallardo clan owned and took care of land because the 1770s document of nobility proofs also declared that the Gálvez brothers "had never exercised any vile, low, mechanic trade and that they had sustained themselves from their own *haciendas*."<sup>9</sup>

Despite her economic hardships, Ana Gallardo sent her children to the local school in Macharaviaya's twin village, Benaque. José also performed acolyte duties at Macharaviaya's church, where he found a source of patronage which would be the

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available records and I have not been able to locate Fernán Nuñez's memorias cited in: Jacobo de la Pezuela, *Historia de la isla de Cuba* (Madrid: Carlos Bailly-Bailliere, 1878), 3:135n3. H. I. Priestley suggests too that Antonio de Gálvez was a poor farmer; see his, *José de Gálvez, Visitor-general of New Spain (1765-1771)* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1980; first published 1916 by the University of California Press), 2.

<sup>7</sup> See Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 2. Historian and genealogist, Vázquez Acuña attributes the shepherds' story to popular tradition; Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1156-1157. I have not found any document that supports that the Gálvez brothers were shepherds. The story of "absolute indigence" of the Gálvez-Gallardo family appeared too in the account of a nineteenth-century historian of Málaga; Francisco Guillén Robles, *Historia de Málaga y su provincia* (Málaga: Imprenta de Rubio y Cano, 1874), 599. It is a work listed in Priestley's bibliography.

<sup>8</sup> María Isabel Pérez de Colosía Rodríguez, "Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada," in *Los Gálvez de Macharaviaya*, ed. José Miguel Morales Folgera, María Isabel Pérez de Colosía Rodríguez, Marion Reder Gadow, and Siro Villas Tinoco (Málaga: Junta de Andalucía-Consejería de Cultura y Medio Ambiente-Asesoría Quinto Centenario-Benedito Editores, 1991), 32.

<sup>9</sup> "No han ejercido oficio vil, bajo, ni mecánico, manteniéndose de sus propias haciendas." It could mean *haciendas* in terms of landed estates, or *haciendas* in terms of their finances; Zazo, *Blasón*.

family's starting point in their way out of poverty.<sup>10</sup> The gleaming pink alabaster niche built for Ana's last remains, located in the center of the wall left to the altar in the Gálvez's family burial chamber in Macharaviaya's church, and the praying sculpture (the only one representing a female) in the hall of the crypt, indicate that her sons identified her as the head and *initial* source of sustenance for the family.<sup>11</sup> The more imposing (and closer to the altar) black marble catafalque dedicated to José de Gálvez, however, shows that he was responsible for the *final* economic success of the whole family.

Let us remember from chapter 1 that Gálvez became a lawyer of the Royal Councils in Madrid thanks to the patronage of two bishops—a decisive support that materialized in the completion of his university studies. The Marqués de la Corona, Charles III's original first choice for the position of visitor-general of New Spain, derided a pre-visitation Gálvez as a poor attorney, indistinguishable for many years among crowds of lawyers. I have not found records on the income earned by lawyers of the Royal Councils, but it is clear that more than his salary, Gálvez's marriage with Luisa Lucía Romet y Pichelin was a sort of springboard for his material wellbeing. Indeed, De la Corona pointed out that only because the Andalusian married a French woman and because he had become the lawyer of that nation's embassy, did the future visitor-general begin to make a name for himself.<sup>12</sup> In her book about the members of the Council of Castile in the 1650-1750 period, Janine Fayard found that her subjects of study married

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<sup>10</sup> See chapter 1, on patronage.

<sup>11</sup> Ana Gallardo y Cabrera signed her last will on 24 Feb. 1749; Zazo, *Blasón*. On the tomb, see José A. Jiménez Quintero, "El Panteón de los Gálvez de Macharaviaya," *Jábega*, no. 7 (1974): 46.

<sup>12</sup> Francisco Carrasco (Marqués de la Corona) to (José Martínez de) Viergol, 13 Mar. 1776, AHN, Estado, leg. 3211. Translation by Priestley: "A poor lawyer, undistinguished among the swarm of practitioners for many years, and first becoming known only as the attorney of the French after he had married for his second wife a French woman;" Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 4n3.

late in their lives not only because they spent years of study at the university, but also because they delayed their marriage “until they found a damsel or lady capable of facilitating a career promotion.”<sup>13</sup> Recently-widowed Gálvez found his career *and* his material promotion with Romet.<sup>14</sup> The marriage was celebrated on 2 August 1750. At the end of that year, Gálvez had his first recorded contact with the administration of the Spanish Empire and one of the first recorded expenses that I have found. He purchased the office of *alcalde mayor* of Zamboanga in the Philippines. The king granted him the office for “his services” *and the payment* of 1500 *pesos fuertes*.<sup>15</sup> This could have been his opening job in the colonial administration, yet there is no evidence that the recently married lawyer ever occupied that office, neither that he ever traveled to the Philippines.<sup>16</sup>

Luisa Lucía was almost a decade younger than José and she was born in Madrid on 6 June 1729.<sup>17</sup> Louis Romet and Marie Pichelin, her French parents, were from Paris and Versailles respectively. *Monsieur* Romet belonged to the Imperial Council of the Prince-Elector of Bavaria and was also the Prince-Elector’s minister in Madrid since

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<sup>13</sup> Fayard calculates that 79 per cent of the Council of Castile ministers for the Charles II period, and 57 per cent for Philip V reign were 30 to 49 years-old when they married; Janine Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille à l’époque moderne (1621-1746)* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1979), 288 and 311. Gálvez was 30 at the time of his marriage with Romet.

<sup>14</sup> Let us remember that Luisa Lucía Romet y Pichelin was Gálvez’s second wife. He had married María Magdalena de Grimaldo in 1748 but she died in June 1749.

<sup>15</sup> The document does not state the nature of “his services;” (?) to José de Carvajal y Lancaster, Buen Retiro, 9 Dec. 1750, AGI, Filipinas, leg. 118, n. 13.

<sup>16</sup> The purchased title had a provision that another Gálvez, Manuel, could occupy the office in case José could not. I still do not know who Manuel de Gálvez is.

<sup>17</sup> All the information on Luisa Lucía Romet y Pichelin and her family comes from Francisco Rodas Coss, “Introducción,” *México en el siglo XVIII: Recopilación de Documentos Relativos a D. José de Gálvez Gallardo*, (Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores-Embajada de México en Madrid-Comisión de Historia, 1983) and the notarial records printed in this book. Lucía was baptized on her birthday at the church of Saint Luis in Madrid; Baptism certificate of Luisa Lucía Romet, AHPM, vol. 17782, fol. 98 in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 59.

1719.<sup>18</sup> At the start of the 1740s, he was a widower who suffered from the chronic ailments of old age. Feeling that his days were close to the end, he decided to arrange all that was necessary for ensuring a comfortable living for his two surviving daughters, married María Luisa, and particularly Luisa Lucía, still a minor. The Romet sisters were entitled to different inheritances from the Pichelin family, explicitly from their mother, an older sister who died at a young age, and their grandfather, Jean Henri Pichelin who had been *ayuda de cámara* of the French king. For his part, Louis Romet ceded to her daughters the right to own two posts of *officier contrôleur vendeur de volailles in charge of inspecting the poultry* at the court of Paris,<sup>19</sup> and the liquid assets of 56 shares and five *diezmos* deposited at the French *Companie des Indes* in 1733 and 1739.<sup>20</sup> In 1740, Romet hired a *curador ad litem* to represent Luisa Lucía in any legal matters she could face and to make sure the Pichelin inheritance was equally divided between his two daughters.<sup>21</sup> At that time Luisa Lucía lived in a convent in the region of Brie, France but the family determined to bring her back to Madrid. In 1742, Romet named his older daughter's brother-in-law as tutor to administer Luisa Lucía's property. Luis Romet died in April of that year. Four months later María Luisa also lost her husband and she assumed the functions of tutor of her younger sibling.

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<sup>18</sup> Louis Romet must have represented Maximilian II Emmanuel (reign 1679-1726) first and then Charles VII Albert, Prince-elector of Bavaria from 1726 and Holy Roman Emperor from 24 January 1742 until his death in 1745.

<sup>19</sup> In Spanish, *veedor y contralor de gallinas de la volatería de la corte de París*. I found the correct name in French in Steven L. Kaplan, *The bakers of Paris and the bread question, 1700-1775* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 113.

<sup>20</sup> Power from Bernardo Dubocher, tutor of Luisa Lucía Romet, to Miguel L'Enfant, resident of Paris, Madrid, 23 Feb. 1742, AHPM, vol. 17782, fols. 109-111, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 71.

<sup>21</sup> Appointment of *curador ad litem* of Luisa Lucía Romet for Diego de Burgos, Madrid, 17 February 1742, AHPM, vol. 17782, fols. 99-102, in *ibid.*, 60-62.

Gálvez's second wife passed away a few years after their marriage. By 1754 documents reveal that the Andalusian lawyer signed a peaceful legal agreement with his sister-in-law, María Luisa. Gálvez was the widower and only heir of Luisa Lucía, but he recognized María Luisa as former tutor and administrator of his late wife's propriety. Through this deal, Gálvez would receive up to 8,000 *libras tornesas* divided in annual payments for the office of poultry comptroller in Paris which generated 900 a year.<sup>22</sup> Gálvez relinquished his right to review his deceased wife's accounts in France and to claim her real estate proprieties there.<sup>23</sup> It is interesting that he decided not to keep his wife's property in France and to my knowledge he never visited the Gallic country. A final point in the agreement with his sister-in-law was that everything that belonged to Lucía (and her family) in Spain, Gálvez could keep for himself.<sup>24</sup> Acquiring resources by marriage was not a strange life-path for Gálvez's generation of reformists. Famous enlightened Peruvian-born minister, Pablo de Olavide (1725-1803), who was in charge of the project of the rural colonies of Andalusia (1767-1776), had married to a spectacularly wealthy widow around 1754. The case of Olavide might be extreme, however, because at 30, he married a 50-year-old widow, Isabel Ríos. Her first husband was a wealthy merchant and she had inherited all his fortune. For their marriage, Ríos donated to

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<sup>22</sup> *Ajuste y convenio* between María Luisa Romet and José de Gálvez, Madrid, 8 Aug. 1754, AHPM, vol. 17810, fols. 131-134, in *ibid.*, 108. According to Marcelin Deforneaux, in those times the *libra tornesa* was equal to four Spanish *reales*; Marcelin Defourneaux, *Pablo de Olavide: El afrancesado*, trans. Manuel Martínez Camaró (Mexico City: Editorial Renacimiento, 1965), 386n2. Janine Fayard also confirms this exchange rate in her *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 439. Thus Gálvez would earn around 32,000 *reales* in total or 3,600 annual *reales* during the next eight years approximately.

<sup>23</sup> María Luisa mentioned in a document dated in Madrid, on 23 Aug. 1742, that the majority of her minor sister's property was in France. We also know that a merchant in Paris managed the fortune of Louis Romet. "Autos de nombramiento de tutora de la señora Doña [Luisa Lucía] Romet, hecho en la señora Doña María Luisa Romet, su hermana, en el día 23 de agosto de 1742," 1742-1754, AHPM, vol. 17782, fols. 493-497, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 78-84.

<sup>24</sup> *Ajuste y convenio* between María Luisa Romet and José de Gálvez, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 109. The document does not detail the properties of Luisa Lucía in France or Spain. Pedro Muñoz de la Torre, a future executor of Gálvez's 1765 will, signed as witness; on Muñoz de la Torre see *infra* n. 40.

Olavide a fortune of 6.3 million reales (around 300,000 *pesos fuertes*).<sup>25</sup> At any case, by early 1765, when the Crown commissioned José de Gálvez as visitor-general of New Spain, he had become a reasonable well-to-do person, although not as rich as Olavide, and not really powerful.<sup>26</sup>

### A Peek into Gálvez's Material Life before the *Visita General*

José de Gálvez must have had in mind the unfortunate death of his predecessor, the last appointed visitor-general Francisco Armona, who died while crossing the Atlantic, because he decided to write a will before leaving for New Spain. Written on 6 March 1765, it is a very simple and practical document that announced last wishes that were common in those times.<sup>27</sup> For example, he wanted to be buried with the habit of Saint Francis of Assisi as shroud (if it was available); he wished 400 masses for his soul (100 at Macharaviaya, at four *reales de vellón* each); and, as was customary too, he donated eight *reales* to Jerusalem and another eight *reales* to the two hospitals of the court (*General* and *Pasión*).<sup>28</sup> As executors he named seven persons and he allotted his younger brother Miguel as his universal heir (in addition of being one of the executors). The 1765 will reveals practically nothing about how Gálvez lived or what he owned; it is

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<sup>25</sup> Defourneaux, *Pablo de Olavide*, 33-34. I have not found connections between Peruvian Olavide and Gálvez, however.

<sup>26</sup> In this sense Pérez de Colosía writes that in 1765 Gálvez was a “rich, young, and ambitious widower;” Pérez de Colosía, “Rasgos biográficos de una familia ilustrada,” 45.

<sup>27</sup> Will of José de Gálvez, Madrid, 6 June 1765 (cited hereafter as “Will Gálvez 1765”), AHPM, vol. 18469, fols. 374-377, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 3-7. There are two wills from Gálvez available in records (this one from 1765, and another from 1787).

<sup>28</sup> In his last will of 1787, he let his wife choose the habit in which his body was to be shrouded. He also devoted more money to *misas* (2,000 at 6 *reales each*—that is 12,000 *reales* in total) and charity (Jerusalem and the *Pasión* and *General* Hospitals would receive 300 *reales each*).



therefore necessary to consult another document from 1765—one that appears as reference in Gálvez’s testament.

Before embarking for New Spain, the new assigned visitor-general ordered an official inventory of all his belongings. Since the early seventeenth century, colonial bureaucrats, first *corregidores*, and later under the reign of Philip IV, treasury officials, had to make a notarized catalog of their personal effects before taking office. The Crown imposed this mandatory measure to control her representatives and prevent abuse and malversation, in other words, so that they would not enrich themselves while serving abroad.<sup>29</sup> Gálvez was neither a *corregidor* nor a treasury official, thus he did not have to meet this requirement, but he judged it necessary: “as I have to go to America to practice the commissions that the king (God save him) deigned to entrust me [...] I see convenient—so that it stays on the record at all time—to make the inventory of the goods, effects, and capital I currently own.”<sup>30</sup> Archivist Francisco Rodas de Coss finds it “unusual” that the visitor-general decided to make this meticulous listing and concludes that it was his way of demonstrating his integrity.<sup>31</sup> As I will show later, throughout his life, Gálvez made conscious efforts to build and maintain the reputation of an honest and incorruptible minister.

The long inventory of his belongings demonstrates that José de Gálvez was already an affluent person before the start of his spectacular New World-related

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<sup>29</sup> Magali Safartti, *Spanish Bureaucratic-Patrimonialism* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1966), 29; Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America* (New York: Harbinger Books, 1963), 130 and 281. The inventory had to be filed with the Council of the Indies, but if the officer was already in a Spanish American territory, the applicable *Audiencia* kept the record.

<sup>30</sup> Undated petition of José de Gálvez attached to Inventory of his wealth, credits, and jewelry, AHPM, vol. 16179, fols. 63-96 in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 7.

<sup>31</sup> Rodas de Coss, “Introducción,” lxix-lxx.

bureaucratic career. The list provides a wonderful window into his material life, and by extension into that of a successful court lawyer or mid-level bureaucrat in mid-eighteenth-century Madrid.<sup>32</sup> The minutiae employed to craft the inventory also shows Gálvez's personal concern for his material possessions. As the 1980s song by pop singer Madonna says, "we are living in a material world." Indeed, "things" surround us in meaningful ways, owning some or being deprived from others reveals how we live and who we are in relation to other members of society. While a pair of socks in our drawer is nothing out of the ordinary and has no consequences, perhaps wielding our newest iPod in front of the fellow riders of a metro train in any urban center can impress others and give us some social high standing; it could even get us into trouble (we might get robbed). For Fernand Braudel, material life marks the limit of what can be attained and what is denied, between possibility and impossibility.<sup>33</sup> Yet, beyond the social status we might acquire by owning some things, the primary function of things is to mediate between us and the environment.<sup>34</sup> Many objects are useful: we might think we will never wear a neon pink-colored plastic dress created by a fashion designer in Tokyo, but that extravagant piece essentially serves the same function of protecting our body against nature, as a humble t-shirt would do, too. Furthermore, the use value and the monetary

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<sup>32</sup> Inventory of José de Gálvez's wealth, credits, and jewelry, Madrid, 10 April 1765 (hereafter cited as "Gálvez's inventory 1765," AHPM, vol. 16179, fols. 63-96 in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 7-58. The document contained 33 folios in total. Deforneaux talks about a similar inventory prepared by the rich bride of Pablo de Olavide in the 1750s; it listed the assets of her late husband, which she graciously donated to her new husband, and it was 40 folios long. Defourneaux, *Pablo de Olavide*, 34. Although this is an impressionistic comparison based on the length of both documents and does not indicate the value of the items listed in both inventories, it may suggest that Gálvez's possessions were quite abundant since the widow that married the Peruvian minister was extraordinarily wealthy.

<sup>33</sup> Fernand Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life 1400-1800*, trans. Miriam Kochan (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), ix.

<sup>34</sup> Eric Van Young, "Material Life," in *The Countryside in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Louisa Schell Hoberman and Susan Migden Socolow (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 51.

cost of some material objects may be superseded by the symbolic significance we (or our society) attach to those things.<sup>35</sup> The study of material life in the past provides ideas of how people lived and how they felt about it; it belongs to the routine that dominates our everyday lives and for this reason, it is part of “an enormous mass of history barely conscious of itself.”<sup>36</sup>

Today we are the sons and daughters of the material (industrial and scientific) revolution that took precedence in the nineteenth century. As Braudel explains, “the men of the eighteenth century were [our] contemporaries on the level of ideas. Their minds and passions were the same as ours, or at least near enough to prevent total disorientation.”<sup>37</sup> Thus, if we could use a time machine and visit lawyer Gálvez at his home in early 1765 we would have a lucid conversation in terms of ideas but by looking at his dress and living environment we would be absolutely appalled by the differences (I imagine Gálvez himself would be horrified at our clothing).<sup>38</sup> In material life terms, the future minister of the Indies lived in the very stable planet that existed before the nineteenth century. Yet by 1765, Gálvez had a complex material existence that contrasted with the one lived by the majority of society in Spain and the Americas.

In early March, before leaving for Cádiz and then for New Spain, Gálvez asked for the official itemization of his belongings. By the end of the month his request was accepted by the *alcalde de casa y corte*, perhaps his former colleague, Felipe Collados. The inspection was carried out during the Holy Week holidays, for Collados had chosen

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>36</sup> Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life*, ix.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., x.

<sup>38</sup> My time machine example is an adaptation of Braudel’s fantasy trip to visit Voltaire at Ferney; *ibid.*, x.

this time, on 10 April 1765.<sup>39</sup> Gálvez had already left Madrid but his agents, Pedro Muñoz de la Torre and Manuel Sánchez Gómez, took care of the proceedings.<sup>40</sup> Muñoz and Sánchez received a royal clerk at Gálvez's home in Leganitos street, about half a mile to the northwest of the royal palace.<sup>41</sup> The visiting *escribano* formed a detailed list of practically all the objects he found in the house and added to his final report two additional inventories prepared by Gálvez before his departure. The appointed visitor-general had written part of these lists with his own hand; one recorded the personal effects he took with him to New Spain, and the other documented his real estate properties, monetary assets (including credits), and his jewels.

An intriguing feature that immediately stands out in Gálvez's general catalogue of belongings is the lack of attention for the house in which he resided. This contrasts with the scrupulous listing and description of every piece of furniture and some very insignificant objects he owned, such as "a lock for the basement's door." The whole document betrays a general disdain for landed and real estate properties, stressed by the fact that it does not state if Gálvez owned the house on Leganitos street. In her study of

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<sup>39</sup> According to Fayard, the Council of Castile (to which the *alcaldes de casa y corte* belonged) had two periods of holidays: Holy Week and Christmas; Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 111. On 30 March 1765, Felipe Collado decreed that the inventory and description of Gálvez's possessions should be performed during "the next holidays." See Decree of Felipe Collados, Madrid, 30 Mar. 1765, attached to "Gálvez's inventory 1765," 7.

<sup>40</sup> Gálvez reached Cádiz on 13 April and sailed to New Spain on 26 April. Felipe Collados filed (*protocolizó*) the inventory on 20 April. It is possible that Gálvez received a copy before leaving Spain. Decree of Felipe Collado, Madrid, 20 April 1765, attached to "Gálvez's inventory 1765," 58. Pedro Muñoz de la Torre was one of Gálvez's 1765 will executors, because he "was his friend, and had great trust in him;" "Will Gálvez 1765," 4. We can trace their friendship to 1754; see n. 23 *supra*. They were both Andalusian. Pedro was from El Colmenar, Málaga and studied at the University of Alcalá. Muñoz became a minister of the Council of the Indies and in 1785, knight of the order of Charles III; "Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Pedro Muñoz de la Torre," 1785, AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp. 230.

<sup>41</sup> A decade before, in 1754, Gálvez lived in the *Del Tesoro* street (*Parroquia* of San Juan), about a mile from the Royal Palace; see *Ajuste y convenio* between María Luisa Romet and José de Gálvez, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 107.

functionaries of the Council of Castile in an earlier period, Janine Fayard observes a sharp decline of 33.7% in ministers's ownership of their living places from the reign of Philip IV to that of Philip V. Thus, by the first half of the 1700s, almost 80% of the councilors of Castile were home renters.<sup>42</sup> This may explain why Gálvez never alluded to the house at Leganitos street as his property.<sup>43</sup>

Gálvez did possess land and houses outside Madrid, but they are mentioned in a secondary part of his general inventory and only in passing without informing about its value. He owned a winery (*lagar*) in Montes de las Peñas, with 170 obradas of vines, and 192 of land for cultivation and groves;<sup>44</sup> a *cortijo* in Bejarafe (a coastal population in the Province of Malaga) with land for cultivation, of which he was not sure of the size;<sup>45</sup> a house in Macharaviaya "with offices;" and a house in Málaga next to the convent of Saint Agustin with one *cuarto bajo* and one *principal*. Van Young tells us that people in the

<sup>42</sup> Rents ranged from around a couple of thousand *reales* to up to 12,000 in her period of study; Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 448-449 and 476-477.

<sup>43</sup> It is possible that at his return to Spain in 1772, Gálvez continued to live in his home in Leganitos street, but I have not found corroboration in any document. The only additional reference I have found to a dwelling of his in Madrid appears in a document written a month after his death, when his widow took official possession of the marquisate of Sonora: the tenure ceremony took place in "the houses that His Excellency don José de Gálvez inhabited and lodged in (*en las casas en que habitó y se hospedó el Excelentísimo Señor don Josef de Gálvez*)," without mentioning a street. The archives of the Saint Martin *parroquia* (where Leganitos was located) indicate that his daughter resided in the *Calle Alta de Leganitos* (Upper Leganitos Street) in 1796. Although Leganitos street still exists, the Calle Alta de Leganitos disappeared to make space for Madrid's emblematic *Paseo de la Princesa*. Overall, *Leganitos* was a good location to live in Madrid. Court composers and musicians like Domenico Scarlatti and later Luigi Boccherini had their residences there. Janine Fayard found in a survey of 1684 that several persons who were carriage owners, or who had nobility titles, and at least two councilors of Castile lived in Leganitos street. In fact it was one of the main arteries in Madrid given that it converged on the *Puerta del Sol*. Possession of title of Marquesa de Sonora, Madrid, 18 Jul. 1787, AHPM, vol. 18673, fols. 82-83, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 181; Matías Fernández García, *Parroquias madrileñas de San Martín y San Pedro el Real: algunos personajes de su archivo* (Madrid: Caparrós editores, 2004), 224, 92, and 96-97; Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 446-447 and 446n10.

<sup>44</sup> According to DRAE an obrada is "a medida agraria usada en las provincias de Palencia, Segovia y Valladolid, en equivalencia, respectivamente, de 53,832 áreas, de 39,303 áreas y de 46,582 áreas." I found that an "area" means 100 square meters, but when I tried to convert Gálvez's 362 obradas of land into hectares and then to acres the quantity was so astounding that I think I probably did something wrong with my conversions or that I do not have the correct conversion rate.

<sup>45</sup> "... [Q]ue por no constar de pronto el número de obradas de que se compone, no se expresa aquí," "Gálvez's inventory 1765," 40.

colonial era in Latin America—and we may extend this argument to eighteenth-century Spain as well—had a significantly lower attachment to their dwellings than we have today. Building techniques and materials were simpler and not as expensive and life-consuming (in terms of mortgages and “years worth of labor”) as they are today.<sup>46</sup> Owning large expanses of land, however, did carry with it a baggage of social prestige. Some of Gálvez’s contemporaries, later colleagues at the top of Charles III’s administration such as the Conde de Aranda, were descendants of the traditional nobility and owned innumerable tracts of land and other real estate.<sup>47</sup> As Gálvez acquired more power, income, and social status after the *visita general* and while holding the top office at the Ministry of the Indies, he bought more properties in Andalusia.<sup>48</sup> Yet, becoming a landlord, or emulating grandees like Aranda at the real estate and landed property levels, was not in his primary interest. Therefore, in his last will of 1787, the then minister of the Indies declared that he had added to his daughter’s *mayorazgo* the “houses and real estate” he owned in the city of Málaga and the village of Macharaviaya, but this statement formed part of the less than 30 words devoted to realty in his testament.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Van Young, “Material Life,” 52-53.

<sup>47</sup> The landed and estate properties of Pedro Pablo Abarca de Bolea, the Conde de Aranda, were innumerable and they included a palace in Madrid and at least one hundred houses just in Barcelona (he owned more dwellings in different parts of Spain); Luis M. Farías, *La América de Aranda* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2003).

<sup>48</sup> The research in notary archives carried out in Madrid by Rodas de Coss indicates that in 1782 Gálvez bought 601 *fanegas* of land that belonged to a *mayorazgo* funded by Fernando Manso Maldonado in the vicinity of Vélez-Málaga; later in 1786, he bought a site for construction with the intention of building a house in Málaga, close to the Old Wall; Power to buy land on his name, from José de Gálvez to Pedro Ortega, resident and royal treasury official of Vélez-Málaga, Madrid, 29 Dec. 1782, AHPM, vol. 18671, fols. 363-365, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 137-139 and Power to buy real estate and build a house in Málaga, from José de Gálvez to Pedro Ortega, resident and General Administrator of the Customs of Málaga, Aranjuez, 9 May 1786, AHPM, vol. 29414, fols. 151-152, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 157-158.

<sup>49</sup> “Testamento otorgado por el Excelentísimo Señor Marqués de Sonora en 10 de abril de 1787,” Madrid, 10 Apt. 1787 (hereafter cited as “Testamento Gálvez 1787”), AHPM vol. 18673, fols. 34-41, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 170.

With his emphasis on rural colonial Latin America, Van Young explains that “in a society of relative scarcity in which modern bourgeois notions of the comforts of home and consumerism were virtually unknown... much of nonwork life was lived outside the house, in public spaces...”<sup>50</sup> This statement has been valid among the rural and urban popular classes in Latin America and Mediterranean Europe practically up until the present day. For the elite society of eighteenth century Europe, however, homes had become synonymous with comfort and socialization—a tendency that began to trickle down from court society to the bourgeoisie precisely in the second half of the 1700s. Let us return to Gálvez’s house on Leganitos street in Madrid. It should have been an unassuming construction because Spanish elites did not distinguish themselves for building ostentatious residences,<sup>51</sup> but from the furniture and objects mentioned in the inventory we can tell its room distribution indicated it was a convivial place that offered the comforts of a courtly style of living. It had two to four *gabinetes* or drawing rooms,<sup>52</sup> a studio and a library (perhaps sharing the same space) with sufficient space for 22 bookshelves and more than 2,000 volumes, a master bedroom, secondary bedrooms (sufficient to accommodate six additional beds and one cot), a kitchen, a basement, a garage, and probably a stall or pen for the lawyer’s mules. The building had at least two

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<sup>50</sup> Van Young, “Material Life,” 53

<sup>51</sup> Fayard indicates that buildings in Madrid were modest in general; Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 445-446.

<sup>52</sup> When the document lists upholstered rooms and glass windows, it confirms the house had three *gabinetes* (one principal and two secondary) but, by the number of *estrados* (four, see below), we can infer the house had one more similar room. The inventory also talks about two *salas* (living rooms? halls?) and one *pieza contigua al gabinete* (a *gabinete*’s adjacent room).

main floors since a main staircase is mentioned in the document. It also had internal and external windows and, most importantly, following Madrid's taste, it had balconies.<sup>53</sup>

Van Young writes that it is rather difficult to discover what people felt about material objects.<sup>54</sup> Given the punctilious details provided to describe Gálvez's furniture and other decorative and useful objects, there is, in reading this inventory, the sense that he felt more for his *less durable* chattels than for the house he abode.<sup>55</sup> Fayard points to a similar phenomenon among other high bureaucrats in Spain:

... [T]he collection of chattels, silverware, tapestries, paintings, carriages, furniture properly said, constituted the daily decoration, the *cadre de vie* [living environment] of our magistrates in Madrid, it always represented an important part of the whole value of the *cuerpos de hacienda* [estates].... All of this leaves us thinking that they attached more importance to the content of their residence, than to their places of living themselves.<sup>56</sup>

Gálvez exhibits a taste for luxury and homely comforts. His inventory classified his effects mainly according to their materials, and secondarily for its use or type. It did not state their monetary value, with the exception of silverware and obviously his cash (*caudal*) and credits, but it made remarks about "fine" things and others of "very little value." Wooden objects opened the list, followed by curtains and tapestries, rugs, mattresses and linens, paintings, mirrors and "other adornments," glass windows, books, bookshelves, carriages, mules, riding equipment, real estate, money, credits, and it closed with china, glassware, earthenware, tin, and general kitchen utensils.

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<sup>53</sup> Balconies were a rule of thumb because of a societal penchant for theatricalism in Madrid, to "see and be seen;" see Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 453.

<sup>54</sup> Van Young, "Material Life," 52.

<sup>55</sup> While it is true that an *escribano* was in charge of describing the majority of the items on the house inventory, the part that Gálvez's left written—a great deal of which was in the Andalusian own handwriting, according to the *escribano*—has the same pattern of attention to details.

<sup>56</sup> Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 443. Fayard found that between 1621 and 1721, real estate represented 8.72 per cent on average of the Castile ministers's total estates, whereas furniture and jewels reached 23.8 per cent; *ibid.*, 454.



The wooden objects and furniture in the list rapidly betray it was a Spanish home: Gálvez owned four *estrados* for his drawing rooms. *Estrados* or raised platforms were very common in Spain since the Muslim occupation of the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>57</sup> Each *estrado* (also dais) counted with a suite of fine furniture composed of one *canapé* (upholstered sofa with back and arms), six armed chairs, and six taborets or stools, or simply one sofa and twelve taborets.<sup>58</sup> Each of Gálvez's four suites of *estrado* was made of a combination of different materials. Three had walnut bodies with a variety of upholstery details like crimson and straw-colored damask, fine linen, tanned sheepskin cushions, glazed linen coverings, etc. Since French style in furniture (particularly the one termed Louis the Fifteenth) was very popular in eighteenth-century Spain, it must have been predominant in Gálvez's joinery, but English influence in furniture tastes was increasingly common too, thus a fourth *estrado* suite of one sofa and twelve taborets was

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<sup>57</sup> This raised floor or dais elevated only one side of a room. If the home had only one *estrado*, the owner reserved his/her most sumptuous selection of furniture, rugs, and hangings to adorn it. If this was the case, it was called a *salón de estrado* and, like an English parlor, it served to entertain guests. In elite residences of New Spain this salon was located in an upper floor and "opened to the central balcony." Usually the *estrado* was covered with fine rugs and originally, instead of sitting furniture, they had cushions. Up until the seventeenth century women sat down on these cushions and men occupied chairs near the dais. New Spain's humbler inhabitants also had *estrados*, but covered with *petates* (straw or reed mats), since they could not afford rugs. *Estrados* were a particularly feminine space where, in addition to receiving guests, women did needlework; I am surprised that Gálvez, a widower for almost ten years by 1765, counted with four *estrados*. Gustavo Curiel, "Formas, costumbres y rituales cotidianos de las elites novohispanas a través de los objetos de la cultura material," in *The Grandeur of Viceregal Mexico: Treasures from the Museo Franz Mayer*, ed. Museum of Fine Arts (Houston), and Museo Franz Mayer (Mexico City) (Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2002), 28 and 40n. 6-7; Grace Hardendorff Burr, *Hispanic Furniture: From the Fifteenth through the Eighteenth Century*, 2<sup>nd</sup>. ed. (New York: The Archive Press, 1964), 41.

<sup>58</sup> Spanish furniture sets usually had a number of taborets in multiples of 6 (6, 12, or 24). Apparently when cushions instead of furniture dominated *estrados* they also came in multiples of six. Burr describes a seventeenth-century large *estrado* with 24 "red velvet cushions." Also, the fabulously rich miner in mid-eighteenth-century New Spain, Pedro de Terreros, the Conde de Regla, had a palace on the street of San Felipe Neri in Mexico City with a large "room of state" with "two dozen taborets decorated with white lacquer and gilt with crimson damask seats." Regla also counted with an *estrado* in his reception room adorned with a mahogany sofa and taborets; *ibid.*, 42 and 108-109.

made of English wickerwork.<sup>59</sup> The inventory of wooden objects went on listing other similar pieces of furniture such as a dozen more taborets with chamois leather covered seats, and more than two dozen additional chairs—that ranged from two with silk upholstery to some that were registered as “old.” There was also furniture with other functions such as one “imperial bed,” another main bed, five beds “for the family” (servants), and one cot (a one person, narrow bed); various tables (among which there were two tables with typically Spanish *guadamacil* or embossed leather upholstery and one small table to put on top of a bed), wardrobes, trunks, etc.<sup>60</sup>

Fayard argues that tapestries were a sign of luxury among seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century bureaucrats, but none is listed in Gálvez’s inventory.<sup>61</sup> Some of the rooms in his home had upholstered walls, however. The master bedroom and one gabinete had crimson damask upholstery; two salas had wall coverings of brocatelle and cotton respectively; finally, printed calico adorned two gabinetes. If we can tell that Gálvez’s main bedroom and *gabinete* were the “red rooms” of the house, he obviously had a “blue room:” his studio and library. According to the inventory, the pair of doors in the balconies of the studio consisted of 96 panes of glass framed by blue sashes. The lawyer owned twenty tall blue bookshelves equipped with doors, locks and keys, and taffeta curtains. Gálvez had a well doted library of 2,197 volumes corresponding to 1,048

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<sup>59</sup> On British influence over Spanish furniture design and decoration, summed up to an increase in direct English furniture imports in eighteenth-century Spain, see *ibid.*, 90-91.

<sup>60</sup> According to Fayard, furniture in Spain was not overly expensive. The assortments of furniture of the ministers of the Councils of Castile did not surpass the value of 15,000 *reales de vellón*; Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 473.

<sup>61</sup> Fayard found the surprising data that tapestries represented 5.41 per cent on average of the estate of her studied ministers. She also noticed a steady decline in the reign by reign average, from 6.69 per cent during Charles II on one end to 4.4 per cent during Philip V, suggesting that perhaps tapestries were not as important in Gálvez’s times, when wall upholstery had substituted the insulation function of tapestries. Braudel also mentions that the utility of tapestries decreased in the eighteenth century. See Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 454 and Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life*, 213.

titles. Listed by authors's names and in alphabetical order, these items occupied the largest number of folios of his general inventory. A detailed analysis in terms of the intellectual content of José de Gálvez's library would deserve a chapter in itself, but in this section I will only concentrate in the material life aspect of owning a large library.<sup>62</sup>

As Francisco Solano writes, "at any epoch, to form a library presupposes an effort."<sup>63</sup> You need sufficient monetary funds, maintain an interest in expanding your collection over the years, and cultivate the right contacts that may help you increase your book reserve. There is no doubt that Gálvez and other members of his generation of royal functionaries were bibliophiles and destined parts of their income to buy books.<sup>64</sup>

Maxime Chevalier considers that in early modern Spain a library of more than 500 volumes containing a variety of topics could be considered rich.<sup>65</sup> Although Gálvez's library doubled this number and there is no doubt he was a member of the cult society of Madrid, there were larger private libraries in Spain. In 1788, Pedro Rodríguez Campomanes made a listing of famous libraries from 1600 to his times and Gálvez's collection did not figure among them.<sup>66</sup> In fact, from the inventory of 1765 to the second

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<sup>62</sup> Library historian Francisco Solano and archivist Francisco Rodas de Coss have analyzed the content of Gálvez's libraries. Their studies give insights on what Gálvez could buy or read, or at least on what were his interests. Solano focuses on Gálvez's second library inventory formed in 1783 (original at BNE, mss. 2262), while Francisco Rodas de Coss made an effort in contrasting, at least in numbers and content, Gálvez's 1765 and 1780s libraries; Francisco de Solano, "Reformismo y cultura intelectual. La biblioteca privada de José de Gálvez, Ministro de Indias," *Quinto Centenario*, no. 2 (1981):1-100; and Rodas de Coss, "Introducción," lxx-lxxvii.

<sup>63</sup> Solano, "Reformismo y cultura intelectual," 3.

<sup>64</sup> In her estimates of the share of the ministers of the Council of Castile's general estates, books represented 3.4 per cent on average between 1621 and 1746; Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 454 and 502-505. Francisco de Saavedra, Gálvez's protégé, mentioned in his *Memoria testamentaria* that he used part of his savings to buy books; Saavedra, "Memoria testamentaria," 271 and 273.

<sup>65</sup> Maxime Chevalier, *Lectura y lectores en la España del siglo XVI y XVII* (Madrid: Turner, 1976), 31, cited in Solano, "Reformismo y cultura intelectual," 3.

<sup>66</sup> Pedro Rodríguez Campomanes, "Noticia abreviada de las bibliotecas y monetarios de España" (1788), cited in Solano, "Reformismo y cultura intelectual," 12-13. Campomanes's own library counted with

one filled up between 1783 and the time of his death, there was a slight reduction in the number titles in Gálvez's library (from 1,048 to 917), although the quantity of volumes increased (from 2,197 to 2,300). The visitor-general carried 253 titles (578 volumes) to support his official commission in New Spain, but as we will see later in this chapter he lost the majority his books. Rodas de Coss estimates that in 1772 Gálvez returned to Spain with only 37 titles.<sup>67</sup>

In the pre-industrial world, where poor and costly transportation reigned supreme, owning a carriage was an advantage and a symbol of social status. Gálvez owned two: a *forlon* worth 6,000 *reales de vellón*, and a berlin with the slightly lesser value of 5,500.<sup>68</sup> Charles III, popularly known as the "best mayor of Madrid," presided over a series of improvements to the city's infrastructure and an increased number of carriages could be seen on the streets, but their maintenance costs made them a luxury.<sup>69</sup> Gálvez owned four mules to pull his two porcelain-colored carriages. The animals are portrayed exquisitely

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12,000 volumes. In 1768, the library of Peruvian Bourbon reformer Pablo de Olavide increased by 2,400 volumes in just one shipment from France! Deforneaux, *Pablo de Olavide*, 42.

<sup>67</sup> Rodas de Coss, "Introducción," lxx-lxxi. In New Spain Gálvez may have expanded his book collection by acquiring part of Francisco Xavier Gamboa's library; Elías Trabulse, *Francisco Xavier Gamboa: un político criollo en la Ilustración mexicana (1717-1794)* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1985), 22n12; and Javier Malagón-Barceló, "La obra escrita de Lorenzana como arzobispo de México 1766-1772," *Historia Mexicana* 23, 3 (1974): 444n15. Malagón-Barceló affirms that one Father Luis Sierra gave him this information.

<sup>68</sup> I am not sure of how *forlones* were but a berlin was a type of covered, fast and light, four-wheeled, travelling carriage. Total value of Gálvez's carriages in *pesos fuertes*: 575.

<sup>69</sup> In fact, one of the few records of Gálvez's activities as an *alcalde de casa y corte* at the end of 1764 was his role in solving a transit case; see AHN, Consejos, bk. 1351 and 1352. Fayard confirms that *alcaldes* were in charge of transit matters; Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 23. Lorenzo Tiepolo, a painter and engraver in eighteenth-century Madrid and son of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, destined great part of his money to the maintenance of his *forlón* and *berlina*; see José de la Mano, "Lorenzo Tiepolo. Vida privada y oficio de un veneciano al servicio de Carlos III" in *Lorenzo Tiepolo*, exhibition catalog, 79-95 (Madrid: Fundación Amigos del Museo del Prado, 1999), available at <http://www.josedelamano.com/pages/tiepolo2.htm>.

in his inventory, indicating their age, color, and size. After an evaluation conducted by a blacksmith master, the domestic animals were worth 10,500 *reales de vellón* in total.<sup>70</sup>

Thus owning certain things—luxurious furniture, a large library, carriages—differentiated Gálvez from poorer residents of Madrid. Other things, like objects of devotion were common among all social classes in the Spanish world. In his inventory however, the only devotional objects listed were five paintings of religious motif (three representations of the Virgin Mary and two of Christ). Again, signs of luxury differentiated Gálvez's material life from that of the less fortunate classes since the lawyer did not spare in decoration for his walls: he had 79 pieces whose topics were mainly non-devotional. In addition to the Virgins and Christs, he owned five paintings with classical themes (one with the Rape of the Sabine women and two of “several nude children,” perhaps depictions of putti or Eros), a large depiction of the history of the four quarters of the world, many of flowers, hunting scenes, four women portraits, six still lifes, the engraved portrait of a man, and five maps representing the four quarters of the world.

Another obvious indicator of prosperity in Gálvez's inventory, that is as hidden and downplayed as real estate, is the size of his *caudal* or capital (liquid, lent, or invested).<sup>71</sup> A resident of Écija (in Andalusia) and probably his relative on his mother's side, José Gallardo, had in his power 59,500 *reales de vellón* belonging to Gálvez. The

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<sup>70</sup> For example, a mule “*de edad de siete años, pelicastaña, bociblanca, silla de tronco, que tasó el mismo [maestro herrador] en dos mil ochocientos y ochenta reales de vellón;*” “Gálvez's inventory 1765,” 40. The value of carriages and mules—all of Gálvez's transportation items—in *pesos fuertes*: 1,100 (or 22,000 *reales de vellón*). According to Fayard, mules were more common and expensive than horses; Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 460.

<sup>71</sup> Apparently Gálvez did not leave any liabilities or debts, since these are not mentioned in the inventory, neither in his will of 1765.

appointed visitor-general of New Spain also had different credits in his favor. The Royal Treasury owed him 176,706 *reales de vellón* in the form of “three *boletines*... ceded by the Baron of Sarni” (minister of the Prince-Elect of Bavaria in Madrid since 1760).<sup>72</sup>

Gálvez also stated that he had minor credits that amounted to 19,200 *reales*. In another section, his general inventory stated that Gálvez took with him 26,000 *reales* in cash for the *visita*.<sup>73</sup> In total, Gálvez’s capital in 1765 amounted to 281,406 *reales de vellón*—not an outstanding sum but neither a trivial one in mid-eighteenth century Spain.<sup>74</sup> Yet, the visitor-general had not provided sufficient proofs of his monetary assets. His agents in Madrid, Muñoz and Sánchez, were responsible for taking care of everything outlined in the inventory, thus, in relation to money, they had to declare that they were not in contact with Gallardo from Écija, that the treasury bonds issued by Sarni were in Muñoz’s hands, and regarding the 19,200 *reales* in diverse credits, Sánchez could only accredit 3,320 *reales* distributed in three bonds he had in his power.<sup>75</sup>

### **The General Inspection: Salaries, Wardrobe, and the Final Economic Wreckage of the Visitor-General**

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<sup>72</sup> This credit could be related to Gálvez’s late wife, Luisa Lucía Romet. Let us remember that her father had also been the representative of the Prince of Bavaria in Madrid. Or it could be pointing at Gálvez’s special relationship with foreign interests in Spain; “Gálvez’s inventory 1765.” It was common for bureaucrats of the Royal Councils to have credits against the state in the 1621-1746 period; see Fayard’s analysis of the “*biens libres*” of the ministers of the Council of Castile in her *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 389-396.

<sup>73</sup> Next to this money, Gálvez listed two small boxes with locks and keys to put everyday expenses during his general inspection (the equivalent to our modern wallets).

<sup>74</sup> 281,406 *reales de vellón* would amount to 14,000 *pesos fuertes*. 9,800 (195,906 *reales*) of these, however, were credits.

<sup>75</sup> The three bonds in Sánchez’s hands had a value of 1,357 *reales*, 24 *maravedíes de vellón*; 22 gold *doblon*es; and 176 *reales*, 11 *maravedíes*, respectively.

At 12,000 *pesos fuertes* a year, Gálvez's assigned salary as visitor-general of New Spain doubled the combined wage of all the other members of his official team, let us remember that secretary Machado earned 1,000 pesos a year and the best paid *dependiente*, accountant Corres, only 1,300.<sup>76</sup> This was a reflection of a wage system—if we can speak of a “system” as such—in Spain and its empire that was highly hierarchical, particularly among bureaucrats.<sup>77</sup> To take New Spain as an example, a thimbleful of top positions—the viceroy and in the case of the 1760s, the visitor-general—received much more in wages than mid- to high-level bureaucrats like *Audiencia* judges, directors of treasury branches, and after 1780s, intendants, whose salaries were closer to those received by lower bureaucrats such as clerks.<sup>78</sup> Even though Gálvez became the best paid man in New Spain below the viceroy, still the latter's salary tripled his annual earnings.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> “Relación de los sujetos que han de pasar a Nueva España con José de Gálvez,” Marqués de Esquilache, El Pardo, 11 March 1765, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1245. More on the *visita* team and salaries in chapter 1.

<sup>77</sup> In the 1940s, Earl J. Hamilton collected data on wages in Spain from the mid-seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries. His sources were the account books of hospitals, colleges, and monasteries. He did not pay attention to bureaucrats, but to the popular classes—the rural day laborers, gardeners, laundresses, linen weavers, midwives. He encountered serious problems when trying to compile homogeneous wage series because, in addition to money, very often workers received supplements in kind that rarely left a record of their nature. Hamilton also discovered that when experienced workers retired, the new occupants of the emptied positions received a lower wage. Moreover, salaries responded only sluggishly to the “forces governing wage rates:” they lagged chronically far behind the fluctuations in commodity prices. Because of all of these factors, the author does not think there was something resembling a wage system in early-modern Spain; Hamilton, *War and Prices in Spain 1651-1800* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1947), chapter 11. Yet, I believe that bureaucracy had the closest thing resembling a wage system in the Hispanic World, since at least it offered job security and a regular pay.

<sup>78</sup> My argument of the hierarchical nature of bureaucratic salaries in Spain and her empire comes from wage data in New Spain listed in Linda Arnold, “Salaries of Positions in Fiscal Departments, 1754-1835,” appendix A of *Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats in Mexico City* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1988), 131-149. See also her regular comments about “the stratified structure of salaries” in 98 and 102.

<sup>79</sup> At the time of the Gálvez visitation, Viceroy Bucareli earned 40,000 pesos; see Bernard E. Bobb, *The Viceregency of Antonio María Bucareli in New Spain, 1771-1779* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962), 25. It is interesting to note that in 1786 José de Gálvez's assigned the same salary of 12,000 pesos he had enjoyed two decades earlier in the *visita general* to the *Superintendente de Real Hacienda* in his *Ordenanza de intendentes*; see *Real Ordenanza para el establecimiento é instrucción de intendentes de ejército y provincia en el reino de la Nueva-España*, Madrid, 1786 (Facsimile of the first edition with introduction by Ricardo Rees Jones; México: UNAM, 1984), article 303.

Francisco de Armona, Gálvez's ill-fated predecessor, had been assigned a significantly lower salary: 8,000 pesos a year or 4,000 less than the Andalusian's annual pay.<sup>80</sup> It is hard to tell why this difference existed between salaries of royal inspectors appointed only a year apart. At first, I imagined that before their respective appointments, Gálvez's position had a higher rank than Armona's. At the moment of his designation as visitor-general of New Spain in 1764, Armona was the intendant of Murcia (a second class intendency in Spain) and received 75,000 *reales de vellón* a year (around 3,750 *pesos fuertes*).<sup>81</sup> Late in that same year, Gálvez had become an *alcalde de casa y corte* of the Council of Castile, the most prestigious advising body in Spain. The annual salary of *alcaldes*, however, was 36,000 *reales* a year (or about 1800 *pesos fuertes*).<sup>82</sup> As we can observe, the salaries of both men before their promotion as inspectors presented the inversed pattern: Armona's was higher than Gálvez's, indicating that *intendentes* occupied a superior level in the Spanish metropolitan administration's hierarchy than *alcaldes de corte*. The world of salaries was never simple in the early modern period, however, and most of the allowances bureaucrats received were composite arrangements.

Indeed, Priestley argues that Gálvez's income during the visitation was supplemented by old and new added wages. In this sense, he writes that the visitor-

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<sup>80</sup> "Relación de sujetos que han de pasar a la Nueva España," Marqués de Esquilache, San Ildefonso, 30 Jul. 1764, AGS, Dirección General de Rentas, Remesas II, leg. 2045. To give an idea of what the difference of 4,000 pesos meant: the top ministers of the royal treasury in New Spain, like the director of tributes, earned that quantity a year.

<sup>81</sup> Murcia appears as a second class *intendencia* in Ricardo Rees Jones, *El despotismo ilustrado y los intendentes de la Nueva España* (Mexico City: UNAM-Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1979), 75. Before holding the Murcia office, Armona had been *intendente* of Valencia and Granada too. For his salary, see Jesús Varela Marcos, "Los prolegómenos de la visita de José de Gálvez a la Nueva España, 1766: don Francisco de Armona y la instrucción secreta del marqués de Esquilache," *Revista de Indias* 46, no. 178 (1986): 455.

<sup>82</sup> Carrasco to Viergol, 13 Mar. 1776, AHN, Estado, leg. 3211. Fayard also confirms this cipher in her *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 106n64.



general received his salary of *alcalde de casa y corte* up until the end of March 1768, when the king granted him a post as *ministro togado* of the Council of the Indies and then he started receiving 50,000 *reales de vellón* or 2,500 pesos more.<sup>83</sup> Priestley does not cite his sources but I have found evidence that confirms this assertion. In a petition to Charles III written in 1772, Gálvez explained that as visitor-general he had received the salary of 12,000 pesos “on top of that of *alcalde*,” which means his official earnings totaled almost 14,500 pesos.<sup>84</sup> At his return from Spain, Gálvez received his title as *ministro togado*.<sup>85</sup> This certificate also mentioned his salary addendums during the visitation and argued that he should have started receiving his new earnings from the Council of the Indies, beginning on the date the king had designated him, back in December of 1767.<sup>86</sup> From this document one can infer that he did not enjoy his extra wages while in New Spain, but until he returned to Spain. It makes sense since the Mexican treasury was responsible for paying the salaries of the visitor-general and his dependents, while the treasury in Spain paid the wages of *alcalde* and *ministro togado*.<sup>87</sup> Returning to the case of inspector Armona, we can speculate that if he had lived and had the two salaries of visitor-general and *intendente* of Murcia, he would have earned a little less than 12,000 pesos—still around 1800-2500 pesos less than Gálvez’s total. Again, for one reason, Charles III or his ministers of state thought Gálvez deserved more remuneration than his predecessor. The

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<sup>83</sup> Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 6.

<sup>84</sup> Petition of José de Gálvez to King, Madrid, 5 Aug. 1772, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246.

<sup>85</sup> I found two copies of José de Gálvez’s title: Title of *ministro togado* of the Council of the Indies for José de Gálvez, Madrid, 7 Jul. 1772, AGS, Dirección General del Tesoro (hereafter DGT), Inventario 24, leg. 184, fol. 579 and AGS, DGT, Inventario 13, leg. 8, fol. 150.

<sup>86</sup> It is basically saying that he received his added salary as member of the Council of the Indies until he returned to Spain in 1772. March 1768, the date cited by Priestley as the time he was appointed to his new position, is in fact the date when the Crown notified the royal treasury to pay the new salary of *ministro togado* to Gálvez, and it also marked the termination of his job as *alcalde de casa y corte*.

<sup>87</sup> I imagine Gálvez’s agents in Madrid cashed his salary as *alcalde de casa y corte*, but I have not found records that confirm how he got hold of the additional 36,000 *reales de vellón*.

Andalusian himself could have asked for a better salary because, as we will see later in this and the next chapter, he was never shy of requesting wage increases or extra prerogatives based on his merits.

As visitor-general Gálvez defended his wage and added privileges against any bureaucratic encumbrance that could prevent him from receiving the full sum he was entitled to. In March 1766, he complained to minister of the Indies Julián de Arriaga that the judge of the *media annata* tax in New Spain was charging this contribution to him and his *dependientes*. The half-annate income tax was an important component of bureaucratic wages in the Hispanic World. With the objective of financing her wars in Europe, the Spanish Crown introduced this contribution in 1631 and fixed its rate a year later. By way of this tax, recently appointed bureaucrats, mainly those in the exchequer or justice fields, and also recipients of honorary posts in government, had to pay back to the royal treasury half of their first year's salary.<sup>88</sup> Although he never formulated a systematic attack against it, Gálvez's relationship with the *media annata* duty was to some extent conflictive: he looked for ways to justify not paying it, and I have found random but numerous cases in which he supported other bureaucrats in their claims

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<sup>88</sup> Haring lists the functionaries exempt from this tax: "military officers in active service, judges of residence [*residencia*], employees of the postal, gunpowder and lottery services, recipients of university scholarships, and after Gálvez visita in the eighteenth century *alcaldes mayores* and officials of the tobacco monopoly." In 1771, Gálvez explained to Viceroy Bucareli that given that *alcaldes mayores* in New Spain had no assigned salary, it was appropriate that they did not pay this tax. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America*, 273n13 and José de Gálvez, *Informe general que en virtud de real orden instruyó y entregó el excelentísimo señor Marqués de Sonora siendo visitador general de este reino, al excelentísimo señor virrey don Antonio Bucarely y Ursúa con fecha 31 de diciembre de 1771* (Mexico City: Imprenta de Santiago White, 1867; facsimile with introduction by Clara Elena Suárez Argüello, Mexico City: CIESAS-Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2002), 128. On the *media annata* in general, see Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 334-335, and again, Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America*, 273-274.

related to this tax.<sup>89</sup> In mid-1766 the Crown sent a confirmation to the Viceroy in Mexico stating that neither Gálvez, nor the members of his team, had to pay the tax. In September Gálvez readily thanked Arriaga for his support. The visitor-general must have been delighted that he and his *dependientes* would receive their entire salary without discounts of any kind.<sup>90</sup>

Back in Spain and reflecting on his experience in the Americas in 1772 Gálvez considered that his endowment of 12,000 pesos was, in general, “enough to sustain oneself, with integrity,” in New Spain.<sup>91</sup> The obvious question that comes to mind at this point is what was the purchasing power of Gálvez’s salary in Mexico City? During his visitation, the Andalusian minister spent approximately 42 months (three years and six months) in Mexico City. Living in the capital of New Spain was not cheap, although

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<sup>89</sup> Teresa Sançiñena mentions in passing that visitor José de Gálvez asked for the reimbursement of the half-annate tax and cites AGI, Mexico, 1703, but I have yet to review this *legajo*; Sançiñena, *La Audiencia de México en el reinado de Carlos III* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1999), 65n185. As inferred in n. 87 with the case of *alcaldes mayores*, Gálvez freed many officers from this burden during the *visita general*. I found one report by accountant-general of the Indies Tomás Ortiz Landázuri criticizing Gálvez’s decision on relieving tobacco officials of the *media annata* tax in Tomás Ortiz de Landázuri to Arriaga, draft report, Madrid, 11 Nov. 1768, AGI, Indiferente General (hereafter cited as Indiferente), leg. 38. Gálvez argued that tobacco employees should be exempted from this tax as their counterparts in Spain were. In another report of Ortiz Landázuri, the accountant-general noted that Gálvez had exempted all the employees of the new gunpowder administration from the tax by giving them *fuero militar*; Ortiz de Landázuri to Arriaga, draft report, Madrid, 26 Apr. 1768, *ibid*. In documents relative to the *visita* of the treasury of Guadalajara, Gálvez also exempted from the *media annata* some of the treasury officials; see Summary by the Council of the Indies on the *visita* of Guadalajara, Guadalajara, 2 May 1768, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246. And for another, later case in which Minister of the Indies Gálvez allowed a royal functionary to pay his tax in installments, see Rafael D. García Pérez, *El Consejo de Indias durante los reinados de Carlos III y Carlos IV* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1998), 158.

<sup>90</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, Mexico City, 20 Mar. 1766; Arriaga to Viceroy of New Spain, draft, Aranjuez, 25 June 1766; and Gálvez to Arriaga, Mexico City, 27 Sep. 1766, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246.

<sup>91</sup> Gálvez’s comment about the sufficiency of his assigned salary was immediately followed by an explanation of the particular circumstances that had made it inadequate and the extraordinary expenses he had incurred. I discuss this question later in this chapter; Petition of Gálvez to King, Madrid, 5 Aug. 1772, *ibid*.

there were more expensive places in this Spanish viceroyalty.<sup>92</sup> In 1771 the judges from the Audiencia of Mexico complained to Viceroy Marqués de Croix that they were living in a “country where everything [had] exorbitant prices” and informed that a fifth of their salaries—around 800 pesos—went into renting a house; therefore, incurring debts was an imperious necessity to make ends meet for these functionaries.<sup>93</sup> With a salary three times superior to that of *oidores*, Gálvez’s position was even more comfortable since he did not have to worry about rents because he used the general-inspection funds to pay the lease of his house and offices in Mexico City.<sup>94</sup> In fact, sources provide a more comprehensive picture of those situations in which the visitor-general *did not* have to spend money from his 12,000-peso salary. One of these circumstances, valid at least for the first years of *la visita* was clothing. In the same general catalogue of belongings that José de Gálvez left before embarking to New Spain, he created a section for the things he took with him for his official expedition—objects that he did not have to purchase abroad. The list is as impressive as the one mentioned above and continues with the same tendency of describing each item in detail. This subsection of his inventory is organized in the following categories (in original order): outwear and underwear, silverware, books, cash, bedding, and kitchen equipment. A visit to Gálvez’s wardrobe deserves a special detour. Perhaps more than furniture (always confined to the private realm of a home), dress

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<sup>92</sup> Wealthy merchant of Veracruz turned into a Mexico City bureaucrat, Pedro Antonio de Cossío, wrote Gálvez that the cost of living in the port-city was higher than in the capital; see Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 26 Nov. 1780, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511.

<sup>93</sup> Audiencia to Croix, Mexico City, 20 Apr. 1771, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1659, cited in Sanciñena, *La Audiencia en México en el reinado de Carlos III*, 60-61. The judges requested a formal raise in their salaries during the Gálvez Visitation and the visitor supported their pledge in his *Informe general*, 9-11. Judges had to wait until 1776 for a raise.

<sup>94</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, Mexico City, 8 Apr. 1768, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246; to see negative reactions to the royal funding provided to pay the visitor’s rent, see Ortiz de Landázuri to Arriaga, draft report, Madrid, 23 Oct. 1768, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 38; I also discuss this matter in a passage of chapter 1.

provides a better substance of a person's material life. Gálvez's attitudes toward wealth and luxury, and the ways he hoped to influence others through his image can be drawn from how he dressed.

Gálvez's sartorial property was impressive at the beginning of the general inspection: it included 491 textile items. He carried with him three-piece suits composed of coat, waistcoat, and breeches (*casaca, chupa y calzón*), separate examples of the same three pieces, cloaks, robes, nightgowns (*batas*), hosiery, neckcloths, hats, shirts, camisoles, nightcaps, handkerchiefs, other undergarments, and bath, bed, and table linen.<sup>95</sup> Gálvez packed this amount of garments because in the New World they were chronically expensive, particularly in the urban areas.<sup>96</sup> In the late colonial period, the Mexico City *Audiencia* judges complained one more time that the cost of living in New Spain was significantly higher than that in the metropolis and, to illustrate their point they cited clothing, which was six times more expensive.<sup>97</sup> In 1776, from his office at the Royal Treasury in Madrid, the Marqués de la Corona commented that "we all know that... clothes and textiles from Europe are what is most expensive [in the Americas and what] every [Crown] employee takes with him as provision in order not to buy them in many years."<sup>98</sup> The reason for the high prices was that European (and also East Asian) fabrics and garments figured as the main import of New Spain and other American

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<sup>95</sup> "Gálvez's inventory 1765," 43-46.

<sup>96</sup> For the dramatic penuries lived by the urban poor in regard to assuring clothing in eighteenth-century Mexico City see, Gabriel Haslip-Viera, "The Underclass," in *Cities and Society in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Louisa Schell Hoberman and Susan Migden Socolow (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 298-299.

<sup>97</sup> "Expediente instruido sobre aumento de sueldo al señor regente y ministros de la real audiencia," 1813-1820, AGNM, Civil, leg. 1106 cited by Linda Arnold, *Bureaucrats*, 102.

<sup>98</sup> Carrasco to Viergol, 13 Mar. 1776, AHN, Estado, leg. 3211.

colonies. Locally-manufactured textiles, produced in *obrajes* or by rural Indian weavers, were used primarily for the attire of the popular classes.

In his sketch of a late eighteenth century crime scene in the rural hinterland of Guadalajara in New Spain, Van Young writes how local authorities found the slain body of José de Leandro, an estate administrator: faced draped with a handkerchief either of printed cotton or silk and body clad in a blue cloak perhaps made of wool—the typical garment for outdoor activities for a wide range of men in Spanish American highland zones.<sup>99</sup> It is safe to suppose that Leandro, even when he was not at the bottom of the social scale like the *peones* he overviewed, had a limited wardrobe. In addition to his working outfit, he probably had a couple of more suits for public celebrations. Just in a quick comparison with Leandro's dead scene, the Andalusian visitor-general brought with him five cloaks (three made of wool, one of silk, and one of a lighter fiber, colored *anafaya de Sevilla*, specifically designed for the summer) and twenty handkerchiefs (sixteen of fine colored cotton, three white, and one made of silk).<sup>100</sup> On the other hand, Gálvez's eleven three-piece suits pale in comparison with the 300 owned by Count Heinrich von Brühl (1700-1763)—an ambitious fashionable Saxon statesman.<sup>101</sup> The difference between Brühl's, Gálvez's, and Leandro's wardrobes can be rationalized, as

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<sup>99</sup> Van Young, "Material Life," 63. According to Amelia Sánchez Leira, the cloak was a typical male apparel in the Hispanic World, and it was an outerwear universally used by rich and poor; Sánchez Leira, "La moda en España durante el siglo XVIII," *Indumenta: Revista del Museo del Traje*, no. 0 (2007): 90 available at <http://museodeltraje.mcu.es/popups/publicaciones-electronicas/2007-indumenta0/Indumenta00-09-ALS.pdf>

<sup>100</sup> One of these handkerchiefs would stand in the historical limelight since it is mentioned in an account of the harsh state-led repression of the 1767 popular rebellions in San Luis Potosí. At the main plaza, during the public execution and funeral pyre arranged for the leaders of the revolt, Gálvez delivered a speech using "exquisite expressions," accompanied by tears and a white handkerchief. "Providencias de Gálvez en su visita" (1773), AGI, Estado, leg. 34, n. 36 cited in Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 223.

<sup>101</sup> The story of Brühl's impressive collection of suits appears in Aileen Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe 1715-1789* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1984), 125.

Braudel noted, because “costume everywhere is a constant reminder of social position.”<sup>102</sup> In the eighteenth century, a century of rising economic inequality, this phrase acquired even more meaning. Dress historians illustrate the point clearly. Willett and Phillis Cunnington explain that: “[t]he eighteenth century presents from different standpoints a conflicting scene of luxury and poverty, or refinement and coarseness, of licence and prudery, jostling each other more violently, perhaps, than formerly.”<sup>103</sup> For Aileen Ribeiro, clothes were the “visible emblems of social standing” during the 1700s. Indeed, from approximately the 1710s to the 1790s, gold brocades, white ruffled sleeves, extra-wide hoops, haute coiffures, and male clothing with colorful and ornate fabrics that seemed an extension of women’s apparel were all tangible symbols of the gulf that separated the elite urban classes from the poor people in the rural areas. This sartorial gap, however, had started to close among poor and rich classes in the cities from the 1750s on, thanks to the increasing availability of cheaper (usually printed) cotton fabrics, and it received a more forcible, perhaps irreversible, closure with the French Revolution.<sup>104</sup>

With the obvious exception of the whalebone hoops and the towering hairstyles reserved for women, José de Gálvez’s attire contained all the fashion elements of male or female European urbanites dominated by French influence.<sup>105</sup> An analysis of the visitor-

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<sup>102</sup> Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life*, 226.

<sup>103</sup> Willett Cunnington and Phillis Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1957), 13.

<sup>104</sup> Jennifer Jones emphasizes the closure of the gap before the Revolution, at least in Paris, where young maids had access to *la mode* since the mid-1700s; Jones, *Sexing La Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (Oxford-New York: Berg, 2004), 73-76.

<sup>105</sup> English influence arrived in Spain until the 1770s, and it entered through France; Leira Sánchez, “La moda en España durante el siglo XVIII,” 90.

general's wardrobe shows he was a fashion-minded royal functionary.<sup>106</sup> The list of exterior clothing opened with the visitor-general's more luxurious garments: four waistcoats made of silk glittering with flowers embroidered in gold thread. Since the 1740s, coats opened and allowed waistcoats to be more salient and adorned; Gálvez owned 24 more of these garments distributed among his three- and two-piece suits. The inventory continued describing his three-piece suits or *vestidos completos*, as they were called in Spain, with their characteristic close-fitting coat, waistcoat, and breeches.<sup>107</sup> The fibers of his suits were traditional: different types of silk, fine wool, and velvet, the last one very popular at the time and appropriate for colder climates.<sup>108</sup> Using the same material for the three pieces was no longer fashionable in the mid-century, except for velvet, and Gálvez's suits seem not to adapt to the new trend since only one material is mentioned in the description of each of them. However, in addition, to his eleven *vestidos completos*, there are two-piece suits composed of waistcoat and coat, and waistcoat and breeches, thus he could probably don combined outfits.<sup>109</sup>

An outfit *à la française* was not completely set without the silk stockings, neckcloths, and shoes. The visitor-general packed white, grey, and black silk stockings

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<sup>106</sup> I am not implying Gálvez was a fob, but I have the impression he cared about his public image. It is possible that his close relationship with the French coterie in Madrid made him a person more receptive to fashion. Since no clothing is mentioned in the inventory of things he left in Madrid, it seems that he saw necessary to take his complete wardrobe to Mexico.

<sup>107</sup> On the three-piece suit as "harbinger of sartorial modernity" see Jones, *Sexing La Mode*, 23. In eighteenth-century Spain these sets of close-fitting garments were called *vestidos a la francesa* or *vestidos militares*—both names indicated the origin of the fashion.

<sup>108</sup> Wool, silk, and velvet were "traditional" in the sense that they had been the fabrics preferred by elites for centuries. In this sense, in the 1750s cotton was "modern." According to Willet and Phillis Cunningham, velvet was fashionable in the 1760s among the British too; Cunningham and Cunningham, *Handbook of English Costume*, 217. Other pieces of outwear in Gálvez's wardrobe were made of the following fabrics derived from wool and silk: *lanilla*, *tercianela*, *castor*, *anafaya*, *Indiana*, *punto de estambre*, *punto de esda*, and *bayeta*.

<sup>109</sup> On the unfashionable complete suit made of the same piece of fabric in the mid-eighteenth century, see Cunningham and Cunningham, *Handbook of English Costume*, 217, and Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, 91.



with many pairs of fasteners. He also took with him 43 *corbatines* or stocks (made of muslin or lace folded closely around the neck forming a band that buckled or tied behind). Strangely, Gálvez listing does not mention footwear which must have been composed of shoes with small heel, round toes, and large buckles and riding boots too. Wigs were essential and universal in Europe, except for the lower classes. There is no doubt Gálvez wore a wig, but his inventory did not list them with the exemption of two *bolsas para peluquines*, which actually could mean “bagwigs.” Bagwigs were “the most obvious tokens of rank.”<sup>110</sup> Popular and elegant, these wigs had a small, square black taffeta (silk) bag on the back where the gentleman’s tied hair was encased; sometimes two ribbons coming from the bag were brought around the neck and tied at the front.

A large variety of colors characterized the dress of the high classes in the eighteenth century, which functioned as a chromatic distinction from the graver tones used by the populace. Gálvez’s exterior garments comprehended a whole rainbow of pastel shades that included pearl, porcelain, cinnamon, pompadour (pink), *grana*, blue, violet, clove, in addition to black.<sup>111</sup> Specialized dress was a distinction of social status and the visitor-general brought with him three military suits and two attires appropriate for mourning occasions.<sup>112</sup> In the mid-1770s, the Marqués de la Corona derided that Gálvez had been once “a poor *garnacha*.”<sup>113</sup> *Garnacha* was the long gown reaching the heels worn by lawyers and the word became a synonym of the profession. Not surprisingly, Gálvez’s wardrobe included two black *garnachas*, made of different types

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<sup>110</sup> Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, 116.

<sup>111</sup> Bright colors were not fashionable in the period.

<sup>112</sup> Gálvez was not a military man, but he had been named intendant of the army of New Spain and he also led a military expedition to the northwestern provinces. His “*vestidos de militar*” (three cited in the list) might not have been uniforms but just a particular style of three-piece suits.

<sup>113</sup> Carrasco to Viergol, 13 Mar. 1776, AHN, Estado, leg. 3211.

of wool (beaver cloth and *bayeta*) and one had lustrous moiré facings. In addition, the list identifies some garments—waistcoats, cloaks, and breeches—as “*para golilla*.” *Golilla* was a collar of stiff white cloth also used by lawyers and judges—another flag of distinction that Gálvez packed for his trip to New Spain. If the Marqués de la Corona had called Gálvez a “*garnacha*,” in an undated personal letter to Governor of Sonora Pineda, Gálvez talked of himself as a “mere *golilla*.”<sup>114</sup>

Gálvez’s wardrobe included an assortment of *ropa blanca*, meaning undergarments and household linens, the price of which could be higher than exterior clothing.<sup>115</sup> Underclothes were another marker that separated the wealthy from the poor.<sup>116</sup> Shirts and *camisolas* were the main item of underwear mentioned in the visitor-general’s inventory; their number amounted to 115.<sup>117</sup> Most men in Europe, independently of social status, wore shirts next to the skin, but affluent Spanish males donned *camisolas* on top of the shirts and below the waistcoat. Gálvez packed 35 new shirts of “very fine Dutch linen” for his trip, but he also carried 22 that were used. *Camisolas* were shirts without neck, with an upper front opening decorated with ruffles. The V-neck and the unbuttoning of the upper part of the waistcoat made them the only piece of male underclothing that was visible. The white frills at the end of their long

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<sup>114</sup> Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 238. Thus, both *golilla* and *garnacha* were synonyms of “lawyers.”

<sup>115</sup> Fayard cites some examples from the seventeenth century in which *ropa blanca* was 50 per cent more expensive than outwear; Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 473.

<sup>116</sup> “This might mean undergarments of silk or linen as opposed to none at all,” Van Young writes when discussing elite men dress in rural Latin America compared to nonelite men; see his “Material Life,” 64. For this section I relied on Cunnington and Cunnington, *The History of Underclothes*, with revisions by A. D. Mansfield and Valerie Mansfield (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1981, first edited 1951).

<sup>117</sup> Other items were *calzoncillos* or drawers to wear under the breeches of which Gálvez had only seven pairs, *almillas* (a vest of linen adjusted to the body), night caps, handkerchiefs, and *calcetas* (different from his silk stockings). No nightclothes are mentioned, perhaps because they were not usual at the time.

sleeves were a symbol of distinction that indicated the wearer did not work manually.<sup>118</sup> Gálvez's 58 *camisolas* are described in detail, sorted by their different types of ruffles of which he clearly favored embroidering over lace (36 vs. 7 pieces).<sup>119</sup> Finally, among the household linens in his list, the visitor-general brought to New Spain sheets, pillows, towels, tablecloths, and napkins. Some sets of sheets and pillows were specifically identified to be for "the family," that is, his servants.

Clothes mediate between us and others. The question of how do you think your dressed self reflects in the eyes of others lingers at the moment of making any sartorial decision. The visitor-general's garments acquire more meaning, if we think of them as mediating between a powerful king's envoy and the colonial subjects he was trying to inspect and reform. When José de Gálvez arrived to New Spain his clothing must have had elicited comments.<sup>120</sup> His fashion probably made him unique within the universe of clothing worn in New Spain and we can only imagine the sartorial judgment of Mexicans or fellow Spaniards, either admiring the richness of his suits or criticizing the ways he donned them. Yet, I have identified only a handful of occasions where Gálvez's clothing is significant in available documentation. They are very telling episodes and more than

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<sup>118</sup> For the use of *camisolas* in Spain, see Amelia Leira Sánchez, "La moda en España durante el siglo XVIII," 87-88. Cunningham and Cunningham do not mention its use but describe eighteenth-century shirts with the jabot—frill-decorated border of the front opening—and long sleeves with ruffled-cuffs; Cunningham and Cunningham, *The History of Underclothes*, 51-53.

<sup>119</sup> Leira writes that lace was reserved for the very rich in her, "El vestido y la moda en tiempos de Goya," in *CD del curso impartido en Madrid del 31 de Marzo al 3 de Abril de 2003, en colaboración con el Instituto del Patrimonio Histórico Español (IPHE) y la Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM)* (Madrid: Publicaciones del Grupo Español de Conservación, 2003), available at [http://ge-iic.com/files/Publicaciones/moda\\_en\\_tiempos\\_de\\_goya.pdf](http://ge-iic.com/files/Publicaciones/moda_en_tiempos_de_goya.pdf), 2. Thus, it is possible that Gálvez might have favored lace, but could only afford embroidered sleeve ruffles.

<sup>120</sup> In eighteenth-century Europe, Ribeiro notes, "foreigners were instantly recognizable by their clothes," Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-century Europe*, 115.

judgments about fashion, they comment upon Gálvez's dressing decisions or, in other words, on his intense relationship with his wardrobe.

Dressing can be interpreted as an act of self-representation; it is, in essence, a performative experience. In one of the many written reactions that Gálvez's general inspection of New Spain generated, the anonymous author criticized the visitor-general's transformative demeanors and costumes. The meaning of some words and phrases are not very obvious in the following passage but in general it conveys how the Mexican public perceived Gálvez:

In Mexico [City] he kept a somber and quiet exterior bearing, eyes downcast, *a que da el vulgo otro nombre*; after concluding his [official] tasks for the day, he gave himself to pleasures in San Borja, [an hacienda] close to the capital; in the towns of *Tierra Adentro* he had an air that was martial, *cortejante*, and frank; in [military] campaigns [he] dressed as a general; at the tribunal, as a *togado* [lawyer]; and in the *Poblaciones* as a private gentleman; in this sense, he took the form of the different characters he wanted to impersonate.<sup>121</sup>

This theatrical, even extravagant and chameleonic, predisposition in the visitor-general's behavior, reminded me of one common Andalusian stereotype commented by Julian Pitt-Rivers in his classic *People of the Sierra*. The author comments that, according to other Spaniards, Andalusians "are always acting."<sup>122</sup> In general this passage speaks of a well-thought, premeditated choice of clothing and behavior from the part of Gálvez. Yet, the second episode I want to emphasize here belongs to Gálvez's involuntary psyche. It

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<sup>121</sup> "En México guardaba un porte exterior de serio, callado, ojos bajos, a que da el vulgo otro nombre; en San Borja, poco distante de la capital entregado a las delicias, concluidas las tareas del día: en los Pueblos de Tierra adentro con aire marcial, cortejante, y franco; en la campaña vestido de general; en el tribunal de togado; y en las Poblaciones de caballero particular; de forma que tomaba todas las de los distintos personajes que tenía que representar," anonymous, "Providencias de Gálvez en su Visita," 1773, AGI, Estado, leg. 34, n. 36. I wonder what the meaning of "downcast eyes" was among the *vulgo* or populace. From the DRAE, I found out that "to downcast one's eyes" means "*humillarse y obedecer prontamente lo que le mandan*." I also wonder what *Poblaciones* means with exactitude, could it indicate indigenous towns?

<sup>122</sup> Julian A. Pitt-Rivers, "Preface to the second edition" in *The People of the Sierra*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), xvii.

happened during the most excruciating moments of the visitor-general's mental disease during the Sonora Expedition (1768-1770). Secluded in the town of Arizpe in Sonora from February to March 1770, the mad visitor-general staged an attack against his own wardrobe on two fronts: extermination and boycott. He tried several times to burn his clothing and remained nude for days. Naked, from his window, he preached to the Indians that he was the Aztec Emperor Moctezuma.<sup>123</sup> In these grave hours, perhaps the most fateful in his whole life, the visitor-general rebelled against his material possessions. And apparently his objects rebelled against him too, because at his return to Mexico City he claimed he had lost his entire luggage.

I observed before that José de Gálvez thought his assigned salary was correct for his official commission of visitor-general of the justice tribunals and treasury of New Spain. The Sonora Expedition and other affairs *beyond* the original requirements of his employment—such as his five-month pacification tour de force in the provinces of San Luis Potosí, Guanajuato, and Michoacán after the expulsion of the Jesuits—were crucial in changing his conformity with the salary assigned by the king's ministers of state. Thus, in 1772, Gálvez declared that the 12,000 *pesos fuertes* would have been fine, *if not* for the “extremely serious” additional missions that had befallen upon his shoulders, which had involved continuous trips outside Mexico City and other extraordinary expenses.<sup>124</sup> The general inspector began to exteriorize his economic hardships when he returned to the capital of New Spain after the two-year Sonora Expedition. On January 1771, Viceroy Croix informed Arriaga that he had awarded Gálvez with an extraordinary gratification

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<sup>123</sup> Account in Vazquez Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez*, 1175.

<sup>124</sup> Petition of Gálvez to King, Madrid, 5 Aug. 1772, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246.

(*ayuda de costa*) that amounted to one year's pay, that is, 12,000 pesos.<sup>125</sup> Croix argued that this payment would cover for the great expenditures the visitor-general had had during his long voyage, increased by the disease "he had contracted there." As soon as the viceroy had learned about the visitor-general's financial difficulties, including the fact that Gálvez had already "consumed his salaries," he readily offered him funds from the royal treasury to take care of his debts. Moreover, the viceroy explained, his proposal was validated by "chapter 14" of the fourteen points presented by Gálvez and approved by the Board in charge of adjusting the final details for the Sonora Expedition in early 1768.<sup>126</sup> Croix did not make explicit the content of chapter 14 but this final point in Gálvez's reformist plan for the Northern Provinces reflected that, before his frontier expedition, he had anticipated the insufficiency of his salary for the great enterprise he was about to carry out on behalf of the Crown: the visitor-general mentioned that his other trips *had left him already indebted* and supplicated that, in case he could not make ends meet, his personal expenses be covered by the public funds of the expedition.<sup>127</sup> In his letter to Arriaga, Croix related that recently he had suggested to the visitor-general the enforcement of chapter 14, but he could not convince Gálvez who, moved by his "*honroso desinterés*," selflessly rejected Croix's instances. Then the Marqués de Croix

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<sup>125</sup> Croix to Arriaga, Mexico City, 27 Jan. 1771, *ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> In his letter Croix dated this *Junta* on 25 Jan. 1768; this was incorrect since it had met on 25 February 1768. Croix, Gálvez, Archbishop Francisco de Lorenzana, *oidores* José Rodríguez de Toro and Ambrosio Melgarejo Santaella, *fiscal* José Antonio de Areche, Diego Córnde (advisor to the viceroy), Colonel Miguel Panes, and José Bassare (superintendent of the Mexico City customhouse and former president of the *audiencia* of Guadalajara) composed the *Junta*. The same individuals had convened in another *Junta* on 21 Jan. 1768 where Gálvez had been elected as head of the frontier expedition. Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 239. Croix indicated that the fourteen chapters had been approved by the king on 20 Sep. 1768, Croix to Arriaga, Mexico City, 27 Jan. 1771, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246.

<sup>127</sup> For the content of "chapter 14" see, Luis Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez y la Comandancia General de las Provincias Internas del norte de Nueva España* (Seville: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1964), 161, and Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 243.

applied some extra brushstrokes to paint a more dramatic situation. Reports had reached him indicating delays in the payment of salaries of *visita* personnel; yet, a generous Gálvez had already paid his *dependientes*'s wages. Croix was sure that Gálvez owed 12,000 pesos to his agent in Mexico City, who had been in charge of cashing his salary in his absence.<sup>128</sup> All of these considerations convinced Croix of the “appropriateness and indispensability” of issuing this sum to the visitor, and he did it against the funds of the Sonora Expedition. Personally, the marquis thought the gratification was insufficient because only a greater quantity could have replaced the visitor-general's material losses—such as his complete luggage—“irremediable in such long, uncomfortable walks (*caminatas*).” He closed his letter expressing his hopes that the king would concur with this measure. In Aranjuez, Julián de Arriaga wrote down “approved” in the margins of the viceroy's correspondence and sent back the official endorsement on May 1771.<sup>129</sup>

How exactly Gálvez “consumed” his salaries? It is hard to tell. If, as suggested above, Gálvez did not buy clothes while in the New World (or at least up until his return from the harsh Sonora Expedition), he must have committed part of his income to pay servants to do the laundering, starching, and ironing of his conspicuous wardrobe. Since masculine faces in the eighteenth century were clean shaven and wigs needed maintenance, he probably paid the services of a barber and a wigpowderer. We know Gálvez traveled to New Spain with his “family” of servants, for whose daily sustenance he was responsible. At the end of the colonial period, *Audiencia* judges complained that

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<sup>128</sup> I do not know who this agent was.

<sup>129</sup> Arriaga to Croix, draft, Aranjuez, 13 May 1771, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246.

their medical care cost one peso a day, more expensive than in Spain.<sup>130</sup> The official surgeon of the Sonora Expedition, Gregorio Cistué, looked after Gálvez during his long disease but I imagine his services and salary came from the funds of the military venture. Let us remember from chapter one that Gálvez's *subdelegados*, Juan Antonio Varela and Bartolomé Ortega y Montenegro had been approved by the Crown as members of the *visita* team without salary; perhaps Gálvez shared part of his 12,000-peso remuneration with them. Or maybe the Andalusian was just a profligate and spent prodigiously on his pleasurable evenings at the Hacienda de San Borja. Disappointedly, available sources are silent about the visitor-general's itemized expenses.

At the end of August 1771, shortly after the visitor-general found out that Charles III had granted him permission to return to Spain, Gálvez asked for the Crown's clear acknowledgment that the royal treasury would fund his, his dependents's, and his family's travel expenses back home *as he supposed*, on the grounds that their coming to New Spain had been paid by the state. According to this letter, another tacit assumption the visitor-general had was that he would receive six months of his salary in advance before his embarkment. To dissipate any doubts—and I imagine, any foreseeable misunderstandings—related to both concerns, he requested the issuing of royal orders for the new viceroy, Antonio de Bucareli, and the “Havana Department.” Gálvez reminded Arriaga that “persons of some character (*personas de algún carácter*)” normally incurred

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<sup>130</sup> “Expediente instruido sobre aumento de sueldo al señor regente y ministros de la real audiencia,” 1813-1820, AGNM, Civil, leg. 1106 cited in Arnold, *Bureaucrats*, 102.



many expenses in transatlantic travel and that he could not afford his transfer without this sort of “regular” (in the sense of sensible, even normal) aid.<sup>131</sup>

By the start of 1772 it was clear that the approval from the Crown would arrive too late. José de Gálvez and his team of dependents expected to leave Mexico City for Veracruz on the first day of February, thus on 22 January the visitor-general decided to take action and requested directly to Bucareli the advancement of at least four months of their salary to finance their travel. This time he invoked a slightly different story. The visitor-general spoke on behalf of the originally-appointed *visita team* (Machado, Corres, Linares, and himself) and he explained that the Crown had not given them any *ayuda de costa* to pay their travel and transportation expenses when they went to New Spain, instead, to defray the costs of the transfer they had received their salary since the day of their appointment in Madrid (March 1765). Following this logic, Gálvez reasoned, Bucareli should mandate the royal officials of the Mexico City Treasury to issue four additional months of their wage starting in February 1772, which, by the way, was a sum that did not compare to the larger quantity they had received in 1765. He also let the viceroy know that he had already entreated six months of his salary, but was still waiting for the king’s approval. Gálvez promised that when the royal consent reached Mexico

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<sup>131</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, n. 81, Mexico City, 28 Aug. 1771, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246. Arriaga wrote down “Conceded” on the margins of Gálvez’s letter and issued a set of orders on 21 Dec. 1771: One was directed to Gálvez, informing that the King had “condescended to his request;” there were two orders addressed to Bucareli, one granting Gálvez six months of his salary before his embarkment for his personal expenses, and another confirming that the Royal Treasury would pay the visitor’s and his *dependientes*’s transatlantic voyage, “in conformity with what had been practiced in his passage to those provinces.” Arriaga also sent a version of the last order to the governor of Havana (Felipe de Fonsdeviela, the Marqués de la Torre, also captain-general of Cuba 1771-1777). See, Arriaga to Gálvez, Arriaga to Bucareli (two different), and Arriaga to governor of Havana, drafts, Madrid, 21 Dec. 1771, *ibid.* De la Torre sent a receipt to Madrid on 22 Feb. 1772. In his two receipts, Bucareli explained to Arriaga that he had instructed royal treasury officials in Veracruz to provide the needed funding to Gálvez and his dependents, and that he had issued the order to pay six extra months of salary to Gálvez; Marqués de la Torre to Arriaga, Havana, 22 Feb. 1772, and Bucareli to Arriaga (nos. 302 and 303), Mexico City, 26 Mar. 1772, *ibid.*

City, his agent would only cash the remaining two-month wage bonus. Bucareli acquiesced to the visitor-general's request and the king, through his minister of the Indies, sanctioned his measure in May 1772.<sup>132</sup>

### **Back to Spain: A Broke and Blushing Royal Functionary.**

I imagine that going from a salary of 1800 *pesos fuertes* to one of 12,000 must have been an elating experience for Gálvez in 1765. The reverse, a disheartening sentiment, must have overwhelmed him when, upon his return to Spain, he took over his position as *togado* minister of the Council of the Indies with an annual pay of 50,000 *reales de vellón* or 2,500 *pesos fuertes*.<sup>133</sup> These differences show the great abyss that separated the remunerations of mid- and high-level bureaucrats in the Indies from those who worked in Spain, at least in nominal terms (I discussed earlier the high costs of living in American cities). For some, an overseas position provided an opportunity to create a cushy bed of savings.<sup>134</sup> It is thus more shocking that notwithstanding his high salary, his additional gratifications, and the lack of evidence we have about his expenditures, Gálvez was completely broke and heavily indebted at the end of the *visita general*.

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<sup>132</sup> Bucareli to Arriaga, n. 181, Mexico City, 25 Jan. 1772, *ibid.* It includes the transcription of Gálvez's *oficio* of 22. Jan. 1772. See also Bucareli to Arriaga (nos. 302 and 303), Mexico City, 26 Mar. 1772, *ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> Title of *ministro togado* of the Council of the Indies for José de Gálvez, Madrid, 7 Jul. 1772, AGS, DGT, Inventario 24, leg. 184, fol. 580.

<sup>134</sup> This, I repeat, at the mid- to high-bureaucratic levels. Saavedra wrote in his *Memoria Testamentaria* that with his salary of *intendant* of Caracas (1783-1788) he was able to save 60,000 pesos. Saavedra, "Memoria testamentaria," 269. The Marqués de la Corona also reported that: "*De Indias no he visto venir ningún Ministro pobre... Virreyes hemos visto venir con medio millón y con dos millones de pesos, que en el curso de sus virreïnatos han pedido y alcanzado aumento de sueldos;*" Carrasco to Viergol, 13 Mar. 1776, AHN, Estado, leg. 3211.

We saw how the Marqués de Croix granted the visitor-general an additional year of his salary in 1771 and then how, in a direct demand to Bucareli, Gálvez had secured at least 3,000 pesos in funding for his return to Spain. Yet, before his transatlantic trip the Andalusian had acquired a very large loan from Mexico City merchant, and one of his men of trust, Juan José de Echeveste. The Basque tradesman had provided him a credit of 25,000 pesos.<sup>135</sup> Debt, various authors have remarked, was an inescapable reality for imperial bureaucrats in spite of their relatively larger nominal salaries. Everybody owed money; I mentioned debt among the judges of the *Audiencia* of Mexico City, but even viceroy Bucareli had red numbers in his account when he assumed his office in 1771.<sup>136</sup>

In early August 1772, Gálvez extended a plea to the king, supplicating the Crown to take over his debt with Echeveste and another 5,000-peso obligation he had acquired recently in Madrid, with local merchant Gregorio Pando. He carefully constructed his case.<sup>137</sup> Gálvez decided to emphasize first all the additional missions he completed in New Spain that were not part of his official commission as visitor-general such as the establishment of the royal tobacco monopoly, the expulsion of the Jesuits, the pacification of the 1767 rebellions, and the expeditions to California and Sonora. He highlighted key aspects of each event, such as the 2.5 million-peso revenue that the state-run tobacco monopoly generated in 1771, or “the conquest of Northern California up to the port of Monterrey.” Toward the end of his petition, Gálvez reminded Charles III that to the said extraordinary services one should add the achievements of his primary

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<sup>135</sup> Chapter 2 discusses Gálvez’s relationship with Echeveste.

<sup>136</sup> Bucareli was governor and captain-general of Cuba when he was named viceroy of New Spain. In Havana he enjoyed a salary of 16,000 annual pesos. When he assumed his new post, however, his debts amounted to 44,000 pesos; see Bobb, *The Viceregency of Antonio María Bucareli in New Spain*, 25.

<sup>137</sup> Petition of Gálvez to King, Madrid, 5 Aug. 1772. All the documents related to this petition come from AGI, Mexico, leg. 1246, unless otherwise stated.

commission as general inspector of New Spain, upon which he did not deem necessary to elaborate, yet he reminded his success had been validated by substantial increases in colonial revenue. As for the causes for his financial ruin he identified the “considerable” expenditures and losses during his many trips that his “moderate salary” could not afford and consequently had led him to incur liabilities. He acknowledged having received the 12,000 award against the funds of the Sonora Expedition that Croix had bestowed upon him, but he affirmed that it had not been enough. To add a dramatic detail, he disclosed that he had to sell even the *vajilla* he had carried with him from Spain. He was referring to the 153 pieces of silverware—distributed in plates, serving pieces, objects for personal hygiene (i.e., ewer, basin, and soap dish), candleholders, a coffeepot and teaspoons, along other pieces and sets of flatware (including specialized items such as a marrow spoon)—described and valued in the inventory of his luggage. Gálvez’s *vajilla* had an approximated value of 289 marks of *plata labrada*, with a monetary equivalent close to 2300 *pesos fuertes* or 46,000 *reales de vellón*.<sup>138</sup> It is rather ironical that Gálvez transported his complete silver collection to the land where most of this argentine metal originated. But silverware, and jewelry to a lesser proportion, was one of the most cherished possessions of Spanish functionaries and urbanite Europeans in general.<sup>139</sup> Van Young describes how the rural poor in Latin America overwhelmingly bequeathed “productive property” in their wills, that is, they listed what little they had of tools,

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<sup>138</sup> “Gálvez’s inventory 1765,” 46-47.

<sup>139</sup> In Fayard’s study silverware and jewelry represented 11 per cent on average of the total value of the general estates of the ministers of the Council of Castile in the 1650-1750 period; during the reign of Philip V, the average reached 11.83 per cent. Fayard collected data about the *vajillas* of ten functionaries in the eighteenth century (1706-1752), and their average valuation is 28,000 *reales*; this sum indicates Gálvez’s silver collection superseded the average value of *vajillas* among mid- to high-level bureaucrats. Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille* 454 and 459.

equipment, and livestock necessary for working the land. In sharp contrast, the only object (in this case, set of objects) singled out in Gálvez's last will of 1787 was a recently acquired *vajilla*—not productive at all, but of symbolic value as indicator of social standing.<sup>140</sup> Given the Andalusian's particular attachment for silver objects throughout his life, we can imagine the significant pain of selling in New Spain what was probably his first *vajilla*.

We have seen how *togado* minister José de Gálvez justified his debt with Echeveste by emphasizing his multiple merits during the Visitation, but what about his recently-acquired liability of 5,000 pesos with Pando? Apparently, his crimson damask *canapé* and other fine pieces of furniture had not survived their owner's absence of seven years, for Gálvez claimed he used this money to furnish his house and to acquire a "moderate" luggage (*equipage*), both inescapable necessities, he contended, to live according to his new employment.<sup>141</sup> To finalize his supplication, he dropped an additional timid request. He asked for "any honorific distinction" the king would like to bestow upon him. Given that "the public" had welcomed his loyal services to the Crown, this recognition would serve "as encouragement to other vassals," and its concomitant (monetary?) aids would allow him to live free from the "anguishes of poverty (*congojas*

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<sup>140</sup> Gálvez referred to a *vajilla* he and his third wife had recently acquired in the *testamentaria* of Miguel de Múzquiz, the Conde de Gausa; "Testamento Gálvez 1787." 169. In the 1789-1791 period Francisco de Saavedra bought a *vajilla* valued in 100,000 *reales de vellón*, more expensive than a country house he acquired in the same years at Canillejas (valued in 60,000 *reales*). For years, at least up to the 1808 French invasion of Spain, he kept his 100,000-*real* silver collection as one of the most valuable set of objects in his general estate. In fact, during the imperial emergency of 1808, Saavedra sent his *vajilla* to the mint house to be converted into cash; see Saavedra, "Memoria testamentaria," 270-283.

<sup>141</sup> As he explained in a letter to Arriaga, attached to his petition: "...ni el considerable deterioro de mis muebles y patrimonio que encuentro casi arruinados durante mi dilatada ausencia;" Gálvez to Arriaga, Madrid, 5 Aug. 1772. *Equipage* (*equipaje* in modern Spanish) in the 1780 Spanish Royal Academy of Spanish dictionary is defined as: "Aparato, recámara, y prevención de lo necesario en un viaje, o camino, para servicio de la persona y criados de algún personaje." The definition circumscribes that owning a luggage was exclusive of better-off persons.

*de la pobreza*)” to continue performing his duties with the “same exactitude he had credited in his past commissions.”<sup>142</sup>

Gálvez wrote his plea in the third person and declared that the “supplicant” (himself) composed this document beset with “the inexplicable flush of embarrassment that asking for one’s own welfare causes in those who only recognized the interests of honor.”<sup>143</sup> The blushing Andalusian introduced his petition with a letter addressed to Arriaga which was a display of humility, more lamentations for his desperate economic situation, and absolute obsequiousness toward the minister of the Indies.<sup>144</sup> He described his services to the Spanish crown as “small [*cortos*].” At one point, Gálvez classified himself among Charles III’s “poor ministers” and expressed that his usual “disinterested genius would leave him submerged in the harshness of the debtor’s slavery,” or “in the darkest misery if he had the means to pay his creditor.” Above all he implored the favor of Arriaga: the ex-visitor-general “confessed” that he was a creature of the minister of the Indies; that he venerated him more than anybody; he described Arriaga as the “most noble protector” of those ministers that served the king with probity; and he was sure the

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<sup>142</sup> “...y servirse también si fuese del Real agrado de V.M., conceder al suplicante alguna distinción honorífica que calificando al público haberle sido gratos sus fieles servicios, se aliciente a los demás vasallos, con el auxilio correspondiente a que sin las congojas de la pobreza pueda continuar en su ministerio con la misma exactitud que tiene bien acreditada en todos sus encargos anteriores.” I wonder what Gálvez meant by “encouragement to other vassals;” Petition of Gálvez to King, Madrid, 5 Aug. 1772. It is interesting that he mentioned “the public’s” approval; for a discussion of the “public” and “public opinion” in the eighteenth-century Hispanic World see the introduction of Gabriel Torres Puga, *Opinión pública y censura en Nueva España: indicios de un silencio imposible (1767-1794)* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2010), 15-40.

<sup>143</sup> “...con el inexplicable rubor que causa el pedir interés al que nunca conoció otros que los del honor;” Petition of Gálvez to King, Madrid, 5 Aug. 1772.

<sup>144</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, Madrid, 5 Aug. 1772.

*Bailío*'s generous heart would help him to find the solace he was looking for at the throne's foot.<sup>145</sup>

The Crown acted swiftly but cautiously before Gálvez's pathetic and sycophantic plea. Thinking that the former viceroy of New Spain might be better informed about Gálvez's insufficient salary and large expenses during his general inspection, on 18 August, Julián de Arriaga asked for a report from the Marqués de Croix.<sup>146</sup> Dipping the quill into the ink and writing with his own hand, Croix composed an impassioned letter on behalf of his former political ally.<sup>147</sup> He enunciated Gálvez's role in pacifying three provinces after the Jesuits expulsion and even claimed that without the visitor-general's prompt and efficient action, the rebellion would have spread throughout New Spain. After recounting one more time Gálvez's important expeditions to California and Sonora, Croix mentioned his "cruel disease" which had disabled him for eight months and had placed Gálvez "several times at the doors of Eternity." Then Croix reminded Arriaga that, being well informed about the visitor-general's financial penuries, in 1771 he had proposed to pay with royal funds all of his extraordinary expenses and debts, not only because "it was fair" but because it had been approved by a *Junta*. Despite the viceroy's insistence, Gálvez "just accepted" 12,000 pesos and he did this forcefully, that is, only after Croix exerted his authority upon his will. After the marquis left Mexico City, he had evidence that Gálvez had sold his *vajilla*, books, and household items (*menaje de*

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<sup>145</sup> Arriaga held the title of *Bailío* for being a knight of Malta.

<sup>146</sup> For "expenses," Arriaga used the word "*dispendio*." *Dispendio* translates as "waste" (excessive and unnecessary expenditures) but it could also mean "excessive use of resources," which I think is what Arriaga meant. Croix's written opinion, Arriaga noted, had to be secret (*reservada*); Arriaga to Croix, draft, San Ildefonso, 18 Aug. 1772.

<sup>147</sup> Marqués de Croix to Arriaga, Madrid, 21 Aug. 1772.

*casa*).<sup>148</sup> Moreover, Croix was sure that the 30,000 pesos the ex-visitor-general was requesting would be destined exclusively to satisfy his debts, implying that Gálvez was not misappropriating Crown's resources.

At the end of August, in a letter that betrayed tiny tidbits of sarcasm, Arriaga let Gálvez know that the king had agreed to ease his financial burden and that he would issue a royal order to settle the debit "you said you have" with Echeveste. The minister of the Indies also informed him that he would ask the minister of the Royal Treasury, Miguel de Múzquiz, to hand Pando the 5,000 pesos Gálvez used for the "moderate adornment" of his home.<sup>149</sup> Gálvez's response, written a day after Arriaga's good news, was short but full of gratefulness directed to the king and, above all, to the minister of the Indies. He was so grateful with the *Bailío*'s intercession with Charles III that he declared that the minister's "sponsorship" was to remain "forever sealed in his heart." He also told Arriaga to remain assured that he was protecting a "good man" that venerated him.<sup>150</sup> By early September, the minister of the Indies's aides were busy drafting the needed royal *cédulas* and the *Bailío* had already asked Múzquiz to pay the obligation of 5,000 *pesos sencillos* to merchant Pando.<sup>151</sup> With this, all the matters related to Gálvez's debts were settled—or so it seemed.

On 13 September, an even redder "flush of embarrassment" must have colored Gálvez's face when he penned another letter to Arriaga. He just had been notified that

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<sup>148</sup> In fact in his 5 Aug. letter to Arriaga, Gálvez spoke of "*pérdidas totales*;" Gálvez to Arriaga, Madrid, 5 Aug. 1772.

<sup>149</sup> Arriaga to Gálvez, draft, San Ildefonso, 28 Aug. 1772.

<sup>150</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, Madrid, 29 Aug. 1772.

<sup>151</sup> Arriaga to Miguel de Múzquiz, draft, San Ildefonso, 29 Aug. 1772. According to undated notes generated at the ministry of the Indies, official Pedro de Rada, a critic of José de Gálvez, was in charge of drafting the *cédula* and orders related to the ex-visitor-general's debts.



Múzquiz's order to issue the 5,000 *pesos* he owed to Pando was ready at the General Treasury. The notification specified, however, that the bill of exchange had a *peso sencillo* denomination, that is, it amounted to approximately 75,000 *reales de vellón*. Gálvez then admitted that his obligation with the Madrid merchant surpassed the 100,000 *reales de vellón* because it was in *pesos fuertes*, just as his debt with Echeveste in Mexico.<sup>152</sup> He could not pay the 25,000-*real* difference because it amounted to half of his salary (50,000 *reales*), and this remuneration was the only aid he had to support himself. Therefore, he supplicated Arriaga to notify Múzquiz to re-issue the bill of exchange but this time in *pesos fuertes*. One can only imagine a rolling-eyed expression in Arriaga's face when he received this new petition from the Andalusian *ministro togado*. In the end he approved this request, but this time the minister of the Indies took his time to answer the suppliant—ten days— or maybe he was just busy dealing with the additional intricacies related to the Crown's plan to pay Gálvez's *other*, larger debt in Mexico.

By that date, the Ministry of the Indies was still waiting for the final report on the accounting of the Sonora Expedition for which Echeveste was responsible, being treasurer of this military venture. Arriaga and his team came up with a smart solution: if the Basque merchant had not yet submitted his data, he should deduct the 25,000 pesos owed to him from this fund. On 14 September a *Real Cédula* was issued and it prompted viceroy Bucareli to notify the *Tribunal de Cuentas* and the royal officials of the Mexico City treasury to "receive the 25,000 pesos in the account numbers of the said expedition," and to make sure this payment (*abono*) was well-registered on the accounts to prevent its

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<sup>152</sup> Gálvez to Arriaga, Madrid, 13 Sep. 1772. There were 20 *reales de vellón* in each *peso fuerte*. In Spain everyday transactions were donned in *reales de vellón*, sometimes taking into account their equivalence in *pesos sencillos*, but in the Americas *pesos fuertes* functioned as monetary base. I believe that in 1772 Gálvez still kept in his mind the way he had made transactions for the last six years in New Spain.

duplication.<sup>153</sup> Five days later, Gálvez wrote again to Arriaga. He had just received a copy of the *cédula*, he felt really thankful, but he reminded the *Bailío* that Echeveste had finished and submitted his bookkeeping on the military mission sometime ago and perhaps the minister should warn the viceroy of New Spain about this. Arriaga complied the next day by sending the ex-visitor-general additional orders for the viceroy that could be attached to the *cédula* and used “in case, ~~as you argue~~, he [Echeveste] had submitted his final accounts of the Sonora Expedition.” On 21 September Gálvez received the extra documents and, with words enveloped in a haze of gratitude, he notified Arriaga that he would send the orders and *cédula* in the next monthly mail to New Spain.<sup>154</sup> When Gálvez shipped these official papers to Echeveste, he was finally settling his debt with one of his men of trust in New Spain. But the Crown’s resolution was a little disadvantageous for the Basque merchant because, instead of receiving his money back in a simple, direct payment, he had to face the long waiting times of colonial bureaucracy.

Indeed, on the first month of 1773, Echeveste presented the *cédula* and orders of 14 and 20 September 1772, respectively, to Bucareli. In the attached letter, the tradesman reminded the viceroy that he had turned in the final accounting of the Sonora Expedition almost a year earlier, on 22 February. Moreover, he added, no funds from this commission remained in his hands. Bucareli simply forwarded the matter to the

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<sup>153</sup> “[*que*] se reciban en data de las cuentas de dicha expedición de Sonora los expresados 25 mil pesos... [*y*] que se practiquen las anotaciones convenientes a evitar la duplicidad de este abono;” *Real Cédula* of Charles III to Viceroy of Spain, 14 Sep. 1772. Arriaga and his men of trust, disliked Echeveste’s role as treasurer of four branches of the royal treasury of New Spain (see chapter 1), I imagine that they suspected his probity and that is why they annotated the warning against the “duplication” of the payment.

<sup>154</sup> Arriaga to Gálvez, draft, San Ildefonso, 17 Sep. 1772; Gálvez to Arriaga, Madrid, 19 Sep. 1772; Arriaga to Gálvez, draft, San Ildefonso 20 Sep. 1772, revealing strikethrough in the original; Arriaga to Viceroy of New Spain (Bucareli), draft, San Ildefonso, 20 Sep. 1772; Gálvez to Arriaga, Madrid, 21 Sep. 1772.

*Audiencia fiscal* José Antonio de Areche. In his report *Fiscal* Areche, another man of Gálvez, first highlighted the “incomparable goodness” of the king who justly decided to take over the ex-visitor-general’s debt. Secondly, he recommended the viceroy’s immediate execution of the *cédula* and, in order “to expedite” the process, the *Tribunal de Cuentas* had to make sure if the final accounts of the Sonora Expedition conveyed or not any liquid sum in favor of Echeveste. Finally, as soon as Areche evaluated the *Tribunal*’s report, he would determine the part of the 25000 pesos to be reimbursed to the merchant.<sup>155</sup> I have not found out when or whether or not the Basque merchant-bureaucrat received his full payment.

Going back to September 1772, on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Arriaga finally notified Múzquiz and Gálvez that Charles III had approved the issuance of the payment to Gregorio Pando in *pesos fuertes* instead of *sencillos*. Two days later Gálvez thanked Arriaga, this time in simple, non-sycophantic way.<sup>156</sup> Both of his debt issues were over but let us remember that at the end of his original plea of 5 August, he also had requested “any honorific distinction... with its corresponding financial aid” the king might convene to give him. A separate note of the Ministry of the Indies said Gálvez had repeated this point in other instances, but in November 1772, Arriaga wrote in the margins that the king had not approved this last request.<sup>157</sup> It was clear that at the end of 1772, Gálvez would not have everything that he wished for.

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<sup>155</sup> Juan José Echeveste to Bucareli, and Bucareli to Fiscal (José Antonio de Areche), Mexico City, 12 Jan. 1773; Areche to Bucareli, Mexico City, 14 Jan. 1773; order of Bucareli, Mexico City, 16 Jan. 1773; receipt of order by Guerrero y Tagle of the Tribunal de Cuentas, Mexico City, 23 Jan 1773, AGNM, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 5212, exp. 15.

<sup>156</sup> Arriaga to Múzquiz, and Arriaga to Gálvez, drafts, San Ildefonso, 24 Sep. 1772; Gálvez to Arriaga, Madrid, 26 Sep. 1772.

<sup>157</sup> Petition of Gálvez to King, Madrid, 5 Aug. 1772, and summary of the matters related to Gálvez’s petition written at the Ministry of the Indies, undated, with a note of Arriaga dated 30 Nov. 1772.

Yet the Crown's acquiescence in taking care of Gálvez's debts eventually became a public affair, at least among the court society. Discussing the matter, the Marqués de la Corona maintained that if he had gone to New Spain as visitor-general instead of Gálvez, he would have obtained the same results in advancing the royal revenues; he would have avoided unnecessary expenses in military expeditions; he would have lived with less means than he had at the time of writing—1776, when he had more than enough money, he said—and, above all, he would never have found himself in the need of asking for 30,000 pesos as Gálvez had done. In a later passage, De la Corona mentioned the issue one more time, with even more vivid words: “[and then Gálvez] returns [from New Spain] anxiously requesting the king to deliver him from the financial difficulty [*ahogo*] of owning 30,000 pesos.”<sup>158</sup> Writing four years later after the debt affair, the Marqués de la Corona's indignation was the cumulus of other matters he felt after observing how powerful Galvez had become in 1776—but these resentments belong to chapter 5.

## Conclusion

The introduction to Part Two of the dissertation suggested that most of José de Gálvez's fortune at the end of his life related to his New World-related bureaucratic career and therefore, it originated to a great extent in that area of the Spanish Empire. At the end of 1772, however, the state of affairs diverged from the reality evoked in my assertion. At that time, a 52-year old Gálvez could look back on his experiences in life and conclude that, in terms of his material welfare, his New World adventure had been a sink hole through which all his capital and beloved belongings had drained—a failure of

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<sup>158</sup> Carrasco to Viergol, 13 Mar. 1776, AHN, Estado, leg. 3211.

some sort. It was true that as *ministro togado* of the Council of the Indies, he now enjoyed a better salary than the one assigned to *alcaldes de casa y corte* but, nevertheless, he considered himself a “poor minister.”

Before becoming visitor-general of New Spain, Gálvez belonged to the small islands of prosperity surrounded by oceans of poverty and destitution in eighteenth-century Europe and her growing colonial world. If we evaluate Gálvez’s material life in 1765 against the extensive backdrop provided by Janine Fayard in her study about the ministers of the prestigious Council of Castile from 1650 to 1750, we can determine that the future visitor-general had already achieved a lifestyle similar to that of a member of one of Spain’s two top royal councils. He had accomplished this feat by surviving a childhood and probably an adolescence submerged in “the anguishes in poverty” (to use his own words); by going up the social ladder through his relationships of patronage and university studies (as chapter 1 explains); by working as a lawyer of the Royal Councils and the French embassy; and by marrying a rich heiress. His second marriage with Franco-Spanish Luisa Lucía Romet seems to have been crucial in Gálvez life to start a well-off existence in which nice furniture, fashionable clothing, two carriages, thousands of books, and a rich collection of silver could be spared. Still, I think the material world he enjoyed in 1765 would not have been possible without a reliable sources of income, such as a salary. Unfortunately, I have been not able to locate information about Gálvez’s income as a lawyer, although we saw that for some years he enjoyed a steady, if not impressive income as widower (from his former father-in-law’s ownership of two offices of *contrôleur vendeur de volailles in Paris*).

I am not sure why Gálvez went broke—or claimed he was bankrupt, using Arriaga’s words of suspicion—at the end of the Visitation. Perhaps a good salary in New Spain was not enough to maintain on its tracks the train of a life of luxury and comforts to which Gálvez had become accustomed in Madrid and that is why he got heavily indebted at the end of his official commission. Yet, in 1781 merchant-bureaucrat Pedro Antonio de Cossío complained about some of his subordinates at the Mexico City bureaucracy saying that they used “trains of carriages and magnificent coupés” that Gálvez had not used when he was there—implying that the visitor-general had lived within a relatively modest material framework.<sup>159</sup> As stated earlier, without more evidence, it is hard to tell the nature of Gálvez’s expenses while in New Spain. He pointed at his several long trips away from Mexico City as the causes for his financial wreckage but never said in an explicit matter that he was paying for his own transportation, housing, meals, and medical expenses, or if he did so, he left no specific evidence indicating that fact.

In this chapter I uncovered a common social practice among imperial bureaucrats: requesting accolades. Nevertheless, the success of Gálvez in obtaining perk after perk from the Crown was, in a true sense, phenomenal. What is important to note too is that members of the social networks he built upon while in New Spain stood by him in his times of financial need: the Marqués de Croix gave him an extraordinary endowment in 1771 and a year later wrote a letter of support on his behalf; Juan José Echeveste lend him the non-trivial quantity of 25000 pesos; and even *Fiscal* José Antonio de Areche praised Charles III’s decision to take care of Gálvez’s debts and tried to process the case

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<sup>159</sup> Cossío to Gálvez, Mexico City, 17 Nov. 1781, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1511.

as promptly as possible. Furthermore, the king had also backed him in all these matters, approving his requests for money, which meant that he acknowledged his merits. Finally, Julián de Arriaga, never a fan of Gálvez, did his job in channeling, processing, and also approving the Andalusian's demands.

What about society in New Spain? What did Mexicans think about Gálvez's material wealth? In general, the *visita general* had been distressing for colonial society and even traumatic for those rebels and bureaucrats that had crossed their paths with the powerful Andalusian minister. Gálvez left behind a haze in the form of a widespread belief that he had enriched himself while in New Spain. The institution of the general-visitation and its functions, and the way Gálvez ran it, gained him throngs of enemies, therefore one may suspect these accusations were politically motivated. There is evidence that the public talked about the visitor-general's not-so-transparent relation with wealth since one of his admirers saw the importance of refuting these sayings in writing. In 1778, the printing house of Felipe Zúñiga y Ontiveros published, *Tardes Americanas* by José Joaquín Granados y Gálvez.<sup>160</sup>

This book was a history of New Spain that began with the arrival of the Aztecs to the Valley of Mexico and the founding of Tenochtitlan, and ended with the most recent events, including the expulsion of the Jesuits and the Gálvez Visitation. Granados y Gálvez was from Málaga and he claimed to be a relative of the powerful colonial

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<sup>160</sup> José Joaquín Granados y Gálvez, *Tardes americanas: gobierno gentil y católico: breve y particular noticia de toda la historia indiana: sucesos, casos de la Gran Nación Tolteca a esta tierra de Anáhuac, hasta los presentes tiempos. Trabajadas por un indio y un español* (Mexico City: Imprenta Matritense de D. Felipe de Zúñiga y Ontiveros, 1778; facsimile edition: Mexico City: Porrúa, 1987).

minister.<sup>161</sup> Employing the Spanish tradition of *diálogos*, Granados y Gálvez's historical account is narrated in the form of a conversation between an Indian and a Spaniard.

Addressing some of the more contemporary events, at one moment the Indian argues that people said that Gálvez returned to Spain loaded with more silver than the "treasuries transported on the famous ships of Ophir."<sup>162</sup> The Spaniard rapidly replies that the only things Gálvez carried with him were his merits and asked rhetorically: "which mines were presented to him? Which business did he manage in which he could nurture greed or receive even a minor gift, such as a chicken?"<sup>163</sup> Granados y Gálvez dedicated his historical *diálogos* to colonial minister José de Gálvez and his brother Miguel.

Inadvertently or not, this book was an example of an eighteenth-century public relations campaign, but since it was published in 1778, the "new Gálvez" was very different from the wretched ex-visitor-general of 1772.

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<sup>161</sup> José Joaquín Granados y Gálvez was born in 1734 in the village of Sedella in Tórrox, in the Province of Málaga. He was a member of the Franciscan order and arrived in the Franciscan province of San Pedro y San Pablo in Michoacán in 1751. First he was a *corista* and in 1758 he became a *predicador* in Querétaro. Later he became guardian of the convent of Río Verde in San Luis Potosí and custodian of *doctrinas* in La Huasteca. He also worked as general-*predicador* in the province of Michoacán and was appointed Bishop of Sonora in 1788. He died in 1794 in Durango.

<sup>162</sup> Ophir was a Biblical place from which King Solomon received innumerable riches every three years.

<sup>163</sup> "Indio. No ha faltado quien asegure que [Gálvez] embarcó consigo más plata, que tesoros flotaban las famosas Naos del Ofir. Español. Sí, la de sus méritos. ¿Qué Minas le presentaron? ¿Qué negocio manejó, donde pudiera cebarse la codicia, que recibiera ni aun por leve obsequio la escasa dádiva de una Gallina?;" Granados y Gálvez, *Tardes Americanas*, 456.



## Chapter 5

### **A New World Fortune**

#### **Gálvez at the Ministry of the Indies: Salaries, Lucrative Pensions, and *Comisos***

#### **Introduction: The Palace of the Marquesa de Sonora**

In October 1797, María Concepción de Valenzuela, the Marquesa de Sonora, bought a partially destroyed real estate property in Madrid. Located at 45 San Bernardo Street, the red brick building still known as the Palace of the Marquesa de Sonora, today houses the Spanish Ministry of Justice.<sup>1</sup> The massive 22,000-square-foot edifice occupies a complete block, has three interior patios, and more than fifty rooms on each of its three main floors. Its gargantuan size is hard to appreciate in full since the whole structure seems to be squeezed on its north and south flanks by the buildings across the narrow streets—*quasi* alleys—of *Reyes* and *Manzanas*, respectively. Luckily, the so-called *Calle Ancha de San Bernardo* (Wide Street of San Bernardo) allows one a panoramic view of its neoclassical façade. The original piece of land, which included a *casa grande* and six smaller dwellings, had belonged to the famous Duques de Alba. The Marqués de la Regalía, governor of Caracas in the 1720s, bought the property in 1745. He projected the construction of a palace, but his plan never materialized and Regalía sold the plot and buildings in the mid-1750s. In 1761, the second Marqués de Grimaldo purchased the property and initiated the building of a palace. José de Gálvez must have known the

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<sup>1</sup> Located in the northwest of Madrid, San Bernardo Street was one of the widest and longest arteries in the Spanish capital. It witnessed much construction in the eighteenth century and a large group of high bureaucrats preferred it for their residences; see Janine Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille à l'époque moderne (1621-1746)* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1979), 447; and Ramón Mesonero Romanos, *El antiguo Madrid, paseos histórico-anecdóticos por las calles y casas de esta villa* (Madrid: Oficinas de la Ilustración Española y Americana, 1881), 2:145.

owner and recognized the building as Grimaldo's home. He might have coveted the property or, perhaps not, and therefore, could never have imagined that one day his fortune would be used to acquire it. This chapter continues the analysis of Gálvez's economic life after he became minister of the Indies. I examine the range of sources of income he practically designed for himself through the exploitation of different strategies such as, waving the banner of his own merit, using his power relationships with economic groups in the New World, and advocating imperial reforms that ultimately favored his personal purse. I describe how he and his descendants decided to employ the acquired fortune and explore its significance not only in terms of their enhanced material life but also with regards to social distinction. Let us return to the palace on San Bernardo Street.

A fire heavily damaged the Marqués de Grimaldo's home in 1789. Unable to finance the needed restoration, he had to put the ruined building on the market; it was evaluated in the mid-1790s at 456,937 *reales de vellón* (around 22,846 *pesos fuertes*).<sup>2</sup> The buyer, the Marquesa de Sonora, contracted architect Evaristo del Castillo to reconstruct the building in the neoclassical style—as it still is.<sup>3</sup> By then the 55-year-old Valenzuela had been widowed for a decade, yet she had sufficient funds to undertake an enterprise that would become one of the landmarks of eighteenth-century architecture in Madrid.<sup>4</sup> If José de Gálvez's attitudes toward real estate were to some extent ambiguous,

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<sup>2</sup> Virginia Tovar Martín, *El Palacio del Ministerio de Justicia y sus obras de arte* (Madrid: Ministerio de Justicia, 1986), 77.

<sup>3</sup> Architect Miguel del Castillo was in charge of building some of the works of infrastructure sponsored by the Gálvez family in Málaga and Macharaviaya mentioned in chapter 3; Leonardo Molina García, *Historia de la Villa de Macharaviaya* (Málaga: Diputación Provincial, 1997), 61. It is probable that architects Evaristo and Miguel Castillo were related.

<sup>4</sup> In the nineteenth century Ramón Mesonero described the building as “*una de las construcciones particulares más sólidas y regulares de Madrid*.” It is not clear if the Marquesa de Sonora or her daughter ever actually lived in the property. According to Mesonero, the palace was never concluded and it remained uninhabited until “an individual” acquired, finished, and sold it to the Spanish government in 1851; see

as discussed in the last chapter, it is clear that his widow's were not. Her financial capacity came from her husband's last will. After Gálvez's demise, the dowager Marquesa de Sonora—she added the word “*viuda*” after her title when she signed her letters—dutifully and painstakingly gathered every piece of the inheritance in her role as administrator of the wealth of their universal heiress, the couple's daughter, María Josefa. Most of the collected wealth originated in her husband's top position at the Ministry of the Indies.

The couple had married on the first day of November 1775, and available documents indicate that the Gálvez-Valenzuela married-life was a joyous one. There is a double miniature portrait of the couple in an illustrated genealogical tree of their daughter Josefa de Gálvez. In the image, a young and lively-looking Valenzuela has a high and wide grey coiffure with frizzed *toupée* surrounding her pale, double-chinned face, naturally adorned with large, heavy-lidded dark eyes. She is wearing a blue dress, transparent gauze (or museline?) buffon billowing over her shoulders and chest, large blue cap with feathers, and a long golden necklace (a large pearl seems to be attached to the right of the gilded chain that also has a large, red medallion that adorns her chest). To her right, in a separate miniature, we see an older and thinner José de Gálvez, with his characteristic aquiline nose and thin, tight lips. He has a short, simple grey wig with two side curls. Gálvez's blue eyes and dramatically rouged cheeks harmonize with the red

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Ramón Mesonero Romanos, *El antiguo Madrid, paseos histórico-aneecdóticos por las calles y casas de esta villa* (Madrid: Establecimiento Tipográfico de Don F. de P. Mellado, 1861), 298. Yet Tovar Martín argues that although it did take decades to finish the palace, this was practically achieved by 1827, and the Duque de Castro-Terreño (José de Gálvez's son-in-law) moved into the house the next year. Castro-Terreño sold the building in 1847 for 1,750,000 *reales* to financier Mario Bertodano, who immediately resold it to Javier de Quinto, from whom the state purchased the building for 1.6 million *reales*; Tovar Martín, *El Palacio del Ministerio de Justicia*, 110-111. An architect modified the building in the 1940s, adding the four towers in the corners that gave it its current Escorial-like look (a style called *Herreriano*, trendy during the Franco Regime).

coat and blue sash of the Great Cross of the order of Charles III that crosses his chest. The glittering golden embroidery of his coat, the bow of his cravat, and the medal from the order illuminate the composition along with his broad forehead.<sup>5</sup> Their wedding ceremony had been spectacular, indeed, a public affair among the court society in Madrid. It took place at the church of San Martín and was officiated by Antonio Caballero y Góngora, bishop-elect of Yucatán, and future archbishop of Santa Fe de Bogotá and viceroy of New Granada.<sup>6</sup> The Marqués de la Corona mentioned in a letter that at the wedding ceremony Gálvez's young bride had exhibited jewels the like of which had never before been seen in Madrid. In his own words, "[Gálvez] married and stunned Madrid with the pearls and diamonds his wife wore."<sup>7</sup> Once again, Gálvez had demonstrated his love of luxury and showiness typical of Andalusian stereotypes.<sup>8</sup>

The bejeweled 33-year-old bride, María de la Concepción Valenzuela, was the orphaned daughter of the third Conde de la Puebla de los Valles.<sup>9</sup> A few days before the

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<sup>5</sup> See the image in José Miguel Morales Folguera, María Isabel Pérez de Colosía Rodríguez, Marion Reder Gadow, and Siro Villas Tinoco, *Los Gálvez de Macharaviaya* (Málaga: Junta de Andalucía-Consejería de Cultura y Medio Ambiente-Asesoría Quinto Centenario-Benedito Editores, 1991), 55.

<sup>6</sup> In Bogotá, Bishop Antonio Caballero y Góngora negotiated the surrender of the Comunero rebels and he was viceroy of New Granada in the 1782-1789 period. In the wedding of José de Gálvez, Concepción Valenzuela's older sister, María del Carmen, served as a witness along with Juan Sánchez and Miguel de Gálvez; see Isidoro Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez y sus alianzas* (Madrid: Isidoro Vázquez de Acuña-Villena Artes Gráficas, 1974), 1201n93.

<sup>7</sup> Francisco Carrasco (Marqués de la Corona) to (José Martínez de) Viergol, Madrid, 13 Mar. 1776, AHN, Estado, leg. 3211.

<sup>8</sup> I would like to make this point clearer, but I need to study this topic further. In the meantime, I include a reflection by Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset: "Andalusians have a propensity to represent and mimic themselves that reveals a surprising collective *narcissism*. The only person capable of imitating oneself is one who ... is habituated to see, contemplate, and enjoy his own figure and being;" José Ortega y Gasset, "Teoría de Andalucía" (1927), in *Teoría de Andalucía y otros ensayos*, 2nd. ed. (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1944), 17.

<sup>9</sup> Valenzuela's ancestors had a connection with the Americas. The first named Conde de la Puebla de los Valles, Melchor de Liñán, had been archbishop of Lima and interim viceroy of Perú during the reign of Charles II. The prelate declined the ennoblement honor but transferred the title to his brother, who became the first count. The Valenzuela family, native of Andalusia, had married into the Liñán family in the 1660s. Concepción de Valenzuela was born in Madrid on 8 Dec. 1741, her complete name María de la Concepción Rosa Gertrudis Josefa Teresa Antonia de Valenzuela y Fuentes Pérez de la Torre y Pedrosa; Adolfo

wedding, the couple signed a prenuptial agreement (*capitulación matrimonial*), a legal instrument that might enable wealthy women to retain control of their property while still married under the community property system.<sup>10</sup> The bride's father and maternal uncle had been *mayordomos de semana* of the Infante Luis Jaime, and she had inherited a life pension of 600 ducats annually (about 800 *pesos fuertes*) from the royal prince's treasury. According to the prenuptial agreement, Valenzuela would retain control of a third of her family's pension for her personal expenses or *alfileres*,<sup>11</sup> while the rest, 400 ducats per year, was to be her dowry, contributed for only ten years. In addition, Gálvez offered a one-time *propter nuptias* donation of 3,000 ducats to his future wife, declaring that this represented a tenth of his holdings in real estate, capital, and furniture.<sup>12</sup> In order to establish what each of them contributed to their new conjugal union, Gálvez promised to issue written receipts for all these financial transactions after the wedding, including the compilation of an exact list of his total assets. The *capitulación matrimonial* stated that, only in case they had descendants, Valenzuela would inherit half the earnings of the

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Barredo de Valenzuela, "El Condado de la Puebla de los Valles," *Hidalguía, la revista de genealogía, noblezas y armas*, no. 154-155 (1979): 341-351, and Vázquez de Acuña, *Historial de la Casa de Gálvez y sus alianzas*, 1201-1205.

<sup>10</sup> Silvia M Arrom, "Changes in Mexican Family Law in the Nineteenth Century: The Civil Codes of 1870 and 1884," *Journal of Family History* 10, 3 (1985):311-312n12. For the prenuptial agreement document, "Capitulaciones matrimoniales para el que han de contraer los Ilustrísimos Señores don Josef de Gálvez Gallardo y Doña María de la Concepción Valenzuela. Otorgadas en 23 de octubre de 1775," AHPM, vol. 18667, fols. 89-92 (hereafter cited as "Capitulationes matrimoniales"), in *México en el siglo XVIII. Recopilación de documentos relativos a D. José de Gálvez Gallardo*, ed. Francisco Rodas Coss (Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores-Embajada de México en Madrid-Comisión de Historia, 1983), 113-116.

<sup>11</sup> 800 *pesos fuertes* a year was 33.3 per cent more than the assigned salary of a clerk in José de Gálvez's general inspection of New Spain team back in 1765. According to the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española*, an *alfiler* was an amount of money assigned to a woman to pay for her personal expenses. Therefore, Valenzuela was going to have around 266 pesos for her *alfileres*, a sum that in *reales de vellón* amounted to 5,333.

<sup>12</sup> By law these one-time donations, also called *arras propter nuptias*, could not exceed 10 per cent of the value of a man's total assets. 30,000 ducats was actually a good sum: in *pesos fuertes* it amounted to approximately 45,500 or 3.79 times the annual salary Gálvez had enjoyed as visitor-general of New Spain.

union's profits (*gananciales*). The prenuptial agreement thus not only safeguarded Valenzuela's wealth (her pension), but also protected Gálvez's estate and ancestry in case he died without offspring. Officially, it watched over the wealth of both, as the document's introduction declared: "[Gálvez and Valenzuela] agreed to do what was necessary for the conservation of their illustrious birth, and the preservation and security of their mutual assets and rights."<sup>13</sup>

In his last will, of April 1787, Gálvez recognized that he had never transferred to his wife the 3,000 ducats due to her by the *capitulación*; neither did he ever make an inventory of his belongings, nor sign the receipt for his wife's dowry. On her part, the testament explained, Valenzuela had never retained for herself the third of the life pension she received from the Infante Luis Jaime. Instead, Gálvez had given her access to all his salaries and rents, which she had administered as if they were her own. The Andalusian minister explained that his wife had organized (and continued to organize) the "great expenses of their house and family" with dexterity. From their common account, Valenzuela had used what was necessary for her *alfileres* and other extraordinary expenditures. In a touching homage to his wife, moreover, Gálvez's testament bequeathed to her the 6,000 ducats that made up ten years of her entire pension, plus the 3,000 he had promised her in their *capitulación matrimonial*. In addition to these 9,000 ducats (which amounted to 12,000 *pesos fuertes*), the Marquesa de Sonora would receive half of all of their union's increase in value.<sup>14</sup> In 1787 an ailing 67-year-old Gálvez felt so satisfied with the marriage choice he had made almost twelve years earlier

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<sup>13</sup> "Capitulaciones matrimoniales," 113.

<sup>14</sup> The other half of their marriage *gananciales* would go, of course, to their daughter Josefa; "Testamento otorgado por el Excelentísimo Señor Marqués de Sonora en 10 de abril de 1787," AHPM, vol. 18673, fols. 34-41 (hereafter cited as "Testamento 1787"), in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 168-169.

that he added to his wife's inheritance a fifth of all his estate due to "the great love I feel for her."<sup>15</sup> Nor could Valenzuela complain about her husband, either: in 1775 she had married a man who would become the best paid minister of King Charles III.

In this chapter we will see Gálvez's unstoppable campaign to be paid what he considered he deserved for his services to the Spanish Crown. From the mid-1770s on, and even after his death, Gálvez managed to acquire and accumulate money from a wide variety of sources, all linked to the New World. The strong determination he displayed to augment and diversify the sources of his income (salaries, pensions, grants) portray the image of an insatiable bureaucrat always ready to ask for more money. In addition to waving constantly the banner of his own merit, Gálvez squeezed the Crown's coffers to secure a comfortable life for his only heir, Josefa de Gálvez, and also for his beloved wife. The palace that the Marquesa de Sonora managed to build remains an undeniable testimony to the wealth her husband had acquired throughout his years in power. For many years after the minister died the dowager marquesa, later joined by her son-in-law, acting on behalf of Josefa, meticulously collected, coin by coin, all the capital entitled to them as Gálvez's heirs. Surprisingly, as we shall see in the conclusion of this chapter, women were the chief beneficiaries of the Andalusian minister's wealth, and their affluence allowed them to become great civic benefactresses in their own right.

## Part One

### Gálvez at the Secretariat of the Indies: Salary and Lucrative Pensions

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 171. On the issue of love for their wives among bureaucrats, Fayard comments: "*Les préoccupations financières qui présidaient aux alliances n'excluaient pas de tendres sentiments entre les conjoints. Les testaments en portent témoignage. Il ne semble pas que l'expression « ma femme chérie »... soit de pure clause de style;*" see Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 289.

In the Gálvez-Valenzuela prenuptial agreement there is a telling passage that speaks of Gálvez's identity as a bureaucrat and of his official sources for earning money. The document remarked that the Andalusian's income came only from "his employments, salaries, and pensions," which at that time amounted to 2,000 *doblonos* or some 96,000 *reales de vellón* per year—a very good income at the time.<sup>16</sup> In chapter four we left Gálvez as an indebted *togado* minister of the Council of the Indies. At the end of 1772 he had recently returned from his seven-year mission in New Spain and claimed he was penniless. By 1775, the sumptuous jewels his bride wore in their wedding, and his claim of total assets valued at 30,000 ducats (45,500 pesos) and annual earnings of 2,000 *doblonos* (8,000 pesos), attests that his financial situation had improved dramatically. What had changed in three years?

In addition to his post as councilor of the Indies, from January 1774 he was a member of the Council on Commerce, Money, and Mining (the *Junta General de Comercio, Moneda y Minas*), and served as interim intendant of the *Regalía de Corte*.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Gálvez and Valenzuela, "Capitulaciones matrimoniales," 115. *Reales de vellón* was the denomination that served as money of account in Madrid and some other parts of Spain. Earl Hamilton explains that "in the second half of the eighteenth century business was transacted and financial records were kept exclusively in terms of *vellón*;" Earl J. Hamilton, *War and Prices in Spain 1651-1800* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947), 57. 2,000 *doblonos* amounted to 8,000 *pesos fuertes* per year. In his current employments, therefore, Gálvez earned 4,000 pesos less than as visitor-general of New Spain.

<sup>17</sup> Gálvez and Valenzuela, "Capitulaciones matrimoniales," 113 and H. I. Priestley, *José de Gálvez, Visitor-general of New Spain (1765-1771)* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press: 1980), 6. The *Junta General de Comercio, Moneda y Minas* was in charge of generating policies to boost industry and commerce; in that membership, Gálvez substituted the Conde de Aranda. Priestley writes that Gálvez served the *Regalía de Corte* position without pay. A document partially reproduced by José Antonio Escudero argues that he did not receive any remuneration for serving both commissions: "*Y habiendo servido la plaza de la Junta de Comercio y la superintendencia de la regalía de corte sin sueldo alguno, fue ascendido a Ministro de Indias...*;" AHN, Estado, leg. 2874 in Escudero, *Los orígenes del Consejo de Ministros en España: La Junta Suprema de Estado* (Madrid: Editorial Nacional, 1979), 1:350-351n24. It was hard to find what the *Regalía de Corte* was. First I found a position called "*intendente de la Regalía de Casa de Aposento de Corte*" usually exercised by Madrid's intendant. Later I realized that the *Regalía de Aposento* (also known as the *Regalía de Real Aposento* or the *Regalía del Hospedaje de la Familia Real*) was an annual tax charged in Madrid on every house in order to pay the lodging costs of the Court. A *Junta de Aposento* (or an intendant in the Bourbon era) maintained the land registry in the city up to date in order to levy the tax



Although he apparently was not receiving any remuneration from these two extra posts, he had begun to collect lucrative pensions from the New World, as we shall see later. The time had arrived to reap the fruits of his hard work and the personal connections gained while he was visitor-general of New Spain. Conversely, the Indies were about to require from him a larger professional sacrifice and attention. On 30 January 1776, King Charles III named Gálvez secretary of the *Despacho Universal de Indias*. Over the years, other positions were to complement his main employment as minister of the Indies—for example, the governorship of the Council of the Indies, the general superintendancies of the Royal Treasury, Mercury, and Tobacco of the Indies, and a membership in the Council of State (Charles III's top advisory body). Still demonstrating the energy of his time as visitor-general in Mexico, Gálvez's actions in his new positions in government allowed him to accumulate considerable wealth from salaries and pensions, but also from other employment-related prerogatives (as the section on *comisos* will make clear). This indicates that a wide spectrum of sources of income was available to Spanish ministers of state, a gamut even wider in the case of Gálvez, since he was in charge of the largest empire in the world.

According to Gildas Bernard, an expert on the secretariat of the Indies, during the long eighteenth century, until 1808, the annual salary of ministers of colonial affairs was “12,000 *escudos* (120,000 *reales*).”<sup>18</sup> His numbers agree with Juan Antonio Escudero's statement that all Spanish ministers of state had a salary of 120,000 *reales de vellón*. This

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correctly; “Aposento, Regalía de,” Lorenzo Arrazola, *Enciclopedia Española de Derecho y Administración: Nuevo Teatro Universal de la Legislación de España e Indias* (Madrid: Imprenta de los Señores Andrés y Díaz: 1850), 3: 264-268. Gálvez must have been in charge of administering this tax.

<sup>18</sup> Gildas Bernard, *Le Secrétariat d'État et le Conseil Espagnol des Indes (1700-1808)* (Geneva and Paris : Librairie Droz, 1972), 157. The *escudos* in Bernard's numbers are *de vellón*.

would correspond to only 6,000 *pesos fuertes*, which is not impressive if we remember that Gálvez's earnings as visitor-general of New Spain were double this amount.

Escudero reminds us, however, that different "emoluments, compensations and other casual salaries as councilors or heads of different offices of minor rank" complemented the ministers' annual income.<sup>19</sup> The bonuses practically allowed a two-fold increase in annual revenues for some officials. Between 1746 and 1754, for example, the best paid minister of King Ferdinand VI, the Marqués de Ensenada, in charge of War, Treasury, Navy, and the Indies, earned 354,776 *reales de vellón* per year, ascribable to 120,000 for his salary as treasury minister; 180,000 for the *mesa* (living expenses); 40,000 for his post as superintendant-general of the Royal Treasury; and 14,776 for different types of other compensations.<sup>20</sup> Thanks to this system of composite income José de Gálvez earned more than what Bernard estimated for the average high official. The Andalusian was in fact responsible for inaugurating an era in which ministers of state saw their assigned annual compensations increase by at least 150 per cent.

In chapter one, we read that visitor-general Gálvez always tried to obtain raises in the salaries of his subalterns. The reasoning behind increasing the income of royal officials, he maintained, was to reward a well-executed job and to put "temptations" away (that is, to avoid corruption). Minister of the Indies Gálvez applied this logic to himself too. His contemporary and longtime critic, Francisco Carrasco, the Marqués de la

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<sup>19</sup> Escudero, *Los orígenes del Consejo de Ministros*, 251.

<sup>20</sup> According to Escudero, Ensenada did not receive a wage for the ministries of War, Indies, and the Navy, nor for his post as lieutenant-general of the Admiralty. In another example from the reign of Ferdinand VI cited by Escudero, José de Carvajal, minister of state, earned a total of 224,776 *reales de vellón*: 120,000 as salary, 14,776 in compensations, and 90,000 as governor of the Council of the Indies. He did not receive a *mesa* remuneration. The most common compensations were the *luminarias* (expenditures that royal officers had to make during public celebrations), and the *casas de aposento* (lodging expenses at the Court); *ibid.*, 251-252.

Corona, noted in a series of letters the astronomical rise in salary that the Andalusian obtained upon his arrival at the Ministry of the Indies in 1776.<sup>21</sup> From his office of *fiscal* at the Ministry of the Treasury, Corona had privileged access to information related to salaries in the Spanish imperial government.<sup>22</sup> Always bitter about a man he regarded as a rival, Corona wrote that he was stunned to learn that as soon as Gálvez took over his new office, he had requested a higher salary than his predecessor, Julián de Arriaga, who had been in charge of two ministries (Indies and Navy). The *fiscal* argued that if he himself had been visitor-general of New Spain, and then had the good fortune of Gálvez in succeeding Arriaga at the Ministry of the Indies, “it would have been impossible, even though the King demanded it, to receive a higher salary than” the defunct minister; that is, he would never have requested a larger compensation and, if provided with a raise, he would have rejected it.<sup>23</sup>

According to Corona, Gálvez’s first step into the ministry had been to tell Minister of State Marqués de Grimaldi “*que estaba cansado de miserias desde que volvió a España, y que le procurase unos sueldos abundantes para vivir con desahogo y decoro sin necesidad de pensar sino en servir al Rey.*” The Andalusian’s demand for a higher

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<sup>21</sup> Carrasco to Viergol, 13 Mar. 1776, AHN, leg. 3211. Unless otherwise noted, the next primary source citations come from this long document composed of a series of letters of which only one is dated.

<sup>22</sup> Francisco Carrasco was *fiscal de Real Hacienda* in Spain and a long-time member of the Council of the Treasury. He was *fiscal* of the *Sala de Millones* (or, after 1771, *Sala de la Única Contribución*) of that Council from 1761 to 1774, and then of the *Sala de Gobierno* in the 1775-1791 period. He obtained the title of Marqués de la Corona in 1770. Let us remember from earlier chapters that in 1784 Charles III offered the position of visitor-general of New Spain to Corona first, but he declined the monarch’s commission for personal reasons.

<sup>23</sup> Corona then wrote about how Minister of the Treasury Marqués de Esquilache had offered him a raise of 1,000 *doblores* (around 80,000 *reales de vellón*) when he took over the General Direction of the *Cruzada* and *Papel Sellado* taxes and that he had declined the proposal, arguing that a raise would be scandalous and unjust because he already had one salary. Esquilache then suggested an increase of 40,000 *reales*, which he also rejected, and in the end he only received a total remuneration of 2,000 *ducados* (around 55,000 *reales de vellón* or 2,800 *pesos fuertes*). 55,000 *reales de vellón* was the assigned salary for councilors of Castile from 1763, and for members of the Council of the Indies since 1773; Fayard, *Les membres du Conseil de Castille*, 108.

salary, the fiscal believed, had had perverse effects for the royal treasury since other ministers, such as Pedro González Castrejón (assigned to replace Arriaga at the Navy), had requested the same paycheck, and Minister of Justice Manuel de Roda a larger *mesa*. In the opinion of Corona it was important, in general, that a new minister tightened his belt to contain the ambitions of others. No doubt Gálvez had loosened his after the Crown raised his salary to 400,000 *reales de vellón*, which de la Corona estimated was equivalent to an increase of 50 per cent over Arriaga's original income.<sup>24</sup> Actually, the 400,000-*real-de-vellón* number was a combination of Gálvez's salary plus the amount granted for his living expenses (*mesa*): 310,000 and 90,000 *reales de vellón*, respectively.<sup>25</sup> From then on, other ministers of state would be awarded the same entry salary.

José de Gálvez's salary increase had an even more extraordinary connotation: according to the Marqués de la Corona, the Andalusian was not only the best paid minister of Charles III, but also the minister of state with the highest salary in the Bourbon period:

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<sup>24</sup> Writing about González Castrejón's appointment in the Navy secretariat, Corona said: "*Lo que no le perdono es que se asociase con Gálvez para aplicarse otros cuatrocientos mil reales y que tuviese valor como su compañero para hacerse el primer día cada uno por una sola secretaría con la mitad más de sueldos que tenía por las dos un consejero de Estado, Gran Cruz de San Juan y teniente general, a los veinte y dos años de ministro.*" Using the following equation— $400,000 = .5x + x$ —I estimated Arriaga's annual earnings (x) at around 266,666 *reales de vellón*.

<sup>25</sup> At least this is the composition of González Castrejón's 400,000-*real-de-vellón* earnings according to documents of 1783 that discussed the salary assigned to the new minister of the Navy (Antonio Valdés y Bazán). Apparently the 310,000-*reales* salary also represented a combined income, because according to a note sent to the minister of the Treasury, Miguel de Múzquiz, González Castrejón's remuneration had been assigned on 14 February 1776 in the following way: 120,000 for his salary as minister of state; 84,000 for his post as lieutenant-general of the Navy; 106,000 in the form of a pension; and 90,000 for his *mesa*; see Múzquiz to Zambrano, Aranjuez, 4 May 1783, and copy of note from Zambrano to Múzquiz, Madrid, 1 May 1783, AHN, Estado, leg. 2874, reproduced in Escudero, *Los orígenes del Consejo de Ministros*, 393n77. Gálvez's salary must have been similarly composed, with some different commissions replacing González Castrejón's income as naval officer.

*Al mes y medio de ministro [Gálvez] ha compuesto de renta del Rey con una sola secretaría más que el doble de su antecesor [Julián de Arriaga] con las dos: mucha más renta que el primer Secretario de Estado [el Conde de Floridablanca] que vino de Embajador de Paris donde gozaba doce mil doblones; mucha más que el Secretario de la Guerra Capitán General de Cataluña y Grande de España [el Conde de Ricla]; más que el Secretario de Hacienda [Miguel de Múzquiz] que siempre ha sido el más dotado por los agregados del Gobierno del Consejo y Superintendencia General; más que [el Marqués de] Ensenada, y que [José del] Campillo con cuatro secretarías que sirvieron, y más que [José] Patiño con las seis que estuvo despachando por diez años hasta que murió.<sup>26</sup>*

If González Castrejón at the Ministry of the Navy asked for a similar raise, and also was granted the 400,000-*reales-de-vellón* salary, Gálvez must have had another source of income in order to become the best paid minister up to that date. The *Historia de España en el siglo XIX* (1902), published posthumously by the nineteenth-century Spanish statesman, historian, and republican politician Francisco Pi y Margall, confirms both this supposition and Corona's claim. The historian's inquiry at the Council of State about the salary of past councilors yielded information on sixteen of them, in office between the final third of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. In that list, Gálvez figures as the second best paid minister with 598,000 *reales de vellón*, just below the all-powerful Príncipe de la Paz, Manuel de Godoy, minister of state and favorite of Charles IV and Queen María Luisa during the 1790s and early 1800s. According to Pi y Margall's data, Gálvez earned 400,000 for his salary and *mesa* and 198,000 as governor

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<sup>26</sup> The Conde de Floridablanca had been ambassador in Rome, not Paris and his salary of 12,000 *doblones* amounted to an outstanding 960,000 *reales de vellón* that was perhaps normal for diplomats. Patiño (1726-1736) and Campillo (1741-1743) had been secretaries of Philip V. The Marqués de Ensenada was minister of both Philip V and Ferdinand VI. One more thing to note: the only date available on the Marqués de la Corona writings is 13 Mar. 1776; given that Floridablanca became minister of State in 1777, we can extend a bit more the timeline of Corona's writings.

of the Council of the Indies (see Appendix A for a list of the incomes of secretaries of state).<sup>27</sup>

When Corona wrote of José de Gálvez's 400,000-*real-de-vellón* earnings, he quickly added that this amount had to be considered "in addition to the 40,000 *reales* he has in the Americas." This extra income referred to a pension for life awarded in 1774 by the monarch to the former visitor-general. Pensions of this type became an important supplement of his salary. The treasury of Mexico City was in charge of supplying the 2,000-*peso-fuerte* endowment. The *real cédula* decreeing the benefit shows that King Charles III conceded it based upon the Andalusian's merits: "in recognition to the merit and zeal of José de Gálvez... and to his particular performance in all the commissions entrusted to him in that kingdom [New Spain], accomplishments that he continues in this kingdom...[etc]"<sup>28</sup> Prompt in self-congratulation, always ready to wave the banner of merit in his own favor, and not shy in asking for more, in his last will of 1787 Gálvez expressed the hope that given his "significant services" ("*considerables servicios*") to the Crown, the king "*will* deign" to augment this pension and extend it perpetually to his

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<sup>27</sup> Francisco Pi y Margall, and Francisco Pi y Arsuaga, *Historia de España en el siglo XIX: Sucesos políticos, económicos, sociales y artísticos, acaecidos durante el mismo; Detallada narración de sus acontecimientos y extenso juicio crítico de sus hombres* (Barcelona: Miguel Seguí Editor, 1902), 1: 31-32. At 598,000 *reales de vellón* (or almost 30,000 *pesos fuertes*) Gálvez earned half the salary of viceroys of New Spain. Until the administration of the Marqués de Croix (1766-1771), the salary of viceroys had been 40,000 pesos. Croix requested a raise, obtaining a 50 per cent increase. From then on, the higher royal official in New Spain earned 60,000 pesos. Although José de Gálvez's earnings did not match those of a viceroy, his situation was still quite privileged because the disparity in salary rates between Spain and the Americas was perfectly normal.

<sup>28</sup> Charles III to Viceroy Antonio Bucareli, *real cédula*, Madrid, 7 Dec. 1774; processed by accountant-general of the Indies, Tomás Ortiz de Landázuri, Madrid, 16 Dec. 1774; and by Bucareli, Mexico City 22 Mar. 1775, in AGNM, Reales Cédulas, vol. 105, exp. 131, fol. 291-293. To add icing on the cake, as soon as Gálvez became minister of the Indies he managed to obtain a royal *cédula* that exempted this pension from taxes (such as the *media annata*) and shipping costs; Charles III to Bucareli, *real cédula*, 18 Feb. 1776, AGNM, Reales Cédulas, vol. 107, exp. 33.

daughter and her descendants.<sup>29</sup> Surprisingly, Charles III acquiesced to Gálvez's last wish—if not to the increase, then at least to its extension. Nine days after the death of the Marqués de Sonora, probably after being informed about Gálvez's last wishes, the monarch and the Conde de Floridablanca signed the order to award Josefa de Gálvez with this pension. Charles III was paying tribute again (but posthumously) to his former minister of the Indies' lifework, and did so with these words: "In recognition to the distinguished merit and vast services of José de Gálvez... I have decided to extend without intermission the annual pension of 2,000 Mexican pesos that... he enjoyed in his life... in favor of his daughter Doña María Josefa de Gálvez y de Valenzuela and her male descendants..."<sup>30</sup>

Returning to 1776, the financial panorama for Gálvez could not have been better: he had just obtained his new job as minister of the Indies and he could boast annual earnings of 638,000 *reales de vellón*. The bounties originating in his general inspection of New Spain did not stop with the 2,000-*peso-fuerte* pension, however. Another juicy reward was already in the making. The jewel in the crown of Gálvez's sources of income—that is, one that he and his family cherished, as evidenced by the number and content of documents they generated on its behalf— was another pension for life granted to him by the Mexican Mining Guild and Tribunal General (*Cuerpo de Minería y Tribunal General*) in 1779. The abundant documentary evidence about this case also

<sup>29</sup> "Y esperando yo que Su Majestad, en atención a los considerables servicios que le tengo hechos... se dignará aumentarla y perpetuarla en mi hija y sus descendientes." Gálvez, "Testamento 1787," 169-170, my emphasis.

<sup>30</sup> Copy of Charles III to Superintendente Subdelegado de Real Hacienda, *real cédula*, Aranjuez, 26 Jun. 1787, AGNM, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 5381, exp. 19. The king's resolution implied the attachment of this pension to Josefa de Gálvez's *mayorazgo*, instituted by her father in April 1787. Information on the concession must have been restricted to a reduced circle of imperial functionaries, for the king used his "secret" seal next to his signature. Nevertheless, it was processed through the official channels of the *Contaduría General de Indias* and the corresponding offices of the treasury in New Spain.

reveals, however, that this was a particularly problematic source of income, as we shall see. Let us examine it in parts.

Historians agree that José de Gálvez's mining reforms in New Spain during and after the *visita general* were one of the factors that stimulated the famous silver production boom of the second half of the eighteenth century.<sup>31</sup> Even before becoming an imperial functionary, Gálvez considered that mining was "the main source of wealth" produced in the Americas.<sup>32</sup> In his *Informe general*, written at the end of the Mexican visitation, his words reflected the importance that this economic activity had had in his agenda. Gálvez wrote in 1771:

Given that mining is the origin and only wellspring of the wealth that gives spirit and movement to the whole of human occupations and the universal commerce of the known world, it asks for the government's first attentions and it should always be seen with the particular care and protection that the king is offering today.<sup>33</sup>

As visitor-general, the Andalusian had done exactly that: he had paid attention and accorded protection to the miners' interests.<sup>34</sup> In a sense he became a lobbyist for the mine owners' pleas and worked hard to obtain advantageous policies on their behalf.

The reduction in the price of mercury was the first reform that visitor-general Gálvez achieved, marking a point of inflection in royal efforts to revitalize the industry.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> David Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico, 1763-1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 168; Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein, *Apogee of Empire: Spain and New Spain in the Age of Charles III, 1759-1789* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 234.

<sup>32</sup> José de Gálvez, "Discurso y reflexiones de un vasallo sobre la decadencia de nuestras Indias españolas," cited in Luis Navarro García, *La política americana de José de Gálvez: según su "Discurso y Reflexiones de un Vasallo"* (Málaga: Algazara, 1998), 90. Read more about the genesis of this essay in the section on *comisos* below, n. 62.

<sup>33</sup> Gálvez, *Informe general que en virtud de real orden instruyó y entregó el excelentísimo señor Marqués de Sonora siendo visitador general de este reino, al excelentísimo señor virrey don Antonio Bucarely y Ursúa con fecha 31 de diciembre de 1771* (Mexico City: Imprenta de Santiago White, 1867; facsimile with introduction by Clara Elena Suárez Argüello, Mexico City: CIESAS-Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2002), 63-64.

<sup>34</sup> Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 74-75.



But perhaps the most visible of the Andalusian's contributions was his role in supporting the unification of the mine owners into a guild and tribunal.<sup>36</sup> According to Alexander von Humboldt, this corporation removed several obstacles afflicting mining production, such as the lack of an official representation before the Crown, while it organized mining legislation into new *ordenanzas*.<sup>37</sup> In 1774, Juan Lucas Lassaga, a lesser but politically ambitious Spanish miner, and Joaquín Velázquez de León, a Creole lawyer, self-taught scientist, and mining engineer, sent a petition (*representación*) to the king on behalf of all mine owners of New Spain requesting the formation of a mining guild, court, investment fund (*banco de avío*), and college. Just a few months after Gálvez took control of colonial affairs, in July 1776, Charles III issued the *cédula* that established the Mining Tribunal. The timing was not coincidental: from the times of the *visita general*, the new minister of the Indies had cultivated close relationships with mine owners, financiers, and engineers, such as Lassaga and Velázquez y León, but also José de Borda, Manuel Aldaco, and the Conde de Regla.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> In March 1768, the Crown approved the reduction of the price of mercury by 25 per cent: the *quintal* went from 82 to 62 pesos. When Gálvez became minister of the Indies, he managed to slash the price 33 per cent more, to 41 pesos. The logic behind these measures was that lower prices in key mining inputs would foster ore production. Therefore, visitor-general Gálvez also requested the lowering in the price of blasting powder and expropriated its administration from private hands.

<sup>36</sup> For a brief genealogy of the institutionalization process of the Mining Tribunal that includes Gálvez's key role over a ten-year period, consult Stein and Stein, *Apogee of Empire*, 236-238 and the classic work by Walter Howe, *The Mining Guild of New Spain and its Tribunal General, 1770-1821* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968, first published 1949 by Harvard University Press).

<sup>37</sup> Alexander von Humboldt, *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, trans. John Black (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1822), 3:323-324. Gálvez proclaimed the new mining *ordenanzas* in 1783.

<sup>38</sup> Early in the *visita general*, Gálvez became acquainted with the miners and *aviadores* of New Spain, among them José de la Borda, owner of the silver mines in Taxco, and Manuel Aldaco, merchant administrator of the Fagoaga family's *banco de plata*. In 1767, Borda and Juan Lucas de Lassaga sent the original request—written by Velázquez de León—to the monarch for the reduction in the price of mercury. Gálvez also tried to incorporate Pedro de Terreros (the Conde de Regla, after 1768) in his plans for reform, but the powerful miner was recovering from the Pachuca region popular revolts of 1766. Admired by Humboldt as a remarkable geometrician and cartographer throughout his *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, Joaquín Velázquez de León became Gálvez's man during the visitation. The visitor-general

This fairly autonomous body, in which miners had the upper hand in the decision-making process concerning their economic activities, began to function in 1777 with Gálvez's protégé Velázquez de León assuming the office of director-general, and Lassaga functioning as general administrator. On 25 February 1779, Lassaga requested the king's approval for the issuance by the Mining Tribunal of an annual pension for life on behalf of José de Gálvez. The amount assigned to this grant was 4,000 *pesos fuertes* (80,000 *reales de vellón*). In 1787, Gálvez instituted a *mayorazgo* for his daughter based on this rent. The minister of the Indies spent the first half of the document establishing the entail justifying why he had received this privilege. One more time, of course, Gálvez stressed merit as the key reason:

When Juan Lucas de Lassaga... administrator of the Mining Tribunal of New Spain... represented to His Majesty, that though there were many notable benefits owed to his Royal Clemency, [originally] entreated by myself, they [the miners from New Spain] could do nothing but to renew the memory of all [the benefits] and justly recognize... that since the King named me visitor-general of those provinces, I dedicated myself to protect that body, knowing that the principal interest of the provinces and the monarchy derived from laboring the mines.<sup>39</sup>

Then Gálvez enumerated all the benefits for which he had lobbied in favor of the mine owners, describing them as the product not only of the pious inclinations of the king, but also of his own “zeal and love for the *patria*” and his “exact knowledge of the true

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took Velázquez with him on the Sonora Expedition (1768-1770) with the object of discovering potential mining sites. The Andalusian also prompted the *criollo* to join the French scientific expedition bound to observe the transit of Venus in Baja California in June 1769; see Edith Boorstein Couturier, *The Remarkable Life of the Count of Regla in Colonial Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), 91; Roberto Moreno, “Apuntes biográficos de Joaquín Velázquez de León—1732-1786,” *Historia Mexicana* 25, (1975): 41-75.

<sup>39</sup> José de Gálvez, “Fundación hecha por el Excelentísimo Señor Marqués de Sonora, en 10 de abril de 1787,” Madrid, 10 Apr. 1787, AHPM, vol. 18673, fols. 26-33 (hereafter cited as “Mayorazgo Josefa de Gálvez”), in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 159.

triggers of happiness in the Americas.”<sup>40</sup> Gálvez utilized the typical language of patronage when he added that “the miners were the first ones to feel the effects of *my protection*.” Finally, he offered an elaborate and curious explanation of how the Tribunal had decided to give him the pension, saying that the miners greatly acknowledged the benefit of his protection but that they “lived confused, unable to find a reward [suitable to] their obligation”.<sup>41</sup> After giving a donation of 300,000 pesos to the Crown for funding the shipyard of Alvarado in Veracruz, the miners’ “noble” and “thankful” spirit led them to the idea of designating a “perpetual” pension on Gálvez’s and his descendants’ behalf. According to the Andalusian minister, the Conde de Floridablanca had received the miners’ petition and transmitted it to Charles III, who approved it by decree and *real cédula* in July 1779. The Andalusian was careful to point out, however, that his enjoyment of the pension should be counted from the day the Tribunal had decided on and approved the endowment, that is, starting on 18 February 1779.<sup>42</sup>

How did Gálvez’s pension work? For its funding, the Mining Tribunal had the right to keep two thirds of the mintage taxes collected by the colonial government. The institution had to pay the salaries of its functionaries, maintain the mining school, and through its bank offer loans to the miners in need.<sup>43</sup> One stipulation of Gálvez’s pension was that it had “*igual preferencia y antelación que los sueldos y salarios que gozan los*

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<sup>40</sup> “...y de mi celo y amor a la patria y de mi exacto conocimiento de los verdaderos resortes de la felicidad de la América;” *ibid.*, 160.

<sup>41</sup> The miners, according to Gálvez, “vivían tan reconocidos al beneficio, como confundidos de una obligación a que no podían hallar recompensa;” *ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* For the complete file on how this pension was approved in Spain, see “Expediente del Cuerpo de Mineros de Nueva España sobre señalamiento, de sus fondos, de cuatro mil pesos fuertes anuales a Don José de Gálvez, Secretario de Estado, para sí y sus sucesores aprobado por S.M.,” AGI, Estado, leg. 40, n. 3.

<sup>43</sup> Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 75.

*empleados en aquel Tribunal,*<sup>44</sup> which basically meant that the pension was one of the primary financial obligations of the institution, even ahead of its employees' salaries. The Tribunal was not responsible for paying the money to Gálvez directly, so the minister of the Indies, and later his family, needed someone of trust to collect and remit it to Spain. In July 1780, Gálvez named Fernando José Mangino, then head of the Mexico City mint, as his agent in New Spain. After the Andalusian minister's death, his widow endorsed Mangino as her proxy to collect the yearly grant, and in 1788 she named Francisco Fernández de Córdoba, who had replaced Mangino as head of the mint.<sup>45</sup>

It seems that Gálvez paid more attention to this source of income than any other. On 10 April 1787, the Marqués de Sonora went to the office of his favorite notary in Madrid, Antonio de Ruseco, to dictate his last will and to institute a *mayorazgo* on behalf of his daughter and her descendants. The Tribunal's pension was the base of the *mayorazgo*, and it also meant that from that day on he gave up this income and transferred it to María Josefa de Gálvez.<sup>46</sup> In the first two paragraphs of the minister's testament devoted to his estate, he added the 2,000-peso pension from New Spain, his shares in the *Banco Nacional de San Carlos* and the Royal Trading Company of the

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<sup>44</sup> "Poder especial y general para cobrar, otorgado por el Excelentísimo señor Don Josef de Gálvez, a favor de Don Fernando Josef Mangino. En 9 de julio de 1780," AHPM, vol. 18670, fols. 111-112 (hereafter cited as "Poder a Mangino 1780"), in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 125.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 125-126; "Poder otorgado por la Excelentísima Señora Marquesa de Sonora a Don Fernando Mangino. En 1º de julio de 1787," AHPM, vol. 18673, fols. 74-75, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 178-179; and "Poder otorgado por la Excelentísima Señora Marquesa de Sonora a Don Francisco Fernández de Córdoba. En 13 de julio de 1788," AHPM, vol. 18674, fols. 172-173, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 190-191. The following year, in 1789, Gálvez's widow diversified her agents and added Fernando Bonabía (*corregidor* of Mexico City) to the equation of pension collectors; see "Poder otorgado por la Excelentísima Señora Marquesa de Sonora a Don Francisco Fernández de Córdoba y Don Fernando Bonabía. En 16 de enero de 1789," AHPM, vol. 18674, fols. 3-4, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 192-194. In 1792, José de Gálvez's son-in-law, acting on behalf of Josefa de Gálvez, confirmed Fernández de Córdoba and Bonabía as his wife's proxies to collect the Tribunal's pension; see "Poder otorgado por el señor Conde de Castro-Terreño a Don Francisco [Fernández] de Córdoba. En 21 de diciembre de 1792," AHPM, vol. 18675, fols. 414-415, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 199-201.

<sup>46</sup> Gálvez, "Mayorazgo Josefa de Gálvez," 164.

Philippines, and his real estate properties to the entail of the Mining Tribunal's pension.<sup>47</sup> At its rate of 80,000 *reales de vellón*, this perpetual pension represented but a mere 11 per cent of Gálvez's total annual earnings (estimated at 718,000 *reales de vellón* after 1779), yet I suspect the Andalusian minister saw this pension as his most reliable source of income. First, it had the character of being "perpetual" for him and his successors. *Mayorazgos* were also non-transferable and perpetual; in fact, the point of funding one was not only to provide financial stability to one's main heir (usually the eldest male), but to preserve the memory and name of the family for as many years and centuries as possible.<sup>48</sup> Second, the 4,000-peso pension's source was New Spain's silver production, which was booming at the time and gave promise of lasting forever. Third, the Mexican miners of the Mining Guild and Tribunal owed Gálvez too much to simply withdraw their support to his family when he was no longer present. Let us return to the question of patronage and favors linked to this pension because, as happened with other sources of income accumulated by Gálvez, this was not free from controversies.

Stanley Stein and Barbara Stein would agree with Gálvez's interpretation of his mining pension, since they attribute it to his merits and efforts. For these historians, the Mining Tribunal was a case of "planned parenthood" on the minister's part, and the pension was simply a handsome reward from the institution in recognition of its creator.<sup>49</sup> Walter Howe, the classic historian of the Mining Tribunal, however, known for his

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<sup>47</sup> In his last will, Gálvez also declared that after his demise his widow should receive 30,000 *reales de vellón* from the Mining Tribunal's pension; Gálvez, "Testamento 1787," 170.

<sup>48</sup> For example, the minister stipulated that his successors, male or female, had to bear his last name and use the Gálvez coat of arms as their insignia. Typical of *mayorazgos* too was Gálvez's order that his heirs should not be men or women of the church (unless they had joined a religious order in widowhood or widowerhood, that is, after leaving descendants); Gálvez "Mayorazgo Josefa de Gálvez," 165.

<sup>49</sup> Stein and Stein, *Apogee of Empire*, 238-239.

critical stance toward his subject of study, interpreted this pension as the tainted fruit of a corrupt deal obtained by Gálvez. For Howe, the grant was not just a generous show of gratitude but a bribe to “assure the continued favor of the powerful minister of the Indies.”<sup>50</sup> Velázquez de León’s and Lassaga’s administration of the Tribunal had been a complete disaster in Howe’s opinion: the *banco de avío* was heading into bankruptcy and only 40 per cent of its funds had been allocated to mining ventures. But these had been handpicked in a highly selective fashion by the director and the administrator; in general, everything reeked of corruption and gross mismanagement, Howe wrote. After the deaths of Velázquez de León and Lassaga in 1786, Gálvez ordered an audit of the Tribunal.<sup>51</sup> “Merit,” “bribe,” “reward,” and “protection money,” are by no means mutually exclusive. There is no doubt that Gálvez was the patron of the Tribunal and its main functionaries, Velázquez de León and Lassaga. They personally owed their positions at the top of this financially powerful institution to the ex-visitor-general, but the mining community in general thanked Gálvez for his decade-long efforts in promoting the creation of this highly useful organization. It is possible (but implausible) that the Andalusian bureaucrat worked hard supporting the miners’ pleas from the time of the visitation thinking ahead to the possibility of securing a “perpetual” source of income in the future based on New Spain’s most valuable economic sector. The miners did not need to “bribe” Gálvez or the

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<sup>50</sup> For Howe, the 300,000-peso gift to the Crown to build port facilities in Veracruz that I mentioned above had also been a bribe from the Tribunal destined “to influence the King to view with favor the aspirations of the mining community and its leaders,” Howe, *The Mining Guild of New Spain*, 94-95.

<sup>51</sup> Stein and Stein, *Apogee of Empire*, 239-243. In the view of Eduardo Flores Clair, Howe’s negative vision of the Mining Tribunal has influenced historiography for many years. The Mexican historian argues that this interpretation obscures the fact that the investment fund of the Tribunal kept the institution’s administration afloat, funded the Mining School, and donated and loaned millions of pesos to the Crown. Therefore, Flores Clair offers a more analytical explanation of why the *banco* ended up in bankruptcy; for his opinion on Howe see his *El Banco de Avío minero novohispano. Crédito, finanzas y deudores* (Mexico City: INAH, 2001), 18-19.

king to secure their favor. Mining was simply too important to the Empire's economy for the imperial government to deny attention to the sector. The fact that Gálvez ordered an audit after the death of his protégés, Velázquez de León and Lassaga, can be read as a genuine interest in straightening things up at the Tribunal in order to continue its correct functioning while, in passing, ensuring the continuance of his pension. In other words, what we (or Howe) think of as "bribery" was simply an extension of patronage, and an accepted way of doing business within reasonable bounds.

After Gálvez's death, in the 1790s, as a result of the audit mandated by him, the Council of the Indies and the Council of State discussed reforms for the Mining Tribunal. Among other things, the councilors discussed whether the pension of 4,000 pesos should continue to be paid to the former minister of the Indies' descendants. There were voices in New Spain that demanded its termination. In 1792, for example, a representation by the agent of the miners of Guanajuato pinpointed Gálvez's pension as an unjust and wrong expenditure that had to be eliminated. The Marqués de Herrera (Vicente de Herrera y Rivera, former regent of the Audiencias of Guatemala and Mexico, and councilor of the Indies since the late 1780s) in charge of preparing the final report on the Tribunal's reform, favored the views of the Guanajuato miners regarding the pension. The Gálvez grant remained untouched, however. By royal *cedula* of 5 February 1793, the Council of State ratified practically all of Herrera's proposals with the exception of reducing (or eliminating altogether) the pension for Gálvez's heirs.<sup>52</sup>

## Conclusion to Part One

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<sup>52</sup> On the Tribunal's reform, AGI, Mexico, leg. 2238; see also Howe, *The Mining Guild of New Spain*, 204-206.

In a span of three years, from 1776 to 1779, King Charles III approved an income of 718,000 *reales de vellón* a year for his minister of the Indies. 120,000 *reales* from this extraordinary amount pertained to the ex-visitor-general's pensions, which were nothing more than grants awarded "perpetually" for the rest of his life and, ideally, for generations of Gálvezes to come. While his financial situation was unmatched, his work situation was exceptional, too. He was in charge of running the affairs of the whole Spanish Empire, a massive conglomerate of different governments and societies which, in addition, was undergoing a series of transcendental reforms that attempted to renew all aspects of their economy, administration, and even facets of its social and cultural life. In the history of Spain, José de Gálvez was the first and only minister of the Indies to be totally committed to imperial affairs. His predecessors in this office oversaw other ministries such as Treasury, the Navy, or War, and therefore had to combine the management of both metropolitan and colonial matters. During his tenure, the so-called "*Secretaría de Estado y del Despacho Universal de Indias*" or "Universal Ministry of the Indies" centralized all fiscal, economic, commercial, navigational, religious, judicial, and defensive concerns related to the empire. Gálvez died on 17 June 1787. Not surprisingly, less than a month later, Minister of State Conde de Floridablanca ordered the colonial ministry's division into two more manageable, less powerful secretariats: the Ministry of Treasury and War of the Indies (or Finances, War, and Commerce), and the Ministry of Justice of the Indies.<sup>53</sup> One would think that annual earnings of 718,000 *reales de vellón* were enough to satisfy a statesman with such a tremendous number of responsibilities.

The wish Gálvez had expressed to Minister of State Marqués de Grimaldi back in 1776

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<sup>53</sup> "Decreto del Rey creando dos Secretarías de Estado y del Despacho de Indias," 8 Jul. 1787, AGI, Indiferente General (hereafter Indiferente), leg. 831.



had become true: he had “abundant salaries to live comfortably off without any worries but to serve the king.” The Andalusian’s ambitions, however, were as large as the empire under his care. Part Two of this chapter will show how far he was willing to pressure the king, and how he claimed one more monetary reward not solely to be extracted from New Spain, but from the Indies as a whole.

## **Part Two**

### **Smuggling and the Fruits of One Decade of *Comisos***

In a private letter of April 1788 the Marquesa de Sonora *viuda* encouraged Antonio Valdés, José de Gálvez’s successor in the newly reformed Ministry of the Indies, for Finances, War, and Commerce, to continue informing her in a prompt manner of “any money” arriving from the Indies that pertained to her late husband’s last will (*testamentaría*) in order to “avoid the prejudice that delays could cause in the estate of a minor.”<sup>54</sup> A year earlier Gálvez had written his testament, naming his 11-year old daughter María Josefa as his universal heir, and his wife as the administrator of the child’s wealth. For almost two decades after Gálvez’s demise his widow, and then his daughter and son-in-law, collected money owed to him by the imperial government for *comisos* processed and paid in the colonies from 1777 to 1787. The minister and his surviving family managed to collect around 160,000 *pesos fuertes* from this privilege, a very impressive sum. This section is a case study that contributes to the dissertation’s

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<sup>54</sup> Marquesa de Sonora to Antonio Valdés, Madrid, 15 Apr. 1788, AGI, Ultramar, leg. 836. Antonio Valdés y Bazán (1744-1816), the young minister of the Navy since 1783, only “inherited” half of the Ministry of the Indies that Gálvez managed (the other half went to the future Marquis of Bajamar, Antonio Porlier). Valdés occupied this office from 18 June 1787 to 24 April 1790; see Pedro de Lerena, royal circular order to the heads of government in the Indies, Aranjuez, 22 Jun. 1790, AGI, Ultramar, leg. 836.

wider reflection on Gálvez's paradoxical relation to the parallel phenomena of reform and corruption within the Spanish Empire.

The *comisos* policy in late colonial Spanish America deserves attention although it has been little discussed in historical literature.<sup>55</sup> In the Hispanic World *comiso* (in modern Spanish, *decomiso*) is a legal term applied to the confiscation or seizure of illegally traded commodities by law enforcement authorities. The word may also refer to the forfeited merchandise itself.<sup>56</sup> The *comisos* policy was basically a mechanism set up by the Spanish state to fight illicit commerce. The way it functioned was complex and changed over time, but it can be summarized as follows. Customs guards and officials triggered the application of this law when they discovered a vessel (or any other form of transport, if trade was being conducted by land) attempting to introduce unregistered legal or illegal merchandise to the territory under their supervision. The smuggled goods, and in some instances the entire vessel, were automatically forfeited. Treasury officials inventoried the confiscated products and sold them in a public auction. The amount obtained from the proceedings was taxed with the standard royal duties (*almojarifazgo*

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<sup>55</sup> In his study of smuggling in the Viceroyalty of New Granada in the early 1700s, Lance Grahn does devote some pages to explaining the *comisos* policy; Grahn, *The Political Economy of Smuggling: Regional Informal Economies in Early Bourbon New Granada* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997). General studies on the royal treasury usually mention *comisos* only in passing, because they represented a minor source of revenue for the Crown. For example, for example, see Luis Jáuregui, *La Real Hacienda de Nueva España: Su administración en la época de los intendentes, 1786-1821* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1999).

<sup>56</sup> *Comiso* comes from the Latin *commisum* which may mean: an undertaking, enterprise; a transgression, offence, fault, crime; an incurring of fines, a confiscation or confiscated property; that which is entrusted, trust, secret; see *Database of Latin Dictionaries* online and Oxford Latin Dictionary, 1982. In his *Diccionario razonado de legislación civil, penal, comercial y forense* (Valencia: Imprenta de J. Ferrer de Orga, 1838), Joaquín Escriche defined *comiso* as: “la pena de perdimiento de la cosa en que incurre el que comercia en géneros prohibidos” and as “los mismos bienes comisados, esto es, los bienes que caen en la pena de comiso.” His definition coincides with entries found in Spanish Royal Academy of Spanish dictionaries (DRAE) of the eighteenth century. In the 1780 DRAE edition, for example, *comiso* is “perdimento de la cosa, en que incurre el que comercia en géneros prohibidos, o contraviene a algún contrato en que se estipuló dicha pena.” The 1791 edition includes the phrase, “llámanse así también los bienes comisados.”

and *alcabala*), as if the merchandise had been introduced legally. From the remaining money, officials subtracted a small fraction to pay for the procedural costs (payments for legal advisors and clerks; charges for transporting and storing the forfeited commodities; the daily sustenance of captured prisoners or confiscated slaves; etc), and the rest was divided into thirds. The person who had discovered (or informed on) the smuggling activity, the informant or *denunciador*, received one part; the local judicial authority in charge of reviewing and sentencing the case obtained the second third; and the final fraction formed the *ramo de comisos* income of the royal treasury and thus entered the coffers of the imperial government.<sup>57</sup>

The first laws prescribing the forfeiture of smuggled merchandise in the Spanish empire dated from the 1550s.<sup>58</sup> The rationale behind the *comisos* policy was a dual one. First, it was directed against smugglers, since it raised the costs of their illegal activities by adding risks such as the loss of their cargoes, ships, and occasionally, their own liberty, since some of them did end up imprisoned.<sup>59</sup> Second, and even more interesting, by rewarding customs guards, royal treasury officials, judicial authorities, or private

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<sup>57</sup> The division into thirds was not as simple or straightforward as I have summarized it here. In a later section I will talk about the intricacies and exceptions to this scheme, given the importance it eventually acquired as a source of personal income for Gálvez. This simplified division that involved one third for the Crown, one third for the superintendent of the customs house functioning as judge for the case, and one third for the guard or person who had denounced the smuggling activities can be found in Linda Salvucci's analysis of the 1753 *ordenanza* on *alcabala* matters promoted by Viceroy Conde de Revillagigedo I; see her "Costumbres viejas, 'hombres nuevos': José de Gálvez y la burocracia fiscal novohispana, 1754-1800," *Historia Mexicana* 33, no. 2 (1983), 231-232n14.

<sup>58</sup> Fabián de Fonseca and Carlos de Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda escrita por D. Fabian de Fonseca y D. Carlos de Urrutia, por orden del virey, Conde de Revillagigedo*, (Mexico City: Imprenta de Vicente García Torres, 1851) (hereafter cited as *Historia general de real hacienda*), 4: 150-151 and *Recopilación de leyes de los reinos de las Indias: Mandadas a imprimir y publicar por la Magestad Católica del Rey Don Carlos II Nuestro Señor*, 5th ed., vol. 3 (Madrid: Doix, 1841) (hereafter cited as *Recopilación de Indias*), law 1, title 17, book 8.

<sup>59</sup> In a royal order on *comisos* issued by José de Gálvez in 1786, he wrote about "possible board expenses" for prisoners and also mentions "sentences imposed on prisoners;" Gálvez to Viceroy of New Spain, San Ildefonso, 4 Sep. 1786, in Fonseca and Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda*, 4:204.

persons (anyone could become a *denunciador*), it discouraged them from partnering with smugglers and persuaded them to fight illicit commerce. In other words, more than focusing on detaining smugglers, the *comisos* policy aimed primarily at improving the capacity of the state to deter the corruption and complicity of customs officials. Gálvez is in part significant precisely for the variations he imposed on the imperial *comisos* policy of rewards, first in 1779 and then in 1785, as we shall see.

Contraband trade was among the Bourbon reformers' main targets in their massive project to heal the imperial/colonial body. Smuggling was an old, endemic problem of Spain in relation to its colonies. The vastness of its overseas possessions, the miles and miles of coast with unprotected bays and perfectly sized coves, the insufficient naval fleet and the poorly manned port garrisons, the geographical closeness of British and French colonies in the Caribbean, and later in the century the new nation to the north (the United States), and the Russians approaching from the Pacific—all of these were sources of great mortification for Spanish authorities in the late eighteenth century. Yet, an extensive geography and the lack of naval control solely explain the extent of smuggling in Spanish America. Another key factor was economic: namely, the scarcity of many consumer products in the colonies which the inflexible and inefficient Spanish commercial fleet system could not supply. Spanish industrial and commodity production could not keep up with the colonies' demand for consumer products (some of which the colonials could not produce themselves because industry was prohibited by imperial authorities who worried about competition from the colonies).

This might be a good space to speak briefly about Gálvez's stance in regard to industry. His approach was quite imperialistic. In his essay *Discurso y reflexiones de un*

*vasallo sobre la decadencia de nuestras Indias españolas* (ca. 1759, see n. 62 below), he prompted the Crown to do everything in its power to fix Spain's commerce with its colonies, particularly New Spain. The goal was to provide the colonies with the basic goods necessary for proper dress and subsistence, to stop the growth of local factories, and to curb the introduction of smuggled commodities from foreign countries (paragraph 41). Gálvez also mentioned (44) that it was popularly known that the "intelligence of indigenous peoples resided in their hands," given the great dexterity they showed not only in growing local crops but also in manufacturing ("*mecanismo de fábricas y artefactos*"). According to the future visitor-general, Indians were able to imitate flawlessly and to copy any factory-produced commodity coming from Europe. This propensity, along with the abundance of cotton and other supplies, and the scarcity of textiles arriving from Europe and Manila, had generated the growth of factories from which the majority of the colonial subjects now supplied themselves (45). Gálvez then described the abundant cotton, wool, and silk industry in the Americas, the good quality of their products, and the good prices they offered; finally he warned that this harmed Spanish trade "*cuyo interés consiste en que los naturales de Indias no se acostumbren a vivir independientes de esta Monarquía para el socorro de sus necesidades*" (46-48).

In addition to the geographical and economic dimensions of smuggling, there were also interrelated political factors such as those analyzed by Josep Delgado Rivas. According to this author one feature that eased the access of foreign powers to the Spanish American markets was a particular proclivity of the Spanish crown to sign disadvantageous international treaties; the other aspect was plain corruption by the agents

of the state.<sup>60</sup> At the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, when it was extremely weak, Spain exhibited a considerable tolerance of foreign trade in the Americas. Viceroy like the Marqués de Castelflos in Peru (1707-1710) had open deals with foreigners and saw Lima flooded with European products. Throughout the empire many administrative officials and military officers received bribes from British traders.<sup>61</sup>

The Spanish Empire was a Swiss cheese full of smuggling holes. Eighteenth-century Bourbon reformers worried much about this and tried to envision possible solutions. Constantly throughout his bureaucratic career, José de Gálvez displayed a special concern for the problem of contraband in Spain's overseas territories. For example, in his essay *Discurso y reflexiones de un vasallo sobre la decadencia de nuestras Indias españolas* (henceforth referred as *Discurso*), written five or six years before he was named visitor-general of New Spain, smuggling figured as one of the principal matters that had to be taken care of if Spain wanted to become a respectable world power again.<sup>62</sup> In this manuscript, Gálvez observed that all the maritime powers in

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<sup>60</sup> Josep M. Delgado Ribas, *Dinámicas imperiales (1650-1796): España, América y Europa en el cambio institucional del sistema colonial español* (Barcelona: Bellaterra, 2007), 80-81 and 99. The author provides examples of varied disadvantageous treaties signed by Spain.

<sup>61</sup> For Castelflos see *ibid.*, 80 and 129. Delgado Ribas also relates the story of how the imperial Spanish government discovered that the British *South Sea Company*, entitled to the *asiento* of slaves, paid bribes to administrative and military officials around the Portobelo area to introduce contraband goods along with the enslaved Africans (131).

<sup>62</sup> José de Gálvez, "Discurso y reflexiones de un vasallo sobre la decadencia de nuestras Indias españolas," in *La política americana de José de Gálvez: según su "Discurso y Reflexiones de un Vasallo,"* ed. Luis Navarro García (Málaga: Algazara, 1998), 123-163. Navarro García studied in detail Gálvez's *Discurso*, which he considers the Andalusian's *opera prima*. The author calculates that Gálvez penned this undated writing between 1756 and 1761, due to some references to the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) before Spain got involved (December 1761- January 1762). More specifically, Navarro thinks, the *Discurso* was written and presented to the king at the beginning of 1760, sometime after Charles III arrived in Spain from Naples. While the historiography has never treated Gálvez as one of the eighteenth-century Spanish *tratadistas* (political thinkers) like Gerónimo de Ustáritz, José del Campillo, Father Benito Feijóo, Bernardo Ward, and even Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, his first major written piece, the *Discurso*, has

Europe knew that Spain possessed the gold and silver that gave “spirit and movement to the general commerce of the world (*orbe*),” and therefore were focused in directing their policies toward “participating” in that wealth by whatever means necessary (*Discurso*, paragraph 1). Gálvez speculated that to expose in detail all the frauds committed by these powers would take him a hole volume (*Discurso*, 4). Instead, for the sake of brevity he chose to paint a broad panorama of foreign illegal commercial activities in the Spanish Empire.

Lawyer Gálvez noticed that the British had recently established settlements near Río Tinto (in modern day Honduras) in order to direct illicit trade from the province of Guatemala all the way up to Yucatán and to keep those territories “infested” with their contraband (*Discurso*, 7-8). He discussed a great deal the illegal extraction of redwood (*palo de Campeche*) conducted by the British, and calculated that when the dye was sold in London it produced huge annual earnings of 7 million *pesos sencillos* (around 5.6 million *pesos fuertes*; *Discurso* 9-11). He also warned against British attempts to establish a new colony in Darien (Panama) and reminded the Crown of how they had armed a great number of smugglers in the last war (the War of Jenkin’s Ear, 1739-1748), who had threatened the government and *Audiencia* of Panama (*Discurso*, 12). The Andalusian then turned to Dutch smuggling, arguing that the island of Curaçao had become a warehouse of “any effects and commodities that can be dispatched and bought in our Spanish Indies.” According to Gálvez, the Dutch practiced contraband trade with

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the elements of a typical political economy treatise of the time in the sense that it was critical toward the Crown’s handling of imperial affairs and tried to influence the monarch’s mind to change his colonial policies by offering recommendations. In fact, only very recently has the *Discurso* captured the attention of historians. Although three copies survived in archives and libraries in Spain, there is no piece of evidence that demonstrates that his contemporaries read it or if it was instrumental for his definitive involvement in American affairs when he was appointed as visitor-general of New Spain in 1765.

“with great frequency and lawlessness” equally in Caracas, Maracaibo, Río de la Hacha, Portobelo, and Cartagena, as also in the islands of Puerto Rico, Cuba, Santo Domingo, and the coasts of New Spain and Guatemala (*Discurso*, 17).

From the Colonia de Sacramento in the Río de la Plata basin, the Portuguese had flooded all South America (*América Meridional*) with “infinite smuggling” (*Discurso*, 29). Even though the Portuguese had been recently expelled from Sacramento, Gálvez was sure that they had kept stocks of merchandise nearby ready to be smuggled into the Viceroyalty of Peru, particularly into rich Lima, a city that suffered from a lack of supplies brought legally by Spanish traders (*Discurso*, 31). Despite Gálvez’s focus on illicit trade practiced by foreigners who operated under the protection of their respective metropolitan powers, he recognized that many Spaniards were accomplices and co-participants in this lucrative business. Spanish smugglers and other kinds of delinquents had their base in Jamaica and Curaçao (*Discurso*, 19). Even the Danish were involved in this conspiracy by offering shelter to both foreign and Spanish smugglers in Saint Thomas, Saint Croix, and the Cays of Saint John (modern U.S. Virgin Islands; *Discurso* 22). France had been a smuggling power capable of paralyzing Spanish trade with the viceroyalty of Peru to the point of making it obsolete.<sup>63</sup> Yet Gálvez could not hide his sympathy for the French, arguing that in the eighteenth century France had been interested only “in the promotion and cultivation of its colonies, and in defending them from England.” He recognized that some private French ships approached Spanish American coasts with the objective of smuggling merchandise, yet their number had no

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<sup>63</sup> For more about the French “commercial invasion” of Lima in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, see Delgado Ribas, *Dinámicas imperiales*, 76-77.



comparison with the activities of the British and Dutch contrabandists who operated under the help and protection of their respective states (*Discurso*, 21).

Spanish reformers were not alone, however, in their interest in fighting contraband trade in the eighteenth century. Smuggling had become an object of concern among statesmen and policymakers from all European powers. Even the British, who for Spain represented the great “smuggling power” at the time, were busy trying to control contraband trade both in the metropolis and the colonies.<sup>64</sup> Changes in the world economy were in part responsible for the obsession with smuggling in the 1700s.<sup>65</sup> After the global economic contraction of the mid-seventeenth century, the “long eighteenth century” (1650s-1820s) saw a steady growth in world trade spearheaded by innovations in the Atlantic economy, such as the development of the plantation system (with slavery and new commercial crops like sugar and tobacco) and the arrival of new non-Iberian powers (Britain, France, the Netherlands) to the Caribbean basin.<sup>66</sup> Needless to say, an increased amount of trade is usually accompanied by more smuggling. Indeed, in our own days the practice of smuggling, such as illegal drug trafficking, can actually take place in extremely different environments. We can easily imagine drug smugglers transporting their cargoes to places outside of state supervision (for example, a shipment

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<sup>64</sup> The British crown had begun to seriously hunt down smugglers since the reign of King Edward I in the thirteenth century. For the British, of course, France was the “source of all evils.” Tea, tobacco, spirits, and luxuries that had duties levied on them were the commodities most frequently run by the smugglers in England; Geoffrey Morley, *The Smuggling War: The Government’s Fight Against Smuggling in the 18th and 19th Centuries* (Dover: Alan Sutton Publishing Limited, 1994), 7. For smuggling in the British colonies, see Carl Ubbelohde, *The Vice-Admiralty Courts and the American Revolution* (Williamsburg, VA: Institute of Early American History and Culture; Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960). For the illicit trade in tea between empires, conducted by “the other” East India Companies—that is, the Dutch, the French, the Danish, and the Swedish—see W. A. Cole, “Trends in Eighteenth-Century Smuggling,” *The Economic History Review New Series* 10, no. 3 (1958): 395-410.

<sup>65</sup> John V. C. Nye, “Free Trade,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Economic History*, e-reference edition, ed. Joel Mokyr, Oxford University Press, 2005, accessed 8 May 2011, available online at <http://www.oxford-economichistory.com/entry?entry=t168.e0288>

<sup>66</sup> Nye estimates a 2 per cent annual growth in world trade between 1640 and 1750, see *ibid.*

of cocaine from Colombia landing on the relatively uninhabited coast of Michoacán, Mexico). But what is difficult to visualize is drug traffickers smuggling their merchandise in the very nodes and centers of international trade. Nevertheless, such contraband trade occurs under the noses of customs officials all the time (i.e., drugs cross the U.S. border from Mexico through the busy San Diego-Tijuana border incessantly). The same phenomenon characterized the eighteenth century.

As Lance Grahn explains in his study of smuggling in the northern provinces of New Granada, in the absence of an efficient legal imperial trade, smuggling was endemic not only among the Guajiro Indian communities of the cove- and inlet-dotted coast of the Río Hacha province, but also in the port city of Cartagena, which, with its customs house, fortifications, and bureaucratic and military bodies must necessarily have been better guarded against the menace of illegal trade.<sup>67</sup> It is interesting that the type of smuggling preoccupying José de Gálvez when he wrote his *Discurso* was that conducted in frontier zones, in the regions that lay outside the direct supervision of the state, such as in the south of New Spain and in Central America, precisely those sites that Grahn would call “soft flanks of the Spanish American empire.”<sup>68</sup> Not surprisingly, one of Gálvez’s first measures as visitor-general of New Spain, taken immediately after disembarking in the port of Veracruz in August 1765, was to send a special commission to investigate alleged smuggling activities in the Laguna de Términos in remote Campeche.<sup>69</sup> Yet the charge he had received from the monarch and his top ministers in March 1765, the *Instrucción reservada*, was clear regarding smuggling occurring at the hub of New Spain’s

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<sup>67</sup> Grahn, *The Political Economy of Smuggling*.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 189

<sup>69</sup> On this commission, see Gálvez to Croix, Mexico City, 8 Mar. 1767, AGI, Mexico, leg. 1250.

commerce: Veracruz. Sections 2-4 (out of a total of 23) of the *Instrucción* focused on the correct functioning of the port city's customs house. The Crown instructed Gálvez to gather information on whether the royal officials there performed proper examinations of land and sea cargoes to prevent smuggling. It was "indispensable," the *Instrucción* remarked, that the visitor-general take as many precautions as necessary "to prevent the introduction of goods brought in single ships [that is, not in the fleet] without passing through the customs house established [there]..." Since merchandise transported to New Spain by the regular fleet could not be inspected with the same meticulousness and care, because of its amplitude, Gálvez had to observe whether the great variety of containers corresponded to the official registries taken in Cádiz. If he found unregistered bales, packages, parcels, boxes, barrels, and bundles, these had to be confiscated by customs officials.<sup>70</sup> Whether smuggling happened under the gaze of the main customs in Veracruz, however, or in remote, unguarded areas, the concerns of Bourbon reformers with contraband commerce and anti-smuggling policies were part of their desire to increase effective state control over the Spanish empire's vast territory.

Introducing and consuming smuggled goods was such an ordinary practice that unlike other contemporary threats such as piracy (or modern ones, like drug smuggling), it was rarely violent, and even less socially subversive.<sup>71</sup> Yet it was undoubtedly illegal, and both ends of the supply and demand chain tried to remain in anonymity. The nature of its illegality had to do, on the one hand, with smugglers flouting established but ill-

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<sup>70</sup> Charles III, *Instrucción reservada*, El Pardo, 14 Mar. 1765, in H.I. Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 405-406

<sup>71</sup> This is a point made by Alan Karras, who explains that there exists an "odd perception that smugglers were violent people," like pirates, but the truth is that the majority of their activities "went undetected and unreported," thus they rarely used violence and they did it only in the last resort; Karras, *Smuggling: Contraband and Corruption in World History* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 17-18 and chapter 2.

defined legal frontiers, and on the other, with the thousands of uncollected, legally mandated customs duties contrabandists did not pay. Indeed, successful contrabandists and their buyers could savor the sweet taste of a veritable form of free trade. The *comisos* policy in the eighteenth-century Spanish Empire, therefore, was part of the effort by the imperial state to stop the continuous losses of potential resources stemming from unpaid taxes. At the same time, *comisos* were a way to gain revenue by confiscating smuggled merchandise, while the policy also implied a voluntary disbursement by the state in order to reward *denunciadores* and other bureaucrats involved in the process. Nor was the rewards formula in the *comisos* exclusive to Spanish law; it was part of a general European state policy of shifting the costs of imperial administration away from royal funds and onto officials or subjects. In the late eighteenth century, British anti-smuggling policies closely mirrored the Spanish *comisos*, as Alan Karras illustrates. First, British authorities confiscated the merchandise and sold it at auction; from these receipts, they deducted the costs for the trial and commissions to the customs officers; finally, the remaining proceeds were divided into equal thirds between the monarch, the governor (in Karras's example, the governor of the Caribbean island of Dominica in 1789), and "those officials who made the seizure or informed on the ship being seized."<sup>72</sup>

In Spain, the third part destined for rewarding the local judicial authority (the governor in Karras's example) took time to materialize. The first law on *comisos* of 16 April 1550 announced the typical division of the proceeds in thirds, but two-thirds corresponded to the Crown's "*cámara y fisco*" (a secret Supreme Council and the royal

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 10. Analyzing a case of French sugar smuggled into Rhode Island in 1761, Carl Ubbelohde emphasizes that the informant (not the officials who made the seizure) received the third of the remaining proceedings; Ubbelohde, *The Vice-Admiralty Courts*, 30-31.

treasury), and the final part to the *denunciante*.<sup>73</sup> Law 3 of title 17, book 8 of the *Recopilación de Indias*, however, was a conglomerate of rulings issued between 1598 and 1631 that established for the first time that royal treasury officials could not act by themselves when processing the comisos, but had to do it in conjunction with judicial authorities (governors, *corregidores*, *alcaldes ordinarios*) who were entitled to share the proceeds in equal parts. Law 11 (composed of two laws, of 1630 and 1657) announced the “prize” of one-sixth of the value of the forfeited merchandise for *oidores*, *alcaldes del crimen*, governors, *corregidores*, and *alcaldes mayores* in charge of dealing with the comiso prosecution as an incentive to do their job correctly.<sup>74</sup> Thus, just before the Gálvez era, this is how a typical comiso executed in a port was divided and distributed among the officials involved in the case (see Table 5.1. and accompanying Graph 5.1.):

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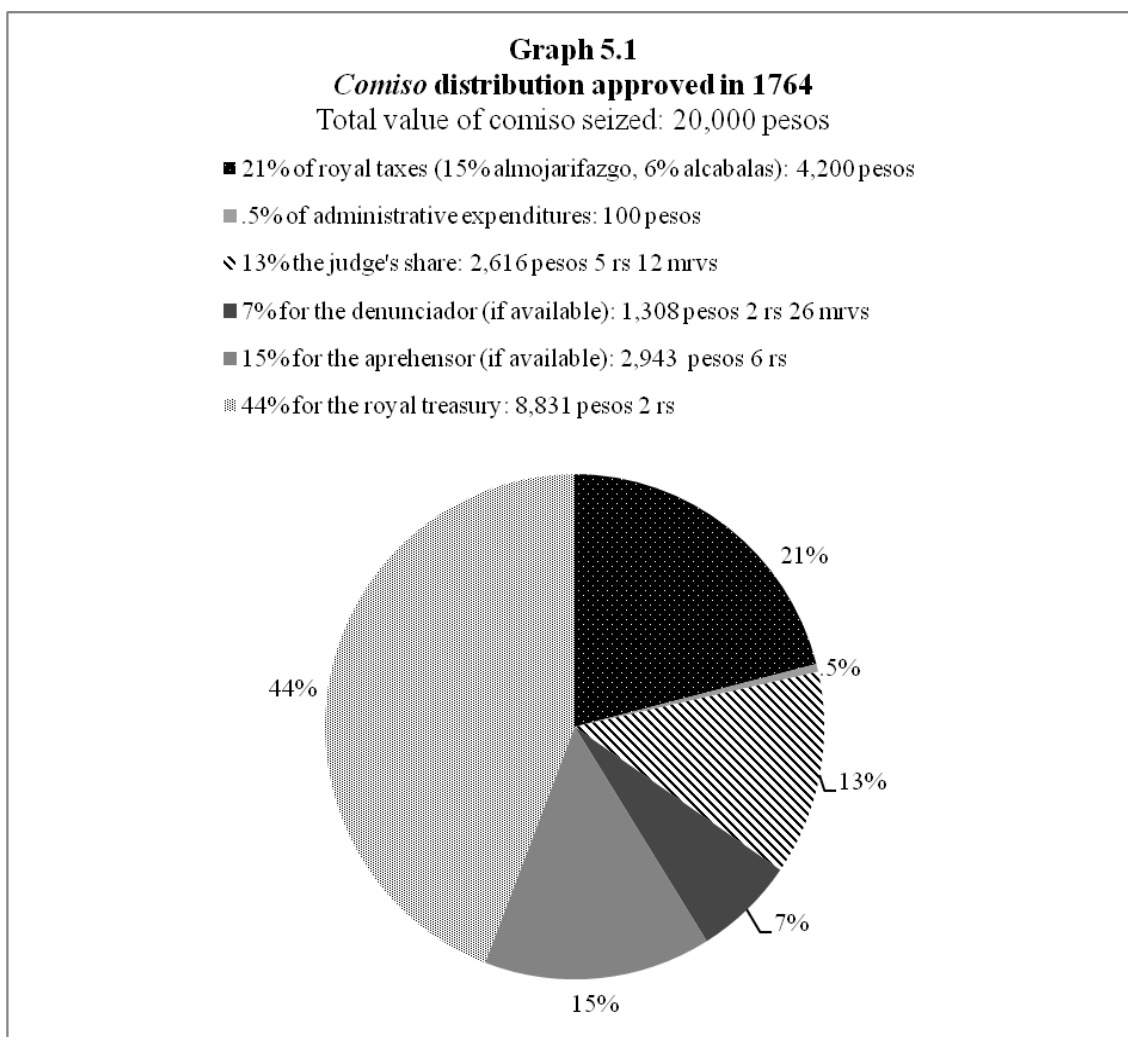
<sup>73</sup> Queen Joanna of Castile, royal *cédula*, Valladolid, 16 Apr. 1550, in Fonseca and Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda*, 4:150-151.

<sup>74</sup> The law read: “*para que por este medio se alienten con diligente cuidado a hacerlas [the causas de comiso]*,” *Recopilación de Indias*, law 11, title 17, book 8.

<b>Table 5.1</b> <b>Comisos division in accordance with the guidelines formed by the General Accountancy of the Indies in 1762 and approved by royal <i>cédula</i> in 1764.<sup>75</sup></b>			
	pesos	reales	maravedís
Total value of comiso seized	20,000	0	0
Substraction of 21 per cent of royal duties applied to merchandise coming from Europe [15 per cent of <i>almojarifazgo</i> , 2 per cent of <i>alcabala Antigua</i> and 4 per cent of <i>alcabala moderna</i> and <i>armada de Barlovento</i> ]	4,200	0	0
Revised total	15,800	0	0
Deduction of administrative expenditures ( <i>gastos y costas procesales</i> )	100	0	0
	15,700	0	0
From this quantity, one sixth belonged to the judge and royal officials “ <i>que hayan entendido la sustanciación de los autos y declaración del comiso</i> ”	2,616	5	12
	13,083	2	26
From this quantity 10 per cent is taken out for the <i>denunciador</i> (if there was one)	1,308	2	26
	11,775	0	0
From this 11,775 pesos, four parts had to be formed:*			
(A) one for the <i>aprehensor</i> or <i>aprehensores</i> <sup>76</sup>	a)2,943	6	0
(B) three for the royal treasury	b)8,831	2	0
If we add item (B) (8,831 pesos 2 reales) to the 4,200 pesos of the royal duties, the Crown received:	13,031	2	0
*Of course, if there was no <i>denunciador</i> , fourths had to be formed from the 13,083 pesos 2 reales and 26 maravedís remaining after the deduction of royal duties, administrative expenses, and the percentage for the judges.			

<sup>75</sup> Contaduría General de Indias, *Demostración práctica, formada por esta contaduría general de las Indias, del método y reglas con que deben exigirse los reales derechos pertenecientes a S.M. y hacer la distribución del valor de las presas que hicieren en mar, tanto las embarcaciones de S.M. cuando las de los particulares, armadas en corso con patentes legítimas en todos los puertos de la América para impedir el comercio ilícito, de lo que se aprehendiere en tierra, y declarare por de comiso en los mismos dominios, y de lo resuelto posteriormente en reales cédulas de 30 de Mayo de 1721 y 11 de Julio de 1758, y a la demostración aprobada por S.M. que con esta última real cédula se remitió para su observancia a todos los virreyes, gobernadores y oficiales reales y demás ministros de Indias*, Madrid, 16 Aug. 1762 (hereafter cited as “Distribution guidelines for *comisos* 1762”) in Fonseca and Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda*, 4:168-174. Domingo de Marcoleta signed the guidelines, but at that time the position of general-accountant of the Indies was vacant. For the *cédula* that approved these guidelines see Charles III, royal *cédula*, Aranjuez, 14 Jun. 1764, in *ibid.*, 4:174-175.

<sup>76</sup> The *aprehensores* was yet another category of people involved in a *comiso* case. Usually, *aprehensores* were members of the navy or the army in charge of the smugglers’ capture and detention.



As the table and graph indicate, in its effort to lure bureaucrats away from deals with smugglers the Crown was willing to allot rewards to judges, *denunciadores*, and *aprehensores* that amounted to approximately 35 per cent of the forfeiture's total value. Given the low wage levels, every officeholder in the Spanish Empire craved an extra income, and they welcomed and sometimes even fought actively for their comiso prizes. Such was the case, for example, of two consecutive governors of Santo Domingo during the Gálvez era. The Marques del Socorro argued that during his tenure as governor and captain general of Santo Domingo (1771-1779) his zeal in office against smugglers had

produced a great quantity of *comisos* on both land and sea. When in 1784 he realized that he was going to receive the part that corresponded to him as the judicial authority in those cases, he found that his successor in office, Isidro Peralta y Rojas (1779-1785), had claimed the share for himself because he had sentenced all the cases opened during Socorro's tenure.<sup>77</sup> This instance involved top bureaucrats, but it is clear that minor functionaries like customs house guards also fought for their prizes as *denunciadores* or *aprehensores*. A historian of the colonial era in the United States, Carl Ubbelohde, discusses one case in which a one-third share for the informant was difficult to assign; if this took place in the British Empire, therefore, it is likely that similar cases occurred in its Spanish counterpart.<sup>78</sup> *Comisos* were not an inconsiderable source of income, after all. In his *Memoria testamentaria*, Gálvez's protégé Francisco de Saavedra stated that while he was intendant of Caracas (1783-1788) his salary amounted to 10,000 *pesos fuertes*. His position entitled him to receive a third part of the *comisos* as judge of every case. If he added his *comiso* earnings, therefore, he could enjoy 14,000 to 15,000 pesos of yearly income.<sup>79</sup>

The system of *comiso* rewards was subject to debate among those participating in the public sphere of the Spanish Empire. An anonymous manuscript entitled "*Apuntes sucintos y prácticos de la América Española para quien más interesa en su mejor Gobierno*" (ca.1777, hereafter cited as *Apuntes sucintos*), directed against many aspects

<sup>77</sup> Like the biblical King Solomon, in 1788 Charles III ordered that the "part [of *comisos*] belonging to the judge must be divided between he who started the procedures [who captured the contraband] and he who sentenced the case;" Isidro Peralta died and his widow claimed the *comiso* rewards for her family. This case was recorded in Charles III, royal *cédula*, San Ildefonso, 23 Aug. 1788, in Fonseca and Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda*, 4: 214-216.

<sup>78</sup> Ubbelohde, *The Vice-Admiralty Courts*, 30-31.

<sup>79</sup> Francisco de Saavedra, "Memoria testamentaria del Excmo. Señor D. Francisco de Saavedra," Seville, 6 Mar. 1814 (hereafter cited as "Memoria testamentaria"), in Manuel Gómez Imaz, *Sevilla en 1808* (Seville: Imprenta de Francisco de P. Díaz, 1908), 269.



of José de Gálvez's handling of imperial affairs, had a long, very interesting assessment of contraband trade in Spain and the Americas.<sup>80</sup> *Apuntes sucintos* explained that smuggling from the British, French, and Dutch colonies in the Indies to the Spanish possessions was a complicated problem, but not as extensive or pernicious as people generally believed.<sup>81</sup> Illicit trade could not be prevented given the Empire's "excessive" extent of open coasts. Moreover, commercial demand in the colonies was impossible to calculate, and regular scarcity of commodities occurred even in the commercial hubs of Europe.<sup>82</sup> For the anonymous author, while Spain would never be able to solve this problem, it could diminish it by paying adequate wages to the officials in charge of the *resguardos* (customs guards) stationed in focal points of consumption, and by increasing their *comiso* compensation to either half or two-thirds of the forfeiture's total value, while the remaining half or third could be employed to cover the judicial proceedings' costs and to reward the judges.<sup>83</sup> In this way, the author of *Apuntes sucintos* proposed to eliminate entirely the *ramo de comisos* income for the royal treasury, arguing that the earnings from reducing the practice of smuggling through the bonus system for *resguardo* officials and judges would benefit the Crown more in the long run. The author then cited as an

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<sup>80</sup> Anonymous, "Apuntes sucintos y prácticos de la América Española para quien más interesa en su mejor Gobierno," Madrid, ca. 1777 (hereafter cited as "Apuntes sucintos"), AGI, Estado, leg. 42, no. 3, paragraphs 80-90.

<sup>81</sup> Some years later Francisco de Saavedra shared the same opinion: he argued that the problem of smuggling in the Americas had been at its worst in the first half of the century, but now Jamaican trade and smugglers were not as powerful or active; see Saavedra, *The Journal of Don Francisco Saavedra de Sangronis, 1780-1783*, ed. Francisco Morales Padrón, trans. Aileen Moore Topping (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1989), 68.

<sup>82</sup> The anonymous author recognized that the British, Dutch, and French frequently visited the provinces of Cumaná, Caracas, Río de Hacha, Cartagena, and Portobelo in search of commodities they needed such as cattle, cocoa, and salt, and it was natural they had more knowledge of the demand of people living in those provinces, a demand they could cover with smuggled goods during their next trip; "Apuntes sucintos," paragraph 85.

<sup>83</sup> With the current system, the author of *Apuntes sucintos* explained, *resguardo* dependants received a very small bonus for all the risks and hard work they expended in discovering and detaining smugglers. For this reason, it was more advantageous for them to collude with smugglers; "Apuntes sucintos," paragraph 87.

example the case of Cádiz, where the employees of the *resguardo* allowed smuggling into and out the port because they were aware that at the Court the superintendant-general and minister of the Treasury, who enjoyed a large salary and did not participate in the arduous *comiso* processes, would receive the largest portion of the value of the forfeitures executed (paragraph 88). It is on this final point that Gálvez's policies on *comiso* affairs are relevant. In a context of contesting opinions about the effectiveness of rewarding officials at all levels of government as a useful instrument in the state's fight against smuggling, two new royal orders on the matter were dispatched from the Andalusian's office. The first one destined a third of the *comiso* proceeds to finance his enlarged ministry. Years later, the second order mirrored the reward applied to the Spanish minister of the Treasury on *comisos* executed in the metropolis, exactly the remuneration that *Apuntes Sucintos* had criticized. Gálvez' second ruling allotted a fourth of the value of the forfeitures carried out in the Indies to himself in his role as superintendant-general of the Indies. Let us delve deeper into these policies and their effects.

### **Gálvez's First *Comiso* Royal Order: Causes, Reception, and Execution.**

After Gálvez assumed office as minister of the Indies in early 1776, the ministry witnessed the progressive expansion of its administrative functions and personnel.<sup>84</sup> There were five categories of Indies Secretariat employees: *oficiales*, *escribanos*, *porteros*, and one archivist. The main aides of the minister, however, were the *oficiales*. Many of Gálvez's favorites, such as Francisco de Saavedra or Francisco Fernández de

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<sup>84</sup> The expanded functions of the ministry of the Indies during the Gálvez era have not been studied. In notes found scattered in archival records, I have observed that the work inside the ministry was divided by themes and regions; therefore, there was *mesa* (an office) of commerce, a *mesa* of the Philippines, etc.

Córdoba, began their careers in the colonial administration by working as *oficiales* at the Ministry of the Indies. Another *oficial*, Silvestre Collar y Castro, was a close friend of the minister's family.<sup>85</sup> Under Gálvez's direction the number of these functionaries more than doubled rising from eight during Arriaga's tenure to seventeen around 1787.<sup>86</sup> This growth was gradual and sometimes occurred in spasms. From the copies of *oficial* titles kept at the *Dirección General del Tesoro* of the Ministry of the Treasury it is possible to observe, for instance, that in October 1785 Gálvez engaged in a massive reorganization of the ministry that included many innovations, including the creation of the fourteenth *oficialía*.<sup>87</sup> Likewise, Gildas Bernard writes that in June 1786 Gálvez created the office of *oficial séptimo*, and a month later the offices of *oficial séptimo segundo*, *séptimo tercero*, and *séptimo cuarto* were established within three consecutive days.<sup>88</sup> The number of *escribanos* working at the Indies Secretariat grew considerably, as well, during the Andalusian's tenure. From 1752 the ministry had actually functioned without *escribanos*, but as soon as he was named minister, Gálvez appointed four. In 1778, after the famous *Reglamento de Comercio Libre* for the Americas was promulgated, four more clerks were entered on the ministry's payroll. In January 1784 another four were added, together with a general raise in salaries for the lower-level clerks. Over the next two years, Gálvez hired yet four more *escribanos*, arguing that the expansion in number of employees was

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<sup>85</sup> Silvestre Collar became ubiquitous witness for special occasions such as the wedding of José de Gálvez's daughter in 1792, and the baptisms of his granddaughter (1796) and grandson (1804).

<sup>86</sup> Bernard, *Le Secrétariat d'État*, 158 and 246. I suspect there were eighteen *oficiales* working for Gálvez instead of seventeen as Bernard argues.

<sup>87</sup> Copy of titles of *oficiales mayores* of the Ministry of the Indies given by Charles III and signed by José de Gálvez to Francisco Aguilar, Pedro Aparici, Manuel de Ayala, Francisco Cerdá, Silvestre Collar y Castro, Francisco Fernández de Córdoba, Vicente León, Antonio Porcel, Francisco de Valencia, Francisco Xavier de la Vega, and Francisco de Viaña, 28 Oct. 1785, AGS, Dirección General del Tesoro, Inventario 2, leg. 69.

<sup>88</sup> Unless otherwise stated, this and the rest of the information in this paragraph come from Bernard, *Le Secrétariat d'État*, 159-163.

indispensable to achieve a non-stop management of Indies affairs. The ex-visitor-general had created sixteen *escribano* positions within a decade. Curiously, Gálvez did not assign additional *portero* and archivist positions. At the zenith of the Bourbon Reforms, that is, the Ministry of the Indies managed to function well only with two *porteros* and one archivist (who, in fact, was also an *oficial*). More functions and employees necessarily meant more disbursements in the way of salaries and everyday expenses, and created an obvious need for a larger budget.<sup>89</sup> Gálvez found in the *comisos* an additional source of funding for the institution under his care.

In May 1779 the Andalusian minister issued his first Indies-wide regulation in *comiso* matters. In the royal order he requested the remission to Spain of a third of all the *comiso* liquidations entered in the treasuries of Spanish America and the Philippines after the first day of 1779. The gross amount had to be remitted in full (that is, without deducting any taxes) and sent to Cádiz at Gálvez's disposal and that of his successors at the ministry, "in order that they can invest the product in the way they judge convenient applicable to the many important matters of the royal service and the public benefit of which this Department is responsible."<sup>90</sup> At the "minister's disposal" meant that the new funds for the ministry had to be deposited in Gálvez's "personal account." The Andalusian had an open account at the *Cinco Gremios Mayores de Madrid*. Originally a union of five guilds (the association of drapers, together with the dealers of silk, lingerie, haberdashery, and jewelry), by the 1760s the *Gremios Mayores* was a trading company

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<sup>89</sup> I have been unable to locate information about the ministry of the Indies' budget or the nature of its everyday expenses beyond the salaries of its employees. Escudero has data from the 1750s on the annual operating costs of the ministry of State. Itemized by quarters, the more important expenditures referred (not surprisingly) to candles, paper, and ink; see Escudero, *Los orígenes del Consejo de Ministros*, 252-255.

<sup>90</sup> Gálvez, royal circular order to the heads of government in the Indies, Aranjuez, 6 May 1779, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 1834.

that also served as a bank. It had an office in Cádiz run by *directores* in charge of sending the *comiso* funds to the higher-ranked *diputados* in Madrid.<sup>91</sup> This commercial house became an investment institution favored among other imperial officers, too. For example, in 1789 Gálvez's protégé Francisco de Saavedra had 41 per cent of his capital invested in the *Cinco Gremios* at a three per cent interest rate.<sup>92</sup> The fact that the *comiso* remittances coming from every corner of the Empire reached Gálvez's own purse did not mean, at least ideally, that these were to be used for his personal enrichment. The line between the public and the private realms was a fine one, however, and it would eventually create conflicts, although these emerged after the minister of the Indies died and will be addressed later.

Gálvez received an acknowledgement of his 1779 May circular order relatively fast. In August, Havana and Mexico responded; Cartagena in September; Buenos Aires, Quito, and New Orleans (his nephew Bernardo de Gálvez was there) a month later; Manila, always years behind, responded in May 1781, but was already declaring 514 pesos as a third of the *comisos* apprehended in 1779 and 1780.<sup>93</sup> This show of efficiency by the different colonial governments was typical; that is, they were proficient in the mere formality of acknowledging a new ruling, but the execution of it was another thing. Only very slowly did the ankylosed machinery of the Indies bureaucracy begin to move, creaking and squeaking and in a disorderly manner, to send the *comiso* remittances. Gálvez must have known that the issuing of his 1779 circular order would not signify a

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<sup>91</sup> A conclusion I reached from several documents in AGI, Ultramar, leg. 836.

<sup>92</sup> Saavedra, "Memoria testamentaria," 269.

<sup>93</sup> Strangely, the order's acknowledgement from Lima is missing. These receipts can be found in AGI, Indiferente, leg. 1834. For the following passages, the primary documents I cite come from the same *legajo*, unless otherwise stated.

guaranteed and steady flow of cash for his office. For years the Crown had complained about deficient *comiso* execution proceedings.<sup>94</sup> Examples of the inefficient execution of the May 1779 order are many; what is most worth noting is Gálvez's personal involvement in the resolution of these conflicts.

A single instance from the Viceroyalty of New Granada serves to illustrate a couple of problems. At the end of October 1783 the treasury officials of Cartagena finished preparing a remittance of 124,000 pesos to Cádiz commended to the care of the minister of the Indies.<sup>95</sup> Of this amount only 531 pesos corresponded to *comisos*, while the rest comprised an assortment of funds payable to the royal treasury accounts that included, among many other things, revenue from the *ramos de temporalidades* and playing cards, *limosnas* (religious donations) for the Church of Our Lady of Covadonga in Asturias, and thousands of pesos issued by the *mitras* (bishoprics) of Quito and Santa Fe to fund the Order of Charles III. In March 1784, after personally reviewing and annotating the long, bewildering, itemized list of accounts, Gálvez selected the *comiso* remittances and then requested formally of the president of the *Contratación* in Cadiz

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<sup>94</sup> Such is the case of two consecutive cases of *comisos* executed in Havana in 1752 that the Council of the Indies reviewed. The institution approved the forfeitures themselves and the sentences pronounced against the smugglers but it also found several problems in the distribution of the total value of the auctioned merchandise. First, there had been an insufficient deduction of royal duties (10 per cent instead of 15); then, there was an *indebida inclusión de algunas cantidades en la partida de costas procesales*—or in other words, the cost of the legal proceedings had been inflated by paying double to the legal *asesor* and the clerk; finally the fourth part of the value of the forfeiture had been applied to the *denunciador* in one case, and in the other, the *denunciador* had received just 10 per cent instead of the third part; see Ferdinand VI, royal *cédula*, San Lorenzo, 18 Oct. 1754, in Fonseca and Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda*, 4:162-164.

<sup>95</sup> Antonio Alfonso Plosinguez and Nicolás García (royal officials), “Nota, cuenta y razón de los caudales, intereses y efectos que en virtud de real orden de 20 de febrero de este año inserta en la del virreinato de 26 de mayo último, se remiten a España en la Fragata de S.M. Santa Clara...” (hereafter cited as “Nota, cuenta y razón”), Cartagena de Indias, 27 Oct. 1783. 60,000 of the 124,000 pesos had to be paid by Havana, as part of the unpaid *situados* assigned to Cartagena. In addition to the accounts and cash, the treasury officials sent boxes with coins, platinum, quinine, and *aceite de María* (a bark from a tree called guanandi); some of these packages were addressed to the monarch, others to the minister of the Indies; see also Plosinguez and García to Gálvez, n. 168, Cartagena de Indias, 30 Oct. 1783.

that the money be forwarded to his *Cinco Gremios* account.<sup>96</sup> The total remittance of 531 pesos, 3 reales, 3 ½ maravedíes did not at all correspond, as one would think, to the “comisos executed in New Granada in 1782;” the amount was a composite of provincial comiso dispatches from different years. Thus, Rio Hacha (131 pesos) and Mompo (137 pesos) contributed one-third of the value of forfeitures executed in 1780; Santa Fe sent 128 pesos from 1781; the royal official of Novita in Chocó province sent the comisos of 1781 and 1782 (19 and 54 pesos respectively); and Quito remitted 59 pesos from an unspecified year.<sup>97</sup> One can only imagine the nightmarish task for Gálvez’s dependants of tracking and recording each of the comiso remittances coming from the New World.

An instance from Cuba shows how conflicts with the execution of the 1779 comiso royal order surfaced at the local level. The intendant of Havana, Juan Ignacio de Urriza asked the minister of the Indies how to proceed when the owners of some forfeited merchandise appealed a confiscation sentence before the Council of the Indies, won their lawsuit, and then requested the restitution of their merchandise, or at least its value in money. Urriza’s main concern was that because of the 1779 ruling, Havana was to send all the funds from the *comisos ramo* to Cádiz, and he wondered which other *ramo* of the royal treasury he should use to return the money to the aggravated owners. Gálvez’s office replied relatively fast, recommending that the value of appealed comisos should not be distributed but deposited in the local coffers until the final decision of the Council

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<sup>96</sup> Plosinguez’s and García’s “Nota, cuenta y razón” contains notes penned by Gálvez. Next to the *comisos* account, the note signed on 26 March 1784 asks his dependants at the Ministry to write an order so that the forfeiture money is given to the Directors of the *Cinco Gremios* in Cádiz, who would then place the amount at his disposal. Afterward, one can find the order to the interim president of the *Casa de Contratación* and another order to the Directors of the *Cinco Gremios* in Cádiz: Gálvez to Bartolomé Ortega and Gálvez to the Directors of the *Cinco Gremios de Madrid* in Cádiz, El Pardo, 26 March 1784; finally there are the prompt responses from both: Miguel de Pedrorema and Domingo Gómez de Villa (directors of the *Cinco Gremios Mayores de Madrid* in Cádiz) to Gálvez and Bartolomé de Ortega to Gálvez, Cádiz, 2 Apr. 1784.

<sup>97</sup> Plosinguez and García, “Nota, cuenta y razón.”

on such cases reached Havana.<sup>98</sup> But intendant Urriza was not satisfied. In his second letter on the matter, he confirmed that he would follow the Crown's order in contested comiso sentences, but noted that there were numerous other cases in which the owners of the forfeited merchandise appealed through extraordinary channels, without notifying his office. Then, typically after Urriza had sent the corresponding amounts to Cádiz, the owners presented to him the royal *cédulas* from the Council granting them the return of the *comiso*. The intendant of Havana was insistent and asked again which *ramo* he should use to cover this part of the total restitution. This time Gálvez himself wrote the draft of the reply order to Urriza in which he finally allowed the intendant to use royal treasury funds to restore the value of the *comisos* to the owners.<sup>99</sup> More importantly, however, the Andalusian minister argued that since even in the absence of appeals all the *comisos* had to be reviewed and confirmed by the Council of the Indies, it was necessary that the intendant kept the value of the forfeitures deposited in Havana until the Council's approval for each case reached him.<sup>100</sup> In other words, his decision would slow the

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<sup>98</sup> Juan Ignacio de Urriza (intendant of Havana) to Gálvez, no. 1239, Havana, 11 Dec. 1783 and Gálvez to intendant of Havana, El Pardo, 25 Feb. 1784. A royal *cédula* issued in Aranjuez on 26 June 1752 mentioned that while the Council processed a *comiso* appeal, the seized merchandise had to be stored (if it was not perishable); *Recopilación de Indias*, Law 4, title 17, book 8, n. 2. According to Law 13, title 17, book 8 of the *Recopilación*, if the merchandise could not be preserved and there was an ongoing appeal, it had to be sold at a public auction and its value deposited in the royal coffers until the definitive sentence was known.

<sup>99</sup> Urriza to Gálvez, no. 1339, Havana, 17 May 1784, and Gálvez to intendant of Havana, San Ildefonso, 18 Aug. 1784.

<sup>100</sup> Law 4, title 17, book 8 of the *Recopilación de Indias* clearly pointed out that all appeals in comiso cases had to be sent in full for review by the Council of the Indies. Only cases of forfeited slaves had to reach the Council for final determination even in the absence of appeals to a higher court. Yet, Gálvez's decision was probably based on a recently issued royal *cédula* of 6 October 1783, which mandated that all the cases of "*contrabando por fraude*" (unregistered merchandise transported between Spanish and Spanish American ports) had to reach the Council. The cases of illicit trade with foreigners could find resolution in the Americas. This 1783 ruling caused an intolerable accumulation of comiso case records at the Council and in 1792 another *cédula* (20 Oct.) reinstated the pre-1783 *status quo*, in which only appealed cases had to reach the Council in full, while the rest just had to be reported (with the inventory of confiscated goods, the appraisal of its value, the auction statement, and the tabulation of the rewards' distribution). I interpret the 1783 *cédula* as part of Gálvez's empire-wide strategy to expand metropolitan control over colonial affairs.



already sluggish flow of *comiso* remittances to the Indies Secretariat, and in a sense Gálvez was shooting his own office funding project in the foot.

Other heads of government in the Indies simply complained that their dependants were incapable of performing the *comiso* operations. When José Basco y Vargas, the governor of the Philippines in the 1778-1787 period, received the May 1779 order, he explained to Gálvez that the personnel he had found in the customs house of Manila was not sufficiently trained to handle such operations. The law established that *comisos* had to be processed quickly and summarily, but the legal advisors of the Manila treasury officials had instead started long trials that in some cases dragged on for almost a year. Hindrances of this kind surrounded Basco y Vargas. He was convinced of the “low intelligence in royal treasury matters” of the customs officials and demanded that the customs offices be staffed with knowledgeable and honest functionaries from Mexico or Spain.<sup>101</sup> Unfortunately for Basco y Vargas, Gálvez’s answer was pretty plain: that he resolved “in an opportune and prudent manner the problem with the *comiso* delays.” This response by the colonial minister meant that he had confidence in Basco y Vargas, a reform-minded and efficient governor.<sup>102</sup> In fact, not only had Manila sent the first registered *comiso* remittance under the new rules, but the *legajo* related to the May 1779

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The *cédula* and its discontents of 1792 are cited in n. 2 of *Recopilación de Indias*, Law 4, title 17, book 8. In his own *Recopilación* (the *Recopilación sumaria*), Eusebio Bentura Beleña lists briefly the royal *cédula* of 8 Oct. 1783, but mentions only the main idea, that *comiso* appeals had to go to the Council with the exception of those involving smuggling performed by foreigners; see Beleña, *Recopilación sumaria de todos los autos acordados de la Real Audiencia y Sala del Crimen de esta Nueva España, y providencias de su superior gobierno* (hereafter cited as *Recopilación sumaria*) (Mexico City: Don Felipe Zuñiga y Ontiveros, 1787), 1: doc. 166.

<sup>101</sup> José Basco y Vargas (governor of Philippines) to Gálvez, n. 16, Manila, 1 May 1780 and Gálvez note on the margin of the letter dated 31 May 1781.

<sup>102</sup> Another possibility is that the minister of the Indies wanted to avoid further expense on personnel, but it seems unlikely since an avalanche of appointments and the re-staffing of many offices across the Empire characterized the Gálvez era.

order contains documentation of the full series of annual remittances from the Philippines in the 1779-1783 period. From the rest of the Spanish Empire, however, information on remittances is either negligible or entirely absent.<sup>103</sup> Thus, the available numbers are not a good indicator of how much in the way of financial resources the Indies Secretariat gained from the 1779 order. Nonetheless, data from scattered *comisos* are still useful to gloss very briefly a couple of characteristics of the confiscation of illicitly traded merchandise during the Gálvez era.

The vast range of seized merchandise could even comprise wax, bags of sugar, and coconuts. The most frequently seized goods in Gálvez's times, however, were a diversity of textiles and clothing, wine, money and other precious metals, hides, *and* slaves, who were treated by *comiso* laws as ordinary merchandise.<sup>104</sup> Of the items on this list, smuggled gold and silver caused the most anxiety to the Crown, as can be attested in the provision that a *denunciante* of smuggled precious metals had to receive a higher reward than a person who informed on the illicit commerce of other products.<sup>105</sup> *Pesos*

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<sup>103</sup> The Manila remittances for the 1779-1783 period amounted to 1,332 pesos; see Royal officials of Manila to Gálvez, n. 18, Manila, 12 May 1781 (514 pesos for one-third of *comisos* in the 1779-1780 period); José Basco y Vargas to Gálvez, Manila, n. 520, 10 Jun. 1782 (477 pesos for 1781); Juan Antonio del Corral and Juan Bautista Revilla (royal officials of Manila) to Gálvez, n. 5, Manila, 20 Jun. 1783 (168 pesos, for 1782); Del Corral and Revilla to Gálvez, n. 12, Manila, 6 May 1784 (174 pesos for 1783). In another *legajo* I found that New Spain sent to Spain from *comisos* executed between 1 January 1780 and 14 June 1784, 5,918 pesos; abstract of Audiencia Gobernadora to Gálvez, N. 137, Mexico City, 23 Feb. 1787, AGI, Ultramar, leg. 836.

<sup>104</sup> See detailed reports of *comisos* from Manila, Montevideo, or Santo Domingo in AGI, Indiferente, leg. 1834. The laws of the Indies established that unlicensed or unregistered slaves taken to the Indies from Green Cape, Guinea Rivers, Sao Tomé, and other coasts of Africa would receive the same treatment as ordinary merchandise; *Recopilación de Indias*, law 2, title 17, book 8.

<sup>105</sup> Entry on "*comisos de la segunda clase (plata y oro)*" in Francisco Machado, *Reglamento o pauta, y demostraciones formadas por el Contador General de las Indias, y aprobadas por el Rey a Consulta del Real y Supremo Consejo de ellas de 27 de mayo de 1784, para el modo de distribuir los comisos de tierra, los de mar y los mixtos de ambas clases, que se hicieren en aquellos dominios, y declarase o aprobase el mismo Supremo Tribunal*, Madrid, 29 Jul. 1785 (hereafter cited as "Distribution guidelines for *comisos* 1785") available in Beleña, *Recopilación sumaria*, 2:100-102; Fonseca and Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda*, 4:191-192; and *Real Ordenanza para el establecimiento é instrucción de intendentes de ejército y provincia en el reino de la Nueva-España*, Madrid, 1786 (Facsimile of the first edition with

*fuertes* were the basic units of *comiso* remittances, but the fractions could arrive in a bewildering assortment of denominations such as *reales* (or *tomines*), *granos*, *maravedíes*, and sometimes *centavos*, *quintos*, and *cuartos*, making the reconstruction of data series quite nightmarish. The more regular (and better registered) remittances related to Gálvez's second royal order on *comisos*, however, do allow a very complete restoration of long-term series, as we shall see below.

### **Gálvez Goes Almost Too Far: Second Royal Order on *Comisos***

It is hard to tell if the May 1779 royal order succeeded in providing the extra cash to fund José de Gálvez's enlargement of his office, since the times of public policy evaluations loomed centuries away. Yet, the measure had been innovative in the sense that it had earmarked for special bureaucratic purposes income that for years had simply been part of the Crown's general revenue. Six years after the first order Gálvez decided to take matters even farther. In a daring move, the Andalusian requested of the King one quarter of the value of all colonial *comisos* for himself in his role of superintendant-general of the royal treasury of the Indies. Charles III acceded to Gálvez's ambitious request, so the Indies secretariat released a second royal circular order related to forfeited merchandise on 25 November 1785 (please consult Appendix B for a list of royal orders on *comisos* linked to Gálvez).<sup>106</sup> The explanatory, almost self-exculpatory tone of the

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introduction by Ricardo Rees Jones; Mexico City: UNAM, 1984) (hereafter cited as *Ordenanza de intendentes 1786*), annex 9.

<sup>106</sup> Gálvez, royal circular order to the heads of government in the Indies, San Lorenzo, 25 Nov. 1785, reproduced and cited in Francisco de Paula Sanz (intendant of Buenos Aires) to royal treasury officials, Buenos Aires, 14 Mar. 1786, BRAH, Col. Mata Linares, 9/1767, 375-375v. The same royal order is also cited in Antonio Caballero y Góngora (Archbishop-Viceroy of Santa Fé) to *asesor general* of the Viceroyalty of New Granada, Cartagena de Indias, 3 Mar. 1786, copied in document no. 2 attached to Antonio Amar y Borbón (Viceroy of New Granada) to Miguel Cayetano Soler, no. 42, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 19 Nov. 1803, AGI, Ultramar, leg. 386.

order serves as testament to the fact that the Andalusian statesman realized that this new perk was an enormous privilege granted to an individual within the imperial system.

The opening of the November 1785 edict served to rationalize the minister's new prerogative. First, Gálvez established that he and the superintendant-general of Spain (the minister of the Treasury) were equals: "Since I started exercising this ministry in early 1776, the king named me Universal Superintendant of the Royal Treasury of the Indies with the same prerogatives and enjoyments of the office of the General Superintendancy of Spain." Gálvez thought he should provide some references: "His Majesty has reiterated this appointment in several *consultas* of the Council [of the Indies?], and in the *Ordenanza de Intendentes*."<sup>107</sup> Always intent on demonstrating his personal honesty and goodness of heart, Gálvez remarked: "I never [before] admitted the salary of the Superintendancy because of the urgencies and expenses of the Crown." Then he said that notwithstanding that "the fourth part of *comisos* corresponds to me in order to provide for some of the great and excessive expenses that the Ministry causes me," he had deferred his request until now because other grave affairs mattered more,<sup>108</sup> and because the Council of the Indies had already requested a quarter of the *comisos* to finance its judicial expenditures (see below). In his edict Gálvez informed all the heads of government and

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<sup>107</sup> In the intendancy system (established in Cuba 1765, Caracas 1776, Río de la Plata 1778, Peru 1780, and New Spain 1786-87), the bureaucrats in charge of the jurisdictions' economic affairs were the *superintendentes* (who could be *superintendentes subdelegados* or *intendentes generales del ejército*) and their head was the *superintendente general*, José de Gálvez. The *Ordenanza de Intendentes* of New Spain (1786) explained on behalf of the monarch that: "*La Superintendencia que ha de ejercer el dicho Intendente General de Ejército se ha de entender como delegada de la General de mi Real Hacienda de Indias, que reside en mi Secretario de Estado y del Despacho Universal de ellas.*" *Ordenanza de intendentes* 1786, 6 (paragraph 4).

<sup>108</sup> Gálvez was implying that he spent part of his personal money in ministry affairs, which is not completely implausible. In the *Ordenanza de intendentes* it was also stipulated that the salaries of intendants in New Spain be enough to keep "the decency of their character" and to cover their office expenses; *ibid.*, 404 (paragraph 303). Unfortunately, I have not found evidence on this practice at the ministry-of- state-level that would apply to Gálvez.

treasury officers in the Indies that the Council was drafting the royal *cédula* and accompanying guidelines that should be observed in the future, in which the quarter that pertained to the *Superintendencia Universal* should always be respected.<sup>109</sup> The minister of the Indies finalized his circular order by requesting the immediate liquidation of the value of all land and sea *comisos* effectuated from the first day of 1777 to the last of 1785. The quarter had to be sent to him as soon as possible, put at his disposal, in any registered ship (*navío de registro*) travelling to Cádiz or to any other Spanish port. In subsequent letters on the matter Gálvez had to remind officials in the Indies that the monarch had conceded to him this amount with “*deducción de derechos*,” in other words, it was tax-exempt and did not have to pay the duties charged to money transfers between the colonies and the metropolis.<sup>110</sup>

The May 1779 order designating one-third of *comisos* for the Ministry of the Indies was not the only antecedent of the November 1785 ruling. For at least two years previously, José de Gálvez had been working on obtaining this specific grant by supporting a reform at the heart of the Council of the Indies closely linked with the writing of a new set of official instructions for the distribution of *comisos* by the *Contaduría General de Indias*. The reform concerned the *fondo de penas de cámara*, where all the fines and monetary penalties imposed by the Council of the Indies were collected and processed. The judge of this fund was responsible for executing or ordering the execution of the Council’s judicial sentences in both Spain and the colonies, with the help of *subdelegados*. When the accused did not pay their fines, the judge and his

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<sup>109</sup> Gálvez referred to the future royal *cédula* of 21 February 1786, addressed in the following paragraphs.

<sup>110</sup> Gálvez to *presidente interino de la Contratación de Cádiz*, El Pardo, 13 Feb. 1787, AGI, Ultramar, leg. 836.

delegates could authorize imprisonments, all kinds of confiscations and seizures (*embargos, trances, adjudicaciones de bienes*), and auctions of property.<sup>111</sup> Beginning in 1781, an old friend of Gálvez's and member of the Council of the Indies, Pedro Muñoz de la Torre, was the judge of *penas de cámara*.<sup>112</sup> Muñoz, Gálvez, and accountant-general of the Indies Francisco Machado (another collaborator of Gálvez from before the *visita general*) must have worked together to produce the reform of the *fondo* in 1786, a restructuring that was intimately related to *comisos* policies in the Spanish Empire, particularly to the November 1785 royal order.

The rationale for changing the way the *fondo* operated was again the need for more resources for its office. In the first half of the 1780s, the office of Muñoz de la Torre saw a growing accumulation of cases and its collection of fines was always in arrears. The Council presented the king with two *consultas* on the matter on 30 April 1783 and 27 May 1784, from which Charles III adopted a couple of resolutions to finance the *fondo*'s judicial expenditures, by order of 21 February 1786. The first measure included the reception by the *fondo* of two types of fines: one applied to traders (from Cádiz and other Spanish ports) who did not return to Spain from their commercial expeditions at the time agreed in their permits; the other fined masters and chief mates of merchant ships (*capitanes y maestres*) who transported unlicensed passengers to the Indies, or who did not turn in to judicial authorities the stowaways found in their vessels.

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<sup>111</sup> Rafael García Pérez, *El Consejo de Indias durante los reinados de Carlos III y Carlos IV* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1998), 179.

<sup>112</sup> On the close relationship between Muñoz and Gálvez, which went back to 1754, see chapter 4, n. 29 and 39. Muñoz de la Torre's appointment as judge of *penas de cámara* appeared in a royal *cédula* of 13 Sept. 1781, reproduced in Antonio Xavier Pérez y López, *Teatro de la legislación universal de España é Indias, por orden cronológico de sus cuerpos, y decisiones no recopiladas; y alfabético de sus títulos y principales materias* (Madrid: Imprenta de Don Antonio Espinoza, 1797), 27: 389-391.

The second resolution approved by the monarch was related to *comisos* and basically mirrored the 1785 grant for Gálvez as superintendant-general of the Indies: “The fourth part of all land, sea, and mixed *comisos* executed by my *resguardos* and judges in the Indies must be applied to the *penas de cámara* fund and judicial expenses of the Council.”<sup>113</sup> The royal *cédula* of February 1786, anticipated in Gálvez’s circular order of November 1785, included an important attachment: the official *reglamento* or guidelines on the new distribution of *comisos*. The *reglamento* had been initially approved by the king in the above-mentioned *consulta* of May 1784, and was authored by accountant-general Francisco Machado, who signed it on 29 July 1785.<sup>114</sup>

Machado’s guidelines of July 1785 are the most ambitious of their kind that I found.<sup>115</sup> The document painstakingly classified *comisos* into seven different categories (*clases*) that varied according to where the *comiso* was seized (land, sea, or mixed), what merchandise had been captured (regular merchandise, prohibited goods, precious metals), and who had informed on or actually confiscated the smuggled goods (was there an informant? was the capture made by a private individual or by a royal official?). Each category merited an exemplification (*demonstración*) of how to distribute a hypothetical *comiso* valued in 20,000 *pesos fuertes*. The guidelines also showed how to subtract a

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<sup>113</sup> Charles III, royal *cédula*, El Pardo, 21 Feb. 1786, in Fonseca and Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda*, 4: 202-204; also found in *Ordenanza de intendentes 1786*, annex 9.

<sup>114</sup> Machado, “Distribution guidelines for *comisos* 1785.”

<sup>115</sup> Two older *reglamentos* were *Demonstración práctica del método y reglas observadas por los oficiales reales de la ciudad y puerto de Cartagena de las Indias, demás parajes de la costa y Tierra firme, en observancia de la Recopilación de aquellos reinos y demás posteriores órdenes reales para la distribución del valor de los efectos de mercaderías, oro y plata labrada, chafalima y amonedada que como respectivo al ilícito comercio es incurso en la pena de comiso, cuya práctica conforme a la ley 9ª título 17 libro 8º de dicha nueva Recopilación, debe igualmente ser observada en los demás puertos de América*, Madrid, 11 Jul. 1758, in Fonseca and Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda*, 4:160-162, and Contaduría General de Indias, “Distribution guidelines for *comisos* 1762.” See also Appendix B for the list of *comiso* guidelines.

quarter of the value of the comisos that corresponded to the *penas de cámara* fund of the Council of the Indies, and the quarter that belonged to the *Superintendente General* (José de Gálvez). Here is an example of how royal functionaries in the Indies had to distribute rewards from a “first-class” comiso (that is, one of regular merchandise, executed on land, with or without informant) (see Table 5.2 and accompanying Graph 5.2):

<b>Table 5.2</b> <b>Division of the value of <i>comisos</i> according to the guidelines of 1785, “first-class” category<sup>116</sup></b>			
	pesos	reales	maravedíes
Total value of comiso seized	20,000	0	0
Subtraction of royal duties (-21 per cent):	4,200	0	0
Revised total	15,800	0	0
Administrative expenditures (“ <i>gastos, costas y alimentos de los reos, si fueren aprehendidos y no tuvieran bienes, pues teniéndolos deben pagarse de ellos</i> ”)	100	0	0
Fines and other monetary penalties (if applicable)	0	0	0
	15,700	0	0
Fines and other monetary penalties (if applicable)	0	0	0
From the 15,700 pesos, one sixth belonged to the judge that declared the comiso (if applicable)	2,616	5	4
	13,083	2	8
From this quantity, four parts had to be formed:			
(A) one belonged to the informant or, if there was no informant, to the <i>aprehensores</i> (if any)	a)3,270	6	8
(B)one was for the Council of the Indies (for the <i>fondo de penas de cámara</i> )	b)3,270	6	8
(C) one for the <i>Superintendente General</i>	c)3,270	6	8
(D) one became the comisos <i>ramo</i> of the royal treasury	d)3270	6	8

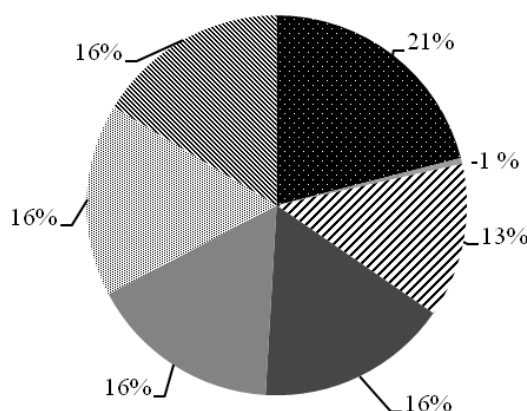
<sup>116</sup> Machado, “Distribution guidelines for *comisos* 1785.” I am using the version of the *Demostración in Ordenanza de intendentes 1786*, annex 9.



**Graph 5.2*****Comiso distribution approved in 1786***

Total value of "first class" comiso seized: 20,000 pesos

- 21% of royal taxes (15% almojarifazgo, 6% alcabalas): 4,200 pesos
- less than 1% of administrative expenditures: 100 pesos
- ✂ 13% the judge's share: 2,616 pesos 5 rs 4 mrvs
- 16% for the denunciador (if available): 3,270 pesos 6 rs 8 mrv
- 16% for the Council of the Indies: 3,270 pesos 6 rs 8 mrv
- ⌘ 16% for the superintendant-general of the Indies: 3,270 pesos 6 rs 8 mrv
- ⌘ 16% the royal treasury's share: 3,270 pesos 6 rs 8 mrv



From every 20,000 pesos worth of comisos, as superintendant-general of the Indies, Gálvez would receive 3,270 pesos, or 16 per cent. In the case of a “third class” *comiso* (that is, contraband of tobacco and other products only traded by the state), however, the fourth part for the superintendant-general reached 4,145 pesos, or 21 per cent. The Andalusian minister probably knew about these estimates done in Machado’s office, and already expected to receive the comisos grant even before the initial approval of the guidelines in the *consulta* of May 1784. Nevertheless, Gálvez received permission to ask his quarter share in November 1785, and then had to wait until February 1786 for the royal *cédula* regarding the *fondo de penas de cámara* to set forth the correct guidelines of how to extract the share that belonged to him. Yet, this procedural delay did

not really affect Gálvez, since he was entitled to receive this income from the first day of 1777 to the day of his last breath.

Let us now analyze the implementation of the November 1785 circular. Gálvez's *oficiales* at the Indies Secretariat understood well the nature of this new regulation. Originally, they filed it in the same *legajo* as the first royal order on comisos of May 1779, but, revealingly, they transferred it to another bundle and left the following note regarding the second ruling: “*su original se halla colocado en el legajo de ministros del Consejo, en su fecha, por ser cosa peculiar de S[u]E[xcelencia][Gálvez].*”<sup>117</sup> Indeed, Gálvez's innovations on comiso policies had transitioned from creating an income for his office to one *peculiar* to his private purse. The first of these special remittances sent from the Indies came from the Caracas intendency (headed by the Andalusian minister's protégé Francisco de Saavedra) in August 1786. The 11,800 pesos deposited in Gálvez's account at the *Cinco Gremios Mayores* corresponded to a quarter of the *comisos* seized between 1778 and 1785.<sup>118</sup> This first remittance from Venezuela had been fast and uncomplicated, and some other parts of the Empire followed suit,<sup>119</sup> but it did not take

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<sup>117</sup> Cover of “Circular a los jefes de ambas Américas, para que remitan a España la cuarta parte de los Comisos de mar y tierra que se hayan determinado y entrado en cajas reales desde 1 de enero de 1777 hasta fin del presente, pertenecientes a S.E. como Superintendente de aquella Real Hacienda,” San Lorenzo, 25 Nov. 1785, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 1834.

<sup>118</sup> For the quantity corresponding to 1777, Gálvez would have to await Saavedra's reexamination of the accounts, because before 1778 the recently established intendency did not keep formal *comiso* records; Gálvez to Intendant of Caracas, Madrid, 9 Aug. 1786. José Pérez Roldán and Francisco Antonio Pérez of the *Diputación y Dirección de los Cinco Gremios Mayores de Madrid* confirmed the deposit of the equivalent of 11,800 pesos in *maravedíes de vellón* in Gálvez's personal account in September; Pérez Roldán and Pérez to Gálvez, Madrid, 7 Sep. 1786, AGI, Ultramar, leg. 836. Practically all of the primary documents I cite next in this chapter come from the same *legajo*, unless otherwise stated.

<sup>119</sup> In January 1787, Gálvez acknowledged the receipt of 1,701 pesos coming from comisos executed in Guayana (also dispatched by Saavedra); Gálvez to Intendant of Caracas, El Pardo, 7 Jan 1787. In this case, however, the minister faced some problems. Gálvez realized that the *Cinco Gremios* had deposited in his account an amount that had been charged with duties. Later, he requested the deposit of the sum in full, that is, free of duties; see Pérez Roldán and Pérez (*Cinco Gremios*) to Gálvez, Madrid, 1 Feb. 1787 and Gálvez to *Presidente de la Contratación of Cádiz*, El Pardo, 13 Feb. 1786. Guatemala also sent its remittances

long for conflicts to surface between the execution of the second *comiso* royal order and the previous order of 1779.

In June 1786, the intendant of Havana explained how he had interpreted the new request for the remittance of *comiso* proceeds. From a total of 247,197 pesos of *comiso* funds acquired in Cuba from 1 January 1777 to the end of 1785, he had calculated that 82,398 corresponded to one-third and 61,799 to the quarter share. Juan Ignacio de Urriza reminded Gálvez that, attending to the May 1779 order, he had already sent 10,202 pesos to the Ministry of the Indies as a remittance of one-third of the seizures executed between January 1779 and the end of 1782. In addition he had returned 1,683 pesos to those owners who had appealed *comiso* penalties. Urriza then decided to subtract these amounts to the calculated quarter share (61,799) and the remainder he got was 40,913 pesos; this sum, he determined, was the share that belonged to the superintendant-general of the Indies.<sup>120</sup> Gálvez did not reject this confused set of accounts coming from Havana, but simply acknowledged it. In the same letter, Urriza promised to send in four separate, future installments the total amount in order to minimize shipping risks. Unfortunately for the Andalusian minister, the treasury of the Cuban intendency did not send the first 12,000 pesos until March 1787. To justify this delay, the accountant of the Havana

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relatively quickly: a total *comiso* value of 5,444 pesos deposited in Gálvez's account on 30 Oct. 1786 and 1 Apr. 1787, according to a note dated 23 Apr. 1787 in Abstract of letter no. 701, President of Guatemala to Gálvez, Guatemala, 2 Jan. 1787.

<sup>120</sup> Abstract dated on 29 Sep. 86, letter no. 1818, intendant of Havana to Gálvez, Havana, 21 Jun. 1786. The numbers Urriza got for the one third and the quarter share (82,398 and 61,799 respectively) are the result of a simple division in three and then in four of the total 247,197. If one deducts 10,202 and 1,683 from Urriza's calculated quarter share (61,799) the result is 49,914 pesos, but the amount the intendant presented to Gálvez was 40,913 pesos or 9,001 pesos less. Which method or guidelines was Urriza following? The letter brief did not specify, but from the analysis we can be certain he was not using the detailed *reglamentos* issued by the *Contaduría General de Indias*. Unfortunately, the actual letter no. 1818 and its attached *liquidación* (account balance) written by the *Contaduría Principal del Ejército* in Havana were not available in the *legajo*.

intendancy argued a shortage of funds and complained that only then, when Cuba had received *situado* funds from New Spain, was he able to send one quarter of the quarter due to Gálvez. The accountant promised to send the next remittance when “the urgencies of the *Tesorería* and the [*situado*] remittances from Mexico allow it.”<sup>121</sup> On 2 June 1787, fifteen days before his sudden death, Gálvez learned that the 12,000 pesos coming from Cuba had reached Cádiz, and he instructed his subordinates to send orders to the president of the *Contratación* and the directors of the *Cinco Gremios Mayores* to make sure the funds reached his personal account.<sup>122</sup> Gálvez died on 17 June knowing two things about *comisos*: that only a handful of remittances due had yet been processed by his bankers, and that colonial governments were freely interpreting the 1785 circular.

Like Havana, New Spain also reached its own understanding of the second ruling on *comisos* in Gálvez’s favor. In a letter dated in February 1787, the governing *Audiencia* revealed that the treasury officials of Veracruz had reminded the *oidores* about the May 1779 royal order, and of the 5,918 pesos they had sent to Spain as the one-third of the value of *comisos* executed from the beginning of 1780 to mid-1786. The treasurers from the port city asked if they should deduct the money already sent for the one-third from the total quarter share that the new order mandated, under the supposition that *the second order derogated the first*, even though the 1785 circular did not even mention the one from 1779. The *fiscal de real hacienda*, Ramón Posada, agreed with the reasoning of the officials from Veracruz; hence, the *Audiencia* of New Spain approved the remission of

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<sup>121</sup> Gálvez to intendant of Havana, San Ildefonso, 7 Oct. 1787 and Alfonso María de Cárdenas (*contador principal del ejército*) to Gálvez, No. 1991, Havana, 23 Mar. 1787. I did not find on the record if Havana ever sent the remaining 28,913 pesos that corresponded to the quarter share of *comisos* executed between 1777 and 1785.

<sup>122</sup> Note handwritten by Gálvez dated 2 Jun. 1787 next to notes by Ministry of the Indies officials (Sr. Pisón to Sr. Mayor, 29 May 1787); Gálvez to Diputados of the *Cinco Gremios*, Aranjuez, 3 Jun. 1787.

the discounted quarter share of the *comisos* to Gálvez.<sup>123</sup> Effectively, even though the minister of the Indies had wasted quite a lot of ink justifying his new *comiso* income in November 1785, he never hinted at what would become of the ruling of 1779. Gálvez's subordinates at the Indies Secretariat recommended for approval New Spain's interpretation, similar to that of Havana, but more formal. Moreover, they thought it was necessary to communicate to the *superintendente subdelegado* in Mexico that any previous order contradicting the guidelines of July 1785 should be understood as void.<sup>124</sup> Unfortunately, the available evidence does not reveal Gálvez's opinion or the resolution of the matter. It is worth noting, however, that the idea that the 1785 circular derogated its 1779 counterpart remained in force when other doubts emerged after the death of the powerful Andalusian minister.

### **Controversies between the Two *Comiso* Royal Orders after Gálvez's Death**

As early as 16 July 1787, and for the next seventeen years, Gálvez's heirs (first his widow, and then his daughter and son-in-law) maintained a regular correspondence related to *comisos* with different secretaries of state: Antonio Valdés (Indies, Finances, War, and Commerce, 1787-1792), Pedro de Lerena (Treasury, 1785-1791), Diego Gardoqui (Treasury, 1791-1796), and Miguel Cayetano Soler (Treasury, 1798-1808). In her first letter to Valdés, written almost a month after Gálvez's death, the dowager Marquesa de Sonora informed the minister that the ship "El Brillante" from Callao had

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<sup>123</sup> Following the distribution principles of the guidelines of July 1785, the Council's *penas de cámara* fund would receive the complete quarter share, which from 1 January 1777 to date (February 1787?) amounted to 22,733 pesos. The remittance to Gálvez would be of 16,814 pesos after the subtraction of 5,918 pesos already sent to Spain by the royal order of May 1779.

<sup>124</sup> Abstract of letter n. 137 from Audiencia Gobernadora to Gálvez, Mexico City, 23 Feb. 1787, includes note by one of the ministry's *mesas* (offices of Gálvez's subalterns) dated on 31 May 1781.

arrived in Cádiz with 16,099 pesos corresponding to the quarters share of *comisos* seized in Peru belonging to her late husband's estate. She requested the "*conocimiento*" (official paperwork—i.e., promissory notes, receipts) of the said amount. Valdés complied with her request, writing that he would ask the president of the *Contratación* in Cádiz to put the funds at her disposal.<sup>125</sup> What is surprising is that the Marquesa knew with precision what *comiso* remittances had arrived in Cádiz, even citing the names of the vessel in which they came. In another example from late August 1787, Valdés let the Marquesa know that the *superintendente* from Buenos Aires had sent 4,548 pesos from certain *comiso* cases; she responded, as was usual, citing Valdés letter, but she added that the money had come on the ship "La Diligencia," a fact that the minister had never mentioned.<sup>126</sup> Concepción Valenzuela must have had a key informant, who might well have been one of Gálvez's men stationed in Cádiz, most probably, his brother Antonio.

The widowed Marquesa was a resolute woman and in September 1787 decided to apply pressure in the matter of *comisos* by writing a *representación* to King Charles III. In the document she reminded the monarch of Gálvez's position as superintendant-general of the royal treasury of the Indies with the same "*facultades, prerrogativas y goces*" as the superintendant-general of Spain. One of these prerogatives was the

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<sup>125</sup> In 1780, one definition of the word "*conocimiento*" was akin to receipt or promissory note: "*papel firmado en que uno confiesa haber recibido de otro alguna cosa, y se obliga á pagarla ó volverla,*" Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua castellana compuesto por la Real Academia Española, reducido a un tomo para su más fácil uso* (Madrid: Joaquín Ibarra, 1780), s.v. "*conocimiento*." In the letter mentioned above, the Marquesa also asked for all the confidential and *reservada* correspondence addressed to the late Marqués de Sonora that would continue arriving until all the "Indies Dominions" learned about his demise. Valdés acquiesced to her request, but he pointed out clearly that his ministry would forward to her all the confidential letters *that were not related* to the "royal service;" Marquesa de Sonora to Valdés, Madrid, 16 Jul. 1787, and Valdés to Marquesa de Sonora, Palacio, 17 Jul. 1787. For Valdés's notification to the president of the *Contratación* and the answer he got from Cádiz: Valdés to Ramón Rivera (presidente interino de la *Contratación*), Madrid, 17 Jul. 1787 and Rivera to Valdés, Cádiz, 24 Jul. 1787.

<sup>126</sup> Valdés to Marquesa de Sonora, San Ildefonso, 27 Aug. 1787, and Marquesa de Sonora to Valdés, Madrid, 30 Aug. 1787.

“enjoyment of the share that corresponded to him of all the land and sea comisos executed... in the Indies.” Her desire, the Marquesa wrote, was to expedite as much as possible the execution of her husband’s last will, so she petitioned the Crown to take two measures to further the process. First, she requested, the fast review and approval (*purificación*) by the *Contaduría General de Indias* of all the *comiso* account balances remitted (or about to be dispatched) from the Americas under the royal order of November 1785; her second request was that the treasury officers in the Indies should calculate and send without delay the balances corresponding to the period between the beginning of 1777 and 17 June 1787, the date of her husband’s death.<sup>127</sup> The Marquesa de Sonora’s *súplica* was exceptionally successful. On 12 November, Valdés dispatched to the *Contaduría General* the *comiso* accounts that had reached his ministry and still needed Machado’s *purificación* (these were accounts from New Spain, Cuba, Caracas, Puerto Rico, and Guatemala). More importantly, on 20 November 1787 Valdés promulgated a new royal circular prompting all the colonial governments to send their accounts and remittances of the one-fourth share of the *comisos* accumulated up to the day of José de Gálvez’s death. The circular repeated the same arguments, and in some passages the same wording, that Concepción Valenzuela had used in her *representación* to the monarch.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Marquesa de Sonora, petition to King Charles III, Pozuelo de Arabaca, 30 Sep. 1787. Concepción Valenzuela sent her *representación* via the office of Antonio Valdés and thanked in advance the minister of Indies and finance with the following words: “No dudo deber a V.E. esta nueva fineza, y la de que no tenga ociosa mi verdadera voluntad de complacerle.” On the margins of the widow’s letter, Valdés wrote to his subordinates with his tiny handwriting: “Give the orders;” Marquesa de Sonora to Valdés, Pozuelo de Arabaca, 2 Oct. 1787.

<sup>128</sup> Valdés to Machado, San Lorenzo, 12 Nov. 1787 and Valdés, royal circular order to all governments in the Indies, San Lorenzo, 20 Nov. 1787.

Parallel to the Marquesa's efforts to obtain for herself and her daughter the *comiso* remittances as quickly as possible, new contradictions between the 1779 and the 1785 royal orders were being investigated inside the Council of the Indies and at the Indies Secretariat itself. The investigation resulted from the forfeiture of unregistered Spanish silk in the port of Omoa (*Audiencia* of Guatemala), and the subsequent report and letter sent to the Council by the then *alcabala* administrator of Guatemala, Bernardo de Madrid, in October 1784. In terms of imperial administrative efficiency this case was problematic in two senses. First, because in 1787 the Council was still solving a problem with the execution of the now obsolete 1779 royal order; and second, Spanish imperial authorities came to realize how little they knew about Gálvez's management of both royal circulars. Let us examine these issues carefully.

Unlike the 1785 order, clear instructions on how to retrieve the one-third of *comisos* for the Ministry of the Indies never accompanied its 1779 counterpart. Therefore, the execution of the 1779 circular had depended on the interpretation of the guidelines written in 1762 (and enforced in by royal *cédula* in 1764; see Table 1, *supra* and refer to Appendix B for a list of this type of guidelines). The Council's analysis of the Omoa case revealed irregularities in the distribution of the value of the *comiso* in relation to royal duties charged, the amount distributed to the judge (Bernardo de Madrid himself), and the sum remitted as the one-third belonging to the Ministry of the Indies. The following table and graph demonstrates Madrid's *comiso* calculations (see Table 5.3 and accompanying Graph 5.3):

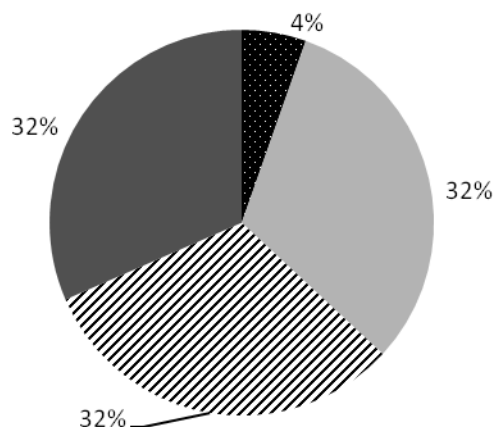


**Table 5.3**  
**Division of the value of a *comiso* executed in Omoa ca 1784<sup>129</sup>**

	pesos	cuartillos reales*
Total value of comiso seized	4377	5
Total value after subtraction of royal duties ( <i>almojarifazgo</i> of 1.5 per cent charged according to the 1778 <i>Libre Comercio</i> rules, and four per cent of <i>alcabala antigua y moderna</i> ) and administrative expenditures (49 pesos, 4 reales)	4142	3
From this quantity, three parts had been formed:		
(A) one belonged to the judge	a) 1,376	1 and cuarto*
(B) one for the royal treasury	b) 1,376	1 and cuarto*
(C) one for the <i>Ministry of the Indies</i>	c) 1,376	1 and cuarto*
* <i>cuartillos</i> de real (4 per real).		

**Graph 5.3**  
**Actual distribution of a *comiso* in Omoa, ca. 1784**

- 4% of royal taxes: 235 pesos 2 cuartillos
- 32% the judge's share: 1,376 pesos 1r 1 cuarto
- ⚡ 32% the ministry of the Indies' share: 1,376 pesos 1r 1 cuarto



<sup>129</sup> The brigantine “San Juan Bautista” coming from Cádiz had transported the unregistered textiles, according to Valdés to *superintendente subdelegado* of the royal treasury in Guatemala, draft, El Pardo, 21 Jan. 1788.

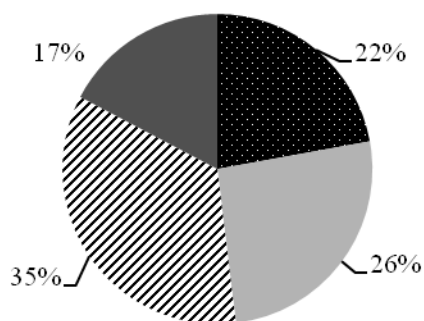
The first objection by the Council was that the Guatemala official had not charged the customary 21 per cent of royal duties (*almojarifazgo* tax of fifteen per cent, and six per cent in *alcabalas*).<sup>130</sup> The other problem related to the distribution of the three remaining shares, of which the Ministry of the Indies had received exactly the same proportion of the forfeiture's value as the local judge and the royal treasury. The Council argued that, after calculating the one-third share for the judge, the remaining two thirds belonged to the Crown. From this new total, thirds had to be calculated again, and one of them was the correct amount, it was agreed, that had to be remitted to the Ministry of the Indies according to the royal circular order of 1779. The distribution outlined by the Council in 1788 is the only document I found explaining how to extract the one-third mandated by Gálvez's first ruling on *comisos* (see Table 5.4 and accompanying Graph 5.4):

<b>Table 5.4</b> <b>Correct division of the value of a <i>comiso</i> executed in Omoa ca 1784</b>			
	pesos	reales	maravedíes
Total value of <i>comiso</i> seized	4377		
Total value after subtraction of royal duties (21 per cent, or 919 pesos, 2 reales, 15 maravedíes) and administrative costs (49 pesos, 4 reales)	3408	6	27
From this amount, three parts had to be formed: (A)one belonged to the judge (B)two for the royal treasury	(A)1,136 (B)2,272	2 4	9 18
From the total of the two thirds for the royal treasury, a third had to be sent to Ministry of the Indies by royal order of 6 May 1779	757	4	6

<sup>130</sup> Bernardo Madrid had levied on the *comiso* only 6 per cent for royal taxes.

**Graph 5.4**  
**Ideal distribution of the Omoa *comiso***  
**according to the Council of the Indies, 1788**

- 22% of royal taxes and administrative expenditures: 968 pesos 6 rs 15 mrv
- 26% the judge's share: 1,136 pesos 2r 9 mrv
- ▨ 35% the royal treasury's share: 1,514 pesos
- 17% the Ministry of the Indies' share: 757 pesos 4 rs 6 mrv



In Bernardo Madrid's original distribution, the Indies Secretariat had earned around 31 per cent of the total value of the *comiso*. After the Council's corrections in 1788, however, the amount corresponding to Gálvez's office represented seventeen per cent, roughly the same percentage that the royal order of October 1785 and its guidelines had granted to the Andalusian (sixteen per cent). Minister Antonio Valdés asked the Guatemalan *alcabala* administrator to return to the royal treasury the extra 239 pesos he had assigned to himself as judge of the silk confiscation case.<sup>131</sup> The Council's examination of the Omoa *comiso*, led by accountant-general Francisco Machado, also suggested that the extraordinary amount of 618 pesos that had been mistakenly assigned to the Ministry of the Indies had to be returned to the Crown. The *Contaduría General de*

<sup>131</sup> Valdés to *superintendente subdelegado* of the royal treasury in Guatemala, draft, El Pardo, 21 Jan. 1788.

*Indias* was confident and “supposed” that in Cádiz there existed “a fund for the one-third of comisos from the Indies” from which the amount could be withdrawn.<sup>132</sup>

A long note added to the abstract of the Council’s report written by an anonymous Indies Secretariat official stated that, contrary to Machado’s belief, there was no fund formally established in Cádiz for the third share of comisos assigned to the colonial office because Gálvez had insisted that all the remittances be deposited in his account at the *Cinco Gremios Mayores de Madrid* “without distinction from the quarter share” later mandated by the 1785 circular. The Ministry’s *oficial* added that the second ruling omitted to explain if the 1779 order had been derogated or continued in force, but recalled the resolution reached in 1787 by the *Audiencia Gobernadora* in New Spain which had interpreted the November 1785 edict as having derogated the first. The author of the note saw the February 1786 restatement of the July 1785 *comiso* distribution guidelines as an antidote against future confusions which would reveal the amounts owed to Gálvez’s estate and whether he had received “*de más o de menos*.” The official recognized, however, that the majority of the treasuries in the Empire had not initiated the remission of their *comiso* quarter shares on behalf of the Gálvez’s heirs, and those who had done it, had sent un-detailed accounts in which they did not explain the distribution method they had employed. It was, therefore, hard to tell if they were following New Spain’s suggestion of subtracting the original one-third from the total calculated one-fourth, or if they had simply sent the complete value of the quarter share. The conclusion of the was pessimistic: the *comiso* accounts could not be settled satisfactorily, since it was impossible to know if the royal treasury or the will testamentary provisions of the

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<sup>132</sup> Abstract of report by the Council of the Indies, Madrid, 11 Oct. 1787 and adjacent note dated 20 Dec. 1787.

Marqués de Sonora had been harmed because the original royal orders had not asked for detailed reports of *comiso* distribution before the guidelines of July 1785 were approved. The only thing left to be done was to ask the *Cinco Gremios* for the deposit receipts of the one-third and one-fourth shares of *comisos*, which could then be examined along with the future remittances.<sup>133</sup>

Valdés approved the last suggestion. In January 1788, with the sole intention of guaranteeing that no loss had been incurred by the royal treasury or Gálvez's testamentary provisions, he ordered the *Cinco Gremios* to submit to the Ministry of the Indies, Finances, War, and Commerce a note or receipt for each individual deposit of both the one-third of the value of the *comisos* ordered in May 1779, and the one-fourth mandated November 1785. The notes were to include the place of origin of each remittance. Regarding the funds corresponding to the one-third of *comisos*, Valdés specifically requested the *Gremios* to state whether the amounts had been credited to the personal account of the Marqués de Sonora, or to one of the royal treasury accounts they managed.<sup>134</sup> As we may observe, confusion and lack of transparency in the management of both types of *comiso* remittances had emerged when after Gálvez's death his successor started to review the accounts. No doubt, Antonio Valdés wanted to clarify the matter thoroughly.

The response of the *Cinco Gremios*, however, was not encouraging. They had reviewed the orders related to *comisos* sent to them by Gálvez, as well as the accounting

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<sup>133</sup> Abstract of report by the Council of the Indies, Madrid, 11 Oct. 1787 and adjacent note dated 20 Dec. 1787.

<sup>134</sup> The *Cinco Gremios* also managed accounts from the royal treasury. The trade house/bank was responsible to report on it, annually; see Valdés to *Diputados de los Cinco Gremios Mayores de Madrid*, draft, El Pardo, 23 Jan. 1788.

drafts their offices in Cádiz and Madrid had presented to the late minister of the Indies. Based upon this review, it was impossible to render a separate accounting for the amounts deposited as covering either the one-third or the one-fourth of *comisos*. Usually, Gálvez alerted them about incoming amounts to be deposited on his behalf stating that they were about to receive sums for the “one-third share,” or the “quarter share,” and sometimes he only wrote about incoming money from the “share of *comisos*” that corresponded to him. They had followed his instructions and had simply labeled their deposits as “*comisos*,” without distinction as to type or origin. If Valdés wanted, the *Gremios* could give him a general report on these credits, including those executed in Cádiz.<sup>135</sup> Valdés was determined to resolve the issue, however, and requested the information the *Gremios* said they could provide. The representatives of the Madrid banking institution replied that they would start to compile the report as soon as their directors in Cádiz sent their respective records.<sup>136</sup> This response was the last document signed by *Cinco Gremios* I found in the *legajo*; unfortunately, their promised report was either never sent, or had disappeared.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Pérez Roldán and Pérez (*Cinco Gremios*) to Valdés, Madrid, 28 Jan. 1788. The Deputies and Directors of the *Cinco Gremios* mentioned only one exception to the trend: on 12 June 1787, Gálvez had requested the deposit in the royal treasury accounts (that is, not in his personal account) of an amount corresponding to one-fourth of the value of eleven *comisos* executed in New Spain between the receipt of the November 1785 royal order and December 1786. Indeed, in the order to the *Cinco Gremios* and in the parallel instruction to the interim president of the *Contratación* in Cádiz, Gálvez mentioned that the 925 pesos had been sent *at his disposal*, that they belonged to the fourth share “*applied to the treasury*,” and he then asked for its deposit in the “*ramo de las de Real Hacienda que están a mi disposición [sic.]*” or in the royal treasury accounts that he managed. Why did Gálvez make this choice? The surviving evidence does not tell us. If it was a mistake, it was destined to remain so because he died a few days later. See, Gálvez to *Diputados de los Cinco Gremios Mayores de Madrid*, and Gálvez to President of the *Contratación*, drafts, Aranjuez, 12 June 1787; Pérez Roldán and Pérez (*Cinco Gremios*) to Gálvez, Madrid, 16 June 1787; and Pérez Roldán and Pérez (*Cinco Gremios*) to Valdés, Madrid, 13 July 1787.

<sup>136</sup> Valdés to the *Diputados de los Cinco Gremios Mayores de Madrid*, draft, El Pardo, 4 Feb. 1788.

<sup>137</sup> In a letter to Machado, Valdés wrote that the *Gremios* did produce the report on 13 March 1788. The highlight of the *Gremios*’s account, according to Valdés, was that “diverse remittances of the one-third

Valdés's main worry, clearly, was that Gálvez had managed the 1779 order in a very discretionary way even though the funds in question were supposedly designated for the royal service. In a letter to accountant-general Machado written in August 1789, Valdés recalled his request to the *Gremios* of early 1788 and said clearly that the one-fourth share "corresponds to the Marqués [de Sonora]," and the one-third part "belongs to the royal treasury."<sup>138</sup> Yet, around the same time Valdés was requesting more information from the *Cinco Gremios*, the king had approved another path out of this maze. To communicate Charles III's decision, Valdés issued a new royal circular on *comisos* addressed to all the colonial governments on 12 February 1788. In it, he first recalled the 20 November 1787 order prompting them to send as soon as possible all the remittances covered in the 1785 ruling on the one-fourth part of the value of *comisos* on behalf of the late Marqués de Sonora. He recognized that doubts could emerge in the process of winding up these accounts, particularly in relation to the first order on *comisos* of 1779. His Majesty had decided, however, that all the one-third shares already sent were to be disposed of by Gálvez's last will. The method to be followed, therefore, was similar to what Havana had supposed, and New Spain had proposed more clearly: that royal treasury officials should calculate the total quarter shares of all *comisos* executed in the decade 1 January 1777 to 17 June 1787 as if the one-third part had never been remitted. From the resulting amount they should subtract the quantities sent in fulfillment of the 1779 order, and the remainder was to become the official fourth-part remittance. This

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share were found credited to the personal account of the Marqués de Sonora, and one remittance of the quarter share credited to the royal treasury" (cfr. n. 135, *supra*); Valdés to Machado, Palacio, 21 Aug. 1789.

<sup>138</sup> Valdés to Machado, Palacio, 21 Aug. 1789.

circular order concluded the process started by the Council of the Indies' *consulta* of October 1787 originating in the Omoa comisos of 1784.<sup>139</sup>

The monarch's decision of February 1788 was crucial in several ways. It basically left the royal order of 1779 without effect. Moreover, it showed that the Crown assumed it was impossible to separate the financial products of both the 1779 and 1785 orders: they were like scrambled eggs, inextricably mixed inside the late Andalusian minister's personal account. It also implied that even after his death, José de Gálvez was collecting extra revenue! While it is true that the one-third share of the *comisos* was not an absolute concession, the intricacy of the methods of calculation nonetheless, was too much for a colonial system that did not follow new rules by the letter and in which officials were likely to comply inexactly with what they were being asked. This is reflected in the reaction to the new circular by the different governments within the Empire. In Puerto Rico, for example, the governor and royal treasury officials answered pragmatically, indicating that the balances on the one-quarter share of *comisos* they had previously sent already took into account all the latest royal dispositions.<sup>140</sup> But more complex governmental units adhered to equally complex interpretations. The viceroy of New Spain replied in May 1788 explaining the long administrative process and the bureaucratic record-keeping initiated after the reception of the November 1785 order, and then the re-launching of it when the the *fiscal de real hacienda* and the advisor of the superintendancy of the royal treasury analyzed the second circular of November 1787.

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<sup>139</sup> Valdés, royal circular order to the heads of government in the Indies, draft, El Pardo, 12 Feb. 1788. In the front page of the circular it says explicitly that its origin was the Council's 11 Oct. 1787 *consulta*.

<sup>140</sup> In other words, they had proceeded as the 12 Feb. 1788 royal order mandated even before receiving it. Juan Sabán (intendant of Puerto Rico) to Valdés, Puerto Rico, 15 Apr. 1788 and copy of Manuel Jacinto de Acevedo and Fernando Casado (royal treasury officials) to intendant of Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, 15 Apr. 1788.



The process had now been stopped again until the *fiscal* reviewed the new 1788 edict and determined how to proceed to the correct execution of the three royal orders. In brief, New Spain would take time in sending the balance of the owed one-quarter share of the *comisos*.<sup>141</sup> Delays in processing the one-fourth share became the norm in the majority of the colonial territories, and at it took at least sixteen years for the Gálvez family to collect the last scraps of a decade of *comisos* (1777-1787).

But a question still remains. The 12 February 1788 order came about after a thorough investigation revealing that José de Gálvez had deposited money earmarked for the royal service in his personal account, along with that part of the *comisos* clearly labeled as a reward for his merits. The Crown eventually reached the conclusion that the money linked to the 1779 rule was lost, and simply ratified the inevitable reality: it had been deposited in Gálvez's account, it was his money now, so let it stay there. But was the monarch's determination of adding the one-third share of *comisos* to Gálvez's estate an extra benefit or actually a punishment for him and his descendants? A simplified arithmetical résumé reveals the following (see Table 5.5):

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<sup>141</sup> Viceroy Manuel de Flores to Valdés, no. 342, Mexico City, 27 May 1788. The viceroyalty of Río de la Plata had a similar response: Viceroy Marqués de Loreto suspended all the *comiso* proceedings until the office of Superintendant Sanz received response from Spain in relation to some questions he had about the distribution guidelines for *comisos* executed before the reception of the new 29 July 1785 rules. Marqués de Loreto to Valdés, n. 4, Buenos Aires, 18 Sept. 1788.

**Table 5.5**  
**Some calculations regarding the “ideal” execution of the royal order of**  
**12 February 1788.**

<p>1. These are the ideal percentages corresponding to the one-third and one-fourth parts of <i>comisos</i> of regular merchandise (or “class 1” <i>comisos</i>—that is, not gold, silver, or tobacco):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) According to the 1787-1788 evaluation of the Omoa <i>comiso</i> of 1784, the one-third that applied to the Ministry of the Indies by the 1779 royal order amounted to seventeen per cent of the total value of the forfeiture.</li> <li>b) The <i>comiso</i> distribution guidelines of 29 July 1785 determined that the one-fourth that belonged to the superintendant-general of the Indies was equivalent to sixteen per cent of the value of the forfeiture.</li> </ul>
<p>2. The period of collection for the one-third and the one-fourth shares may be simplified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 6 May 1779 royal order: from 1 January 1779 until roughly the issuance of the second royal order (November 1785), or approximately 83 months (seven years to round up).</li> <li>b) 25 November 1787 royal order: from 1 January 1787 until the death of José de Gálvez on 17 June 1787, or approximately 126 months (10.5 years to simplify it).</li> </ul>
<p>3. Let us assume that the colonies produced 1,000 pesos of “class 1” <i>comisos</i> each year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) For 7 years, the total value of <i>comisos</i> would have amounted to 7,000 pesos</li> <li>b) For 10.5 years, the total value of <i>comisos</i> would be 10,500 pesos</li> </ul>
<p>4. This is how the ideal collection of the third and fourth parts should work with these numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) For the 1779 royal order: 1,190 pesos correspond to the one-third (seventeen per cent in reality) of the total value of <i>comisos</i> executed in seven years.</li> <li>b) For the 1785 royal order: 1,680 pesos correspond to the one-fourth (sixteen per cent in reality) of the total value of <i>comisos</i> executed in 10.5 years.</li> </ul>
<p>5. According to the 12 February 1788 royal order, the Indies governments had to calculate the one-quarter share belonging to Gálvez for the 10.5-year period and then subtract the one-third they had already remitted as part of the 1779 royal order (ideally, seven years): 1,680 pesos – 1,190 pesos = 490 pesos remissible to Gálvez’s heirs under the terms of his will.</p>
<p>6. Conclusion: In this ideal world, Gálvez received 1,190 pesos up to 1785 corresponding to the one-third share of <i>comisos</i>, and his descendants would receive 490 pesos for the one-fourth part of <i>comisos</i> executed in the 10.5-year period to make up the original amount of the grant: 1,680 pesos.</p>

The logic of the 12 February 1788 order was thus to adjust the grant of 1785, because in practice the 1779 order had also been a gift to Gálvez. In this scheme the Andalusian minister simply earned what he justly deserved, nothing more. If he had kept the money allotted by the 1779 royal order (which started to arrive in 1781) in his personal *Cinco Gremios* account without touching it, he would have earned the three per cent annual interest this early modern banking institution offered to its clients. If he had expended the money in his personal account for equally personal ends, he would have enjoyed considerable liquidity—a coveted privilege in the eighteenth century. Yet, if Gálvez employed the one-third share of *comisos* funds deposited in his account to meet the very ends the royal order of 1779 had specified (to finance the operations of the Ministry of the Indies), the 12 February 1788 order would have signified a dramatic loss for his estate. Instead of earning sixteen per cent of the total value of *comisos* between 1777 and mid-1787, his family would have received approximately 4.6 per cent (by my calculations).<sup>142</sup> Bureaucratic inefficiency was on the Andalusian's side, however. Evidence suggests that the 12 February 1788 royal order did not have much impact among the colonial governments. On the record, only Buenos Aires, Havana, New Spain, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico responded to it. In addition, future edicts reminded officials of the execution of the 20 November 1787 royal order, neglecting completely the 1788 circular. Another factor that would have benefited Gálvez was that the investigation conducted by the Council of the Indies in the 1787-1788 period on the case of the Omoa *comiso* of 1784 had revealed that royal treasury officials in the colonies had been calculating the mandated one-third share of *comisos* at higher rates than the ideal one

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<sup>142</sup> The possibility that ministers of state used their personal money to finance their offices was a real one, as I discuss in n. 89 *supra*.

(twenty-one per cent vs. seventeen per cent). Finally, as we shall see, the sheer size of the amounts remitted for the one-quarter share of *comisos* were so astounding that they cannot be interpreted as other than genuine gains for Gálvez and his family.

### ***Comiso Collections at the Turn of the Century***

The dowager Marquesa de Sonora continued collecting the money from the Empire's *comisos* with remarkable perseverance. She did it proactively and was not shy now and then in demanding her share. In August 1789, for example, after confirming that she had cashed a *comiso* remittance from Caracas, the Marquesa told Valdés that she hoped the General Accountancy of the Indies would clear this and other remittances she had received, and that she trusted that the minister's goodness of heart would prevail to make the *Contaduría* process the *comiso* matters more quickly in order to expedite the resolution of her late husband's will.<sup>143</sup> She insisted on this last point because for her, the *comiso* collection process did not simply end in the reception of remittances. Indeed, Francisco Machado's General Accountancy had the task of determining if the *comisos* had been executed and distributed correctly. If Machado found a problem in his accounting revisions, Gálvez's widow would have to reimburse the funds she had already received to the royal coffers. Until Machado cleared up all the *comiso* accounting, then the money was hers and her daughter's to keep.

The earliest setback the Marquesa de Sonora experienced was on 27 August 1787, when Valdés told her that 4,416 pesos had arrived from the viceroyalty of Río de la Plata, but that she was responsible to give half this amount to the former superintendent of

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<sup>143</sup> Marquesa de Sonora to Valdés, Madrid, 20 Aug. 1789.

Buenos Aires, Manuel Ignacio Fernández, who had functioned as the judge in those *comiso* cases. She complied immediately.<sup>144</sup> In 1791, the Governor of the Philippines, Félix Berenguer de Marquina, stated that in accordance with the February 1788 and November 1787 orders, his predecessor had remitted 1,451 pesos corresponding to the one-fourth of *comisos* executed in the 1777-1787 decade. After revising the accounts, however, he had found that 903 extra pesos had been erroneously assigned to Gálvez as superintendant-general of the Indies. Minister of the Treasury Diego Gardoqui asked the dowager Marquesa to reimburse that amount to the General Treasury. Again, although she readily complied, she was also willing to exert more pressure. In June 1792 she wrote to Gardoqui: “Let me remind Your Excellency about royal circular orders that have requested the submission to the *Contaduría General* of all the *comiso* distributions executed during the time my deceased husband held the Superintendancy [...with the purpose of] undoing all the mistakes that could have been suffered in favor of or against [his estate].” She added that she hoped Gardoqui would remind the accountant-general to review Berenguer’s *comiso* accounts in addition to those that had already reached his office, as well as the ones that were forthcoming. She also requested the repetition of the orders, so that the last testament of her husband could proceed to its resolution, because “it is very regrettable to me that after five years, and despite the favors of your predecessors, I have not seen the [final] settlement of these belongings.”<sup>145</sup> Therefore, it was in the best interest of her estate and her daughter’s to receive the “official clearance”

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<sup>144</sup> Valdés to Marquesa de Sonora, San Ildefonso, 27 Aug. 1787, and Marquesa de Sonora to Valdés, Madrid, 30 Aug. 1787.

<sup>145</sup> Summary of letter from Félix Berenguer de Marquina (Governor of Philippines) to Valdés, Manila, 7 Jul. 1791; Diego Gardoqui to Marquesa de Sonora and Gardoqui to Francisco Montes (from the General Treasury) Aranjuez 6 Jun. 1792; Marquesa de Sonora to Gardoqui, Madrid, 20 Jun. 1792.

or “*purificación*” by the General Accountancy in order to avoid returning money and other incurring related setbacks. Gardoqui did not concede the issuance of a new royal order but did send to Machado’s office the files of the Philippines case for review.<sup>146</sup>

Beginning in 1794 and going up to 1804, when the available records end, Concepción Valenzuela, the Marquesa de Sonora *viuda*, was no longer alone in her tireless pursuit of *comiso*-related income; she now counted with an ally: her son-in-law, Prudencio de Guadalfajara, the second Count of Castro-Terreño, who acted on behalf of his wife, María Josefa de Gálvez.<sup>147</sup> Before her daughter’s marriage, the Marquesa de Sonora introduced herself as mother and tutor of Gálvez’s universal heir, in charge of administering Josefa’s estate. When her daughter married Castro-Terreño, the widow continued pursuing the claims on behalf of her own personal interests, because by the

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<sup>146</sup> Gardoqui to Machado, 24 Jun. 1792. Unfortunately we do not know the response of Machado. On 20 Oct. 1792, however, Charles IV issued a *cédula* that eased the work of the *Contaduría General*. Since 1783, this office had been in charge of reviewing each *comiso* case and sentence, but from 1792 on its role was limited to the review of forfeiture cases that had been appealed by the owners of the confiscated merchandise (see n. 100 *supra*). Perhaps Machado’s answer to Gardoqui’s 24 Jun. letter led to this *cédula*, which in turn would have been provoked by the Marquesa de Sonora’s insistence on getting her *comisos* remittances approved.

<sup>147</sup> The couple had married on 23 November 1792. The Count (later Duke) of Castro-Terreño was a Grandee of Spain, the chief groom of the king, and a military man. His biography is truly fascinating. Prudencio de Guadalfajara was born in Zamora in 1761 (therefore, he was 15 years older than Josefa de Gálvez). According to his biographer Pedro Chamorro y Baqueiro, he was the 29<sup>th</sup> of 30 siblings and yet became the oldest male, with the right to inherit his father’s title and the family’s abundant fortune. His career in the military was brilliant. In 1808, he fought bravely against the French. From 1811 to 1814 he was on the other side of the Atlantic, as he had been named general of the Spanish Southern Army during Mexico’s war of independence. Castro-Terreño fought against insurgents like José María Morelos and Mariano Matamoros. In December 1816 he became captain-general of Extremadura. He was widowed in 1817 and remarried in 1818. He never completely trusted the Cádiz 1812 constitutionalists. From 1826 to 1832, he was captain-general of Navarra and then held the same position in Castilla la Vieja, but only for one year. From 1833 to 1840 he worked as captain of the *Compañía de Alabarderos* in Madrid and after the revival of the Cádiz constitution in 1837 he became a senator. He died in 1855, at the age of 94. See Pedro Chamorro y Baqueiro, *Biografía del Excelentísimo Señor Capitán General Duque de Castroterreño dedicada a Sus Majestades la reina y el rey* (Madrid: Imprenta Militar a cargo de Mariano Satue, 1853) and Francisco de Paula Mellado, *Diccionario Universal de Historia y Geografía* (Madrid: Establecimiento Tipográfico de Don Francisco de Paula y Mellado, 1846), 2:153-156.

Andalusian minister's last will she was entitled to receive one fifth of all his property.<sup>148</sup>

In May 1794, therefore, the Marquesa de Sonora and her son-in-law wrote jointly to Minister of Treasury Gardoqui. The content of the letter followed the same lines as the June 1792 letter by Gálvez's widow, but the arguments related to the *Contaduría's* role were more forceful. Sonora and Castro-Terreño demanded the immediate publication by Machado's office of the final rulings on the review of *comiso* remittances they had already received and the designation of a person to be in charge of reviewing those cases still pending. They also asked for new royal orders, including explicit deadlines for the Indies governments to send the outstanding remittances, and they also pressured the Council of the Indies in demanding the resolution of all pending contraband cases. They remarked astutely that all of these measures would ultimately benefit the royal treasury since in the absence of such enforcement mechanisms it was not receiving what corresponded to it. Gardoqui took almost two months in responding to this comprehensive request, and then simply sent to Machado another order prompting the *Contaduría* to clear up pending files as soon as possible, and to make a list of those colonial treasuries that had not submitted their shares of *comisos*, so that these amounts could be claimed.<sup>149</sup>

The last documents in the *Archivo General de Indias* file on the *comiso* shares due to José de Gálvez are dated at the turn of the century. The passage of time generated new challenges at the local level, as the case of the *comisos* from Cartagena de Indias, in the

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<sup>148</sup> Gálvez, "Testamento 1787," 171 and according to her own statement in copy of Marquesa de Sonora, proxy letter on behalf of Francisco Zalamea (Santa Fe de Bogotá), Andrés de León (Santa Fe de Bogotá), and Juan de León y Páez (Cartagena de Indias), Madrid, 24 Sep. 1799 in document no. 1 attached to Amar y Borbón (Viceroy of New Granada) to Cayetano Soler, no. 42, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 19 Nov. 1803.

<sup>149</sup> Gardoqui to Machado, draft, Aranjuez 24 May 1792. Again we do not know Machado's response.

viceroyalty of New Granada, shows. Beginning in 1799, the Marquesa and the Conde individually designated the same three people—two of whom were local functionaries in Santa Fe de Bogotá and Cartagena—to act as their proxies in claiming the shares of *comisos* belonging to them as Gálvez's heirs. Of the three representatives they selected, a retired royal treasury official in Cartagena responded to their call, but he named yet another proxy, a local merchant, Felipe de Peñarredonda, who after doing some of the initial work himself later designated yet another man to act on his behalf in Santa Fe de Bogotá: José Antonio Maldonado, an attorney.<sup>150</sup> Fortunately for Sonora and Castro-Terreño, Peñarredonda and Maldonado were quite efficient in defending their interests. With an abridged copy of José de Gálvez's testament as proof of his clients' inheritance rights, in July 1801 the merchant of Cartagena asked the port's treasury officials to inform him about the amounts of money deposited in their till that corresponded to the quarter of *comisos* accumulated during Gálvez's tenure of the General Superintendancy of the Indies. Peñarredonda added that the amount might be handed over to him immediately, since he was ready to remit it to the rightful owners in Spain.<sup>151</sup> The treasury of Cartagena reported 5,200 pesos in *comisos* owing to former superintendent-general Gálvez, comprising eight remittances that had come from every corner of the viceroyalty between 1786 and 1789.<sup>152</sup> At the instance of the viceroy, the Court of Audits (*Tribunal de Cuentas*) in Santa Fe reviewed the case and raised two important objections.

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<sup>150</sup> Copies of Prudencio de Guadalfajara (Conde de Castro-Terreño), proxy letter on behalf of Francisco Zalamea (Santa Fe de Bogotá), Andrés de León (Santa Fe de Bogotá), and Juan de León y Páez (Cartagena de Indias), Madrid, 24 Sep. 1799; Marquesa de Sonora, proxy letter on behalf of Zalamea, León and León y Páez, Madrid, 24 Sep. 1799 in document no. 1 attached to Amar y Borbón (Viceroy of New Granada) to Cayetano Soler, no. 42, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 19 Nov. 1803. From this note to n. 156 all copied documents are part of attachment no. 1 of Amar y Borbón's letter of Nov. 1783.

<sup>151</sup> Copy of Felipe de Peñarredonda to royal treasury officials of Cartagena, Cartagena, 3 June 1801.

<sup>152</sup> Report by royal treasury officials of the Royal Accountancy of Cartagena, Cartagena, 5 July 1801.



First, the exact date of Gálvez's death was missing, which raised the question of how could they know if the alleged *comisos* (particularly those remitted in 1789) had been properly executed when he held the General Superintendancy. Second, from a review of the 6 May 1779 royal order, they concluded that "it seems that the one-third share of *comisos* is not conceded to the ministers *for their pockets*, but to the Ministry for the attainment of important objectives in the king's service and for the public's benefit."<sup>153</sup>

The specter of the actual meaning of the 1779 order continued to haunt Gálvez and his descendants after his death. But the selection of proxy substitute Maldonado proved fortunate. The attorney first suggested that Viceroy Pedro Mendinueta ask his clerks to retrieve from the archives the November 1785 and 1787 royal orders. Mendinueta's officials complied and added both orders to the main case file. A few days later Maldonado penned a brilliant defense of his client's claims by presenting an interpretation that clarified the *Tribunal de Cuentas*' main doubts. According to the attorney, the circular orders of 1785 and 1787 left no doubt that Gálvez was personally entitled to a quarter of the *comisos*. The minister had died in June 1787, Maldonado reminded the Court of Audits, but three of the *comiso* remittances to Cartagena were dated in 1789. There was no available evidence to prove that the *comiso* cases had been executed after his death, however: after all, if the royal officials who had sent the amounts to Cartagena had declared that these *comisos* belonged to the Marqués de

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<sup>153</sup> Copy of report by Felipe de Vergara y Caicedo (*contador ordenador* of the *Tribunal de Cuentas*) to *Tribunal de Cuentas*, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 13 Jul. 1801, my emphasis. The final report of the *Tribunal* was adamant: "after reviewing the 6 May 1779 royal order [... the *Tribunal* considers...] that the said funds are not property of Minister Don José de Gálvez or his heirs." The *Tribunal* hoped for a declaration from the king that explained the matter. Copy of *Tribunal y Real Audiencia de Cuentas*, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 5 Sep. 1801.

Sonora, there was no reason to doubt their word.<sup>154</sup> In October 1801 the Court of Audits and the *fiscal* of the *Audiencia* issued two reports replicating Maldonado's arguments in favor of the Marquesa de Sonora and the Conde de Castro-Terreño. A resolution that finally approved the transfer of their share of the *comisos* quickly followed.<sup>155</sup> I did not find evidence of the physical remittance to Gálvez's heirs, but such a transfer was assumed by the Spanish Treasury Minister, Miguel Cayetano Soler when he and the new accountant-general for North America reviewed and approved the whole file in 1804.<sup>156</sup>

Almost two decades after the grant of one-quarter of the *comisos* was awarded to José de Gálvez, his heirs continued gathering the sums; but the entire process had become more complicated since the historical memory of local bureaucracies was short. Crucial data such as what the royal order was by which they had to hand over the funds, and even the date of death of the former minister of the Indies were now hard to find. The New Granada case suggests that Gálvez's family kept a record of which territories in the Empire had paid (or not paid) what was due on *comisos*. A reliable transatlantic social network that informed them about the amounts deposited in the local treasuries could have served these functions, as well. Otherwise, it is hard to explain why the marquise

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<sup>154</sup> Copy of José Antonio Maldonado to Viceroy (Pedro Mendinueta y Múzquiz), Santa Fé de Bogotá, 18 Sep. 1801 and Maldonado to Joaquín Cayzedo y Cuero (¿?), Santa Fé de Bogotá, 28 Sep. 1801,

<sup>155</sup> Copies of Tribunal y Real Audiencia de Cuentas, report, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 8 Oct. 1801; Manuel Mariano de Blaya (*fiscal de lo civil* of the Audiencia), report, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 19 Oct. 1801; Viceroy Mendinueta y Múzquiz, decree, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 23 Oct. 1801.

<sup>156</sup> In late 1803, the new viceroy of New Granada, Antonio José Amar y Borbón, sent the whole file to Cayetano Soler with the sole intention of informing him about his predecessor's resolution of the case. In his answer to Amar y Borbón, Cayetano Soler mentioned that "the king learned that your predecessor approved the assignment [of 5,200 pesos] to the agent of the widow and daughter of the Marqués de Sonora." In his review and report on the case, the accountant-general for North America (an office evolved from the former General Accountancy of the Indies), the Conde de Casa Valencia, also wrote about the "legitimate handing-over of an amount that was deposited in the treasury of Cartagena;" Viceroy Amar y Borbón to Miguel Cayetano Soler, no. 42, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 19 Nov. 1803; accountant-general Conde de Casa Valencia to Cayetano Soler, report, Madrid, 31 Mar. 1804; and draft of Cayetano Soler to Viceroy Amar y Borbón, Aranjuez, 1 Apr. 1804.

and the count sent their proxy letters specifically to Cartagena. It is also possible that this case was not unique, and that Sonora and Castro-Terreño did the same for other jurisdictions in the Spanish Empire. After all, in 1804 other places, such as Acapulco in New Spain, continued to dispatch *comiso* remittances.<sup>157</sup> The same year, Minister Cayetano Soler helped Sonora, Castro-Terreño, and Antonio Valdés—who was trying to collect what corresponded to him, too—with what was the last royal order of the series on *comisos*.

The 30 November 1804 royal circular on *comisos* was mainly a reminder of an order issued fourteen years earlier on behalf of Antonio Valdés (see Appendix B). When Gálvez's successor left his office of minister of the Indies, Finances, War, and Commerce in April 1790, the then Treasury secretary, Pedro de Lerena, issued a circular order prompting the Indies governments to send their remittances of the quarter share of *comisos* during the time Valdés worked as interim superintendant-general of the Indies (from 18 June 1787 to 24 April 1790). The 1790 edict recommended using the same procedures mandated for the remission of *comisos* due to the Marqués de Sonora by order of 20 November 1787. The 1804 reminder of the 1790 circular inevitably rang a bell, therefore, for the local governments to check if they had met the guidelines of Gálvez's *comiso* rewards, as well.<sup>158</sup> Valdés did not share in the relative success of Gálvez's heirs in collecting their fortune, however, because in the spring of 1804 he sent a desperate letter to Cayetano Soler stating that he knew that local treasuries throughout Spain's

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<sup>157</sup> The Acapulco remittance of 1,200 pesos corresponded to *comisos* executed in that port during 1778, 1780, and 1782! Concepción Valenzuela mentioned that she had received news from Mexico about this specific shipment; therefore, at least in Mexico she continued to have reliable social networks; Marquesa de Sonora to Cayetano Soler, Madrid 6 Nov. 1804; and drafts of Cayetano Soler to Tesorero General, and Sonora, San Lorenzo, 10 Nov. 1804.

<sup>158</sup> Pedro de Lerena, royal circular order to the heads of government in the Indies, Aranjuez, 22 Jun. 1790.

dominions had already liquidated the sums owed to him as the quarter share of *comisos*, but that they had not transferred the money, amounting to 14,216 pesos, 7 *reales*. He asked for a direct credit from any treasury in Spain, and hoped the royal treasury would then seek reimbursement from the funds deposited in the Indies. Cayetano Soler's note on the margin of this letter is very telling "the current anguishes of the royal treasury do not allow this."<sup>159</sup> At least, the November 1804 royal circular order demonstrates that the Treasury Minister was willing to help Valdés to get his *comiso* money from the Indies, and was, indirectly supporting the claims of Gálvez's heirs.<sup>160</sup>

### **José de Gálvez's *Comiso* Income in Aggregate Numbers**

How much did Gálvez and his family earn from the November 1785 grant of income from *comisos*? My estimate for the total is 167,027 pesos during a period of 126 months running from 1 January 1777 to 17 June 1787.<sup>161</sup> We know this sum is a result of a chaotic accrual of remittances during a period extending from the first transfer of funds, received in August 1786, to the last one, recorded in November 1804 (207 months). If the

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<sup>159</sup> Indeed, 1804 is considered critical in the economic history of Spain, since the Empire was completely broke and had issued emergency measures such as the *consolidación de vales reales*. Valdés to Cayetano Soler, Burgos, 1 Mar. 1804 and margin note of Cayetano Soler dated on 14 Mar. 1804. I wonder how Valdés knew the precise amount owed to him in diverse Indies treasuries. This precision is something I did not observe on the side of Gálvez's heirs.

<sup>160</sup> Again the passage of time had damaged the official record, because the 30 November 1804 royal order was a bureaucratic comedy of errors: it dated the 22 June 1790 order in 1792; placed Gálvez's death in July, instead of June; and had Valdés's last day in office as April 1792 (instead of 1790), too. Although this royal order is quite explicitly devoted to Valdés, its cover page shows that the *oficiales* at the Treasury ministry classified it as an edict that ordered the remittance of the quarter share of *comisos* that corresponded to the Marqués de Sonora and to Antonio Valdés. Cayetano Soler, royal circular order to the heads of government in the Indies, San Lorenzo, 30 Nov. 1804.

<sup>161</sup> Please refer to Appendix C for the data series in which I am not including the dispersed amounts I gathered from the one-third share of *comisos* remitted by order of 6 May 1779. In fact, I obtained the sum of 13,534 pesos pertaining to the remittances mandated by the 1779 circular, an amount which, we all know, ended up in Gálvez's personal purse, as well. According to the available records on *comisos*, therefore, the aggregate sum that José de Gálvez's and his heirs' deposited in their account at the *Cinco Gremios Mayores* amounted to 180,561 pesos.

monetary remissions had been constant, Gálvez, and then his heirs, would have received an average of 9,683 *pesos fuertes* per year.<sup>162</sup> This number is not insignificant, and in New Spain would have been the salary of a top bureaucrat;<sup>163</sup> it was more than the sum of Gálvez's two life pensions from New Spain passed on to his descendants—the one from the treasury of 2,000 pesos, and the other from the Mining Tribunal of 4,000 pesos. In *reales de vellón*, the legal tender in Madrid, it amounted to 193,660, that is, 10,000 *reales* more than the annual salary Gálvez received in his position as governor of the Council of the Indies.<sup>164</sup> I began this chapter with the history of the Palace of the Marquesa de Sonora, which in 1845 the then Duque de Castro-Terreño sold for 1.75 million *reales de vellón*. The total of *comisos* deposited on behalf of Gálvez could have bought almost two such palaces, because it reached the level of 3.3 million *reales*. Of course, these numbers are not completely accurate in the sense that they stand for gross sums, but they serve well to draw a sketch of the magnitude of the *comiso* grant and what it represented for Gálvez, his widow, daughter, and son-in-law.

And what do the numbers say about the *comisos* policy itself? This question is important not only in terms of the execution of the royal orders on behalf of Gálvez, but

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<sup>162</sup> I arrived at this number by dividing the total amount by the number of months, and then calculating an annual average. When I did the same for Valdés (from June 1787 to April 1790, 34 months, a total of 14,216 pesos), I obtained an annual average of 5,017 pesos. As I mentioned in n. 159 *supra*, Valdés did not state how he calculated this sum. One more thing to note: according to Escudero, the salary of the Marqués de Ensenada as superintendant-general of the treasury of Spain amounted to 40,000 *reales de vellón* (2,000 *pesos fuertes*). No doubt Gálvez had made the right choice when he asked for a quarter of the value of the Empire's *comisos* instead of requesting the regular salary assigned to a superintendant-general. 9,683 *pesos fuertes* a year were definitively better than 2,000; Escudero, *Los orígenes del Consejo de Ministros*, 251.

<sup>163</sup> Let us remember, for example, that in 1778, Fernando José Mangino earned 7,000 pesos as superintendant of the Mexico City Mint, the highest salary for a functionary in the fiscal departments of New Spain at the time.

<sup>164</sup> For Gálvez's salary refer to Appendix A. *Reales de vellón* were the legal tender only in some regions of Spain, one of which was Madrid; see Humberto F. Burzio, *Diccionario de la Moneda Hispanoamericana* (Santiago de Chile: Fondo Histórico y Bibliográfico José Toribio Medina, 1958), 2:421, s.v. "vellón, moneda de."

also in relation to this policy's double capacity to curb contraband, through the threat of confiscations, and to reward local treasury officials, a clear disincentive for joining the side of smugglers. Let us first look at the remittances by the different jurisdictions. These are the figures (see Table 5.6):

<b>Table 5.6</b> <b>Total remittances of one-fourth of the <i>comisos</i> executed in the Indies and sent to Spain between 1786 and 1804 distributed by jurisdictions or regions</b>		
Jurisdiction or region	Pesos remitted	%
Caribbean (Cuba, Florida, Louisiana, Puerto Rico, and Santo Domingo)	35,595	21
Central America (Guatemala)	6,724	4
New Granada	6,881	4
New Spain	23,434	14
Peru	16,099	10
Philippines	35,111	21
Río de la Plata	10,994	7
Venezuela	32,188	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>163,067</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The Philippines, Venezuela, and the Caribbean were the territories within the Spanish Empire that most remittances. The Caribbean's presence among the top three is not surprising because it was one of the more dynamic economic regions in the Atlantic World. In addition, the geographical proximity of Jamaica and the United States meant that smuggling was ubiquitous. What is more, let us remember that in 1786, the intendant of Havana had calculated that the quarter share of *comisos* that belonged to Gálvez amounted to 40,913 pesos, but due to the lack of liquidity he could only sent 12,000. If the remaining 28,913 was ever sent, the total of Caribbean total would almost double. The new intendancy of Venezuela also had a growing economy based on plantations, and it was permeable to illicit trade from the British and Dutch possessions in the Lesser

Antilles and, of course, from Jamaica, too. Moreover, between 1783 and 1788, Francisco Saavedra headed the intendancy. He owed his career to José de Gálvez, and the swiftest and least troublesome executions of the *comiso*-remittance policies I observed occurred in Caracas under Saavedra's aegis. So, that Venezuela represented nineteen per cent of the remittances may also speak to a more effective *or more willing* execution of the royal orders. The figure from the Philippines does not make sense. First, it is based on one loose document that mentions that Gálvez's widow received a little more than 32,000 pesos from comisos in 1793 (see Appendix C).<sup>165</sup> It is an unusually large amount for one lump-sum remittance: it represented 94 per cent of the Philippines' registered *comiso* remissions. Yet, these were the times of the Royal Trading Company of the Philippines and the mandate to combat smuggling was part of its statutes. Perhaps the company struck some extraordinary sea *comisos* that could explain the 32,000-peso amount.<sup>166</sup> One surprising fact is that the Viceroyalty of New Granada (modern Colombia, Ecuador, and Panama), a region that teemed with contraband, as Lance Grahn shows, sent very little in

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<sup>165</sup> Note (from the ministry of the Treasury?), 18 Feb. 1793, that read: "*Nota. Con oficio de 18 de febrero de 1793 se pasaron a la Señora Marquesa Viuda de Sonora dos letras dadas por la dirección de la Compañía de Filipinas contra la principal en esta corte, y endorsadas por el Señor Gardoqui importantes 32,852 pesos y 6 granos pertenecientes a la testamentaria del señor Marqués de Sonora por la parte de comisos como superintendente general que fue de Real Hacienda de Indias cuya minuta de remisión está unida a la de la orden del 24 del propio febrero comunicada al gobernador de Filipinas, avisándole el recibo de estas y otras letras, colocadas en real hacienda del negociado.*"

<sup>166</sup> The largest single confiscation I found in documents comes from the Buenos Aires intendancy and refers to a single *comiso* of 320 pieces of English flannels (*bayetas*) found in the Spanish commercial frigate *Infanta Carlota*. The value of the forfeiture amounted to 16,672 pesos of which Gálvez received 2,398 pesos. The Philippines Trading Company would have had to execute fourteen seizures of this type of high yielding *comisos* to reach the reported quantity of 32,852. Like the *Compañía Guipuzcoana* founded in Venezuela in 1728 (its institutional mother), the Philippines enterprise had to organize a coastguard service to combat illicit commerce in its jurisdiction. For the *comiso* in the viceroyalty of Río de la Plata, see Francisco de Paula y Sanz to Valdés, n. 731, Buenos Aires, 9 Aug. 1787; for the *Compañía Guipuzcoana*, read Delgado Ribas, *Dinámicas imperiales*, 151; for the Royal Trading Company of the Philippines, see María de Lourdes Díaz Trechuelo Spinola, *La Real Compañía de Filipinas* (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos, 1965).

the way of remissions.<sup>167</sup> The figures from the largest viceroalties, New Spain and Peru, are not as impressive, either. But the data in this table in relation to New Spain are completely misleading. New Spain was burdened with supplying *situados* (direct transfers of funds for state operations in the Caribbean Basin—Cuba, Florida, Louisiana, Puerto Rico, and Santo Domingo—and the Philippines). Indeed, on at least one occasion a treasury official in Havana said he could not send more *comiso* remittances until New Spain paid the *situado* to Cuba.<sup>168</sup> In essence, the Mexican treasury was practically the origin of 64 per cent of these remittances, if not more, because Caracas and Cartagena also received *situados* from it.

I have often mused on the question of how the study of *comisos* can help us with the elusive problem of knowing the scale and scope of illegal trade occurring in the Spanish Empire. A historian of smuggling, Alan Karras, views quantitative approaches from a very negative perspective: “It is absolutely impossible to claim with any accuracy that illegal trade amounted to 10, 20, 30, or even 50 percent of any given country’s total commercial exchange at any particular historical moment” and later adds that “discovering *how much* smuggling took place is simply impossible to do with available historical archives.”<sup>169</sup> Yet, I believe the data on the *comisos* can help us to estimate not how much illicit commerce occurred per se, but how much smuggling could be held accountable by the state. That is, the *comiso* numbers may contribute more to the history

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<sup>167</sup> Grahn, *The Political Economy of Smuggling*.

<sup>168</sup> Cárdenas (*contador principal del ejército*) to Gálvez, No. 1991, Havana, 23 Mar. 1787. In the execution of the 1779 circular on the one-third of *comisos*, royal officials in Manila argued the treasury of New Spain was going to send the remittances on their behalf; Corral and Revilla (royal officials of Manila) to Gálvez, n. 5, Manila, 20 Jun. 1783, AGI, Indiferente, leg. 1834.

<sup>169</sup> Karras, *Smuggling*, 2. In another passage he adds: “[G]overnments simply could not know, and did not know, exactly how much material, of any kind, crossed their porous frontiers; the same could be said of most countries today. Record keeping was imperfect, because record keepers were either willfully or woefully ignorant of activities taking place directly under their noses;” *ibid.*, 3.



of building state capacities to deter illegal activities by smugglers and their potential allies (royal officials) than to the history of contrabandists themselves.

From the total of remittances sent to Gálvez and his heirs, and taking into account Francisco de Machado's *Distribuciones* of July 1784, it is possible to calculate roughly how much smuggling *failed* thanks to confiscations by royal officials in the little more than a decade between 1 January 1777 and 17 June 1787. Let us remember that one quarter of a typical mixed ("land and sea") *comiso* amounted to 16 per cent of the total value of the confiscated merchandise. In the 126 months of *comisos* granted to superintendant-general Gálvez, 1,019,170 pesos was the total value of forfeitures executed by a multitude of guards and administrators at the customs houses in all the Spanish Empire. Taken as an annual average, the sum reaches to 97,063 pesos. This last amount was equivalent to the yearly earnings of 1.5 viceroys in New Spain.<sup>170</sup> From Fabián de Fonseca's and Carlos de Urrutia's history of the royal treasury in New Spain, we can see that the *comisos ramo* was actually quite insignificant. The eighteenth-century royal officials turned fiscal historians calculated the gross value of the complete thirty six *ramos* of the viceroyalty's treasury between 1785 and 1789 at 53,739,390 pesos. The most productive fiscal *ramo* was the *alcabala* tax, which reached a value of 17.7 million pesos, and the least productive one (numbered thirty-six if all the *ramos* are listed from highest to lowest value) was that of the *bienes mostrencos*, which produced only 1,760 pesos in that quinquennium. The *comisos ramo* was number thirty-two in the list, with a gross value of 15,210 pesos, almost equaling another "obscure" *ramo*, that of *alumbre*,

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<sup>170</sup> 60,000 pesos was the annual salary of viceroys; see n. 27 *supra*.

*cobre, estaño y plomo* (aluminum, copper, tin, and lead), which totaled 15,660.<sup>171</sup> Thus, with an annual average value of 3,024 pesos, the *comisos ramo* represented only three per cent of the gross income of the viceroyalty. Curbing contraband trade by the practice of confiscations obviously was not really a priority in New Spain. It would be interesting to see if the numbers were similar in other jurisdictions of the Empire. Notwithstanding the relatively low level of the *comiso* earnings in the royal treasury, we have observed that at the personal level Gálvez's grant of a quarter of the value of the forfeitures was not inconsiderable, and we could extend this argument for the army of royal treasury officials, coastguard functionaries, governors, and intendants, among others, functioning as *denunciadores*, *aprehensores*, or judges, who received their shares of each of the *comiso* distributions. Overall, the *ramo de comisos* can be characterized as very small, but also as one that was well exploited by all parties involved in the process.

### **Conclusion: The Origins and Destiny of Gálvez's Wealth.**

An influx of New World money ultimately built the expensive Palace of the Marquesa de Sonora. I offered calculations earlier that, in an ideal world of regular financial transfers, the widow and daughter of José de Gálvez would have received around 9,000 *pesos fuertes* per year just from the *comisos* fund. To this amount one may add the 6,000 pesos in life pensions that the Andalusian obtained for his performance as

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<sup>171</sup> Table 1, "Estado de valores y distribución que tuvieron los ramos de Real Hacienda del Reino de N.E. destinados á sufragar los gastos comunes y generales de ella en el quinquenio de 1785 á 1789, según los estados que anualmente presenta la contaduría mayor de cuentas," in Fonseca and Urrutia, *Historia general de real hacienda*, 1:xxxix. I originally found part of these data in Luis Jáuregui's history of the royal treasury, but he had a mistake in the total value of the *ramos* (his total does not correspond to the sum of the values for the thirty six *ramos*) and I had to recur to his source (Fonseca and Urrutia); see Table 10A, "Coeficiente gasto/ingreso de los ramos comunes de la Real Hacienda novohispana (agregado 1785-1789)," in Jáuregui, *La Real Hacienda de Nueva España*, 177.

visitor-general in New Spain. The Galvez women, thereby, were entitled to very high annual earnings of 15,000 *pesos fuertes*, or 300,000 *reales de vellón*, bettering the salaries of some contemporary ministers of state (see Appendix A). Of course, reality was not as clear cut as these aggregated numbers suggest. The flow of financial resources was not constant at all. For years, the dowager Marquesa de Sonora went to great pains to collect the *comisos* on her and her daughter's behalf. The Conde de Castro-Terreño joined her later in pursuit of the money from illicit commerce, and by himself the Conde also arranged to keep the life pensions alive, as occurred on one occasion on which he had to demonstrate to authorities in New Spain that his wife was still alive.

Several times these grants were called into question. There were constant doubts that Gálvez's successor in the colonial office, Antonio Valdés, had about what the order of 6 May 1779 really meant in terms of its practical execution. Also, in the mid-1790s the Council of the Indies discussed the continuance of the Mining Tribunal's pension. Yet, the Galvez women succeeded in keeping them. Even in 1804, when the Crown was to all intents and purposes broke, and Valdés requested the 15,000 pesos the government owed to him in *comiso* remittances, the ex-minister did not manage to obtain the late payment, but the Marquesa de Sonora still received what corresponded to her and her family from the *comiso* dispatches that continued to flow. When in doubt, the idea that prevailed is that the Gálvez women deserved these grants because their husband and father had gained them through his merits.

Established in the 1770s, the life pensions from New Spain were clearly a reward for José de Gálvez's actions as visitor-general. The 4,000 pesos from the Mining Tribunal had an obvious origin: the visitor-general's lobbying on behalf of the mining industry,

mainly in the form of reducing the price of mercury and supporting the creation of the *Tribunal de Minería* itself. The 2,000 pesos annuity for life granted by the treasury lacked this specificity, but it referred to his legacy of reforms that had changed the face of the viceroyalty. As soon as he assumed the position of minister of the Indies in 1776, Gálvez became the best paid minister of Charles III. His large salary may be interpreted as a down payment toward his future services, based on his proven experience as visitor-general and councilor of the Indies. By the fall of 1785, it was time to harvest the meritocratic fruits of almost ten years of serving the Indies Secretariat, with its attached position of superintendant-general, and that is when he received the grant of one-fourth of the *comisos*.

José de Gálvez was not just a quiet, hardworking statesman, passively waiting for the king to shower him with bonuses and other accolades. On the contrary, he exacted these monetary rewards from the Crown through constant pressure. To obtain his enormous salary he even declared that he was tired of living in misery and that if he was to concentrate his full energies in his ministry he needed the extra income. The grant of a quarter of *comisos* income is all the more interesting because it was part of his relentless drive for reforms—an example in which policy change allowed him to accumulate more wealth on his own account. The November 1785 endowment was also an example of his efforts to create a bureaucratic equilibrium between Spain and the Indies. After all, if Spain's superintendant-general of the Treasury received one-quarter of all *comisos* executed in the metropolis, why should Gálvez not receive his own share in the forfeitures from the colonies?

The *comisos* grant became muddled when the Crown found out that it was completely intermeshed with the concession of one-third of *comisos* Gálvez had obtained on behalf of the Ministry of the Indies. Once more we see the confusion of the private and public spheres in Gálvez's administration of the Empire, a constant in his career. It is hard to tell if the *comiso* funds that pertained to the secretariat, and were deposited in his personal account, allowed him to profit personally; that is, if this was a form of corruption. There is no convincing evidence on this question one way or the other. At least Charles III settled the score somehow by issuing the royal order of 12 February 1788 which recognized that the one-third share of *comisos* belonged to Gálvez's personal income, too, while at the same time, reduced the quarter shares grant by discounting the thirds already remitted. As I concluded, it is not clear if the February 1788 order favored the Crown or Gálvez, or if it was executed at all in several parts of the Empire.

But what was José de Gálvez's material life like after he became minister of the Indies? Only bits and pieces of evidence are available about what he did with this money after 1776. As chapter four demonstrated, it is obvious that he had acquired a taste for luxury before he became minister of state. Regrettably, there are no inventories of his personal possessions during this period, such as the one he ordered before leaving for New Spain in 1765. We can only imagine that he and his family dressed exquisitely, and that they owned elegant furniture and carriages. In relation to real estate, I showed that it did not figure prominently in his last will of April 1787: he just mentioned that "the houses and real estate he owned in the city of Málaga and its jurisdiction and in the village of Macharaviaya and its district" were to be incorporated into his daughter's

*mayorazgo*.<sup>172</sup> It is hard to determine of which type, how numerous, or how valuable these properties were, with the notable exception of two recorded real estate purchases: a large one of rural lands in Andalusia in 1782, and another of a lot in the city of Málaga in 1786.<sup>173</sup> Gálvez also devoted part of his money to pious ends. In chapter three I mentioned how he and his brothers practically reconstructed the parochial church of Macharaviaya. In fact, inside the building José de Gálvez and Concepción Valenzuela

<sup>172</sup> Gálvez, “Testamento 1787,” 170.

<sup>173</sup> In 1782, Gálvez purchased 601 *fanegas* of land in the environs of Vélez-Málaga. By then, he already owned properties close to his place of birth: a power of attorney of 1781 given to José de Madrid, a neighbor in Macharaviaya, shows that the minister of the Indies gave him powers to administer the “haciendas, houses and other real estate” he possessed in the village. In 1782, Gálvez issued another proxy letter with powers to buy land on his behalf to Pedro de Ortega y Monroy, general administrator of the royal treasury of Vélez-Málaga. The lands he was purchasing belonged to Antonio de Salazar (*regidor* of Vélez), who possessed a *mayorazgo* founded by his ancestor Fernando Manso Maldonado (also *regidor*, but in the sixteenth century) and had been given permission by the monarch to break the entail by selling his lands. The 601 *fanegas* were distributed in 12 *cortijos* of different sizes and three separated one-*fanega*-sized lots. The properties were adjacent to Vélez-Málaga and the town of Algarrobo. Trees—mainly evergreen oaks, olives, *acebuches* (a sort of “wild” olive), and carobs—constituted the wealth of these lands. The largest *cortijo*, named “Cruz de Miranda,” counted 138 trees. The price for the sale, according to the letter, was 107,890 *reales*, a strong sum for one purchase. In early 1785 Gálvez assigned another manager, Juan González de Porras, to administer all “real estate, houses, vines, lands and other *fincas* and possessions, that by any title or reason belong to me” in Macharaviaya. Finally, in May 1786 Gálvez issued yet another power of attorney to Pedro de Ortega y Monroy, who by then was general administrator of the customs in Málaga, in order to buy a lot (*un sitio de construcción*) located close to the Old Wall of Málaga, with the intention of building a house in that port city. Just to add a side note: one of Gálvez’s agents, Pedro de Ortega y Monroy went from general administrator of the treasury in Vélez-Málaga to administrator of the customs of the port of Málaga in the 1782-1786 period. His brother, José, was the first director of the Maritime School of San Telmo, also located in that port city. Both brothers became knights of the order of Charles III: José in 1787 and Pedro in 1788. The School of San Telmo was one of Gálvez’s main projects for Málaga, as I mentioned in chapter three, thus I suspect the Ortega y Monroy brothers advanced their administrative careers under the shadow of the minister of the Indies. See power to administer properties in Macharaviaya, from Gálvez to José de Madrid, resident in Macharaviaya, Madrid, Aranjuez, 19 Jun. 1781, AHPM, vol. 29412, fols. 245-246; power to buy land on his name, from Gálvez to Pedro Ortega, resident in Vélez-Málaga and royal treasury official, Madrid, 29 Dec. 1782, AHPM, vol. 18671, fols. 363-365; power to administer properties in Macharaviaya, from Gálvez to Juan González de Porras, resident in Macharaviaya, Madrid, 28 Jan. 1785, AHPM, vol. 18672, fols. 27-28; and power to buy real estate and build a house in Málaga, from Gálvez to Ortega, resident in Málaga and general administrator of the customs, Aranjuez, 9 May 1786, AHPM, vol. 29414, fols. 151-152, in *México en el siglo XVIII*, 127-129, 137-139, 140-142, and 157-158. For the disincorporation of the *mayorazgo* of Manso Maldonado in Vélez-Málaga see a short piece by a historian of the Axarquía, Purificación Ruiz García, “La Molineta,” n.d, available at <http://www.fileden.com/files/2007/12/15/1646204/LA%20MOLINETA.pdf>. For the Ortega y Monroy brothers, “Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, José de Ortega y Monroy, Valenzuela y Pizarro,” 1787, AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp. 266, and “Expediente de pruebas del caballero de la orden de Carlos III, Pedro de Ortega y Monroy, Valenzuela y Pizarro,” 1788, AHN, Estado-Carlos III, exp. 290.

“owned” the *Desposorios* chapel, with its ornaments and jewels. In his last will Gálvez asked his wife and daughter to continue paying after his death 400 ducats annually (around 550 *pesos fuertes*) to a secular priest to celebrate daily masses in their chapel.<sup>174</sup> When Gálvez died, Fernando Mangino, as executor of Gálvez’s will in Mexico City, presided over the donation of an expensive silver lamp to illuminate the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe.<sup>175</sup> The last two recorded investments of Gálvez’s fortune were in the famous state enterprises of the time: he was a shareholder at the *Banco Nacional de San Carlos* (briefly mentioned in chapter three) and the *Real Compañía de Filipinas*.<sup>176</sup>

The Andalusian minister’s great power over the affairs of the Indies allowed him to gather other precious assets that he probably did not obtain through purchase, however. Some were financially unimportant, such as avocado trees that, at least in the province of Málaga, could only be found in one of his *fincas*.<sup>177</sup> When British mineralogist Joseph Townsend visited Madrid in the second half of the 1780s, the vice director of Charles III’s cabinet of natural history recommended that he visit the private cabinet of the Marqués de Sonora. Townsend was astonished at the beauty of the emeralds he found there, which were superior “for luster and for size” to any he had seen. He also encountered “good specimens of gold and silver, with artificial birds in filigree, from the

<sup>174</sup> Gálvez, “Testamento 1787,” 170.

<sup>175</sup> “Fundación hecha por el Sr. Marqués de Sonora D. José de Gálvez, para dotar de alumbrado la Colegiata de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe,” Mexico City, 20 Oct. 1787, AGNM, Bienes Nacionales, vol. 1906, exp. 1.

<sup>176</sup> Gálvez, “Testamento 1787,” 170.

<sup>177</sup> In his *Conversaciones Históricas Malagueñas*, father Cristobal Medina listed all the plants from the Indies that grew in the province of Málaga. His reference to avocado is very telling of Gálvez’s relationship with the Americas: “Avocado, tree brought from Europe, it produces a fruit bigger than the largest pears, with the same shape. It is grown in the orchard of the His Excellency the Marqués de Sonora, partido of Almayate, in the direction of Vélez-Málaga,” Cecilio García de la Leña [Cristóbal Medina Conde], *Conversaciones históricas malagueñas, o materiales de noticias seguras para formar la historia civil, natural y eclesiástica de la M.I. ciudad de Málaga* (Málaga: Oficina del Impresor de la Dignidad Episcopal, 1789), 153; and see also Julián Díaz Robledo, *Historia del aguacate español: 1955-1996* (Madrid: Eilea, 1997). Vélez-Málaga is today a top avocado-producing region in Europe.

East Indies, which must give pleasure to all who can admire the works of art.” According to Townsend, the collection was valuable, but the Englishman was disappointed with Gálvez nonetheless, since in his opinion he “most evidently had no taste for science, and was solicitous, not to acquire knowledge, *but to increase his treasure*.”<sup>178</sup>

The New World fortune that Gálvez bequeathed to his wife and daughter allowed them, ultimately, to thrive as women of status and property in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. By this I mean that their inherited wealth did not simply let them buy a ruined palace and rebuild it even more splendidly. More significantly, the Marquesa of Sonora *viuda* and the Condesa of Castro-Terreño became important benefactors for the poor in Madrid at the turn of the century. In late 1789, the Marquesa de Sonora became a member of the prestigious *Junta de Honor y Mérito de la Real Sociedad Económica Matritense de Amigos del País*, also known as the *Junta de Damas de la Real Sociedad Económica Matritense*.<sup>179</sup> Founded in 1786 and composed of elite, enlightened women mainly from Madrid, the *Junta de Damas* devoted its energies to philanthropic ends, such as charity and helping to promote education among the poor, particularly women.<sup>180</sup> Gálvez’s widow quickly ascended to important positions inside

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<sup>178</sup> Joseph Townsend, *A Journey through Spain in the years 1786 and 1787; with particular attention to the agriculture, manufactures, commerce, population, taxes, and revenue of that country; and remarks in passing through a part of France*, 2nd ed. (London: C. Dilly, 1792), 1:288-289, my emphasis. This harsh view of Gálvez contrasts with the support he gave to scientific expeditions during his years at the ministry of the Indies.

<sup>179</sup> *Estatutos de la Junta de Socias de Honor y Mérito de la Real Sociedad Económica de Madrid* (Madrid: Imprenta de D. Miguel de Burgos, 1830), 29. The all-male precursor of the *Junta de Damas* was the *Real Sociedad Económica Matritense de Amigos del País* founded in 1775, an association in charge of promoting industry, commerce, patents, charity, and education. José de Gálvez was one of its members.

<sup>180</sup> Spain’s top female intellectual figure in the eighteenth century, Josefa Amar y Borbón, formed part of the *Junta de Damas*’ original founders, along with María Isidra Quintana de Guzmán y de la Cerda (who obtained her doctorate in philosophy and literature at the University of Alcalá), María del Rosario Cepeda y Mayo (honorary *regidora* of Cádiz), and members of the nobility, such as the Duquesa de Osuna, the Condesa de Montijo, and the Condesa de Torrepalma y Truillas. Queen María Luisa de Parma quickly joined in as “protector” of the *Junta*. The main projects of the *Junta de Damas* were the *Escuelas*



this women-only organization, and by the catastrophic year of 1808 she had functioned as vice-president of the *Junta de Damas* for several terms. In 1809, the Marquesa de Sonora assumed full control when the incumbent president of the society had to escape from Madrid for political reasons. Despite her fragile health, she skillfully kept the organization afloat during those turbulent years presided over by the usurper King Joseph I. Concepción Valenzuela died in 1811, aged 70.

Thanks to the financial resources of her parents, María Josefa de Gálvez had received the best possible education available for women at the time. At an early age she had already acquired “more than common” knowledge of the humanities, sciences, and languages.<sup>181</sup> Yet her life-long passion was philanthropy.<sup>182</sup> She joined her mother at the *Junta de Damas* in 1795. In 1804, poet María Rosa de Gálvez published an ode to charity dedicated to her niece, the Condesa of Castro-Terreño.<sup>183</sup> Interestingly enough, for Josefa de Gálvez philanthropy went hand in hand with politics. This is not surprising: her mother had raised her among the most enlightened and liberal political circles of Madrid.<sup>184</sup> A sign of the dowager Marquesa de Sonora’s enlightened spirit is that in 1796

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*Patrióticas* and the direction of *La Inclusa* (an orphanage), and the *Colegio de la Paz* (a shelter for girls that were more than seven-years-old and, because of their age, could not continue living in *La Inclusa*). The dowager Marquesa de Sonora acted as the *Inclusa* curator for some years. She also belonged to another organization similar to the *Junta de Damas*, the *Asociación de Señoras de la Cárcel de la Galera*, in charge of looking after the wellbeing of imprisoned women. Unless otherwise noticed, most of the information on the Marquesa de Sonora’s and the Condesa de Castro-Terreño’s charitable and patriotic activities comes from Elisa Martín-Valdepeñas Yagüe, “Afrancesadas y patriotas: la Junta de Honor y Mérito de la Real Sociedad Económica Matritense de Amigos del País,” in *Heroínas y patriotas: mujeres de 1808*, ed. Irene Castells, Gloria Espigado, and María Cruz Romeo (Madrid: Cátedra, 2009), 343-370.

<sup>181</sup> Eulogy of the Condesa de Castro-Terreño published in *Gaceta de Madrid*, no. 93, 5 Aug. 1817, 827 (hereafter cited as “Eulogy of Josefa de Gálvez”).

<sup>182</sup> Her eulogy stated that she had been a member of all the charitable societies available at the time; *ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> María Rosa de Gálvez, “La Beneficiencia,” *Obras poéticas de Doña María Rosa Gálvez de Cabrera* (Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1804), 1:9-13. The poem was inspired by Josefa de Gálvez’s *Elogio a la reina* of 1801 in which she had made a great defense of the virtues of charity.

<sup>184</sup> When Alexander von Humboldt arrived in Madrid in 1799—the city where he would obtain his official commission to explore the Americas—he immediately related to the more liberal political circles. One of

she won a prize and the publication of her *Eulogy for Queen María Luisa*. In this booklet, Concepción de Valenzuela called María Luisa a “generous queen” (a “*reina liberal*”).

The marquise criticized Spanish society’s emphasis on domestic virtue, arguing that it was a disgrace that “modern customs” accused women of “a lack of heroism.” According to her, “women, with the fortitude, great soul, and [sense of] equality” of Queen María Luisa could be considered heroes, too.<sup>185</sup> What she did not imagine, however, was that her daughter was going to become a heroine for the patriotic cause a few years later.

The year 1811 was a dreadful one for Josefa de Gálvez: her mother died, her husband was commissioned to New Spain, and on 22 May she was taken prisoner and secluded in a convent for seven-and-a-half months because of her support for the patriotic cause against French rule. Alluding to her father, years later her obituary explained that, provided with a “great and generous heart, [the Condesa de Castro-Terreño] had deployed all her energy and *inherited patriotism*” during the captivity of King Ferdinand VII. She had “sacrificed *her considerable wealth*” to maintain (under great risk) the lines

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these was the famous *tertulia* of María Francisca de Sales de Portocarrero, the Condesa de Montijo, frequented by politicians who had been contemporaries of José de Gálvez such as Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, Francisco de Cabarrús, the Conde de Campomanes, and the O’Reillys. Montijo was an active member of the *Junta de Damas* along with the Marquesa de Sonora and she must have been the connection between the great German explorer and Gálvez’s widow. Afterwards, Humboldt would frequent the “Señora de Gálvez home” during his stay in that city almost on a daily basis as he explained in a letter written to engineer Miguel de Constanzó: he talked about a common friend, Mr. Decis, who “I saw daily in Madrid in the house of Ms. de Gálvez, the Marquis of Yranda and the O’Reillys;” see Humboldt to Miguel de Constanzó, Mexico City, 22 November 1803, in José Omar Moncada Moya, *El ingeniero Miguel de Constanzó. Un militar ilustrado en la Nueva España del siglo XVIII* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1994), 332; see also Miguel Ángel Puig-Samper Mulero and Sandra Rebok, *Sentir y medir: Alexander von Humboldt en España* (Aranjuez: Doce Calles, 2007), 97.

<sup>185</sup> Marquesa de Sonora, *Elogio de la Reyna N.S. formado por la Exc.ma Señora Marquesa de Sonora, viuda, y leído en la Junta Pública de distribución de Premios de 17 de marzo de 1796* (Madrid: Imprenta de Sancha, 1796), 2. It is worth noting that in the 1780s, José de Gálvez’s library counted with at least three feminist treatises, which reveals the kind of readings his wife could have enjoyed. The feminist treatises were from 1562, 1768, and another was not dated; see Francisco de Solano, “Reformismo y cultura intelectual: La biblioteca privada de José de Gálvez, Ministro de Indias,” *Quinto Centenario*, no. 2 (1981): 30n102.

of correspondence with the patriotic army chiefs, and to help in the escape of hundreds of prisoners who rejoined the army and helped defend the fatherland.<sup>186</sup> In 1816, in a written recollection of her capture and confinement, Gálvez noted that it seemed that the Josephine government had singled her out as a subject of annihilation through a broad range of insults. The less painful of these abuses had been the immediate loss of her “mules, *silver*, and the ruining of *her rich haciendas* in Puerto Real,” the worst affront that she was conducted to her imprisonment surrounded by naked sabres and had been forced to stand half an hour facing the gallows.<sup>187</sup> From the entrails of the convent of the Concepción Franciscana she continued her support for the insurrection, her epitaph recalling her father one more time, “*correspondiendo así con las santas obligaciones que la imponían el gran Ministro que la dió el ser.*”<sup>188</sup> When the patriots managed to expel the brother of Napoleon Bonaparte from power, Castro-Terreño returned to her normal life. In late 1813, she had succeeded her mother as one of the leaders of the *Junta de Damas* by becoming the association’s secretary. Using a language swollen with patriotism, she published an appeal to all ladies in Madrid, without distinction of class, to join the *Junta de Damas* in their task of sewing uniforms for the soldiers.<sup>189</sup> She took this project even a step further in forming a separate organization called the *Compañía de Señoras de Fernando VII* dedicated to provide the army with uniforms through donations and their own sewing work. For all her patriotic endeavors she was awarded with the

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<sup>186</sup> “Eulogy of Josefa de Gálvez,” 827, my emphasis.

<sup>187</sup> Request for a badge of the Order of Noble Ladies of Queen María Luisa written by Condesa de Castro-Terreño, Madrid, 22 May 1816, AHN, Estado, leg. 7562, exp. 16, my emphasis. The destroyed “rich *haciendas*” in Puerto Real (Andalusia) were for sure part of the inheritance left by her aunt, the poet María Rosa de Gálvez.

<sup>188</sup> “Eulogy of Josefa de Gálvez,” 827.

<sup>189</sup> See Josefa de Gálvez’s appeal in *El Universal*, 12 Feb. 1814, 170, cited in Elisa Martín-Valdepeñas, “Afrancesadas y patriotas,” 358.

Sash and Cross of the Order of Queen María Luisa in 1816. Gálvez's daughter, the great benefactress, died a year later after a long disease, at the age of 40 years.

In conclusion, the Galvez women invested a great part of their inherited fortune in their charitable and political activities. The remainder of the minister's wealth found a similar destiny: it ended up in the hands of women. By the second quarter of the nineteenth century the third generation of Galvezes had only one representative, Matilde de Gálvez, the second child of the Andalusian minister's only nephew, Bernardo. Her older brother, Miguel de Gálvez, second Conde de Gálvez and heir to the Sonora Marquisate after the death of Josefa de Gálvez, died in 1825. Matilde, who had married into a family of noble Neapolitans, thus became the third Condesa de Gálvez and the third Marquesa de Sonora, inheriting the wealth of her father Bernardo and of her first cousin once removed Josefa.<sup>190</sup> In 1827, the mother of three daughters (Pauline, Adelaide, and Clotilde) became a widow. On her last trip to Andalusia to settle her affairs and those of her daughters, Matilde fell ill in Málaga and died. The daughters who accompanied her on that fateful trip returned to Naples orphans, but also heirs to a considerable fortune.

Pauline inherited the family's titles and married into the powerful Del Balzo family.<sup>191</sup> Adelaide and Clotilde resolved never to marry, and to take care of each other. The unmarried sisters enjoyed a life few nineteenth-century women could equal: devoted

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<sup>190</sup> In 1795 Matilde de Gálvez y Saint-Maxent married Marshall Raimondo Capece Minutolo, son of the Prince of Canosa.

<sup>191</sup> Pauline Capece Minutolo's son, Ernesto del Balzo, inherited the Gálvez and Sonora titles and married Lady Dorothy Walpole, from the British nobility. Pauline's daughter Adelaida del Balzo (married to Francesco Pignatelli, prince of Strongoli) became a tireless educator and philanthropist, devoting her life to improving women's education and founding in 1895 the *Istituto Suor Orsola Benincasa* (the *Suor Orsola Benincasa* University of Naples today).

to both theological and scientific knowledge, the arts (particularly music), philanthropy, and aristocratic socialization, they lived in a Greek-temple-styled pavilion at a villa on the hill of Posillipo, overlooking the bay of Naples, with Mount Vesuvius on the horizon. In the 1860s they decided to spend their fortune in the construction of a monumental church (Santa Maria di Bellavista) on a plot donated by the last king of the Two Sicilies, Francis II. They achieved their goal in only four years, and with their resources on the verge of extinction they lived modestly in one of the towers attached to the wings of the building.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> See Mrs. Augustus Craven [Pauline la Feronnays Craven], *Adélaïde Capece Minutolo*, 9th ed (Paris: Didier et Cie., 1882; edited in English as *A Noble Lady: Adelaide Capece Minutolo*, trans. Emily Bowles, London: Burns, Oates, and Company, 1869), and Maria Angarano, “Sorelle, (non) madri, nipoti, tra *pietas* cristiana e passione risorgimentale,” in *Scritture femminili e storia*, ed. Laura Guidi. (Naples: ClioPress, 2004), 191-237.

## Conclusion

### **The Gálvez Era (Reprise)**

*Joseph de Galbez, loco para el mundo,  
infeliz para él, rueguen a Dios  
que sea feliz en el otro*<sup>1</sup>  
José de Gálvez, 1769

*El sueño de la razón  
produce monstruos*<sup>2</sup>  
“Los Caprichos,” ca. 1799  
Francisco de Goya

### **The Underlying Motivations**

In early October 1769, the so-called Sonora military expedition reached the barracks of Pitic, an arid, recently abandoned presidio in the modern Mexican state of Sonora. The leader of the campaign was José de Gálvez. In the next few days at the Pitic barracks, the visitor-general of New Spain discussed with his military officers the plans for a definitive assault on the mountains of Cerro Prieto. These were a natural stronghold used as headquarters by the Seris and Upper Pimas, nomadic indigenous peoples who for three decades had repeatedly raided the surrounding Spanish settlements as a way to resist imperial encroachment on their territories. According to Gálvez’s ambitious plans, once pacified, the province of Sonora was going to become a model for the development of the Spanish imperial frontier through peace, colonization, and mining.<sup>3</sup> In the chilly,

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<sup>1</sup> H. I. Priestley’s translation is “Joseph de Galvez, insane for this world; pray for him, that he may be happy in the next;” see his *José de Gálvez, Visitor-general of New Spain (1765-1771)* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1980; first published 1916 by University of California Press), 280.

<sup>2</sup> “The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters” is a famous etching by Francisco de Goya.

<sup>3</sup> In August 1785, King Charles III bestowed the title of Marqués de Sonora to José de Gálvez. A contemporary French diplomat explained that the denomination of Sonora was chosen “from the name of a colony which [Gálvez] had organized, and secured from the incursions of the savages;” see Jean-François Bourgoing, *Modern State of Spain: Exhibiting a Complete View of its Topography, Government, Laws, Religion... and Commerce in that Country* (London: John Stockdale, 1808), 1:147.

early morning of 14 October, the visitor-general's closest aides woke up at their boss command. His Most Illustrious, as they called him, had fallen ill with intermittent fevers and chills since early June, but after short convalescences had managed to keep his tireless work rhythm. On that morning, however, José de Gálvez loudly declared that he just had a conversation with Saint Francis of Assisi. The saint had given him some documents, and they had discussed the ineptitude of the expedition's military officers. Saint Francis told Gálvez that he himself would put an end to the Indian insurrection by sending an army of six hundred monkeys from Guatemala, dressed in military uniforms. The army of monkeys, unleashed and running through the Cerro Prieto would effectively banish the enemy and pacify Sonora.

Gálvez mental disease got worse. As the days passed, he was constantly out of his mind. His aides took him to the mission of Ures, a more benign place than Pitic. There, they locked him in a room. From its window, naked, the visitor-general preached to the Indians that he was the Aztec Emperor Moctezuma. The inspector's party moved him later to the town of Arizpe, where he crowned himself as King of Prussia, later of Sweden, and eventually he also stated he was "the Eternal Father." During his long insane episodes, Gálvez wrote hundreds of official decrees that ordered impossible things, such as the construction of a navigable canal from Mexico City to the port of Guaymas, Sonora (a one thousand miles-project). In the following months, he was able to recover from insanity and amazingly he headed toward a brilliant bureaucratic career at the imperial level. What is crucial to note here is that, even in his delirium, Gálvez was being optimistic about the possibilities of attaining his reformist objectives. His imaginary conversation with Saint Francis of Assisi reflected a determination to find

solutions to the problems that his plans for imperial modernization faced in such complex local conditions as those offered by the Seris and Upper Pimas of Cerro Prieto (who, by the way, survived another twenty years before being defeated).<sup>4</sup>

At the closure of this long investigation, I see José de Gálvez as a royal functionary that was ready to use all the methods available, including celestial consulting and armies of monkeys, to modernize the ways in which Spain ran things in its global Empire. Indeed, like a furious army of “uniformed wild animals” the power of the Crown advanced over the lives of the Spanish colonial peoples during the Gálvez era. In this respect, Charles Walker writes that the Bourbon Reforms “dramatically changed relations between Andean society and the state.” For David Brading, this set of structural transformations represented a veritable Spanish “reconquest of America.” John Lynch defines them as a new form of imperialism.<sup>5</sup> The growth of the state in the everyday lives of the Spanish king’s subjects was a process that most of them did not want. The great merchant monopolists of Cádiz and Mexico City, the world magnates of that time, felt that the new policies of free trade endangered their businesses; the new increased taxes on consumption (on tobacco, for example) affected people of all classes and ethnicities; more soldiers meant more possibilities for state repression as indeed occurred during the massive indigenous rebellions of the early 1780s in the Andes; moreover, in 1767 the Crown suppressed the Jesuit order and the Jesuits were the mentors of the local Spanish

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<sup>4</sup> Good accounts of Gálvez’s mental breakdown episodes in Sonora can be found in Priestley, *José de Gálvez*, 278-280; and Mario Hernández Sánchez-Barba, *La última expansión española en América* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1957), 238-251.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Walker, *Smoldering Ashes: Cuzco and the Creation of Republican Peru, 1780-1840* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999), 22; David Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico, 1763-1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 30; John Lynch, introduction to *Latin American Revolutions, 1808-1826: Old and New World Origins* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 16.



American elites. Gálvez was the constant behind these processes of change, and therefore became a target for public acrimony.<sup>6</sup>

Ultimately, José de Gálvez and the army of monkeys is a metaphor for the spirit of the Spanish Enlightenment, of its unwavering effort to infuse life back to senescent imperial Spain, in the hope that it may lead its imperial rivals in the concert of Europe again.<sup>7</sup> Alternatively in this dissertation I have portrayed Gálvez as obsessed with advancing his bureaucratic career or finding ways to expand his own power and authority and also underlined his insatiable thirst for the acquisition of wealth and social status. At the end of the day, however, what inspired the Andalusian minister to advance reform in spite of the heavy resistance he encountered in both Spain and the Americas were his strong nationalistic feelings. In the 1790s, the Conde de Cabarrús recalled, for example:

*aquel Gálvez, no bien apreciado por sus contemporáneos... es el único ministro que he tratado que fuese susceptible de entusiasmarse por el bien y la gloria de su país, y al cual sólo faltó para ser un grande hombre haber nacido cuarenta años después.*<sup>8</sup>

Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra writes that Gálvez simply could not stomach foreign insults to Spain: referring to the abbé Guillaume-Thomas-François Raynal's *Histoire philosophique des deux Indes* (1st ed., 1770; 2nd ed., 1774), an anti-Spanish biased history of the Americas, the author cites the secretary of the French ambassador during

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<sup>6</sup> For example, in 1782, the *Libertador*'s father, Juan Vicente Bolívar, wrote a letter to Francisco de Miranda (the "Precursor" of Venezuelan independence) complaining about the "damned minister Gálvez;" see Lynch, *Simón Bolívar: A Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 7.

<sup>7</sup> John Lynch has branded Gálvez as an anti-Enlightenment bigot; see his *Bourbon Spain 1700-1808* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 253. Unlike its French counterpart, however, the Spanish Enlightenment did not promote general, universalist principles, but specific and applied ones. Spanish *ilustrados* like Gálvez had an interest in supporting the sciences, for example, for the advancement and benefit of Spain and its Empire, not of human knowledge.

<sup>8</sup> Conde de Cabarrús, *Cartas sobre los obstáculos que la naturaleza, la opinión y las leyes oponen a la felicidad pública: escritas por el Conde de Cabarrús al Señor Don Gaspar de Jovellanos y precedidas de otra al Príncipe de la Paz* (Vitoria: Imprenta de Don Pedro Real, 1808), letter no. 5, 81.

the Gálvez era writing in the early nineteenth century that “I have often seen Gálvez, minister of the Indies, burst into violent passion at the mere mention of [Raynal].”<sup>9</sup>

Nationalism in late eighteenth-century Spain had a distinctive imperialistic character since the metropole itself was nothing but a mosaic of peoples and languages with diverse identities. Gálvez and other Bourbon reformers, therefore, found in the Empire and its defense a source of collective identity and pride that stimulated them to further their reformist programs.<sup>10</sup>

### Three Levels of Significance

#### State Reform (and the Bourbon Reforms)

The general conclusions of this dissertation can be outlined as having three different levels. The top level relates to the context of large-scale state reform in general, and the Bourbon Reforms in the Spanish Empire in particular. From an analytical or theoretical perspective, academic literature seldom treats the phenomenon of “reform” as a concept that deserves a separate discussion. In any case, political scientists talk about “institutional change,” and it is rare to find works about state reform itself.<sup>11</sup> The word

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<sup>9</sup> Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Historiographies, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 181. Cañizares-Esguerra also wrote about José de Gálvez’s patriotism in his battles against another anti-Spanish biased publication: William Robertson’s *History of America* (1777). In 1778, the minister of the Indies, managed to ban the English edition and to suspend the project of a Spanish publication on the grounds that it was necessary to “impugn anything that is offensive and goes contrary to the national glory,” see *ibid.*, 178.

<sup>10</sup> Not surprisingly, José de Gálvez has been called a “hard-line imperialist” and David Weber remarks that he was the first Spanish functionary to refer to Spain’s overseas territories as “colonies,” see Lynch, *Bourbon Spain*, 253, and David J. Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and their Savages in the Age of Enlightenment* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 3.

<sup>11</sup> A work whose main topic are reforms, but without the word in its title is James C. Scott’s *Seeing Like a State*. Theoretically, this work has been central to my research. Scott studies state modernization efforts since the eighteenth century and tries to explain why they have failed. His examples from eighteenth-century Germany and France gave me ideas on what was in the heads of Spanish Bourbon reformers, on

“reform” is loaded with political content in the Spanish-speaking world. In contemporary Mexico, for example, candidates to high political positions repeat *ad nauseam*, but always in a solemn tone that they will advance “the reforms that the country needs.” Mexican politicians do not even have to explain what set of institutional changes they have in mind, but there is a tacit societal understanding that transcendental issues for the country are at stake.<sup>12</sup>

In my opinion, structural state reforms can be thought as radical instances of change that could even rival revolutions. Revolutions are perhaps the most dramatic episodes of political, economic, and social change, but *agents outside the state* initiate them: the people, in the case of social revolutions, or disgruntled elites opposing the prevailing system in political ones. *Agents acting at the heart of the state itself* carry out reforms, however. A state is usually a conservative being; the less it changes, the better for its stability and endurance.<sup>13</sup> Thus it is particularly dramatic that sometimes the state is willing to risk its own stability to achieve transformations in the ways it relates to its subjects, by changing the economy, administration, and even aspects of society and culture. Reforms can be thought of as as a surgeon performing an operation on her own body, with the hope of avoiding the intervention of other physicians she does not trust.

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what they were trying to achieve in the context of other reformist policies in eighteenth-century Europe; see Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998) and also Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

<sup>12</sup> Scholars and political commentators in Mexico rack their brains trying to figure out what politicians really mean by the “reforms that the country needs” phrase; see, for example: Gerardo Esquivel, “¿Cómo crecer?,” *Nexos en línea*, 1 December 2011, available online at <http://www.nexos.com.mx/?P=leerarticulo&Article=2102461>

<sup>13</sup> In this sense, Karl Marx argued that the modern state is essentially a conservative force: its coercive capacity may undermine social movements that threaten the *status quo*, and it has a sustained belief in the inviolability of existing arrangements (the law); David Held, *Political Theory and the Modern State: Essays on State, Power and Democracy* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1989), 33.

Central to this dissertation is the placing of “reform” at the center of the discussion, an opportunity to explore the dynamics produced by *transitional political moments*.

The Bourbon Reforms are one of the best-studied periods in the historiography of colonial Latin America, perhaps only second or equal to the Conquest. Historical literature focuses on two aspects: their intellectual origins or whether these reforms were successful or not. Historians have explored the first theme mainly through the analysis of the works of the *tratadistas* (or *proyectistas*, political thinkers) of the first half of the eighteenth century, such as Gerónimo de Ustáritz, José del Campillo, Father Benito Feijóo, Bernardo Ward, and even Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa.<sup>14</sup> The larger body of literature on the Bourbon Reforms, however, belongs to the debate on their results, and here the positive evaluations preceded the negative views. In the early 1900s, H. I. Priestley highlighted a new efficient administration and rapid economic growth as José de Gálvez’s legacies for New Spain. David Brading retook this interpretation in the 1970s to characterize the period as a successful “revolution in government.” Yet, the British historian himself recognized that the Bourbon Reforms “failed miserably” at the local levels of government.<sup>15</sup> A crack had been opened, and a tsunami of revisionist works contradicted the former vision of achieved prosperity for Spain and her colonies during the second part of the eighteenth century. The criticisms ranged from outward denunciations of the reformers’ incompetence and null results (Linda Salvucci),<sup>16</sup> to

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<sup>14</sup> MacLachlan’s work and the first volume of the Steins trilogy are good examples; see Colin MacLachlan, *Spain’s Empire in the New World: The Role of Ideas in Institutional and Social Change* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) and Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein, *Silver, Trade, and War: Spain and America in the Making of Early Modern Europe* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

<sup>15</sup> Priestley, *José de Gálvez* and Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico*, 88.

<sup>16</sup> Salvucci writes: “*es evidente que los esfuerzos de Gálvez por hacer cumplir la reforma no tuvieron los resultados esperados, no tanto por la intervención de otros cuanto por su limitada visión de lo que era la*

more nuanced approaches looking for explanations as to why a particular intended reform did not function in practice (take for instance, Jeremy Baskes' study of the *repartimiento de mercancías* in Oaxaca).<sup>17</sup>

My dissertation goes beyond the discussions on the origins or the results of the Bourbon Reforms because I focus on the moment of change and on reformers themselves. Asking questions such as how did Bourbon reformers initiate institutional change, that crucial moment when a functionary jumps from a project in paper to actual policy implementation; how was the bureaucratic routine of reform; how reformers organized; how they constructed tight networks of patronage that were political; what reformers thought they were going to achieve in terms of institutional change, but also in terms of gains for themselves. This is a totally new approach to study the period while, at the same time, continues to illuminate the debates dominating historical literature. For those studies exploring the origins of the Bourbon Reforms, my dissertation functions as an epilogue on how the ideas conceived by the *proyectistas* turned into practice; no doubt, Gálvez's life provides the script because he was a man of action in the public and political spheres, rather than a closeted thinker or philosophical speculator. For the heated

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*administración imperial. Es cierto que durante su visita se formularon notables proyectos para reorganizar la burocracia fiscal, pero muchas propuestas nunca llegaron a la práctica.*" According to this author, historians like H. I. Priestley confused José de Gálvez's achievements with his intentions; see her "Costumbres viejas, 'hombres nuevos.' José de Gálvez y la burocracia fiscal novohispana, 1754-1800," *Historia Mexicana* 33, no. 2 (1983): 255-257.

<sup>17</sup> One of the central Galvezian topics I did not touch in this dissertation is José de Gálvez's policies regarding the local district magistrates, the *alcaldes mayores*, who benefited with the practice of the forced *repartimiento de mercancías*. Basically, the *repartimiento* involved the distribution of different goods and livestock by the *alcalde mayor* to the indigenous population under their jurisdiction in return for the natives' products or money. Gálvez thought this forced distribution was just an opportunity for business for the *alcaldes mayores*, who, in addition, exploited the Indians. The intendancy system was the solution to this problem since it would replace *alcaldes mayores* with salaried officials called *subdelegados*. Baskes found out that, in practice, *subdelegados* appropriated the formal and the informal functions of the *alcaldes mayores*, including that of the *repartimiento* (despite being a practice banned by the Crown); see Jeremy Baskes, *Indians, Merchants, and Markets: A Reinterpretation of the Repartimiento and Spanish-Indian Economic Relations in Colonial Oaxaca, 1750-1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

debate on the positive, null, or negative results of the Bourbon Reforms, my approach goes hand in hand with a phenomenon explained by James C. Scott about a certain “indelible residue” left by modernizing state transformation efforts facing implementation problems at the local level. Scott argues that, “backed by state power through records, courts, and ultimately coercion, these state fictions [i.e., reformist plans] transformed the reality they presumed to observe, although never so thoroughly as to precisely fit the grid.”<sup>18</sup> José de Gálvez’s project for reform was never implemented to the letter; nevertheless, there is no doubt it transformed the Empire’s reality in many, sometimes unexpected, ways. At this higher level, therefore, my dissertation is part of the back-story of why Spanish America exists as it does today, despite attempts to reform colonial structure and retain the Empire. In my view, the Bourbon Reforms during the Gálvez era were the first (and probably the most ambitious) scheme of large-scale institutional modernization led by an authoritarian state in the history of Spanish America.

### **Political Culture (and Corruption)**

At its middle level, my work is a case study of how traditional practices of political culture—the personal acquisition of wealth by public officials, certainly, and arguably “corruption,” but also the mobilization of patronage networks and nepotism—can be adapted to transitional political moments, for good or ill. From my understanding of political culture as “the fundamental sub-stratum of thinking about public life, the basic rules of the game, what people expect to gain from political participation, and what

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<sup>18</sup> Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 24.

politics *means* to people,”<sup>19</sup> I study how Gálvez and his retinue used these practices as necessary tools to enable and execute modernization policies. The study of political culture in the past presents several methodological challenges to the historian, however.

In the 1950s, like a modern Prometheus, political scientist Gabriel Almond took the concept of culture from its ancient temple in Anthropology to illuminate his discipline. From then on the quantitative method, the use of survey data became central for Political Science as a discipline. In the 1980s, historians undertook the examination of political culture, an effort in which historians of the United States were the pioneers.<sup>20</sup> In the field of Latin American history, political culture remains a relatively unexplored topic of research. The challenge for historians is how to use this concept in the production of historical findings. Unless we are contemporary historians, we cannot apply surveys to our subjects of study; therefore, we necessarily need to find political culture through a careful reading of our historical texts. In my study of political networks, in trying to reconstruct the “who is with whom and why,” the study of what I call “political gossip” has been relevant. Unlike other European countries, the press was only in its beginnings in Spain and its Empire. For royal functionaries, personal and secret (*reservada*) correspondence constituted spaces to ventilate opinions on the ongoing occurrences in the political sphere. Unfortunately, the number of private and *reservada* letters that I could find was dismayingly small. The exquisite formality of José de Gálvez’s official

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<sup>19</sup> Eric Van Young, “Ethnicity, Village Politics, and insurgency in Mexico, 1810-1821,” original manuscript, later published as “Etnia, política local e insurgencia en México, 1810- 1821,” in *Los colores de las independencias iberoamericanas: liberalismo, etnia y raza*, ed. Manuel Chust and Ivana Frasset (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2009), 143-169.

<sup>20</sup> Stephen Welch, *The Concept of Political Culture* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993).

correspondence was frustrating in this respect, too. I had to develop creative methods to find political gossip.

Memoires and chronicles became an excellent source to capture personal connections among imperial bureaucrats; the reading of official (and unofficial) documents written by the Andalusian minister's opponents, such as the reports of accountant-general of the Indies, Tomás Ortiz de Landázuri, or the bitter writings of the Marqués de la Corona, was useful, as well; a diverse array of anonymous documents giving their views on the current public affairs, such as the *Apuntes sucintos y prácticos de la América Española para quien más interesa en su mejor Gobierno* (ca. 1777) allowed me expand my panorama about politics and politicians in the Spanish Empire;<sup>21</sup> finally, the notes penned by Gálvez and other functionaries on the margins of official correspondence were scarce but revealing snapshots of the instant opinions of early-modern decision-makers. With this battery of unusual sources of political gossip, I analyzed levels of interpersonal trust, group-forming propensity, the assumptions Gálvez and his network of protégés shared about belonging to the service of the king in a moment of institutional change, their expectations for gain from this program of reform, and the growth of intolerance against political corruption in a particular point in time. My chapters reflect all of this, thus, in the first three I study how Galvez created impressive networks of patronage and nepotism, and in the last two I analyze how he became rich through the personal and institutional connections he had developed in the New World. My work ultimately portrays the Galvezian juggernaut's size and sophistication, and places it as the main driving force behind large-scale imperial modernization.

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<sup>21</sup> *Apuntes sucintos y prácticos de la América Española*, ca. 1777, AGI, Estado, leg. 42, n. 3.



The general discussion of political corruption is part of this mid-level of significance, too. My dissertation presents this phenomenon as a historical problem.<sup>22</sup> Several times I have asked myself the inevitable question of how can you study corruption in a world so different from ours: a world without a free press, without elections, and without media scandals. Even worst, the historical actors that I claim worried about corruption did not use the word in the sense it has today.<sup>23</sup> In addition, one could think that if people in the past were unable to develop a concept of political corruption, therefore they could not be corrupt. Classic scholars of corruption, such as Samuel Huntington, and also James C. Scott, are close to this line of thought when they establish a direct link between corruption and state modernization.<sup>24</sup> They claim that in a context of state modernization problems seem to arise from the survival of attitudes and sentiments from previous systems, traditional behaviors that clash with the emerging rational state bureaucracy. This is essentially what I argue in my dissertation, but I differ from these authors when their arguments imply that officials with traditional behaviors were not conscious of the real nature of their actions; that they had no sense of guilt even

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<sup>22</sup> Other efforts in this sense are: Jean-Claude Waquet, *Corruption: Ethics and Power in Florence, 1600-1700*, trans. Linda McCall (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992); Horst Pietschmann, "Burocracia y corrupción en Hispanoamérica colonial: una aproximación tentativa," *Nova America*, no. 5 (1982): 11-37; Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, "La lucha contra la corrupción en la Nueva España según la visión de los neoestoicos," *Historia Mexicana* 40, no. 3 (2006): 717-765; and Christoph Rosenmüller, *Patrons, Partisans, and Palace Intrigues: The Court Society of Colonial Mexico 1702-1710* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2008).

<sup>23</sup> According to the Royal Academy of Spanish dictionary (DRAE) of 1780, corruption means, among other things, "putrefacción, infección, contaminación de alguna cosa" and also diarrhea. The fifth meaning, however, gives a clear hint of what we currently associate with corruption: "vicio, o abuso introducido en las cosas no materiales, como corrupción de costumbres, de voces, etc." Actually, the modern online DRAE repeats the same definition ("vicio o abuso introducido en las cosas no materiales") before giving the law-based modern meaning of: "en las organizaciones, especialmente en las públicas, práctica consistente en la utilización de las funciones y medios de aquellas en provecho, económico o de otra índole, de sus gestores."

<sup>24</sup> Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968); and James C. Scott, *Comparative Political Corruption* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972).

if taken to the court because they had not assimilated the new system of values; that they were not aware of the criminal nature of their deeds. The fact is that corruption, simply defined as *the abuse of public office for private gain* but also as *the failure of public officers to adhere to ethical standards of integrity* has been condemned for a very long time. Corruption among judges, dishonesty among accountants, and fraudulent activities of royal officials were all considered shocking and reprehensible even before the Age of Enlightenment; they were illegal during the Gálvez era as they are today, and they constituted an ethical problem, too.

In discussions with my colleagues, some of them have mentioned how difficult it is to find “smoking gun documents” when one attempts to study corruption in the past, but there are in fact sufficient documents about the context in which the gun was originally shot. I found formal, judicial accusations of corruption, official reports, and even information on rumors circulating about certain functionaries abusing the prerogatives of their offices on their own or their protégés’ behalf. People in the eighteenth century used other words such as fraud, embezzlement, contraband, all of which today we associate with corruption. These practices performed by royal officials were condemned over and over again as being damaging to the public good and the king’s patrimony, a conflation of interests that the corrupt functionaries were supposed to be defending and protecting. Moreover, the Spanish imperial system had institutions, such as the *Contaduría General de Indias*, the *fiscales* of the *Audiencias* (like Ramón Posada y Soto), and the court of audits, that were in charge of controlling and punishing these shenanigans.

In the early-modern Spanish Empire corruption operated at two different levels. The agents of the Crown targeted fraud and embezzlement instances committed by functionaries at the local levels of government. The fight against corruption in its many forms was one of the rationales behind the implementation of large-scale administrative reforms. Bourbon reformers recognized corruption as a factor that was eroding the authority of the Spanish crown over its American dominions. The denunciation of these practices among customs administrators and the *alcaldes mayores* became José de Gálvez's preferred hobbyhorse during his inspection of New Spain. At the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid and the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, I gathered sufficient materials to study Gálvez's comprehensive reform of the custom houses in the ports of Veracruz, Acapulco, and Campeche in colonial Mexico and how it affected local bureaucrats working at the ports' administration. In his role of visitor-general, Gálvez discharged many underpaid custom officers in the viceroyalty's main port-cities under charges of embezzlement and association with smugglers. In judicial cases that dragged for years, the accused ex-functionaries tried to acquit themselves from the charges. At the same time, and as a way to prevent "corruption," Gálvez raised the wages of those officials who survived his purge. It is my intention in the future to write an article based on a careful reconsideration of these contrasting policies aimed at minor fiscal functionaries that will show the ways in which the rival imperial-level networks of patronage studied in this dissertation extended to lower, regional and local, levels of bureaucracy.

Corruption also operated at the higher levels of the imperial administration. This type of shenanigans received less official scrutiny, however. Crown authorities criticized

and investigated, but never prosecuted the personal enrichment of the Andalusian minister's younger brother in Cádiz. For many years, Pedro Antonio de Cossío seemed to have worn a protective Teflon coat against attacks coming from the barracks of Gálvez's enemies, criticisms that pointed at the merchant's rich harvest of personal benefits from his positions in government. With accusations founded on the same grounds, however, Cossío fell from Gálvez's grace, but his punishment was just a forced retirement from the public sphere. The overarching question in my research is not to find out if corruption existed or not in Spain and its Empire during the eighteenth century. This dissertation did not attempt to search the origins of corruption in Spanish America in order to trace a clear genealogy that linked Gálvez's enrichment or the cases of fraud at the customs in Veracruz with corrupt Mexican politicians buying mansions in Miami or with drug smuggling as it occurs today. My intention was to portray corruption-related practices as a fundamental problem in public life hovering in the minds of eighteenth-century Spanish imperial reformers, as well as in the arguments of the opponents of structural state transformations.

A final point on this issue: I have a second article project tentatively called "*El que no transa, no avanza: A History of Reform and Political Corruption in Mexico.*" The title in Spanish is a popular adage in Mexico which would translate as "the person who does not *make dubious deals*, does not move forward." This project will be an attempt to dissect the history of Mexico and reveal how the abuse of public trust has taken place historically by focusing on three key moments of state reform. The three broad programs of modernization are the Bourbon Reforms advanced by José de Gálvez, the regime of modernizing dictator Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911), and the neoliberal reforms under the

presidency of Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994). This dissertation provides sufficient evidence for the first period but I have yet to determine to what extent Porfirio Díaz and Carlos Salinas (and their respective retinues) dealt with similar situations in order to test the following hypothesis: the waves of top-level political corruption that swept Mexico during the ages of Gálvez, Díaz, and Salinas may be explained by the critical frailty of state institutions *at the moment* of structural reforms in contrast with the vast political power concentrated in the hands of these modernizers.<sup>25</sup> In a context of substantial state reorganization, these leaders and their close collaborators managed to attain economic growth and maintain relative social stability, while at the same time, behind the smoke curtain of success, they either filled their pockets or let their political allies do so.

### **José de Gálvez (and the Future)**

At its lower, more concrete level, my dissertation is the story (at least in part) of one of the major figures in Spanish colonial history, rendered in a way that has not been done before. In 1878, Spanish historian Jacobo de la Pezuela lamented that “*de Gálvez se han escrito muchas notas biográficas, pero ninguna biografía verdadera.*”<sup>26</sup> It is striking that more than a century later one can still argue the same thing even though the Andalusian’s presence is ubiquitous in the historiography of eighteenth-century Spanish America. In the small corpus of works centered exclusively on Gálvez (from Priestley’s

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<sup>25</sup> Gálvez’s power deriving from the confidence the monarch had placed on him and from his impressive networks of patronage; Díaz’s from the coercive capacity of his regime and his retinue of efficient administrators (the *científicos*); and Salinas’s from a long history of *presidencialismo* during the PRI era and his team of neoliberal technocrats. Before I became a historian of the Spanish Empire, I actually tested this hypothesis with a Latin American contemporary of Carlos Salinas; see my unpublished manuscript “Country Taken Over: Political Corruption in Argentina during the Age of Carlos Menem” (2010).

<sup>26</sup> Jacobo de la Pezuela, *Historia de la isla de Cuba* (Madrid: Carlos Bailly-Bailliere, 1878), 3:135n3.

book on the *visita general*, to the multiple contributions by Luis Navarro García, and the publications by other –mainly Spanish—historians and genealogy- and history-aficionados) there is not a single work that dares (or at least attempts) to capture the entirety of his complex biography. This dissertation falls into this group, too. Rather than a consecutive narrative on the life of José de Gálvez, the chapters are a group of studies *autour* the Andalusian minister. The focus on patronage, nepotism, and other types of political social networks required a great deal of prosopography, that is, in a sense this is a reconstruction of the biography of Gálvez but also of hundreds of people around him. In addition, the dissertation opens a window into aspects of his life that had not been explored in detail, if at all. One example is the analysis of his salaries, life pensions, and other sources of income in which the project seems to have given an economic history turn. The detailed discussion on the Andalusian's wardrobe, furniture, and other material possessions is also a novelty in Galvezian historiography. The rich and complex legacy of José de Gálvez begs the writing of a political biography as a revision of this dissertation. Such a book would be attractive to a large academic, as well as lay, readership. In my future book manuscript, I plan to move beyond the current focus on political elites toward Gálvez's relationships with the popular classes in Spanish America. Historiography has overlooked his reforms on the "humanitarian" treatment of slaves and his bureaucratic connections with British abolitionists. Also, there is not a comprehensive study on how the executive agent of the Bourbon Reforms dealt with the wave of popular rebellions that characterized his times.

The Bourbon Reforms period in Spain and its Empire extended from the 1720s (initiating approximately two decades after the arrival of the new dynasty to power in

1700), to the 1808 crisis in Spain, and for some analyzes of Spanish America reaching up to the 1820s. Within this rather diffuse time frame, the Gálvez era (1765-1787) is a coherent period of study because of the consistent, accelerated pace that state transformations achieved during those times. In only two decades, Gálvez extended and applied to Spain's overseas possessions those institutional changes that Bourbon reformers had been slowly introducing in Spain since the 1720s; for instance, as the new intendancies consolidated in Spain, Gálvez applied them *en masse* to the Americas during his years in power. As I showed throughout this dissertation, the coherency of the Gálvez era derives from the minister of the Indies' practice of building on the reformist experience he acquired during the *visita general* of New Spain.

With the exception of the statue sculpted by orders of the Gálvez brothers in the 1780s that is located today at the entrance of the family's burial chamber in the village of Macharaviaya, I have not found any monument commemorating José de Gálvez's numerous contributions to either his *patria chica*, region, country, or to any of the independent Spanish American states. The Archivo General de Indias, for example, does not have a visual sign in recognition of its creator and original patron. There are several possible reasons to explain this general absence and the first one of them could be related to the controversial nature of the Andalusian minister's legacy. Mexican historian Felipe Castro Gutiérrez dedicated one of his books to "the memory of the men and women that were exiled, jailed, mutilated, hanged, and quartered by orders of José de Gálvez," referring to the visitor-general's ruthless repression of the popular rebellions of 1767 in

New Spain.<sup>27</sup> A second reason could be the sort of “anti-Gálvez backlash” that followed his death. The Conde de Floridablanca divided into two secretariats the so-called “Universal Ministry of the Indies” in July 1787, only a month after Gálvez had passed away. In New Spain, the highly innovative office of the superintendant-general of the royal treasury, operating separately from that of the viceroy, was abolished in early 1788. Many of his protégés, still holding positions in government, including his brother Antonio, were subjected to close scrutiny by higher authorities. The truth is that it almost seems as if there had been a concerted effort, in both Spain and the Americas, to erase the memory of José de Gálvez’s rule of the Spanish Empire. I suspect this “selective oblivion” is nothing but a byproduct of an early-modern adverse reaction to personalism in politics exerted by a king’s alter ego, that is, against the vast amounts of power the Andalusian minister held in his hands. After all, according to his contemporary, French diplomat Jean-François Bourgoing, Gálvez’s appointment as minister of the Indies represented at the time “the greatest and most unlimited power that a man, who is not a sovereign, can exercise on the globe.”<sup>28</sup> Despite the obvious anti-Gálvez backlash occurring in the 1790s, new studies on the 1808 Spanish crisis of sovereignty, however, show the Andalusian minister’s creatures trying to reintroduce (through the power of the

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<sup>27</sup> Felipe Castro Gutiérrez, *Nueva ley y nuevo rey: reformas borbónicas y rebelión popular en Nueva España* (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán-Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1996). The Steins were so impressed by Castro’s epigraph that they cited it at the beginning of one of their chapters; see Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein, *Edge of Crisis: War and Trade in the Spanish Atlantic, 1789-1808* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 162.

<sup>28</sup> Bourgoing, *Modern State of Spain*, 2:182.



Junta Central) many of the imperial reforms planned decades earlier under their patron's aegis.<sup>29</sup>

During the later stages of my doctoral research I visited the Museo Nacional de Historia, located inside the Castle of Chapultepec, in Mexico City. I was surprised to find a full-length portrait of José de Gálvez that I did not know existed. What really caught my attention was the painting's legend that read:

Visitor-general Gálvez was a controversial functionary. Although there were some people who benefited from his dispositions, he also left behind a set of grievances in New Spain. A document of 1775 described him as a man without experience, without prudence, without wisdom... in addition he despised Americans.

Then the legend cited from the anonymous document that prophesized, "Gálvez has destroyed more than he has built... [H]is destructive hand is going to prepare the greatest revolution in the American Empire."<sup>30</sup> This dissertation provides a deeper understanding of how the perceived "destructive hand" of José de Gálvez, the chief agent of Spanish imperial modernization, really functioned.

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<sup>29</sup> See for example, Olga González-Silén, *Holding an Empire Together: The Spanish Resistance and Caracas in the Early Years of the War against Napoleon* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, forthcoming). González-Silén identifies Francisco Saavedra as leading this short-lived "Gálvez-era revivalism."

<sup>30</sup> My own photograph. The cited document is actually *Apuntes sucintos y prácticas de la América Española, ca. 1777*. I imagine that the author of the portrait's legend used David Brading's citation of *Apuntes sucintos* in the Spanish translation of his *Miners and Merchants*; see Brading, *Mineros y comerciantes en el México borbónico (1763-1810)*, trans. Roberto Gómez Ciriza (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1975), 63-64.

## Appendix A

### Salaries of Ministers of State and Councilors of State in the second half of the eighteenth century

Name	Main office	King	Salary composition	Salary (in <i>reales de vellón</i> )	Source
Duque de Alcudia (Manuel de Godoy)	Minister of State	Charles IV	Salary of councilor of State and emoluments Minister of State Captain-general of the royal army <i>Sargento Mayor de Guardias</i> Captain of <i>franquicias</i>	134,776  480,000 120,000  60,000 8,400 <hr/> 803,176	*
José de Gálvez, Marqués de Sonora	Minister of the Indies	Charles III	Salary and mesa Governor of the Council of the Indies	400,000 198,000 <hr/> 598,000	*
Marqués de Grimaldi	Minister of State	Charles III	Salary <i>Mesa</i> Bonus “ <i>para que se pudiese mantener con más decencia</i> ”	120,000 180,000  180,000 <hr/> 480,000	*
Antonio de Váldes	Minister of the Navy/Minister of the Indies (Finances, War, and Commerce)	Charles III and Charles IV	Salary Emoluments as councilor of State	400,000 44,776 <hr/> 444,776	*
Conde de Cañada	Governor of the Council of Castile		Emoluments as councilor of State Governor of the Council of Castile and post as <i>camarista</i>	134,776  264,529 <hr/> 399,305	*
Marqués de la Ensenada	Minister of War, Treasury, Navy, and the Indies	Ferdinand VI	Salary of secretary of the Treasury <i>Mesa</i> Superintendant of the Royal Treasury <i>Por las propinas, luminarias ordinarias y casa de aposento por consejero de estado</i>	120,000  180,000 40,000  14,776 <hr/> 354,776	§
Jerónimo Caballero	Minister of War		Emoluments as councilor of State Salary of state minister	44,776  310,000 <hr/> 354,776	*

(cont.)					
Name	Main office	King	Salary composition	Salary	Source
Marqués de Bajamar	Minister of the Indies (Justice)	Charles III and Charles IV	Emoluments as councilor of State Governor of the Council of the Indies	134,776 198,420.14 <hr/> 333,196.14	*
Marqués de Villarías	Minister of Justice	Ferdinand VI	Salary of state minister <i>Mesa</i> Secretary of the Queen <i>Por los gajes y casa de aposento de secretario del rey</i> <i>Por las propinas, luminarias ordinarias y casa de aposento por consejero de estado</i>	120,000 180,000 8,823.18 6,941.06  14,799 <hr/> 330,563.24	§
Conde de Campomanes	Governor of the Council of Castile and minister of <i>cámara</i>		Salary Emoluments as councilor of State	264,529 14,776 <hr/> 279,305	*
Conde de Aranda	Council of State	Charles III	Salary and emoluments from the Council As captain-general of the royal army	134,776 120,000 <hr/> 254,776	*
José Carvajal	Minister of State	Ferdinand VI	Salary of councilor of State Other compensations ( <i>propinas, luminarias</i> and <i>casa de aposento</i> ) Salary of Governor of the Council of the Indies	120,000 14,776  90,000 <hr/> 224,776	§
Manuel Antonio Flores	Councilor of State		Emoluments as councilor of State Lieutenant general	134,776 90,000 <hr/> 224,776	*
Conde del Asalto	Councilor of State		Emoluments as councilor of State Lieutenant general	134,776 90,000 <hr/> 224,776	*
Duque de Almodóvar	Councilor of State		Emoluments as councilor of State <i>Mayordomo Mayor</i>	134,776 67,500 <hr/> 202,276	*
Eugenio Llaguno	Secretary of the Council of State		Salary of secretary of the council and emoluments <i>Ministro Consejero, primer Rey de Armas de la Orden del Toisón</i>	134,776  1,320 <hr/> 136,096	*

(cont.)					
Name	Main office	King	Salary composition	Salary	Source
Conde de Colomera	Councilor of State		Emoluments as councilor of state	134,776	*
Marqués del Socorro	Councilor of State		Emoluments as councilor of state	134,776	*
Conde de Altamira	Councilor of State		Emoluments as councilor of state	14,776	*
Sources:					
<p>* Francisco Pi y Margall, and Francisco Pi y Arsuaga, <i>Historia de España en el siglo XIX. Sucesos políticos, económicos, sociales y artísticos, acaecidos durante el mismo. Detallada narración de sus acontecimientos y extenso juicio crítico de sus hombres</i> (Barcelona: Miguel Seguí Editor, 1902), 1:31-32.</p> <p>§ José Antonio Escudero, <i>Los orígenes del Consejo de Ministros en España. La Junta Suprema de Estado</i> (Madrid: Editorial Nacional, 1979), 1:251.</p>					

## Appendix B

Royal circular orders related to José de Gálvez's requests of shares of *comisos* and list of eighteenth-century official guidelines on how to distribute *comiso* revenues

Table 1	
Royal circular orders (to all the governments in the Indies) on <i>comisos</i>	
Date	Description
6 May 1779	Gálvez requests a one-third of the value of all <i>comisos</i> executed in the Indies to finance the Ministry of the Indies's operations
25 November 1785	Gálvez requests a one-fourth of the value of all <i>comisos</i> executed in the colonies as a reward for his position as superintendant-general of the Indies.
20 November 1787	At the instances of Gálvez's widow, this order reminded the prompt execution of the 25 November 1785 royal order up to the date of the minister's demise.
12 February 1788	Issued to remind the content of the 20 November 1787 order and to resolve conflicts with the 6 May 1779 order.
22 June 1790	Another reminder (more intended to claim Antonio de Valdés's quarter share of <i>comisos</i> in his role of interim superintendant-general of the Indies).
30 November 1804	Reminder of the 1790 royal order.

Table 2	
Guidelines on how to distribute <i>comiso</i> revenues issued in the eighteenth century	
Date	Note
11 July 1758	Approved by royal <i>cédula</i> on the same date.
16 August 1762	Signed by Domingo de Marcoleta (in the absence of an accountant-general) at the <i>Contaduría General de Indias</i> . Approved by royal <i>cédula</i> on 14 June 1764.
29 July 1785	Authored by Francisco Machado, accountant-general of the Indies. Approved by royal <i>cédula</i> on 21 February 1786.

### Appendix C

List of the quarter share of *comisos* remitted by the governments of the Indies on behalf of superintendant-general Gálvez by royal order of 25 November 1785.

	Date of source document (y,m,d)	Jurisdiction	Origin	Pesos	Reales / Tomines	Maravedíes	Granos	Centavos	Cuartos	Silver	Reason (if available)
1	17860621	Caribbean (Cuba, Santo Domingo, Florida, New Orleans) (CAR)	Havana	12,000	3			71			One-fourth of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17851231 (total was 40,000 but intendant sent only 12,000, no proofs that reminder was ever remitted)
2	17860901	Venezuela (VEN)	Caracas	11,812	4						¼ of comisos executed between 17780101 and 17851231
3	17861214	Río de la Plata (RP)	Montevideo	2,244	2 ¼						Comisos executed by former intendant Manuel Ignacio Fernandez (no dates)
4	17860401	Guatemalan Audiencia (GUA)	Guatemala	5,444	2						¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17851231
5	17861030	GUA	Omoa	1,279	6 ½						¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17851231
6	17870207	VEN	Guayana	1,701	5						¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17851231, sent by Caracas
7	17870223	New Spain (NS)	New Spain	16,814	5		3				¼ of comisos (minus the remitted 1/3 by order of 17790506) from 17770101 to 178607111
8	17870303	New Granada (NG)	Santa Fe de Bogotá	1,408	3	8 ½					¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17861231

(cont.)	Date	Jurisdiction	Origin	Pesos	Reales / Tomines	Maravedíes	Granos	Centavos	Cuartos	Silver	Reason
9	17870321	NS	Veracruz	211	4		9 ½				Comisos sent by royal officials in Veracruz
10	17870531	NS	Campeche	3,340	4		7 ¾				¼ of comisos (no dates)
11	17870716	Peru	Callao	16,099							¼ of comisos (no dates)
12	17870911	CAR	Havana							2719 ounces, 11 <i>adarmes</i>	¼ of comisos, (executed in 1781, remitted in silver objects, such as <i>tejos</i> , <i>platillos</i> , <i>limaduras</i> , and <i>recortes</i> )
13	17870913	CAR	Puerto Rico	2,135	7	28					¼ of comisos (no dates)
14	17871206	RP	Buenos Aires	1,417	6						¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17870617
15	17871216	RP	Buenos Aires	2,328	3						From a single comiso (no dates)
16	17880411	Philippines (PHI)	Philippines	1,241	7		4				¼ of comisos executed between 1777 and 1786
17	17880501	RP	Buenos Aires	4,367	1/2						¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17851231 sent in May 1786
18	17880501	RP	Montevideo	606	7						¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17851231 sent in May 1786
19	17880725	VEN	Caracas	8,806	1						Comisos from 1777 to 1787
20	17881222	PHI	Manila	179	6				12 1/2		Tobacco monopoly comisos from 17860826 to 17870617



(cont.)	Date	Jurisdiction	Origin	Pesos	Reales / Tomines	Maravedíes	Granos	Centavos	Cuartos	Silver	Reason
21	17890817	VEN	Provinces of Maracaibo- Guayana and Isla Margarita- Trinidad	5,229	2 ½						¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17870617
22	17891028	CAR	Puerto Rico	237		7					Reminder of ¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17870617
23	17900316	CAR	Nueva Orleans		81,183	17					¼ of comisos executed between 17760101 and 17870615 [ <i>sic.</i> ] in the province of Louisiana
24	17900405	NS	Presidio del Carmen and Campeche	1,551	12		8 ¼				Comisos remitted from Veracruz, no dates
25	17900531	VEN	Provinces of Cumaná and Barcelona	4,638	7						¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17870617, remitted from Caracas
26	17900616	CAR	Havana	3,713	3			81			¼ of comisos executed between 17770101 and 17870617 (remission to Spain pending)
27	17910121	CAR	Santo Domingo	4,000							From 60 comisos, corresponding to the time the Marqués de Sonora was superintendent general
28	17910513	NS	Veracruz	243	4		3				Tobacco monopoly comisos, no date

(cont.)	Date	Jurisdiction	Origin	Pesos	Reales / Tomines	Maravedíes	Granos	Centavos	Cuartos	Silver	Reason
29	17910707	PHI	Philippines	836	6		8				From 18 comisos (the Marquesa de Sonora returned a share from a remitted original total of 1,451 pesos)
30	17920223	NS	Veracruz	49	6		9				Comisos, no dates, remitted from Veracruz
31	17920321	NG	Cartagena de Indias	271	4						Comisos, no dates
32	17930218	PHI	Philippines	32,852			6				Comisos, no dates, issued by the <i>Real Compañía de Filipinas</i>
33	17930126	CAR	Florida	159	1	32					Comiso, no dates
34	17930126	CAR	Cuba		3,874	22					Comisos for Marqués de Sonora, but also Pedro de Lerena and Council of the Indies (?), no dates
35	18031118	NG	Cartagena de Indias	5,200	6 ¼						¼ of comisos executed in diverse parts of the viceroyalty, deposited in Cartagena (remission to Spain pending)
36	18041110	NS	Acapulco	1,221	4		7				¼ of comisos executed in 1778, 1780, and 1782, remitted from Veracruz

(cont.)	Pesos	Reales / Tomines	Maravedíes	Granos	Centavos	Cuartos	Silver	
Subtotals	153,660	85,169	104.5	65.5	152	12.5	2,719	
		85,177.53 (adding mrvs. and grano fractions)	3.07 in reales	5.458 in reales				
		10,647.19 in pesos			1 in pesos	0.078 in pesos	2,719 pesos	
Total in pesos	167,027.27							
Source: Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Ultramar, leg. 836								

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AFBN	Archivo Franciscano, Fondo Reservado, Biblioteca Nacional de México, Mexico City, Mexico
AGI	Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain
AGNA	Archivo General de la Nación, Buenos Aires, Argentina
AGNM	Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico City, Mexico
AGNP	Archivo General de la Nación, Lima, Peru
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas, Valladolid, Spain
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid, Spain
AHPM	Archivo Histórico de Protocolos, Madrid, Spain
APRM	Archivo del Palacio Real de Madrid, Madrid, Spain
BCMT	Biblioteca de Castilla-La Mancha, Fondo Antiguo, Toledo, Spain
BNE	Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid, Spain
BPRM	Biblioteca del Palacio Real de Madrid, Madrid, Spain
BRAH	Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid, Spain

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