

# The Routledge Hispanic Studies Companion to Early Modern Spanish Literature and Culture



Edited by Rodrigo Cacho Casal and Caroline Egan

# THE ROUTLEDGE HISPANIC STUDIES COMPANION TO EARLY MODERN SPANISH LITERATURE AND CULTURE

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This invaluable resource will be of interest to advanced students and scholars in Hispanic studies, as well as Renaissance and early modern studies more generally.

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*Edited by Rodrigo Cacho Casal and Caroline Egan*

SERIES EDITOR: BRAD EPPS AND JAVIER MUÑOZ-BASOLS  
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# FOREWORD

The chapters collected in this volume focus on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a chronological framework associated with the rise of the Hapsburg Empire, from Charles I (Charles V, 1516–1566) to Charles II (1665–1700). In keeping with the rationale of *The Routledge Companions to Hispanic and Latin American Studies* series, this volume's purpose is twofold: to introduce the intellectual and artistic breadth of early modern Spain and to review the most current critical trends and theoretical discourses concerned with this period. The goal is to bring a range of cutting-edge approaches to bear on key debates, issues, works, and questions. Indeed, while literature and literary studies play a central role, the *Companion* also focuses on a variety of subjects including history, politics, science, the visual arts, music, race, faith, and gender. The scholars contributing to this volume are based in institutions spread across the globe, including the United States, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Spain, France, Italy, Denmark, Canada, and Germany. Such international representation is matched by the theoretical range of the various chapters which, while in keeping with the common goals and objectives of the *Companion*, offer multiple perspectives and approaches.

The project has been several years in the making and severely disrupted, like many things in our lives, by the COVID pandemic. The editors would like to acknowledge and thank the enthusiasm and generous support of the various contributors to the *Companion*, who, in spite of all the difficulties, have made this volume possible. In particular, we would like to remember here the late Professor Trevor Dadson, who passed away before the project could be sent to press. His chapter is a reminder of his scholarly and intellectual legacy, and we would like to dedicate this *Companion* to his memory. Gracias, Trevor. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Series Editors, Professor Brad Epps and Dr. Javier Muñoz-Basols, who entrusted this project to us, as well as the editorial team at Routledge, especially Samantha Vale Noya and Rosie McEwan. We would also like to thank all of those who contributed to the development of the volume by preparing translations of specific chapters. Their excellent work was then revised by the editors in conversation with the authors.

In order to offer a text accessible to a wide audience, the spelling and punctuation of early modern texts quoted in these chapters has been modernized, except in specific cases where a conservative orthography was more appropriate.

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# ABBREVIATIONS

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| ACA   | Archivo de la Corona de Aragón (Barcelona)   |
| AGI   | Archivo General de Indias (Seville)          |
| AGS   | Archivo General de Simancas                  |
| AHN   | Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid)          |
| AHN N | Archivo Histórico Nacional, Nobleza (Toledo) |
| AHPB  | Arxiu Històric de Protocols de Barcelona     |
| BNE   | Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid)       |
| BUS   | Biblioteca de la Universidad de Sevilla      |
| CC    | Convento de la Concepción (Valladolid)       |

# EARLY MODERN SPAIN AND THE END OF THE GOLDEN AGE

*Rodrigo Cacho Casal*

## The center of the world

Writing in the 1520s, the Spanish humanist Fernán Pérez de Oliva remarked on the impact that the new geographical discoveries in the western hemisphere had on traditional conceptions of space and cosmography, particularly with regard to the location of the Iberian Peninsula in the world map: ‘antes ocupábamos el fin del mundo, y agora estamos en el medio, con mudanza de fortuna cual nunca otra se ha vido’ [we used to be at the end of the world, but now we find ourselves in the middle, as a result of an unprecedented reversal of fortune]. As is well known, this observation relies on the cartographic shift that occurred after the first arrival of Europeans to the Americas, which meant that the classical convention establishing the known limits of the Earth in Iberia, namely in Cape Finisterre (*finis terrae*) and the Strait of Gibraltar (the Pillars of Hercules, *Non plus ultra*), was no longer valid. Spain, the site of Pérez de Oliva’s utterance, was now at the center of it all. Of course, this consideration has potential ramifications that go beyond spatial matters, branching out into ideology. As such, the argument develops swiftly into a celebration of the political hegemony secured by the Crown of Castile overseas:

Agora ya pasó sus columnas [de Hércules] el gran poder de nuestros príncipes, y manifestó tierras y gentes sin fin que de nosotros tomarán religión, leyes y lengua: estas serán siempre obedientes a España, que por madre ternán de todo el bien que de aquí adelante hubieren.

*(Pérez de Oliva 2008: 195)*

[Now the great power of our princes has reached beyond the pillars [of Hercules], revealing endless lands and people who will receive our faith, laws, and language: these will always submit to Spain, who will be their mother providing all the good that from now on will come their way.]

After the momentous crowning of Alfonso V the Magnanimous in Naples in 1442 (he was already King of Aragon and Sicily), the international prominence of Spain had experienced an unprecedented boost thanks to the administrative union of the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon in 1469, cemented by the marriage between Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic Monarchs. Their aggressive policy of ‘reconquest’ leading to the annexation of Granada and colonial

enterprise fostered in the New World laid the foundations for the development of a Spanish global empire. This legacy was bolstered by their grandson, Charles V, who was crowned Holy Roman Emperor and inaugurated the rule of the Hapsburg dynasty in Spain, which reached its expansionist peak in 1580, when Charles's son, Philip II, successfully claimed the right to the throne of Portugal, gaining control of all its colonies in America, Asia, and Africa. During the sixteenth century, the Hapsburg monarchs secured a diverse and vast extension of lands, confirming the premise posited by Edward Said (1994: 93) in his attempt to define the nature of imperialism: 'The actual geographical possession of land is what empire in the final analysis is all about'.

The massive possession of land across the globe was the touchstone of Spanish political and economic power and constituted an enduring source of pride for early-modern Spaniards, who remarked time and again on their achievements and how these surpassed those of other great empires of the past, especially Rome (Elliott 1989: 8). This was pointed out by several authors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as Gregorio López Madera, who in his *Excelencias de la monarquía y reino de España* [Excellencies of the Monarchy and Kingdom of Spain] (1597) stated that 'es incomparable el exceso que lleva esta monarquía y reino de España a todos los pasados' [the supremacy manifested by this monarchy and kingdom of Spain cannot be matched by any of those of the past] (f. 66<sup>v</sup>). The politico-geographic argument features frequently in similar texts of the period, such as Fray Juan de Salazar's *Política española* [Spanish Policy] (1619), where strong emphasis is placed, yet again, on territorial extension:

Cuya monarquía y grandeza consiste en la innumerable, por no decir infinita, multitud de reinos, señoríos, provincias y varios estados que tiene en todas las cuatro partidas del mundo, siendo el mayor imperio que desde la creación del mismo se ha hasta nuestros tiempos conocido.

(Salazar 1619: 2)

[Whose monarchy and greatness depends upon the numerous, perhaps infinite, number of kingdoms, feuds, provinces, and various states that it possesses across the four parts of the world; being since its inception the largest empire existed until our own time.]

According to both López Madera (1597: ff. 35<sup>v</sup>–47<sup>v</sup>) and Salazar (1619: 45–79), land and religion are the pillars that sustain the great apparatus of the Spanish Empire, which is portrayed as deeply rooted in Catholicism since its inception. The confidence that these works exude fosters a quasi-mythical image of a monarchy built on solid ground, homogenous and cohesive in spite of its global reach. This idealized—and, consequently, quite fictional, as we will discuss later—self-perception of greatness was also matched by the cultural and artistic sophistication achieved in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The encounter with the New World fostered a growing interest in cartography and natural history (Portuondo 2009; Barrera-Osorio 2006), and the prominence of urban courts favored architecture and the production of visual artifacts and literary texts. Language and the arts played a prominent role in this period and its enduring influence in the construction of a Spanish identity in modern times.

In particular, strong emphasis was placed on the promotion of Castilian as the language of administration and culture of the vast Iberian Empire. Antonio de Nebrija (2011: 3), in dedicating his *Gramática de la lengua castellana* [Grammar of the Castilian Language] (1492) to Queen Isabella, famously said that 'siempre la lengua fue compañera del imperio' [language has always been the companion of empire]. In spite of its limited circulation, this work, the first grammar

of a vernacular language to be published in Europe, drew from humanistic sources in order to establish a link between Rome and Spain thanks to the popular commonplaces of *translatio imperii* [transmission of empire] and *translatio studii* [transmission of knowledge] (Asensio 1960; Martínez 2013). This bond became even stronger in the seventeenth century, when scholars such as Bernardo Aldrete proved with unquestionable evidence in his *Del origen y principio de la lengua castellana* [On the Origin and Beginning of the Castilian Language] (1606) that Spanish had derived directly from Latin, inheriting also its political supremacy on a global scale: ‘como hija noble de tan excelente madre le cabe gran parte de su lustre y resplandor, con que ambas se han estendido hasta los últimos fines del orbe’ [as the noble daughter of such an excellent mother she possesses a good share of her luster and flare, since both have reached the ultimate confines of the globe] (Prologue to Philip III, c. +2<sup>v</sup>). Following these arguments, Spain not only features as the site of imperial power but also as the world’s center of the arts, humanities, and sciences, held together by the Spanish language.

### The arts of the empire

The cultural bridge between ancient Rome and modern Iberia was Italy, where the Spanish Crown controlled large parts of the territory (Milan, Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia). Italian humanism and Petrarchism exerted great influence on the literary landscape of early modern Europe, providing scholars and writers with a variety of models to follow and imitate. To be a modern poet in the sixteenth century, one in touch with current literary trends, one had to be an Italianate poet. The most important work associated with the development of this new artistic wave in Spain is, unquestionably, the posthumous publication of *Las obras de Boscán y algunas de Garcilaso de la Vega repartidas en cuatro libros* [The Works of Boscán and Some of Garcilaso de la Vega Organized in Four Books] (1543). Both authors, who were good friends, had visited Italy and had firsthand knowledge of its cultural and artistic tradition. And, although a significant portion of their poems were written following the metric and linguistic conventions of the Spanish fifteenth century, they are responsible for pushing through the literary innovation that we associate with the Renaissance. They employed the hendecasyllable in order to compose imitations of Petrarch and of classical authors. Boscán displays acute awareness of the pioneering nature of the corpus contained in Book II of his poetic collection, devoted to Petrarchan works, as he declares in the dedication to the Duchess of Soma, which is often considered the poetic manifesto of modern Spanish poetry:

Este segundo libro terná otras cosas hechas al modo italiano, las cuales serán sonetos y canciones, que las trovas desta arte así han sido llamadas siempre. La manera destas es más grave y de más artificio y (si yo no me engaño) mucho mejor que la de las otras.

(Boscán 1999: 115)

[The second book contains things written in the Italian way, which are sonnets and *canzoni*, as we traditionally call the compositions pertaining to this art. These are more solemn and more sophisticated, and (if I am not mistaken) much better than the others.]

In this passage, Boscán makes an explicit comparison between Spanish traditional poetic forms (those featuring in Book I) and the Italianate, declaring the latter superior in all regards. The feature that he seems to find more accomplished within this tradition is its capacity to signify with musicality and *perspicuitas* [clarity]. Garcilaso celebrates similar ideas—associated with the Renaissance ideal of *sprezzatura* [studied carelessness]—in the paratexts of Boscán’s translation of

Baldassar Castiglione's *The Courtier*, published in 1534. Here, he praises his friend because he succeeded in 'huir del afectación sin dar consigo en ninguna sequedad, y con gran limpieza de estilo usó de términos muy cortesanos y muy admitidos de los buenos oídos' [avoiding affectation without being arid, and, with such clarity of style, used courtly terms, well-received by those of good taste] (Garcilaso de la Vega 1995: 267). Garcilaso was soon awarded more popularity and fame than his friend Boscán, becoming one of the most influential Spanish poets of all time (Sebold 2003: 23–46). The author, who was a soldier and died in the battlefield, was lauded as the 'Prince of the Castilian Poets', providing an elevated literary model to match the imperial ambitions of Spain. The prologue to Fernando de Herrera's annotated edition of Garcilaso (1580), penned by the humanist Francisco de Medina, praises this work because it will provide future generations of poets and scholars with outstanding models to imitate so that the greatness of Spanish language will be able to reach 'las últimas provincias donde vitoriosamente penetraron las banderas de nuestros ejércitos' [the most remote provinces where the flags of our armies have victoriously penetrated] (Herrera 2001: 203). If Spanish was to become the language of an empire, as wished for by Nebrija, it also needed to develop a refined literary culture (Middlebrook 2009).

After Garcilaso, Spain seemed to have found its new poetic Messiah in Luis de Góngora, author of elegant Petrarchan poems as well as witty autochthonous traditional compositions, such as ballads and *letrillas*. In 1612/1613, he disseminated manuscript copies of his *Polifemo* [Polyphemus] and *Soledades* [Solitudes], written employing a highly complex Latinate language, where there was a proliferation of hyperbatons and learned terms. Spain, it seemed, had finally surpassed the legacy of Rome and Italy by creating a new poetic language altogether (Blanco 2012). Góngora's poems immediately divided audiences into two opposing sides: the admirers and the detractors. This generated one of the most acrimonious and enduring literary quarrels of early modern Spain, concerned with the *poesía nueva* [new poetry] or *poesía culta* [learned poetry], as this style was known at the time (Roses Lozano 1994). Nowadays, Góngora's *culto* poems are universally hailed as the greatest expression of the Spanish Baroque and its art of conceits (*conceptismo*). These are texts where language challenges the conventional boundaries that separate signifier and signified, transforming the echoes of words into meaning, exalting the musicality contained within them, and placing as the ultimate source of creativity the unexpected links between disparate objects and ideas, flaunting an irreverent approach to classical decorum. The protagonist of the *Soledades*, a young pilgrim of love who shipwrecks on an unknown shore as dawn is approaching, is an eloquent embodiment of Góngora's new poetics:

entre espinas crepúsculos pisando,  
riscos que aun igualara mal volando  
veloz, intrépida ala,  
menos cansado que confuso, escala.

(Góngora 2016,  
Soledad I: ll. 48–51)

[through thorns and shadows treading twilight picks/his way, and cliffs a challenge  
even to/the swiftest boldest wing/begins, uncertain more than tired, to climb.]

(Góngora 2007: 115)

The uncanny sense of confusion that these lines communicate to the reader is bound together with the rush of the intellect as it fights against the limits of verbal representation and human understanding. Thoughts, feelings, and perception merge into one, as we tread on darkness, imitating the uneven steps of Góngora's character, lifting our imagination to heights never explored

before. This aesthetic vertigo is precisely what we always experience when confronted with the most accomplished Baroque art. One needs only to consider the impression made on the viewer stepping in front of Diego Velázquez's *Las Meninas* (1656). By looking at the scene, we are welcomed into the small gathering of members of the court as they witness the painter working on a portrait. Thanks to this process, the pictorial characters come alive as, conversely, we step into artifice, becoming another item in Velázquez's canvas. As posited by Michel Foucault (2002: 5): 'No gaze is stable, or rather, in the neutral furrow of the gaze piercing at a right angle through the canvas, subject and object, the spectator and the model, reverse their roles to infinity'. That is, as infinite as the fruits of the imagination born out of the literary and artistic works of early modern Spain.

### **Looking for the Golden Age**

The cultural and artistic flourishing experienced in this period is traditionally known to Spanish historiography as the Golden Age or *Siglo de Oro* (for a good overall discussion, see Bennassar and Vincent 2000). It is widely accepted that the use of this term with this particular meaning first arose during the Enlightenment within the context of literary studies (Rozas 1984; Lopez 1995; López Bueno 2004). It was then that various authors looked back with nostalgia to the achievements of the sixteenth century, with the likes of Garcilaso de la Vega and Fray Luis de León, which they regarded as the apogee of Hispanic poetry as opposed to the seventeenth century, the Baroque era, considered decadent, hollow, and pompous, embodied by the 'disproportionate' works of authors such as Góngora and Lope de Vega. A case in point is Luis Joseph Velázquez's *Orígenes de la poesía castellana* [Origins of Castilian Poetry] (1754). His work arranges the history of Spanish poetry into four distinct periods: (1) from its origins to the times of John II, (2) from this monarch to the times of Charles V, (3) from this monarch to the times of Philip IV, and (4) from this monarch through the present day (of the mid-eighteenth century). For Velázquez, there is no question that the third era featured the most remarkable authors: 'Esta tercera edad fue el Siglo de Oro de la poesía castellana' [This third period was the Golden Age of Castilian poetry] (66). Indeed, he mainly means the sixteenth century, since, in his opinion, peninsular literature 'empezó a ir declinando a fines del siglo' [began its decline towards the end of the century] (65). The concept of *Siglo de Oro* became established and eventually was used to characterize a whole era. And, indeed, many of the chapters included in this volume use the term in productive ways, recognizing its disciplinary legibility and historic relevance.

In spite of its fortune, the rubric 'Spanish Golden Age' is problematic for at least two reasons; first, because it establishes a historic, artistic, and literary ranking that cannot withstand rigorous academic scrutiny. It purports the fiction that some eras are superior to others, more accomplished, advocating the idea that history is a long competition between winners and losers, creating a false sense of atemporal and universal values existing beyond specific cultural, social, political, and economic frames of reference. Second, such values are in fact highly subjective, and, inevitably, each historic period tends to place its own 'Golden Age' in a different moment in time. For instance, the Spaniards of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were quite unanimous in believing that this was to be identified with the reign of the Catholic Monarchs. Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo (1974, vol. 2: 467) stated his unquestionable preference for the times of Queen Isabella: 'aquel tiempo fue áureo e de justicia' [that was a golden time and of justice], and a similar idea can also be found in Martín González de Cellorigo (1991: 95): 'Nunca nuestra España en todas las cosas tuvo más alto grado de perfección' [Never did our Spain reach a higher grade of perfection in all things].

Arising from these considerations, the Golden Age label imposes a rhetoric of rise and fall, a pseudo-biological reading of history that organizes time in separate compartments that embody symbolic stages of evolution (childhood, young age, maturity, decrepitude . . .). If the Golden Age is considered the peak of the evolutionary scale, this is inevitably destined to collapse with time. This is an extremely antiquated way of conceiving history, one that was actually current in early modern Spain (Burke 1976). Nebrija's theories on language and political power, discussed previously, rest on the conviction that empires, like all living creatures, evolve until they decline and perish. The greatness of Rome and Latin is unquestionable, and yet, they both shared the same fate: 'junta mente començaron, crecieron i florecieron i, después, junta fue la caída de entrambos' [they began together, they grew and flourished, and, afterwards, they fell together]. Spain may have taken Rome's place, and yet this empire too is inevitably bound to collapse with time, as his words gloomily anticipate: 'por estar ia nuestra lengua tanto en la cumbre, que más se puede temer el decendimiento della que esperar la subida' [since our language has reached its peak, one should be more wary of its decline than hopeful of its rise] (Nebrija 2011: 3, 9).

Glory and decadence are unexpected—and yet agreeable—bedfellows in the construction of the myths upon which Spanish identity rests (Kamen 2008: 172–205; Rawlings 2012). As we saw, early modern Spaniards were quite confident of the greatness achieved by their monarchy on a global sphere. However, they also displayed a self-perception of decline, which surfaces particularly in the seventeenth century (Elliott 1989: 241–61). Their arguments rest on philosophical commonplaces that have their roots in classical culture. Chief among these is the idea of the *senectus mundi* [world grown old], developed by authors such as Lucretius and later Christianized by the fathers of the Church, namely by Cyprian (Zocca 1995; Dean 1997). According to this principle, the world has lost its youth, its natural resources are declining, and human beings' physical and intellectual prowess is depleted. Similar concepts populate many pages of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish works, including the rhetorical tract by Juan de Guzmán, *Primera parte de la retórica* [First Part of the Rhetoric], published in 1589: 'digo en cierto modo los elementos cansarse, pues ya no se halla aquella fertilidad, a lo menos en nuestra España, según la había antiguamente' [what I mean is that, to a certain extent, the elements get tired, since the fertility that once was, in our Spain at least, is no longer to be found] (Guzmán 1993, vol. 1: 108).

Discourse on decline was, however, not only bound to abstract philosophical ideas. Spain was a problematic empire, which, during the Hapsburg reign, faced social conflict, revolt (in the peninsula, in the Low Countries, in America . . .), depopulation, inflation, bankruptcy, and agrarian crisis. Several *arbitristas* [projectors] of the seventeenth century wrote accounts of these troubles including a number of suggestions on how to overcome them (Rawlings 2012: 31–49). The rhetoric of decline was extremely current at the time. In spite of their differences, most of these authors shared some of the remarks included in Botero's influential *Della ragion di stato* [On the Reason of State] (1589), which identified overextension as the key problem of states such as Spain: 'with size riches increase and with them vices, luxury, arrogance, licentiousness, avarice, the root of all evil'. Moral issues aside, the great distance between the American colonies and the metropole is identified as particularly troublesome, since 'colonies are of little use to the country if they are established in very remote lands and from which assistance is not to be expected nor significant support'. The consequences of this, according to the Italian author, have been quite significant for both Portugal and Spain, causing the depopulation of Iberia: 'the Portuguese and the Spaniards have not sent and do not send out who is superfluous in his country but he who would aid his country . . . so that the provinces grow weak and quite feeble' (Botero 2017: 8, 143).

Imperialism and globalization, the roots of Spanish greatness, are also identified by Botero and the *arbitristas* as the reasons for its downfall, promoting the myth of decline, which, as indicated

by Kamen (2008: 172), ‘is the most fundamental of all myths of Spain’s history, because it supplies a simple and universal explanation for every aspect of the country’s development’. According to this, Spain went from being a small and isolated state to achieve the status of a vast empire fueled by the silver coming from the Americas. Yet the Indies were also the main reason for its decadence, because their resources stagnated the economy, arresting its development and favoring the flow of money abroad, especially in the direction of the Genoese bankers who financed the Spanish Crown. By the end of the government of Charles II, the last Hapsburg monarch, the empire was falling apart, relegating Spain to a role of secondary importance in the international political sphere, which would see its ultimate collapse in 1898 with the loss of its few remaining colonies (the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Cuba). This narrative, however, is fundamentally that: a narrative. Scholars such as Henry Kamen (2008) and Matthew Restall (2003) have demonstrated how several of the received assumptions on early modern Spain and its conquest of the New World are, in fact, merely myths supported by little historical evidence and yet very hard to overcome.

### **Myths under scrutiny: the Black Legend**

All of the studies included in this *Companion* challenge this mythical legacy in a variety of ways. In particular, they question the all-too-static historiographical construction of early modern Spain as an absolutist, centralized monarchy inhabited by a homogenous population. ‘Spain’—as recalled by Antonio Feros (2017: 15)—‘was the name given to a geographical region occupied by several communities’. This means that it is perhaps more accurate to speak instead of *Spains*, composed of individuals pertaining to different ethnic groups, speaking a variety of languages, and professing (albeit not openly) different religious faiths (Feros 2017: 12–47). Aldrete’s celebration of Castilian as the unifying shared language spoken in the peninsula—‘lenguaje que todos sus vasallos hablamos’ [language spoken by all of its vassals] (1993: c. +2)—is indeed quite limiting: among others, Valencian, Catalan, Portuguese, Basque, and Arabic were in use, and this linguistic map expands exponentially if one takes into account the overseas colonies. Such multiplicity is but a reflection of the complex conglomerate of polities that formed the Spanish Empire.

Indeed, it is important to bear in mind that *empire* is in itself a rather general and imprecise way of referring to the Hapsburg dominions. As pointed out by Anthony Pagden (1990: 3), ‘There never was, of course, a “Spanish Empire”’; in reality, ‘although in many respects the administration of those territories was an imperial one, they were always, in theory and generally in legal practice, a confederation of principalities held together in the person of a single king’. The *Monarquía española* [Spanish Monarchy] had its symbolic center in the Crown of Castile, but most of the peninsular and overseas nation-states that constituted it often administered themselves in a semiautonomous fashion, as part of a ‘composite’ or ‘polycentric’ monarchy (Elliott 2009: 3–24; Cardim et al. 2012). Thus, the so-called Spanish Empire was not a granitic and totalitarian institution that held absolute sway on all of its provinces; moreover, this was not built on the premise of military conquest in the first instance but rather as the result of dynastic succession, as in the case of the possessions in the Low Countries (Charles V), as well as Portugal and its annexed colonies (Philip II) (Kamen 2008: 96–125; see also Elliott 2002; Kamen 2005).

The revision of traditional approaches to empire has been at the center of extensive research in the last three decades. These studies have contributed to dispelling static and oversimplified versions of politics in the early modern globalized world, as traditionally conceived by area studies, and underscoring instead the links, crossings, intersections, and connections between different composite monarchies, and, more specifically, between the regional and the supra-regional in

various locations across the globe favoring the mixing of 'worlds' beyond the confines of what is usually regarded as the history of a specific nation (Subrahmanyam 1997, 2007; Gruzinski 2001, 2004). From this vantage point, Spain no longer appears as an exceptional case within world history. Such alleged uniqueness has its origin in two distinct and yet interdependent narratives: an optimistic and complaisant version generated in the peninsula and a negative and pejorative account cultivated mainly abroad by Castile's political rivals. The latter consists mainly of a set of negative stereotypes usually referred to as *Leyenda negra* [Black Legend], which has played a fundamental role in the perception of Spain by foreign nations to this day, as well as in the way in which Spaniards make sense of their own history.

The 'Black Legend' was a rubric devised in the early twentieth century by Julián Juderías, who published an infamous book in defense of Spain's national pride against what he regarded as the calumnies of foreigners: *La leyenda negra y la verdad histórica* [The Black Legend and Historical Truth] (1914). The root of the anti-Hispanic sentiment identified by Juderías was to be found in the early modern period, when Spain was a powerful empire generating envy and resentment among the various nations and states subjected to its rule. Sverker Arnoldsson (1960) traced the first signs of this negative propaganda to fifteenth-century Italy, but it can also be found in later accounts by international travelers who visited the peninsula in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, primarily describing it as backward, provincial, unsophisticated, obsessed with religion and purity of blood, and overall not worth visiting (Hillgarth 2000: 71–271). Yet most of these views fail to convincingly configure a distinct 'Spanish Black Legend', as they are all clear examples of widespread xenophobic stereotypes shared among different nations in the early modern period. Spanish literature, for one, offers ample examples of similarly offensive remarks directed against Italians, French, Flemish, Dutch, English, Irish, Germans, and Turks (Herrero García 1928: 335–573).

It is perhaps more precise to refer to the Black Legend as the anti-Spanish political propaganda circulating over the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, produced in the Low Countries in support of the revolts raised against Hispanic domination in this region, as well as in some of the most significant political adversaries of Spain in that age, mainly France and England (García Cárcel 1992: 27–31, 42–97; Hillgarth 2000: 309–479; Rawlings 2012: 11–30). Certainly, the most recurring topics discussed in these texts were the critique of the repressive authority of the Inquisition and the protest against the brutality and destruction caused by the conquistadors in the New World. Protestant countries found both topics—especially the former—particularly useful when trying to demonize their enemy. Interestingly, some of the most influential sources found in order to exert this criticism were produced by Spaniards. Two of the most notable cases are those of Reinaldo González Montano (Reginaldus Gonsalvius Montanus) and Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas.

The *Sanctae Inquisitionis Hispanicae artes aliquot* [Some Arts of the Spanish Inquisition] was published in Heidelberg in 1567 by a dissident Spanish exile who used the pseudonym Reginaldus Gonsalvius Montanus (Rawlings 2012: 21–4). The author, who probably belonged to the community of Spanish Protestants discovered in Seville in 1557, was a friar—perhaps Antonio del Corro and/or Casiodoro de Reina—claiming to possess inside knowledge of the workings of the Holy Tribunal. The text emphasizes the cruelty and evil of this institution of religious and ideological control that, in the author's opinion, had only one main goal in mind: 'to send to eternal destruction both the body and the soul of anyone whom they are able to trap in their cruel hands' (Gonsalvius Montanus 2018: 151). The volume was extremely popular, enjoying various editions in Latin and in other European languages. The first English translation—by Vincent Skinner—was issued in 1568, the same year as the French version by Jacques Bienvenu. A year later, in 1569, the Dutch (by Joris De Raedt) and German translations appeared. *Sanctae*

*Inquisitionis Hispanicae artes aliquot* was weaponized in the hands of the Hapsburgs' political rivals, presenting the Inquisition as the pinnacle of Spain's tyranny. Skinner's epistle to the reader, found in his translation of the work, links religion with politics, presenting a dark and threatening image of 'the dangerous practises and most horrible executions of the Spanish Inquisition' in Europe, particularly the Low Countries:

the sudden imprisonment of honest men without process of law, the pitiful wandering in exile and poverty of personages sometime rich and wealthy, the wives hanging on their husbands' shoulders and the poor banished infants on the mothers' breasts, the monstrous racking of men without order of law, the villainous and shameless tormenting of women naked beyond all humanity, their miserable death without pity or mercy, the most reproachful triumphing of the popish synagogue over Christians as over painimes and ethnics, the conquering of subjects as though they were enemies, the unsatiabable spoiling of men's goods to fill the side paunches of ambitious, idle shavelings, the slender quarrels picked against kingdoms and nations.

(in *Gonsalvius Montanus* 2018: 460–61)

This catalogue of horrors found an ideal companion in the works of Bartolomé de Las Casas, especially his *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* [A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies] (1552). Organized by geographical area, this text was dedicated to Charles V's heir, Prince Philip, with the intent of contrasting the abuses of the *encomenderos* in the New World (the *encomienda* was an allotment and the native population residing in it put under guardianship of a Spanish settler), describing with minute detail all the atrocities committed by the conquistadors in the Indies against their people: 'despedazallas, matallas, angustiallas, affigillas, atormentallas y destruillas por las extrañas y nuevas y varias y nunca otras tales vistas ni leidas ni oídas maneras de crueldad' [dismember, kill, distress, upset, torment, and destroy them employing the most unusual, novel, different, never seen or read before acts of cruelty] (Las Casas 2013: 13). This catalogue of horrors found fertile ground among the same countries where Reginaldus Gonsalvius Montanus became popular. In particular, the *Brevísima relación* plays an important role in the 1580 *Apology* commissioned by William of Orange—one of the most prominent figures in the anti-Spanish resistance in the Low Countries—in response to a ban from Philip II (see Hillgarth 2000: 311–17; Rawlings 2012: 26–7). His indebtedness to Las Casas is made explicit in passages such as this (the text is based on the 1581 English translation):

the Indies, where they have miserablie put to death more than twentie millions of people, and have made desolate & waste thirtie tymes as much lande in quantitie and greatness as the lowe countrie is, with such horrible excesses and ryottes that all the barbarousnesses, cruelties, and tyrannies whiche have ever bin committed are but sport in respect of that which hath fallen out upon the poore Indians, which thing even by their owne Bishoppes and Doctours hath bin left in writing.

(*William of Orange* 1969: 58–9)

According to the narratives put forward by Flemish, Dutch, English, and French, religious repression and unregulated expansionism were the defining features of the Spanish Empire, and they both manifested themselves in the same way: through an excess of violence. Attacks such as those contained in the *Apology* generated a considerable amount of propagandistic and satirical exchanges between Spain and its foreign enemies. Inevitably, this interaction produced a partisan and ideologically charged debate that was often far removed from any kind of historical accuracy.

To the Black Legend, Hispanic authors responded with a hyperbolically positive rhetoric that has been sometimes labelled the White Legend (Keen 1969) or the Pink Legend (García Cárcel 1992: 101–13, 244–53). Such extreme views did not disappear with time, as witnessed by Juderías, who, centuries later, still felt the urge to defend ‘el buen nombre de España’ [Spain’s good name] (Juderías 1914: 10). With its wide-ranging approach and multiplicity of perspectives, the present *Companion* makes a significant contribution to overcoming historical simplifications and myths, providing both specialists and non-specialists with a valuable tool to navigate the complex intellectual and academic construction that we call early modern Spain.

### Early modern keywords

In keeping with the rationale of *The Routledge Companions to Hispanic and Latin American Studies* series, this volume’s purpose is twofold: to introduce the intellectual and artistic breadth of early modern Spain and to review the most current critical trends and theoretical discourses concerned with this period. The goal is to bring a range of cutting-edge approaches to bear on key issues across a number of areas: history, politics, literature, science, the visual arts, music, race, faith, and gender. The scholars contributing to this volume are based in institutions spread across the globe, including the United States, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Denmark, Canada, and Germany. Such international representation is matched by the theoretical range of the various chapters which, while keeping with the common goals and objectives of the *Companion*, offers multiple perspectives and approaches.

The essays collected in this volume focus on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a chronological framework that featured the development of the Hapsburg Empire, from Charles I (Charles V, 1516–1566) to Charles II (1665–1700). As already pointed out, this era is usually referred to as the Golden Age, a concept that was coined during the Enlightenment. The preference for ‘early modern’ in the title of this *Companion* acknowledges that in recent decades, the most innovative approaches to Hispanic culture have exceeded some of the traditional theoretical boundaries evoked by the Golden Age rubric, encompassing a greater range of disciplines and a wider academic horizon, focusing on multidisciplinary studies, and analyzing the global and multicultural ramifications of the Spanish Empire. This is also why this volume has been conceived as a direct cognate of the *Companion to Colonial Latin America and the Caribbean* (Martínez-San Miguel and Arias 2021), included in the series.

Rather than imposing a firm structural categorization, this *Companion* will revolve around what Raymond Williams called *Keywords* in his influential book of 1976. These are words that are both indicative and binding within certain activities and forms of thought. The productivity of such an approach still resonates with recent early modern scholarship, such as Ita Mac Carthy’s edited collection *Renaissance Keywords* (2013) and Roland Greene’s *Five Words* (2013). The present volume will place terms such as Empire, Capital, Knowledge, Language, Tradition, Wit, Modernity, Desire, Faith, Race, and World in dialogue with one another in order to interrogate some of the foundational categories and narratives in the critical construction of Early Modern Spanish Studies. Each individual contribution to the *Companion* will resonate with a series of keywords, allowing for productive critical interaction and innovative approaches. The goal is to put forward a polyphonic yet cohesive dialogue between literature, music, fine arts, science, politics, history, religion, and sexuality in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

One of the purposes of this *Companion* is to underpin recent scholarship on early modern Spain, showing that the empire was an elusive concept, and that far-flung imperial projects were deeply intertwined with local polemics on identity and belonging. Hispanic imperialism, rooted in the political and cultural complexity of early modern Iberia, produced a fragmented

and multi-ethnic society spread across various continents. Far from being isolated, Spain was at the center of the paradigmatic shifts that consolidated radical moves toward modernity, where debates concerned with capital, social status, urbanism, race, gender identity, and political allegiance played a crucial role. By engaging key historical, social, political, artistic, and literary issues with twenty-first-century scholarship, this *Companion* positions early modern Spain within a much broader international and intellectual context, introducing a wider readership to its rich and fascinating world.

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## PART I

# Kingdom, empire, world



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# 1

## THE IMPACT OF SPANISH IMPERIAL POLITICAL CULTURE IN IBERIA AND EUROPE, 1500–1700

*Thomas James Dandeleit*

### **Ferdinand, Machiavelli, and the beginning of the long Spanish century**

On November 1, 1506, the Catholic King, Ferdinand of Spain, sailed into the harbor of Naples with ten royal galleys that he had set out with from Iberia, together with numerous other ships of war led by the great captain, Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba. Saluted first by the canons of the Castelnuovo and then by salvos from all of the ships in the harbor and the castles of the city, the king and his queen, Germaine of Foix, were welcomed upon disembarking by a throng of nobles, barons, and ambassadors from Naples and other Italian states. In a carefully choreographed scene, the monarchs were escorted to a richly painted triumphal arch that had been built for the occasion. There the king acknowledged the privileges and customs of the new subjects and kingdom that he had acquired through military conquest and papal investiture in 1504. Three noblemen, Fabrizio Colonna, Prospero Colonna, and the Duke of Termens, then approached Ferdinand, who handed Fabrizio Colonna the royal standard and named him his *alférez mayor*, or chief standard bearer. Mounting white horses, the monarchs then processed through the city in triumphal fashion followed first by their personal guard and Gonzalo de Córdoba, with Prospero Colonna at his right hand, and then by the ambassadors of the pope and king of France (Zurita 1610: ff. 86<sup>r</sup>–86<sup>v</sup>).

This 1504 triumphal entry of Ferdinand of Spain into Naples, following a decade of sporadic war with the king of France for possession and title of the kingdom, signaled the definitive emergence of the Spanish monarchs as the rising political power in Italian and European political life at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The earlier conquest of Islamic Granada in 1492 by the combined forces of Queen Isabella of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon had solidified their internal reputation and position as the most powerful monarchs to rule in Iberia in many centuries. At the same time, the discoveries and conquests of Columbus between 1492 and 1504 increased their reputations, income, and territories both at home and abroad. Together with the Italian victories and the conquest of Navarre in 1512, these accomplishments led no less a political authority than Machiavelli to describe Ferdinand, and by implication and association, Isabella, as the primary examples of successful new monarchs of early sixteenth century Europe.

More specifically, in *The Prince*, first circulated in 1513, three years before Ferdinand's death and only seven years after his entry into Naples, Machiavelli summarized the political characteristics and achievements of the Catholic King. Specifically, in Chapter 21, entitled 'How a Prince Must Govern to Acquire Reputation', Machiavelli described the qualities that led him to present Ferdinand as his primary example of the new prince:

Nothing causes a prince to be so much esteemed as great enterprises and giving proof of prowess. We have in our own day Ferdinand, King of Aragon, the present King of Spain. He may almost be termed a new prince, because from a weak king he has become for fame and glory the first king of Christendom, and if you regard his actions you will find them all very great and some of them extraordinary. At the beginning of his reign he assailed Granada, and that enterprise was the foundation of his state. At first he did it at his leisure and without fear of being interfered with; he kept the minds of the barons of Castile occupied in this enterprise, so that thinking only of that war they did not think of making innovations, and he thus acquired reputation and power over them without their being aware of it. He was able with the money of the Church and the people to maintain his armies, and by that long war to lay the foundations of his military power, which afterwards has made him famous. Besides this, to be able to undertake greater enterprises, and always under the pretext of religion, he had recourse to a pious cruelty, driving out the Moors from his kingdom and despoiling them. No more miserable or unusual example can be found. He also attacked Africa under the same pretext, undertook his Italian enterprise, and has lately attacked France; so that he has continually contrived great things, which have kept his subjects' minds uncertain and astonished, and occupied in watching their results. And these actions have arisen one out of the other, so that they have left no time for them to settle down and act against him.

(Machiavelli 1950: 81–2)

This assessment by the founder of modern political thought, together with the description of Ferdinand's triumphal procession in Naples, are appropriate places to begin a chapter on Spanish political culture in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, since both highlight the rising prominence of Spain in the political life of Europe from the beginning of this period. This constituted a major sea change for Spain and Europe, since the Iberian kingdoms and monarchs, often fragmented and consumed with internal struggles, had been relatively weak and often isolated players in the medieval European order. The emergence of the newly named 'Catholic Kings' after the victories of the 'miraculous year' of 1492, however, signaled the beginning of a new European order that would witness Spain playing a dominant role.

What Machiavelli hinted at, but could not fully foresee, about Ferdinand's reign and all of its 'great enterprises', was that it was just a prelude to a century of even more dramatic developments. Indeed, the two immediate successors of Ferdinand and Isabella, Charles V (ruled 1517–1556) and Philip II (ruled 1556–1598), went far beyond the boundaries of Christendom to forge the world's first global empire with territories in the Mediterranean, Atlantic, and Pacific regions. Earlier empires, such as the Roman and Chinese, were not global in the modern sense, since they had no knowledge of the full globe, most especially the Americas, or territories on a global scale. The political power and influence of Spain on the European and global stage, on the other hand, grew to such an extent in this period that it is not too much to claim that the long sixteenth century from roughly 1492 to 1640 constituted the Spanish Century, particularly in Europe and the Atlantic World. More specifically, the broad-ranging political influence of

the Spanish Empire, because of its increasingly disproportionate economic and military power, reshaped the political order and culture of Iberia, much of Europe, and significant parts of the New World to an extent that was unmatched by any other European power.

This is not a view of Spain that has traditionally been advanced or acknowledged in much of early modern European historiography of the nineteenth or twentieth century, especially in the Anglo-American literature. In part, this has been the result of a preoccupation with the teleology of the nation state and national histories or with other empires perceived as more successful or fully realized, especially the later British Empire. Related biases have frequently led historians to view Spanish history primarily from the vantage point of its weaknesses or failures, as the substantial literature on the 'Decline of Spain' in the later seventeenth century underlines. The resulting depiction of the Spanish Empire as being a giant with feet of clay cast a long shadow on Spanish history. Combined with the lingering effects of the Black Legend, the decline and decadence narrative often created an image of the Spanish Empire as an overwhelmingly negative and regressive political presence in the early modern world. These preconceptions have often detracted from the obvious rise in political power and success that Machiavelli already saw in Ferdinand and from a more complicated historical analysis of Spanish political history that acknowledges the central role that the Spanish Empire played in the development of European and global political life in this period.

Fortunately, the last few decades have begun to see a substantial shift in the historical literature on the politics of early modern Spain that has coincided with a renewed interest in the comparative history of early modern empires across time, space, and discipline (Pagden 1995; Elliott 2007). A growing revisionist trend that focuses on political innovation and sophistication in the Hapsburg era has begun to take up the challenge of looking at how empire functioned to transform societies closer to the ground in the various corners of empire as well as in Europe and Iberia. Internally, important work on the costs and benefits of empire has been joined by studies of the impact of a growing global empire upon the development of traditional institutions such as the conciliar system, the *visitas*, and the viceroynalties. The result is a more complex and dynamic view of the Spanish empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Bernal 2005). At the same time, political analysis has moved beyond center and periphery to look at the crucial roles played in empire formation by multiple centers of the empire, while relations with local elites have moved beyond the old paradigm of oppression and resistance to look at social and political integration of the Iberian and local ruling elites (Benigno 2007; Kamen 2003). Similarly, new scholarship on the relative financial strength of the empire and on the resilience of the imperial monarchy even in the last decades of the seventeenth century has introduced important revisions to the decline narrative (Drelichman and Voth 2014; Storrs 2006).

As these examples point out, the broader historical revision of Spanish imperial politics is fluid and evolving, and there is presently no dominant school or interpretation of Spanish imperial political history. It is possible, however, to identify some of the most significant paradigm shifts in the field that promise to bring greater analytical clarity, interpretive accuracy, and a richer understanding of the vast political enterprise that was the Spanish Empire. Among the most important interventions in the realm of framing and defining the Spanish empire, and the nature and dimensions of its political power and influence, is the idea of the 'Spanish imperial system' articulated by Giuseppe Galasso and Aurelio Musi, particularly for the Italian context, but that also applies to the entirety of the Spanish imperial project (Galasso 1995; Musi 1994). In contrast to earlier perspectives that emphasized the fragmented and composite nature of Spain's monarchy and kingdoms, Musi argues that 'Imperial Spain was a system: that is, it was a structure endowed with unity, an interdependence among its elements, and functions exercised

by the various parties concerned' (Musi 2007: 82). Galasso elaborates on this idea, stressing that in the case of early modern Spain, the meaning of empire derives from

the sense of power that assumes a particular historical and political relief thanks to the extent of its dominions, the forces it has available, the preponderance that it exercises in a determined and geographical and historical context, the connection between its political dimensions and its economic and cultural ones, and so forth. In this sense the notion of empire is closely associated with that of *civilization*.

(Musi 2007: 82)

Viewed from this perspective, central aspects of the Spanish imperial system emerged in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella when the monarchy greatly expanded its dominions, increased its power and influence at home and abroad through its military, and used its political institutions and economic power in a way that created interdependence among its various territories. It did not yet have the full-scale 'preponderance' of political and territorial power that marks empires or the mature political culture that was capable of creating a distinct 'civilization'. This only fully emerged in the expanding empire of the successors of Ferdinand and Isabella, Charles V and Philip II.

Political culture is a term used throughout this chapter to describe a broad set of common political mentalities and practices that developed among the Spanish and European ruling class in the early modern period. It borrows from recent studies in cultural theory and empire that are yet another fertile ground for reinterpreting the Spanish Empire. Not constrained or defined by formal political theory, institutional preoccupations, or juridical definitions, imperial political culture was shaped first and foremost by Renaissance humanist scholarship that focused on the literature, examples, and historical models taken from the Roman Empire. History, above all other disciplines, was the political instructor of princes. The ideas and reflections on empire that were disseminated in a growing body of humanist works such as Petrarch's biography of Julius Caesar, new editions of Caesar's *Commentaries* with expansive introductions, and new humanist histories of the ancient Roman empire and emperors all sought to inspire the revival and imitation of the greatness of the Roman Empire. This intellectual revival was the foundation of the imperial Renaissance and the genesis of imperial political culture since 'the enterprise of empire depends upon the *idea of having an empire*', in the words of a leading contemporary scholar of cultural theory and European imperialism (Said 1993: 10–13). A related contention is that 'Empire follows Art'. In the early modern case, this meant that a potent combination of literary and plastic arts—sculpture, architecture, and painting—borrowed from the Roman Empire was repeatedly used as the inspiration, justification, and celebration of new global imperial systems. They were powerful tools of cultural conquest that marched alongside the Spanish armies and sailed with their navies. Imperial political culture and the Spanish imperial system thus went hand in hand, and these two analytical frames will be used in the pages that follow to organize and highlight some of the primary and most influential political developments in Spanish imperial history in the long sixteenth century.

More specifically, two central pillars of the Spanish imperial system and political culture will be the focus of the chapter that follows: war and military power as the primary vehicles for winning honor, fame, and glory and the building of monumental architecture using the colossal orders of the ancient Roman architect Vitruvius for the same reasons. This is not a random choice of themes. Rather, this chapter argues that the Spanish monarchs were intentionally following the perceived political playbook of the ancient Roman emperors as they pursued an agenda dominated by military and architectural triumphs. Using their powerful war machine to conquer new

territories that brought increased revenues, they spent enormous sums on ambitious and expensive building programs centered on royal palaces to celebrate and memorialize their victories. It was a political and cultural program that would be imitated by other European monarchs for centuries.

### **Spain and the Renaissance of empire**

With intellectual and cultural roots in Renaissance Italy, the dream of reviving the power and glory of the ancient Roman Empire was at the heart of the imperial ambition and political project that animated Spanish empire building from the time of Ferdinand and Isabella through the mid-seventeenth century and beyond. The triumphal imagery of Ferdinand's entry into Naples is just one example of a political ritual inspired in part by the imagery of Roman triumphs imagined by the Roman humanist and historian Flavio Biondo in his history of ancient Rome in the mid-fifteenth century. Images of the triumph of Caesar were also painted by Mantegna in the same period for the Duke of Mantua.

The imperial humanism of Renaissance Italy first articulated in the works of Petrarch, Guarino, Biondo, and many other early Italian humanists in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was embraced and advanced by the Spanish monarchs and Spanish humanists who served them in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Dandelet 2014). This distinctive genre of Renaissance humanism focused on the revival and imitation of works by central authors of the Roman Empire such as Caesar, Suetonius, Tacitus, Marcus Aurelius, Vitruvius, and Plutarch, and the accompanying political agenda was nothing less than the revival of the ancient glory of the Roman empire politically, culturally, and militarily.

As an early Spanish example of imperial humanism, Antonio Nebrija, the Bologna-trained humanist who returned to Spain to teach at the University of Salamanca and then Alcalá in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, famously dedicated his Castilian grammar to Queen Isabella in 1492, noting that language was an essential tool of empire. More explicitly, Antonio Guevara, a tutor and councilor to Charles V, dedicated his *Reloj de príncipes* [Mirror of Princes], based upon 'newly discovered' letters of Marcus Aurelius, to the young emperor as a political guide. A generation later, Pedro Mexía, a tutor and royal historian for Philip II, dedicated his work entitled the *Historia imperial* [Imperial History] to the 'heir of the emperors' so that he could learn from their deeds and then surpass them (Dandelet 2014). Guevara and Mexía are strong examples of Spanish imperial humanists who exercised widespread influence abroad since their work was translated into French, English, German, and Italian and published in many editions that were frequently dedicated to leading princes from other parts of Europe.

The patronage of the Spanish monarchs was instrumental in ensuring that imperial humanism would become an enduring part of the political culture of the Spanish Empire and that Spain would play a central role in disseminating the imperial Renaissance throughout Europe. Acknowledging the importance of Spain in the history of the imperial Renaissance, that is, acknowledging and understanding the fullness and influence of the Spanish Renaissance in its political, literary, and artistic dimensions, is yet another critical aspect of the revision underway in Spanish and European history.

The Catholic Kings were not alone in their ambition for empire. Indeed, the contest for empires that could compete with ancient Rome in power and glory was the great game of early modern political life, as their French and British competitors most clearly demonstrated. But it was the Spanish Empire that set many of the precedents for the empires that followed and also inspired the envy and accompanying rivalry and political contest with the aspiring French, Dutch, and British empires that dominated European political life in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This was a role first demonstrated in the realm of warfare.

## The rise of Spanish power and the art of war

The consolidation of monarchical power in Iberia and the quickly following expansion of Spanish power in Europe and abroad relied upon the force of arms first and foremost. The ability to wage war was constitutive of political power. It was an essential element for establishing political legitimacy and holding power in Machiavelli's world, and Spain was the rising military power of the day. The long campaign against the Nasrid kingdom of Granada that ended with the victory of Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492 marked the beginning of a string of military conquests in Iberia and abroad that signaled the growing militarization of Spanish society and the rise of Spanish military capabilities and innovations that were also decisive in battles abroad. It was in the war for Granada, for example, that the innovation of the Spanish military formation of the *tercio*, a company of roughly 3,000 professional soldiers, was first refined and used to great effect by the Great Captain, Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba. A decade later, Spanish *tercios* led by the same commander were instrumental in conquering Naples for Ferdinand in a series of victories over the French armies.

The *tercios* played a decisive role in Spanish victories during the long decades of the Italian Wars in the kingdoms of Sicily, Naples, and Milan between 1494 and 1559. Organized in the formation of a large block of men armed with pikes on the exterior guarding infantry armed with harquebuses on the interior, the *tercios* were a major part of the 'imperial system' that made the Spanish military the dominant fighting force in Europe in the period from roughly 1500–1650 (Quatrefages 1983; Thompson 1976). Already in the fourteenth century, Petrarch had dreamt of the revival of Roman military power and martial virtues in Italy, but by the middle of the sixteenth century, it was the Spanish armies that were emulating the ancient legions in terms of victories and dominance on the fields of battle and at sea.

That Italy was the principal theater of Renaissance war is well established. When Charles VIII invaded the peninsula in 1494 to press his claims to the kingdom of Naples as the heir of the earlier Angevin rulers, he led a large army of an estimated 25,000 men. The smaller powers of Italy, including the duchy of Milan, the Florentine and Venetian Republics, and the papacy, offered no initial resistance or actively collaborated with the French, and Charles VIII quickly took Naples from its much weaker Aragonese ruler, Alfonso. Ferdinand of Spain, also the king of Sicily and a cousin of the king of Naples, had more direct and recent dynastic claims to the kingdom of Naples. War between the two most powerful kings of Europe was subsequently inevitable, and for the next 65 years, they and their successors fought repeated battles for control of the kingdom of Naples, the duchy of Milan, and more general political domination of the Italian peninsula (Guicciardini 1969; Zurita 1610; Mallet and Shaw 2012).

The Italian wars witnessed the transformation of warfare due in large part to a new political reality, namely the rise of the world's first global power that could draw upon financial, material, and human resources from different parts of the Spanish Empire. American gold, Italian grain, and soldiers and taxes, especially from Iberia and Italy, paid for and fed the increasingly large armies and navies of the Spanish Empire. (After the conquest of the Portuguese Empire in 1580, revenues from the Asian spice trade and growing Atlantic slave trade added additional international streams of income.) The Italian wars served as a revealing laboratory to measure the impact of empire on the development of warfare and vice versa, since the wars directly paralleled the rise of the Spanish Empire first under Ferdinand and next under his grandson, Charles V (ruled 1517–1557), and his son, Philip II (ruled 1557–1598).

Briefly summarized, the period from 1492–1559 witnessed the following major military victories and expansions of the territories of the Spanish monarchs either through dynastic inheritance or direct military conquest or some combination of the two: in 1492, Ferdinand

and Isabella conquered the Kingdom of Granada; 1492–1503 brought Isabella of Castile, the queen of Spain, the first New World territories of the Caribbean islands claimed by Columbus; 1504 marked Ferdinand's first victory over the French for control of Naples when Pope Julius II invested him with the feudal rights to rule that kingdom; in 1512, Ferdinand conquered the Kingdom of Navarre; in 1517, the grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella, Charles V, joined their kingdoms with those of his father and grandfather, the Hapsburg prince Philip and the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian; in 1520–1521, Cortés conquered the empire of the Aztecs in Mexico for Charles V; in 1535, Charles V conquered the Duchy of Milan in his second major victory over the French king Francis I; in 1535, Pizarro conquered the Inca empire in Peru for Charles V; in 1557, Philip II inherited from his father all of the New World kingdoms, the Spanish kingdoms, Franche-Comté, the Netherlands, and, in Italy, the kingdoms of Sicily and Naples and the Duchy of Milan.

By 1535, and increasingly thereafter for the rest of the sixteenth century, the expanding Spanish empire also produced growing revenues from New World gold and silver mines, as well as from their new Italian territories. This was a decisive factor in their military dominance in Europe and the Atlantic world and another major component of the Spanish imperial system throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its importance was first evident in Italy. During the first two decades of the reign of Charles V, the critical years of the Italian Wars, an estimated 4,500,000 gold ducats came to the young emperor from the New World, an amount that was roughly 25 percent of his military budget. A similar amount and percentage of the war budget came from the Italian territories of Sicily and Naples, underlining the comparable importance of both Old World and New World conquests and income to the funding of war. More generally, the unprecedented and consistent infusion of funding, especially after the discoveries of the silver mines in Potosí (1545) and Zacatecas (1546), was a growing factor in Spanish military dominance. Between 1536 and 1556, an additional 31,000,000 ducats came into Spain from the New World, pointing to the growing importance of New World treasure for the war budget (Tracy 2002: 113). This model of filling the military treasury with the booty of conquest evoked the memory of the ancient Roman Empire, and it went hand in hand with the rise of a quasi-permanent, professional, and stronger military force, an additional unifying mark of the young Spanish Empire, especially in Italy.

With total numbers of Spanish troops in Italy ranging from 10,000 to 30,000 men throughout the period, the armies were commanded by the Spanish viceroys of Sicily and Naples and the governor of Milan, all of whom also held the title of Captain General of the Spanish military forces. Spanish government in Italy, as in most of the rest of the empire, was overwhelmingly focused on military affairs—on feeding, supplying, and housing the infantry and naval forces that guaranteed Spanish rule (Rivero Rodríguez 1998).

The offices of viceroy and governor had roots in medieval Aragon and Valencia and the adaptation of the offices for the Italian context, and the vicerealties of Mexico and Peru as well as the Netherlands, demonstrated how Iberian political institutions evolved to become another critical unifying aspect of the Spanish imperial system. This was also the case with less regular, but still vital, instruments of governance, like the *visita*, a form of government audit first developed in medieval Iberia but expanded and used to audit viceregal governments in early modern Italy and the New World as well. Similarly, courts, judges, and various fiscal officers presiding over taxation bound the various parts of the Spanish Empire together, as did the overarching conciliar system that supervised all of the major areas of imperial governance. These pan-imperial institutions provided a unifying political super structure that coexisted with many local privileges and distinct political institutions that were also a feature of the Spanish Empire, especially in the Iberian and Italian kingdoms.

Ultimately under the command of the king but also serving as his primary advisors and councilors, the various men who held major offices in the empire could be called upon to serve in multiple territories. A growing group of governors, ambassadors, and military commanders subsequently emerged by the middle of the sixteenth century that made up a cosmopolitan ruling class that was unparalleled in Europe. It became increasingly common for men like the Count of Olivares in the sixteenth century to serve as viceroy of Sicily, ambassador to the papacy, and a leading councilor to the king on the Council of Italy. His more famous son and favorite of Philip IV, the Count-Duke of Olivares, was born in Palermo and subsequently brought a wealth of knowledge of Italy to his position later in life.

The capability to draw upon military and political talent from various parts of the empire when different challenges or opportunities arose applied especially to the Spanish military forces in Italy. The roughly 10,000 soldiers stationed in Sicily, Naples, and Milan saw relatively few battles after 1559 and the Peace of Cateau-Cambresis, when the French monarch acknowledged Spanish claims in Italy and withdrew for most of the next century. But they were frequently called to serve other imperial needs: they fought in the Netherlands during the long decades of the Dutch revolts from the 1550s to the 1650s, for example, and they also joined other Spanish and Italian forces in the conquest of Portugal in 1580 (Parker 2004).

The transport of thousands of troops to Portugal in 1580 underlined the other critical component of the Spanish Empire's war machine that came into its own as a permanent force in the latter half of the sixteenth century, namely the navy. Growing, but not yet well organized or permanent in the time of Ferdinand and Charles V, by the middle of the sixteenth century, Spanish ships circulated in small groups in the western Mediterranean between the major Iberian port cities and the Italian ports in Palermo, Messina, and Naples. Each of the Italian kingdoms was expected to pay for and maintain a number of ships for their defense, but in addition, Spanish ships and, after 1527, the fleet of Genoa, joined in the naval forces serving the Spanish monarchy. By the later 1560s, a fleet of between 100 and 200 Spanish-allied ships sailed in the Western Mediterranean.

The famous naval battle of Lepanto in 1571 between the Ottoman navy and an alliance of Spanish, Venetian, and Papal forces serves well to illustrate the rising naval profile of the Spanish fleet in the Mediterranean. An epic clash that involved combined forces of an estimated 160,000 men and 600 ships, it was the largest naval battle fought in the Mediterranean with oar-powered galleys since antiquity (Parker 1988; Beeching 1982). The victory of the Holy League, led by Don Juan of Austria, illegitimate son of Charles V and the king of Spain's half-brother, effectively ended Ottoman westward expansion in the Mediterranean. Comparisons with ancient Rome were not lost on contemporaries, especially on the winning side, and the victory cemented Philip II's reputation as the new Constantine, or Roman emperor, of his time. War clearly brought honor, fame, and glory to the most powerful imperial monarch of the age, Philip II, and the other victors. Moreover, the victory at Lepanto inspired a large wave of cultural production, including poetry, theatrical reproductions of the battle, paintings, and sculpture to celebrate and commemorate the event (Wright, Spence, and Lemons 2014).

Beyond the Mediterranean, the simultaneous and interrelated growth of Spanish military and naval power in the Atlantic and Pacific worlds also deepened and solidified throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, making the Spanish empire the first modern global power. The Atlantic treasure fleet ensured the safe passage of people and bullion between Iberia and the New World, while in the Pacific, Spanish ships carried Mexican silver to the Philippines to buy Chinese silk that was brought back to the New World and Spain. Between 1580 and 1640, moreover, after the Spanish conquest of Portugal, the Spanish monarch's Portuguese fleet carried on the lucrative spice trade between Lisbon and the Indian Ocean. In short, by the later

sixteenth century, the Spanish navy was the largest and most powerful naval force in the world. While not ‘invincible’, as the famous defeat of the armada by England in 1588 demonstrated, it was able to protect Spanish territories and treasure, promote commerce, and project Spanish power to an extent that was unmatched by any contemporary competitor until the later seventeenth century.

Above all else, it was the treasure fleet that brought large amounts of American silver and gold bullion back to Spain twice each year throughout most of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that connected the military and cultural power of Spain. For it was American treasure, first and foremost, that funded the expansive art and architectural projects of the Spanish monarchs. Imperial conquest and imperial culture were thus inextricably linked.

### **Art, power, and the majesty of empire in the age of Charles V and Philip II**

Honor, fame, and glory were the ultimate goals of political power that united the new Machiavellian princes of the Renaissance with the ancient Caesars. The hard edges of the Spanish imperial system in the forms of dominant armies and navies; unmatched revenues from conquered territories; a virulent ruling class; a legal system to impose order; and a variety of other institutions such as the councils, Inquisitions, *visitas*, and fiscal administrators all contributed to these goals. But they did not fully provide ‘conspicuous proof’ of the ‘majesty of empire’ that early modern rulers desired to prove their equality with the ancient Caesars. According to the ancient architect Vitruvius, that was something accomplished by the building program of the emperor Augustus (Vitruvius 1999). For the Spanish empire, too, that task was entrusted to the writers, painters, sculptors, and, above all others, builders who created the lasting images and monuments of the imperial monarchs and their empires. Political culture and the political history of the Spanish Empire only take on their full meaning when these arts of power are incorporated into the picture of imperial rule.

It was in the age of Charles V that artistic and architectural patronage, together with artists and architects of the highest caliber, combined to reach a new level of reviving the grandeur of ancient Rome in the plastic arts and architecture in Spain. Philip II, Philip III, and Philip IV all continued the tradition throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, setting a standard that inspired envy and imitation among the other aspiring imperial monarchs, most especially in France and Britain. While a full accounting of the artistic and architectural production of the Spanish Empire under the Hapsburgs is obviously beyond the scope of this short study, a focused look at two of the major architectural projects that most directly and dramatically embodied the vision of imperial revival in the reign of Charles V and Philip II is possible.

More specifically, the palace of Charles V in Granada, first conceived in the early 1530s and constructed over the next 40 years, and the palace complex of El Escorial outside of Madrid, built by Philip II between 1560 and 1580, reintroduced the colossal orders of Vitruvian architecture into Spain for the first time since antiquity. They were dramatic additions to the landscape that announced and celebrated the arrival of the new European imperial order led by the Spanish Empire. They constituted unrivaled and undeniable ‘conspicuous proof’ of the ‘majesty’ of the empire. They also constituted political ‘texts’ that were meant to teach clear lessons about the power and identity of their creators to the subjugated, the ruled, and the competition in Europe and the Mediterranean world (Kamen 2010).

In the first case, Charles V had established his major residence in Granada after moving there with his new bride, Isabella of Portugal, in 1526. During the first years, the couple lived in the old Nasrid palace in the center of the Alhambra fortress on the hill that overlooked the city. It was the finest palace complex in Iberia, and Charles V and Isabella made it their home. But

upon returning to Spain from his Italian and German travels in 1533, Charles began building an entirely new palace that became the major architectural symbol of his reign. Distinguished by the classical style of a Roman imperial palace, it proclaimed loudly in stone that Spain, following Italy, was a new center of a classical Roman imperial architectural revival (Rosenthal 1985).

The palace was the most dramatic material sign that by 1533, Charles V was deepening his imitation of the ancient Roman emperors. To imperial devices, triumphs, paintings, and literary models he now added architecture. With the palace in Granada, imperial Roman architecture and real imperial power merged with a fullness that Western Europe had not witnessed since antiquity. This development was inspired first and foremost by the architectural tradition of the imperial Renaissance in Northern Italy and Rome. Charles V had spent weeks in Mantua in 1530 enjoying Giulio Romano's newly built Palazzo Te with Duke Federico Gonzaga and thus had firsthand knowledge of the imperial architectural revival. It is subsequently in the context of this visit, which followed the imperial coronation in Bologna in 1530, that the decision to build the imperial palace following the colossal order of ancient Roman architecture must be viewed.

This was also the case for the architect chosen to design the building, Pedro Machuca, who spent his formative years in the Rome of Julius II, Bramante, Michelangelo, Raphael, and Giulio Romano. There he had ample opportunity to study both the ancient buildings of Rome and their early Renaissance imitations like the Tempietto, the palace of the Cancelleria, and the Vatican palace (Brothers 1994: 86).

In addition, by the time Machuca went to work on the Granada palace, he also most likely had access to some of the work of Vitruvius thanks to the translations and publications of the Milanese architect Cesare Cesariano, who was named Charles V's official architect in Milan in 1527–1528. Thus, through exposure to and study of both the example of ancient and Renaissance architectural examples and the theory of ancient architecture, he became well versed in the colossal order of the ancient imperial style that he applied with vigor to the imperial palace in Granada (Rosenthal 1985: 234–7).

The imposing square palace started by Machuca, though not completed by him due to his death in 1550, was an imperial triumph in stone. The Doric-order pilasters of the first story, common to ancient imperial palaces, project strength, as does the rusticated façade. The two-story main entrance with its fluted columns topped by a broad arch evokes the image of a triumphal arch. This leads into a striking interior oval courtyard. Unique in its size and application to Renaissance palace architecture, this space nonetheless followed earlier Italian examples such as the house of Mantegna in Mantua. It also followed the d'Este palace in Ferrara in the use of busts of ancient Roman emperors in its wall decoration.

Never really needed as a living space, as attested to by the fact that neither Charles V nor any of the other Hapsburg or Bourbon kings of Spain ever resided there for any length of time, the palace was primarily a monument to the Roman imperial power of Charles V. It proclaimed definitively that the Alhambra, Granada, and Spain more generally had returned to their ancient Roman roots. While the ruins of the ancient empire, like the Roman theatre near Seville, reminded Spaniards that they had once been a part of ancient Rome, the new palace stated with renewed classical architectural drama that they were now ruled by an emperor equal to the ancient rulers of Roman Spain.

While the Nasrid palace was preserved, the new Roman palace, by its size and the monumental orders it deployed, was a building that dominated the sight, literally cast a shadow on the old palace, and pronounced permanency. It was the architecture of imperial conquest that served multiple purposes: to celebrate victories already won; to definitively claim the territory for the victors; and to announce to foes, especially the Ottomans or their agents in Spain or Africa, that

the new Roman emperor, the only true heir to ancient Rome, was now permanently back in lands that Islam had once claimed.

### **El Escorial and Philip II as the new Constantine**

Following his father's example as a builder, while perhaps also wanting to surpass him in this realm, Philip II lost little time in initiating a new monumental palace complex outside of Madrid once his reign had begun. It was an imperial palace not just in its Vitruvian style but also in the way it was financed. The king was the largest single owner of Indian labor in the New World, and he dedicated 20,000 ducats that he received annually from the sale of his Indian labor rights to the building of El Escorial. Over the twenty years that it took to complete the building, this accounted for roughly 80 percent of the total cost, calculated at over 5,000,000 ducats (Williams 2001: 56–8).

A project that spanned the years from 1563 to 1584, not counting another fifteen years to finish the interior decoration on the church, it was a work of colossal Vitruvian dimensions that combined the artistic and architectural genius of the Italian and Spanish Imperial Renaissance with the treasure of the New World. It dwarfed his father's palace in Granada from only a generation earlier, and unlike that building, it became the favorite residence of the king and the center of his considerable patronage and personal attention. The palace of Charles V was a strong symbol of imperial aspirations when it was first begun, but El Escorial was a powerful statement of the full realization and stabilization of that Empire with its center in Iberia.

The declared intention and inspiration of the building was to celebrate Philip II's victory over the French at St. Quentin on the feast of St. Lawrence in 1557. In this sense, it is an excellent example of the relationship between military power and artistic production, that is, between a central institutional aspect of the Spanish imperial system, its army under the command of the king, and its political culture. Like no other Spanish building of the sixteenth century, El Escorial embodied the triumph, wealth, and style of Philip II's empire.

Inspired by the monumental orders of imperial classicism exported from Rome to Spain, the architectural genealogy of El Escorial is much clearer than that of the Granada palace. Juan Bautista de Toledo, the original architect of the building, was a disciple of Michelangelo and his chief assistant in the building of New St. Peter's from 1546–1548 (Kubler 1983: 42–5). A mathematician and architect shaped by the broad revival of Vitruvius then in full flower in Italy, Toledo was called by the king to Madrid in 1559 from Naples where he had been working for the Spanish viceroy, Pedro de Toledo, on various projects. Named the first 'royal architect' by Philip II, he set to work on designs that were eventually submitted for review to the Academy of Florence, then presided over by Giorgio Vasari. Various other architects, including Michelangelo, provided drawings for parts of the palace, and in 1573, Andrea Palladio, among others, submitted potential plans for the church of San Lorenzo that was the centerpiece of the complex.

Although Toledo died in 1567 before much work could be done on the building, his plans exercised a strong influence on his successor, Juan de Herrera. Described by some art historians as 'Spain's first great classicist', Herrera had been the apprentice of Toledo since 1563. He was an old servant of Philip II who had traveled with him to Milan, Genoa, and Mantua in 1548. In 1553, he was again in Italy as a soldier in the service of the Gonzaga family and subsequently had numerous occasions to become familiar with Palazzo Te and the aesthetics of the imperial Renaissance in Italy (Wilkinson Zerner 1993: viii–2).

Under the watchful and enthusiastic eye of Philip II, with whom he met regularly to discuss the design and progress on the building, Herrera presided over a building project that employed 1,000 men for a period of twenty years. No other work of a similar magnitude was finished so

quickly. The Louvre palace complex, for example, took over a century to complete, as did the Vatican palace and St. Peter's. El Escorial, in contrast, was largely completed by 1584, giving the king another fourteen years to enjoy it. The palace-church-library-monastery-mausoleum was the most ambitious example of a distinct architectural form of Spanish imperial classicism. Herrera, for his part, was credited by some in the ensuing centuries as the architect who ensured through his work on El Escorial and other buildings that 'the pure and excellent taste for ancient Roman architecture extended itself through all the provinces' of Spain (Wilkinson Zerner 1993: 28).

While closely related by imperial classicism, there are obvious features of El Escorial that set it apart from the main precedent of the imperial palace of Charles V. With its Flemish-inspired towers and austere, unadorned exterior, the first impression that El Escorial gives is not of an Italian Renaissance palace transplanted in Spain. The palace in Granada projected the secular power and image of a Roman emperor first and foremost as it successfully sought to make a strong political and cultural statement. By way of contrast, El Escorial projected by size, grandeur, decoration, and use the power of an imperial Spanish Catholic monarch. Religious symbolism and use were absent in Granada. In El Escorial, they were pervasive.

While the use of the classical orders in both Granada and El Escorial represents the continuities between the imperial Renaissance in early and later sixteenth-century Spain, the differences in religious function of the two complexes reveal substantial transformations in the image of the Spanish monarchy in the later period. From the beginning, Philip II planned El Escorial as a royal complex that included a monastery, a large church, a library, a mausoleum, and a palace for himself and his family. In the case of Granada, Charles V had a cathedral-mausoleum project in the city, but it was separate from the palace that was meant primarily to house his own family and court. What model or models, then, inspired Philip II?

In merging the ecclesiastical and royal buildings at El Escorial, and by giving the Church of Saint Lawrence such a dominant and central position in the complex, Philip II was most closely following the model of the Vatican and papal monarchy. Famously few documents exist that allow us to know the king's exact models, inspirations, or intentions for the design of El Escorial. Smaller precedents existed in León for a royal mausoleum and palace complex; in Madrid, the monarchs kept an apartment in the monastery and church of San Jerónimo, and Charles V had retired at Yuste, combining his imperial residence with a monastery.

But in terms of scale, aesthetics, and function, the El Escorial complex most closely compared with the Vatican in the latter half of the sixteenth century. If Philip II was competing with any other monarch, it was the papal prince. Both complexes had buildings to house communities of religious to serve them and their churches in life and to pray for them after their deaths, substantial libraries and art collections, monumental Renaissance churches decorated with fine paintings and sculpture that enjoyed pride of place, mausoleums for their predecessors and themselves, sumptuous palace quarters graced by substantial collections of Renaissance art and decoration celebrating the deeds of the respective monarchies, and spacious interior courtyards as well as exterior gardens.

El Escorial and New St. Peter's were the biggest building projects in Europe in the latter half of the sixteenth century, and only St. Peter's would eventually exceed the cost of building and decorating the church of St. Lawrence. It is in this comparative context that the El Escorial is best understood.

But Philip II had no desire to fashion himself another pope or priest king. Rather, El Escorial served as the primary stage where Philip II could play the political role that the papacy and its major humanist historian of the late sixteenth century gave to him, namely that of the new Constantine (Dandeleit 2001). Published in 1593, Cesare Baronio dedicated volume three of his

twelve-volume *Annales Ecclesiastici* [Ecclesiastical History] to Philip II. It is a 684-page volume devoted exclusively to the history of Constantine, and in the four-page dedication, the author makes clear parallels between the role of Constantine as great protector and propagator of the Church and the similar contemporary role of Philip II. It was the papacy's preferred version of the political role of Christian emperors as generous patrons, faithful protectors, and obedient sons of the Church, and Philip II was happy to embrace that role (Baronio 1593). El Escorial was thus a palace complex for a new Constantine, built to serve as the physical and symbolic center for the world's largest empire and the rightful heir to ancient Rome as a Christian empire (Tanner 1993: 162).

Roughly 75 years passed between the first circulation of *The Prince* in 1513 and the completion of El Escorial in 1584. Had Machiavelli visited the court of Philip II in the last fourteen years of his reign from 1584–1598 when the old king lived and governed from his new palace, he would have found not a 'new monarch' but a new Constantine with a mature empire that surpassed in its global reach and territories all historical predecessors, including ancient Rome. In less than a century, the grandson and great-grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella had presided over the rise of a global colossus whose military power and political system had begun to impose the major marks of Spanish civilization—language, law, religion, art, learning, to name the most obvious—on substantial parts of the globe, particularly in the New World. For Spanish royal historians, this was one of the greatest historical dramas in the history of the world that could only have occurred because of divine intervention. For others, like the French humanist Anthoine de Bandole, writing in the decade after the death of Philip II, the expansive nature of Spanish imperial power was acknowledged, but in far less favorable terms: the kings of Spain had 'Navarre in their hands, Portugal in their claws, Italy in tutelage, Germany under lease, England in their nets, the Indies in their coffers, Flanders under their lance, and Poland at their call' (Bandole 1609: 13). Ferdinand, the old fox, would have certainly smiled at this political state of affairs, and Machiavelli would not have been surprised.

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## 2

# RULING THE HISPANIC MONARCHY'S OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

*Pilar Ponce Leiva and Amorina Villarreal Brasca*

### **Introduction**

The Spanish monarchy was a political entity that underwent a long process of gestation and maturation from the end of the fifteenth century to the mid-seventeenth century. Despite its undoubted stability over time, this entity was not a rigid, static body; on the contrary, one of its characteristics was the continual change in its composition and forms as it adapted to different circumstances.

At the end of the sixteenth century, there were three crowns in the Iberian Peninsula—Castile, Aragon, and Portugal—that were joined in the person of the monarch, but each one had its different kingdoms and fiefdoms, including its respective Mediterranean and overseas territories. To these were added Flanders and the Low Countries as territories pertaining to the Hapsburg dynasty but not tied to any of the peninsular crowns or Navarre.

The complex character of the monarchy—in which the king was the ruler of each of the kingdoms but not in the same way in all of them—is key to understanding the political dynamics and the institutions used to administer such extraordinarily broad territories. The union of all the territories in the figure of the sovereign was compatible with a clear awareness of the fact that the monarchy was composed of a diversity of kingdoms, each inhabited by diverse nations with their respective languages, laws, and customs (Gil Pujol 2004, 2016). While the kingdoms that made up Castile had a basic unity, the territories that composed the Crown of Aragon presented a juridical-institutional diversity that differentiated the member kingdoms: Aragon, Majorca, Valencia, Sardinia, Sicily, Naples, and the principality of Catalonia (Barrios Pintado 2015).

### **Part I: on the Spanish monarchy**

#### ***Current debates on the nature of the Spanish monarchy***

Interpretations of the nature and administrative dynamics of the Spanish monarchy have reflected the significant changes in recent years by historiography of the political history of the Hispanic world in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Terms like modern state, absolutism, imposition, subordination, subjugation, authority, negotiation, resilience, and adaptability have been

intensely debated from different perspectives and disciplines, contributing to the understanding of what was considered in the early modern period a ‘famous machine’, a complex, magnificent ‘factory’ (Elliott 2004).

Understanding the historical meaning of the Spanish monarchy and its system of government has been directly involved in the debate that has arisen in European historiography about the relevance, or not, of talking about ‘states’ as sovereign political entities in modern Europe. Until the 1980s, the dominant interpretation was that a monarchy was just another one of the states emerging in western and southern Europe beginning in the fifteenth century and that, as an antecedent of the liberal states described in a Weberian conception (nation-states), it presented a concentration of power under a single authority, fiscal centralization, and was endowed with a specialized professional administration (Tomás y Valiente 1982; Maravall 1972). In the final decades of the twentieth century, however, political history showed a significant change of direction toward positions that question the existence, between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, of the state as an independent political entity, differentiated from both rulers and ruled and able to claim the fealty of both groups (Lalinde Abadía 1986; Cañeque 2001; Musi 2011). From this latter perspective, the relations between rulers and ruled would translate into a personal tie (of loyalty and mutual support) compatible with the existence of different powers (Church, king, tribunals, courts) that interacted from their different jurisdictions through collaboration, negotiation, or conflict (Clavero 1986; Hespanha 1989). Furthermore, the fact that an interconnection existed between networks of personal loyalty and institutional lines reinforces the relevance of a change of perspective in the analysis of the ‘state paradigm’ (Feros 1998). The current situation tends, in large part, to utilize the terms employed at that time to describe complex situations that do not strictly align with the classical notion of state.

More in accord with the political culture of the era than the concept of ‘state’ is the term ‘empire’, repeatedly used by the authors of treatises of the period and by contemporary researchers. Strictly speaking, however, the diversity of crowns, kingdoms, and territories incorporated in the Spanish monarchy did not constitute an empire *per se*, because the Spanish monarch lacked the title of Emperor. We cannot speak, then, of a Spanish Empire after the abdication of Carlos V to his brother Fernando I in 1555. In the Spanish context, the term ‘empire’ is typically used in the medieval sense of ‘universal Christian monarch’ or to connote a power that shows a good number of the characteristics attributed to empires: special historical and political relevance across all its domains; the union of diverse territories through different means and modalities; the ability to mobilize significant contingents of armed forces; connections between its political, economic, and cultural dimensions, and so on (Barrios Pintado 2015; Burbank and Cooper 2010; Fernández Albaladejo 1992; Gil 1995). Although the Spanish monarchy fulfilled all these requisites, the fact that an empire seems to necessarily imply the existence of an emperor as supreme ruler—which was not the case in Spain after 1555—favors the use, in specialized historiography, of other terms and concepts.

One line of interpretation, about which there is currently broad consensus among researchers, uses the term ‘compound monarchies’ to refer to political formations that collected different, formerly sovereign, territories under monarchies, as in Spain, Britain, and the Austrias. Also called multiple, or plural, monarchies (Russell and Andrés-Gallego 1996), such entities were formed by the aggregation of territories under different modalities and integrated in their jurisdiction the greater part of European and American territories—with the notable exception of Portugal, which was only part of a compound monarchy when it was part of the Spanish monarchy (1580–1640). These compound units coexisted with an infinite number of smaller territorial and jurisdictional entities that tried to protect their independent status. From this perspective, it has been possible to analyze methods of incorporation used by these compound

monarchies; the relations between their constituent kingdoms, crowns, and states; and their mechanisms of survival. Given its effectiveness in collecting spaces with different traditions, languages, customs, and laws, the formula employed first by the Spanish monarchy and later by the other compound monarchies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has been deemed a particularly useful referent, both in the past and with respect to current processes of unification of different nation-states under a single supranational entity (Russell and Andrés-Gallego 1996; Elliott 2002; Gil Pujol 1996, 2016; Arrieta and Elliott 2009).

In another line of inquiry that aims more at analyzing the management and preservation of the combined territories than their political constitution, one perspective that has been gaining ground sees the idea of the compound monarchy as closely tied both to the concept of nation-state and to an understanding of relations as flowing exclusively between center and periphery (between the metropolis and its colonies). This proposal highlights, in contrast to that center-periphery model, the existence of various centers across the different territories—a known point—that interacted not only with the king but also among themselves and in this way supposedly participated in the political administration of the collective. The differences between one proposal and the other, however, do not affect the final assessment of the system introduced by the Spanish monarchy, considered as solid and durable as it was malleable and changeable (Cardim et al. 2012; Ruiz Ibáñez 2016)

### ***Contemporaneous debates on the forms of union and their political consequences***

The method of incorporating kingdoms into the greater unit that was being formed was extremely important, given the political implications that it had for the relationship established between the king and his subjects. According to the code of the *Siete Partidas* [Seven-Part Code] promulgated by the King of Castile Alfonso X in the thirteenth century, there were four legitimate ways to gain a kingdom: inheritance, election, marriage, or as a gift from the Pope or the Emperor (2, 1, 9). Conquest, as an act of force without legal backing, was deemed illegitimate in the Hispanic world, although it would certainly be frequently mentioned in political treatises as a means of annexing territories.

Of the different types of unions described, attention was focused on two: inheritance and conquest. Both means of incorporation led to different forms of integration. By incorporating a territory through inheritance or matrimony, the union was made between equals (*aeque principaliter*), while annexation through conquest was considered an ‘accessory’ union. Castile, Aragon, and Portugal made up a union between equals, while the Indies were annexed accessorially to the Crown of Castile by papal gift or—according to some authors—through the principle of *translatio imperii* (Gil Pujol 2016). The situation was different for both Navarre—conquered by Castile but preserving its own *fueros* or customary laws—and Flanders and the Low Countries, which were territories added to the Hapsburg dynasty as fiefdoms of the Holy Roman Empire and which were not tied to any one of the three peninsular crowns but rather to the greater unit that they formed.

When the union was made between equals, the kingdoms and domains involved retained their laws and customs within the greater body then formed; when the union was accessory, the conquered kingdom was governed according to the already existing laws of the conquering kingdom or those specifically enacted for the recently incorporated territories. Furthermore, in the kingdoms united *aeque principaliter*, the subjects would have the right of preference, or even of exclusivity, in fulfilling the duties of public positions, while in annexed territories, such a right did not exist (Gil Pujol 2016).

Generally speaking, the local elites of the various kingdoms enjoyed a great degree of self-government, which promoted their loyalty to the ruling dynasty and therefore their continued participation in the Spanish monarchy. However, the criteria that had to be followed in providing positions and their relation to the method of incorporation was a clear political matter that generated strong tensions, especially in Spanish America. If the Indies were part of the Crown of Castile, then theoretically all subjects should have the same rights regardless of whether they were from New Spain or Valladolid, because they were all inherently Castilians. But this was not what happened, since Americans generally only managed to get posts in the Spanish administration when positions were up for sale but not when they were dependent on royal favor. From the American perspective, this was a question that, at least since the early seventeenth century, had clear political and ideological significance; it was diminishing not only the role of Americans in the monarchy but also how other member kingdoms perceived them. The role of Spaniards in the Indies in their administration and incorporation into the monarchy were emblematic and closely related themes in the Spanish American essay, constituting an inevitable rite of passage for coming to understand the meaning of highly political terms such as ‘emulation’, ‘self-affirmation’, and ‘perception’ of self and others. A position in the administration was not only a post that allowed one to advance in the social hierarchy; it was also (or especially) a tangible and suitable place in a huge, complex, and implacable world (Ponce Leiva 2017).

## **Part II: the institutional framework**

### ***Exceptionality and integration***

The governing and management of Spain’s overseas territories provide privileged vantage points for analyzing two concepts that appear systematically associated with those territories: their exceptionality, on one hand, and their full incorporation in the ensemble of kingdoms that constituted the Spanish monarchy, on the other. This exceptionality is due to the variety of the integrated territories, the rapid changes that came about in response to evolving circumstances, and the ever-present awareness of the distance between America and the peninsula, as well as between the different overseas spaces; all of this led to a peculiar ad hoc approach to legislation and political administration. The integration of the Indies into the Spanish monarchy is typically placed on the same level as their exceptionality. The imposition of one official king, one official language, and one official religion (coexisting with many indigenous rulers, tongues, and faiths); the introduction of a set of homogeneous institutions designed to integrate the Indies into the administrative and political apparatus of the monarchy; and the incorporation of the overseas territories into an economic system regulated by the metropolis are some of the factors that demonstrate that these territories were considered part of the Spanish world.

### ***Guiding principles and administrative structure***

The characteristic institutional framework of the Spanish monarchy was the polysynodial regime, made up of a group of councils from which the monarch received the advice necessary to make decisions. Given the aggregate nature of the monarchy, polysynody meant a complex panorama of multiple actors, institutions, and statutes within a single political community that is still difficult to comprehend. Today, there is a tendency to combine classic studies on administration—dedicated primarily to the institutional framework and guiding principles of the institutions—with works that focus on both the actors and the practices of government within their respective political cultures and in precise historical contexts.

The plurality of nations represented a real challenge for institutional management. On the one hand, such management needed to respect diversity while also effecting subjection to the monarch, and on the other, it needed to be unified relative to foreign powers but diverse in terms of internal affairs (Barrios Pintado 2015). To achieve these goals, the monarchy maintained as a guiding principle the conversion of the monarch into the king of each and every constituent kingdom or territory, at the head of a political body that appeared to foreigners to be a collective, while internally each territory was administered separately. In practice, and to avoid the fragmentation of its parts, this involved a delicate political balance (Gil Pujol 2016).

The administration of the monarchy was structured around the principle of a single and multiple king in combination with the duties of a council. This arrangement derived from political thinking regarding royal power that had established that the king could achieve good government only if he could count on the judgment of honest men, hence the relevance of the councils in political administration (Sánchez 1993; Moranchel Pocatererra 2010). In turn, and corresponding to the duties of the council, the monarchy's entire political community was subject to the principle of service to the king and therefore to the kingdom (Esteban Estríngana 2012). The logic of service to the monarch provided the mechanism for shoring up administrative structures and ensuring the functioning of the system, which thus remained under the standard of distributive justice and the economy of royal favor (Hespanha 1993).

In the case of the Indies, the management of affairs by the monarchy incorporated from very early on three other guiding principles that were specific but not exclusive to the administration of the Indies, which ultimately became procedural standards (García Gallo 1987). The first was specialization by branches, that is, the division of the bulk of business into four categories: government, justice, war, and revenue (García Gallo 1987; Barrientos Grandon 2004). The duties of these branches were not written in stone, nor did they constitute a separation of powers. It was more a distribution of responsibilities among the different institutions of the system by royal decision, which was susceptible to modification and was generally regulated or consolidated by custom.

The second principle had to do with the merging of different functions and responsibilities in a single individual or institution. One example of this type of fusion was the figure of the viceroy, who represented the ruling king, presided over the highest governing body of the territory, and took on military responsibilities as the Captain General as well as judicial responsibilities as president of the *Real Audiencia* [Royal Court] in the viceregal capital, among other duties. In light of these convergences, and as a standard of order of the general administration of the Indies, the term *high government* was used to distinguish subordinate responsibilities from primary ones, although the assignment of these categories did fluctuate.

The final principle is that of the union between the temporal and the spiritual in the government of the Indies. On the one hand, this is due to the close relation between both powers, understood as integral parts of a whole and traditionally represented as two swords (*Partida Segunda*). On the other, the Indies were unique because of *Patronato Regio* [Royal Patronage], the legal regime that established relations between the Church and the Crown for the administration of the American ecclesiastical sphere (García Añoveros 1990).

With regard to the overall institutional framework, the generally accepted classification distinguishes two broad groups: the institutions of the king and the institutions of the kingdoms (Tomás y Valiente 1982). The first broad category included institutions that worked together with the king at court or in the territories of the kingdoms, where they represented the monarch to different degrees or with different responsibilities. In the second group, the main institutions of the kingdoms were the courts, along with other organizations particular to each of their legal systems. Furthermore, in a generic panorama, it is important to remember that the

institutions of the king and those of the kingdoms existed together with other administrations with similar characteristics, such as the seigniorial or the ecclesiastical, which had their own structures and dynamics.

### ***The institutions of the king in the court***

In the administration of the monarchy, the role of the king was paramount, constituting the primary locus of the highest administrative offices established at the royal court. The monarch was the apex of the administration and also the unifying factor that affected institutions at every level. Although there are different criteria for determining which should be considered the king's institutions at court, it is generally agreed that the king primarily made use of councils, *juntas*, secretaries, and favorites (*validos*) to rule his dominions (Tomás y Valiente 1982; Barrios Pintado 2015).

#### *The royal councils*

Of all the king's courtly institutions, the councils were the most important for management. After a long trajectory of development from medieval origins, the councils ultimately became a symbol of and response to the aggregate nature of the monarchy. Governing through councils signified respect for the differing juridical entities of the kingdoms, because in every one of the synods, the monarch was represented. Despite the clarity of royal representation, there is often confusion on this point: the councils did not represent particular territories to the king, but rather, they represented the king within and to those territories. The councils belonged to the king and not to the kingdoms, which had their own institutions (Tomás y Valiente 1982).

The list of royal councils at their peak included the Castilian Council of State—which in turn included the Chamber of Castile (*Cámara de Castilla*)—and the Councils of Aragon, the Inquisition, Italy, Portugal, Flanders, the Indies—also with its own Chamber of the Indies (*Cámara de Indias*), although only intermittently—Orders, Treasury, and the Crusades. Each one of them was responsible for its titular territory or the subject, but not all of them had the same responsibilities by royal delegation. Some had jurisdictional functions or had their responsibilities outlined in Royal Orders (*Ordenanzas Reales*), as in the case of the Council of the Indies. Others, despite their importance, were not tribunals and did not have their own legal statutes; this was the case of the Council of State.

Historiography offers different taxonomies of the councils (Barrios Pintado 2015), although generally they have been divided into territorial councils or thematic councils, based on whether their responsibilities centered on geographical spaces or a specific subject. This typology is useful as long as we remember that the thematic councils could share their responsibilities with the territorial ones, because the divisions were not inflexible in practice. The reason for this administrative flexibility was that the king's councils could reign supreme jurisdictionally on a matter or business in a given territory—for which they were constituted as the highest institutions in their line—but they were never sovereign. This means that the king could modify—and, in fact, he did so constantly—the responsibilities of any given synod.

In essence, the councils were member organizations with consulting functions on matters about which the king requested their opinions and executive functions in fulfilling the specific mandates given them by the monarch. Some of them were responsible for justice, in which case they acted as supreme courts by express delegation of the monarch, the true titleholder and only possessor of universal jurisdiction. The functioning of the councils as a whole was presented by their contemporaries as the harmoniously arranged mechanism of a clock, in which advice was

offered to the king for resolution and then returned to the council for execution through royal orders (Saavedra Fajardo 1994). In practice, there were matters or territories to administer that might correspond to one or another council, depending on the different interpretations regarding synodal responsibilities, which explains the frequent overlaps of and conflicts over duties.

It is worth mentioning that most conciliar advice was transmitted in writing, at the expense of face-to-face meetings with the king, which transformed not only the act but also the documentation of advising into fundamental instruments for the development of the administration and of political activity. In turn, the written consultations were part of the set of documentary forms that articulated the administrative processes of the monarchy and gave the written word the ability to represent and mediate power. The consultations existed alongside other documentary forms of similar effect but different character, such as the bills of favorites or the decrees of monarchs, which emulated the consultation process through varying formulas, generally with the objective of avoiding or supplanting the participation of the council in favor of other political actors.

#### *The council of the Indies*

For governing America, the Council of the Indies was the most important institution (Schäfer 1935–1947). It was a *royal, supreme* institution thanks to its broad jurisdiction that excluded any other institution, as well as *universal* because it was responsible for all matters and domains of the New World. Thus, and as stated in Royal Orders, the Council of the Indies had the highest responsibility in matters of secular and spiritual government, justice, war, and revenue for the American territories, responsibilities that were managed mainly through the synod and the House of Trade (*Casa de Contratación*), which was responsible for organizing and overseeing transatlantic trade (Fernández López 2018). However, the formidable legal and institutional nature of the Council of the Indies was not always reflected in administrative practice, where often it found itself diminished by the activity of other neighboring institutions that took full or partial control of matters relating to the Indies. For example, from very early on, management authority for matters relating to revenue was transferred to the Council of the Treasury (*Consejo de Hacienda*) and to the various *juntas* on this matter, including other councils, such as the Council of the Crusades, which was responsible for the administration of the respective papal bull in America (Martínez López-Cano 2017).

The institutional and political prominence of the councils is unmistakable and allows us to assess the importance of electing their members. The preeminence of the post of councilor made it one of the primary aspirations of those who worked in the service of the king; that same preeminence made it necessary for aspirants to possess truly meritorious qualities. Hence, Ramírez de Prado (1617) emphasized that the councilor had to be an irreproachable Christian man, the worthiest of worthies, with knowledge, experience, modesty, temperance, good judgment, and many other similar personal virtues. In practice, the process of candidate selection was essential for shaping the monarch's final decision. Every council had its own formula for appointments, although certainly most of the territorial synods themselves chose the candidates and submitted them to the king in the form of an advisement.

On this point, the Council of the Indies is different from the other councils, because the responsibility for nominating councilors did not belong to them but to the Chamber of Castile, an organization composed of members of the Council of Castile, which was responsible for appointments and royal favors. The power to propose Councilors of the Indies to the monarch was related to the origin and political development of the institution of the Indies, which came about as an offshoot of the Council of Castile. Matters relating to the Indies were completely

separated, but the Council and Chamber of Castile refused to let go of their ability to advise the Councilors of the Indies. The way the councilors were named had consequences on the profiles of these public servants, because in contrast to what happened with the councils of other territories, in the Council of the Indies, there were hardly any members who had management experience gained in America and even fewer who were born there. On the contrary, the vast majority of posts were given to learned men who forged a *cursus honorum* in Spain, working their way up through the king's institutions at court; eventually, however, corruption made it possible to simply buy positions, thus weakening the endogamy of the conciliar regime (Ponce Leiva 2017; Villarreal Brasca 2017).

#### *The juntas*

The dynamics of the king's *juntas* were similar to those of the councils, but *juntas* constituted a lower administrative level within the institutional regime (Baltar Rodríguez 1998). However, they were repeatedly used in administrative practice, particularly for managing intersecting matters of the monarchy that required greater specialization or flexibility. The *juntas* could be temporary or permanent, depending on their nature and the purpose for which they were established. They were used frequently in managing the Indies, especially when it came to matters of revenue or war, which ultimately led to stable *juntas* made up of members selected from the councils involved. Furthermore, different matters in the Indies were dealt with in numerous isolated *juntas* of the king, which were composed of members of different synods or other royal servants such as the royal confessor, the favorite, or the secretaries. In this sense, the king named the members of these *juntas* using more situational criteria, making them more versatile management mechanisms than the councils and able to serve multiple objectives.

#### *The secretaries*

The king's secretaries played a fundamental role in the management of the monarchy (Escudero 1969). There were various types of secretary, according to the responsibilities and spaces to which they were assigned, and their primary functions were related to their roles: the writing, processing, dispatching, and safekeeping of documents issuing from the monarch or addressed to his person. In the sixteenth century, they enjoyed the king's confidence, were more important, and had influence on political decisions. For matters pertaining to the Indies, secretaries like Francisco de Eraso and Juan de Ibarra monopolized the management of American roles and matters, with the monarch's consent. Beginning with the reign of Philip III, they would be replaced by the figure of the favorite, with the first one to monopolize face-to-face advice being the Duke of Lerma, who managed to restrict the secretaries' access to the monarch. However, the work of the different secretaries as managers of the king's papers, either personally or within the councils, *juntas*, or other institutions, still remained important in the practice of government.

#### *The favorites*

With respect to the favorites, it is important to note that their visible incorporation into the system of government began during the reign of Philip III and lasted throughout most of the seventeenth century, although with variations in concept as well as in practice (Tomás y Valiente 1963; Elliott and Brockliss 1999). The institutionalization of the king's favorite, his elevated position over the councils, and his method of management, similar to that of other institutions and with private access to the king's person, constantly tested the importance of the councils' duties and

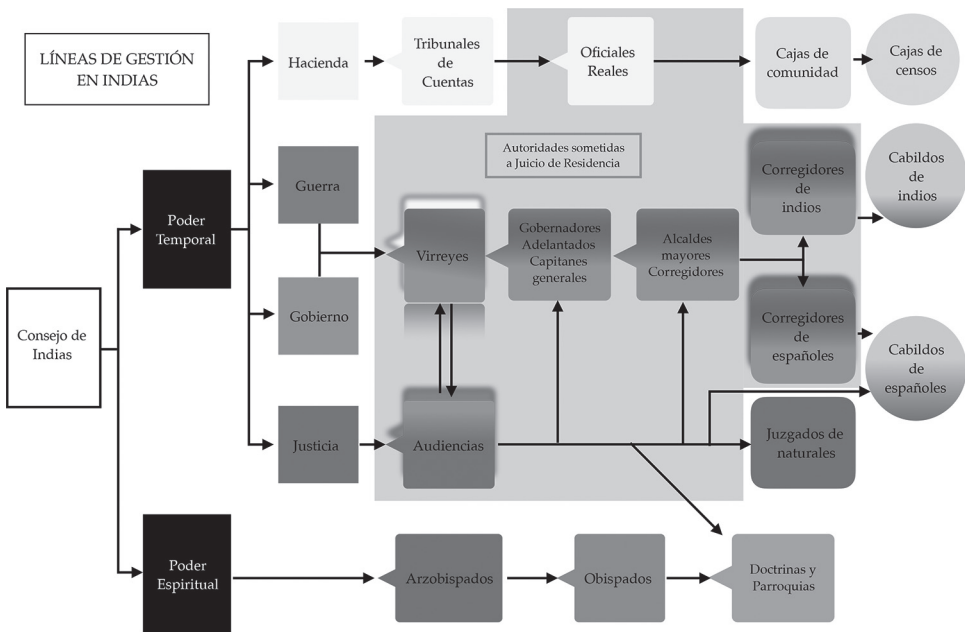
kept them open to debate (Feros 2000). The favorites justified their positions through the concept of perfect friendship, founded on love, with which they declared themselves united with the monarch and presented themselves to the political community as virtuous, experienced, prudent men, dedicated to easing the burden of the monarchy that weighed on the sovereign. On an administrative level, favors constituted fundamental pieces of management, where they used alternative proceedings and took advantage of patronage to achieve government objectives not only at court but also in the overseas territories (Amadori 2013; Villarreal Brasca 2013).

### The king's institutions in the kingdoms: the case of America

The guiding principles of the monarch's governing actions in the Indies ultimately determined the organization of the royal institutions in that territory. Figure 2.1 shows the lines of management that will be referred to here. The first major division in the government of the Indies was made because of the separation between temporal power and spiritual power; that is, between civil and ecclesiastical power. Within secular power, the specialization of businesses led to the development of four main branches—Justice, Government, War, and Treasury—which were assumed as responsibilities by different authorities, both individuals and groups.

#### Authorities with government and justice responsibilities

The territory of the Indies was organized into six high governments, or major provinces—Santo Domingo, Guatemala, Mexico, Manila, Santa Fe de Bogotá, and Lima, subordinate only to the king and the Council of the Indies. They were run by a governor, who was also the Captain General of the military forces, president of the *audiencia* that had its seat in the capital



Autoras: Pilar Ponce Leiva y Amorina Villarreal Brasca

Figure 2.1 Lines of management in the Indies.

where he resided, and tax collector for the royal treasury, which meant that his responsibilities included all four branches of business. In the case of Lima and Mexico, the governor was the viceroy, the personal representative of the monarch, which also granted him the designation of vice-patron of the Church. In addition to this division was that of the minor provinces, with very dissimilar characteristics from one to the other. The governors of these provinces were named by the king, or occasionally by the viceroy, and had responsibilities in defending the territory, acting as high justice and general commander, and controlling the treasury. They could also name lieutenant governors to represent them and act in their name (Céspedes del Castillo 1983; Pérez Herrero 2002).

To govern the cities, the king, or the viceroy, named *corregidores*, similar to mayors, who were responsible for government, for justice as royal judges, for defense as military commanders, and for revenue as collaborators of the royal officers. They also acted in the areas surrounding urban centers, which effectively gave them jurisdictions similar to those of small provinces.

A common characteristic of these authorities, to which should be added the royal officers responsible for the Treasury, was their submission to a residency requirement once their appointment terminated. The importance of the political and economic responsibility of positions in government, justice, and the treasury, at the high level of territorial administration, made this control mechanism an obligatory practice (Andújar Castillo, Feros, and Ponce Leiva 2017).

At the local level, town councils were the institutions that were first established in the cities of the Indies as an instrument of organization and political action in the daily life of the community and support for the interests of the elites.

#### *Jurisdictional authorities*

In addition to the high governments, there was a total of twelve high provinces, each of which constituted the district of an *audiencia*, a title that was reserved for the king's high court of justice in that territory. They were the third venue for legal proceedings, so their sentences meant the end of the judicial process, and only in exceptional cases could one plead a case before the Council of the Indies as the highest court. There were different types of *audiencias* based on the responsibilities of their presidents; they also had legislative functions and were keepers of the royal seal, which, added to the superiority of their judicial authority, made them institutions that carried a greater weight as representatives of the royal person (García Gallo 1987).

#### *Authorities of the Treasury*

The royal officers were the primary authorities of the Treasury, responsible for accounting and control of revenue through the management of the Royal Treasuries established in cities, mining centers, and important trading or tax ports, to which were sent the moneys and accounts of the lesser treasuries of the territory. The royal officers, in turn, were also overseen in their accounting by the Courts of Auditors in Lima, Mexico, or Santa Fe de Bogotá. Likewise, there were accounting offices that administered specific royal income streams, such as sales tax or shops. To earn the appointment of royal officer, specific training was not necessary beyond experience in managing accounts (Bertrand 2011).

#### *Defense of the Indies*

Once the territories were settled after the conquest, the defense of the Indies against the expansionist ambitions of other crowns was one of the most worrying matters for the monarchy. There

### *Ruling the overseas territories*

was not, strictly speaking, a military organization, but a series of garrisons or professional military presidios in the strict sense, established at strategic points such as ports or borders. Planning took place in the king's institutions at court, which were charged with the defense of the whole of the royal possessions and took steps to reinforce defensive enterprises or make them profitable. In practice, defense was essentially in the hands of the troops that were called up in times of danger and led by important members of local society, supported by the people to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the danger to their interests (Marchena 1992).

### *Spiritual government of the Indies*

There were five archbishoprics that structured ecclesiastical government—Mexico, Santo Domingo, Santa Fe de Bogotá, Lima, and La Plata—and these included smaller districts in 27 bishoprics. The administration of American pastoral work was organized into parishes, for Spaniards and mestizos, regulated by secular clergy; and into doctrines (special parishes where religious education and evangelization were stressed) for indigenous peoples, administered by regular clergy. Since the beginning and by royal decree, evangelization and religious indoctrination in America were in the hands of the reformed mendicant orders, to which was later added the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), among others (García Añoveros 1990).

### *Integration of institutions of indigenous government*

The diversity of indigenous American societies led to different forms of self-government under Spanish domination. Generally speaking, two systems can be discerned: the traditional system that survived through the figure of the *cacique* or *curaca* and a new one articulated through the Indian council.

The traditional system endured largely in the areas that had been dominated by the Inca and Mexica empires and was more readily maintained in regions further away from the new centers of power. In general, those native local governments had remained active after the incorporation of their respective communities into the two American empires. The local lords who had kept their positions, privileges, and wealth at that time did the same under the Spanish government, giving rise to a vigorous indigenous elite in the viceroyalties of Peru and New Spain (Rojas 2010).

Through the second system, that of the Indian councils, the *kurakas*, *tlahtoque*, and *tetecuhitín*, as leaders of their respective groups, had the ability to build on the new Spanish ways and manipulate them to their own benefit, as happened with the positions of governor, *corregidores*, and councilors. To do this, they made an effort to understand the legislation pertinent to the Indies and adapt it to their benefit (Stern 1986; Rojas 2010). In the case of the traditional system, local nobles largely retained the same rights and responsibilities they had had before, as tribute collectors and community leaders whose legitimacy derived from their lineage. In the case of this second system, indigenous leaders developed and exercised their power through newly introduced Spanish institutions, and these individuals did not necessarily claim their right to do so on the basis of historical nobility.

## **Part III: debates on the dynamics of managing the Hispanic American territories**

As seen previously, the administration of the American territories generally followed the model established in peninsular Spain. In its institutional configuration as well as its management dynamics, parallels can be seen on both sides of the Atlantic.



Figure 2.2 *Americae Retectio*, engraving by Adrian Collaert, published by Philippe Galle. Flora, the goddess of fertility, together with Janus, pulls aside the curtain that was covering the globe. They are flanked by portraits of Christopher Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci.

Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España, ER, n° 2940, circa 1580.

Recent analyses of the attacks by other European monarchies on the integrity of Spain demonstrate that the idea of its progressive decline does not match the capacity for response and resistance of a monarchy that held itself together despite numerous adversities. In this way, current interpretations hypothesize that resilience, the ability to overcome adversity by adapting to it and turning it into an advantage, was one of the main characteristics of the Spanish monarchy (Storrs 2013). For example, the definitive economic crisis that hit Castile in the mid-seventeenth century did not prevent other economies, like those in the Mediterranean or America, from enjoying a prosperity that was taken advantage of by the Crown to compensate for the lost income and also by local elites in order to negotiate their political role in the territories. The constant negotiation between the king, the kingdoms, and their local elites was a basic principle of political theory in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the practical management of matters of government was, in large part, based on it. The image of an absolutist government in Spanish domains has been softened in recent decades. Advances in research are showing more precisely the horizontal mechanisms of decision-making: access to the king was possible; members of the Council of the Indies grounded themselves in the arguments of petitioners to write their advisements; and finally, royal decrees were, in many cases, a reflection

of the petitions of subjects (Gaudin and Ponce Leiva 2019; Cunill 2015; Masters 2018). It could be said that negotiation as a management tool was possibly the most effective aspect of the Spanish administration. Some of the basic principles of political treatises converge in it, such as ‘moderation’, ‘dissimulation’, ‘restraint’, ‘balance’, ‘mutual support between king and subjects’, ‘distributive justice’, and ‘reciprocal preservation’. Negotiation as a habitual practice of government was not, therefore, a sign of weakness on the part of the ruler or of cunning on the part of the subjects but an intrinsic part of late medieval political theory. Moreover, the ability to negotiate with care, to know how to harmonize the interests of the king and those of his subjects while maintaining the status quo, was one of the most appreciated qualities in agents of the administration. It was not the agent who implacably carried out orders who was rewarded but rather the one who—with caution and skill—knew how to generate consensus; the ways that such resolutions were presented—always under the mantle of royal goodwill and benevolence—does not invalidate the fact that they were agreements reached through mediation by those with autonomy and jurisdiction.

The American territories obviously presented some characteristics that were very different from the European kingdoms that made up the Spanish monarchy. One of their defining characteristics was the enormous distance that separated them from the central institutions and from the king. Distance, in space and time, appears mentioned in treatises and memorials as an argument and example of the complexity, the magnificence, and at the same time the vulnerability of those complex political entities that constituted the Spanish Monarchy.

The territorial complexity and multiple obstacles to organizing communication with the Indies made it an exceptional challenge that the monarchy went about managing in various ways. On average, the voyage from Andalusian ports to the Lesser Antilles took some 32 days; to Veracruz, about 75 days; and to Panama, 77 days. The routes and navigation times of the return trips were different due to wind patterns: from Havana, it took 65 days to return to Spain; from Cartagena de Indias, 115 days; from Veracruz, 122 days; and from Panama, some 135 days. From this data, it can be deduced that the time taken to transport products and passengers doubled once ships arrived in the Caribbean and that the sensation of distance was greater in traveling from America to Europe than the other way around (Pérez Herrero 1992; Céspedes del Castillo 2000). With respect to correspondence, the regular communication channels of the annual fleets of the West Indies convoy operated alongside informal routes of communication, such as secular or ecclesiastical passengers. In addition, the monarchy developed the system of so-called *dispatch ships* to carry documents quickly for specific purposes. Extraordinary dispatch ships could make a round trip in as little as 35 days, although two months was more normal, and some took longer than 100 days (Vallejo García-Hevia 1998; Sellers-García 2013; González Martínez 2017).

Generally viewed as a disadvantage because of its implications for the management and administration of such far-flung territories, distance gave a particular character to the Spanish monarchy in governmental, juridical, and administrative terms. Distance was repeatedly mentioned in political theory and administrative practice, always with negative connotations, both for delaying communications between the court and its overseas domains—with the consequent lack of current information—and for the excessive autonomy of the local agents and powers that it could enable (Gaudin and Ponce Leiva 2019).

One of the ways both the monarchy and individuals overcome the inconveniences of such distances was through so-called ‘paper bridges’, that is, the writing and circulation of multiple letters and documents that joined together spaces that would otherwise have remained inexorably isolated from one another (Castillo Gómez and Sierra Blas 2014). Those papers contained information, accusations, and, of course, regulations enacted for all territories or those enacted specifically for a given territory, thus forming the well-known ‘ad hoc effect’

(*casuismo*) of legislation pertaining to the Indies (Tau Anzoátegui 1992). The key idea maintained in numerous reports and memorials sent to the Council of the Indies, especially during the first half of the sixteenth century, was that the American reality was not easily compatible with rigid legal rules, which, furthermore, were designed for contexts and geographical environments very different from those of the Indies. It became essential for good government, therefore, to consider above all else the circumstances (of person, time and place) that surrounded the case. From this perspective, *casuismo*—so reviled by the systematic conception of jurisprudence—did not mean chaos, contradiction, or improvisation but rather the adaptability and pragmatism that new circumstances required: hence, it became a unique element of legislation for the Indies. The regulatory framework of Spanish America that came from the peninsula was completed with rulings issued by governing and judicial authorities located in America in relation to both the temporal and ecclesiastical governments. Governing from a distance in this way did not mean either mere colonial domination or anarchical local self-management: it could be claimed that the success of the system was based on the consensus of the local elites and the circulation of officers of the crown relatively well connected with the current trends in the court in Madrid.

In this sense, one question that is being intensely debated in current historiography is the subordination of some spaces to others, the controversial center–periphery perspective, the opposition between centralism and local autonomy, and the existence of different centers of power that interacted among themselves (Rivero Rodríguez 2013; Ruíz Ibáñez 2016). In contrast to a hierarchized image of the territories—articulated around viceroalties divided into *audiencias*, departments, *corregimientos*, and municipalities—following political practice and administrative management makes clear the existence of a set of territories with different centers, ruled by individuals (or institutions) with jurisdiction, each one of which was in communication with the Council of the Indies either directly (viceroys, *audiencias*, governors, bishops) or through attorneys (in the case of town councils). The existence of such centers with juridical and governing capacity is incompatible with an already obsolete view based on the ‘center-periphery’ duality, which presents the metropolis as a center that ordered and some colonies on the periphery whose duty was to obey.

In reality, it would be more important to consider that there was never, in any case, a center and a periphery. Both in the metropolis and in America, different institutions of power functioned simultaneously. While, on the one hand, in the court of Madrid, the opinions defended by the king, the favorite, or the Council of the Indies did not always coincide (for example, with regard to appointments, populating an area, or defense), in America, on the other, the disparity of interests aroused frequent conflicts between the different political institutions at the provincial, regional, or local level. More than center and periphery, it is possible to observe multiple sectors in the court and in the Americas that generated political proposals—not always successfully—that changed according to the circumstances, needs and individuals involved. In this sense, speaking of the ‘king’, the ‘favorite’, the ‘Council of the Indies’, the ‘viceroys’, or the ‘Audiencia’ as static, immutable entities simply because they have existed for centuries does not make a precise contribution to understanding the issues.

In the political practice of the American territories, we can observe, therefore, the existence of numerous centers of decision-making. There of course exists a long tradition of studies on the dynamics of the management of Spanish American territories in which the key analytical points are negotiation, decentralization, and political and juridical autonomy held by the institutions of the Indies (Céspedes del Castillo 1983). However, this decentralization did not imply that the center was irrelevant. The constant intervention—be it in the short, medium, or long term—of the Council of the Indies in the supervision of decisions made in different spaces has been well

established with plenty of evidence. Regarding the importance of relations between different American territorial centers, detailed studies on the management of various American spaces are making clear that we cannot make sweeping generalizations: while some territories maintained close ties between themselves (Chile and Lima, for example), others acted with a notable autonomy with respect to higher regional authorities (the case of Quito toward the viceroy of Peru, for instance) (Ponce Leiva 2018).

In the face of changing realities, rather than imposing authority by following a hierarchical line, political practice was developing a complicated ‘machine’ of pacts and reciprocities that functioned in multiple directions and at varying intensities, a machine that was lubricated by both negotiation and adaptability. That way of understanding and exercising political relations constituted a repeated exercise of contracts and adjustments in all matters or at all levels of the management of the Indies, which was not a static pact; rather, its flexibility allowed for circumstantial changes to be incorporated into the system and structural needs to be constantly discussed and refined (Pérez Herrero 2002). In the Spanish political treatises of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a recurrent theme was the advantage of moderation, dissimulation, containment, and respect for local laws on the part of the king—the head of a monarchy made up of different kingdoms—and this standard was expressed regularly in political practice. The expressive observation of the bishop and viceroy Juan de Palafox, that the Spanish monarchy was governed by twenty individuals (an expression recently employed to reinforce the idea of a strong centralism; Rivero Rodríguez 2013), could be applied to the design of the overarching policies to be followed in the major concerns of the State (what could be called ‘high politics’, such as the increase of fiscal pressure or international relations), but the management of government and decision-making in daily affairs was shared, negotiated, disputed, and sometimes imposed between the different institutions of power located in America—including, of course, the powerful local elites, who were subsequently confirmed, or not, by the king through the Council of the Indies. This negotiation was far from being perceived as a manifestation of weakness or vulnerability by the sovereign; rather, it was defended with arguments whose persistence over time increased its value. In the words of the great writer Saavedra Fajardo in 1640, ‘a los buenos príncipes agrada que en los súbditos quede alguna libertad; los tiranos procuran un absoluto dominio. Constituida con templanza la libertad del pueblo, nace della la conservación del principado. No está más seguro el príncipe que más puede, sino el que con más razón puede’ [good princes are pleased that their subjects have some freedom; tyrants attempt absolute dominion. If the freedom of the people is constituted with temperance, it will lead to the preservation of the principality. It is not the prince who can do more who is safer, but the prince who can do it with greater reason] (Saavedra Fajardo 1994, *Empresa* 20; in Gil Pujol 2016: 209).

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### 3

# IBERIAN IMPERIAL RIVALRIES AND THE MISSIONARY CONQUEST OF JAPAN

*Alejandro Cañeque*

The history of early modern Spain is not usually associated with the history of Japan, even though many Spaniards from that time had their minds fixated on that great East Asian archipelago. Part of the reason for this disconnection is that modern historians have adopted the perspective of the nation-state, for instance, concentrating on the study of early modern Spain, Italy under Spanish rule, colonial Mexico, colonial Peru, and so on, relegating to the background the fact that all of these territorial units belonged to a larger polity, the *Monarquía Hispánica*, known in English as the Spanish Empire. It was an empire which was not only European and American but also African and Asian, especially during the period of the union of the Spanish and Portuguese Crowns between 1580 and 1640. That is why many Spaniards in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries thought in imperial terms and had a global mindset. If we are going to fully understand the complexities of the early modern Spanish world, the history of early modern Spain should not be studied dissociated from the history of its empire; instead of separating the Spanish Empire into nation-state fragments, it should be studied as an integrated and coherent unit of analysis.

Japan aroused the interest of the inhabitants of the monarchy mainly for two reasons: It was a convenient and effective point of access to the wealth of China, and, perhaps more decisively, it captured the evangelical imagination of the religious orders, which became convinced that the Japanese could be converted to Christianity. The prospect of having access to the material riches of Japan provoked competition between the Portuguese and the Spanish. At the same time, the desire to convert the Japanese triggered a fierce rivalry between the religious orders to determine which of them was going to control the mission and claim its prestige. In this confrontation, the Jesuits would stand on one side, confronting the Mendicant orders (Franciscans and Dominicans) on the other.

Historians of early modern Spain have not paid a lot of attention to Spanish activities in Japan, let alone to those of the Portuguese.<sup>1</sup> Some of the few who have studied this subject have argued that the controversies between the religious orders originated not in doctrinal disputes or in different methods of evangelization but in the 'exacerbated nationalism' and mutual aversion that characterized the relations between the Spanish and the Portuguese in East Asia (Elison 1973: 137; Boxer 1946). Other historians have contended that the disputes over the best method to evangelize the Japanese and the Chinese were intensified by Spanish and Portuguese commercial competition in the Far East. According to João Paulo Oliveira e Costa, the Portuguese saw the

Mendicant orders' ambitions in Japan as just one more effort by the Spanish in the Philippines to displace them from the archipelago. In his view, the conflicts and controversies between Jesuits and Mendicants in Japan were just a manifestation of Portuguese resistance to the Spanish push for hegemony between 1580 and 1640 (Oliveira e Costa 1994: 478, 507–8).

Although these arguments do not lack merit, the reality was always more complex. Take, for example, the case of the Italian Jesuit Alessandro Valignano, the great organizer of the Japanese mission. Although he always appeared closely associated with the Portuguese and had a reputation for being hostile toward the Spaniards, he nonetheless played a prominent role in ensuring that the inhabitants of the Portuguese colony of Macao recognized the union of the two crowns in 1580 (Valignano 1954: 175–7). What is more, Philip II himself had supported the right of the Jesuits to be the only order allowed to do evangelical work in Japan. Although Philip III withdrew this support, in 1628, Philip IV requested that the pope reestablish the Jesuit missionary monopoly (Oliveira e Costa 1994: 508–10). To reduce the conflicts and rivalries inherent in the Japanese mission to the dichotomy of Portuguese Jesuits versus Castilian Mendicants simplifies historical realities excessively not only because there were many Spanish and Italian Jesuits in Japan but also because the religious orders were often driven more by corporate and institutional interests than by their undivided loyalty to a particular nation.

One factor that historians tend to ignore in these discussions is the enormous prestige that the Japanese mission enjoyed among the religious orders. This was a crucial aspect in an era of great evangelical fervor, and the Mendicants could not give up participating in such an effort. Converting the Japanese was seen as an endeavor similar to the conversion of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire by the Apostles. Thus, the Jesuits, as the founders of the Japanese mission, would do their utmost to ensure that the prestige inherent to this undertaking would belong only to them. Here is where the interests of Jesuits and Portuguese, on the one hand, and Mendicants and Spaniards, on the other, converged. The Portuguese in Macao were also interested in maintaining a commercial exclusivity with Japan, which brought them great profits, while the Spanish in Manila would make every effort to penetrate the lucrative Japanese market. In other words, while Portuguese and Spanish merchants vied for the material wealth of Japan, the religious orders fiercely competed for the spiritual riches of the Asian archipelago.

We should also reexamine and revise the common idea that in Asia the two Iberian empires lived either with their backs turned to each other or were in constant conflict. This idea was a result of the development of national historiographies during the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which concentrated on the study of their respective empires while for the most part ignoring the other one.<sup>2</sup> But, as Rafael Valladares has pointed out recently, it does not make a lot of sense to speak of a 'history of Portugal' or a 'history of Spain' for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although the existence of numerous conflicts between the Spanish and the Portuguese is undeniable, this does not mean that their actions were only driven by their 'patriotic identity', which was often utilized as a tool to protect individual or class interests. Besides, we cannot ignore the fact that there were many Portuguese in the service of the Spanish monarchy and many Spaniards in the service of the Portuguese kingdom, especially when both crowns were united under the same dynasty (Valladares 2001: xi). As Sanjay Subrahmanyam (2007) has correctly observed, regardless of the differences in substance and style that may have separated them, the Iberian empires did not constitute isolated spaces. They were, to a great extent, entangled at all levels, starting with the royal courts at Madrid and Lisbon. Examining jointly the Portuguese and Spanish documentation from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries would be highly illustrative of this point.

There is no better example of these 'connected histories' than the thriving commerce that existed between Macao and Manila, the two main Iberian establishments in the Far East. Despite

being prohibited, these commercial exchanges continued to grow until 1640, since the prosperity of both colonies depended on the exchange of two commodities which enjoyed a huge demand in the seventeenth century: silk and silver. Whereas Macao was the center for the distribution of Chinese silk, all of the American silver with which most Chinese silk was paid for passed necessarily through Manila (Flynn and Giraldez 1996).

### **The beginning of the Japanese mission**

On August 15, 1549, the first European missionaries arrived in Japan, only six years after the first Portuguese merchants had established contact with the Japanese. They set foot on Kyushu, the southernmost island of the Japanese archipelago. It was a small party composed of three Spanish Jesuits, two servants, and a Japanese interpreter. Leading the expedition was the future saint and 'apostle of the Indies', Francis Xavier. He would remain in Japan a little over two years, where he was cordially received by several daimyos.<sup>3</sup> Xavier traveled to Kyoto, the imperial capital, in the hope of meeting the emperor of Japan. Although the emperor did not deign to meet him, Xavier learned that the emperor's authority was very limited, since the daimyos were the ones who held actual power at the local level. Given the great difficulty he had communicating with its inhabitants, Xavier's stay in Japan was not very fruitful, and at the end of 1551, he decided to return to Goa, the Jesuit headquarters in Asia (Alden 1996: 59–60). Nevertheless, Francis Xavier's Japanese experience excited the interest of the Jesuits in the conversion of the archipelago. He himself had contributed greatly to this interest with his highly favorable views of its people (see, for example, Zubillaga 1996: 347–72). By the 1580s, the Jesuits were firmly established in Japan, having converted, according to their own assessment, 300,000 Japanese.

Upon their arrival in the islands, Portuguese merchants and Jesuits found a kingdom divided among numerous opposing autonomous domains, particularly on the island of Kyushu. This was the era in the history of Japan known as the *sengoku* or 'country at war' period. In one way, the Portuguese merchants would contribute to increasing the violence that engulfed the country by introducing firearms (harquebuses and small cannons), which had been unknown to the Japanese and would become indispensable weaponry for their armies (Oliveira e Costa 1999: 71–86). The merchants of Kyushu, who were very interested in trading with the Portuguese, saw the Jesuits as the perfect intermediaries for getting privileged access to Portuguese ships and their precious cargoes of Chinese silks. Because of its geographic location, Kyushu had historically been the center of commercial exchanges between Japan and China, and the Portuguese would end up monopolizing that trade across the sea. The Jesuits would take advantage of the island's endemic divisions and armed conflicts to favor their evangelical enterprise. Moreover, as Francis Xavier had realized, introducing himself to the daimyos as an envoy of the authorities of Portuguese India, while bearing letters and gifts from both the governor and bishop of Goa, had served to open many doors that would have otherwise remained closed (Elisonas 1991: 302–5, 313; Alden 1996: 59–60). In this way, the Japanese mission of the Jesuits would be closely identified with Portugal from the very beginning.

This symbiosis of the interests of daimyos, missionaries, and merchants reached its apex in 1580, when one of Kyushu's daimyos ceded Nagasaki to the Jesuits. At that time, the place was no more than a small fort with several hamlets clustered around it, its most important asset being its magnificent bay. With that cession, the local daimyo would secure for himself a substantial revenue stream from the regular presence in his dominion of the Portuguese ships. For seven years, Nagasaki was a Jesuit (but not a Portuguese) colony. The Society of Jesus possessed complete judicial and administrative power and the authority to appoint a 'captain' to govern it (Elisonas 1991: 326–31). Nagasaki was soon transformed into a prosperous and fully

Christianized port city, becoming the operational headquarters of both the Christian missionaries and the Portuguese traders (Elisonas 1991: 332–5; Alden 1996: 61–2).

Despite this initial success, the *sengoku* period would soon be over, and the troubles for Christian missionaries were about to start. A movement for the unification of Japan had begun in the central part of the country, where three key figures would reach special prominence as unifiers of Japan. The first one was Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582), who by the time of his death had been able to gain control over the greater part of the island of Honshu. The second was Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598). Despite having begun his political and military career as just another daimyo, Hideyoshi's power gradually increased, and by the time of his death, he had become the most powerful figure of Japan. In 1587, he invaded Kyushu, imposing his authority over the belligerent daimyos and putting an end to the independence of the island (Asao 1991: 40–50).

Up until 1587, the relations between the Jesuits and Hideyoshi had been cordial. The vice-provincial had even met with him in person. That is why the Jesuits were shocked when, hardly one week after that meeting, Hideyoshi issued a decree condemning the Christian religion as a pernicious doctrine and peremptorily ordering the missionaries to leave the country. The edict also banned forced conversions and condemned the destruction of the shrines of Japan's traditional religions, something never seen before in the history of the country. After issuing his decree, Hideyoshi confiscated Nagasaki from the Jesuits and made it part of his dominions. Although the Jesuits accused him of behaving as an arbitrary tyrant, his actions made perfect sense. In Hideyoshi's eyes, the Society's vice-provincial appeared to be just another daimyo in need of being subdued. What is more, he suspected the Jesuits of trying to organize a league of Christian daimyos, something that could mean a serious threat to his authority. In any event, Hideyoshi decided not to implement his antichristian policies, and the Jesuits were able to remain in the country, provided that they behaved discreetly. It is very likely that he still saw them as efficient intermediaries in his dealings with the Portuguese merchants. The fact that he was always interested in all kinds of novelties coming from the West would also have helped the Jesuits' cause (Elisonas 1991: 359–64; Asao 1991: 74–5; Hirofumi 2009: 255–7).

### **The competition for the souls of the Japanese**

The events of 1597 would change everything. That year, six Discalced Franciscan friars (five from Spain and one from Mexico) and twenty-three Christians from Japan were executed by crucifixion on a hill in the outskirts of Nagasaki. Although these executions initially constituted a minor event in the history of Japan, they caused heated controversies in the Hispanic world.<sup>4</sup> Franciscan authors and their sympathizers immediately described the executions as true martyrdoms, while some Jesuits questioned this description. The Franciscans had only arrived in Japan in 1593 and faced staunch opposition from the Jesuits. Like the latter, the friars were greatly excited with the prospect of Christianizing Japan, because, along with China, it constituted the main missionary target of the religious orders in the late sixteenth century. However, at the behest of the Jesuits, they were forbidden to missionize in Japan by a papal brief promulgated by Pope Gregory XIII in 1585, which prohibited any religious order, save for the Society of Jesus, from entering Japan. King Philip II, who at the time was also king of Portugal, had given his approval to the papal decree (Boxer 1951: 159–60; Oliveira e Costa 1994: 478–9).

The Franciscans would insistently press the authorities in Madrid, Rome, and Manila (founded by the Spanish in 1571) to allow them to travel to Japan. Finally, in 1593, the governor of the Philippines agreed to dispatch a Franciscan delegation to Japan on account of the interest shown by the Japanese authorities in establishing commercial ties with the Spanish colony. The governor appointed the friar leading the delegation as his ambassador, in this way sidestepping

the papal prohibition. After meeting with the Japanese authorities, the Franciscans got permission to remain in Kyoto and, presumably, to engage in missionary work (Sola 1999: 59–65). The arrival of the Franciscans meant the end of Jesuit missionary exclusivity in Japan. The Society of Jesus would oppose with all of its might this sudden intrusion of the Franciscans into the Japanese mission. This would create endless, nasty controversies between the religious orders. At stake was which order would claim the honor and prestige of Japan's conversion.

Alessandro Valignano, Visitor of the Japanese mission and its most significant promoter, had presented the Jesuit arguments justifying the papal brief of exclusion clearly and forcefully. After completing his first visit of inspection in 1583, he composed his famous *Sumario de las cosas de Japón* [Summary of the Things Pertaining to Japan], in which he briefed the authorities in Rome on the main aspects of Japanese culture and the state of the mission. In his report, Valignano offered many recommendations for how a mission in a place such as Japan should be conducted. He also contended that it was not advisable that other religious orders be sent to Japan, because the conversions were very recent, making it necessary to act prudently. The presence of other orders, with their different views on many matters, would only confuse the neophytes and open the door to the rise of heresies and schisms. Valignano also believed that the Japanese would never accept being ruled by foreigners and that the Spanish king would never be able to conquer and dominate those lands. Since the Japanese would refuse to adopt European customs, the Jesuit missionaries would have to adapt themselves to the manners of Japanese society. Valignano also warned that the Japanese authorities did not believe that the Jesuits were in Japan for purely altruistic motives. Many believed that the ultimate purpose of conversion was the establishment of an alliance between the king who had sent the Jesuits and the Japanese converts in order to conquer Japan (Valignano 1954: 143–9). In the opinion of the Jesuits, that fear was precisely what had prompted Hideyoshi to order the execution at Nagasaki of the twenty-six European and Japanese Christians. He had become convinced that the arrival of the Franciscans with the excuse of preaching the Gospel was but a ruse to prepare the ground for an invasion of Japan from the Philippines (Guzmán 1601: 588–94).

The Franciscans were never persuaded by the Jesuit arguments. They rejected the Jesuit contention that the Japanese were different from the Europeans and that their conversion, therefore, should be conducted following a different method. For them, it was not licit to change the way the Gospel was preached to pagan peoples. The same method that had been used by Christ himself and by the Franciscans to convert New Spain, Peru, and the Philippines should be used in Japan. What the Franciscans meant with this argument was not that they saw Japanese and Amerindian civilizations as equal but that the missionaries should never adopt the customs of Japanese society, as the Jesuits had done. They also contended that a diversity of religious orders was necessary in any well-organized Church (Ribadeneira 1601: 437–8, 447–8; Aguirre 1973a: 43–58). To this, the Jesuits would counter that the Church would be perfect even if the orders did not exist, as had been the case in the primitive Church. The religious orders were simply an ornament of the Church and in reality were not all that necessary (Guzmán 1601: 668–9).

The Franciscans would even reject the Jesuit suggestion that, were other religious orders to be admitted in Japan, only one should be present in each province so as not to interfere with one another in their work. The Franciscans countered that, although this might be appropriate for the Philippines, where towns were very small, it was totally inadequate for Japan, with its great cities; it would be as ridiculous, they asserted, as to claim that there should be only one convent in the cities of Madrid, Seville, and Rome (Aguirre 1973a: 104). The Mendicants would contend that, although this division of the territory among the orders already existed in both the New World and the Philippines, it only applied to the Indian parishes (for the Spanish, the natives of the Philippines were also 'indios'). It was this way because the Indians were 'gente de