

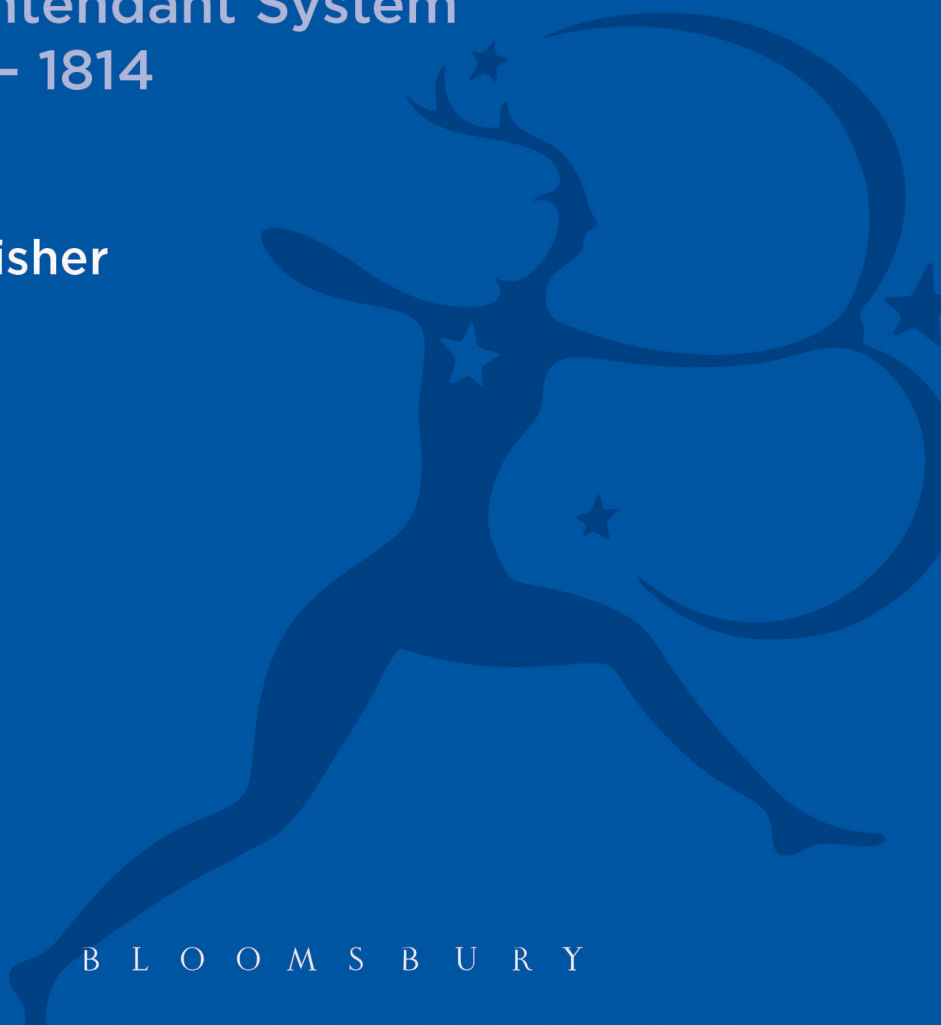


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GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY IN COLONIAL PERU

The Intendant System
1784 - 1814

J. R. Fisher



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Government and Society in Colonial Peru

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GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY
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THE INTENDANT SYSTEM 1784-1814

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1784-1814

by

J. R. FISHER

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PREFACE

The viceroyalty of Peru was an inevitable victim of the imperial reform programme of Charles III. The introduction of freer trade within the empire completed the destruction of the old commercial structure on which the prosperity of Lima had depended, while the incorporation of Upper Peru in the new viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata diverted the flow of most of Potosí's silver away from Lima to Buenos Aires. Despite the depressing effects of these changes in Peru, however, the crown believed that the viceroyalty could be made more prosperous and more profitable, and was determined to provide it with better government and improved financial and judicial administration. But conservative groups in Peru stubbornly and effectively resisted the efforts of the *visitador general* who arrived in 1777 to implement this programme. His work was brought to a complete halt by the outbreak of the rebellion of Túpac Amaru in 1780.

Many historians have turned their attention to the rebellion of Túpac Amaru, although few have resisted the temptation to see it as an expression of Peruvian nationalism rather than a demand for reform within the imperial structure. The conflict between the *visitador general* and the viceregal establishment has been analysed clearly by Palacio Atard, while the important work of Céspedes del Castillo covers the economic and financial aspects of the separation of Upper Peru. Relatively little attention has been paid, however, to the period after the suppression of the Indian rebellion, when the crown made a renewed effort to provide Peru with a radically reformed structure of government. The *visita general* was revived and reached its peak in 1784, when the system of provincial administration by intendants—already operating in the neighbouring viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata—was extended to Peru. This development was in part a response to the rebellion of Túpac Amaru, which had focused attention upon the abuses suffered by the Indians at the hands

of the *corregidores*, but it also reflected the wider aims of stimulating economic development in Peru, increasing the yield of royal revenues and generally making crown authority more effective.

The recent work of Deustua Pimentel provides a useful introduction to the creation of the Peruvian intendancies, but deals largely with royal intentions rather than the consequences of reform in the provinces. The basic questions about the effects of the introduction of the intendant system—dealt with for the viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata by the outstanding work of Dr John Lynch—have remained unanswered for the viceroyalty of Peru. The aims of this work are to explore the background to and the effects—social, political and administrative—of administrative reform in Peru in the late colonial period, and to examine the achievements of the intendants in relation to their aims and duties as defined in the Ordinance of Intendants.

The Archivo General de Indias in Seville provided much of the manuscript material on which the book is based. The detailed documentation of the *visita general* in the section *Audiencia de Lima* was particularly valuable. Both this section and *Audiencia de Cuzco* contain important material on the policies of the crown and the Council of the Indies, and correspondence with viceroys, intendants, *cabildos* and *audiencias*. The Archivo Nacional in Lima yielded important information on the functioning of the machinery of government within the viceroyalty, while the section *Cabildo* of this archive, together with the *Libros de Cabildo* and the *Libros de Cédulas y Provisiones Reales* in the Archivo Histórico Municipal of Lima, proved indispensable for the study of relations between the intendants and the municipal corporations. Material on financial administration was obtained from the Archivo Histórico del Ministerio de Hacienda y Comercio in Lima, while the city's Biblioteca Nacional provided valuable documents on administration in general. The manuscript section of the Archivo General del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores in Lima contains some interesting material for the late colonial period. Several unpublished contemporary studies on Peruvian commerce were consulted in the British Museum, together with a fine set of maps, many of which were prepared under the auspices of the intendants.

I wish to express my gratitude to the directors and staffs of these libraries and archives—and to those of the Institute of Historical Research in London and the Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos in Seville—for their kind assistance and co-operation. I am grateful to Félix Denegri Luna, who allowed me to consult rare printed sources in his private library in Lima, and to Pablo Macera Dall’Orso for his expert advice on Peruvian archives. I am particularly indebted to Professor R. A. Humphreys and Dr John Lynch for their encouragement, advice and assistance, and for their patient scrutiny of the book’s first draft—the defects of course are my responsibility. A grant from the University of London Central Research Fund aided my researches in Spain. Finally, I should like to thank my wife for her unfailing support and co-operation.

University of Liverpool,
October 1969

J. R. F.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- A.G.I. Archivo General de Indias, Seville
- A.G.M.R.E. Archivo General del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Lima
- A.H.M. Archivo Histórico Municipal, Lima
- A.H.M.H. Archivo Histórico del Ministerio de Hacienda y Comercio, Lima
- A.N.P. Archivo Nacional del Perú, Lima
- B.M. British Museum, London
- B.N.P. Biblioteca Nacional del Perú, Lima
- H.A.H.R. Hispanic American Historical Review*
- Ord. Ints. Real Ordenanza para el establecimiento e instrucción de intendentes de ejército y provincia en el virreinato de Buenos-Ayres*

CHAPTER I

The Decadent Viceroyalty

THE SECOND HALF of the eighteenth century witnessed the application in Spanish America of the Bourbon programme of administrative, economic and financial reform. The aims of the programme were to centralize and improve the structure of government, to create more efficient economic and financial machinery, to defend the empire from other powers, and in general to restore integrity and respect for law at all levels of administration. The comprehensive overhaul of the imperial structure was initiated in 1763 by Charles III and his enlightened ministers after the humiliating defeat of Spain in the Seven Years War. Yet, although military defeat provided the immediate stimulus for imperial reform, the programme was neither hasty nor ill-prepared; it was part of a continuing process inaugurated at the beginning of the century by Philip V, the first Spanish Bourbon, and continued by Ferdinand VI. During the reigns of the first two Bourbons the emphasis lay on reform in Spain itself; during the reign of Charles III reform continued in the peninsula, but the main emphasis shifted to the empire.

The seventeenth century had been for Spain an era of catastrophic decline, characterized by a drain of wealth and manpower, territorial loss, political confusion and economic stagnation.¹ The end of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713 saw further territorial contraction, with the loss of Milan, Naples, Sardinia, Luxembourg and Flanders. Spain was left militarily and economically exhausted, but she was left too with a new monarchy. The Bourbon, Philip V, aided by French advisers and encouraged by a long period of comparative peace

¹ E. J. Hamilton, 'Money and economic recovery in Spain under the first Bourbon, 1701-46', *Journal of Modern History*, xv (1943), 192-3.

in Europe, devoted his reign to the task of reviving and reforming the decadent country which he had inherited. Progress was slow but steady. In the economic sphere, for example, Philip's reign was marked by the consistent application of mercantilist theories and policies.¹ Internal barriers to trade were eliminated, model factories were created, protection was introduced for domestic agriculture, industry and commerce, and sweeping reforms were made in public finance.

One of the most powerful incentives to reform was the need to unify the country, economically and politically, and to impose central control and direction over provincial government. Under French inspiration the solution adopted was to introduce a system of administration by intendants, provincial governors with a mixture of military, financial, economic and judicial authority, directly responsible to the king's ministers in Madrid.² The first intendants were appointed in 1711 and provision was made for the introduction of this new system of administration on a more comprehensive basis in 1718. It was not, however, until 1749, with the provision of a new instruction or ordinance, that the system began to operate effectively throughout the peninsula.³ By 1749 the intendant system had proved its worth in those provinces where it had operated on a permanent basis throughout the reign of Philip V, and with the encouragement of persuasive reformist ministers, such as José Patiño and José de Campillo, Ferdinand VI felt justified in formally recognizing it as the basis for the provincial administration of the country.

Campillo, Minister of Finance under Philip V, had risen to high office from the lower ranks of the administrative hierarchy, serving for four years as intendant of Zaragoza.⁴ His approach to political and administrative problems was indicative of the general attitude of the early Bourbons and their ministers—reform must be based upon the application of reason, and must

¹ M. Artola, 'Campillo y las reformas de Carlos III', *Revista de Indias*, xii (1952), 687-90.

² H. Kamen, 'El establecimiento de los intendentes en la administración española', *Hispania*, xxiv (1964), 374-8.

³ W. W. Pierson, 'The establishment and early functioning of the *Intendencia* of Cuba', *The James Sprunt Historical Studies*, xix (Chapel Hill, 1927), 78.

⁴ Kamen, *op. cit.*, 385.

be preceded by inspection and the collection of accurate information. In his *Nuevo sistema de gobierno para la América*, written in 1743, Campillo turned his attention from the peninsula to the empire, which he saw as a market for Spanish manufactures and as a source of raw materials for Spanish industry.¹ His work fell into two parts: a critical analysis of the defects of the economic and administrative structure of the empire, and proposals for reform. His main proposals, for general inspections, or *visitas generales*, the creation of intendancies and the introduction of 'free trade', became the basis for the reform programme of Charles III.

The capture of Havana by the British in 1762 dramatically demonstrated to Spain the strategic weaknesses of the imperial structure; the commercial boom which resulted from the British decision to open the port indicated the economic and financial benefits which a general relaxation of trade restrictions might bring.² Peace in 1763 was followed by the rapid implementation of a four-pronged programme of reform. In Spain a special committee was appointed to consider the defects of the imperial commercial system and to suggest remedies.³ The result was a gradual relaxation of the old restrictionist pattern, beginning in 1765 with the grant of permission for various Spanish ports to trade with the major Caribbean islands. The experiment worked, and the concessions were gradually extended to other parts of the empire, until in 1778 the new system was applied to all the empire except New Spain and Venezuela, an exception which lasted until 1789.⁴ Restrictions still applied, but thereafter the major ports of Spain were free to trade directly with the major ports of the empire, and the latter were free to trade with each other.

The policy of removing barriers to imperial communication was accompanied by an even more radical process of reforming the empire from within. A rapid *visita* of Cuba in 1763-4

¹ Artola, *op. cit.*, 690-713.

² Pierson, *op. cit.*, 81.

³ *Ibid.*, 83. For a thorough examination of the whole process of reform see J. Lynch, *Spanish colonial administration 1782-1810* (London, 1958), 46-61.

⁴ J. Muñoz Perez, 'La publicación del reglamento de comercio libre de Indias de 1778', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* iv (1947), 640-3. R. Vargas Ugarte, *Historia del Perú. Virreinato (Siglo XVIII) 1700-1790* (Lima, 1956), 395-7.

established the need for drastic reform of the island's administration, and provoked the decision to create an intendancy there.¹ In the following year, 1765, final preparations were made for the famous *visita general* of José de Gálvez to New Spain.² His inspection of the viceroyalty confirmed that attempts to improve its defence, prosperity and government must be based upon territorial reorganization and the creation of a new system of administration.³

The outline of Gálvez's scheme for the creation of a system of intendancies in New Spain was ready by 1768.⁴ Discussion of it occupied the attention of ministers in Madrid for nearly twenty years, but practical progress in its application was slow, due as much to ministerial caution in Madrid as to viceregal obstruction in Mexico.⁵ When Gálvez was appointed Minister of the Indies in 1776 further intendancies had been created only in Louisiana and Sonora, but in that year the reform programme entered a new phase, with the creation of the new viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata.⁶ This step provided the stimulus for the introduction of the intendant system in the new viceroyalty in 1782, and for its extension to the viceroyalties of Peru and New Spain in 1784 and 1786.

The immediate reason for the creation of the new viceroyalty was a desire to ensure the success of the expedition sent to the Río de la Plata to repel Portuguese infiltration.⁷ Its commander, Pedro de Cevallos, argued convincingly that if his military authority was to be effective it should be reinforced by political control of the Plate area. Consequently he was named head of a new viceroyalty, with its capital in Buenos Aires, ostensibly on a temporary basis. The apparent impermanence of the arrangement was merely an insurance against failure, and the viceroyalty was made permanent in 1777. There were many

¹ Pierson, *op. cit.*, 82.

² L. Navarro García, *Don José de Gálvez y la comandancia general de las Provincias Internas del norte de Nueva España* (Sevilla, 1964), 143.

³ A.G.I., Indif. General 1713, 1714, for full *expedientes* of discussions on Gálvez's proposals.

⁴ A.G.I., Indif. General 1713, 'Informe y plan de Intendencias que conviene establecer en las provincias de este reyno de Nueva España', 15 Jan. 1768.

⁵ L. Navarro García, *Intendencias en Indias* (Sevilla, 1956), 22-40. For an example of viceregal resistance see A.G.I., Indif. General 1713, Bucareli to Arriaga, 27 July 1772.

⁶ Lynch, *op. cit.*, 39-40.

⁷ *Ibid.*

arguments to support this decision, and the idea of creating a new viceroyalty for the Río de la Plata area had been advocated previously. A major obstacle, however, had always been the apparent inability of the area to function without economic assistance from Peru. To solve this problem, and to provide funds for the expedition, it was decreed in 1776 that the new unit should include the rich mining area of Upper Peru. This decision made the new viceroyalty economically viable. For the viceroyalty of Peru, however, it was destructive and harmful since it disrupted a commercial pattern in existence for over two hundred years.

The separation from Peru of the rich mining provinces of Upper Peru did not entirely halt the flow of silver from Potosí to Lima but there was a significant fall in the volume of trade between the two areas.¹ Moreover, the opening of the port of Buenos Aires in 1778 accelerated the decline of Lima as the centre of commercial activity for the Spanish empire in South America. It is true that before 1778 the Lima monopoly was already being undermined from within, as much contraband traffic went directly to Buenos Aires and other ports, but the formal removal of Lima's privileges inevitably made the situation worse and produced an atmosphere of extreme pessimism there.² The double blow of commercial and territorial re-organization threatened the interests of the powerful merchant and office-holding groups, as well as the general prosperity of the viceroyalty. The provinces of Upper Peru and those further south, such as Salta and Tucumán, had a long-established commercial relationship with the Peruvian provinces of Arequipa and Cuzco; now they were forced, perhaps unwillingly, to turn to Buenos Aires. At the same time imported manufactures brought ruin to the domestic industries of Arequipa and Cuzco, as well as to those of the interior provinces of the new viceroyalty.³ Peruvian agriculture also suffered. Sugar producers, for example, found their formerly profitable

¹ G. Céspedes del Castillo, *Lima y Buenos Aires* (Sevilla, 1947), 139-46.

² S. Villalobos R., *Comercio y contrabando en el Río de la Plata y Chile* (Buenos Aires, 1965), 19-22. R. Vargas Ugarte (ed.), 'Informe del tribunal del consulado de Lima, 1790', *Revista Histórica* (Lima), xxii (1955-6), 266-310.

³ M. Burgin, *The economic aspects of Argentine federalism 1820-1852* (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), 3-18.

markets in the Río de la Plata and Chile undercut by cheaper Brazilian sugar imported through Buenos Aires.¹ Peru possessed tremendous economic potential, with a wide range of animal, vegetable and mineral resources, but in 1778 her prospects were gloomy. The future seemed to offer continuing commercial and economic depression, unless the crown could provide the means of stimulating the exploitation of resources and bring about general economic revival.

There was clearly scope for internal economic development, but the possibilities of the domestic market of the reduced viceroyalty, with a total population of a little over one million, were limited. Statistics for colonial population are notoriously suspect, but those for the late eighteenth century can certainly be accepted as more reliable than the varied estimates available for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The census of viceroy Gil, completed in 1792, showed a total population of 1,076,122.² The majority, 608,894, were classified as Indians, a further 244,436 as *mestizos*, 81,592 as free coloureds and slaves, and only 135,755 as *españoles* (plus 5496 clergy). A further census, completed in 1795, produced a higher total figure, 1,115,207, the increase depending largely on an increase in the Indian population to 648,615.³ The upward trend was maintained. Although no further census was taken before independence, it seems that the total population in the early years of the nineteenth century was about 1,400,000.⁴ The further increase was due in part to territorial readjustment. According to the estimates of Hipólito Unanue, the celebrated geographer of colonial Peru, the addition to the viceroyalty of the intendency of Puno in 1795 and of Mainas and Guayaquil in 1802 and 1803 added 200,000 to the population. Expansion within the areas included in the 1792 census accounted for the remainder of the increase.

¹ A.G.I., Aud. de Lima 1100, Escobedo to Gálvez, no. 181, 16 Jan. 1784. See below, 128.

² M. A. Fuentes (ed.), *Memorias de los virreyes que han gobernado el Perú* (6 vols, Lima, 1859), vi, 1-353, Gil, *Memoria de Gobierno*, appendix 6-9, table 3.

³ A.G.I., Indif. General 1525, *estado* with Bonet to Gil, 29 Dec. 1795. See below, 251-3.

⁴ A. Rosenblat, *La población indígena y el mestizaje en América* (2 vols., Buenos Aires, 1954), i, 199. The population of Mainas was estimated at 25,641 in 1814—A.G.I., Indif. General 1525, 'Censo de la población de la provincia de Maynas'.

The vast majority of the Indians and many of the *mestizos* were rural inhabitants, concentrated in farming and mining villages in the *sierra*. The *españoles*—a definition which includes creoles as well as peninsular-born Spaniards—were predominantly town and city-dwellers. The censuses of 1792 and 1795 showed that over forty per cent of their number lived in the cities of Lima, Cuzco and Arequipa alone.¹ Further nuclei were to be found in other centres of provincial administration, such as Tarma and Trujillo, in mining centres, such as Huaylas and Huánuco, and in coastal towns such as Ica and Moquegua.

This pattern reflected the traditional urban character of Spanish settlement in America. Many of the city-dwellers were rural landowners who chose for social reasons to live in urban centres. The focus of Spanish society in Peru was, of course, Lima. Here were to be found noble families, many of whom could trace their ancestry, if not their titles, to the conquistadores, forming a powerful, interwoven hierarchy of wealth and prestige.² Lima was also the home of great merchant families, who were often related by ties of kinship or economic interest to the titled nobility. The two groups are difficult to separate. There were nobles without commercial interests and merchants without titles, but in the middle there was a complex overlapping. José Antonio de Lavalle Cortés, for example, *prior* of the *consulado*, was in 1782 granted the title conde de Premio Real.³ Through his wife, Mariana de Sugasti Ortiz de Foronda, he was already related to the powerful family whose head held the title conde de Vallehermoso.⁴ The first conde de Premio Real had served as *alcalde* of Lima in 1779, and was appointed a lifetime *regidor* in 1784.⁵ His son, Juan Bautista, served as *alcalde* in 1814.⁶ This was an example of a single family linking the titled nobility with the merchant hierarchy and the municipal oligarchy.

¹ 56,548: 135,755 (1792); 59,524: 140,890 (1795).

² R. Vargas Ugarte, *Títulos nobiliarios en el Perú* (Lima, 1965), 19-74.

³ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴ J. Bromley, 'Alcaldes de la ciudad de Lima en el siglo xviii', *Revista Historica*, xxv (1960-1), 322.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 346. A.G.I., Aud. de Lima 619, Escobedo to Gálvez, no. 321, 20 Aug. 1784.

⁶ A.H.M., Libro de Cabildo 43, ff. 86-7, *acta cap.*, 19 Dec. 1813.

The third important segment of the upper class of Peruvian society consisted of the powerful office-holders: the *oidores*, members of the viceregal court, treasury ministers, officials of the mint, the tribunal of accounts and other financial offices, army and naval commanders, and Church dignitaries. Again it is impossible to define this as a separate group, since the ties of friendship and family which linked the office-holders to the titled nobility, the landowners and the merchants were complex and intricate. It is true that some leading offices—that of viceroy, for example—were reserved for *peninsulares*, but many creole families formed part of the upper structure of administration and government. The example of the Manrique de Lara family illustrates this.

The family was descended from the conquistadores of Peru, in particular from Nicolás de Rivera, one of the founders of the city of Lima.¹ The title, marqués de Lara, was granted in 1739 to Nicolás Manrique de Lara, who, although a native of Lima, reached the upper ranks of the administrative hierarchy in the peninsula, serving as a minister of both the Council of the Indies and the Council of Castile.² The title was inherited in 1754 by his brother, Francisco, whose wife, Rosa María Carrillo de Albornoz y Bravo de Lagunas, was a sister of the conde de Montemar, head of another great Lima family. Their son, Nicolás, served as *alcalde* of Lima in 1769, and was appointed first intendant of the province of Huamanga in 1784.³ In 1779 he inherited from his father not only the family title, but the important office of *contador mayor* of the tribunal of accounts of Lima, which, after his return from Huamanga in 1785, he continued to serve until his retirement in 1798.⁴

The idea that creoles were excluded from government is a misleading oversimplification. They were excluded from some posts and they increasingly sought a larger share of offices in general, but in this period they monopolized minor offices and also procured a number of higher appointments. If creoles had been excluded from office, administration might have been less

¹ A.N.P., Superior Gobierno 33, *cuaderno* 1085, description of family's history.

² Ibid. See also Vargas, *Titulos nobiliarios*, 38.

³ Bromley, *op. cit.*, 338. See below, 37-42.

⁴ See below, 243-4.

corrupt. As it was, Lima society, embracing merchants, land-owners and office-holders, formed a tightly knit sector or group, riddled with self-interest and impregnable to all but the most determined investigators and reformers. Administrators arriving from Spain tended to merge into this structure of power, rather than to challenge it. According to Juan and Ulloa, even the most honest viceroys, who arrived in Peru with good intentions, succumbed to the all-pervasive system of bribery, corruption, influence and maladministration for which Peru had become notorious by the middle of the eighteenth century.¹

Reform of administration in the viceroyalty of Peru offered perhaps the most daunting challenge to Charles III and his ministers. In their report on conditions in Peru Juan and Ulloa emphasized the fact that all groups and officials in positions of authority—the viceroys, the *audiencias*, the *oficiales reales*, the *corregidores*, the *cabildos*—simply ignored any royal orders which they found inconvenient or detrimental to their private interests.² They noted that this lack of respect for justice and order began at the top of the administrative structure, with over-powerful viceroys. The extensive personal powers which they enjoyed sometimes prevented absurdities and mistakes in the adaptation of rigid general laws to local conditions, but on other occasions this authority was abused.³ Moreover the *audiencia*, in theory a counterweight to the viceroy, co-operated in this process of holding up or failing to apply royal orders which threatened the interests of its ministers or of their influential friends.⁴ For example, Juan and Ulloa complained that the sale of merchandise brought to Lima by specially-registered ships in 1743 was held up while the *cédula* granting permission for the voyages was examined and considered by the *audiencia*. Meanwhile, the monopolist merchants, closely linked with the *oidores* by family and personal ties, sold off their previous stocks.⁵

¹ J. Juan y Santacilla and A. de Ulloa, *Noticias Secretas de América* (Buenos Aires, 1953), 355-9.

² *Ibid.*, 341. There is evidence that their report was known not only in Madrid but also in Cuzco in 1783. See D. Valcárcel, *Las Noticias Secretas en 1783* (Lima, 1965).

³ Juan and Ulloa, *op. cit.*, 351-2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 352, 357.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 366-7.

A further aspect of viceregal authority which offered scope for abuse and corruption was the power to appoint district officers, or *corregidores*, and treasury officials.¹ The sale of *corregimientos* seems to have been a regular occurrence, and, although complaints against the practice were sometimes upheld, a viceroy was usually able to avoid censure.² When evidence was collected for the *juicio de residencia* of viceroy Manuel de Amat (1761–76) he was charged with irregularity in making these appointments. Despite the fact that the charges were known widely to be justified, Amat was exonerated by the *juéz de residencia*, on the grounds that the evidence presented to support the charge was contradictory and ill-prepared.³ The *residencia*, or official review of an official's record at the end of his term of office, was in theory a valuable check on viceregal misrule, but, according to Juan and Ulloa, a viceroy usually ensured lenient treatment by carefully cultivating the friendship of the senior *oidor*, who would be in charge of the process.⁴

Individual administrators who attempted to root out corruption found themselves frustrated by the strength of the vested interests ranged against them. After his visit to Spanish America in the 1740s Antonio de Ulloa served in a number of administrative posts until, in 1758, he was appointed governor of Huancavelica.⁵ Since Huancavelica was the major source of mercury for the American silver miners, efficiency and honesty in the operation of the mine was essential. Ulloa found instead a network of interlocking interests, including the *corregidor* and the treasury officials, preoccupied with personal gain, at the expense of the treasury and the miners, rather than with the mine's efficient operation. His attempts to improve administration failed, since each level of authority was, in turn, involved in corruption. Thus, the miners bribed the treasury officials and the *corregidor*. These were protected by minor officials of

¹ *Ibid.*, 349.

² See Vargas, *Historia del Perú. Virreinato (Siglo XVIII) 1700–1790*, 55, for details of sale of office by viceroy Castell dos Rius.

³ See E. Dunbar Temple, 'Un informe del obispo don Baltasar Jaime Martínez de Compañón en el juicio de residencia del virrey Amat', *Documenta* (Lima), año 2, no. 1 (1949–50), 654.

⁴ Juan and Ulloa, *op. cit.*, 362.

⁵ See A. P. Whitaker, 'Antonio de Ulloa', *H.A.H.R.*, xv (1935), 179.

the viceregal court, who were themselves secure from censure due to the bribes which they paid to the *fiscal*. In Ulloa's view the office of the *fiscal*, or attorney-general, was 'a marketplace where he who has no substance to contribute is an object of contempt'.¹ As a last resort Ulloa appealed to Amat for support in his attempts to reform administration at Huancavelica. Instead of support he met resistance from a viceroy who had no desire to challenge the accepted standards of the structure which he headed.²

The problem of getting to the root of bad government was complicated by the fact that individual authorities, although prepared to acknowledge the existence of maladministration, were concerned merely with passing the responsibility for it to other groups or individuals. Amat, for example, participated in corruption, but repeatedly complained that the responsibility for bad administration in Peru lay with others. In 1762, shortly after his arrival in Lima, he claimed that 'the source and origin of all the political ills of the country' was the *audiencia* of Lima, whose ministers, with the exception of the dean, were interested only in trade.³ He alleged that the sub-dean, in particular, was fit only for the conduct of trade, 'which is the sole object of his attention'. The prologue to Amat's *Memoria de Gobierno* also dwelt upon the deficiencies of the viceroyalty's administration, describing Peru as 'a kingdom governed by the caprice of an insatiable greed of those who command the provinces'.⁴ He was referring to the *corregidores*, and there is no doubt that the government of Peru was at its worst outside of the capital, at a provincial level. The ultimate responsibility for corruption lay in Lima, but the practical consequences of maladministration were most damaging in the provinces.

The need to reform local government was one of the chief

¹ *Ibid.*, 180, Ulloa to Arriaga, 15 Aug. 1762.

² For a discussion of Ulloa's relations with Amat see V. Rodríguez Casado and F. Pérez Embid, 'Estudio preliminar' to *Memoria de gobierno del virrey Amat* (Sevilla, 1947), xciii-cvii.

³ See 'El virrey del Perú, Manuel de Amat, informa al rey del estado de las audiencias del virreinato y en especial de la de Lima. . .', *Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional* (Buenos Aires), 24 (1942), 349-50.

⁴ See 'Prólogo de la Memoria del virrey Amat', *Revista chilena de historia y geografía*, 117 (1951), 44. The prologue was probably written by Miguel Feyjóo, who served as *corregidor* in Quispicanchas and Trujillo.

motives for Gálvez's desire to introduce an intendant system in New Spain. He described the district officers there as: 'two hundred wretches, who, with their empty title of judges, have come to constitute an independent judicial sphere, wherein, driven by their greed, they work out their own fortunes at the expense of the royal treasury and the ruin of the people'.¹ In Peru conditions were even worse. One of Gálvez's most experienced subordinates during the *visita* to New Spain was Antonio de Areche, who began a separate *visita* to Peru in 1777.² Shortly after his arrival, he wrote to a former colleague in Mexico:

This land bears no comparison with that of Your Excellency in any respect. In Mexico there is usually justice; here tyranny is common. . . . Peru is being ruined by the lack of honest judges, forced Indian labour and the forced trade conducted by the district officers. The *corregidores* are concerned solely with their own interests. . . . Oh dear friend! how close we are to losing everything here, unless these disgusting abuses are corrected, because they have already continued far too long, and a tragic end can be foreseen if a remedy is not provided. Here everything is private interest, nothing public good.³

There is a mass of documentary evidence to support the claim that the *corregidores* were greedy and rapacious officials.⁴ To a certain extent they were victims of circumstances in that their official salaries were utterly inadequate for their subsistence and expenses of government. For example, the *corregidor* of Chancay received an annual salary of 1250 pesos, the *corregidor* of Huamachuco 1000, and the *corregidor* of Cañete 962 pesos 4 reales.⁵ However, the official salary was usually irrelevant

¹ Quoted in C. E. Castañeda, 'The corregidor in Spanish colonial administration', *H.A.H.R.*, ix (1929), 448.

² V. Palacio Atard, *Areche y Guirior. Observaciones sobre el fracaso de una visita al Perú* (Sevilla, 1946), 7.

³ Vargas, *Historia del Perú. Virreinato (Siglo XVIII) 1700-1790*, 379-80, Areche to Mangino, 17 Dec. 1777.

⁴ See for example L. A. Eguiguren (ed.), *Guerra separatista. Rebeliones de Indios en Sur America. La sublevación de Túpac Amaru. Crónica de Melchor de Paz* (2 vols., Lima, 1952).

⁵ A.G.I., Indif. General 1713, Areche to Gálvez, no. 195, 20 Aug. 1780. The equivalent value of the peso in contemporary English money varied, according to the exchange rate of silver, but was usually between 4s and 5s.

when the value of a *corregimiento* was assessed. The significant factors were the number of Indians in the province and the value of goods laid down for the *repartimiento*. Thus, the *corregimiento* of the *cercado* of Lima was considered to be of little value, because the *arancel* of the *repartimiento*, or forced sale of goods to the Indians, was fixed at the relatively low figure of 10,000 pesos.¹

The abuses made possible by the trade of the *corregidores* were described in great detail by Juan and Ulloa and other contemporaries, and were well known to the central government.² In defence of the system it was often argued that, despite abuses, it was the only means of providing the Indians with essential items, such as cloth, iron and mules, and of making them take an active part in the economic life of the viceroyalty.³ But one of the disturbing features of the *repartimiento* system was that the goods forced upon the Indians were often completely useless. Baltasar de Arandia, the *corregidor* of Chichas in the period immediately before the Túpac Amaru rising, found in the warehouse of his predecessor a number of books to be distributed to the Indians, including eleven volumes of *The Christian Year*, two of *The Spiritual Discourses*, the fourteen volumes of Feijóo and two volumes of an economic dictionary.⁴

The chief function of the *corregidores* was judicial, but the fair application of justice was made difficult by the fact that the *corregimientos* were 'diphthongs of Merchants and Justice, so that in them the staff of commerce is joined with that of justice'.⁵ The *corregidor* distributed his merchandise, he disposed of the public force necessary for the collection of debts due to him, while at the same time he was the judge who dealt with the complaints of the Indians, including those against his commercial activities. In practice there were no real checks upon abuse of this authority. The *residencia* which the *corregidor*

¹ B.M., Eg. MS 1810, f. 78v.

² Juan and Ulloa, op. cit., 189, 193-6, 198-9. See also B.N.P., MS C4129, for detailed reports on *repartimientos* in the diocese of Arequipa in 1778.

³ This was Escobedo's reason for wishing in 1784 to retain some form of official distribution. See below, 89-90.

⁴ B. Lewin, *La rebelión de Túpac Amaru y los orígenes de la emancipación americana* (Buenos Aires, 1957), 293.

⁵ Amat, *Memoria*, ii, 186. The same phrase is used in B.M., Add. MS 13981.

had to face on completion of his term of office was a theoretical deterrent against bad government; in fact this deterrent was ineffective because the process had become a mere monetary transaction between judge and judged.¹ The alternative legal recourse for aggrieved Indians—appeal to the *audiencia* of Lima—was equally ineffective, partly because of cost and distance, and partly because the *audiencia* tended to support the authority of the *corregidor*.² Legal remedies denied, the Indians came to see rebellion as the only effective means of opposition to an oppressive *corregidor*. The chief cause of the rebellion of Juan Santos Atahualpa, which broke out in the provinces of Tarma and Jauja in 1742 and lasted until 1756, was the tyranny of the *corregidores*.³

Although tolerated by the *audiencia* of Lima, the commerce of the *corregidores* was strictly illegal and remained so until the middle of the eighteenth century.⁴ Complaints were frequently made to the crown, and during the government of the viceroy conde de Superunda it was decided to authorize and regulate the *repartimientos*, partly in an attempt to remove their worst features, but with the chief aims of reducing the constant distraction caused to the viceroys and of exploiting a useful potential source of crown revenue.⁵ A *cédula* of 15 June 1751 ordered the formation of a special *junta* in each viceregal capital to prepare lists of the quantity, quality and prices of the goods which each *corregidor* was to be allowed to distribute to the Indians of his province. The *aranceles* for Peru were approved in 1756, when it was ordered that copies should be posted at the doors of the *ayuntamientos* and outside the houses of the *corregidores*. A *corregidor* who exceeded the limits laid down was to be fined and removed from office.

The value of the *aranceles* for the whole of Peru amounted to 5,429,000 pesos. The *corregidor* of Ica, for example, was allowed a *repartimiento* to the value of 100,000 pesos during his five-year

¹ Juan and Ulloa, *op. cit.*, 200.

² B.M., Add. MS 20986, f. 143, edict of Túpac Amaru for the province of Carabaya, 15 Nov. 1780.

³ Juan and Ulloa, *op. cit.*, 196. See also C. D. Valcárcel, 'Perú borbónico y emancipación', *Revista de Historia de América*, 50 (Dec. 1960), 335-9.

⁴ Amat, *Memoria*, ii, 186.

⁵ *Ibid.*, ii, 186-9.

term of office; for Cañete the figure was 124,000; for Huanta 112,000.¹ Each *corregidor* paid an *alcabala* duty of four per cent on the total of the *arancel* for his province. The value of this tax for the viceroyalty amounted to the considerable sum of 217,160 pesos, and it seems that this might have been the chief factor inducing Superunda, who had the reputation of being an efficient administrator of financial affairs, to attempt to reform the structure.² On this point Amat commented: 'the tariffs formed serve only for the charge of *alcabalas*, but in no way for the control of the *corregidores*' conduct, for each distributes what he wants, and at prices determined by his uncontrolled authority and desires'.³ The old problem of the lack of an adequate administrative machinery to enforce the law persisted.

Amat wished to abolish completely the *repartimiento* system, and to provide the *corregidores* with larger salaries, the cost of which would be met by general economy and by an increase in the rate of tribute. He rejected the commonly-held view that, without the *repartimientos*, the Indians would decline into laziness and idleness, pointing out that in Lima the Indians who exercised the mechanical arts, or who were employed on estates around the city, worked well, 'for no other reason except that in this city they see the fruit of their work'.⁴ Indians who fled from their villages or from estates did so not to avoid work, but to escape from ill-treatment, 'and this is what those who are thus unable to persecute them call laziness and indolence. . .'.⁵

During the years between the Santos rebellion and the great Indian rising led by Túpac Amaru in 1780, there were frequent local disturbances originating in Indian discontent with their *corregidores*. Amat described the desperate and unorganized rioting against the *corregidor* of Sicásica (1770-1), when the *teniente* was murdered, and he reported on the murder of the *corregidor* of Pacajes in 1771 and the riots at Huamachuco in 1773 and 1774.⁵ His successor, Manuel de Guirior, described

¹ B.M., Eg. MS 1810, ff. 78-155, gives a description of each *corregimiento*, including details of the salary, the *arancel* and the *alcabala* to be paid.

² Vargas, *Historia del Perú. Virreinato (Siglo XVIII) 1700-1790*, 236-7.

³ Amat, *Memoria*, 189.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 194-5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 292-304.