* THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN IBERIAN WORLD *

The Conspiracy of the Ninth Duke of Medina Sidonia (1641)

An Aristocrat in the Crisis of the Spanish Empire

Luis Salas Almela

BRILL

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An Aristocrat in the Crisis of the Spanish Empire

By

Luis Salas Almela

Translated by

Ruth MacKay

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Cover illustration: Details of the painting *Don Gaspar Alonso Pérez de Guzmán el Bueno*, IX duke of Medina Sidonia, in the pacification of the Algarve in 1638, Anonymus, 1638. Fundación Casa de Medina Sidonia, Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Cádiz, Spain.
Composed by José María García Redondo

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

To Martina and Laura,
For giving me so much, every day;
And to the memory of Bernarda Salas,
Whose powerful light of goodness
I hope now to reflect upon them

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To Susana, for the treasures we share in this life.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGFCMS	Archivo General Fundación Casa de Medina Sidonia (Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Spain)
AGI	Archivo General de Indias (Seville, Spain)
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas (Simancas, Spain)
AHMJF	Archivo Histórico Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Jerez (Spain)
AHMSB	Archivo Histórico Municipal de Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Spain)
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid, Spain)
AHN-N Osuna	Archivo Histórico Nacional-Sección Osuna (Toledo, Spain)
ARSI	Archivio Della Compagnia di Jesú (Rome, Italy)
ASF	Archivio dello Stato di Firenze (Florence, Italy)
ASV	Archivio Segreto Vaticano (Rome, Italy)
BFZ	Biblioteca Francisco Zabálburu (Madrid, Spain)
BL	British Library (London, Great Britain)
BNE	Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid, Spain)
RAH	Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia (Madrid, Spain)
RB	Real Biblioteca (Madrid, Spain)

NOTE ON CURRENCIES

1 ducat	375 maravedíes
1 ducat	11 reales
1 real	34 maravedíes

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INTRODUCTION

As the sun dropped low in the late afternoon of 24 September 1641 and the usual throng of servants, aides, ministers, and those seeking some royal favor began leaving the patios of the old Madrid palace, the *alcázar*, a nondescript carriage, its windows probably blocked by curtains, entered the royal residence. Out of the carriage stepped the Duke of Medina Sidonia. He was taken by the king's favorite, the count-duke of Olivares, into the presence of His Catholic Majesty, King of Spain, Philip IV. The audience, unusual in that it took place in the king's private rooms, had been prepared with the greatest caution possible. Once inside the alcázar's intricate labyrinth of hallways and rooms, the duke was conducted via "a secret stairway that led to His Majesty's room," to the place where the king awaited him. Once there, the duke gave the king some papers on which were written his confession and a list of his criminal acts (*culpas*), and he got down on his knees before the king, sobbing and begging for clemency for his errors. The *culpas* and errors stemmed from his participation in a political plot with international connections and various objectives, among which stood out the aim of severing the contractual link uniting Andalusia and the crown of Castile and converting the former into something resembling a noble republic that would somehow be under the protection of Medina Sidonia himself. That September afternoon, given the duke's signs of repentance, the king told him, "as great as your error, all the greater my opportunity to show my clemency." The duke then left by the same secret stairway. The king ordered Jerónimo de Villanueva, *protonotario* of Aragón and Olivares's chief creature, to record what had gone on, and then he and Olivares both signed the document after solemnly swearing to its veracity.[1]

This scene, as described in the text that Olivares and Villanueva signed, was the climax of the story this book will recount and analyze. Its descriptions are among the key documents for understanding the conspiracy, led by the most powerful nobleman in Castile, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, Gaspar Alonso Pérez de Guzmán el Bueno. But the theatrical nature of the encounter between duke and king, involving dramatic repentance and royal clemency, leads one to believe that at the very least its terms had

[1] AGFCMS, leg. 994.

been arranged ahead of time. Despite his seditious attempts, in fact, Medina Sidonia was still being protected in September 1641 by his kinsman, the count-duke of Olivares himself. Equally paradoxically, it is likely that all those involved in the scene, perhaps with the exception of Villanueva, lamented its terms: the king, because he was forced to pardon the duke; the duke, for having confessed his crimes; and Olivares because, in the medium run, the political consequences of the conspiracy would be one more factor leading to his dramatic fall from power.

* * *

The enormous gap between the political discourses of seventeenth-century absolutism and the uprisings and revolts of that century have fascinated generations of historians. This is not the place to go over the mid-twentieth century historiographic debate regarding the "seventeenth-century crisis," a period of prolonged economic, demographic, and political instability throughout Europe. Many monographs and edited volumes were published about the events and their ideological and heuristic implications.[2] The debate, in general terms, grew out of social scientists' desire to seek overriding explanations for historical events in large structures and collective phenomena. That generation of historians, faced with a scarcity of case studies, worked to discover shared motivations and common impulses; they were comparative historians without knowing well those elements they were comparing.[3] Though the most influential analytic works of the time recognized regional variations and thus excluded certain case studies from the category of "states in crisis" (especially the northern maritime powers), explanations for the origins of that unusually convulsive period of European history centered on a series of structural causes, both economic and institutional, which in turn generally were interpreted as obstacles in the way of state formation and the progress of Western Europe in general.[4]

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[2] Trevor Aston, *Crisis en Europa, 1560–1660* (Madrid: Alianza, 1983); Ruggiero Romano, *Coyunturas opuestas: La crisis del siglo XVII en Europa e Hispanoamérica* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993); Francesco Benigno, *Espejos de la Revolución* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2000). See also, on the Hispanic monarchy, Geoffrey Parker, ed. *La crisis de la Monarquía de Felipe IV* (Valladolid: Instituto Universitario de Historia Simancas, 2006), which includes an interesting bibliographic essay.

[3] Eric J. Hobsbawm referred to this when he criticized the over-use of the word "revolution." "La revolución," in Roy Porter and Michale Teich, eds. *La revolución en la historia* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1990 [Cambridge 1986), 16–70.

[4] For opposing views on this question by Hobsbawm and H.R. Trevor-Roper see, for the former, "La crisis del siglo XVII," first published in *Past and Present*, 5 and 6 (1954); and, for

Some fifty years later we are far more knowledgeable about the seventeenth-century conflicts, but today historiography favors not structures, for which it appears to have an aversion, but individual case studies.[5] One might argue that the profession has gone too far in its particularism, not so much because of the obsessive attention to the concrete, but rather because, having put aside the old, rigid, conceptual hierarchies, it sometimes appears that any aspect on which the researcher focuses has the same explanatory value as any other aspect. Having eliminated what in the twentieth century were called the "preconditions of revolution," all elements actually or potentially involved in a given political disturbance such as the one we are studying here are considered essentially equivalent in their ability to help us understand those events. A paradigmatic case in recent decades is the way political factors have been regarded. Claims for the autonomy of politics—evident, for example, in revisionist studies of the English Revolution—recently have led to a compromise solution which in my opinion is as unacceptable as the old determinism, putting an end to any hierarchy of explanation.[6] The debate was born of an error, as those same analyses that denied the importance of socioeconomic phenomena were nonetheless built upon the knowledge provided by the very structuralist historians they wished to overcome. In any case, the various revisionist phases of the old structural paradigms all contain valid advances such as analytical flexibility or the notion of the interdependence of all the factors that come together in moments of crisis.

The purpose of these brief historiographic considerations is simply to frame the discussion that follows about one of the least-known conspiracies of the mid-seventeenth-century Hispanic Monarchy. I would like to situate the work along the path suggested by Hugh Trevor-Roper, who said many of the rebellions of that era were direct attacks on power. But because power is a complex phenomenon whose constitutive elements are all intertwined, it seems worthwhile to reassign some conceptual

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the latter, "La crisis general del siglo XVII," first published in *Past and Present* 16 (1959), both included in Aston, *Crisis en Europa*, 15–71 and 72–109.

[5] Xavier Gil Pujol has used the term shrinkage (*encogimiento*) to refer to this tendency toward concrete studies: "Más sobre las revueltas y las revoluciones del siglo XVII y sobre su ausencia," in Parker, ed., *La crisis de la Monarquía*, 351–392, 355.

[6] For an overview of the revisionist debates on the English revolution and civil war see Francesco Benigno, *Espejos*, 17–46; and Xavier Gil Pujol, "El revisionismo sobre la Revolución Inglesa: crónica y cuestiones de venticinco años de debate," in Xavier Gil Pujol, *Tiempo de política: Perspectivas historiográficas sobre la Europa moderna* (Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2006), 209–266. Benigno's introduction (7–13) discusses the independence of the political in studies of revolution.

order to these elements, even a hierarchy of explanatory value. Thus even in a substantially political case study such as this one, one must keep in mind that social and economic factors, without which there are no political factors, contain explanatory value that is potentially greater than any other analytical category and that furthermore more easily admit the possibility of comparative analysis with other case studies.

* * *

The Duke of Medina Sidonia's conspiracy took place in the 1640s, a time of turmoil not only for Spain but for Europe in general. The early modern era is rife with internal political conflicts that for one reason or another led to violence. In the case of the Spanish Hapsburgs, violent acts of political discontent began with the dynasty's very arrival on the Iberian peninsula—the comunero rebellion of Castile and the germanías rebellion in the Crown of Aragón—and they continued throughout the following century. In the peninsula alone, we can point to the revolt of the moriscos of Granada in 1568–1571, the Aragonese rebellion of 1591, the salt riots of 1631, and the Évora (Portugal) riots of 1637. But the extent and intensity of the revolts and rebellions in the Hispanic Monarchy's possessions in the 1640s are astonishing.

Within that framework, the Medina Sidonia conspiracy was especially noteworthy. The sphere in which it was projected to take place, Andalusia, was not a territory with its own institutions like other rebellious territories: Aragón (1591), Catalonia (1640), Portugal (1640), Aragón again (1648) during the Duke of Híjar's conspiracy, Naples (1647), and Sicily (1674).[7] Andalusia did not even have a viceroy, like New Spain did in 1565, at the time of the Martín Cortés conspiracy.[8] In fact, though Andalusia has its own geographic, demographic, and cultural identity, one really cannot speak of it as a territory unto itself; it is, rather, two large spaces: Lower and Upper Andalusia. The former, the site of the Medina Sidonia estate, more or less corresponds to the areas taken from the Muslims during the rapid Castilian conquest of the thirteenth century. The very speed of the Christian advance left the territory with some peculiar characteristics, such as the overwhelming presence of powerful seigneurial estates (*señoríos*). The economic and political center of the region was the royal

[7] Antonio Manuel Hespanha, in his *Vísperas del Leviatán: Instituciones y poder político* (*Portugal, siglo XVII*) (Madrid: Turus, 1989) refers to these particular institutions as *instituciones regnícolas*.

[8] Antonio Francisco García-Abásolo, *Martín Enríquez y la reforma de 1568 en Nueva España* (Seville: Diputación Provincial, 1983).

(i.e. not seigneurial) city of Seville, whose Guadalquivir River was navigable from its mouth up to downtown, converting it into the capital of the Indies trade starting with Columbus's first voyages. By the mid-seventeenth century, Seville was one of the richest and most densely populated cities of all Europe.[9]

The leaders of the conspiracy, the Duke of Medina Sidonia and the Marquis of Ayamonte, were far from being marginal social agents. On the contrary, they were famously rich and powerful and they wished to become even more powerful, *potentados*, a term loaded with meaning, as we shall see. Thus the notion of popular revolt has no place in this study, though possibly the discontented masses might have played an important role in the conspirators' plans. Another peculiarity of the plan was the indisputable prominence of the duke, similar to the role played by the Duke of Híjar a few years later. But Híjar's motivations revolved more around the court, and Medina Sidonia's importance in Andalusia far outweighed Híjar's in Aragon.[10]

For these reasons, the fact that Medina Sidonia's conspiracy was thwarted makes it even more interesting. If it had gone forward, social groups of all ranks and varieties would have had to take a position, which surely would have involved measuring their own particular conflicts as reasons for and against joining, which also surely would have led to interminable debates among historians regarding the true causes of the movement, arguing from the point of view of one or another of the factors set in motion by the conspiracy.[11] But Medina Sidonia's aborted coup rose up with no interference, a straightforward political challenge by the aristocrat, a powerful territorial lord, to the king, bare of all other connotations. In other words, the fact that it was not successful shrinks the conspiracy down to its two principal organizers, the duke and the marquis—the latter was far less powerful than the duke, but still had his

[9] On late medieval Seville see Enrique Otte, *Sevilla y sus mercaderes a fines de la Edad Media* (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 1996); on the city as imperial capital, see Antonio Acosta Rodríguez et al., *La Casa de la Contratación y la navegación entre España y las Indias* (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2003).

[10] Ramón Ezquerra Abadía, *La conspiración del duque de Híjar (1648)* (Madrid: 1933); Enrique Solano Camón and Porfirio Sanz Camañes, "Nuevas perspectivas en torno a la conspiración del duque de Híjar," in *Actas de la IV reunión científica de la AEHM*, vol. 1 (Alicante: 1997), 521–538.

[11] A paradigmatic example of juxtaposed explanations is that of the English Revolution: see Lawrence Stone, "La revolución inglesa," in *Revoluciones y rebeliones de la Europa Moderna* (Madrid: Alianza, 1972), 67–78.

regional importance in Lower Andalusia—along with a few more noblemen named in the subsequent investigation but who played minor roles.

The conspirators' relative isolation does not, however, mean their plans were incoherent. On the contrary, I believe Medina Sidonia's power and privilege should make us very careful not to dismiss the attempt as frivolous or desperate. Rather, it was a model case of change from above, an attack on power from power. This book attempts to explain why the most powerful of all Castilian lords chose to sever his political loyalty to the king while the remaining great noblemen sought less risky and less aggressive means for getting through the difficult decade.

* * *

In September 1658, Felipe Cuadrados, a humble supplier of goods to the court who at the time was sitting in Madrid's jail, let a scribe copy a document in his possession. The document in question, itself a copy, was the confession the Duke of Medina Sidonia signed and presumably made before Philip IV in that modest little room in the alcázar in 1641. The anecdote shows clearly that seventeen years later, Madrid was still curious to hear news of the events.[12] To some degree, this was because the consequences of the events of 1641 were still evident. The dukes of Medina Sidonia, who for centuries had been the richest and most powerful aristocratic house in all of Castile, no longer enjoyed that status. Yet at the time the copy was being made in the jail, the old duke, don Gaspar Alonso, was making one of his last attempts to recover his lost prestige and influence. In 1658 he managed to marry his son and heir to one of the daughters of Philip IV's then all-powerful favorite, Luis de Haro, who happened also to be a relative.[13]

The duke's confession, copies of which exist today in historical archives in several countries, was the basis used by successive generations of historians to explain the conspiracy. The plot itself has not drawn much attention, probably because it was aborted and because, as a result, its objectives were never clear. In 1961, Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, one of the great figures in mid-twentieth-century Spanish historiography, wrote an article about the conspiracy in which he revealed the existence of the essential documents regarding the case, including the confessions of the two principal conspirators, the case file of the prosecution of the marquis,

[12] The copy was made on 7 September 1658. AHN-N Osuna, C-290, doc. 13/2.

[13] Luis Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia: El poder de la aristocracia, 1580–1670* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2008), 435–459.

and statements by informers. Seven years later, Domínguez Ortiz wrote an article about the duke's punishment. It is interesting to note that the historian interpreted the conspiracy as the acts of two noblemen with little to do, far from the seat of royal power, who wished to emulate the example set by their Portuguese relatives, the Duke of Braganza and his wife, Luisa de Gusmão, Medina Sidonia's sister, who in December 1640 had changed their ducal crowns for royal ones when they rebelled against Philip IV.[14]

The only monograph on the case was written by one of the duke's descendents, Luisa Isabel Álvarez de Toledo y Maura, 21st Duchess of Medina Sidonia, who largely relied upon the arguments laid out during the Marquis of Ayamonte's defense. The duchess denied there was any conspiracy at all, arguing, on the contrary, that the true conspirator was the count-duke of Olivares. According to this theory, Olivares had devised a complicated scheme involving the denunciation, imprisonment, and exile of Medina Sidonia motivated by age-old jealousy by his family toward the Medina Sidonia, to whom they were related, allegedly over the ducal inheritance. Implicitly, Álvarez de Toledo suggested that the fact that her family's enormously rich archive, the Archivo General Fundación Casa de Medina Sidonia, does not contain documents directly dealing with the plot proves the plot did not exist, and she explicitly denied the validity of all the other documentation that is dispersed among other libraries and archives.[15]

From an entirely different point of view, the historian I.A.A. Thompson in his overview of the reign of Philip IV considered the Medina Sidonia conspiracy to be of great importance within the general crisis of the monarchy, and he pointed out that the duke's motives were emblematic of general seigneurial discontent in Castile. In his opinion, with which I agree, the duke's attempt was, above all, timid.[16] Rafael Valladares, meanwhile, has analyzed the plot in terms of its political opportunity. In his study, seen from the Portuguese angle, Valladares correctly reinterpreted

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[14] Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, "La conspiración del duque de Medina Sidonia y el marqués de Ayamonte." *Archivo Hispalense* 106 (1961).

[15] Luisa Isabel Álvarez de Toledo, *Historia de una conjura* (*La supuesta rebelión de Andalucía en el marco de las conspiraciones de Felipe IV y la Independencia de Portugal*) (Cádiz: Diputación Provincial, 1985). For a discussion of this interpretation and a wider analysis of the bibliography about the plot, see Luis Salas Almela, "El duque de Medina Sidonia en la crisis de 1640: contexto e hipótesis para una conjura," *Anais de História de Além Mar*, vol. 10 (2009), 9–31.

[16] I.A.A. Thompson, "El reinado de Felipe IV," in José Andrés Gallego, ed., *Historia General de España y América* (Madrid: Gredos 1991), vol. 8, 443–492, 470.

the Andalusian conspiracy as an insurrectionary plan that was in no way chimeric. On the contrary, he says, in the context in which it took place, it had excellent chances of succeeding.[17]

But despite this more recent work, the interpretation that continues being reflected in the historiography is that of Domínguez Ortiz, which had two main points: that the protagonists of the plot, Medina Sidonia and Ayamonte, were isolated, and that there was a close relationship between the Portuguese revolt and the Andalusian plan in that Medina Sidonia wished to emulate his in-laws, the new monarchs of Portugal.[18] As a result, the aborted coup is still referred to as an impossibility dreamed up by two men without scruples. Worse yet, it is said there are no documents. Although it is certainly true that the duke's case file was lost, nobody until now has bothered to pull together the many surviving pieces of testimony to analyze them carefully and as a whole. In general, it has been assumed that since Domínguez Ortiz wrote his articles, everything that could be known was known. In fact, he merely pointed out the existence of the coup and proposed that more work be done on it in the future, a goal he never carried out. This book's purpose is to carry out that goal, with the aid of important documentary discoveries, and to shed light on the failed conspiracy and its consequences.

The book redefines the problem by focusing above all on the history of the house of Medina Sidonia. I avoid excessively psychological explanations, which were the focus of much previous work, and I go beyond the theory that Medina Sidonia simply was attempting to imitate what was happening in Portugal. I have relegated the concrete details of the plan away from the center of this book not because they were not important but because we have only the statements by the protagonists and the informers to guide us. Rather, this book will try to unravel the logic that inspired the duke and analyze the possibilities he had of success.

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[17] Rafael Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal, 1640–1680: Guerra, conflicto y poderes en la monarquía hispánica* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1998), 37–45.

[18] Manuel Moreno Alonso, "El descubrimiento de la conspiración del duque de Medinasidonia," in Juan Luis Castellanos and M.L. López Guadalupe, eds., *Homenaje a don Antonio Domínguez Ortiz*, vol. 2 (Granada 2008), 603–631.

PART ONE

WITH ALL HIS POWER AND AUTHORITY

CHAPTER ONE

THE INHERITANCE OF A DUKE OF MEDINA SIDONIA

The ninth Duke of Medina Sidonia inherited his titles after decades during which his father and grandfather had preserved and expanded their noble authority in accordance with the enormous economic possibilities of Lower Andalusia. Their seigneurial position was further strengthened by their successful strategy of becoming the representatives of the crown in Lower Andalusia, both institutionally and through informal channels. The former mostly comprised military functions, and the latter consisted in seeking the greatest political linkages possible with the court, especially through strategic alliances with the governments of the Hispanic Monarchy, above all with the kings' favorites (*validos*).

To a large degree, the very mechanisms that made the monarchy strong in Andalusia were the ones that allowed the dukes to exercise enormous influence both at court and in the region where they had their lands. Nevertheless, the underlying nature of their seigneurial power, defined as ancestral and dating back to the incorporation of Andalusia into the Crown of Castile, meant the dukes' identity as representatives of royal authority was of a very particular sort, defined above all by consolidated dynastic interests. The dukes' political priority therefore was that royal strategies were aligned as much as possible with their own goals. If this were not the case, they could always interpret royal orders as they wished, trying not to force the limits of the kings' tolerance.

At any rate, upon the death of his father –the eighth Duke of Medina Sidonia, Count of Niebla, and Marquis of Cazaza on 20 March 1636–, don Gaspar Alonso Pérez de Guzmán was saddled with governing the most powerful, richest, and most influential noble estate in all of Castile, and probably of all the kingdoms and seigneurial estates making up the Monarchy of the Catholic Monarch.[1] Upon becoming the new Duke of Medina Sidonia, he became an important political actor at the heart of an empire that was still the world's largest. Gaspar could not bid his father farewell personally, because news of the father's declining health reached

[1] AGFCMS legs. 992 and 3.125 for the transfer of the titles; RAH 9/828, fol. 125v, 19 April 1636 for Philip IV's condolences.

him at court in Madrid, where he had been living for several years. Instead, he received instructions that the old man had written on his deathbed to guide him on good government.[2] Although the instructions were almost entirely devoted to moral and religious questions, Gaspar also had inherited a tradition of power and a set of priorities which, in his personal government, he would have to interpret and implement under new circumstances.

1.1 *An Andalusian Seigneurial Estate*

The noble lineage of the Medina Sidonia had its roots in the deeds of the mythical Alonso Pérez de Guzmán, known as "el Bueno" for his loyalty to the monarchs of Castile. Ever since those far-off times, at the turn of the fourteenth century, the family's fortunes had continued to grow.[3] In 1368, the Pérez de Guzmán acquired the first inheritable noble title granted to any non-royal Castilian family: the counts of Niebla.[4] Nearly one century later, they became the first lords of vassals to receive the title of duke, in their case of their city of Medina Sidonia.[5]

Along with the titles, the Pérez de Guzmán accumulated towns and seigneurial lands (*señoríos*), all of them in one particular geographic area. Their estate comprised large parts of the present-day provinces of Cádiz and Huelva, along with a small *señorío* straddling Cádiz and Málaga.[6] In the early sixteenth century, after unsuccessful attempts by the dukes to add the city of Gibraltar to their dominium, the territory of the seigneurial estate of the Medina Sidonia remained pretty much stable and would stay that way until the time of the conspiracy.[7] There are two notable geographic aspects of this noble estate: it was compact, despite its size, and

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[2] The old duke's instructions were more a manual on the good Christian death than a true guide to good government. For a summary, see "Relación de las cosas más particulares sucedidas en España, Italia, Francia, Flandes, Alemania y otras partes desde febrero de 1636 hasta fin de abril de 1637," BNE, mss. 2.367, fols. 175r-180v, printed document.

[3] Pedro Barrantes Maldonado, *Ilustraciones de la casa de Medina Sidonia* (Cádiz: Universidad de Cádiz, 1998) [1551]; Pedro de Medina, *Crónica de los muy Excelentes señores duques de Medina Sidonia*, CODOIN vol. 34 [1561].

[4] Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada, *Niebla: De reino a condado. Noticias sobre el Algarve andaluz en la Baja Edad Media* (Madrid, 1992).

[5] AGFCMS, leg. 1.058, ducal title granted by Henry IV of Castile in 1472.

[6] For a description of this jurisdictional aggregation and its symbolic effects, see Luis Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 29–52.

[7] José Luis Cano de Gardoqui and Antonio Bethencourt, "Incorporación de Gibraltar a la Corona de Castilla, 1436–1508," *Hispania* 103 (1966), 325–81.

above all it was maritime, taking up nearly half the Crown of Castile's southern Atlantic coast.

Castilian law granted broad powers to seigneurial lords over their vassals; they imparted first-instance justice, collected tributes, and were involved in all sorts of local governmental matters, including the appointment of officers. The early modern Castilian *señorío* also involved military responsibilities, especially in Lower Andalusia, including recruiting of the local militias and of troops raised by royal levies.[8] The militias were municipal self-defense troops, either infantry or cavalry (in the latter case called *caballeros cuantiosos*), which Andalusian towns, at least in theory, were supposed to keep prepared and armed in case of attacks from the outside. One must keep in mind that the calling up and use of these militias was restricted to defensive efforts by towns from the same region against outside threats. In this case, the radius extended throughout Lower Andalusia, including the large ports, though in the latter half of the 1630s this requirement tended to be systematically overlooked.[9]

The titled nobility who owned and governed these great seigneurial estates had broad economic, jurisdictional, military, and governmental powers. Added to that was the *mayorazgo*, the name given to the inherited, entailed property passed on to the firstborn son. Together, these powers meant the *señoríos* were discontinuous juridical-administrative units, in contrast to those areas governed directly by the crown (the *realengo*), sprinkled throughout the kingdom of Castile.[10]

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[8] I.A.A. Thompson, *Guerra y decadencia. Gobierno y administración en la España de los Austrias* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1981) [1976]; I.A.A. Thompson, "Los ejércitos de Felipe II: del tercio a la milicia," in *Las sociedades Ibéricas y el mar. La Monarquía* (Lisbon, 1998), 477–96; Enrique Solano Camón, "Aspectos en torno a la jurisdicción militar en la España de los Austrias," in Enrique Martínez Ruiz and Magdalena de Pazzis Pi Corrales, eds., *Instituciones de la España Moderna. Las jurisdicciones* (Madrid, 1996), 263–292; Antonio Jiménez Estrella, *Poder, ejército y gobierno en el siglo XVI. La Capitanía General del reino de Granada y sus agentes* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2004); Enrique Martínez Ruiz, *Los soldados del Rey. Los ejércitos de la Monarquía Hispánica* (*1480–1700*) (Madrid: Actas, 2008).

[9] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*. For details about the violation of militia regulations, see José Contreras Gay, *Problemática militar en el interior de la península durante el siglo XVII. El modelo de Granada como organización militar de un municipio* (Granada: Fundación Juan March, 1980).

[10] On the mayorazgo, see Bartolomé Clavero, *Mayorazgo: Propiedad feudal en Castilla, 1369–1836* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1974). On the concept of jurisdictional discontinuity, though in this case applied to the case of the Portuguese municipal realengo, see Hespanha, *Vísperas del Leviatán*.

1.2 *Sanlúcar de Barrameda and Ducal Finances*

Of all these sources of power, the only one that can properly be quantified is the economic, at least as it concerned direct access to resources. The house of Medina Sidonia in 1600 was considered the richest in Castile. Annual income was estimated at around 250,000 ducats, coming from three principal sources: the tuna monopoly along the entire Atlantic coast in Andalusia, which included salted tuna, customs duties in Sanlúcar; and rents from the rest of the estates. The total amount may be exaggerated, but not by much.[11] This was confirmed when the seventh duke, don Alonso, died in 1615 leaving personal property (that is, property not juridically tied to the *mayorazgo*) worth nearly five million ducats.[12] Yet in 1636, upon the death of Alonso's son and heir, the eighth duke, don Manuel Alonso, there were only a few hundred thousand maravedíes listed. What could account for such a contrast in barely two decades?

When speaking of the wealth of the dukes of Medina Sidonia, one must start by noting that the estate was one of the most densely populated in Castile. Yet what truly made this noble line so extraordinary and influential was the jewel of the dukes' inheritance, the city of Sanlúcar de Barrameda.[13] When the ninth duke, don Gaspar, inherited the port city, it was still one of the busiest commercial centers in the Iberian Peninsula. It was the port through which ships entered the Atlantic after going down the Guadalquivir River from Seville. This geographic situation did not make Sanlúcar subservient to Seville; on the contrary, it strengthened it, thanks to the support and protection of its powerful lords. The valuable cargo that went up and down the Guadalquivir, and the fabulous amounts of American silver that paid for the cargo, halted right in the political and economic heart of the Pérez de Guzmán estate.[14] Thus the fortune and wealth of the Medina Sidonia and the city of Sanlúcar are inconceivable without taking into account their location at the administrative center of the Indies trade. Of the three principal sources of the Medina Sidonia

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[11] As a comparison, a list of Castilian seigneurial rents gives Medina Sidonia's as 250,000 ducats, while the other titled estates barely earned 10,000. "Relazione di Spagna," BNE, mss. 3.876, fols 264–89.

[12] Cabrera de Córdoba, Luis. *Relaciones de las cosas sucedidas en la Corte de España desde 1599 hasta 1614*. (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1997) [1614], 476.

[13] Sanlúcar de Barrameda officially became a city in December 1639. AHMSB, leg. 4.715, no. 14, fol. 186r-194v., 31 December 1639.

[14] Luis Salas Almela, "Nobleza y fiscalidad en la ruta de las Indias. El emporio señorial de Sanlúcar de Barrameda (1576–1641)," *Anuarios de Estudios Americanos*, 62/2 (2007), 13–60.

wealth—tuna, ordinary rents, and the Sanlúcar duties—it was the duties that gave the house far more than their monetary value; they gave the lineage a particular identity and closely linked it to Seville, the financial hub of the monarchy, and to all the nations with which Seville traded. The wealth of Sanlúcar was the wealth of its inhabitants, many of them rich Castilian and foreign merchants or landowners. Thus much of the Medina Sidonia influence lay in the social rank of their vassals, but especially those in Sanlúcar.

At the same time, however, Sanlúcar's position in the Atlantic commercial network had always created tensions and problems. Leaving aside the question of illegal trafficking, which was widespread along the Andalusian Atlantic coast, the Medina Sidonia found a variety of ways to take advantage of the Guadalquivir commerce. The most lucrative, stable and, in theory, legal was based on the seigneurial customs levies in Sanlúcar. Since the thirteenth century, the dukes had owned the right to exact tribute on merchandise coming and going; this tribute was called the *almojarifazgo*. Already in the fifteenth century, this seigneurial rent had been the subject of disputes with ministers of the crown charged with collecting similar royal duties, called the *almojarifazgo mayor* of Seville. This duty comprised entry and exit rights imposed upon merchandise passing through royal ports between the Portuguese border and the kingdom of Valencia, which included the entire coast of present-day Andalusia and Murcia. The theoretical fiscal homogeneity of the crown, therefore, was blocked by the existence of seigneurial ports along the coast.

Starting in the sixteenth century, there also were the royal institutions created to manage the Indies trade, particularly the Casa de la Contratación, the Council of Indies, and the Consulate.[15] Despite the fact that the crown tried to minimize the influence of Lower Andalusian seigneurial authorities over the Indies trade, throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries not only were there conflicts but also an endless number of partial agreements, compromises, and distributions of power, resulting in noble fiscal districts that lasted until the eighteenth century.[16]

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[15] Antonio Heredia Herrera, *Casa de la Contratación y Consulado de Cargadores a Indias: afinidad y confrontación* (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2003).

[16] The two most important and influential seigneurial jurisdictions among Lower Andalusian ports were Sanlúcar de Barrameda and El Puerto de Santa María, the latter ruled by the dukes of Medinaceli. See Juan José Iglesias Rodríguez, *Monarquía y nobleza señorial en Andalucía. Estudios sobre el señorío de El Puerto* (*ss. XIII-XVIII*) (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla), 2003.

Thus it was that the most serious problems arising from the fiscal jurisdictional discontinuity that Sanlúcar signified led to a confrontation between the Medina Sidonia and the crown regarding the latter's aspiration to control all trade and, in particular, the Indies trade. The Medina Sidonia's *almojarifazgo* gave them no right whatsoever to exact duties on the Americas trade. Furthermore, certain social stigmas impeded the great nobles from directly participating, as merchants or lenders, in commerce. Nevertheless, there were many ways in which they and their leading vassals grew wealthy from and participated in the complex network that we call the Indies trade.

All American commerce, as we said, passed through Sanlúcar. In the late fifteenth century, the already prosperous Andalusian ports grew even more so. As a result, in the mid-sixteenth century, Charles V and his ministers decided to create a new tax on the American trade, called the *almojarifazgo de Indias*. Until then, trade with the American colonies had been free of tribute. Thus a double customs circuit arose in Andalusia; one managed commerce between Andalusia and America, and later the Asian empire, and the other managed trade between Andalusia and the rest of Europe. Nevertheless, given that a large part of the merchandise shipped from Andalusia to America was manufactured in Europe, the commercial circuit based in the Guadalquivir linked European manufacturing centers with the Indies via Andalusia. Seen in this manner, it is clear that the dual royal fiscal structure in the region was applied to just one commercial network.

As a result, the wealth and influence that the Medina Sidonia derived from the Americas trade in large part came from the massive increase in European products passing through their ports to be shipped to America. Further, the dukes and their leading vassals could take advantage of the ship traffic to place their agricultural products in European markets and on board navy ships bound for the Indies. Therefore a large part of the conflict with royal authorities in Seville grew out of the competition that Sanlúcar posed as an import base. The key to the conflict lay in the duke's ability to tax imports that arrived at Sanlúcar from Europe to a lesser degree than imports arriving at royal ports. The objective, obviously, was to make Sanlúcar more attractive to foreign merchants. This explains why, as Domínguez Ortiz pointed out, the inhabitants of seigneurial ports, far from opposing their lords, submitted to their rule, given that lords and vassals had a shared interest in increasing trade, the former for fiscal reasons, the latter because it was their principal source

of income.[17] In addition, most of the governing elite of Sanlúcar, who belonged to the house of Medina Sidonia, produced wine for export. Thus there was a solid group with shared interests: merchants, vintners, and the dukes.[18]

The balance among them shifted, however. After a period of enormous tension between the royal tax collectors in Seville and the duke's ministers in the late sixteenth century, an agreement was reached in 1609 between the two parties. Although it might appear to be just another partial pact, prevailing conditions made it more stable and lasting. Among those favorable conditions was the Twelve Years' Truce, signed in 1609 between the monarchy and the Dutch Republic, which led to an increase of trade throughout Lower Andalusia. Also, a tacit agreement at the same time between the Indies Consulate and the crown that included very high tribute in exchange for less supervision by the crown over merchandise on the Indies fleet helped Medina Sidonia obtain a similar agreement regarding his fiscal jurisdiction.[19] As a result, starting in 1610 the Pérez de Guzmáns' involvement in the African plans of Philip III and Lerma notably increased, as did the family's expenses in that area. In return, for many years no royal court seriously investigated the legitimacy of the ducal customs post in Sanlúcar, nor the revenues that Medina Sidonia received there.

The weakness in this system of mutual tolerance and collaboration between the crown and merchants or nobles was that the tax structure behind the Indies trade—that is, the Andalusian *almojarifazgos*—required commercial fluidity in order to reap benefits for everyone. The European wars in which Spain was involved, specially after 1618 continued generating new enemies, whose commercial activities, particularly in the case of the Dutch, had to be tolerated if the crown wanted to avoid shortages and the paralysis of imperial commerce. For the dukes of Medina Sidonia, whose power was highly sensitive to trade, the implicit pact with the crown meant that the benefits gained through fiscal jurisdiction were to a large extent reinvested in the military, which also

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[17] Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, "La incorporación a la corona de Sanlúcar de Barrameda," *Archivo Hispalense*, vol. 147–152, 215–31.

[18] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 201–208.

[19] José María Oliva Melgar, "La metrópoli sin territorio. ¿Crisis del comercio de Indias en el siglo XVII o pérdida del control del monopolio?" in *El sistema atlántico español* (*siglos XVII-XIX*), ed. Carlos Martínez Shaw and José María Oliva Melgar, 19–73 (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2005).

indirectly interfered with foreign trade. Thus the point of equilibrium in the agreement between the dukes and the crown was that Medina Sidonia's increased authority, through the exercise of fiscal and military power, would compensate for the enormous and expensive job of defending the Lower Andalusian coast and the Spanish forts along the Atlantic coast of Morocco. It was an unsteady equilibrium between service and favor, a reflection of the exaggerated imbalances caused by the wars in general.

The contradictions of the Hispanic empire's commercial system were made manifest in Sanlúcar, therefore, as a variant of what was happening in Seville with the great merchants, that is, tolerance regarding fraud in return for enormous generosity in the form of grants (*donativos*) and service to the king. Nevertheless, when the enormous silver contraband case known as the great *descamino de plata* was uncovered in 1633, the extent of the fraud took everyone by surprise, even the Council of Finance, given the social and political standing of the people and institutions held accountable, among them the duke of Medina Sidonia and some of his leading protegés and retainers. Yet the crown's solution was the usual: a compromise by which the investigation was halted in return for an extraordinary subsidy.[20]

Thus we are in a position to reply to the question with which this section opened regarding the different financial situations inherited by the eighth duke in 1615 and the ninth duke in 1636. When the ninth duke began governing, matters in the Sanlúcar customs post were in a bad state, in part the result of several international factors. In 1621, the Twelve Years' Truce expired, and the war with the Dutch recommenced, meaning trade with the Dutch ended. Even worse, the outbreak of war with France in 1635 meant that now French merchants also were considered enemies, their properties were seized, and they were prohibited from trading. Exclusion of the French was especially serious for the Medina Sidonia given that the largest and most influential merchants in Sanlúcar were from Brittany.[21] It is therefore not surprising that the duke was in no rush to seize French goods, thus giving the merchants time to hide their properties or change their identity papers. In fact, it was not until 1640, five years after the war began, that the first embargo revenues were recorded.[22]

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[20] Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV* (Madrid: Pegaso, 1960).

[21] María G. Carrasco González, "Los mercaderes franceses en Sanlúcar de Barrameda. Una información sobre los privilegios de la nación francesa en el Sanlúcar del siglo XVII," in *Actas del II Congreso de Historia de Andalucía. Historia moderna*, vol. 1, 381–89 (Córdoba 1991).

[22] The amounts were relatively modest: 137,172 silver *reales* and 131,451 in copper. AGS, Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, d. 26, nd, summer 1640.

At the same time, the *almadrabas* income was subject to pressure from the royal treasury, as it had been during the rule of the seventh duke. This time the cause was the short-lived salt tax, imposed in 1631 throughout Castile. Salt was essential to the tuna business. The tax was abolished after just a few months, but the experiment once again led the Council of Finance to pay close attention to the Medina Sidonia's tax earnings from salt and get tangled in yet another conflict, which appears to have definitively ended when the seventh duke paid off enormous amounts to the crown.[23]

Thus the lack of personal property in the eighth duke's will was simply the most obvious symptom of a problem that had been building over time. Gaspar, the ninth duke, outlined all his family's services to the king and made clear his interpretation of their financial state: "If our income from rents was like it was in my father's day, we could hope that our difficulties would improve with time. But the wars with Holland and France mean customs duties barely pay for its own administration".[24] The duke was saying, in other words, that the wars were so damaging to his estate that it was very difficult to continue serving the king as his ancestors had done. He implied not only that declining trade and fiscal pressure were to blame for his financial woes, but that there was an additional factor: the eighth duke's political decision to serve the king to the utmost. This was a political choice in which military, political, and administrative jurisdictions were never relinquished, no matter how expensive, in order to save reputation, in the hope that sooner or later the crown would reward his efforts. The financial labyrinth that this strategy led to is perfectly illustrated by the ninth duke's continual borrowing between 1636 and 1641 at very high interest rates, a system aptly called ruinous borrowing (*tomar dinero a daño*.)[25]

1.3 *The Military Career of a Duke of Medina Sidonia*

As we have seen, the dukes of Medina Sidonia had a long tradition of military service in defense of Andalusia, one of the cornerstones of the family's social prestige in the Hispanic monarchy. In 1588 Philip II had named the seventh duke, Alonso Pérez de Guzmán, "captain general of the ocean and coast of Andalusia," with command over the naval forces (the

[23] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 194–200.

[24] AGFCMS, leg. 3.038, letter from Medina Sidonia to an unknown recipient, Madrid, 7 February 1638.

[25] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 181–83.

"invincible Armada") that were to invade England. The fact that he kept the title of "captain general", the highest military rank with territorial jurisdiction, despite the Armada's defeat shows that the crown recognized the connection between the defense of the Andalusian Atlantic coast and the resources and authority of the seigneurial estate. As Peter Pierson wrote, the duke of Medina Sidonia had been acting as such long before the title was created.[26] But once the *capitanía* existed, its jurisdictions grew and it ended up being de facto hereditary; when one duke died, his son, with the king's explicit permission, received the appointment as captain general along with his noble titles. That was the case with the eighth and ninth dukes in 1615 and 1636, respectively. In other words, from 1588 to 1641, the highest military authority in western Andalusia, a region that was key to the interests of the Hispanic empire, lay with a lineage that also had inherited a massive amount of jurisdictional, economic, symbolic, and political power.[27]

The establishment of such a broad military command, beyond the fact that it was a royal appointment, implied the exercise of new authority, though in fact, the command was characterized by the vague nature of its responsibilities, at least as they were outlined in the appointments, and the nature of the attributes shifted as the years passed. Thus, at the very time of the early seventeenth-century fiscal agreements, between 1609 and 1614 the government of the duke of Lerma, Philip III's favorite, carried out two operations that had considerable impact along the southern peninsular border. First, the moriscos were expelled from Castile and Aragon; and second, two new enclaves on the Moroccan Atlantic coast, Larache and Mamora, were captured. The link between the two operations lay in the increased pirate activity after the expulsion, when many moriscos turned to piracy, taking advantage of their knowledge of the territory they had been forced to leave. Castile's occupation of the pirate ports of Larache (1611) and Mamora (1614) marked an attempt to minimize the threat. In any case, both towns fell under the command of the *capitanía* of the dukes of Medina Sidonia.[28]

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[26] Peter Pierson, *Commander of the Armada. The Seventh Duke of Medina Sidonia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

[27] Luis Salas Almela, *Colaboración y conflicto. La Capitanía General del Mar Océano y Costas de Andalucía, 1588–1660* (Córdoba: Universidad de Córdoba, 2002), 25–60.

[28] Miguel Ángel de Bunes Ibarra and Carmen García-Arenal, *Los españoles y el norte de África, siglos XV-XVIII* (Madrid: CSIC, 1992); Carmen García-Arenal, *La diáspora de los andalusíes* (Barcelona: Icaria, 2003).

At the same time, immediately after its creation, the *capitanía* had to confront other dangers from European rivals. The failed conquest of England in 1588 made the Andalusian coast more vulnerable. In 1596, Cádiz, Lower Andalusia's principal seaport, was occupied and sacked for two weeks by an Anglo-Dutch squadron. For Philip II, by then a very old man, the humiliation was the clearest sign that the Iberian Peninsula had become vulnerable and would remain so unless it ruled the seas.[29]

Under these circumstances, after 1596 a series of military measures were imposed along the coastline. Once again the old militia system and mutual aid among cities and towns was revived, in large part at the instigation of Medina Sidonia, at least in Lower Andalusia. Larger towns erected fortresses to repel attacks, and watchtowers were built along the coastline to alert towns if an enemy was detected at sea. Though there was always a lack of sufficient funding, nonetheless the program moved ahead reasonably well under Medina Sidonia's command. In 1625, during the time of the eighth duke, the English returned to Cadiz, and this time the Spanish forces enjoyed victory; not only did they repel the attack, they inflicted considerable damage on the attackers.[30] In the eyes of Philip IV the experience was so positive that he decided to revive the militia and mutual aid system throughout the crown of Castile.[31]

Defending Cádiz, the departure point for much of the Indies fleet laden with European products and often the point of return for ships carrying American treasure, required constant tension and attention. It was no coincidence that one of the first official acts of the ninth duke after assuming his title was to visit Cádiz, which he did on 2 April 1636. Underlining the importance of his visit, he arrived accompanied by a cavalry company from his estate comprising 120 horsemen.[32] This unusual display was a response to the general state of alarm along the coast after war had been declared with France the previous year.[33] It also was a sign that the young duke was personally committed to the city's security and would make it one of his priorities. But at the same time, from a seigneurial perspective,

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[29] Jesús Ribas Bensusan, *Asaltos a Cádiz por los ingleses. Siglos XVII y XVIII* (Cádiz, 1974); Luis López Anglada, *Los asaltos ingleses a Cádiz en el Siglo de Oro* (Cádiz, 1975).

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ruth MacKay, *Los límites de la autoridad real. Resistencia y obediencia en la Castilla del siglo XVII* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 2007) [1999], 96–104.

[32] Each man received 10 *reales* in salary; AGFCMS, leg. 993, 13 April and 27 June 1636.

[33] José María Jover Zamora, *1635: Historia de una polémica y semblanza de una generación* (Madrid: CSIC, 2003) [1947].

it was a way of reaffirming the Medina Sidonia's authority and Cádiz's dependence on the duke for its safety.

Closely related to this specific responsibility was one of the *capitanía*'s great areas of military competence: the Indies fleets. This went far beyond simply guarding the coast; as one example of Medina Sidonia's role in Hispanic imperial commerce, in 1639 Philip IV asked the duke to arrange for General Carlos de Ibarra's passage to the Caribbean so he could bring back that year's silver, having been unable to do so, for various reasons, the previous year. Medina Sidonia was charged with two things: overseeing military arrangements to send eight ships, and assisting royal authorities in the area to convince the necessary parties to lend up to 400,000 ducats to finance the expedition.[34]

The importance of the duke of Medina Sidonia's capacity—his *mano*—to intervene in the preparation of the fleets was explicitly recognized in 1640 by Jerónimo Gómez de Sandoval, then the captain general of the galleon fleet, who said his journey to America the previous year was possible only because of the duke. Specifically, Gómez de Sandoval mentioned that the duke had sent him some infantry soldiers, though the duke had no royal order to do so, without whom he could not have made the voyage. He said, "Your Excellency … is everything, the one who sends navies when it is most impossible for them to sail." Even if we discount the rhetorical element, it is clear that Medina Sidonia was an essential point of reference for troops in Cádiz (the arsenal and incubator of the Hispanic fleets) and for the naval forces that sailed between the Indies and Castile.[35] By the time Gómez de Sandoval wrote these flattering words, the situation was once again the same, and once again he had to ask Medina Sidonia for troops from Cádiz so he could make the voyage, and once again the duke agreed.[36] That summer, the count of Castrillo, then the president of the Council of Indies, also requested the duke of Medina Sidonia's help in preparing the treasure fleet, saying that "in order to send our galleons, we need Your Excellency's help with soldiers and sailors."[37]

Two other important aspects of the dukes' military authority were their efforts against smuggling along the Lower Andalusian coast and the seizure of embargoed goods from enemy merchants. Both roles, common to

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[34] AGFCMS, leg. 2.418, d. 66, 76 and 100, 28 and 30 January and 13 February 1639.

[35] For some examples of the duke's activities in this area, see Carla Rahn Philips, *Seis galeones para el rey de España. La defensa imperial a principios del siglo XVII* (Madrid: Alianza, 1991) [1986].

[36] AGS, Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, d. 7 and 8, 4 and 5 July 1640.

[37] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, d. 310, 21 August 1640.

certain military commanders, were based on the authority of the Council of War. Jurisdiction over smuggling abatement was quite controversial in the case of the dukes of Medina Sidonia, given their seigneurial rule over such an important port for the Indies trade as Sanlúcar, and their authority made them both judges and jurors in cases affecting the royal treasury and private merchants. Their authority over smuggling was closely linked to their competence over general embargoes, a measure that Philip II had systematically taken against his enemies while leaving execution in the hands of the Medina Sidonia. But this responsibility was taken away from the dukes in 1624 when Philip IV created the Admiralty (*Almirantazgo*) of Seville, which generated enormous tension not only with the dukes but with all the Seville institutions involved in the Indies trade.[38]

Nonetheless, enforcement of embargoes occasionally still was assigned to the Medina Sidonia. In 1637, for example, Philip IV had to retract orders he had sent the duke to take charge of embargoes against the French because the Admiralty had protested against what it saw as usurpation.[39] Two years later, the king ordered the duke to embargo several merchant ships from Hamburg in the port of Sanlúcar, though the German ships had journeyed to Andalusia precisely because the duke had assured them they would not be embargoed, prompting the Flemish and German consuls to vehemently complain about the broken agreement. Nevertheless, given the Spanish navy's need for ships, the king insisted.[40] Caught in a bind, the duke attempted to salvage his reputation; while he waited for the king's reply, he let a few of the ships depart. Philip told him to never let that happen again.[41]

The incident shows how embargoes caused two sorts of problems for the duke. First, by that point in the seventeenth century, embargoing a ship meant slowing down trade, which hurt Spain's own economic and fiscal interests. And second, given that the duke frequently encouraged merchants to visit Andalusia and promised them they would not be

[38] The Almirantazgo of Seville was an institutional innovation whose basic purpose was to create a safe trade route between Seville and the Netherlands by financing a navy to escort cargo ships. It had fiscal jursidiction and was empowered to prosecute fraud. Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, "El almirantazgo de los países septentrionales y la política económica de Felipe IV," *Hispania*, XVII (1947), 272–90; Ignacio de la Concha, "El Almirantazgo de Sevilla," *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español* XIX (1948), 459–525; Luis Salas Almela, "Poder señorial, comercio y guerra. Sanlúcar de Barrameda y la política de embargos de la Monarquía Hispánica, 1585–1641," *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna* 33 (2008), 35–59.

[39] AGFCMS, leg. 2.417, 195r, 5 June 1637.

[40] AGI, Indiferente General, leg. 1.873, 13 January 1639.

[41] AGFCMS, leg. 2.418, d. 16, 11 January 1639.

disturbed, his own authority was at stake. In a letter to the royal secretary Pedro de Coloma, don Gaspar made no effort to dissimulate his annoyance at the crown's habit of ignoring his warnings: "No ships will enter these ports as long as they are threatened with embargo … This policy in a way seems to tacitly undermine the credit of my arguments and the proper approach to the problem."[42] It might appear contradictory that the duke, despite his complaints, fought to retain control over the execution of embargoes, but doing so allowed him to be indulgent with his protegés and, above all, not suffer the indignity of having someone else in his region execute them.

1.4 *The Medina Sidonia and the Olivares Government: Family and Politics*

When conversations commenced in the 1630s regarding the marriage of the then duke of Braganza, *dom* João, the count-duke of Olivares, Philip IV's favorite, apparently considered offering his own daughter to the Portuguese nobleman, which would have enabled him to link the Portuguese and Castilian nobilities. More specifically, it would have offered the Portuguese duke the possibility of entering into the intimate decision-making circle of Philip IV, who at the time ruled both countries.[43] For reasons unknown to us, that plan did not work out, and it was one of the count-duke's nieces who married the Portuguese duke. The niece, *Dona Luísa de Gusmão*, as she is referred to in the Portuguese historiography, was the daughter of the eighth duke of Medina Sidonia. Thus an alliance was formed between the Pérez de Guzmán and the Braganza, two dynasties at the peak of their respective social hierarchies.[44]

Historians have considered this marriage one of Olivares's failures, as he had been rejected by the Portuguese duke, who preferred Olivares's richer relatives, the dukes of Medina Sidonia. This theory needs correcting, in my opinion. According to the theory, there was enmity between the two branches of the family whose origin lay in a contested will in the early sixteenth century. The quarrel indeed existed, but it should be

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[42] AGFCMS, leg. 2.418, d. 77, 6 February 1639.

[43] Fernando Bouza, "A nobreza portuguesa e a corte de Madrid. Nobres e luta política no Portugal de Olivares," in *Portugal no tempo dos Felipes. Política, cultura, representações* (*1580–1668*) (Lisbon, 2000), 221.

[44] The wedding ceremony is described in an anonymous account titled "Relassao do Cazamento do duque de Bragança, Joaõ Segundo," BNE, mss. 18.633, no 53.

interpreted in the context of younger noble sons fighting through the courts for the privileges bestowed upon their older brothers. This particular case was resolved when Charles V stepped in. From then on, members of the Olivares branch sought to improve their fortunes by putting themselves at the service of the monarchs at court or in principal posts throughout the Hispanic monarchy. What is most important for our purposes is that, contrary to what has been said, the Olivares, at court, collaborated very closely with the Medina Sidonia. They were both noble families with common interests in and around Seville, where both held considerable power. And both benefited from their collaboration; the Medina Sidonia had relatives in key posts at court to speak up for their interests, and the Olivares branch gained enormously in prestige as representatives at court for the great Seville nobility, thanks to its intimacy with the Medina Sidonia. For that reason, the rise of Olivares to favorite at the start of Philip IV's reign cannot be separated from the fact that he was a close relative of Medina Sidonia. If part of his political qualifications were based on his Andalusian contacts, his blood relationship to the Pérez de Guzmán was an essential component of that heritage.[45]

At the same time, it is worth pointing out that the only period when the Medina Sidonia were not related by marriage with the favorite to the monarch, from the time of the prince of Eboli in the mid-sixteenth century to the death of Luis de Haro in 1661, was during the Olivares period. That is, whenever there was a favorite or prime minister next to the monarch, the Pérez de Guzmán married their heirs to the prime ministers' daughters. Olivares is an exception only because they *already* were close relatives and had communicated fluidly for decades. Marrying their children would have been interpreted at court as either a sign of mistrust between them or as an effort by the Guzmán clan to fortify its positions against other seigneurial lineages.

Furthermore, the governmental strategy deployed by Olivares as *valido* fit very nicely with the concerns and priorities of the dukes of Medina Sidonia. Maritime domination, secure imperial routes, and African expansion perfectly matched the Pérez de Guzmán's desires,[46] and their

[45] As late as 1639, Juan Alonso Martínez Sánchez Calderón, in his writings celebrating the Olivares lineage, argued that the principal branches of the Guzmán family, the Medina Sidonia and the Olivares, shared interests and values: "Epítome de las historias de la gran Casa de Guzmán," BNE, mss. 2.256, 2.257 and 2.258. This work, completed in 1629, was approved for publication in September 1640, though it was never published, possibly because of the political crisis at that time.

[46] For an outline of Olivares's reform program, see John H. Elliott, *El conde duque. El político en una época de decadencia* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1991 [1986]), 132–43.

commonality in this sense is documented throughout the period in which Olivares served the king.[47]

The harmony between the two poles of power, royal and seigneurial, lasted at least until 1631, when the salt tax, one of Olivares's projects, directly threatened the duke's economic power. Opposition to the salt tax was widespread throughout Castile, from the Basque provinces in the north, where there was armed resistance, to Seville, where the clergy's opposition led Olivares to take exceptional measures against them.[48] The sudden distrust between the eighth duke and Olivares provoked by the salt tax was overcome in a matter of months, largely because the measure was such a failure, and the two poles once again collaborated with few difficulties. Nevertheless, a side effect of the salt tax remained, which gave rise to a lawsuit that lasted more than a decade between the Medina Sidonia and the royal treasury; though the flat tax (*única contribución*) on salt had been eliminated, the price of salt consumption for certain industries (such as dried fish, the famous *almadrabas*) went up. With hindsight, the episode shows how Olivares's use of his administrative authority to solve problems of government was the cause of protests from one of the pillars of his ministry—that is, the Guzmán-Haro-Zúñiga faction—and throughout the crown of Castile.

Most testimony pointing to the supposed enmity between the Medina Sidonia and Olivares branches dates from after the Medina Sidonia conspiracy, in August 1641, and after the *valido*'s fall in January 1643. But throughout his time in government, we find more or less ordinary friction between the author of increasing demands on the king's subjects and one of the king's principal vassals. The friction was bound to grow, given the successive failures of Olivares's policies.

All this helps us to understand why don Gaspar, when he was still heir, married his paternal aunt, Ana de Guzmán, breaking with his father's and grandfather's tradition of marrying the daughters of *validos*. The explanation for this extreme example of familial endogamy lies in the Medina Sidonia family's desire to show that their relationship with the new *valido* was already solid. (Olivares's only daughter was still unmarried.) But shortly after Gaspar married, he was left a widower with a young son, who would be the tenth duke.[49] Don Gaspar, therefore, needed to remarry.

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[47] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, ch. 6.

[48] Juan Eloy Gelabert, *La bolsa del rey. Rey, reino y fisco en Castilla (1598–1648)* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1997), 82–95.

[49] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 309–12.

CHAPTER TWO

TENSION AND RUPTURE IN THE HISPANIC EMPIRE (1636–1640)

2.1 *Shoring up Prestige*

The authority of prominent figures in early modern Europe was based largely on reputation and public opinion. Both qualities alluded to the prestige the figure might have as a result of generous patronage, of being in the position to offer services and favors. The question of how to distribute one's resources so as to maintain a good reputation and sway public opinion was something that a lord of vassals had to think about most carefully as he devised a power strategy.

The concept of public opinion was complex and nuanced. With regard to the dukes of Medina Sidonia, public opinion depended not only on their spending and their military duties, but also, and above all, on the degree to which they could influence the Hispanic Monarchy's actions in Lower Andalusia, which generally depended on the good relationship they had with the current government in Madrid. That is, the house of Medina Sidonia's authority over its vast area of influence also was based on the degree to which the crown's principal political and strategic directions were filtered and interpreted by them. The strength of the dukes' and the monarchs' political ties, then, reflected their agreement on objectives as well as a certain amount of autonomy regarding how to implement royal commands.[1]

When don Gaspar became duke in 1636, he inherited a situation with positive and negative aspects. As we saw earlier, the close family ties with Olivares had suffered as a result of royal initiatives. In a proposal (*memorial*) he presented to Philip IV in 1636, the count-duke of Olivares spoke of his own doubts regarding the new duke's military abilities, though the *valido* also expressed praise for the Medina Sidonia and his house's tradition of serving the monarchy. Olivares suggested to the king that someone trustworthy be placed as a military adviser to the duke, who had inherited

[1] Olivares's reform plans as late as 1637 fully coincided with the general interests of the Medina Sidonia. John Elliot and José Francisco de la Peña, *Memoriales y cartas del conde-duque de Olivares*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1978–1981), vol. 2, 131–153.

the post of captain general from his father.[2] Medina Sidonia was not exactly unknown at court; following his father's tradition, he had spent the first half of the 1630s living in Madrid, learning about the mechanics of court politics and creating a network of personal contacts within the circles surrounding the throne. Nevertheless, Olivares's reference to his nephew in this *memorial* can be interpreted in two, contradictory ways: it could be symptomatic of the distrust between the two branches of the family since 1631, or it could also be a sign that Olivares wished to satisfy an old request by the eighth duke that his brother, the Marquis of Fuentes, be named governor of Cádiz and lieutenant captain general to assist him in his many tasks.[3] It appears likely that both were true. Olivares's realization that Andalusia was very vulnerable after France's declaration of war might have made him want to place a military expert alongside the captain general—a move which, as it happens, could comply with his relatives' request.

But some of Philip IV's edicts in 1636–1640 were interpreted as direct threats against the Medina Sidonia military jurisdiction. Central to these developments was the Duke of Arcos, head of one of the very few seigneurial houses whose power and influence in Andalusia could be compared to that of Medina Sidonia. Don Gaspar feared the establishment of a new military district centered on the Arcos duchy which would hurt his own, leaving him, in his words, *desairado*, or out in the cold. Nevertheless, thanks to the excellent contacts he had at court and Medina Sidonia's ability to apply pressure, the Arcos plan did not bear fruit. Of particular help to don Gaspar was none other than Olivares, who in a few weeks managed to get the measures favorable to Arcos withdrawn.[4] Beyond illustrating a certain hostility between the duke and part of the royal court, the incident reflects the shrinking authority of the *valido*, who was unable to prevent important groups at court from undercutting the spheres of power that Medina Sidonia had occupied for decades.

In addition to his paradoxical relationship with Olivares and the Duke of Arcos, a third complication for the duke as soon as he inherited his title was that the family's finances were not solid. Along with the declining customs payments in Sanlúcar because of war with France, he inherited his father's debts, largely the result of services to the crown. To alleviate

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[2] AGS Estado, leg. 2.658, nd, summer 1636.

[3] AGFCMS, leg. 3.083, letter 2 March 1636.

[4] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia,* 318–328; the duke's quote is from AGFCMS, leg. 2.418, d. 350, 12 June 1639.

the problem, the new duke transferred part of the fiscal pressure to his vassals, calling in old debts owed to the *señorío* as well as a portion of unpaid royal taxes; as an example of the latter, just one month after inheriting, don Gaspar asked his vassals in Niebla to pay back taxes to the Royal Treasury from the 1629 grant (*donativo general*), monies that he himself ended up using for defense purposes.[5] Medina Sidonia also pressured the crown, apparently successfully, to make good on promises of several income-generating postr of authority (*encomiendas*) in military orders that were owed to the eighth duke for his services.[6] But none of these steps was sufficient to offset the financial damage caused by the salt tax and the outbreak of war with France. The dukedom's liquidity crisis had never been so serious, and so in August 1637 the duke asked his agent in Madrid to tell him how the other nobles at court were solving their financial problems. Perhaps he could copy their methods.[7]

Given the situation, the new duke had to choose between spending and saving; he opted for the former. He decided to continue his house's tradition of investing efforts and large amounts of ducats in prestige and royal service. Serving the king had become essential for justifying Medina Sidonia's privileges in Lower Andalusia, and the give-and-take had the advantages of later allowing the dukes to request compensation from the crown and of reinforcing seigneurial authority through the exercise of military functions. As a result, as don Gaspar desperately sought funds to cover his debts, he acquired new debts in accordance with expectations of what a duke of Medina Sidonia should do.[8] The vicious circle could be broken only in two ways: with new trade to increase customs earnings in Sanlúcar, or more payments from the crown in return for services rendered.

The strategic option of expanded spending was a result not only of the duke's military obligations but also his image as a generous lord of vassals. Both were critical to the legitimation discourse of the house; the two images were parallel. Three examples will suffice to make the point.

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[5] AGFCMS, leg. 3.142, letter duke to Dávila y Estrada, 4 August 1637. On the 1629 *donativo* and Medina Sidonia, see Luis Salas Almela, "Cuatro intereses sobre una jurisdicción: el donativo general de 1629 y los intentos de segregación jurisdiccional en el condado de Niebla," in L.C. Álvarez Santaló, ed. *Estudios de historia en homenaje al profesor Antonio García-Baquero* (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2009), 623–638.

[6] AGFCMS, leg. 3.142, d. 363, letter Medina Sidonia to his agent, 4 October 1637.

[7] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 309–312.

[8] The duke signed several promissory notes and loan agreements in Seville and Madrid. In August, in Seville, he accepted at least 44,000 reales: AGFCMS, leg. 993. In Madrid, in the same time period, he took loans amounting to at least 50,000 reales: AGFCMS, leg. 3.083.

The best example of investment in institutional prestige was the enormous expense the duke underwent after Philip IV asked him to put down the Portuguese kingdom of the Algarve during the disturbances there in 1637–1638.[9] Medina Sidonia was in charge of raising an army on the border between Lower Andalusia and the Algarve to suppress what became known as the Évora riot (*motin de Évora*), on the other side of the Guadiana River. After a few weeks of tax and grain riots, the unrest spread through almost all of southern Portugal, quickly showing Philip IV the depth of the problem, which touched on his very authority over Portugal.

Medina Sidonia chose to use carrots rather than sticks, reassuring the municipal elites of the towns in question. Though he did raise an army, based in Ayamonte, he chose to stress negotiation and bribes rather than force. In so doing, he sought not only to involve the Portuguese elites in putting down the conflict, but also to extend his reputation as a magnanimous and generous lord. Indeed, Gabriel Bocángel de Unzueta, librarian to the king's brother, the cardinal-infante Fernando, sang the duke's praises in this regard; his writings—commissioned by the duke, by Olivares, or by both—expressed the perfect harmony between the government in Madrid and the dukes of Medina Sidonia that could only lead to positive results and bloodless victories, which indeed is what happened in the Algarve.[10]

The economic costs of this particular mode of politics through bribery, which Medina Sidonia financed in large part through high-interest loans, began to weigh on the seigneurial treasury as soon as the troubles in Portugal were put down. The correspondence between the duke and his agents, both from Madrid and Seville, shows his extreme financial stress in the following months. The method of obtaining money through abusively high-interest loans (*tomar dinero a daño*) entailed the assumption of enormous future costs for a ducal treasury whose growth was, in the best of cases, highly unlikely.[11] Thus the duke's only hope was to get out from under his debt through royal favor.

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[9] Joaquim R. Magalhães, "1637: motins da fome," *Biblos* vol. 52 (1976), 319–333; Antonio de Oliveira, *Poder e oposição politica em Portugal no período filipino (1580–1640)* (Lisbon: DIFEL, 1990); Rafael Valladares, *Epistolario de Olivares y el Conde de Basto* (Badajoz: Diputación de Badajoz, 1998), 53ff; Jean-Frederic Schaub, *Le Portugal au temps du Compte-Duc d'Olivares (1621–1640). Le conflict de jurisdiction comme exercice de la politique* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2001).

[10] Gabriel Bocángel Unzueta, *Lauro cívico* (Madrid? 1638).

[11] AGFCMS, leg. 3.163.

Less than two years later we have a magnificent example of a second sort of prestige investment, in this case seigneurial. In August 1637, the duke's first wife, Ana de Aragón y Guzmán, had died. She was, as noted earlier, his paternal aunt.[12] The couple had two children. The elder was don Gaspar Juan, who would become the tenth duke of Medina Sidonia from 1664 to 1667. The younger, Gaspar Antonio, died as a small child. The prudent step therefore was for the duke, who was still young, to marry again in order to ensure that in the case of Gaspar Juan's early death, he still had heirs. To seek out a new wife, the duke turned to his family in Madrid and asked them to find a suitable candidate.[13] After rejecting a few possibilities, the duke began looking in Andalusia. Through indirect references, it seems he initially focused on the duke of Arcos's daughter, a marriage which, according to the same sources, was prevented by Philip IV himself.[14]

The duke finally chose Juana Fernández de Córdoba, daughter of the marquises of Priego and dukes of Feria. The Priego and Feria titles had been united precisely with the marriage of Juana's parents a few decades earlier, thus connecting the important Andalusian lands around Córdoba, which belonged to the marquis, with the equally strategic lands of the duchy of Feria, in Extremadura along the border of Andalusia and Portugal.[15] To the degree that marriage signified a family alliance and a certain community of interests, doña Juana was a good choice for Medina Sidonia, as the marriage hugely strengthened his regional influence. Additionally, a noble marriage also held out important economic advantages for the husband, starting with the extremely valuable dowries that were the custom and that could put seigneurial finances back in the black. Given the duke's debts at that time, it is logical to assume that the one hundred thousand ducats that Juana brought to the marriage with her dowry were a powerful argument in her favor, and the duke decided to marry her.[16]

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[12] On mourning after the duchess's death and her last will, AGFCMS, leg. 993, 12 and 14 August 1637.

[13] In a letter to his agent in Madrid, the duke referred to "few suitable marriage prospects." AGFCMS, leg. 3.142, 18 December 1638.

[14] Ignacio Atienza, "Aunque fuese con una negra, si Su Majestad así lo desea; sobre la autoridad real, el amor y los hábitos matrimoniales de la nobleza hispana," *Gestae*, no. 1 (1989), 32–52, 43.

[15] On the duchy of Feria and its union with the marquisate of Priego see Juan Manuel Valencia Rodríguez, *El poder señorial en la Edad Moderna: la casa de Feria* (*siglos XVI y XVII*), (Badajoz: Diputación de Badajoz, 2010), vol. 1, 366–383. Surprisingly, the author does not even mention this marriage with the dukes of Medina Sidonia.

[16] Before the wedding had taken place, Philip IV granted Medina Sidonia the right to link the dowery to his entailed estate. AGFCMS, leg. 993, 15 January 1640.

Negotiations leading to the marriage agreement took place in Madrid, where the duke's representatives were, in addition to his court agent, also none other than the count-duke of Olivares and Luis de Haro, the *valido*'s nephew, who was very well situated at court to take on important responsibilities; indeed, he would succeed Olivares a few years later. Thus Olivares and Haro, as relatives of the duke and prominent courtiers, were the ones who defended Medina Sidonia's interests in those negotiations, to the duke's great satisfaction.[17] Among the things that most pleased him was something for which it was essential that his representatives be royal advisers: the concession by the king of a *mayorazgo*, along with a noble title, for the eldest son of the newlyweds, though that son could not inherit the Medina Sidonia title, which would go to his son from his first marriage. The new title was marquis of Villaverde, which the children of the second marriage did inherit, though lack of succession meant the title eventually reverted back to the Medina Sidonia house in 1667.[18]

The duke's second marriage took place in spring 1640 and was the occasion for extraordinary festivities. The duke organized a huge entourage to collect his new wife from her father's home in the town of Montilla, in Córdoba. Comprising more than five hundred people, the procession wended its way along the Guadalquivir River, following an elaborate itinerary and precise iconography. Regarding the latter, Medina Sidonia took special pains to symbolically display his role as military authority and protector of the region. The procession visited several important towns along the way, both under royal jurisdiction (*realengo*), such as Lebrija, next to his estate and the site of a customs post under the supervision of Seville, and seigneurial (*señorío*), including El Arahal and Osuna, both belonging to the Duke of Osuna, finally ending up in Montilla, capital of the marquisate of Priego.

Along the way, Medina Sidonia met with the Duke of Osuna, the Duke of Lerma, and the Marquis of Peñafiel, the latter two of whom were staying with Osuna, one of the four most powerful noblemen in Andalusia. Lerma's title was a new one but an important one in Old Castile, and furthermore he was a relative of Medina Sidonia and the heir of the first great *valido* of the seventeenth century, Francisco de Sandoval y Rojas, who had guided Philip III's monarchy from 1598 to June 1618.[19] Despite

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[17] For a summary of the powers of attorney for the negotiations, see RAH 9/828, fol. 114r, 21 July 1639; the marriage agreement is in AGFCMS, leg. 993, 10 October 1639.

[18] The concession of the title is in AGFCMS, leg. 994, 229 July 1640.

[19] Antonio Feros, *El duque de Lerma: Realeza y privanza en la España de Felipe III* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2002) [Cambridge University Press 2000]; Patrick Williams,

Lerma having lost power amid suspicion of corruption, by 1640, when the government of the count-duke of Olivares was inspiring growing opposition, there was nostalgia for those times, somewhat of a golden age for the high Castilian nobility, whose political powers grew thanks to the *valido*. In any case, Medina Sidonia's visit to his relatives was both lavish and the occasion for mutual favors which, though they may have been pro forma, were nonetheless politically significant in that both sides agreed to the performance.

Medina Sidonia also took advantage of the occasion to strengthen ties with oligarchs in the two most important royal town councils on his route, Lebrija and Écija. The latter enjoyed particular protection by the duke; for example, when the duke in summer 1640 ordered emergency military levies after French warships appeared in the Bay of Cádiz, the governor (*asistente*) of Seville, the Count of Salvatierra, cut back the number of men Lebrija would have to supply because he knew the town was one of the duke's favorites.[20] The duke responded generously to the two town councils' signs of affection, rewarding councilors who most supported him with memberships (*hábitos*) in religious military orders.[21]

All this ostentatious display was aimed at making people talk, at least in Lower Andalusia. The prior of the Augustinian monastery in Sanlúcar, Fray Alonso Chirino Bermúdez, who formed part of the duke's wedding entourage, wrote an account of the journey that was printed in Cádiz that same year, no doubt an indication of the duke's desire to gain some prestige in return for his considerable economic investment and make the account available to a much broader audience.[22] The fundamental and overriding point, in other words, was that the printed account of the

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The Great Favourite: The Duke of Lerma and the Court and Government of Philip III of Spain, 1598–1621 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006); José Martínez Millán and María Antonieta Visceglia, *La monarquía de Felipe III,* 4 vols. (Madrid 2008–2009); Santiago Martínez Hernández, *Rodrigo Calderón. La sombra del valido,* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2009); Luis Salas Almela, "Realeza, valimiento y poder. En torno a las últimas aportaciones sobre el reinado de Felipe III," *Hispania* no. 234 (2010), 165–180.

[20] AGS Varios Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, d. 65, Salvatierra to Medina Sidonia, 24 July 1640.

[21] For a detailed study of the duke's wedding procession, see Luis Salas Almela, "Languages of Power and Festivities: The Wedding Processions of the Dukes of Braganza (1633) and Medina Sidonia (1640)," forthcoming.

[22] Antonio Chirino Bernárdez, *Panegírico nupcial: Viaje de D. Gaspar Alonso Pérez de Guzmán, duque de Medina Sidonia, en las bodas con Dª Juana Fernández de Córdoba,* manuscript copy of the original printed version, BNE, mss. 18.635, no. 18. On the duke's expenses for his journey, see AGFCMS, leg. 3.142, letters from the duke to his agent in Seville, 3 and 17 December 1639.

festivities drown out any talk of the duke's financial difficulties and reinforce his image as a magnanimous lord.

And, third, the duke of Medina Sidonia also tried to consolidate and legitimize his house's prestige in Andalusia through the discourse of religion and patronage. Specifically, don Gaspar tried to persuade especially important religious orders to accept him as their provincial patron. This role, which certain orders historically included in their statutes or simply had as a practice, consisted of a pact between lord and congregation according to which the former would finance the general chapters of the order in exchange for the lord's right to choose in which convent or monastery the order's assembly would take place. The quid pro quo was important because the general assemblies were the main governmental body of the order, where the provincial superior and other regional authorities were chosen, so the patron of the order had the ability to influence the election. At the same time, though this often was only implicit in the contracts drawn up between orders and noble patrons, it was understood that along with the masses and prayers for the benefactor's good health to be said during the general chapter meeting, members of the order, at the very least, would display great respect and consideration for the seigneurial house that now protected them. This might be reflected on a practical level in the order's pastoral functions, especially considering that the patron could help the careers of those friars who wished to prosper. Therein lies the explanation for the interest that political powers had in the preaching orders, which had an exceptional ability to spread messages from pulpits and as missionaries.

The house of Medina Sidonia's first provincial patronage in Andalusia was with the Order of Dominicans, who favored the seventh duke in 1588. Not until 1622 was the eighth duke named patron of the Mercedarian Recollects, also called the Discalced Mercedarians. Beyond Saint Dominic of Guzmán's supposed link to the Medina Sidonia clan, which may have been fictitious but nonetheless was used by the Pérez de Guzmáns to adorn their genealogy, the Dominicans had always been preachers and missionaries, both in Europe and America. As a result of the close relations between the order and the dukes, the seventh duke and his wife, Ana de Silva y Mendoza, were not simply patrons but they also financed an impressive new convent and church in the city of Sanlúcar, whose magnificence is evident even today.

The Mercedarians, meanwhile, were concerned mainly with collecting alms throughout Christendom with which to pay the ransoms of Christians captured by the Muslims of North Africa or by other infidels. It was a

lucrative business, especially for the captors, and it gave rise to important liquidity flows and communication between the Iberian Peninsula and the Maghrib. Starting in the sixteenth century, the principal staging point for this commerce in human lives was the Castilian outpost of Orán, very close to the most active corsair capital, Algiers. After two fortress towns on Morocco's Atlantic coast, Larache and Mamora, were captured by the Castilians, the Medina Sidonia grew increasingly interested in the ransom business, which could bring them not only prestige but indirect economic profit. It would be a way of opening up commerce with the infidel, which was prohibited by the church.

Though the transfer of the usual ransoms from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic coast did not actually ever take place, Medina Sidonia's patronage of the Mercedarians, along with their close ties to the Franciscans, who occasionally also participated in ransoming captives,[23] was a form of influence.[24] The duke himself, don Manuel Alonso, built two important establishments for the order in Huelva and Sanlúcar, the latter very close to his palace and home. Nor should we forget that drawing the ransom business toward the area of Mamora (present-day Mehdia) and Salé, in western Morocco, also interested the Moroccans, especially the king of Marrakech. In any case, the duke's good relationship with the Mercedarians and his general involvement in ransoms meant he had very fluid contacts with the Moroccan kingdom. In 1638, don Gaspar also was chosen to be patron of a single, very important convent: the Franciscan convent in Marrakech, a critical site where the Catholic Monarchy could gather information about what was going on throughout present-day Morocco.[25]

This is the context for understanding the ninth duke's efforts in 1639–1641, despite his financial difficulties, to become provincial patron of two additional orders. The first attempt, which was successful, was with the Discalced Carmelites. The order, which had broken off from the Carmelites in 1593 and were basically independent, were involved in bitter internal debates over the work of the founder, Saint Teresa of Jesus. By the mid-seventeenth century, the gentle humanism of the Castilian saint had been blurred by a sector of the order who were more rigorous

[23] In 1637, for example, the Franciscans asked Philip IV, through the Council of War, for permission to send a ransom mission to Berber territory, which was granted. AGS Guerra y Marina, leg. 1.185, 26 April 1637.

[24] Mercedarian *patronato* in AGFCMS, leg. 776, 9 May 1622.

[25] The duke's appointment, in AGFCMS leg. 993, 28 July 1638; possession of the *patronato* by his representative, Juan de Montellano, AGFCMS leg. 993, 5 April 1640.

and more "Roman."[26] Medina Sidonia's interest in the order may have lain in its Castilian origins. After her early canonization in 1622, Teresa had come to symbolize Castilian spirituality, so much so that in the late 1620s she even was competing with Saint James (Santiago de Compostela) to be patron of Spain. The duke became patron of both the feminine and masculine branches as well as the convents and monasteries in the Indies, which may be the key to his interest. In this manner, Medina Sidonia boosted his influence on both sides of the Atlantic, even though at that point the Carmelites had few representatives in America.

But even more interesting was the second religious order the duke had his eye on, which was the Company of Jesus. Leaving aside the simplistic black legend that grew up around the Jesuits owing to their proximity to power and their vote of obedience to the pope, their secular and pedagogical vocation in defense of post-Tridentine militant Catholicism made them a fantastic instrument for disseminating ideas. And despite their direct dependence on the Vatican, which often is misinterpreted, by the early seventeenth century nearly all their teaching and missionary work took place in nominally Catholic territories, aimed at correcting errors and compensating for the enormous theological ignorance in some sectors of Catholicism.[27]

The Jesuits' strategy as soon as they began expanding was to seek support and favors from those in power, from the crown to city councils, from viceroys to lords of vassals. It was in that way, protected from above, that they quickly managed to establish a space for themselves in a society that would seem to have been already sated with religious organizations. It was essential for the Company of Jesus to establish centers in principal towns and cities for the purposes of evangelization and intellectual cultivation. These centers were expensive, however, making it necessary to obtain the support of powerful individuals who in exchange would appear in Jesuit sermons as examples of Christian piety and also would attain some cultural prestige in the eyes of their vassals.

So it is not surprising that the high Andalusian nobility was interested in the Jesuits or that the interest was mutual. Already in 1560, just four

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[26] Ildefonso Moriones, *Ana de Jesús y la herencia teresiana: Humanismo cristiano o rigor primitivo* (Rome: Edicioni del Teresiannum, 1968).

[27] On the clergy's insufficient theological training see Pegarto Saavedra, *La vida cotidiana en el Antiguo Régimen* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1994) part 2 ch. 1. On Jesuit missions see M. Ruiz Jurado, "Espíritu misional de la Compañía de Jesús," in José J. Hernández Palomo and R. Moreno Jeria, ed. *La misión y los jesuitas en la América española, 1566–1767: Cambios y permanencias* (Madrid: CSIC, 2005), 17–42.

years after Saint Ignacio de Loyola's death, the duchess of Medina Sidonia, Ana de Silva, had backed the establishment of a Jesuit school in Trigueros. That initiative, which came from a *vecino* of the town, marked the Jesuits' first appearance on Medina Sidonia lands.[28] The next was an effort to work in Protestant England based in part on previous work with the Saint George English Hospital in Sanlúcar, an establishment that served as a training base for missionaries going north.

When don Manuel Alonso, the future eighth duke, married one of the Duke of Lerma's daughters in 1598, the Pérez de Guzmán line was joined to one of the most prominent of all Jesuit figures, Saint Francis Borja. From then on, the Jesuits and the house of Medina Sidonia maintained a relationship of mutual service and favor which, during the times of the eighth duke (1615–1636), was put to the test during the complex process of establishing the Jesuit school in Sanlúcar. It seems clear that the dukes very quickly realized the propagandistic possibilities of the Company of Jesus, and already with the seventh duke (1570–1615) there were frequent pastoral missions financed by the Pérez de Guzmán for their own *señorío*, particularly the more conflictive areas of the estate.[29]

Each new duke had his own religious preferences and affinities on which to construct an image of piety and devotion. While the seventh duke was close to Franciscans and Dominicans, the eighth preferred the devotion of the Holiest Sacrament and the Mercedarians, and the ninth, even before he inherited the title, was close to the Jesuits, or so the Andalusian Jesuits said in their correspondence with their superiors in Rome, raising hopes that he would pay to make their school in Sanlúcar even more splendid. The school was in some way linked to the old Saint George hospital. For his part, the duke may have been drawn to the possibility that the teaching order would provide him with an opportunity to communicate messages of social discipline draped in religious doctrine.[30]

So that was the general situation as the new duke, don Gaspar, set about being accepted as patron of the Jesuits in Andalusia (or the province of Bética, as the Jesuits referred to it). The first problem was that

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[28] ARSI, *Bética* 22, 19r-21v.

[29] On some of the missions on Medina Sidonia lands see Pedro de León, *Grandeza y miseria en Andalucía: Testimonio de una encrucijada histórica* (*1587–1616*), ed. P. Herrera Puga (Granada 1981) [1616].

[30] There is a long tradition of criticism of the Jesuits that culminates with the Enlightenment; for example, see Voltaire's classic sarcastic tale, "The Confession, Death, and Appirition of the Jesuit Berthier."

there was no precedent. Precisely because of the Company's proximity to lay centers of power, the order was very careful to ward off attempts to cross the line between protection and interference. Jesuits in Rome were worried that granting such an exceptional position to the duke of Medina Sidonia would offend other great Andalusian lords who also had invested huge sums of money in the order's foundations, for example the Duke of Arcos. And finally, the case of Father Castilla, a Jesuit father in Sanlúcar who apparently had excessively insinuated himself at court (the contemporary term was *pecado aúlico*) and repeatedly was reprimanded by the company's general, had set a poor example.[31]

Nevertheless, pressure from Medina Sidonia was such that despite all the contrary arguments, the odds seemed to shift in his favor. Among other things, he managed to win over the order in Seville, which apparently wrote to Rome in his support. His most enthusiastic support, logically, came from the Jesuits at the Sanlúcar college, who saw the possibility of taking advantage of their institution's new privilege within the order. Correspondence between the general in Rome and Jesuits in Bética suggests that certain projects and petitions from the duke indeed were being considered in Rome. But just then, the uprisings in Catalonia and Portugal and, in particular, the rebellion by the duke himself pushed everything else to the background and eventually undid the plans altogether.[32] In any case, despite his financial problems, it is clear that Medina Sidonia sought to increase his prestige and influence by taking on even more expenses that could be amortized only in terms of symbolic power and legitimization.

2.2 *Relations with Morocco*

Starting at least in 1578 and perhaps earlier, the Medina Sidonia were continually expanding their responsibilities with regard to relations between the Hispanic Monarchy and the kingdoms of Fez and Marrakech. From being simply close royal advisers on African affairs, they grew to be almost autonomous executors of royal policy. Africa was part of their tradition; the founder of the line, the mythical don Alonso Pérez de Guzmán, *el Bueno*, made his first fortune in Africa working for a king of Fez. Later, he put his ties to the Moroccan king at the disposal of Castilian King Alfonso X, who was under attack by enemies within his own kingdom.[33]

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[31] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 74–76.
[32] ARSI, *Bética*, 6-I, 297r-334r.
[33] Barrantes Maldonado, *Ilustraciones*, 42–52.

The third duke of Medina Sidonia in 1497 led his own troops to conquer Melilla, the first Castilian outpost in North Africa, which he then handed over to the Catholic Monarchs. More recently, the seventh duke was behind Philip II's plans to gain control of Larache and its port in 1578–1581, coinciding with Spain's eventual annexation of Portugal.[34] But it was only in 1611, during the reign of Philip III and Lerma, that Larache became part of the Crown of Castile; it was followed by Mamora in 1614. Don Alonso was very active in that process. His agents acted as negotiators and spies for Philip III while he took charge of logistics for both operations from the Andalusian coast.[35] Larache and Mamora were captured because they provided refuge to pirates who menaced the Andalusian coast, undermining shipping and commerce while restricting the growth of coastal towns, which obviously were matters of great concern to the Medina Sidonia, whose estate faced the sea.

The dukes, then, sought to extend their relations and influence in Africa. That process took a significant leap forward when their military responsibilities as captains general of the coast were augmented with the defense of the Larache and Mamora fortresses. Starting in around 1610, the Medina Sidonia were responsible for provisions, weapons, and soldiers there, and the dukes' attention quickly was drawn to the wider geography of Fez and Marrakech thanks to news coming in from informers based in Moroccan centers of power. Gradually, as we have seen, the dukes got involved in a series of initiatives there including ransom negotiations and, of great interest to us, the campaign to take the port of Salé.

The enclave of Rabat-Salé, on the Moroccan Atlantic coast a few miles away from Mamora, was one of the sites most affected by the exodus of moriscos from Spain after the 1609 expulsion. In Salé, the military bastion of the city of Rabat, moriscos from the town of Hornachos, in Extremadura, established a corsair republic nominally linked to the kingdom of Marrakech that greatly expanded its activities over the next two

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[34] CODOIN vol. 27, 393–395; RB, II/573, correspondence Philip II and Medina Sidonia, 1576–1578; D. Cabanelas, "El problema de Larache en tiempos de Felipe II," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebráicos,* IX (1960), 19–53; by the same author, "El duque de Medina Sidonia y las relaciones entre Marruecos y España en tiempos de Felipe II," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebráicos,* XXIII (1974), 7–27; Luisa Isabel Álvarez de Toledo, *Alonso Pérez de Guzmán, general de la Invencible* (Cádiz, 1994).

[35] Miguel Ángel de Bunes and José Antonio Martínez Torres, "La república de Rabat-Salé y el duque de Medina Sidonia; notas sobre la política atlántica en el siglo XVII," in Antonio Bethencourt, ed. *IV Centenario del ataque de Vanderdoes a Las Palmas de Gran Canaria* (Las Palmas, 2000), 187–203; Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 97–130.

decades, becoming a serious problem not just for ship traffic through the Strait of Gibraltar but even for English trade with the Baltic.[36] Given their incessant and devastating mischief, the dukes of Medina Sidonia starting in 1623 began agitating for the incorporation of Salé into Philip IV's dominium for the same reasons that Philip III had been persuaded to take Larache and Mamora.[37]

Intense negotiations took place with the moriscos, who governed the city from their fortress (*alcazaba*).[38] Given the difficulty of discussing sovereignty with Muslims, the Medina Sidonia argued that obedience to Philip IV would win them protection and, thus, political survival. They never referred to the rulers of Salé as moriscos, so as to avoid any reference to the fact that they were Muslims; rather, they were *andaluces*. The king's councils debated the topic endlessly, but Philip IV agreed with Medina Sidonia that it was advisable to take Salé, implicitly legitimizing the duke's information gathering and contacts with both the *andaluces* in Salé and the monarchs of Marrakech.

There were moments during the first half of Philip IV's reign when it seemed Salé really would be incorporated, but the truth is that neither a concrete plan for surrender nor a legal formula for its integration into Castile were ever worked out. Medina Sidonia urged the royal councils to make a decision, pointing to the possibility that Moroccan rebels in the interior might topple the moriscos of the alcazaba, which indeed would have posed a serious threat to the Hispanic Monarchy. Every time a *morabito*, the name given to autonomous Moroccan religious leaders who periodically raised troops, rose up, and challenged the Europeans, would attack Salé, Medina Sidonia lost no time in saying that if Salé fell, the threat to the Castilians would be such that even the Indies trade would suffer. In 1637, for example, when a morabito named Muhamad al-Hajj put Salé under siege, Medina Sidonia expressed his fears to Madrid but this time added a twist, which was to back a proposal from a Franciscan friar, Gregorio de San Luis, that Salé be turned into the principal site for ransom operations, replacing Algiers.

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[36] Mikel de Epalza, *Los moriscos antes y después de su expulsión* (Madrid: MAPFRE 1992); Andrés Sánchez Pérez, *Los moriscos de Hornachos, corsarios de Salé* (Badajoz: Diputación Provincial, 1964); George Collin, "Proyecto de tratado entre los moriscos de la alcazaba de Rabat y el Rey de España en 1631," *Hespérides*, no. 42 (1952), 23–24.

[37] AGS Guerra Antigua, leg. 888.

[38] Present-day Rabat comprised two entities: the *medina*, where most people lived; and the *alcazaba*, or Salé, which was fortified, whose inhabitants controlled traffic in and out of the port and effectively governed the whole city.

The attempt to once again draw ransoming into Medina Sidonia's realm of influence seemed to make sense. Indeed, Philip IV had asked the duke that same year to take charge of an expedition of Augustinians who were passing through Sanlúcar on their way to Salé to ransom captives, which was what led to the plan's revival. So Gregorio de San Luis's proposal won the king's initial support, and the king asked the duke to endorse it as well. But the plan at the very least had been inspired by Medina Sidonia himself. While Muhamad al-Hajj attacked Salé,[39] don Gaspar wrote to the fortress town's rulers in the name of Philip IV promising them help, and he took advantage of the occasion to open up a new line of communication with authorities in Salé using Fray Gregorio, who was helping to ransom captives in Fez and Marrakech.[40] The friar's proposal, aside from being similar to previous proposals by the eighth duke, would have significantly added to the duke's capacity for maneuver with the ransoms. In essence, the friar was suggesting that ransoming be moved to the Atlantic side of the Maghrib; in the words of Philip IV, "there will be trade between those kingdoms [Fez and Marrakech] and my borders, which are in need of it, and the fathers of the Gospel will be able to go in and evangelize."[41]

Though the attempt to draw the ransom business toward his zone of influence did not prosper, apparently because the Council of Castile opposed the proposal in order to protect its own jurisdictions, the duke did not stop pressuring Philip IV and Olivares to look at *his* border. The following year, in 1638, he came up with new reasons for insisting on the importance of Salé, the most important of which was England's interest in capturing a North African port near the Strait of Gibraltar from where it could threaten Spain's imperial traffic. Salé was a good option.[42] Along with that threat, he pointed to other reasons that might interest the king: Spain could increase trade with the king of Marrakech focusing on two strategic products: cheap potassium nitrate, essential for manufacturing gunpowder, and wheat, to guard against shortages and price hikes. In exchange, Spain could sell European textiles to Morocco. The Council of State agreed, and the duke of Medina Sidonia moved ahead.[43] In 1639, he

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[39] B.A. Mojuetan, "Legitimacy in a Power State: Moroccan Politics in the Seventeenth Century during the Interregnum," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 13, no. 3 (August 1981), 347–360, 350–352.

[40] AGFCMS, leg. 2.417, 16 February 1937, fol. 66r.

[41] AGFCMS, leg. 2.417, 4 March 1637, fol. 83r.

[42] Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 175ff.

[43] It was Fray Matías de San Francisco, one of the duke's agents in Morocco, who explained these lucrative possibilities to the king in a letter: AGS Estado, leg. 2.668,

received express support from several influential figures in Portugal and Castile for his plans to take Salé.[44]

In 1640, the duke decided to offer the king of Marrakech, with whom he had been in close contact, a sign of his friendship in the form of a good will gesture (*embajada,* which also means embassy) and lavish gifts. The Franciscan prior in Marrakech, Fray Matías de San Francisco, happened to be in Sanlúcar to confirm the duke's patronage of his monastery.[45] According to what Medina Sidonia told the Count of Castilnovo, a Portuguese nobleman and governor of Mazagan, Madrid's failure to reach a decision on the pending African matters additionally led him to send his personal secretary, Juan de Montellano, along with one of his usual agents in North Africa, Francisco Roque, with letters to the king of Marrakech, his prime ministers, and other leading members of his court. The duke said delay could be fatal for the plans under way. In other words, he wanted to ensure that the Moroccans would not get suspicious upon seeing that Fray Matías returned to Marrakech with no positive gesture from Castile regarding their joint plans.[46]

Medina Sidonia made two things clear in his instructions to Montellano: first, the duke wanted the Moroccans to understand that it was he who was responsible for the *embajada* and the presents, that he was not following orders from the king, and that this mission could be the first of many mutual favors. Second, Montellano must not forget that the duke's principal desire was to oversee ransoming, so the secretary must convince Fray Matías that the mission was the best way of achieving that goal. The duke also was hopeful that the king of Marrakech might hand over to him a certain number of captives, which would drawn the attention not only of Philip IV but also of Queen Isabel, who was especially moved by the plight of prisoners. And, finally, though Montellano was not to say anything about this so as not to cause suspicion, the duke told him to listen carefully for any mention of Salé, which was the third objective of the mission, along with trade and captives. The duke was beside himself because Madrid had not responded to a request by the king of Morocco for fifty thousand ducats worth of cloth with which to initiate the

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151r-152v, 28 March 1639. For the Council's and Medina Sidonia's reactions see AGFCMS, leg. 2.418, d. 425 and 449, 1 and 10 July 1639.

[44] Among the figures were Jorge Mascarenhas and Cardenal Borja, the duke's uncle: AGFCMS, leg. 2.418, d. 592, 29 November 1639; and Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 178.

[45] At least since 1637, Fray Matías had worked as one of the duke's informers and agents in Marrakech; AGFCMS, leg. 2.417, letter from the duke, December 1637, fol. 389 r-v.

[46] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, d. 55, 9 February 1640.

exchange, so he asked his secretary to try to give the impression that Philip IV's failure to respond was due to an error in the request that had made it impossible to process it correctly. Meanwhile, Montellano was to continue seeking ways to buy potassium nitrate.[47] The *embajada* to the Moroccan court met with approval by various courtiers there who were especially pleased with the duke's efforts to prevent Salé from falling into the hands of their common enemy, the morabito al-Hajj.[48]

Although not everyone at court in Madrid agreed with Medina Sidonia, by April the king finally allowed the duke to move ahead with his plans to take Salé, either by purchasing it from the king of Marrakech or negotiating with the *andaluces* in the alcazaba. The duke favored both options, and he kept both channels open while at the same time insisting with Philip IV that he provide the necessary funds for bribing Moroccan courtiers in order to make more bearable the discredit that would come once their port passed into the hands of the king of Spain.[49]

It was at this point, in the summer of 1640, when everything seemed to be going Medina Sidonia's way, that news arrived of the serious disturbances in Catalonia. As the weeks passed, it became evident that these were not mere riots or passing complaints but rather the opening of a new battlefront that was extremely dangerous for Spain given France's potential involvement. The general alarm gave Medina Sidonia the opportunity to go a bit further in his efforts to gather up more African responsibilities. For example, he met with an official messenger from the king of Morocco sent to negotiate with Philip IV. As far as we can tell, this possible usurpation of royal jurisdiction was unprecedented; there were no short-term consequences for the duke, though the king did warn him he should not take such liberties in the future.

Until 1640 the duke continued negotiating with the Moroccans as a representative of Philip IV, at least concerning matters of state. But his desire to extend his family's authority, along with the lack of direction on Moroccan affairs from Madrid, were turning the Pérez de Guzmán clan into essential royal executors and advisers regarding all aspects of Atlantic Morocco. A qualitative leap in that direction occurred when *alcaide* Mohamed Nibili arrived in Sanlúcar in fall 1640 as ambassador of the king of Marrakech. Medina Sidonia prevented him from meeting with Philip IV, receiving him himself. The duke's first explanations for this behavior

[47] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, d. 55 and 68, both 9 February 1640.
[48] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, d. 323 and 328, 30 August and 2 September 1640.
[49] AGFCMS, leg. 2.429, d. 161 and 179, 17 and 29 April 1640.

were delivered to various royal ministers under his command in the region. On 21 October, when he gave orders for the Moroccan ambassador's trip home, the duke apparently felt obliged to include all sorts of explanations. He said the main reason he had retained the ambassador was that Philip IV had entrusted him with all negotiations regarding Salé to prevent the fortress "from falling into the *morabito*'s hands," which led Medina Sidonia to deduce that he should preserve good relations with the Moroccan king. He tried to present his actions as being perfectly normal, pointing to his having sent Montellano to meet with the Moroccan king and suggesting that the return visit by the ambassador was mere reciprocation. This was partly true, but it was also true that the ambassador's intention had been to meet with Philip IV. The duke therefore reminded his subordinates that Philip IV was involved in many important matters right then, notably a projected trip to the Catalan front, and that the ambassador's presence in Madrid would have been just a nuisance for the king. And the duke tried to minimize the appearance of usurpation by saying, "we have ordered that, rather than go there [to Madrid], he leave with us his letter and the captives, which will be sent to His Majesty, and that he return from here to Morocco."

The duke attached this long, justificatory preamble to his orders to Juan de Otáñez, master of accounts (*contador general*) and supply commissioner (*proveedor*) for Andalusia, regarding the ambassador's return trip. He instructed Otáñez to transport the envoy in a large *saetía*, a ship used for ceremonial purposes that Philip IV had anchored in the bay of Cádiz. It is worth noting, however, that Otáñez was not the actual recipient of this order; rather, it went to his substitute, Jacinto Carvajal. For years, Otáñez had been very strict about obeying royal orders, causing friction with Medina Sidonia, and Otáñez's presence in Madrid made it all the easier for the duke to exceed his duties with as few bothersome witnesses as possible.[50]

But, at it turned out, Otáñez was in Cádiz, probably having returned earlier than expected, and on 22 October, he replied to the duke's letter. He neither questioned the duke's authority nor its justification, but he did question his decision to pay the expenses of the Moroccan ambassador's stay in Sanlúcar with money allotted for the presidios and fortresses in North Africa. After saying that everything Medina Sidonia did was assuredly in the king's best interest, Otáñez wrote, "Your Excellency

[50] AGS Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, d. 152, 22 October 1640.

knows well … that our hands are tied by the king's order, transmitted to us by the Marquis of Monasterio,[51] to not pay even a messenger from the fortresses, even if His Majesty orders us to do so, without going through the said marquis." Otáñez's solution for the problem of how to pay for the ambassador's return trip was to somehow borrow the money, giving the duke time to tell the king what had happened and let Philip make a decision.[52]

Meanwhile, the duke was getting ready to send another of his people to Marrakech, this time Fray Matías de San Francisco, with money to pay the ransom of more captives. It is likely the duke planned for the friar to make the journey with the ambassador. The duke told the governor of Cádiz, the Duke of Ciudad Real, about the journey and its objective, and the governor promised not only to help out with the friar's trip but to give alms to pay for Fray Matías's rescue operation.[53]

It took Medina Sidonia a full week to get in touch with the king regarding all this. In his *memorial* he justified his actions with the ambassador in Sanlúcar by referring to an order from Philip IV months earlier telling the duke to seek a way of taking Salé. He also minimized the rank of the Moroccan envoy, saying he was just an *alcaide* accompanying a shipment of thirty-two Christian captives, though he admitted that the Moroccan was intending to be formally received by Philip IV. He closely linked the episode to his prior dealings, implying that delivery of the captives somehow compensated for the military expenses he had undergone to keep Salé independent. In short, the duke had saved Philip IV a great deal of trouble and money; he himself had spent 13,500 *reales*, and he asked to be reimbursed.[54]

We do not know if Medina Sidonia's audacity caused worry or unease in Madrid in the following weeks. But no one was unaware that he had never announced the ambassador's arrival to Madrid, and surely he had known of it several weeks before. In any case, the revolt of Portugal just a month and a half later caused Philip IV's government to put everything else aside. It was not until March 1642 that the king would once again be interested in the Maghrib, this time not because he wanted to cement relations but

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[51] Octavio Centurión, marquis of Monasterio, was a Genovese financier, and in this context was working as a royal business agent (*factor*) to provision Andalusia.

[52] AGS Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, d. 149, Cádiz, 22 October 1640.

[53] AGS Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, d. 152, Cádiz, 24 October 1640.

[54] The duke sent letters from the king of Marrakech and the captives along with his memorial: AGFCMS leg. 2.419, d. 389, 29 October 1640.

because he feared a Moroccan invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in favor of the rebels in Portugal or the sedition of Medina Sidonia.[55]

Medina Sidonia's involvement in African affairs formed part of the investigation once the plot against Philip IV was discovered in summer 1641, and the retention of the Moroccan envoy was of particular interest to his accusers, including the Council of State, which reviewed all the correspondence and documentation regarding the duke's and his father's dealings with Morocco in the past. Those dealings had augmented the prestige of the ducal *señorío*, which had become a reference point for relations between the Hispanic Monarchy and the infidel. Obviously, it was not usual for a noble house to act as an agent in foreign affairs, though certain houses with transnational interests did serve the monarchy, mediating between Castile and other territories.[56] The difference in this case is that the Medina Sidonia exercised direct military command over troops at the front—in the Castilian presidios in Africa—and had their own considerable economic interests there and operated a network of informers and agents at the Moroccan courts. Their range of action in the Maghrib was truly exceptional, and in 1641 these possibilities appear to have led them into rebellious temptation right when the Spanish Hapsburg monarchy was at its weakest. At any rate, it is clear that the African component of Medina Sidonia's power was one of the pieces of the puzzle that led the ninth duke to believe he was in a position to stage a coup in Andalusia.

2.3 *Defeat and more War (1639–1640)*

The already critical situation of Philip IV's monarchy grew only worse in the six years following France's 1635 declaration of war against Spain. Intense efforts were made to increase revenue, pushing the tax system to its absolute limits; in the words of J.H. Elliott, Olivares was driven to apply a "nearly obsessive" fiscal policy.[57] In 1640, this already dire state of affairs took another step toward disaster with the Catalan and Portuguese

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[55] Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 183–188.

[56] For example, the cases included in Ángeles Redondo Álamo and Bartolomé Yun Casalilla, "Bem visto tinha … Entre Lisboa y Capodimonte: La aristocracia castellana en la perspective transnational (ss. XVI_XVII)," in Bartolomé Yun Casalilla, ed. *Las redes del Imperio: Élites sociales en la articulación de la Monarquía Hispánica, 1492–1714*, (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2008), 39–64.

[57] John Elliott, "Una sociedad no revolucionaria: Castilla en la década de 1640," in John Elliott, Rosario Villari, et al., *1640: la monarquía hispánica en crisis*, (Barcelona: Crítica, 1992), 103–122.

rebellions, and Castile's taxation capacity began to literally fall apart.[58] Military recruitment and levies were constant and ever more frequent.[59] Squeezing taxes and men out of society, which seriously harmed the Castilian economy in general, was possible only because Spain's territories throughout Europe were essentially living under a state of siege.[60] Though the Spanish Hapsburg monarchy survived, owing both to authoritarian rule and negotiation, the general sense in Castile was that Philip IV's government was oppressive like never before, a notion not all that distant from tyranny, as many anti-Olivares pamphlets were arguing at the time.[61]

In February 1639, after yet another request by the king to his vassals for funds with which to pay for the urgent and expanding wars, Medina Sidonia, who was expected to pay twenty-four thousand ducats from his vassals and his own treasury, told Philip IV that "with the continual difficulties on my estate, such as levies and contributions for the war and other services for Your Majesty, our need is such that I am not able to serve you with such an amount."[62] Though this formula, in which nobles would explain to the king that their own financial problems were such that they could not help the king, was practically a ritual in those years, it is true that Medina Sidonia's finances had suffered enormously since France's declaration of war and even more so because of his own expenses, as we have seen.[63]

One of the methods used by Philip IV to wrest soldiers from society was aimed specifically at the nobility: the so-called colonels levy began in

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[58] Gelabert, *La bolsa*, 103–121, 284–316, 329; Juan E. Gelabert, *Castilla convulsa (1631–1632)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2001), 131–178.

[59] Thompson, *Guerra y decadencia*; José Contreras Gay, "El siglo XVII y su importancia en el cambio de los sistemas de reclutamiento durante el Antiguo Régimen," *Studia Histórica. Historia Moderna*, no. 14 (1996), 141–154; MacKay, *Los límites*; Francisco Andujar Castillo, "Empresarios de la guerra y asentistas de soldados en el siglo XVII," in David García Hernán and Davide Maffi, ed., *Guerra y sociedad en la monarquía hispánica: política, estrategia y cultura en la Europa Moderna (1500–1700)*, 2 vols. (Madrid: MAPFRE, 2006), vol. 2, 375–394.

[60] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda,* 49–59; Alberto Marcos Martín, "¿Fue la fiscalidad regia un factor de crisis en la Castilla del siglo XVII?" in Geoffrey Parker, ed. *La crisis*, 173–253, esp. 250–253; Beatriz Cárceles de Gea, *Fraude y desobediencia fiscal en Castilla, 1621–1700* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León), 2000.

[61] I.A.A. Thompson, "La movilización de los recursos nacionales y la tesis de Downing. La guerra y el estado en España a mediados del siglo XVII," in Enrique Martínez Ruiz and Magdalena de Pazzis Pi Corrales, ed. *España y Suecia en la época del Barroco (1600–1660)* (Madrid: Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1998), 279–306.

[62] AGFCMS, leg. 2.418, doc. 120, 21 February 1639.

[63] A seventeenth-century inventory of mortgages taken out by Medina Sidonia on his estate lists 21,165 ducats for royal service in 1636–1641 alone. AGFCMS, leg. 994, nd.

1632, lapsed, and was reactivated in 1635. Other levies were aimed at the entire kingdom, such as the one percent levy, approved by the Cortes in 1639.[64] In Andalusia there were many smaller and more specific levies, for example to pay for ships, supply troops, or finance the Castilian presidios in North Africa. In late 1639, after receiving yet another order to raise and pay for a levy, Medina Sidonia wrote to his agent in Madrid asking him to find out how other noblemen were responding to the request, the idea being to avoid the service without making his refusal all that noticeable to the king. A little more than a month later, Medina Sidonia said he was unable to comply with the request, owing yet again to his incessant expenses and efforts on behalf of the king.[65]

On another front, since the loss of Benavides's fleet to the Dutch in the Bay of Matanzas (Cuba) in 1628, Philip IV's government had endeavored to limit the enemy's presence in the Caribbean. To that end, warships had to be sent to America from the fleet theoretically meant for the European wars. The plan had been successful up to the mid-1630s, but war with France in 1635 meant the king once again had to shift naval resources back to Europe. The large fleet commanded by Antonio de Oquendo in 1639, part of the push to impose Spanish rule over the North Sea, included twenty-seven ships from the Indies fleet.

Though the historian Carla Rahn Phillips was correct in noting the necessary balance between Spain's naval strategy in the Indies and in Europe, she only briefly addressed the impact of Oquendo's defeat at the Battle of the Downs on Spain's control over America.[66] The strategic unity of the two fronts, the possibility of fighting the Dutch and the French simultaneously in the Indies and in Europe, was so obvious by the mid-seventeenth century that no one could help but see that Spain's defeat in the English Channel was going to have fatal consequences for Castilian control over the Indies and trade. The king himself had linked security of Spanish ports, the Indies trade, and Oquendo's mission when he pressured Andalusian authorities to finance the North Sea navy, saying "provisioning the navy is one of the most important safeguards" for America.[67] Months after the disaster at the Downs, the Seville city council wrote a letter to Medina Sidonia expressing sorrow over the impact on the city of

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[64] On these levies, see MacKay, *Los límites*, 53–72 and 119–124; on the *coronelías* and seigneurial levies in Andalusia, see Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 130–155.

[65] AGFCMS, leg. 2.418, doc. 624, 12 December 1639, and leg. 2.419, doc. 23, 22 January 1640.

[66] Phillips, *Seis galeones*, 273–329.

[67] AGFCMS, leg. 2.418, doc. 443, Philip IV to Medina Sidonia, 9 July 1639.

the battle deaths. The council also mourned the great expense it had undergone to finance the campaign: "[Seville] and its neighbors are so immediately affected by the loss of men and money given that most of the men on the ships are militia soldiers from this city."[68]

We know now that the navy sent to the North Sea under Oquendo's command marked the Hispanic Monarchy's last attempt to wrest control from the Northern European powers. Even at the time, the Downs disaster was understood to have been a wasted sacrifice of men, money, and supplies, the cause of irreparable damage to trade as a result of the king having ordered merchant ships to be used as warships, and the end of any short-term possibility of maritime domination. All was uncertain, with the monarchy somewhere between absolute commercial dependence on foreigners and isolation; in any case, the possibilities of trans-Atlantic Castilian trade had been seriously reduced. The future looked grim, ripe for what José Alcalá-Zamora called centrifugal tendencies.[69]

The war in Catalonia meant the sacrifices would only increase; news from the front intensified worries throughout Castile and discouraged the royal ministers in charge of military supplies and levies in Andalusia. Juan de Otáñez, a conscientious royal servant, wrote to Medina Sidonia in July 1640 about rumors that the Dutch were going to attack Panama; they appeared to be false, but one had to be on alert being that "in our unfortunate state, one must fear the worst." Even worse, he said, Catalonia was a calamity "that is going very badly," words that were symptomatic of widespread and growing fatalism.[70] Indeed, by June 1640 the Catalan rebellion was upsetting the entire Castilian military system, making it work harder, forcing it to halt and then put down the newest threat. Already in 1637, Medina Sidonia had been complaining to Philip IV and Olivares about the resistance he was encountering in his district to military levies and that the forcible recruits were then shut up in the Cádiz presidio without beds or sustenance. They were suffering miserably, he said, "and the job of soldier has become hateful instead of honored and desirable."[71]

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[68] AGS Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, doc. 63, 24 July 1640.

[69] José Alcalá-Zamora, "La política exterior del reinado," in José Alcalá-Zamora, ed., *Felipe IV. El hombre y el reinado* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2005), 190; by the same author, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte (1618–1639): La última ofensiva europea de los Asturias madrileños* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales, 2001) [1975], 466.

[70] AGS Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, doc. 5, Cádiz, 4 July 1640.

[71] AGFCMS, leg. 2.417, 69r, 15 February 1637.

In late July 1640 he wrote to the king again complaining that the latest recruitment orders were impossible to carry out because the towns were refusing to give up their men. According to the duke, they were giving three excuses for not complying: they distrusted the levy because another levy a few months earlier had taken their militia forces outside Andalusia, which theoretically was prohibited; they were worried about the demographic problems that were making themselves felt throughout the kingdom because of the wars; and they said the young men of their towns were busy with the harvest, which was only half over. In addition, Medina Sidonia said, Andalusia was afraid France was going to attack the coast, which justified their wanting to keep their men at home for self-defense.[72] The first and last arguments are significant for understanding the situation in which Philip IV found himself as he sought troops to put down the Catalan revolt. The towns said the crown was improperly using their militia forces, which had been established for regional self-defense and had never taken the place of ordinary recruits until recently. It is possible that excuse really was put forward by the towns, but one cannot forget that it was the dukes of Medina Sidonia who since 1580 had pressured to revive and sustain that ancient but efficient defensive force. And the duke's own explanation for the towns' resistance—the presence of the French navy—also was a way of reminding the king that he could not leave Cádiz and the rest of the coast defenseless. But the king's reply made things even worse for the duke; he ordered that "just this once" a judge (*oidor*) from the Granada chancery court should take charge of the levy on Medina Sidonia's seigneurial estate and on that of other nobles as well.[73] This would signify a huge loss of face for Medina Sidonia and a precedent that could end up depriving him of important military jurisdictions, in addition to being a strict warning from the king to obey his orders without giving excuses.

The royal government, facing resistance to voluntary military levies and to its calls to the nobility to join the fighting, decided to once again announce that the king himself would go to the front, in this case that of the war against France, which was in Catalonia.[74] The importance of this potential royal visit to the front, beyond serving to cheer on the war effort, was that the nobility and hidalgos had the obligation to accompany him.

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[72] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, doc. 262, 28 July 1640.

[73] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, doc. 309, 21 August 1640.

[74] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, docs. 282, 285, 286, 295, 303, and 314, all August 1640; Elliott, *El conde-duque*, 602–618.

The situation for the grandees (*grandes*), the highest-ranking lords of vassals, was a bit different; since 1625 their traditional obligation to serve the king with a given number of armed men (the larger the estate, the more the men) had been replaced by a financial obligation called the *lanzas*, a tax in commutation of their obligation to serve with mounted lancers. Medina Sidonia was one of three nobles who had to give the most: eighty *lanzas*. But 1639–1640 saw what Domínguez Ortiz called a "nobility strike," in which virtually none of the lords obeyed the order even though the peremptory royal orders, announced in cities by the royal governors (*corregidores*), stated that non-compliant nobles would cease being noble. Nowhere was there less compliance than in Andalusia. In Jerez de la Frontera, for example, everyone called upon to participate in the levy of the military orders resisted, from the corregidor to the entire nobility, including Medina Sidonia, who was an intermediate military authority in the matter.[75]

Noblemen always tried to minimize their contribution and maximize the benefit when negotiating with the crown, so one cannot believe everything they said. As a contrast, in August 1640 the corregidor of Jerez de la Frontera told Medina Sidonia about several successful levies in the city in recent months. The fact that indeed there were several simultaneous levies at this point, some paid for by the city and others by aristocrats, among them Medina Sidonia himself and the Duke of Medinaceli,[76] shows that there were still men willing to fight if they got paid and that the great lords preferred to pay to raise men in royal jurisdictions (*realengo*) than provide men from their own estates. So when Medina Sidonia received notification of the king's plans to visit the front, he sent his regrets, saying he would be unable to accompany the monarch owing to the many military obligations he had, which the king had ordered him to carry out on his own border. Only after Olivares pressured him did Medina Sidonia offer to provide five hundred infantrymen, at his own expense.[77] The gesture served to undercut the argument of the war's demographic impact, though it was clear that never before had it been so difficult to raise soldiers in Andalusia.

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[75] Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, "La movilización de la nobleza castellana en 1640," *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español,* vol. 25 (1955), 799–823; Agustín Jiménez Moreno, "Poder central y poderes locales: El cumplimiento de la convocatoria de los cabelleros de hábito del año 1640 en Jerez de la Frontera," in Jesús Bravo Caro and Siro Villas Tinoco, ed., *Tradición* versus *innovación en la España Moderna* (Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 2009), vol. 2, 705–728; on Medina Sidonia's attitude, see AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, doc. 72, 12 February 1640.

[76] AGS Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, doc. 122, Jerez, 23 August 1640.

[77] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, docs. 403 and 422, 6 and 17 November 1640.

All the while he was offering resources to the crown, as we have seen, Medina Sidonia at the same time used the monarchy's dire straits as a way of taking on more decision-making power regarding the army, the militias, and military spending in his district, areas that he and his father before him had spent two decades trying to control. To a large extent, it was the general nature of Madrid's orders that allowed the duke to act in this manner, similar (though prior) to the behavior of municipal intermediaries on whom the monarchy relied for war equipment and whom Thompson identified as the true beneficiaries of the war effort in Castile.[78]

Two elements in particular bear mentioning. First, the duke had increasing leeway over the crown's defense spending in Andalusia despite the fact that for the previous few months the Marquis de Monasterio, the king's *factor* for military supplies, theoretically held absolute sway.[79] Certain individuals, among them Martín de Arrese, whom the duke had appointed as bookkeeper and coordinator for Andalusia provisioning, grew closer to the duke when they (defying the king's orders) moved from Cádiz to Sanlúcar, enabling the duke to exercise closer supervision and ensure that Arrese approved the documents the duke ordered him to. Shiploads of supplies passed through the port of Sanlúcar, and with Arrese right there, the ducal capital could openly benefit from the lucrative war economy. Thus some of the duke's orders that in another context might have appeared perfectly normal, such as specifying that certain military supply shipments be accounted for,[80] took on new meaning being that they occurred in Sanlúcar, out of sight of any other royal ministers concerned with military provisions such as the corresponding *veedor* or *contador*. The control Medina Sidonia exercised over these officials gave him great freedom in deciding where and how basic elements such gunpowder or sailors' hardtack (*bizcocho*) should be distributed. This basic level of control was in addition to his vast military jurisdictions as captain general of the coast, which was particularly important in times of sharp budgetary restrictions throughout the monarchy.[81]

The second element, the second way in which the duke augmented his military authority as the Catalan revolt got under way, was to ceaselessly

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[78] Thompson, "La movilización," 294–298.

[79] On previous conflicts in this regard, Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 288.

[80] For one such account, see AGS Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, doc. 41, 16 July 1640, and *passim*.

[81] As one example of these usual powers, the governor of Cádiz could not approve wages paid to troops in the city's castles and fortresses without prior approval from the duke: AGS Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, doc. 45, 17 July 1640.

remind Madrid, using all possible means at his disposal, of the dangers facing Andalusia. That is the key to understanding his reaction to an apparently unimportant naval battle in July 1640 off the place of Arenas Gordas, very near Sanlúcar. Medina Sidonia seized the opportunity to wield his powers as if the region were being invaded. He summoned the top military officers—the Duke of Ciudad Real (who was governor of Cádiz), don Jerónimo de Sandoval (captain general of the galleon fleet), and the Duke of Maqueda y Nájera (captain general of the ocean navy)—to consider how they could defend Cádiz if the French tried to attack.[82] He ordered the rope makers (*cordoneros*) of Seville to begin making ropes for the artillery, and he put all the militias under his command on a state of alert.[83] The disproportionate nature of his response can be explained only if it is understood as a reminder to the court of Andalusia's war needs. Indeed, the gathering of generals sent off a *memorial* to Madrid warning of their excruciating lack of funds.[84]

And then, word arrived of the rebellion in Portugal. In the juridical context of a composite monarchy such as this one, such movements and secessions were signs of the decomposition of a political body that had been based on the Hapsburgs' dynastic rights. Fear and obsession circulated through Philip IV's government in the face of what Francisco Manuel de Melo called "the epilepsy of republics and disobedience of princes."[85] The epilepsy seemed to be everywhere, even in Castile, though Castilian disobedience should be seen more as an awareness of coming hardships than an explicit wish to destroy what was left of the Hispanic Monarchy. It therefore seems logical to think that those sectors outside the court who were actively loyal to Philip IV were more inclined in early 1641 to renegotiate political ties and loyalties. In other words, the weakness of the whole might open the door to a new decision-making division of labor.

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According to one interpretation based on classical Marxism, economic and social discontent in the seventeenth century evolved into political opposition to the Hapsburg government.[86] The debate is ongoing, but in

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[82] AGS, Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, docs. 74, 77, 78, 80, 82 and 83, all from late 1 July 1640.

[83] He also instructed the militias to follow specific itineraries; AGS Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, docs. 86, 95, and 110, from late July and 3 and 30 August 1640.

[84] On the lack of funds with which to pay the Cádiz militia, see AGS Varios-Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, docs. 98 and 116, 8 and 28 August 1640.

[85] Melo to Olivares, 26 October 1640, cited in Elliott, *El conde-duque*, 578.

[86] José Antonio Maravall, *La oposición política bajo los Austrias* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1974), 228.

recent years the class analysis behind such an explanation for the mid-century revolts has been seriously questioned. Regarding what Mousnier and Elliott called preconditions for the revolution, which according to Elliott existed both in Castile and in the territories that in fact rebelled, one must remember, from a strictly political perspective, that loyalty to the crown could vary according to the times, as has been shown with the French Fronde.[87] The king's declining legitimacy as a patron,[88] coinciding with a desperate military panorama, together were conducive to wavering loyalty, particularly as pressures on vassals, including noble vassals, reached an extreme level.[89]

Serving the king had lost much of its cachet; by 1640, one got little in return.[90] The affronts suffered by the nobility were many, from the authoritarian measures taken after the crisis of 1629–1632 to the direct assault on their incomes. But it was not just the nobility who felt offended. Felipe Ruiz Martín was surprised that the Castilian urban elites did not rise up around 1640; though the exact scope of fiscal pressure is a matter for debate, recent work, differentiating by sector, is showing that throughout Castile the pressure was very great indeed. Widespread complaints that people were suffering were not mere rhetorical.[91]

There are indications that the frustration and opposition triggered by the latest demands were particularly sharp in Andalusia. We cannot know the exact differences between fiscal pressure in Andalusia and other

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[87] John H. Elliott, "Revueltas en la Monarquía española," in J.W. Smit, Lawrence Stone, et al, *Revoluciones y rebeliones de la Europa Moderna,* Alianza, 1989 [1970], 123–144; John H. Elliott, Rosario Villari, Antonio Manuel Hespanha, Bruno Anatra. et al., *1640. La Monarquía Hispánica en crisis,* Crítica, Barcelona, 1991, 102–122; Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *Alteraciones andaluzas* (Madrid: Narcea, 1973), 15–45; Geoffrey R.R. Treasure, *Seventeenth Century France* (London, 1981) [1966], 215–227.

[88] Carlos Álvarez Nogal has written about Philip IV's extreme difficulties in early 1641 when the previous year's silver shipment did not arrive: *El crédito de la Monarquía Hispánica en el reinado de Felipe IV* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1997), 100–103.

[89] According to Thompson, the crown's suits to recover sales taxes that had been farmed out were an indication of the pressure being put on the nobility; the years 1630–1634 and 1640–1645 were particularly intense. See "El reinado", 470.

[90] Philips, *Seis galeones*, 305.

[91] Felipe Ruiz Martín, *Las finanzas de la Monarquía Hispánica en tiempos de Felipe IV* (*1621–1665*) (Madrid: RAH, 1990), 22; Juan Eloy Gelabert, "El impacto de la guerra en el fiscalismo en Castilla," in *La España del Conde Duque de Olivares,* John Elliott and Angel García Saenz, ed. (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1990), 557–573. Alberto Marcos Martín published a well-argued piece emphasizing the steep fiscal pressure in Castile during the mid-seventeenth century: "¿Fue la fiscalidad…?". The contrary view, in José Ignacio Andrés Ucendo, "Hacienda, economía y estabilidad social en la Castilla del siglo XVII," in Francisco Javier Guillamón Álvarez and José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez, ed. *Lo conflictivo y lo consensual en Castilla. Sociedad y poder político, 1521–1715* (Murcia, 2001), 57–78.

regions, but we do know that Philip IV was driven by the notion that Andalusia was rich and could contribute more. The king acquired this idea after his trip there in 1624, and he often returned to the theme when he heard excuses from aristocrats or city councils saying they could not provide him with funds. Therefore the Indies trade and the various commercial routes that it comprised also were subject to pressure; the *medias anatas de juros*, or levies on income of offices and bonds, are one of the clearest examples of taxes indirectly affecting the Indies trade. In addition, petitions for *donativos* and one-percent levies on certain incomes had a negative impact on trade, which already was suffering because of supply restrictions resulting from the crown's prohibition against trading with a variety of European countries with which Spain was in war[92]

Medina Sidonia tried to reduce the damage caused to his estate by the Catalan revolt, both in terms of men and money. For years Philip IV had drawn on the Medina Sidonia for his armies, which allowed the noble house to emphasize its traditional role as defender of the *patria*. By December 1640, don Gaspar still held control over an infinite number of resources in Andalusia while the crown was showing signs of having exhausted its authority, which became obvious with the disobedience over the 1640 military levies. The Portuguese rebellion led by the Duke of Braganza on 1 December 1640 was a brutal addition to this list of misfortunes.

It might appear paradoxical that Medina Sidonia, despite his position of power, nonetheless chose sedition. He had been agile in taking advantage of whatever opportunities he could to extend his influence as the crown lost its own leverage in Andalusia. Nonetheless, the duke and his advisers knew that this state of affairs existed only because of the dire situation in which the crown found itself, and the duke therefore insisted to his agent in Madrid that he ask the royal councils to make permanent the temporary and partial augmentations of his authority.[93] At the same time, regardless of how broad his military authority had become, it could not compensate for the complicated financial state of his noble house or the increasingly authoritarian actions of Philip IV's government as the

[92] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda*, 151–313, deals with Castile in general but also specifically with Andalusia in places. See also Gelabert, *La bolsa*, 99–118; Gelabert, *Castilla convulsa*, 131–178; and Ildefonso Pulido Bueno, *Consumo y finalidad en el reino de Sevilla: el servicio de millones en el siglo XVII* (Seville 1984).

[93] The duke specifically asked that his extraordinary capacity to appoint commanders of the Indies fleet be made permanent: "That is not the least important of my authorities nor one that I have not wanted." AGFCMS, 3.170, 25 January 1640.

crown absorbed one military defeat after another. The fact is that unhappiness with the crown went back to the last days of the eighth duke, who, in his will, had explained that he could not leave his heirs much personal property because of the "authority and splendor with which I carried out my obligations, placing them at the service of His Majesty."[94] Clearly, the old duke was suggesting that the king owed him; the duke had served him well and had received little in return. Things had only gotten worse during the reign of his son, the ninth duke, who nonetheless had few options. That would change in 1641.

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In the early 1640s, the duke of Medina Sidonia asked one of his aides to draw up a list, similar to the one his father had had, of all the ways in which don Gaspar had served the crown since he inherited his estate. At the end of the list there was a brief letter, like a *memorial*, summarizing all his efforts, especially military recruitment; his towns had suffered a sharp decline in population as a result of sending troops to Italy, Flanders, and Catalonia, he said. The duke himself had paid for much of this, and he pointed particularly to the effort to put down the Évora revolt of 1638. In addition, there was a huge volume of other royal matters, and not a day had gone by since he became duke without his being asked to perform some action or another: "His Excellency has had more missions and operations to perform in one year than his father and grandfather had in many years." And the problem was not merely quantitative:

> The duke has taken such care and trouble in serving His Majesty in all cases and never hesitated. Day and night he signed papers, gave orders, and followed orders with unheard of attentiveness. He never signed papers or orders without first reading them, amending or adjusting them himself, so that His Majesty's intentions and desires would best be realized.[95]

The unexpected outcome of all this service to the king came in the summer of 1641, when the duke was named as the principal guilty party in the crime of *lèse majesté*.

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[94] AGFCMS, leg. 1.000.

[95] AGFCMS, leg. 994, nd, "Relación sucinta de los continuados servicios…"

PART TWO

THE END OF MYTHICAL FIDELITY: THE CONSPIRACY

CHAPTER THREE

THE CONSPIRACY (1640–1642)

3.1 *Portugal: Casting Off the Ties of Obedience* (*December 1640–July 1641*)

> I understand that in various places in Portugal there is agitation. If this is confirmed, it is advisable to take the necessary precautions and seek a remedy. I therefore am advising you of this and ordering you to do everything you can in my service, as quickly and conscientiously as you are accustomed to doing.

Thus Philip IV sent the duke of Medina Sidonia news of the second uprising on the Iberian Peninsula in barely six months; first Catalonia, and now Portugal. He furthermore told the duke to receive any Portuguese gentlemen who might wish to pass over from Portugal to Castile. A few days later, the wheat trade with Portugal's towns in Africa was halted pending news of their loyalty to the Hapsburg crown.[1] But Philip IV's message was not, in fact, the first news the duke received about events in the neighboring kingdom; he had gotten word in a message from Badajoz dated 5 December 1640. On the 10th, the marquis of Ayamonte also told the duke about what was happening in Portugal. Therefore it is not surprising that as early as 15 December, Medina Sidonia, apparently on his own initiative, sent Captain Pedro de Céspedes to the Azores Islands and Madeira to investigate, as carefully as possible, the attitude of the people there toward the Portuguese rebellion.[2]

According to some sources at court, Olivares and Philip IV reacted to news of the uprising with complete confusion. Yet the coup cannot have come as a surprise.[3] In July 1640, the governor of the Algarve, Manrique Correa, had asked Medina Sidonia to allow Correa's son, Martín, currently serving under the duke in Mazagán (Morocco), to return home, as the governor feared the Catalan example might be followed in the

[1] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, docs. 446 and 452, 10 and 19 December 1640.

[2] AGS, Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, docs. 172, 173, and 176; 5, 10, and 15 December 1640.

[3] Fernando J. Bouza, "¿Primero de diciembre de 1640: una revolución desprevenida?" *Manuscripts* 9 (1991), 205–25; Rafael Valladares, *Epistolario*, 91–92.

Algarve.[4] For the past several years, in fact, people—among them Medina Sidonia—had been warning the Madrid government about Portugal's highly unstable political situation.[5]

Philip IV's first plan to topple the new Portuguese regime was to divide the long Luso-Castilian border into military districts, each of which would be under the command of the highest-ranking nobleman on the Castilian side of the border.[6] Medina Sidonia, accordingly, was given responsibility for the Algarve. As his headquarters he chose (as was the case in 1580 and 1637) the town of Ayamonte, where he was to establish and preside over a junta to take charge of the situation.[7] Ayamonte was the residence of a close relative of the duke, the marquis of Ayamonte. The two noblemen, who were now going to share military responsibilities on the border, had known each other well since they were young. Sixteen years earlier, they had been entrusted together with representing the eighth duke of Medina Sidonia, who was ill, at the lavish and sumptuous reception the duke hosted for the royal court in the forest of Doñana, near Sanlúcar.

Among the duke's duties in 1640 was to help protect the Sagres and San Vicente fortresses, which were expected to remain loyal to the Hapsburgs. In contrast to the catastrophic reality, the rhetoric of the crown brimmed with baffling optimism; in the king's words, "in very short time, God willing, I will overcome all my enemies with a powerful army, a task made

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[4] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, 10r, 5 July 1640. On Martín Correa in Mazagán, see Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 126.

[5] On anti-Castilian sentiment in Portugal, see Pedro Cardim, "Los portugueses frente a la Monarquía Hispánica," in *La Monarquía de las naciones. Patria, nación y naturaleza en la monarquía de España* (Madrid: Fundación Carlos de Amberes, 2004), 355–83.

[6] Elliott, *El conde-duque*, 591–92; Rafael Valladares, *La guerra olvidada: Ciudad Rodrigo y su comarca durante la Restauración de Portugal (1640–1668)* (Ciudad Rodrigo: Centro de Estudios Mirobrigenses, 1988).

[7] The Ayamonte junta had six members: Antonio Isasi Idiáquez (a member of the Alcántara Order and the Council of War); Leonardo de Soria Camargo (general inspector); Juan de Carvajal (a member of the Council of Orders); Fernando Altamirano (a royal judge [*alcalde de Corte*] in charge of the military levies in the district); Urbán de Ahumada (lieutenant commander); and Andrés de Ribera (lieutenant commander). The junta's secretary was Matías González de Medrano, the king's secretary in the Council of War. The marquis of Ayamonte was in charge of weaponry. See Enrique Arroyo Berrones, "El progatonismo de Ayamonte en la sublevación de Portugal," in *III Jornadas de Historia de Ayamonte* (Ayamonte, 1998), 187–213, 209. The remaining districts were organized as follows: Extremadura was in the hands of the marquis of Villanueva del Fresno and the marquis of Priego (the duke consort of Feria); the duke of Alba was allowed to choose which of his estates in which to serve; the León border was given to the counts of Alba de Liste and Oñate and the duke of Béjar; Galicia was the responsibility of the marquis of Tarazona (the estates of the count of Monterrey), and the marquis of Valparaíso took the Miño border.

easier by the fact that all the Catalans are pleading with me to forgive them and allow them to return to my favor."[8]

Military operations in Lower Andalusia multiplied in December as the crown tried to quash the Portuguese coup. The duke of Maqueda, captain general of the Ocean Navy, was ordered to take transport ships with infantry to Lisbon to defend loyal castles. Though the king was aware of the difficulties and knew the rebels might have galley ships in the Tagus estuary, he insisted on the importance and urgency of this operation. Maqueda had considerable leeway and was permitted to act as he saw best; to speed things up, he was told to correspond with Medina Sidonia so the two men could help each other, an unlikely prospect given their history.[9]

Nonetheless, one of the first steps Medina Sidonia took after hearing news of Portugal was to contact Maqueda simply to exchange views, as was typical between military officers in such a situation. Don Gaspar said he was unable to go personally to Cádiz, where Maqueda was stationed, as he did not want to cause gossip (*hacer ruido*), but he sent an aide, don Miguel Páez de la Cadena, with precise instructions.[10] Medina Sidonia proposed, first, that the two men meet in any port town in the Bay of Cadiz. Next, according to the instructions, once it was clear that don Gaspar wished to collaborate with Maqueda in obeying the king's orders, Páez must lay out the difficulties inherent in this obedience. Above all, Maqueda must understand that there was no money, no supplies, and no way of obtaining them. Yet, Medina Sidonia said, "though you must consider this, it must not get in the way of execution." Páez furthermore was to collect all the information he could in Cádiz about the Portuguese situation in case there was anything new. Finally, he must find out about the ships being prepared for the journey to Portugal. Maqueda replied that he was willing to meet Medina Sidonia in El Puerto de Santa María.[11] According to Medina Sidonia's confession to Philip IV a few months later, when he admitted having received a letter from Ayamonte when he (the duke) was in El Puerto, it would appear the meeting with Maqueda did

[8] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, docs. 447, 453, 454, 455, 466, and 468; 12, 19, and 22 December 1641.

[9] Medina Sidonia and Maqueda had a jurisdictional conflict in 1639 which appears to have gotten physical; AGFCMS, leg. 2.418, docs. 329 and 344, 28 May and 6 June 1639.

[10] Miguel Páez de la Cadena by 1640 had spent years serving the house of Medina Sidonia, starting with the seventh duke. When Gaspar became duke, Páez gave up his positions but assumed a new post with the duke's guards. His service in the Algarve won him membership in the Calatrava Order; see Juan Pedro Valázquez Gaztelu, *Catálogo de todas las personas ilustres* (Sanlúcar de Barrameda: Ayuntamiento, 1996 [1760]), 370–71.

[11] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, docs. 448, 449, and 45; 15 (2) and 17 December 1640.

take place, though I have not found any reference to what transpired there.

Nearly at the same time, on 20 December, Medina Sidonia also contacted the two royal ministers in charge of military expenses in Andalusia, Juan de Otáñez and Martín de Arrese, to tell them, given the succession of disturbances rocking the monarchy, that from then on he, as captain general, would be in charge of all royal funds in the region.[12] Similarly, on 1 January he appointed his personal secretary, Juan de Montellano, to be chief accountant of the Ayamonte army.[13] Thus don Gaspar used the emergency to push a bit closer toward his longtime aspiration of extending control over royal military funds in his district. As we will see, this was only the first of many steps that cast a pall of corruption over his military command.

More generally, Braganza's seizure of the Portuguese throne meant Luisa de Guzmán, who was Medina Sidonia's sister and Olivares's niece, was now queen of Portugal. That was why Olivares wrote to Medina Sidonia on 18 December lamenting "the blood we share with the man responsible for that evil," i.e. the Portuguese revolt. The count-duke said he trusted God would punish the traitor, "and I am certain that Your Excellency will make every effort in this matter given your obligation and how close the matter is to you." He added a hasty postscript in his own hand: "Sir, I hope history will speak of Your Excellency as I hope [illegible] bathing us in their treacherous blood."[14] Three days later, the *valido* went even further in his rhetoric, in a letter dated 21 December that I have not seen, reminding Medina Sidonia that his ducal house's loyalty lay with the king.

The duke replied to this last letter with a spirited defense of his loyalty to Philip IV. Remarking on the count-duke's apparent doubts regarding his diligence and love for His Majesty, he expressed shock: "I nearly died seeing that Your Excellency's account of my service on so many occasions has come to this. Perhaps Your Excellency, like myself, is justly irritated at recent events," he allowed, or perhaps he himself had been excessively brusque in his communication. "But I believe my actions are entirely satisfactory," he wrote. To make his case, the duke enclosed what was probably a list of services rendered since he inherited the house in 1636 until November 1640, stressing how much the house had spent to cover the

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12 AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, doc. 178, 20 December 1640.
13 AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, doc. 2, Ayamonte, 1 January 1640.
14 AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, doc. 467, 18 December 1640.

crown's liabilities.[15] He declared on his honor as Olivares's servant and nephew that there was no more dedicated servant of the king than he. If Olivares were to examine the duke's actions he would find that Medina Sidonia "does not deserve the disfavor and distrust with which you treat me." If he had the resources he needed, he said, his actions would prove what a good vassal he was and what a worthy relative of Olivares. And, he added, a lineage such as his, which in the past had sacrificed sons to the king's service, would find little out of the ordinary in condemning a "brother-in-law who has so offended us" to burn at the stake.[16] "When I ask for money it is not for my own campaigns, because the dukes of Medina Sidonia never do that … but rather because one cannot venture out to war without funds sufficient to ensure survival. I will go to Ayamonte … and there I hope Your Excellency will respect me by sending me what I need [i.e. men and weapons] so that the Portuguese will not doubt my authority."[17] These last two sentences are the key to Medina Sidonia's attitude at this point. As a prerequisite for his actions, he would ask the crown for resources. In other words, he would not use his own resources in this new war, either because he had run out or because the duke did not want to continue going into debt without compensation. A letter to Medina Sidonia signed by one of the king's ministers in Madrid on 1 January 1641 reflected the Madrid public's positive reaction to the duke's promise to kill or capture Braganza.[18] So the duke's affirmations of loyalty apparently had circulated at court with Olivares's knowledge (at a minimum), given that the latter was the letter's recipient as well as the principal beneficiary of the theory that Medina Sidonia was anxious to avenge his family's honor. But the question of the economic resources authorizing Medina Sidonia's mission would continue to be crucial throughout the following months.

For the time being, the duke's relationship to the court consisted of an exchange of letters, orders from Madrid that the duke replied to

[15] AGFCMS, leg. 994 has a document called "Brief list of the continual services for His Majesty King Philip IV … by the duke, don Gaspar Alonso Pérez de Guzmán el Bueno, from March 20, 1636, when he inherited the Medina Sidonia estates, to the end of 1640," which presumably is a draft of the list sent to Madrid.

[16] In referring to the blood shed by the lineage, the duke was referring to the line's founder, Alonso Pérez de Guzmán el Bueno, who let the Muslim beseigers of Tarifa kill his eldest son rather than surrender the fort to them.

[17] BNE mss. 8.180, fol. 9v–10r. This letter is followed by a summary of the traditional interpretation of the conspiracy, including the roles played by Father Nicolás de Velasco and Sánchez Márquez.

[18] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 1, 1 January 1641.

from Sanlúcar more or less directly. On 23 December 1640, for example, Philip IV seriously warned the duke for the first time that he must show more haste. He recriminated Medina Sidonia for not having immediately gone to the border once he learned that Braganza's uprising had succeeded in the Algarve. The king also complained about the contradictions between the marquis of Ayamonte, who claimed not to know what was going on in Portugal, and the duke, even though the duke and the marquis relied on the same sources. Once the revolt was under way, the king said, haste was required in order to frighten those Portuguese who were still undecided. As for the duke's excuse that he lacked soldiers, it was a poor excuse, being that the governor (*asistente*) of Seville had offered to supply troops immediately. And even without the troops from Seville, the king went on, Medina Sidonia should have made use of the militia, "which would have inspired those parts of Portugal that continue to obey me." Nor was the lack of funds a good excuse, according to the king: "In situations such as this one, there are no excuses, and it should not be difficult to find what you need in the city until the shipment arrives." Acting on his own initiative in financial matters was exactly what the duke was doing, though with rather different aims than the king had in mind. In short, Philip IV said, in order to gain time, Medina Sidonia should obey his orders while the court notified the governor of the Chancillery of Granada to send reinforcements.[19] From then on, the torrent of orders regarding military preparations grew more intense; the measures included a levy of sailors, arms purchases, repairs of old weapons in storehouses, and even buying hunting weapons and distributing them along the borders.[20]

It is hard to determine how sincere Philip IV was when he assured Medina Sidonia that the diversion the duke was to carry out in the Algarve was the principal action along the border. Not until the end of January 1641 was a general appointed to lead the Extremadura army, meaning Medina Sidonia's army had somewhat of a head start.[21] The general chosen was the count of Monterrey, Olivares's brother-in-law, which humiliated several high-ranking noblemen, including the duke of Alba, who thought they should have been appointed to lead the Extremadura border that traditionally was the most important in Luso-Castilian conflicts. As a result, local authorities were not as involved in war preparations as they

[19] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, doc. 469, 23 December 1640.
[20] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, docs. 470, 471, 473 and 474; 24 and 26 (3) December 1640.
[21] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79–2, doc. 34, 20 January 1641.

might have been. So Medina Sidonia's reticence regarding the war with Portugal was most certainly not an isolated case.[22]

The king had a strategic dilemma in deciding which of the two fronts was more important, Catalonia or Portugal. The combination of domestic warfare and foreign invasion characterizing the Catalan revolt had no antecedent in the history of Hapsburg Spain. Therefore, historians traditionally have believed that the king had no doubts and always favored the Catalan front, given that the presence of the French constituted a direct threat to the heart of the Hispanic Monarchy. If that were true, then the strategy toward Portugal would have been simply to contain the rebels.[23] But even admitting that the French threat was more severe, the crown's pressure on Medina Sidonia and other noblemen with estates along the border indicates the king believed he could fight simultaneously on two fronts, given Braganza's weak position at this point. While the royal army concentrated on Catalonia, the forces of the nobility could harass or perhaps even capture key points in Portugal so as to, at the very least, destabilize the Braganza "tyrant." Philip IV took this option so seriously that for several months he ceased requesting that men from Andalusia be transferred to Catalonia, a crucial development considering that Andalusia for decades had been the main source of Castilian troops and that levies had increased in the months between the Catalan and the Portuguese revolts. Meanwhile, in Madrid there were rumors that the strategy this time would be different than in 1580, when the duke of Alba had marched straight to Lisbon from Badajoz, on the Spanish border.[24] This time, it was said, the southern front, i.e. the army of Medina Sidonia, would be the priority. It was even said that Philip IV himself would command the troops, once again to encourage the support of the nobility.[25]

But in the first days of 1641, there was a change of tone in the correspondence between Medina Sidonia and Madrid. Tension diminished. The shift may have come about as the duke's levies were showing results, though it is very difficult to establish the degree to which he complied

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[22] Valladares, *La guerra olvidada*, 24.

[23] Valladares, *La rebelión*, 31–52; Raquel Camarero Pascual, "La guerra de recuperación de Cataluña y la necesidad de establecer prioridades en la Monarquía Hispánica (1640–1643)," in David García Hernán and Davide Maffi, eds. *Guerra y sociedad en la monarquía hispánica: política, estrategia y cultura en la Europa Moderna (1500–1700)* (Madrid: MAPFRE, 2006), vol. 1, 323–57.

[24] Rafael Valladares, *La conquista de Lisboa: Violencia militar y comunidad política en Portugal (1578–1583)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2008).

[25] This theory was advanced by the Florentine ambassador in Madrid, Ottavio Pucci; ASF, pezzo 4.965, 5 and 13 (2) February 1641.

with his orders in terms of ready soldiers.[26] The duke also appeared outwardly more willing to assist the king. It may have been that the government chose to accommodate the duke, who clearly was unenthusiastic about the Portuguese campaign, in the hope he could be convinced of the advantages of being actively loyal to the Hapsburg crown.

But given that speed was of the essence in the attacks on southern Portugal, the duke was asked to inform the crown as quickly as possible regarding his plans for the Algarve. This latest royal order permitted Medina Sidonia to take possession of weapons in Seville and take all necessary measures "without moving people in a manner disproportionate to your aims and the time allotted for them, given the great harm that would come about otherwise, both in the province and to my [the king's] finances."[27] Despite official optimism, scarce resources obliged the crown to carefully measure each move, which enabled the duke to better camouflage his recalcitrance.

Already in early 1641 Philip IV approved several of the duke's actions, including having used four thousand ducats from his *millones* revenue to aid Terceira Island, in the Azores. But the king refused to allow him to take revenue from the tax known as *humos*, which by then had been abolished.[28] Thus we can see that Medina Sidonia's powers were broad during that second month of military preparations, which was also reflected in the Ayamonte war junta. For example, in a summary of pending business signed by Philip IV, the king emphasized the duke's proposal that the count of Salvatierra and others who would assist Medina Sidonia in his military tasks be given posts. The king added a request that the duke tell him how matters had been handled in 1638. So the king was letting the duke decide which jobs the noblemen and other authorities under his command should perform, trusting in his judgment to draw up a battle plan.[29]

But the news from Ayamonte was not encouraging. On 19 January 1641 the duke's courier who transmitted orders to the Portuguese authorities in the name of Philip IV, Francisco Nieto, testified before a notary regarding

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[26] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, doc. 180, nd, is a draft by the duke of a letter to local authorities; the reply from the *corregidor* of Jerez regarding troop shipments to Cadiz is in ibid, doc. 186, 26 December 1640. Medina Sidonia's messengers carried his orders to all corners of Andalusia, to places as distant as Granada, los Velez, and Baza; AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, docs. 6 to 12, 2 to 8 January 1641.

[27] AGFCMS, leg. 2.419, doc. 478, 29 December 1640.

[28] AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, docs. 4 and 4bis, 3 January (2) 1641.

[29] AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, doc. 23, 17 January 1641.

his own arrest in Tavira, troop placements in Portugal, and the general happiness throughout the kingdom of Portugal after João IV's self-proclamation as king. Some of the marquis of Ayamonte's vassals coming over from Portugal delivered similar news, describing the euphoria among the people, who prayed for God to protect Braganza. They also recounted the well-known anecdote of a miracle in which the image of the crucified Christ being carried in a Lisbon procession gave his blessing for the coup. It was also said that Braganza would abolish taxes, and there was talk of the execution in Lisbon of Vasconcelos and the few remaining Hapsburg loyalists who tried to protect him.[30]

On 7 January 1641 the Algarve border was ordered closed. On the 14th it was announced that those who wished to pirate the Portuguese would be given license (*licencia de corso*) to do so, and candidates were assured they could keep their entire booty.[31] But orders like these could clash with the duke's efforts, backed by the king, to reach out to Portuguese authorities in border towns so as to regain their obedience. The duke was pessimistic about the latest initiatives, though he promised he would do everything in his power to carry them out.[32]

In mid-January there was an assessment of measures taken so far regarding the Algarve border. Medina Sidonia sent a list of troops drawn up by Leonardo de Soria Camargo, the army inspector in Ayamonte, according to which there were 185 men from the Seville detachments and one hundred of the duke's cavalry. On general strategy, Medina Sidonia opined that it would be difficult to obtain anything through negotiations. Explaining the absence of results on the military side, he pointed to the lack of supplies, ammunition, and weapons. In his opinion, in order to undertake measures that were creditable (*con reputación*), it was essential to consolidate and maintain whatever they captured; in other words, there was no strategic utility in harassing border towns, and therefore he would not do it. So he and the *asistente* of Seville decided to postpone the militia call-up so as not to spend funds needlessly. The king replied that he had already authorized payment of 30,000 ducats and several thousand surplus *fanegas* of wheat and barley from the Catalan army, and he therefore instructed Medina Sidonia to figure out his route into Portugal and prepare the necessary artillery. He also sent a military commander, Urbán de Ahumada, said to be an expert negotiator, to serve the duke as governor

30 AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, docs. 1, 2, and 3, nd (2), 19 January 1641.
31 AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, doc. 21, 14 January 1641.
32 AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, docs. 24 and 26, 18 and 21 January 1641.

of the San Gian castle in Lisbon.[33] The king insisted again that the duke create some sort of "diversion" along the border, and he estimated that Lower Andalusia could supply 8,000 infantry at a cost of 27,000 *escudos* per month. He was expecting imminent payment of 54,000 *escudos*, which would cover two months.[34]

Nonetheless, contradicting these plans, starting on 6 February the duke began dismissing the few troops he commanded, sending them home until further notice, and the demobilization continued over the following months.[35] In a further indication of the duke's inertia, his mobilization order to the noblemen and hidalgos of Sanlúcar, by far the largest and most militarized town of his *señorío*, was signed only in late February 1641.[36] It is not hard to understand the underlying tension between Medina Sidonia and the royal government at this time.

The tension extended to intelligence-gathering in southern Portugal, an area requiring particular attention by the duke, even more so than military intervention. In order to destabilize support for Braganza, the duke had to be able to make commitments in Philip's name. Such extraordinary power was not entirely new; in fact, in 1638, when Medina Sidonia helped put down the riots in Évora, he was given blank orders with the king's signature. In March 1641 he received permission to use the leftover blank signed orders from 1638, though he was asked to tell the government how many he had used the first time and how many remained, specifying the royal council jurisdiction of each one. Medina Sidonia replied imme diately, saying thirty-nine were endorsed by Contreras, secretary of the Council of War, and eighty-eight by the duke of Villahermosa and 223 by Diego Suárez, the president and secretary, respectively, of the Council of

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[33] In 1617, Urbán de Ahumada requested the Council of War to accelerate his promotion, given that he had served more than six years in the Naples and Sicily galleys and distinguished himself in combat; the council agreed, noting that he was "well born." AGS Guerra Antigua, leg. 817, 19 December 1617. For his swearing-in to the duke, see AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, doc. 185, 25 December 1640. For the order of payment by the royal mint in Seville against the 30,000 ducats, see AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 41, 27 January 1641.

[34] AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, docs. 27 and 28, 31 January and 6 February 1641. Soria Camargo's list of troops is in AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 32, 18 January 1641.

[35] On that date, the duke ordered the captain of a company in El Coronil, Juan de Auñón Noguerol, to return to the town and reassemble the troops, being that his company had only twenty-seven soldiers. AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 49, 6 February 1641. Weeks later, the duke's seigneurial vassals were demobilized with the excuse that they could not neglect their businesses for so long: AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 91, 23 May 1641.

[36] AHMSB, leg. 4.716, fols. 27r-v., 23 February 1641.

Portugal. However he regretted he was unable to be specific about the royal orders he had used during the Évora riots, he said, as that information was locked in his files in Sanlúcar. The king insisted, and on 11 April the duke wrote from Ayamonte offering more information, though he did not send copies of the documents, fearing the roads were unsafe. Instead, he requested that someone be sent to Ayamonte to pick them up personally.[37]

Given the very awkward position of the crown at this time, the matter of the king's signature was significant. The situation vis-à-vis the duke in early 1641 was not the same as during the Évora riots, when he had the king's full trust, though nor had he been stripped of this extraordinary power. Yet, though Medina Sidonia was not the only military authority collecting information and negotiating in Portugal with the king's approval, no other authority appears to have had the same capacity to make commitments in the king's name.[38] According to later denunciations, the duke furthermore took advantage of the ongoing secret negotiations, and the allegedly closed border between Algarve and Lower Andalusia was in fact not hermetically closed, as Madrid wished, particularly in the area of Medina Sidonia's own border towns. In April, he was ordered to enforce the general prohibition against traffic across the border.

In his effort to strangle the Portuguese rebellion, Philip IV took three additional measures: First, he ordered Martín Carlos de Mencos, an admiral, to steer friendly foreign cargo ships away from the Portuguese coast and toward Castilian ports, and he told Mencos that Medina Sidonia had orders to attack and that the two should coordinate their plans.[39] Second, the king ordered that ships in Flanders be outfitted to pirate along the Portuguese coast.[40] And, third, in May he ordered the duke to put cavalry along the border to ensure that during the wheat harvest those Portuguese who had planted in Castile could not cross over to harvest.[41]

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[37] AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, docs. 36, 37, 43 and 60; 8, 15, and 25 March and 11 April 1641.

[38] Philip IV was pleased at the lavish reception that Medina Sidonia offered the count of Taroca and Juan Suárez de Alarcón, two Portuguese lords who passed over to Castile and "set an example for the Portuguese nobility to come and show their loyalty." AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, doc. 33, 23 February 1641. Don Gaspar told Madrid he was involved with an intelligence-gathering effort by the marquis of Villanueva del Fresno on the Extremadura border; AGFCMS leg. 2.420, doc. 42, 25 March 1641.

[39] AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, docs.65, 66, and 68; 18 and 21 (2) April 1641.

[40] AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, doc. 93, 19 June 1641.

[41] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, doc. 79, 20 May 1641.

One of the disputes between Medina Sidonia and Philip IV concerned the Royal Treasury. In February the king asked the general supply commissioner for Andalusia, Juan de Otáñez, to let him know how the allotments from the royal agent (*factor*), the marquis of Monasterio, were being distributed. The king said he did not understand how the presidios of Larache and Mamora were so poorly equipped, given that Monasterio himself had told him he had authorized payments. The crown was especially perplexed because the king had allowed Medina Sidonia to take 12,000 ducats from the Sanlúcar *millones* for that purpose. It is true that the contradictory information reaching Madrid in part was caused by the administrative and financial chaos resulting from so many troubles. The king himself told Medina Sidonia that the grandees and titled nobility in charge of the Portuguese border, along with those overseeing military levies, were blocking funds owed to suppliers and bankers and instead using them for military expenses. The practice was so widespread there were fears of a general financial collapse. Trying desperately to avoid that prospect, the king ordered that the embargos cease and that military expenses be paid for by the treasury.[42]

But these measures could not solve a deeper problem, in which Medina Sidonia himself was a participant. In late June, the duke ordered his governor in Sanlúcar to take all the royal funds in the city and use them for various purposes under his jurisdiction. Specifically, he referred to 26,000 *reales* apparently in the hands of Captain Baltasar Benítez for the purpose of purchasing ships. Anticipating resistance from royal ministers, the duke ordered his governor to ensure, "firmly and immediately," that he got paid. Once he got the money, Medina Sidonia gave it to Martín de Arrese, who was in charge of military expenditures in Andalusia, to use it as he needed. A little over a month later, Medina Sidonia repeated the operation, this time ordering two royal ministers to hand over three thousand ducats apiece for supplies in the Larache and Mamora presidios.[43]

In June 1641 the duke asked Arrese to meet with him in Sanlúcar, and the latter stayed until at least early September. According to a letter from Juan de Otáñez to the duke, Arrese's presence in Sanlúcar prevented Arrese from being in Cadiz to receive shipments on behalf of the king and make payments. Otáñez also reminded the duke that he (the duke) had ordered him to "stay out of this matter," and he added, "I have tried to obey; I never said anything more about it, nor did I investigate further."

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42 AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, docs. 31 and 44, 11 February and 25 March 1641.

43 AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, docs. 112 and 125, 28 June and 4 July 1641.

Thus Otáñez let Medina Sidonia know that he was aware of the problems resulting from the alteration of normal royal treasury procedures.[44] Otáñez's name, it is worth pointing out, appears in testimony regarding the conspiracy; one of the principal accusers said the plotters had identified Otáñez as a "traitor" because he "has angered our duke with the papers he took from Sanlúcar about supplies for Larache and Mamora."[45] According to that source, Medina Sidonia wished to take revenge on Otáñez for having communicated with royal councils in Madrid regarding the duke's handling of royal funds.

Similarly, the duke's involvement with weapons and gunpowder raised suspicions of fraud. In April, thanks to a shipment of saltpeter from Safi, Morocco, manufacturers in Sanlúcar made 35,000 kilos of high-quality gunpowder, and they demanded what appeared to the artillery inspector to be excessive payment. The duke had entrusted the president of his seigneurial council with the job of testing the gunpowder, and the manufacturers worked out of mills leased to the duke himself. Along with a likely connection between the saltpeter shipment and the Moroccan emissary in October 1640, Medina Sidonia clearly had multiple connections with this facet of the military effort. This was true also with bread and biscuit, essential supplies for the troops.[46] So the murky nature of these affairs, which thus far had had absolutely no military consequences, added a specter of embezzlement to the conspiracy, which did nothing to improve relations between the duke and the royal court. And in March 1641, one month past the deadline set by the king to commence military operations in Portugal, the tension grew worse.

Thus it is safe to say that plans to take military action along the Algarve border were not simply a rhetorical exercise aimed at extracting more resources out of Andalusia but rather a serious option. In early April the duke was empowered to act in the king's stead in accepting the loyalty of conquered Portuguese towns and was even allowed to pardon them. At the same time, Medina Sidonia could offer grants and rewards to those towns "that were quick to take measures conducive to the pacification of that kingdom." Such exceptional powers were made even more

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[44] Otáñez was remarkably blunt with the duke, revealing his open distrust of Medina Sidonia's handling of royal funds; by that point, however, don Gaspar had been urgently summoned to Madrid. AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 141, 2 September 1641.

[45] BNE mss. 722, 88–108, May 1643.

[46] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 82, 28 April 1641. Regarding the duke's possible involvement in the profitable wheat trade to Portugal, see AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, *passim*.

exceptional a few days later when he was permitted to free the towns in question from "all the tributes they paid before the troubles."[47] Given that if Medina Sidonia had ever actually invaded the Algarve, he would have had a great deal to say regarding punishments and rewards, it seems that Philip IV's tactic was to make participation in the invasion of Portugal very tempting for the duke, at least in terms of reputation and prestige. Despite sharp suspicions in Madrid over the duke's failure to act, the king and Olivares had no alternative but to keep moving forward and continue trusting that the duke would get involved sooner or later. The alternative, to remove the duke and create a vacuum of authority in Andalusia, would simply have encouraged the Portuguese rebels.

The nobility played a crucial role in Philip IV's plans for Portugal, not only in the high command. In early April, the duke was ordered to announce that hidalgos who joined his army would be exempt from enrolling in Catalonia. Medina Sidonia also was asked again to provide detailed information about his troops and his plans for attack.[48] On 9 April, Gonzalo de la Serna, in charge of gathering the royal cavalry in Lower Andalusia, was ordered to give the duke six hundred cavalry, adding to the four hundred the duke was to raise at his own expense.[49] But a few days later, Philip IV once again emphasized the maritime nature of the Portuguese operations, shifting troops from the Ayamonte army to the navy.[50]

According to the Florentine ambassador in Madrid, the definitive decision to emphasize the Catalan front and postpone the Portuguese campaign was made in early April. He said the sudden switch, and the king's apparent rejection of plans to invade Portugal, surprised the court.[51] The reason for the change in strategy lay in the passive attitude of the high noblemen along the border upon whom the entire plan depended. However the ambassador said that in May once again there was talk in the royal councils of incursions into Portugal, though by then the focus was on Extremadura instead of on Medina Sidonia's lands.[52]

If the Florentine ambassador's interpretation was correct and the king in April (at least temporarily) rejected plans to invade the Algarve, that was not necessarily positive news for the Andalusian lords and hidalgos. On the contrary, from then on the crown would be pushing for support for

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47 AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, docs. 54, 55, and 64, 6 (2) and 16 April 1641.
48 AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, doc. 51, 3 April 1641.
49 AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, doc. 57, 9 April 1641.
50 AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, docs. 71, 76, and 77, 16 April 1641.
51 "Here nothing more is said about Portugal;" ASF pezzo 4.965, 10 April 1641.
52 ASF pezzo 4.966, *passim*.

the Catalan front, leaving Lower Andalusia even less protected. The marquis of Ayamonte expressed this view in a letter to Medina Sidonia around this time, commenting on news that Turkish ships were lurking nearby in the Atlantic: "People are needed on the Portuguese borders, and Your Excellency should try to avoid any further damage," he wrote.[53] His desire to dedicate troops and resources to Andalusian self-defense rather than to the king's priorities so obviously echoed Medina Sidonia's actions regarding military levies that one could almost question the truth of the well-timed warning about the Turks. Indeed, the argument by town councils and lords that Andalusia was being left defenseless was the only justification for not obeying royal orders for the establishment of the Ayamonte army. In April the king himself told Medina Sidonia that some seigneurial lords had told their towns not to send men to the presidios in Africa, violating the king's orders with the excuse that they needed to protect their estates.[54]

As the Florentine ambassador had said, in May the king reviewed the possibilities for military action in southern Portugal. He bluntly told Medina Sidonia that if the duke could do anything, no matter how modest, he should do it now; otherwise there was no sense in wasting resources on an inactive front.[55] "The principal basis of this war is negotiation, because it will not be easy to act only with force," the king wrote. His words show that at this point, Philip IV and Olivares believed they could follow the strategy taken with the Évora riots and in 1580, combining military threats with negotiation. Though we do not have the duke's reply, and there were no significant changes in military preparations in Ayamonte, it is likely the duke favored military action so he could get the reinforcements he needed.[56]

Given this apparent change in attitude by the duke, in late May the government believed the matter of how the Ayamonte army would be raised had been settled. The duke was informed that weapons had arrived from Galicia, along with gunpowder and bullets, and that each branch of the army now had commanding officers: Francisco de Agüero for the artillery,

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[53] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, docs. 72 and 73, Lepe, 9 April 1641.

[54] AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, docs. 59 and 70, 11, and 26 April 1641.

[55] AGFCMS, leg. 2.420, docs. 72, 73, 76, 79, and 81; 2, 5, 20 and 22 May and 22 June 1641.

[56] Serna was ordered to give 1,000 horses to Medina Sidonia; regarding the infantry, which the duke said should add up to 10,000 men, the duke was asked to send detailed information so that Fernando Altamirano would know what remained to be done. Philip IV said mobilization of the artillery train had been ordered, and that nothing remained except for the orders to be obeyed. AGFCMS leg. 2.420, doc. 77, 11 May 1641.

Vicente de Lamarra for the cavalry, and Urbán de Ahumada, Francisco de Torres Castejón, and Francisco Ripoll for the three infantry divisions, or *tercios*. The duke received blank patents for the remaining *tercios* so he could choose his officers, and he was told he would receive more money, though with the 30,000 escudos already sent, plus the artillery train, he would have sufficient reserves to buy wheat and deal with any contingencies that might arise.[57]

But the new military surge only led to more talk about the militia and the number of soldiers who could be raised in the area, which led to a war of statistics by early summer; the Ayamonte junta spoke of 2,500 men while Madrid spoke of 7,000, to which 1,000 local and outside horsemen were added.[58] As a means of comparison, according to a Sanlúcar militia roll in June 1641 there were 2,687 men enrolled in Sanlúcar alone, of whom 1,622 were arquebusiers, 242 were musketeers, and the rest had no weapons.[59] So the four hundred men that Sanlúcar was asked to contribute to the Ayamonte army amounted to one-seventh its militia.

But in a sharp contrast to all these preparations, Medina Sidonia was ordered on 9 June to immediately hand over whatever infantry Maqueda needed to go to sea, the king having decided that the most urgent priority was to send ships to help relieve the siege of Tarragona, in Catalonia. Maqueda received orders in late June to set sail accompanied by the ships commanded by Martín Carlos de Mencos for Catalonia, where they would serve all summer.[60] These developments lead us to believe that May was when Olivares suffered his last disappointment regarding Portuguese military intervention, at least as concerned the dubious collaboration of Medina Sidonia.[61]

On 21 June the duke put in writing his decision to leave Ayamonte and go to Sanlúcar to supervise the levies and troops.[62] He sent Francisco

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[57] Per diem costs were calculated on the basis of other royal armies; it was calculated that the 1,500 men in each *tercio* would cost 2,550 *reales* per day and the officers 15,180 *reales*. AGFCMS leg. 2.420, docs. 83 and 95, 28 May and 22 June 1641.

[58] AGFCMS leg. 2.420, docs. 103 and 115, 28 June and 18 August 1641.

[59] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 105, 23 June 1641.

[60] AGFCMS leg. 2.420, docs. 88, 89, 92, 94, 97, and 100; 9 (2), 18, 19, 24, and 26 June 1641.

[61] Despite this, there were still serious plans for capturing key points along the border, particularly in Extremadura. In December 1641, Juan de Garay told the king and Olivares that he had a war plan with two options, the more serious of which involved capturing Elvas with an army of 15,000 men plus 3,000 cavalry. The other option was to occupy all towns to the east of the Guadiana River, using the river as a natural line of defense. Philip IV was very interested, perhaps thinking for the last time of maintaining the offensive simultaneously on both fronts; AGS Guerra Antigua, leg. 1.378, 29 December 1641.

[62] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, docs. 114 and 115, 2 and 3 July 1641.

Lorenzo Losada, a royal treasury official, to Madrid to deal personally with the king. According to his instructions, Losada should explain to Philip IV the strategic importance to the monarchy of Cadiz and the entire coast, emphasizing how dangerous it would be to leave the city bereft of troops. He also should remind the king of the large numbers of supplies, weapons, and soldiers that had been taken from the Cadiz forts. He also was told to find out for the duke where certain rumors had arisen in Madrid, the details of which are unclear though they might have been linked to Medina Sidonia's dealings with royal finances, perhaps triggered by Otáñez's complaints mentioned above. In any case, Losada's mission was a clear attempt by Medina Sidonia to justify the time he had wasted on the border.[63] And given Losada's royal treasury post, it might also have been an attempt to get rid of him in Andalusia, as he could not be trusted.

As the summer wore on, activities along the Algarve front diminished. In August the king wrote to Medina Sidonia indicating he knew don Gaspar had gone from Ayamonte to Sanlúcar.[64] On 19 August the duke was urgently summoned to Madrid, and on the 25th he received news of the victory of the royal fleet in Tarragona, despite which he was reminded to continue assisting with naval preparations.[65]

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In his treatise *The Dial of Princes*, Fray Antonio de Guevara wrote that war could undermine a prince's sovereignty. While war prevailed, he wrote, "lords will make more efforts to please their vassals than vassals will make efforts to please kings, because vassals will help them against their enemies and lend them money."[66] It is likely that at critical moments, the king's dependence on Lower Andalusia's military resources in general, and on Medina Sidonia's authority in particular, led him to rely on the duke to lead operations against the rebels in the Algarve. As we have seen, it would have been impossible to separate don Gaspar from the military effort in December 1640 because there was no a priori justification for such a lack of confidence. The fact that he was related to the new queen of

63 AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 124, 24 July 1641.

64 AGFCMS leg. 2.420, docs. 102, 107, 108, and 109, 28 June, 1 and 8 July, and 5 August 1641; the duke's decision to go to Sanlúcar is in AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 104, Ayamonte, 21 June 1641.

65 AGFCMS leg. 2.420, doc. 119, 25 August 1641.

66 Antonio de Guevara, *Relox de príncipes* (Madrid: ABL-CONFRES, 1994 [1529]), book 3, ch. 12, 749.

Portugal was insufficient cause, among other reasons because Olivares shared those ties.[67]

But Medina Sidonia's desultory response to the Portuguese uprising, in contrast to his immediate response after the Évora troubles in 1637–1638, is perhaps the best example of what Domínguez Ortiz called the noble strike (*huelga de nobles*).[68] What had changed since the earlier disturbances? In addition to increasing demands from the crown, there was the fatal failure of the Indies treasure fleet to sail, which led to monetary measures causing further discontent, particularly around Seville. The confluence of adverse circumstances was putting Castilians, as Domínguez Ortiz put it, "at the limits of their loyalty."[69] Taxes in Castile were almost double those in Portugal at a time when certain sectors, such as commerce, were feeling the impact of the widening war.[70] It was difficult to find any nation that could legally trade with Castile, and the few merchants who did come to Andalusia, as Medina Sidonia complained, often saw their ships embargoed by the authorities and then refitted for military service in the royal navy. But the worst part was that all these efforts were just leading to more defeats. The fact that Lower Andalusia would not rebel until a few years later, the period that Domínguez Ortiz called the *alteraciones andaluzas*, does not mean there was no tension earlier. In fact, the crown repeatedly sent Luis de Haro to Andalusia starting in 1641 to calm the troubled waters.[71]

In his history of the reign of Philip IV, Matías de Novoa accused Medina Sidonia of having halted dispatch of a powerful navy against Lisbon in the early weeks after the Portuguese coup. He further insidiously insinuated that it was don Gaspar who had denounced the counter-plot against Braganza, which cost the lives of those involved.[72] The result, according to Novoa, was that Philip IV lost the initiative as well as the kingdom of Portugal and its empire.[73] Medina Sidonia's perfunctory response to the

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[67] Valladares, *La rebelión*, 39.

[68] Domínguez Ortiz, "La movilización," *passim*.

[69] Ephemeral efforts such as the hearth tax planned in early 1641 or forcible loans that were interpreted as attacks on privilege caused considerable resistance; Gelabert, *Castilla convulsa*, 182–86. On the Indies treasure see Álvarez Nogal, *El crédito de la Monarquía*, 264–72.

[70] Antonio Manuel Hespanha, "Portugal y la política de Olivares: Ensayo de análisis estructural," in *Revueltas y revoluciones en la Historia* (Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 1990), 59–81, 76.

[71] Domínguez Ortiz, *Alteraciones andaluzas*.

[72] Mafalda de Noronha Wagner, *A casa de Vila-Real e a conspiração de 1641 contra D. João IV* (Lisbon: Colibrí, 2003).

[73] Matías de Novoa, *Historia de Felipe IV* (Madrid: CODOIN), vol. 80, 467–69.

crown's demands starting in December 1640 is clear from the narrative thus far, and it had various causes. His seigneurial commercial interests placed him in opposition to those (including some *arbitristas*) whose concerns over the balance of payments made them believe that commerce with northern Europe harmed the Castilian economy.[74] After years of economic efforts on behalf of the crown, the duke (and other important lords[75]) believed he was not being recompensed as he deserved, and the string of defeats and general deterioration meant compensation would not arrive any time soon. To add to that, since the 1630s the crown had gotten its way domestically by enforcing its authority in imperious ways it was unable to exhibit abroad.

But in 1641, Medina Sidonia was not accused of passivity, embezzlement, or incapacity, but rather of having conspired against his king. In the last years of the king's reign, a satirical verse said, "A kingdom having revolted, others imitated it, taking the example to its logical consequences."[76] Had the rebellious contagion reached the very heart of the Catholic Monarchy?

3.2 *Conspiracy, Denunciation, and Pardon* (*August 1641–May 1642*)

Until August 1641, there was nothing unusual about Medina Sidonia's or Ayamonte's behavior, at least as far as Olivares and the king could see. Philip IV and his chief adviser were not panicking, though they were frustrated and resentful as criticism and resistance continued spreading among the nobility. And meanwhile, not content with disobeying orders regarding the Portuguese rebellion, the duke and the marquis took things one step further, entering into direct contact with the king's enemies to seek help for the incipient coup. These plans became more concrete in early summer.

The outline of the conspiracy at that point can be summarized as follows:

1. June 1640-January 1641. From the start of the revolt of the Catalans until the defeat of the Spanish forces in Monjuic, near Barcelona, the

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[74] Jonathan Israel, *La República holandesa y el mundo hispánico* (*1606–1661*) (Madrid: Nerea, 1997) [Oxford 1982], 63.

[75] For the duke of Alba in fall 1641, see AGS Guerra Antigua, leg. 1.378, 14 and 24 October 1641; Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 152.

[76] Antonio de Solís (attr.), "Sátira del gobierno de Felipe IV, rey de España, sobre el valimiento del conde-duque de Olivares y don Luis de Haro," BNE mss. 18.202, 4v.

Duke of Medina Sidonia and the Marquis of Ayamonte met to discuss their discontent and frustration.

2. January 1641-August 1641. The December 1640 uprising in Portugal helped the cause of sedition but made it more difficult to continue helping Philip IV. Thus both Medina Sidonia and Ayamonte began plotting to turn the situation in Andalusia in their favor. As Medina Sidonia's refusal to put down the Portuguese helped the rebels prosper, he solidified his plans, and by spring 1641 the Andalusian conspiracy was headquartered in Lisbon. There, the duke's agents met with representatives of the Netherlands and France, which were supposed to send a naval force to Andalusia to decisively tip the balance in favor of the conspirators.
3. In mid-August 1641, with rumors perilously circulating in Madrid regarding Medina Sidonia's disloyalty to Olivares and the king, Portugal's *dom* João IV and the admiral of the French navy decided not to wait for the arrival of the Dutch ships and instead left for Cádiz. At the same time, seditious pamphlets circulated in Andalusia.
4. But the French naval force, accompanied by Portuguese vessels, arrived only in the second week of September, by which time the duke already was on his way to Madrid.

From here on, this story will be divided into three sections. The first will address the plot's design and its unveiling from August 1641 to 1643, along with Medina Sidonia's and Olivares's efforts to deny rumors about the duke's disloyalty. Next,we will go over the various options weighed and taken by the duke and the marquis, according to informers. And third, we will turn to the king's punishment of Medina Sidonia, especially after the fall of Olivares.

1. *The Discovery of the Plot*

In July 1641, alarming rumors about the Duke of Medina Sidonia began emerging from the gossip mills of Philip IV's court. The most insistent of the stories apparently referred to the duke's flagrant refusal to obey orders in connection with his mission to the Portuguese border, angering the government, which as a result was unable to take action against the Portuguese rebellion. In August, Philip IV and Olivares began receiving reports regarding a certain conspiracy being hatched in Andalusia with the complicity or open participation of Medina Sidonia. In addition to the confessions of Medina Sidonia and Ayamonte themselves, there are five other sources, all of whom leaked news of the plan; two were in

Portugal, two in Andalusia, and one in the Netherlands. Their stories, put together with the rest of the sources available, are as follows.

Informer 1: The first warning came in early August in disturbing messages sent from The Hague by a Portuguese man named Manuel Botelo de Sosa, who sent them to Madrid through an adviser to the Cardinal-Infante, Miguel de Salamanca, who also was very close to Olivares. It is interesting to note that Salamanca, though he usually worked out of Flanders, already had carried out duties for the count-duke regarding Portugal such as finding out the Duke of Braganza's attitude toward the Évora uprising.[77] In his message, Botelo warned of the dangerous situation in Andalusia, saying that the person in charge of that territory's security, Medina Sidonia, was himself a major part of the problem. Though Salamanca cast doubt on the report, given that Botelo was Portuguese, still he warned Olivares that the situation was serious.[78]

Informer 2: On 16 August, Clara Gonzaga de Valdés, who said she was the cousin of Leonardo de Soria Camargo, inspector (*veedor*) of the army of Ayamonte, gave a letter to Antonio Isasi, a royal minister who also served in Ayamonte. The aim was to alert Madrid and thwart a conspiracy that she attributed to the Duke of Braganza. Her principal concern was the fact that several days earlier, large numbers of infantry and cavalry had gathered on the Portuguese side of the Guadiana River, in the town of Castromarín. According to Gonzaga, the point of this gathering was to take Ayamonte and capture the weapons stored there. To achieve this goal, the Portuguese were counting on the small number of soldiers in Ayamonte, so the writer urged that the forces be increased.[79] The very fact that such a message got through without passing through the military authorities of the Ayamonte army was itself an implicit denunciation of passivity toward, or even complicity with, the potential Portuguese offensive.

Days later, Gonzaga traveled to Madrid to reiterate her warning, which emphasized the role of the Marquis of Ayamonte, and she offered more details about what was going on at the border. On 25 August and 27 August she met with José González and Alonso Guillén de la Carrera, ministers who were both creatures of the count-duke of Olivares. González

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77 Elliott, *El conde duque*, 516–519.

78 See a series of letters, published by Domínguez Ortiz, in which the writer warns that Cádiz suffered a serious illness for which the "leading physician," Medina Sidonia, was no good. AHN Consejos leg. 7,261, no. 1, b and c (nd); and 9 August 1641.

79 The informer's identity at that point was secret. BNE ms. 954, 154r–155v, Ayamonte, 16 August 1641.

in particular was considered to be one of the count-duke's closest advisers. He originally was posted at the Valladolid chancery courts, and he rose through the court thanks to Olivares until becoming a member of the Council of Castile in 1629.[80] Guillén also was a jurist. He was from Seville, and in the early 1630s was a member of a committee on navigation and commerce that Olivares established to revive trade, which was flagging. Soon after, he was one of the Castilian writers—according to the historian Jover Zamora, the most measured—who took part in the famous polemic after Louis XIII declared war on Spain in 1635.[81] The fact that all the ministers who investigated the Medina Sidonia conspiracy were close aides to Olivares explains the secrecy surrounding the case in those months, leading one to believe they were chosen precisely as a means of ensuring silence and discretion, which Olivares imposed from the very start.

Returning now to Gonzaga, her report focused on the shaky defensive situation on the border between Huelva and Portugal, which she suggested was deliberate. Implicitly, this inculpated the area's highest military authority, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who in July, before leaving Ayamonte for Sanlúcar, had given leaves of absence to the small number of troops in the barracks there. He also left signed or blank authorization forms for the Marquis of Ayamonte to distribute; according to Gonzaga, the marquis sold them. As a result, there were no more than 230 infantrymen and twenty cavalrymen at the military base. She furthermore said that though it had been possible to halt the construction of three forts on the Portuguese side of the Guadiana—two in Castromarín and one in Vilareal de Santoantonio, near the mouth of the river—nothing was done. The marquis's excuse for his inaction was that he could not initiate hostilities without the king's orders. And finally, she denounced the scandalous ease with which one could go back and forth from one side to the other carrying messages. Gonzaga lamented the fact that "proper loyalty" was not on display in Ayamonte, but she mentioned nothing about more complicated conspiracies.[82]

Informer 3: Gonzaga's declaration also included a letter from Leonardo de Soria Camargo, the second person to write a denunciation from Andalusia, in which he recounted how he, along with Antonio Isasi Idiáquez, Juan de Carvajal, and Fernando Altamirano, had managed to

[80] Elliott, *El conde-duque*, 302 and 542.

[81] Elliott, *El conde-duque*, 420; Jover Zamora, *1635: historia de una polémica,* 87–96 and 161–166.

[82] BNE ms. 722, 291v–295r.

avert what he considered the surrender of Ayamonte to the Portuguese, allegedly planned for 14 August.[83] Gonzaga further handed over intercepted correspondence to or from the military authorities including coded letters from the Marquis of Ayamonte to Medina Sidonia. Weeks later, the marquis admitted they were authentic.[84]

We know nothing more about Clara Gonzaga except for the statements in 1646 by Ayamonte's lawyer, who naturally wanted to discredit her; he said she had been Soria Camargo's lover and had also been a prostitute.[85] Leonardo de Soria Camargo was from Jerez de la Frontera, according to his request for a habit of the Order of Calatrava. We know that in 1641 he had been working for a decade in the area of military finance in Lower Andalusia.[86] His effort to join the Order of Calatrava was expressly supported, to good effect, by the eighth Duke of Medina Sidonia, who asked the king to speed up the process so Soria could quickly return to Cádiz to continue carrying out his duties.[87] After powers had passed to the ninth duke, he was sent to Madrid in 1637 to explain to the king how faulty Cádiz's defense was, just as he had been sent to Madrid by the eighth duke. In the later case, however, he stayed at court at least until 1640.[88] The Medina Sidonias had been sending messengers to court to defend the family's positions and institutional demands since the 1620s. The practice can be understood in two ways: either they were a way of getting rid of someone temporarily, or they were a sign of the dukes' confidence in the messenger by giving him an important task. Leonardo de

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[83] BNE ms. 722, 295r–296r.

[84] BNE ms. 722, 206r–v. It is likely that some of these letters were the ones Belluga de Moncada handed over to a certain Juan de Isasi to urgently take from Ayamonte to Sanlúcar on 2 July 1641. AGS, Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 113, 2 July 1641.

[85] Some time later, the Council of Finance looked at petitions from Clara Gonzaga in which she requested payment from the king in return for her services, which were "worthy of great reward … and may inspire and be an example so that in similar cases, beyond their natural obligation, [the king's vassals] will ignore all danger to serve Your Majesty." Given that she requested only the emoluments for the post of chief accountant (*contador mayor de cuentas*) for her son, the council decided to give her one thousand ducats in income for the life of her son. The amount was such that it would not compare badly to other requests the council had turned down that same day. Present at the decision were the president, Felipe de Porres, Manuel Pantoja, and Domingo Centurión. BL Eg. 2,081, 14 January 1649.

[86] On 4 July 1631, in Cádiz, he signed a document as an inspector (*veedor de la gente de guerra*) in the presidio there. AGS Guerra y Marina, leg. 1,049.

[87] The habit was granted: AHN Ordenes Militares, Caballeros Calatrava, exp. 2,505. Medina Sidonia's letter of support and the favorable response are in AGFCMS, leg. 2,416, 6 and 15 August 1643.

[88] For Soria Camargo's first stay in Madrid see AGS Guerra y Marina, leg. 1,185, 27 July and 12 September 1637; for the second stay, AGFCMS, leg. 2,418, docs. 584 and 598, 27 November and 2 December 1639.

Soria appears to have been very loyal to both the eighth and ninth dukes, making the latter explanation more likely. As an example, when he was in Madrid in 1640, he denounced a colleague of his from the Cádiz presidio who had sent (following the king's orders) the Council of War a detailed analysis of the city's defenses, which made the duke angry at the author.[89] We do not know why Soria decided to denounce the duke in 1641, but it is true that his accusation was framed in strictly military terms.

In any case, these messages set off alarms in Madrid. Three days after Gonzaga sent her first letter from Ayamonte to the court, on 19 August 1641, Philip IV sent his first summons to Medina Sidonia. The king, after using as an excuse a letter from the count-duke of Olivares himself, said that in order to best prepare the military forces, given the threat of the French and Dutch navies, the duke immediately should meet with the king in person. So as to not cause gossip, the duke should make people think he was leaving Sanlúcar only to return to Ayamonte. To speed up his journey, Philip IV ordered that horses and carriages be made available to the duke in Córdoba. He also told Medina Sidonia to travel with few servants and to go directly to Loeches, "from where you can arrive at court at night to see me and talk with me about these matters in secrecy [*sin ruido ni ostentación*]." Always with an eye to making the trip seem normal, Philip IV ordered him to bring "all the accounts and papers necessary for understanding the state of military preparations." The king even insinuated that the reason for his order had to do with military levies, leading him to ask Fernando Altamirano, who was in charge of recruitment in Seville, to also attend and bring his lists. Meanwhile, so that the levies should not halt, the king suggested to the duke that Juan de la Calle, Seville's leading judicial authority, be put in charge of the matter temporarily.[90]

Medina Sidonia gave various excuses for postponing his trip, starting with alleged health problems. Juan de la Calle sympathized with the duke, saying, "Your Excellency's health could get worse on the trip."[91] The warning later would appear to be double-edged. In any case, it was assumed in Madrid that the duke had immediately gotten under way with his journey, and the Duke of Ciudad Real, the governor of Cádiz, assumed all necessary powers for coordinating the Lower Andalusian militias in response to

[89] Excuses by the writer, Captain Benito Losada, in AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-1, docs. 76, 77, and 78, 13 September 1637 (royal order) and 17 July 1640.

[90] AGFCMS leg. 2,420, doc. 118, 19 August 1641.

[91] AGS Varios Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 135, 30 August 1641.

news that an enemy navy was massing outside Lisbon to attack Cádiz. Nevertheless, when Ciudad Real received his orders, Medina Sidonia in fact was still in Sanlúcar, leading Ciudad Real to request that don Gaspar be the one to order the cities of Córdoba, Carmona, and Écija to send one thousand men each from their militias to defend Cádiz.[92] It is important to keep in mind that the transfer of military powers from Medina Sidonia to Ciudad Real, though circumstantial, was a first step in reducing the duke's sphere of power in Lower Andalusia.

The duke's delay finally prompted another Andalusian nobleman, the important courtier Luis de Haro, to travel from Madrid to Andalusia so as to oblige Medina Sidonia to obey and at the same time to calm down the rest of the nobility in the Guadalquivir valley. According to the historian Rafael Valladares, Haro's orders were to force Medina Sidonia to go to Madrid and, if he would not, to kill him, for which purpose he was carrying poison.[93] We cannot know if this was the health setback to which Juan de la Calle referred when he warned the duke to be careful, but in any case Haro left Madrid on 4 September "in haste." According to an anonymous court newsletter (*aviso de corte*), he reached Córdoba on Friday, 13 September, the day Medina Sidonia apparently reached Madrid. If this indeed is true, the two men must have crossed paths. Haro stayed in Andalusia until 5 October, when he returned to Madrid "having met with all the lords" of Andalusia, according to the same source.[94]

Various sources indicate that the rumor mills of Madrid already were familiar with some of the details of Medina Sidonia's situation. There was even talk of a manifesto signed by the Duke of Braganza urging the Castilians to rise up, according to which the new Portuguese king promised honors and aid to certain important men (*potentados*) in Andalusia involved in the conspiracies. According to Pellicer –a famous writer, who also was author of a series of news from the court, from which we take the information for the following references–, these were "words worthy of fire," adding that pamphlets had been distributed along the border by Ruy de Figueredo de Alarcón on 16 August. Pellicer ended by praising the king for having lifted a new levy on income from public debt (*media anata de juros*) for that year, a measure particularly important for Seville.[95]

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[92] Ciudad Real attached copies of the king's orders to his letter. AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, docs. 136, 137, and 142; 30 and 31 August and 4 September 1641.

[93] Valladares, *La rebelión*, 44.

[94] BNE mss. 6,043; also in Novoa, *Historia de Felipe IV*, vol. 80, 473–474.

[95] José Pellicer, *Avisos*, BNE, mss. 7.692, 156–160v, 10 September 1641.

The connection between Haro's mission to calm the Andalusian nobility, who presumably were nervous because of Medina Sidonia's sudden summons to Madrid, and the lifting of the *media anata* in 1641 and 1642, to which we can add the December 1640 moratorium of the new hearth tax, which generated considerable opposition,[96] clearly reflects the crown's fearful response to the disturbing news from Andalusia.[97] In the case of the *media anata*, the anxiety dated from at least summer 1638, when an anonymous author, writing on behalf of the city of Seville, asked the king and the count-duke to put an end to the tax because of the damage it caused the local economy.[98]

Returning to our story, while all this was going on, the crown turned to another key player, the Count of Chinchón, to try to ensure that things got no worse in Lower Andalusia. He was sent to Seville in August 1641 under mysterious circumstances but with the obvious mission of staying there awhile. Philip IV put him temporarily in charge of the city's government while the Count of Salvatierra, the governor (*asistente*), personally led the troops, probably to Ayamonte, on the express orders of the king. It was Salvatierra who personally informed Medina Sidonia of this surprising royal order:

> It caught me by surprise and was so unexpected, and I will scrupulously obey it … At the same time, His Majesty orders me to tell my aides to obey the Count of Chinchón's orders until I return to the city and says the count will be in charge of the city's government. It is a pleasure to work under Your Excellency's orders, and I will in all matters serve you as I should.[99]

Amid the courtesies of this message one detects both Salvatierra's surprise at the king's mistrust and his fear of royal reprisals if he did not obey. One should remember here that Salvatierra and Medina Sidonia had had excellent relations ever since the latter inherited his father's titles.[100]

Medina Sidonia reached Loeches, near Madrid, the second week of September. The town belonged to the count-duke of Olivares, to whom

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[96] Sanlúcar was ordered to stop collecting this tax on 27 December 1640: AHMSB, leg. 4,715, no. 14, f. 276r–v. Domínguez Ortiz, *Política fiscal*, 92–93; Rafael Valladares, *Banqueros y vasallos. Felipe IV y el medio general* (Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla La Mancha, 2002) 52–53; Gelabert, *Castilla convulsa*, 180–189.

[97] Gelabert, *Castilla convulsa*, 188–189.

[98] RAH 9/3699, printed sheet, 28 September 1638.

[99] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 139, 1 September 1641.

[100] Manuel Nieto Cumplido, "Cartas inéditas del duque de Medina Sidonia y la conspiración de Andalucia," *Boletín de la Academia de Ciencias, Bellas Letras y Nobles Artes* 89 (1969), 155–173.

he was related and who went out to meet the duke as he arrived. According to the anonymous author of the newsletter cited earlier, Olivares was accompanied by some of his best-known creatures: Francisco Antonio de Alarcón, Alonso Guillén de la Carrera, and Jerónimo Villanueva, the *protonotario* of Aragón.[101] That same day, Olivares and Medina Sidonia arrived at Philip IV's Retiro Palace, in Madrid, and from there went to the alcázar. Still according to the anonymous writer, once there the duke kissed the hands of the king, the queen, and the prince, and dined with His Majesty. On his first night in Madrid, don Gaspar stayed in the alcázar, and returned the next day to Loeches, where the Countess of Olivares awaited him. A later version, by one of Olivares's enemies, Matías de Novoa, also refers to a private meeting between Medina Sidonia and his uncle, the Patriarch of the Indies, in which the latter supposedly tried to make his nephew confess to his crimes.[102] In his version, Pellicer emphasized that when the duke kissed the king's hand, Philip IV received him with "great signs of benevolence." He wrote: "The rumor here is that the lord Marquis of Ayamonte has stepped down, on His Majesty's orders, which were brought to him by Gaspar de Bracamonte, Count of Peñaranda, and that he obeyed. At this point I know only that that is what they say, and that forty notifications have been sent to gentlemen in Seville." The grandeur and ostentation with which Medina Sidonia was received in Loeches was consistent with the secular tradition of the Perez de Guzmáns' entrances into the court, an effort to make everything look normal, which Pellicer himself tried to reflect. The duke, in fact, had taken many of his servants with him to Madrid, including Luis del Castillo, of whom it was said that he was the duke's favorite (*valido*).[103] One gathers from that version that the king was trying to calm everyone's nerves, both in Andalusia and in Madrid.

Days later, Pellicer wrote in a postscript, "the lord Duke of Ciudad Real sent two hundred and fifty armed men to Sanlúcar when the lord Duke of Medina Sidonia went there before coming [to Madrid]." This detachment of men does not seem to have posed any threat to Medina Sidonia, as can be seen from later events. In any case, an anonymous hand wrote in the margin of this *aviso*, "Under no circumstance include this." Later the postscript was crossed out.[104] The concern over news management reflected

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[101] On Villanueva and Alarcón, see Elliott, *El conde-duque*, *passim*.

[102] BNE, ms. 6,043 and Novoa, *Historia de Felipe IV*, vol. 80, 475.

[103] A list of the gentlemen who tended to the duke on his journey includes sixteen who ate at his table, twenty-four who received travel expenses, and eleven servants of servants. AGFCMS, leg. 750, nd.

[104] Pellicer, *Avisos*, BNE, mss. 7.692, 159–161v, 17 and 27 September 1641.

by this marginal note is evidence of the fear of speaking too lightly about matters concerning such powerful figures as the Medina Sidonia and Ciudad Real.

Informer 4: While the duke's situation became increasingly talked about in Madrid, the royal ministers continued gathering evidence against him through letters and reports from various individuals who offered testimony. The first to directly point to Medina Sidonia as chief of the conspiracy were Francisco Sánchez Márquez, master of accounts of the army in Portugal at the time of Braganza's rebellion (he was imprisoned in Lisbon) and his wife. According to Sánchez Márquez, when he was a prisoner he met a key figure in the conspiracy, Fray Nicolás de Velasco. This friar, whom Sánchez Márquez accused of being the duke's agent, told him about the plans. In a later statement, Sánchez Márquez said Velasco had letters from Medina Sidonia to Braganza containing "ambiguous language" inviting Braganza to join his brother-in-law in carrying out their agreement.

We know Velasco was highly trusted by the duke, as shown by the fact that he sent him as an emissary to the King of Marrakech and to the moriscos of Salé in 1637[105] and again in 1640, when he accompanied the Moroccan ambassador back to his country. Medina Sidonia also knew Sánchez Márquez; the bookkeeper had served under the orders of the eighth duke, Manuel Alonso, overseeing the disbursement of monies from the Royal Treasury to the military.[106] Also, in 1626, he received a letter of recommendation from the duke. We do not know at what point Sánchez Márquez changed jobs, but he was the only one of the three treasury officials who worked with Manuel Alonso in Sanlúcar who later left Andalusia.[107] He gave his first statement on the case to Francisco Antonio de Alarcón, José González, and Antonio de Contreras, though none of the three ministers signed the document. After that, Sánchez Márquez corresponded with the count-duke of Olivares from a place he refers to as La Posada, and in his letters he added details and interpretations regarding the conspiracy and related affairs, starting with Medina Sidonia's and Ayamonte's military shortcomings.[108]

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[105] On the friar in Marrakech see AGFCMS leg. 2,417, 389r–v, 4 December 1637. Fray Antonio Seyner, however, wrote that the Portuguese laughed at Velasco's stories: *Historia del levantamiento de Portugal* (Zamora 1644), 160–162.

[106] AGFCMS, leg. 2,413, 31 May 1626.

[107] On Sánchez Márquez's time working under the orders of Medina Sidonia, see Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 274–289.

[108] The first letter we know of is dated 4 September 1641, when the duke had not yet arrived in Madrid. AHN Estado, leg. 8,753, exp. 7, 4 August 1641.

More than a year later, in 1643, Sánchez Márquez gave a second statement, in which he added some interesting details. First, he switched from being a chance recipient of information in the Lisbon jail to presenting himself as an active investigator into the rebels' plans. Second, he said he had met Velasco when the latter was held prisoner in the same Lisbon jail where he was, though it was likely their imprisonment was more a sort of house arrest so as to quash any circulation of rumors. But Márquez did confess to having enjoyed the same favorable treatment while confined as did Jacinto Pacheco (Medina Sidonia's servant), Velasco, and other Castilians close to Medina Sidonia. He also told a dubious tale of having used a lieutenant traveling to Andalusia as a messenger to tell Medina Sidonia not to be fooled by the Portuguese, and he added some names that no other source cites and about whom we know nothing, such as a Trinitarian named Manuel Mauritz who was a friend of Velasco's and someone named Blanington Romano. Possibly the most interesting thing he said concerned his departure from Lisbon in July 1641, when he managed to convince the Lisbon plotters that he was involved in the Andalusian conspiracy, which allowed him to return to Castile. Thus, after many obstacles, the bookkeeper arrived in Madrid to denounce the plan. In his own account, Sánchez Márquez was the hero—along with his wife, who went to Cádiz to denounce the conspiracy to the duke of Ciudad Real. He said the count-duke also saw things that way, calling Sánchez Márquez an "angel" sent by God to save the monarchy. He therefore requested a supernumerary post on the Council of Finance and a list of favors (*mercedes*) for himself and his family.[109] Despite his self-portrait, it seems likely that Sánchez Márquez at the very least had an initially ambiguous position vis-à-vis the conspiracy, though for whatever reason he ended up denouncing it. In fact, he had been in touch with his former lords and benefactors, the Medina Sidonias, from Lisbon, sending them information about Portuguese affairs.[110] His ultimate choice to be loyal to the king was generously compensated.[111]

Informer 5: The second person to denounce Medina Sidonia from Portugal was the Countess of Castilnovo, widow of the governor of the

[109] BNE, ms. 722, 88–108, May 1643.

[110] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 78-2, doc. 23, 30 January 1638.

[111] In 1643 he received a habit of the Order of Santiago (AHN, Ordenes Militares-Caballeros de Santiago, exp. 7,550). We do not know how many of his other requests in exchange for his information were honored, including the post on the Council of Finance. BNE ms. 722, 88–108.

Mazagán (Morocco) presidio.[112] Her information was transmitted in a report she sent to Olivares at the end of her long journey from Mazagán after her husband's death in May 1640; she traveled from Morocco to Sanlúcar, and then to Portugal (before the revolt) and finally to Castile. She told the count-duke that in Sanlúcar she had been warmly received by a vessel sent by the duke, whose emissary was none other than Fray Nicolás de Velasco. The friar, the son of longtime retainers of the duke, had great influence over Medina Sidonia, in the countess's opinion. But she had met Velasco already in Mazagán, where he had stayed for two months. Her impression of him was that he was "a man of suspicious dealings and restlessness." Once in Lisbon, she said, she was arrested upon the orders of the new Braganza king, though she continued to be well-informed as to the political situation in the rebellious kingdom. The countess attributed Velasco's presence in Lisbon to "the Duke of Medina Sidonia's personal matters, and he was always with the Duke and Duchess of Braganza." She coincided with Sánchez Márquez in placing the friar, along with a brother of Francisco de Lucena, in the audience the day the conspirators against *dom* João were executed in 1641.[113]

Anonymous newsletters circulating in Madrid reported that all the informers except the one in the Netherlands had received their first rewards by January 1642:

> Favors by the king to those who uncovered Medina Sidonia's treason: to the first [presumably Leonardo de Soria] 2,000 ducats, a very honorable post in the navy, and a crest with five kingdoms and a man with a sword in his hand. To the second [perhaps Sánchez Márquez] an accounting post and a habit [of a military order]. To the third [perhaps the Countess of Castilnovo, who would award this post to someone else] the post of general inspector of the Portuguese army, and a habit.[114]

We also know that a son of Clara Gonzaga, Juan de Cárdenas, in 1649 received a pension of 1,000 ducats for the services rendered by his mother.[115]

Interestingly, and certainly not coincidentally, once the duke had left Sanlúcar and was in Madrid, the Count of Monterrey and the Marquis of Mirabel, both serving on the Portuguese border in Extremadura, sent

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[112] He died in an ambush in Morocco in April 1640. AGFCMS leg. 2,419, docs. 175 and 183, 28 April and 6 May 1640.

[113] AHN Estado, leg. 8,753, exp. 7, Badajoz, 13 September 1641.

[114] MHE, vol. 16, 233–234, Madrid, 20 January 1642.

[115] BL Eg. 2,081, consulta, 14 January 1649.

reports about what they knew of the conspiracy. Their delay in denouncing the plans indicates caution by the titled nobility in reaction to the incessant rumors of Andalusian sedition; regardless of their true preferences, they were anxious to not indicate partiality. But once Medina Sidonia was in Madrid and the news was out, they were no longer hesitant.[116]

A week went by after Medina Sidonia arrived in Madrid before he made his famous confession to Philip IV, on 21 September 1641, in the old alcázar. We know nothing about the duke's days in Madrid, but the chronology of denunciation indicates the king and his favorite were collecting testimony with which to pressure the duke until he finally confessed. As we know, the king immediately pardoned him.[117] It is important to keep in mind that all this took place during one of the few optimistic lulls that Philip IV had in the 1640s. Just one month earlier—in fact, one day after Medina Sidonia was ordered to come to Madrid—the Duke of Maqueda and the Marquis of Villafranca had managed to send troops to Tarragona and avoid the city falling to the enemy, leading the king and Olivares to once again hope for a quick resolution to the Catalan conflict, which would have allowed them to attack Portugal before the new regime there was firmly in place.[118] This strengthened position also may have helped the king and his favorite in that Medina Sidonia would not have held out any hope for an immediate collapse of the monarchy. It is difficult to say what the intended publicity was for the theatrical scene of repentance and pardon after the duke's confession. There are indications that the manuscript version took several years to begin circulating. But the important point is that after the scene took place—whether it was genuine, arranged, or altered in the telling—the duke was a free man, unlike the Marquis of Ayamonte.

2. *A Victim of Slander*

As such, Medina Sidonia stayed in Madrid for several months cleaning up his image, a project in which Olivares probably took part. One of the most

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[116] BNE, ms. 722, 312v–313r, 18 September and 28 September 1641.

[117] A copy was published in Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *Historia de la caída del conde-duque de Olivares* (*manuscrito del siglo XVII*) (Málaga: Algazara, 1992). There are two manuscript copies: BNE ms. 954, 145r–152v; and AGFCMS leg. 994.

[118] Antoni Simón i Tarrés, "La 'Jornada Real' de Catalunya que propició la caída del conde-duque de Olivares," in *Revista de Historia Moderna. Anales de la Universidad de Alicante* 28 (2010), 235–268, 235–240.

notable components of this campaign was the publication of a poster in which the duke, in chivalric terms, challenged the Portuguese "tyrant" to a duel. Such a propagandistic recourse can be explained by the fact that, beyond rumors and suspicions, the only information about the matter that was generally known was that Medina Sidonia had been summoned to Madrid and that the Braganzas had distributed leaflets along the Portuguese border urging an uprising and implying that Medina Sidonia was their ally. So the point of the poster was to counteract these narratives. It was doubtless a desperate measure, and definitely an unusual one; perhaps the duke sought to trigger memories of Charles V's famous challenge to Francis I of France more than a century earlier. Clearly the aim was to show that Philip IV and his most powerful Castilian vassal were, despite everything, standing together. Not coincidentally, the text of the challenge referred to the duke as Captain General of the Coast and Army of Portugal, though in fact the Count of Peñaranda was temporarily in charge of military affairs in Ayamonte.[119] Medina Sidonia's challenge to his brother-in-law, *dom* João IV of Portugal, was published a few days after the duke confessed, on 29 September, though apparently it was not distributed in Madrid until 5 October.[120]

In the text, the duke challenged the duke of Braganza to a duel on the Castilian-Portuguese border at Valencia de Alcántara. The tone reflects the fury of this descendent of the legendary Alonso Pérez de Guzmán el Bueno that his loyalty to the kings of Castile had been put in doubt by a traitor. According to the poster, Braganza's aim was to

> encourage foreign princes and the deluded Portuguese who follow him, showing their evil, and to belittle me (in vain) before my king, may God save him, for I support him, and [Braganza] spreads these poisonous stories in order to remain in power, for if indeed he could induce His Majesty to doubt my loyalty, His Majesty would lose his most powerful ally in combating [Braganza's] sedition. After those mysterious and treacherous leaflets were distributed in Castile, [Braganza] acclaimed me as the liberator of Andalusia and his supporter, celebrating this noisy malice with public and spectacular actions, thus making evident their falseness. For if, which would be impossible, I indeed had followed his path, the key would have been silence.

In order to expose Braganza's lies, it was essential to show that the duke was in the king's good graces and that, despite the slander, royal

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[119] Pellicer, *Avisos*, 1704, 24 September 1641.

[120] BNE ms. 6,043. Pellicer does not mention it until 8 October, considering it a prudent and dignified gesture worthy of a great lord. Pellicer, *Avisos*, 175, 8 October 1641.

favor continued on the side of the house of Medina Sidonia, which remained entirely loyal to the monarch. Rumors to the contrary must have been very concrete, as the text even mentions Fray Nicolás de Velasco, who, it was said, has been sent by the Junta de Ayamonte as a spy and used by Braganza to make it appear the duke was conspiring with Philip IV's enemies. In reply, Medina Sidonia credited himself with having taken the necessary measures to impede an attack on Cádiz. And finally, he said he was willing to spill the blood of his own sister for having been corrupted by the Braganzas.

Expecting that the Duke of Braganza would not appear at the duel, Medina Sidonia offered his city of Sanlúcar, the "principal base of the Dukes of Medina Sidonia," to whomever killed the Portuguese tyrant. The text ended with various shows of loyalty by the duke to the king. First, even before the king ordered him to raise troops, he offered "to serve him with 1,000 of my cavalry so that … if [Braganza] does not come and fight me hand to hand, they and I may bring this man to your royal feet, dead or alive." The duke further promised that any military man who captured a Portuguese town would be rewarded with lordship over one of the best towns in Medina Sidonia's estate.[121] On 14 October, the duke began preparing his journey to the Extremadura border. He wrote to his city of Sanlúcar, ordering the gentlemen there to serve with him during the twenty days the duel challenge lasted.[122] The journey was very expensive, as the duke had to pay not only his vassals and servants but also the lords who accompanied him from Madrid.[123]

Barely two months later, on 3 December, leaflets appeared defending the moral legitimacy of Medina Sidonia's challenge to João IV, a traitor who had tried to besmirch the duke's honor. Among the writers who took it upon themselves to take up this cause were Father Juan Martínez Ripalda, a Jesuit at Madrid's Colegio Imperial, Olivares's last confessor and one of the very, very few servants who remained loyal to the favorite after his fall from power.[124] In his defense of Medina Sidonia, Ripalda enumerated four points that nullified, in this case, the theological prohibition

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[121] BNE ms. 18,202, 51r–54v, Toledo, 29 September 1641.

[122] The duke paid the travel expenses and lodging of the troops. AGFCMS, leg. 994, Madrid, 14 October 1641.

[123] A bill of exchange was issued in Seville for 37,710 *reales* to be remitted to the duke in cash, *moneda resellada*. Another bill for two hundred ducats covered only the travel expenses of the pages and servants of servants. AGFCMS, leg. 3,163: 11, 13 and 27 November 1641.

[124] Elliott, *El conde-duque*, 629–647.

against duels. First, there was open warfare with Portugal; second, Philip IV, "the true king," had the right to kill Braganza, "a delinquent vassal," and there was no better agent than Medina Sidonia, the most injured, who therefore was allowed to place his own life in danger for the good of the republic; third, there was no other way to restore the good name of the Medina Sidonias; and, finally, the Jesuit wrote that the prohibition against duels assumed the existence of a higher authority recognized by both parties, which was no longer the case given that Portugal had revolted.[125]

Father Tomás Hurtado, a professor in Seville, also wrote a moral justification for the challenge addressed to the Duchess of Medina Sidonia and printed in Antequera. After the various approvals for the publication, all of them praising the duke's decision to challenge his brother-in-law, Hurtado's text went on to praise the duke and duchess. Their house's affairs were not of this world, he said, but of the heavenly sphere, given their moral purity, and thus the duke was morally justified in his stance. The text resembles a catechism, with questions that the duke's confessor, the *reverendísimo* Father Fray Antonio de Saavedra, prior of the convent of Santo Domingo de Sanlúcar, sent to Hurtado on behalf of the duchess. It all added up to saying the duke was perfectly justified in putting his health at stake to defend his life and his honor, two concepts that Hurtado believed were one and the same.[126]

Medina Sidonia did not just receive theological arguments in favor of his challenge; they also came from other individuals and institutions. Among them, the city council of Seville sent the duke a letter congratulating him for his gesture: "It is right to show the world that along with your estate you inherited your ancestors' bravery and the loyalty that this perpetually grand House preserves, which so affects this city, given the resultant splendor cast upon it."[127] The city council of Jerez de la Frontera also sent its best wishes to the duke, congratulating him for his resolution.[128] A member of the ducal household, Lorenzo Dávila y Estrada, also signed a manifesto called "A Political Letter to the Ancient and Illustrious Nobility of Portugal" in which he called on them to recover their honor, stained by Braganza, by rising up and casting off his yoke; otherwise, they would be dishonored as vile and mistreated by their new and tyrannical king.[129]

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125 BNE ms. 722, 116r–122r.
126 BNE ms. 17,880, 230r–249r, November 1641.
127 BNE ms. 951, 83v–84r, Seville, 2 November 1641.
128 AHMJF, Actas 1639–1641, ff. 1,193r–1,194v, 17 October 1641.
129 BNE ms. 2,373, 136r–145r.

It was in this atmosphere that Medina Sidonia left Madrid on 26 November for Valencia de Alcántara, where he lodged in the castle (at his request) until 19 December. That day, as on every other day during the period of the challenge, the duke went out as if on a military campaign, accompanied by nine companies of men along with the gentlemen and nobles of his entourage. There were at least two objectives of this display: to protect the duke (the task of his own noblemen) and to watch him (presumably the task of those who accompanied him from Madrid).[130] Among the latter was the Count of Oñate, who wrote to Olivares on their last day of waiting.[131] As Braganza never appeared within the allotted time period, the entourage disbanded, and some of the cavalry went to Badajoz while others returned to Madrid. The duke had the king's permission to choose a place in Extremadura to stay until he received new orders, and he chose the small town of Garrovillas, formerly a possession of the Pérez de Guzmáns but given to the Count of Alba de Liste in the fifteenth century as part of a dowry.[132]

Despite Braganza's failure to appear, which was entirely expected, a few months later a pamphlet appeared in Lisbon parodying the duel. The text was in the form of reflections by a Quixote-like figure who is horrified at the anachronism of the chivalric poster announcing the challenge. The interesting thing here is that the criticism was aimed not at Medina Sidonia, who actually was indirectly praised, but at Olivares. Thus, after a digression describing the cowardice of the Castilians, the pamphlet turned its attention to Medina Sidonia's relative, the count-duke:

> [The poster] can be assumed not to have been made by don Gaspar de Guzmán el Bueno, duke of Medina Sidonia, by rather by don Gaspar de Guzmán el Malo, duke of chimeras, so as to draw a response from Portugal … but the Portuguese, now lords of their own destiny will not respond. And even if it were the work of his [Medina Sidonia], it must have been forced upon him (because one would not expect this of such a gentleman), so it is ridiculous to say that the Portuguese wished for our king [Philip IV] to suspect Medina Sidonia, for in doubting him he would lose his most powerful ally [in putting down the sedition], and it is clear that he who was not afraid of a king's opposition will hardly fear that of his vassal, grand though he may be, except if [Medina Sidonia] is suggesting that his is greater, in which case indeed he would offend his king's majesty.

130 AGS Guerra y Marina, leg. 1,378, 20 and 23 November 1641.

131 AHN Estado, lib. 866, 68r–69r, 19 December 1641, followed by a list of the nobles who accompanied the duke, 69–73.

132 Barrantes, *Ilustraciones*, 400–401.

In this way, with an ironic response to the accusation that the Portuguese would have celebrated the duke's coup before it broke out, being that that only would have given the plot away, Medina Sidonia was exonerated. Finally, referring to the poster's reference to the friendly relations between Medina Sidonia and Philip IV, the pamphlet's author says he does not understand why the duke had not already returned to Sanlúcar if indeed he had been pardoned.[133]

Since August, the rumors and betrayals had been constant. The duke of Medina Sidonia was far from his power base, in a state of controlled freedom and under watch in a remote town in Extremadura. Plans for military action in the Algarve had been postponed, while royal ministers had been sent to Andalusia to take up key civilian and military posts. As we have seen, the Count of Peñaranda governed the Ayamonte border while the Duke of Ciudad Real had taken charge of military affairs in the entire region. In Seville, the Count of Chinchón was in temporary charge of the city council, while Juan de Santaelices had taken over both imperial commerce and the royal courts there. Luis de Haro, meanwhile, was trying to calm down the other powerful lords in the region, probably promising and threatening in equal parts. From all this, we can reach two conclusions: First, though Medina Sidonia had been caught and his plans had been uncovered, the crown was not in a strong enough position to truly punish him, so his treason had to be concealed. And, second, the fears and mistrust in Madrid regarding the mood in the Guadalquivir valley were aimed not only at the great lords and merchants but also at high-level royal officials, including several leading figures in Seville.[134]

3. *The Conspirators' Plans*

It seems certain that in Andalusia there was unhappiness and agitation and that in the midst of this the duke of Medina Sidonia, Ayamonte, and a few other leading figures planned some sort of sedition that went far beyond their firm opposition to the war with Portugal. Statements from informants, diplomats, and the few chroniclers who wrote about the matter offer various versions of the conspiracy. Based on those accounts, we will now turn to the plans themselves and compare these descriptions to

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133 "Cartel de desafío y protestación caballeresca de don Quijote de la Mancha, caballero de la Triste Figura, en defensión de sus castellanos," Lisbon, 23 June 1642.

134 Regarding the increasing discontent of great merchants in Seville, see José Manuel Díaz Blanco, *Así trocaste tu Gloria. Guerra y comercio colonial en la España del siglo XVII* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2012), 119–183.

the leaders' confessions. By definition, a plot does not leave much written evidence. For that reason, the few letters we have between Medina Sidonia and the Marquis of Ayamonte are all the more exceptional, as they are the only truly direct evidence of the plot, though their content—written partially in a code that the marquis himself would end up confessing a few months later—is somewhat disappointing.

The letters were written when Medina Sidonia was in Sanlúcar helping to prepare the Duke of Maqueda's ships.[135] In one, dated 21 June, the marquis warned Medina Sidonia that in Seville, "with all the changes [*novedades*] and toughness [*rigores*], things [were] in such upheaval and discontent that I [feared] the same as in Lisarda [i.e. Portugal]," and he suggested to the duke that he contact other Andalusian lords such as the Duke of Arcos (code-named Jacinta) and Jileta (identity unknown). He concluded mysteriously by saying, "Thetis will provide," which according to the marquis's own confession, was a reference to the Junta de Ayamonte. Thetis appears in the *Illiad* as the mother of Achilles, though elsewhere in Greek mythology she is a sea nymph and goddess of water, so the reference may have been to foreign naval forces. The marquis also wrote that the cleric taking the message to the duke should once again seek explicit support from Narcisa, the code name for the Portuguese Count of Óvidos, while the marquis himself would try to move things ahead as much as possible. He added: "On land and on sea, we are alert and vigilant to see if don Martín Carlos [de] Mencos arrives, as Your Excellency ordered, so they can send the weapons to Cádiz and receive the rest," possibly referring to more weapons and/or troops.[136] Ayamonte seems to be suggesting that Medina Sidonia was in Sanlúcar waiting to meet certain detachments that would then go to Cádiz. We know Mencos was in charge of a fleet whose arrival in Cádiz, loaded with American treasure, had been delayed for months.

A month later, another letter from the marquis to Medina Sidonia said that the previous night, during fireworks on the eve of the feast day of Santiago, a "man from San Bento" arrived with letters from Lisarda [Portugal], upon orders from Galatea (Nicolás de Velasco). Fearful he would be searched, he hid the letters, but (Ayamonte told Medina Sidonia) he would get them the next day and the marquis would tell the duke what they said. Cryptically, he said, "it is seeking for snow, because we die of

[135] Medina Sidonia left Ayamonte on 21 June 1641, leaving the Marquis of Ayamonte as military commander. BNE, ms. 722, 21.

[136] BNE ms. 954, 152v–153r, Ayamonte, 26 June 1641.

heat." In a postscript he added that the next day there would be a general muster of the troops and that the Marquis of Poza was in Málaga at the duke's orders.[137] These letters, and later statements by the Marquis of Ayamonte, indicate three things: First, that Ayamonte and Medina Sidonia were the identifiable leaders of a conspiracy in which Braganza's Portugal was involved. Second, either the plans were not very precise at this point or the conspirators preferred using cryptic language. And third, the plans seem to have originated in around December 1640. Nevertheless, July 1641 appears to be the key month for basic concrete details.

Another interesting point raised in these two letters is the references to discontent in Andalusia. According to Sánchez Márquez's accusations, the conspirators planned to get popular support in both Andalusias – eastern and western– by passing out an angry, printed letter to Philip IV saying "Spain was lost thanks to the count-duke." According to Sánchez Márquez, so as not to lose his estate, Medina Sidonia would "rise up as the defender of the *patria* and he would not stop until he reached Madrid and tear in pieces [*hacer cuartos*] the count-duke." Curiously, Sánchez Márquez, always relying on information from the omnipresent Fray Nicolás de Velasco, was the only one to specifically mention revenge as Medina Sidonia's alleged motivation.[138] Translated into noble language, according to this version Medina Sidonia rebelled to protest the lack of reciprocity between the services rendered by his house to the monarchy and the favors received in return. Now let us turn to each point raised in these letters.

Leadership and seigneurial discontent: Though it was clear the leader was Medina Sidonia, the sources disagree on whether he or Ayamonte came up with the plan to begin with. Sánchez Márquez was emphatic that the marquis had been the instigator, saying the latter was offended because he had not been put in charge of border defense.[139] As could be expected, Medina Sidonia said the same thing in his confession. According to the duke, shortly after the Portuguese revolt he received a letter from the Marquis of Ayamonte asking that the duke send one of his closest aides, Luis del Castillo, to the marquis, to speak with him. Through these means, Ayamonte allegedly insinuated to the duke that it was a bad thing to lose relatives in Portugal and a good thing to defend one's estates from

137 BNE ms. 954, 153v–154r, Ayamonte, 24 July 1641.

138 BNE ms 722, 88–108, May 1643.

139 BNE ms 722, 290ff. Sánchez Márquez later ratified this statement, though it was not signed by the royal councilors.

the "harassments and taxes we pay." In the duke's later version, he felt "extremely offended" and was tempted to send Castillo straight to the king to tell him everything, but he did not wish to betray the marquis. Later, when Medina Sidonia was in Ayamonte in charge of the army, he said, he delayed the conversation more than a month. Only then, "I sinned and committed this great error, I consented, I imagined such evil, and I wrote to the rebels through a friar named Nicolás de Velasco … upon the suggestion of the same Marquis of Ayamonte." The duke specified, however, that correspondence with Portugal always went through the marquis and that he, the duke, was not informed as to the content of the letters. He said he did not know who else the marquis wrote to aside from Velasco, the archbishop of Lisbon, and the Marquis of Ferreira, nor did he know if they replied or if Ayamonte wrote to the Duke and Duchess of Braganza. Nevertheless, Medina Sidonia said he had written twice to Francisco de Lucena in response to letters that Lucena sent him upon the suggestion of Velasco. Though he did not say, the duke implied it was possible that in the marquis's correspondence, the denunciation of the plot to kill Braganza might have leaked out, costing the life of the Duke of Vila Real.[140]

Not surprisingly, the Marquis of Ayamonte remembered things differently. When he was questioned in 1643, he said he had been a follower, not a leader. After the Portuguese rebellion, he said, he tried to "get out of the way" and serve the king elsewhere, afraid that Medina Sidonia might be planning something subversive. If Ayamonte's request to be transferred really existed, I have been unable to locate it. Ayamonte finished his confession by admitting his enormous error but insisting that his only intention had been to move the fighting—presumably the war against Portugal—away from Andalusia, and he begged clemency from the king by offering him a solution. He suggested that the way of regaining *dom* João's loyalty to the Hapsburgs was to give him the title of Prince of the Algarve, as Philip II had offered to the house of Braganza when he annexed Portugal in 1580. Ayamonte also warned Philip IV of the dangerous situation in the Spanish West Indies.[141]

After Olivares's fall in February 1643, Juan de Morales y Barrionuevo, prosecutor for the Council of Castile, summarized all the information he had about the plot. He began by mentioning the plot's auspicious

[140] A copy was published in *Historia de la caída del conde-duque*, op cit.; there also are two copies in the BNE, ms. 954, 145–152v; and AGFCMS leg. 994.

[141] BNE ms. 722, 204r–209r. This is a copy, it says, made during the lifetime of the marquis, though it is likely the BN text is a copy of a copy made during the trial.

circumstances, especially the Portuguese rebellion, when Ayamonte complained to Medina Sidonia that his services and those of several of his high-ranking relatives had not been rewarded as generously as he thought appropriate. According to this version, Ayamonte urged the duke to conspire already in summer 1641, and it was Ayamonte himself who began corresponding with Braganza, with the duke going along. Beyond figuring out which of the two men was the first to devise the plot, it is more interesting to note that the crime missing in both men's confessions—their passivity in the face of the Portuguese rebellion—was understood to be part of the general atmosphere that made it possible for the seditious plans to be born in the first place. According to the royal prosecutor, the marquis was accused only of having endangered the Ayamonte fortress by weakening defenses along the border.[142] A tougher stance at that point or recognition of the damages inflicted by the Portuguese would have amounted to an admission that the crown was ill prepared to face the Braganza challenge.

Supporters, henchmen, and allies: The marquis said in his first confession that he knew nothing about conversations with any city council member nor with any other Andalusian city official involved in the plan. The plotters trusted the plan would succeed because of the "universal discontent everyone feels and because the duke believed he had many people, particularly captains and soldiers, who were pledged and that they would join because they wished to be free and free of tributes." The contradiction, obviously, lies in the fact that a seditious plan as complex as this and which depended on the participation of the cities had not even bothered to test public opinion beforehand.[143] Asked again in 1643 to explain the identity of those who he earlier said had expressed discontent in Seville, Écija, Córdoba, Málaga, "and the rest of Andalusia," the marquis said he was referring to women, which according to contemporary understandings made the matter strictly private and depoliticized. But he also said the general discontent arose from the count-duke's disasters, among which already in his first statement he mentioned the "deceit" (*engaño*) by Olivares of Medina Sidonia and himself, presumably suggesting that the count-duke invented the plot in order to make the two aristocrats confess to it.[144] This allegation that the count-duke had schemed to punish the duke and the marquis was also the basis of Isabel Álvarez de Toledo's

142 BNE ms. 722, 222v–224v.
143 BNE ms. 722, 204r–221v.
144 BNE ms. 722, 210–221v.

version of the conspiracy, but it became explicit only when Olivares was no longer in power and thus unable to do anything to defend Medina Sidonia in his lawsuit.

It appears, then, that the plotters believed the sedition would be embraced throughout Andalusia by contagion. According to the marquis, it was the ruin of the Andalusian provinces and the "threat of losing the rest and of this monarchy ending" that spurred them on to "urge that His Majesty remove the count-duke from his side and that the people rise up, in the belief that this would be widely supported." The objective was not so much to topple Olivares as it was to use his unpopularity throughout Castile to gain more support for the uprising.[145] The Andalusian cities that most worried Philip IV were Seville and Jerez de la Frontera, though I have been unable to find any explicit proof of communication between the conspirators and any city council or leading municipal figures. All we know is that, according to Sánchez Márquez, Velasco was certain that both cities were going to respond favorably to Medina Sidonia's coup.[146]

The seditious parties were well aware of Philip IV's political frailty, which we know not only from the marquis's explicit statement in that regard but also because, on a more pragmatic level, Ayamonte said they had been inspired by the example of the Catalans who, after revolting against their lord, were now being called upon by the king to negotiate. It was true that already in the early months of the revolt of the Catalans, ways were being sought, very discreetly, to put a negotiated end to the conflict.[147] This means that either Medina Sidonia and Ayamonte were very well informed in 1640–1641 regarding the internal conversations of the Council of State or that Ayamonte used this argument in 1643 to demand the same clemency that Philip IV was willing to concede to the Catalans. Most likely, both were true. Ayamonte said he hoped the king would be equally benign "with this affiant and the rest of the Andalusian lords regarding their pretensions." Having said this, the marquis tried to avoid giving the names of these other lords, saying he knew nothing concrete about who was involved other than himself and the duke. Also, the two men's insistent complaints about the burden of taxation in Andalusia, which Ayamonte referred to as "oppression," clearly can be linked to the high cost of a war that threatened to leave Andalusia

145 BNE ms. 722, 204r–221v.
146 BNE ms. 722, 88–108, May 1643.
147 Simón i Tarrés, "La 'Jornada Real' de Catalunya," 238.

defenseless, the outer limits of testing these powerful families' fidelity toward the king.[148]

As for the remaining conspirators, or at least those whose names were mentioned as being open to the plan, we have little information. As could be expected, the evidence and testimony regarding their identity is uncertain.[149] One was the Marquis of Poza, governor of Málaga. His name appeared in several accusations, and he corresponded warmly with Medina Sidonia during those months, initially as a result of military matters in which don Gaspar gave Poza the use of his militia to help defend Málaga.[150] Though such acts of courtesy were in part ritualistic, the fact that Medina Sidonia did not oppose the transfer of his seigneurial militia to a distant district is not unimportant and it shows unusual generosity. Furthermore, Medina Sidonia in one of his letters to Poza asked the latter to pay particular attention to one of his servants, named Tenorio, who was carrying the letter. We of course know nothing about the conversation between Tenorio and Poza, but we do know that the correspondence between the two lords continued and that it was based on protocol but also on extreme courtesy.[151]

As for the Duke of Arcos, Fray Nicolás de Velasco—again according to Sánchez Márquez—said that if Arcos refused to take part, Medina Sidonia would kill him. But Medina Sidonia in his confession said he had taken no concrete steps toward sedition except to write to "those who had power in Andalusia," and he tried to marry his son to either the daughter of Arcos or the daughter of Braganza.[152] We know nothing of the correspondence with Braganza on this point, but Arcos and Medina Sidonia did agree to marry their children, the mediator being Father Juan de San Julián, of the Discalced Mercedarians, of which Medina Sidonia was provincial patron. The marriage pact was ordinary except for three important points: It called for unusual speed, so much so that Medina Sidonia agreed to seek a dispensation for his son, who was not of legal age; each lord deposited

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148 BNE ms. 722, 204r–209r.

149 A list from the Marquis of Mirabel, which came from someone he trusted in Portugal, alluded to fourteen lords who were in on the conspiracy, along with the cities of Sanlúcar, Seville, and Ayamonte. BNE ms. 722, 312–313r.

150 The duke's agent in Madrid at that time, Lorenzo Dávila, wrote to the Count of Cabra, Poza's son and heir, telling him he could use the militia belonging to the Duke of Baena, Poza's father, to defend Málaga. In essence, Medina Sidonia renounced command over the Baena troops so the Count of Cabra could use them in the defense of Málaga. BFZ, Altamira, leg. 389, GD 9, 133r–135v, 14 and 15 April 1641; and leg. 431, GD 16, 130r-v, 2 July 1641.

151 BFZ, Altamira, leg. 431, GD 16, 128r–132v, 21 June and 6, 10 and 27 July 1641.

152 BNE ms. 954, 145r–152v and AGFCMS leg. 994.

100,000 ducats in the name of the opposite party in case the marriage did not go through, so the opposite party could use the money of the other; and the king was never mentioned except with reference to the "royal authority" necessary to ensure that the inheritance of the remaining Arcos children would not get in the way of the dowry. In the remaining clauses of the agreement, the word royal (*real*) does not even appear.[153] Philip IV just two years earlier had opposed Medina Sidonia's marriage with Catalina Ponce de León –Arco's daughter-, which probably explains why the Arcos contract, with all its guarantees and haste, deliberately ignored the king's will.

After Haro's visit to Andalusia, Arcos was sent away from the region on a mission he did not want, indicating that his involvement with the projected uprising was, at the very least, ambiguous.[154] A few months later, Juan de Santaelices, a member of the Seville judiciary, told the king about his dealings with the Duke of Arcos, who was delaying his departure for Cuenca, which was where the king had sent him. At a midnight meeting halfway between Seville and Marchena, where Arcos lived, and in the presence of Juan Pantoja, Arcos said he knew nothing about Medina Sidonia having slipped away to Sanlúcar (more on which below) until he heard the news from Santaelices. Arcos expressed his total loyalty to the king, saying that if Medina Sidonia wrote him he would tell him to stop writing, "and that as long as [Medina Sidonia] was disloyal to the king, he could forget about the Duke of Arcos." The next day he left for Cuenca, an indication he was afraid, though he did offer his vassals in place of those of Medina Sidonia to defend Cádiz.[155] At least, this would seem to show that the Andalusian nobility knew something was afoot and did not denounce it, waiting to see which way the wind would blow. The Duke of Arcos, the second-most influential noblemen in Lower Andalusia, could have been a key ally for the conspirators.

We know even less of the other noblemen in the region. The Marquis of Priego, who apparently was mentioned in the Portuguese leaflets as one of the duke's allies, had just married one of his daughters to the duke, so they were family. The Duke of Osuna, cited by the same source, was one of those whom Medina Sidonia visited along the way on his wedding

[153] AGFCMS, leg. 2,140, ratification of marriage contract signed before a notary by Medina Sidonia, 18 August 1641.

[154] Agustín Vázquez de Soto to Duke of Gandía, AHN-N, Osuna, CT 18, doc. 24–2, 17 September 1642.

[155] AHN Consejos leg. 7,261, no. 31a, 25 June 1642.

journey in 1640. Sánchez Márquez accused the Marquis of Maenza of being involved, or at least that is what he said Fray Nicolás de Velasco said in Lisbon.[156]

Finally, as concerns the Portuguese who were involved in the Andalusian coup, Ayamonte admitted that both he and the duke had corresponded with some of them, including the Marquis of Ferreira, the Count of Óvidos (governor of the Algarve), the archbishop of Lisbon, and Manuel de Sousa, nephew of the governor of Castromarín. However, the marquis said the point of this correspondence was to urge the recipients to obey Philip IV.[157] This and other testimony gives us an idea of how intense and fluid the passage of persons and messages was back and forth across the Guadiana in early 1641.[158]

Of the testimony we have, only that of Sánchez Márquez deals with the involvement at the next level down. He absolves some of Medina Sidonia's people and accuses others. In particular, he said that "if there was one I mistrusted, it would be Juan de Montellano."[159] Elsewhere, he suggested that Jacinto Pacheco, duke Manuel Alonso's page and the son of the noble house's late agent and bookkeeper in Seville, should be watched carefully, "and his papers should be collected, where you will find two safe-conducts" with orders to take them to Morocco. Sánchez Márquez suggested that the excuse for the search could be Pacheco's unauthorized presence in Seville, being that he had been exiled to Mamora (Morocco) for six years. Sánchez Márquez further said he knew about Pacheco's involvement because he had had access to his papers in Lisbon. He also accused a cleric named Pinto of having carried the last letters from Portugal to the duke.[160] Although it does not corroborate explicitly Sánchez Márquez's accusation, we know that Pacheco arrived in Sanlúcar from Portugal in late June 1641 with five other men and several letters for Medina Sidonia and the Marquis of Ayamonte and that Pacheco said he

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156 AHN Estado, leg. 8,753, exp. 7, 4 and 15 August, 10 October 1641.

157 At the trial there was testimony from sixteen soldiers in Ayamonte's army proving the "scandalous" frequency with which he dealt with the Portuguese. Including residents and leading personages, there were more than twenty witnesses. BNE ms. 722, 313r–324v.

158 Among the senders of letters was a Portuguese captain, Francisco Liote, who in 1639 had been the duke's emissary to the King of Morocco to discuss handing over the Salé fortress; Liote apparently sought a way of going over to Castile so as to stay loyal to Philip IV. Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 176.

159 AHN Estado, leg. 8,753, exp. 7, 4 and 15 August, 10 October 1641.

160 AHN Estado, leg. 8,753, exp. 7, 15 September 1641. I know nothing about this Pinto, though possibly he was a relative of Juan Pinto Domonte, one of the Sanlúcar gentlemen who accompanied the duke to the Extremadura border during the time of the duke's challenge to Braganza.

needed to speak personally with the duke.[161] It is also true that Pacheco arrived in Lisbon from Marrakech, after having accompanied the Moroccan ambassador on his return to Africa.

Hence, for their plans to succeed, the conspirators counted on general discontent and on earlier contacts with key players, though we know little about the detail or importance of the latter. Perhaps at that point they were simply vague conversations with opponents, along the lines of what was going on in the Duke of Medinaceli's palace in Madrid.[162] In any case, the political mood seemed right. Though the plans were ambitious, the conspirators also seemed willing to see how things evolved politically as they went along, and the options ranged from modest proposals for domestic reform, e.g. the count-duke's departure, lower taxes, and the nobility's return to the Cortes, to more far-fetched notions of a noble or even monarchical republic. What is clear is their desire to achieve peace, at the very least between Andalusia and the foreign powers, including France, Holland, and Braganza's Portugal.

International support and the American treasure: The plotters conceived of a quick, initial coup that would turn the situation in their favor. Everything seems to indicate the coup failed in large part because of lack of coordination. On 10 September, shortly before Medina Sidonia's arrival in Madrid, Pellicer noted a rumor (which began with a French prisoner[163]) connecting the duke with the arrival off Andalusia of thirty-eight French warships with ten thousand men on board, along with fourteen Portuguese ships bound for Cádiz.[164] According to this source, the departure of the navy from Lisbon took place on 28 August, which, Pellicer said, "was verified after learning that it arrived in Lagos, not far from Ayamonte."[165] Thus Medina Sidonia's departure from Sanlúcar for Madrid meant the

[161] Pacheco had been in charge of stocks and seized contraband in Sanlúcar. Velázquez Gaztelu, *Catálogo*, 365–366. One of the duke's ministers, Esteban Belluga de Moncada, told the duke about Pacheco's arrival in Ayamonte: AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 109, 27 June 1641.

[162] Luis Astrana Marín, *Epistolario completo de don Francisco de Quevedo Villegas* (Madrid: Reus, 1946); Elliott, *El conde-duque*; Krzysztof Sliwa, *Cartas, documentos y escrituras de Francisco Gómez de Quevedo y Villegas (1580–1645), caballero de la Orden de Santiago, señor de la villa de la Torre de Juan Abad, y sus parientes* (Pamplona: Eunsa, 2005).

[163] The prisoner said he had been captured in Catalonia and somehow managed to get sent to Portugal.

[164] For a description of the battle that apparently took place in September 1641 between five vessels of Dunkirk against thirty-six from Portugal and France near Cádiz, see BNE VC/170/23, "Copia de una carta…" printed by Francisco de Lyra, perhaps in Cádiz, in 1641.

[165] Pellicer, *Avisos*, 156–160v, 10 September 1641.

conspirators could not count on the outside help they needed for their armed uprising.

Sánchez Márquez confirmed that collaboration by other European powers in favor of the coup was based on the joint Dutch-French-Portuguese squadron, though he was of the opinion that the objective was to first shut off the Andalusian ports in the Mediterranean, then take Cádiz and Sanlúcar, and finally go up the Guadalquivir to support the revolt in Seville organized by the Marquis of Ayamonte. The next step would be to capture the treasure fleet. Sánchez Márquez also said—never mentioning Medina Sidonia by name but referring only to "the accomplice"—that the duke's personal gain would come from dividing up the booty from the Indies fleet with the other plotters, including the French, Portuguese, and Dutch, and that he would keep the ships "to guard the coast."[166] This version coincided almost entirely with that made by his wife, Isabel Márquez, to the Duke of Ciudad Real, governor of Cádiz, which Olivares received on 24 August 1641.[167] Sánchez Márquez also warned that Gibraltar was in danger and would be the next target once the enemy saw it could not take Cádiz.[168]

The person who offered the most details about the plotters' outside help was the Countess of Castilnovo. In her account, she wrote that both Fray Nicolás de Velasco and a brother of secretary Francisco de Lucena attended many meetings with officers of the French and Portuguese navies and that the French admiral had told the Portuguese that "he would not put a single man in Cádiz nor on the Andalusian coast if the Duke of Medina Sidonia did not first board his ship, and that was his order." If the Cádiz venture failed, Castilnovo said, the French navy had orders to attack Bayona (Galicia). She also said France's priority was that Portugal help take Tarragona, after which the French would repay the favor by sending the archbishop of Bordeaux, who also was an admiral, to help Portugal.[169] Also the Dutch had promised to send another group of ships to support the uprising. According to the countess, conversations regarding these plans must have taken place in August 1641, given that all those involved immediately signed on to the plan and sent Fray Nicolás "to quickly help the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who was in bad straits." Furthermore, they issued announcements (*bandos*) along the border

166 BNE ms. 722, 290r-v.
167 BNE ms. 722, 291r. This statement and testimony was not later examined.
168 AHN Estado leg. 8,753, exp. 7, 4 August 1641.
169 Camarero, "La Guerra de Recuperación," 338–350.

concerning the participation of the Duke of Osuna, the Marquis of Priego, and other Andalusian lords. The pamphlets were distributed and the fleet was sent, but both things occurred when Medina Sidonia was on his way to Madrid. According to a Jesuit in Seville, "the news about the pamphlet in Seville is true, and it is not lacking in inventiveness (*ingenio*)."[170] Yet Castilnovo finished by saying that the idea in Portugal (presumably among the Castilian prisoners) was that Velasco, though in the name of Braganza, basically was acting on behalf of Philip IV to stir up false hopes among the Portuguese, being that nobody believed Medina Sidonia could plan something like that. In her opinion, it was all an invention by the Portuguese to "give the people hope and enable their schemes."[171]

According to Ayamonte's two confessions regarding the enemy navies that were to join up in Lisbon, their objective was to go to Málaga and Almería in diversionary maneuvers to allow the plans for rebellion to move ahead. One interesting line of defense put forward by the marquis was that he and the duke did not want war in Andalusia and therefore opposed the presence of enemy fleets in Cádiz or Sanlúcar, as they were afraid the crews would sack the towns, and that is why the rebellion began with the distribution of leaflets calling for freedom. Nevertheless, once Medina Sidonia was on his way to Madrid, the enemy navies seem to have changed their minds and were interested only in the treasure fleet, which had been their goal from the very start.[172]

Alberto Pardo Calderón, who had a commission from the king to investigate the arrival of the enemy fleets in Andalusia, concluded "in essence" that on 13 September the French-Portuguese fleet appeared with fifty ships that remained around Cádiz until 17 September. A week later – around 24 September- the third part of the force, some twenty Dutch ships, appeared. There is documentary evidence that a Dutch navy under the command of Admiral Artus Gijsels did indeed arrive in Cádiz in September 1641, despite Stadtholder Frederik Henrik's budget cuts, with orders to join Medina Sidonia's conspiracy.[173] But the other conclusions in

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[170] "Carta de un padre de la Compañía…" MHE vol. 16, 160–161. The diplomatic correspondence of Florence also refers to the leaflets, which the ambassador called *brutissime*, and he transcribed the highly seditious phrase, "*se il re vive, il regno muore*." ASF pezzo 4,965, 26 December 1640.

[171] She also described how the Duke of Montalbán, governor of Brazil, came to declare his obedience to Braganza so as to not lose his government, given that no one in Brazil remained obedient to Spain. AHN Estado leg. 8,753, exp. 7, Badajoz, 13 September 1641.

[172] BNE ms. 722, 204–209r and 210v–221v.

[173] Professor Maurits Ebben recently discovered the ship's log containing this information. I am deeply grateful to Ebben for this information. About the Dutch warefare

Pardo Calderón's report couldn't be more than suppositions regarding the conspirators' intentions, except for testimony from sailors who said they had been on board the enemy ships.[174] According to a French sailor, the French admiral refused to run any risk once he found out Medina Sidonia was on his way to Madrid.[175] And though there may not be a direct connection, it is true that in early September the Duke of Ciudad Real sacked a guards captain at the Santa Catalina castle in Cádiz for leaving the door open for an entire day, opening up the castle to the Caleta beach.[176] Together, all these reports led Philip IV to order the Count of Peñaranda, commander of the Ayamonte army, to investigate more broadly along the coast.

In his confession, Medina Sidonia mentioned that he himself had given safe-conducts to six people, one of them a cleric from Sanlúcar named Pinto (who also was mentioned by Sánchez Márquez) to deal with the Venetian Republic. Apparently Pinto himself brought news from the ambassadors sent by the conspirators to Venice just as Medina Sidonia received the order to go to Madrid. Seeing that all was lost, don Gaspar decided to not to go to court at first (claiming indisposition) and burned the papers.[177] We know nothing of Venice's potential role in this wide-ranging conspiracy.

In his summary, the royal prosecutor, Morales y Barrionuevo, accused the marquis of planning to hand over American treasure to the enemy.[178] Taking into account the frequent seizures of American silver in the late 1630s and the frustration that caused among the great merchants of Seville, this part of the plot probably was more complicated than simply handing over silver to the enemy.[179] It is more likely the prosecutor was referring to commerce with France and the Netherlands, in which payment in silver was illegal.

Another interesting conection was with the Kingdom of Marrakech. In his confession, Ayamonte told a story that would seem to indicate that the origins of the seditious plan dated from one month before the Portuguese

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budget, see Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic. Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477–1806,* Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995, 538–539.

174 BNE ms. 722, 330r-v.

175 BNE ms. 722, 209v–210r.

176 Ciudad Real informed Medina Sidonia, his military superior, of this decision. AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 144, 2 September 1641.

177 BNE ms. 954, 145r–152v and AGFCMS leg. 994.

178 BNE ms. 722, 222v–224v.

179 Díaz Blanco, *Así trocaste*, 139–164.

rebellion, November 1640, when the marquis heard the duke and Luis del Castillo (the duke's chief steward and "very much in his confidence") talking about an early sixteenth-century event in which the third duke of Medina Sidonia threatened he would "bring the Moors back to Castile" if Ferdinand and Isabella did not give Gibraltar back to him.[180] In considering the possible Moroccan connection, one should remember that Medina Sidonia at this point was dealing directly with the King of Marrakech's ambassador to the Spanish court, as we saw earlier.

Sánchez Márquez also provided much information on this topic. In one of his statements he said the conspiracy included the possibility of requesting military support from Morocco in case the plot ran into trouble or needed men.[181] On 10 October, Sánchez Márquez wrote a letter to Olivares from the home of one Simón Rodríguez in which he recounted the visit the previous day by Father Matías de San Francisco, a preacher who had served in Morocco. Sánchez Márquez said that while speaking of Moroccan affairs, "this friar had good things to say about that king, [who] had offered to help His Majesty … with men, weapons, and ammunition." Sánchez Márquez then linked the Moroccan king's offer with the retention in Sanlúcar of the monarch's emissary and with the fact that Medina Sidonia had sent his own secretary, Juan de Montellano, to Morocco:

> Putting this all together with what Fray Nicolás de Velasco told me in Lisbon, that if it were necessary [the duke] would transport Moors to conquer Upper and Lower Andalusia, I conclude, most excellent lord, that he dealt with the Berbers on behalf of the duke making it appear that it was in the service of His Majesty, may God protect him. Thus it would be of great utility to [interrogate] Juan de Montellano and Jacinto Pacheco … and sire, this good Fray Matías, who must return to Morocco, should leave as quickly as possible so as to disabuse [the Moroccan king] of the idea and so he does not give military aid to the tyrant John of Berganza.[182]

We certainly know that Medina Sidonia's attitude toward Morocco worried Madrid, so much so that in 1642 the Council of State addressed the subject and the relationship between Medina Sidonia and the Moroccan king, paying more attention to Northern African affairs than it had done since the early 1620s.[183] We also know that thanks to his contacts with Marrakech, Medina Sidonia was able to manufacture large amounts of

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[180] BNE ms. 722, 204r–209r.
[181] AHN Estado, leg. 8,753, exp. 7, 4 and 15 August, 10 October 1641.
[182] AHN Estado, leg. 8,753, exp. 7, 16 October 1641.
[183] Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 183–188.

excellent gunpowder, a product that was not only strategic and scarce but also very profitable. It is therefore not out of the question to think that Medina Sidonia sought not only to prevent the King of Marrakech from helping Philip IV but furthermore to use the Moroccan to his own ends. This would mean Sánchez Márquez was right, but it would also mean Medina Sidonia had impeded the King of Marrakech's military aid to Philip IV so as to allow his brother-in-law to revolt in Portugal. This suggestion that the Andalusian duke previously had been involved in the Portuguese events does not appear anywhere else in the documentation, as far as I know.

Political objectives: According to Medina Sidonia's confession, the other plotters asked him in the early days of the plan to send emissaries to Lisbon who were authorized to join forces with Braganza or with any other ruler or republic, which the duke had not done, giving reasons and excuses. Nevertheless, we know that the plans that were carried out, albeit too late, were hatched in Lisbon with the participation of Fray Nicolás de Velasco and Juan de Montellano, representing the duke. The central role of Lisbon in the plan, according to the Marquis of Ayamonte, can be explained because *dom* João very quickly showed interest in the Andalusian conspiracy, well aware that without Andalusian assistance in the war, Philip IV would have a hard time putting down the Portuguese rebels.[184]

Adding more information about the Portuguese plotters, Medina Sidonia said they had tried to persuade him to join by suggesting he appoint himself king of Andalusia, which he said seemed crazy to him. But the duke's description of the plans also referred to the navies of France, Portugal, and Holland, though in his version he would be the one to capture Cádiz and then burn the royal fleet, after which they planned to disembark in Sanlúcar. At the same time as all this was going on, pamphlets would be distributed along the border promising to rid Andalusia of taxes, and letters were written to cities, towns, grandees, and the titled nobility. The object was to oblige the king to remove the count-duke, who had "invented" tribute payments, and to return the nobility to Castile's representative assembly, the Cortes. According to the duke, the Marquis of Ayamonte wanted to go even further and turn Andalusia into a republic, breaking (or at least weakening) ties to the monarchy of Philip IV.[185]

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[184] BNE ms. 722, 210–221v.

[185] BNE ms. 954, 145r–152v and AGFCMS leg. 994.

In Morales Barrionuevo's words, Ayamonte wanted to incite Andalusia to rise up and become a "free republic" and to "restore the noble estate" in the Cortes.[186] Sánchez Márquez, meanwhile, echoing the words of Fray Nicolás de Velasco, also said the plotters aimed at ending tributes in all of Andalusia. With reference to the Hispanic Monarchy, he added that their ultimate goal was that Andalusia be at peace with all Christendom, that Philip IV remain king of Castile, and that the new Portuguese king promise to naturalize those Castilians who wished to join the coup, giving them tax exemptions.[187] This is the first indication we have in the seventeenth century of a plan to divide up the inheritance of the Hapsburgs; similar plans would become relatively frequent in the second half of the century.

According to Ayamonte's first statement, shortly after the December 1640 coup in Lisbon he asked the duke to send Luis del Castillo to his palace. He wanted to ensure that Medina Sidonia was not seduced by the rumors circulating in Portugal about him becoming king of Andalusia. So the marquis suggested that, if he were planning something, he should "try to free [Andalusia] and turn it into a republic." In Ayamonte's opinion, the notion of proclaiming oneself king of Andalusia was a mistake because the other Andalusian lords would be opposed, while the republican option could remain open to some future return of Philip IV or his son, Baltasar Carlos, as sovereign, "once the tributes cease or there is an opportunity." Up to here, as we see, the accounts of the two leaders more or less coincided on the point of Ayamonte's "republicanism." But they differ in how they interpreted the marquis's role in the affair. According to the marquis himself, he sought to "preserve" Andalusia within the bosom of the monarchy. That way, too, he thought the duke could count on the support of the cities.[188] Nevertheless, it is also important to remember that the term "king of Andalusia" in reference to the Medina Sidonias had been used for decades, though in a more literary and laudatory sense.[189]

4. *The Burden of Pardon*

Quevedo wrote in his *Política de Dios* that a good ruler should issue pardons just as Christ did with the adulteress. In the same work, Quevedo

[186] BNE ms. 722, 222v–224v.
[187] BNE ms. 722, 88–108.
[188] BNE ms. 722, 204–221v.
[189] Luis Salas Almela, "La agencia en Madrid del VIII duque de Medina Sidonia, 1615–1636," *Hispania,* 224 (2006), 909–958, 948–949.

mentioned an anecdote according to which King Alfonso X decided not to punish someone so as to not stain the man's entire illustrious family. Instead, he summoned the rebel, by himself, and lovingly scolded him, taking note of the man's lineage and bloodline and obliging him to recognize his faults and mend his ways.[190] Similarly, Saavedra Fajardo counseled Philip IV in 1640 that, faced with sedition, "it is best to restrain rigor, exercising it rarely, to dissimulate and be calm before those who cannot be punished and to win the hearts of everyone."[191]

Throughout the autumn of 1641, as the king's ministers continued trying to make it appear that Medina Sidonia was still in the king's good graces, they were busy investigating the duke's collaborators, particularly the Marquis of Ayamonte. This double track allowed the crown on the one hand to defend the duke's innocence while, on the other, dissuade him from any idea of reactivating the plan. On 26 September, a few days after the duke's confession, the king sent the Council of Castile the legal case (*causa*) against Francisco de Guzmán y Zúñiga, the Marquis of Ayamonte. From the very start, the prosecution did not go through ordinary channels. As with Medina Sidonia, the king ordered that only very few, well-selected aides be involved in the case and that the testimony of the defendants and principal witnesses not be recorded by notaries but rather directly by José González or Alonso Guillén de la Carrera. The specially appointed judges were Francisco Antonio de Alarcón and Antonio de Contreras. This essentially turned the prosecution into a matter of politics, not justice, as the marquis himself would complain months later when he gave his second statement.[192] The extrajudicial procedure above all reveals the crown's weakness, as it was forced to protect itself from excessive publicity about such a potentially dangerous plot; the weakness also would have been apparent had the crown given the marquis the pardon it offered to Medina Sidonia, which would have been likely had ordinary channels been used.

It was in this context that Ayamonte made his first statement, on 16–17 October 1641, in Illescas, before Guillén de la Carrera, a member of the Council of Castile. By that time, Medina Sidonia's challenge to the Duke of Braganza had been published, and even if the marquis were unaware of

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[190] Francisco de Quevedo, *Política de Dios y gobierno de Cristo*. (Madrid: Swan, 1985 [1626]), part 1, ch. 7 113; part 2, ch. 23, 250.

[191] Diego de Saavedra Fajardo, *Idea de un príncipe político cristiano representada en cien empresas* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1999 [Munich 1640]), *empresa* 73.

[192] BNE ms. 722, 209v.

the confession by the duke in which he accused Ayamonte of being the ringleader, it was general knowledge that the objective of the challenge was to make the relationship between the king and Medina Sidonia appear normal. In any case, Ayamonte surely could intuit the duke's confession from what Guillén told him in his attempts to convince the marquis to himself confess. Knowing the conspiracy was definitely vanquished, and guessing what the duke had said, the marquis therefore did finally confess, though he still sought to exculpate himself to the degree possible.

The marquis began by appealing to royal clemency, comparing Philip IV to God, saying the king had been placed on Earth to use "his same clemency and kindness." This appeal that fault be pardoned with honor and life was, of course, itself an implicit confession. These three elements—clemency, honor, and life—which Medina Sidonia also used in his confession, suggest a defensive strategy aimed at achieving the same result. Though we do not have a decree resolving the case, this first phase of the prosecution against Ayamonte was to some degree enveloped by Medina Sidonia's pardon, and by the end of 1641 it was in a sort of procedural limbo while the marquis remained imprisoned. Unrelated events months later would end up determining the marquis's fate.

From a procedural point of view, all this was highly unusual. Sánchez Márquez complained in a letter to Olivares that no member of the Royal Council had asked him anything, and he mentioned certain documents he had been unable to present as evidence for the prosecution. The cause of this silence was the pardon granted to Medina Sidonia in September 1641, which blocked two lines of investigation: into the duke's involvement, being that he had been pardoned, and into Ayamonte's, because it was nearly impossible to separate his guilt from that of Medina Sidonia. In any case, Olivares's weakened government at that point could not have absorbed the public discredit involved in admitting that the leader of the Guzmans had conspired against the king, and Philip IV did not want to be forced to sack Olivares.[193]

Diego de Saavedra wrote that any rebellion or conspiracy implicitly counts on the participation of the fickle masses and that conspiracies consist of phases and can turn more radical or milder depending on the reaction of the ruler.[194] At exactly the same time as he wrote these

[193] From a wider point of view, J. Elliott underlined that those efforts were part of the strategy held by the Olivares regime to safeguard the count-duke's own reputation. Elliott, *El conde-duque*, 599–602.

[194] Saavedra Fajardo, *Idea de un príncipe, empresa* 73.

well-known aphorisms for Philip IV, both elements clearly were on the minds of Medina Sidonia and Ayamonte. There is no doubt that Medina Sidonia's conspiracy was as open-ended and poorly planned as the one the Duke of Híjar would attempt a few years later in Aragón.[195] The duke and his allies sought to challenge the monarchy, given Philip IV's weak position, and take advantage of the possibilities that might present themselves. The plans were not explicit except as concerned the quick coup in Andalusia to force the king to negotiate with the leaders. Though the coup was just a plan, and despite the fact that the duke's doubts ending up neutralizing it, from the king's point of view the mere failure to act on the Portuguese front, which meant Spain lost the opportunity to strike the first blow against the rebels, was deserving of severe punishment. Nonetheless, that crime, the most serious—by commission or omission—was virtually impossible to prove, and anyway the investigation inevitably would hurt the image of the monarchy that Philip IV was so desperate to preserve. Thus the duke's passivity in the war against Portugal never appeared in the concrete accusations against him.

3.3. *A Trip Without Permission and the Impossible Prosecution* (*June 1642–January 1643*)

The Duke of Medina Sidonia's sudden departure from Sanlúcar in August 1641 severely limited his range of action in Andalusia, the territory to which his interests were tied. His military authority, the sphere the Medina Sidonia had most strengthened since they were appointed captain generals of the coast in 1588, diminished if he was not there. And the seigneurial estate's loss of leadership, both traumatic and unexpected, put an end to normal government and to all the ways in which his noble power was exercised. The damage to his seigneurial power was enormous, and it would only get worse as the months passed. This is one of the essential facets of the weeks during which Medina Sidonia was ostracized in Garrovillas, completely marginalized and powerless, far away from his estate, the royal court, and any meaningful source of news. We can only speculate as to Philip IV's motivations for leaving Medina Sidonia in limbo so long, but it seems to have been a sort of test as to the state of the duke's loyalty and his inclination to flee to Portugal. If the duke fled, the king

[195] Ezquerra Abadía, *La conspiración…*; Solano Camón and Sanz Camañes, "Nuevas perspectivas"; Valladares, *La rebelión*, 96–101.

could freely move against him and his property; if he did not, perhaps he had truly repented.

The duke tried to put an end to all this in summer 1642, a few weeks after he had been appointed Captain General of the Cantabrian Army, headquartered in Vitoria.[196] Apparently while he was in Trujillo, having just begun the trip to his new Cantabrian post, he suddenly decided to go to Sanlúcar. Seen in the context of the duke's weakened seigneurial authority,[197] the episode was in part triggered by various letters from his servants over recent months with alarming warnings about the state of his estate, particularly the accounts and treasury. Those letters, which would be introduced as evidence during the trial, were joined by messages from military authorities in Mamora and Larache lamenting the poor state of the army along the border ever since the duke had left.[198] But the duke's decision should also be seen in light of the newly credible possibility that the political-military balance in Andalusia might be upset. Indeed, in those days there was news that the French ambassador in Lisbon was pressuring Braganza to take the initiative and attack by land and by sea, the latter with a fleet of fourteen ships in Lisbon.[199]

Nonetheless, everyone knew that, having been accused of treason and signed a confession, albeit with the king's pardon, Medina Sidonia should have obtained the king's express permission before traveling to Sanlúcar. His arrival in his seigneurial capital caused a fuss throughout Andalusia. Lorenzo de Andrade, the Seville Almirantazgo's inspector in charge of anti-smuggling operations in Sanlúcar, notified his superiors of the duke's arrival the very day he got there, on 20 June 1642. The following day, don Gaspar wrote to Juan de Santaelices, who had extraordinary powers in Seville—he already was president of the Casa de la Contratación[200] and now had been appointed regent of the Audiencia court—to justify his trip, saying he wished to better serve the king by speeding up the cavalry levy and also because he missed his wife.[201] On 22 June, Andrade wrote to

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[196] The Council of Cantabria was trying to sort out the overlapping jurisdictions of the Captaincy General of Guipúzcoa, the viceroy of Navarre, and the *corregimiento* of Guipúzcoa. See Susana Truchuelo, *Gipuzkoa y el poder real en la Alta Edad Moderna* (San Sebastián: Diputación Foral de Guipuzkoa, 2004) 154–55.

[197] Domínguez Ortiz thought the flight was inexplicably stupid. See "La conjura."

[198] AHN Estado leg. 8.754; on the military aspect see Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 189–95.

[199] RB, II/1.431, 534r–539v, nd, allegedly the version of the accountant Arzac, who left Lisbon on 6 May 1642.

[200] AGI, Contratación, 5.785, lib. 1, 191v.

[201] AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, exp. 31a, 21 June 1642.

Juan de la Calle, the outgoing Audiencia regent,[202] saying he was in touch with someone very close to the duke "who considers himself a very loyal vassal of His Majesty and who offers to work miracles and tell whomever [he is ordered to] all about the duke's plans." Andrade said the duke had said that any departure from Sanlúcar would be over his dead body, though his wife and servants had pleaded with him. According to the loyal vassal who was talking to Andrade, if the duke were permitted to stay in Sanlúcar, "he would be a faithful vassal of His Majesty."[203] In other words, this royal minister's first interpretation, based on his source, was that by staying in Sanlúcar, Medina Sidonia was trying to force a return to the status quo. There, he had a new way of pressuring the king, being that it was far more awkward to make him go to Vitoria from Sanlúcar than from Garrovillas, given the possibility of the uproar that the duke's refusal to obey would cause. If there was one place where don Gaspar could gather strength to oppose this trip to Vitoria, it was in his court in Sanlúcar, where at the very least he could take stock of his resources and his possibilities.

While the duke remained there, Andrade continued writing letters. On 27 June he wrote again to Juan de la Calle, saying he did not dare to commit to writing what he knew, for fear of being murdered, but that the dangers to the monarchy were even more grave: "I remind you that it behooves us to keep a close eye on this matter, as where there's smoke, there's fire, and the third time we may not be able to control the fire. Rip this letter up, for the love of God." Andrade also suggested that a royal official be put in charge of Sanlúcar to keep an eye on the duke with the excuse of controlling smuggling.[204] What Andrade did not dare to write probably referred to his suspicions regarding another seditious plot, the third in a series, one that allegedly began with an episode of open disobedience by the eighth duke of Medina Sidonia toward Philip IV. It never came to anything, and little is known of it.

Whether or not Medina Sidonia went to Sanlúcar to try to reactivate the conspiracy, the fact is that he did not remain quiet. On 22 June he wrote to Juan de Santaelices telling him he was sending a servant, Lorenzo

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[202] He was waiting for Santaelices to take the post, though a satirical song around that time depicted Juan de la Calle as the man in charge: "Don Juan de la Calle is who/governs this monarchy/He holds it up and guides it/ through thick and through thin./ And someone in the know/ finding himself in this situation/ said rightly or wrongly/ that Spain is a manure box/ and he is the beetle." Cited in MHE vol. 16, 291.

[203] AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, Sanlúcar, 20 and 22 June 1642. Andrade even asked an Almirantazgo notary to certify that he had seen the duke in his palace on 20 June.

[204] AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, Sanlúcar, 27 June 1642.

Dávila, to speak with Santaelices in Seville. Dávila then would continue his journey to meet with Philip IV and explain to him why the duke had returned to Sanlúcar.[205] Medina Sidonia sought to give the impression that the motivation for his trip had been strictly to serve the king, particularly regarding the levy of 1,000 cavalry he had offered Philip IV. That is how the duke justified his arrival to Juan de la Calle; he wrote about problems with the levy, which was short money, horses, and men, and he said that was why he had earlier sent Lorenzo Dávila from Garrovillas to Sanlúcar. He also announced Dávila's proximate arrival in Seville, where he would try to sell some of the duke's belongings to raise money for the levy. He ended by remarking that it was a great consolation to do all this for the king, of which Santaelices was witness.[206] Indeed, Lorenzo Dávila arrived in Seville on 23 June with orders from the duke to first meet with De la Calle and with Santaelices and then travel to Cuenca to meet with the king and Olivares. Nevertheless, according to Dávila himself, he stayed only two days in Seville. All the stories and rumors against his lord made him decide to return to Sanlúcar and tell his lord to immediately leave for Vitoria.[207] The stories undoubtedly concerned the revival of the conspiracy.

Meanwhile, Olivares was well aware of what was going on in Andalusia. Don Juan Pantoja wrote the *valido* to say that the duke's presence in Sanlúcar was what most worried him, Juan de Santaelices, and Juan de la Calle. He said he wished the duke

> would simply end this ill-advised journey and go on to Vitoria. The means to do this are being put into effect. I am most hopeful about sending Lorenzo Dávila back to Sanlúcar with letters from everyone telling him what a poor choice he has made. God willing, our efforts on behalf of His Majesty bear fruit and this gentleman's errors are mended. It is a shame that his behavior and disobedience leaves him open to His Majesty's anger and at risk of losing your protection and goodwill.[208]

The peculiar and uncomfortable position both of Olivares and his creatures in response to Medina Sidonia's latest challenge is clear; opposing the duke while at the same time not causing a scandal, so as not to hurt Olivares, was a very careful balancing act.

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[205] AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, Sanlúcar, 22 June 1642.

[206] ibid.

[207] AGFCMS, leg. 994. According to his own account, Dávila weeks later did meet in Molina de Aragón with Olivares, who told him to immediately return to Sanlúcar, where he arrived on 21 August.

[208] AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, Seville, 25 June 1642.

Pantoja wrote to Medina Sidonia himself at greater length, lamenting that the joy at the duke's return to the "peace and greater comfort" of his own home was incomplete, lacking, as he did, royal permission for the trip. For that reason, and owing to his esteem for the ducal house, Pantoja said his "heart had been broken" to see Medina Sidonia "so exposed to such pernicious attacks," especially given the care with which Olivares ensured that the duke would be "free of slander from emulators so that he and his house might enjoy the splendor they deserve." Pantoja took credit for having advised the eighth duke of Medina Sidonia years earlier to not be disobedient or rebellious—this must have been the first of the three conspiracies mentioned earlier—"for which Your Excellency and the duke were very grateful." The only people who would derive any happiness from the duke's actions, Pantoja went on, were his enemies, who would enjoy the king's anger with the duke. Therefore, Juan de Santaelices and Juan de la Calle had decided to prevent Lorenzo Dávila from continuing his journey to Cuenca; instead, they were sending him back to the duke to beg him to leave Sanlúcar and go to Vitoria. Pantoja also indicated he understood the duke's motivations, particularly his frustration at not having been properly compensated for his efforts on behalf of the king.[209] A letter from Santaelices to Medina Sidonia that same day used similar language, though he said the king was honoring the duke by ordering him to take such an important post, presiding over a council whose other members included great men and an archbishop. He also referred to the duke's advisers as "young men without obligations who have been deceived."[210]

Santaelices wrote as well to Olivares, telling him about the efforts he had made with the duke's two leading aides, Juan de Liébana and Lorenzo Dávila, to get the duke to leave Sanlúcar. Santaelices wondered what the cause of the duke's "error" was, saying Liébana had told him it was because the duke did not want to be posted to Vitoria and also because he had received an anonymous letter telling him he would be murdered on his way to the Basque Country. Santaelices tried to find out more about this news, to no avail, so he focused on getting the duke to leave, also pressuring his most loyal servants and the duchess to persuade the duke. This apparently was the context in which the duke exclaimed that if the king arrested him for disobedience they would have to tear him limb from limb (*hacerle pedazos*) before he would leave Sanlúcar. In response, Santaelices suggested that Olivares try to work with the notion, suggested by the duke

[209] ibid.
[210] AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, exp. 31, nd, but certainly 25 June 1642.

himself, of serving the king somewhere other than Vitoria, giving him hope of a change of posting. In any case, Dávila and Santaelices convinced the duke to leave Sanlúcar by pointing to two things: first, the dissatisfaction that news of his arrival had caused in Seville, which it appears was not the case; and news that Portugal was preparing a convoy of warships which, if it were to attack Andalusia while the duke was there, would invite accusations of his complicity with the enemy, even if he had nothing to do with it. The most important thing for Santaelices was that don Gaspar "lose his fear" and start his journey to Vitoria.[211]

And indeed, on 27 June, just one week after having arrived in Sanlúcar, the duke of Medina Sidonia left for Cantabria,[212] alerting Pantoja, De la Calle, and Santaelices of his decision. To Pantoja he said he wished to "disprove the ill-founded malice and reckless stories of the masses [*el vulgo*], which one can't get away from." He insisted that his trip to Sanlúcar had been very useful with regard to the cavalry levy, but in a postscript written from his carriage, in his own handwriting, he thanked Pantoja for having made him see the error of his ways.[213] The duke wrote to Santaelices saying he knew the latter had been the origin of the arguments pushing him to leave, for which he was grateful.[214]

The duke justified his latest challenge to Philip IV alleging homesickness for his family and a desire to better serve the king. But in parts of the correspondence during those days, the duke went further, insinuating that he had resolved the tension between obedience (i.e. going to Vitoria) and defending his own interests by going to Sanlúcar, from where he hoped to negotiate with the king to get a posting more to his liking, which meant something closer to his power base. Liébana's version, according to which the duke feared he would be murdered on his way to Vitoria, cannot be corroborated, which is not surprising. It is therefore most logical to think that Medina Sidonia was disobedient because he hoped to regain control of his own destiny, either by inciting Andalusia to rise up with the help of the French and Portuguese warships, or, at the very least, by taking stock of his forces.

Lorenzo Dávila was well aware of what he stood to gain by halting his lord's disobedience, though at the same time he sought desperately to save the duke's image once the latter decided to go to Vitoria. Dávila wrote

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211 AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, exp. 31a, 25 June 1642.

212 Inspector Andrade wrote on the 27th to Juan de la Calle to point to his own role in encouraging the duke to leave. AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, exp. 31b, 27 June 1642.

213 AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, 27 June 1642.

214 AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, exp. 31d, 27 June 1642.

to various royal ministers, asking them to defend the duke to Olivares. But Dávila also well knew that his own loyalty to the king was deserving of compensation, which he received,[215] and therefore he also asked Juan de la Calle to write to José González on his behalf: "My efforts and pains in service of His Majesty deserve thanks."[216]

Though we can only present hypotheses, the relationship between Dávila and Juan de la Calle poses some interesting questions. We know that Dávila cheated Medina Sidonia financially, thanks to confidential tips he received from Madrid regarding monetary policy. Juan de la Calle, meanwhile, in August 1641 was removed temporarily from his post and replaced with someone whom the king trusted more, precisely because of the close contact between De la Calle and Medina Sidonia until September. So both Dávila and De la Calle, who made great show of their separation from the duke, may have acted out of a desire to not appear involved in the duke's unclear plans, regardless of their breadth. At the same time, we know that in May 1642 Dávila told authorities in Seville that his lord, instead of going from Garrovillas to Vitoria, was on his way to Sanlúcar, and Dávila himself told José González in a letter dated 27 June that he had done so. De la Calle gave that same information to Olivares on 14 May.[217] So it is obvious that Dávila's betrayal of his lord made it even more unlikely that the duke could reactivate the plot.

This second conspiracy by the ninth duke, if it in fact existed, is even more murky than the first. Medina Sidonia had good reasons for trying to return to his power base, though clearly he was taking a big risk with his disobedience. He was under no banishment order or conviction, yet everyone was aware that his decision was highly suspicious. Once again, he opted to run the risk of worsening his position by going to Andalusia, where he could take stock of his forces, though the outcome was very disappointing for him. He not only lost support, including from servants and aides afraid of royal punishment from which their lord could no longer protect them, but, in addition, his scope of action was severely curtailed as a result of key royal appointments of men such as Santaelices, the Count of Peñaranda, and the Count of Chinchón in Lower Andalusia.

In any case, Medina Sidonia's decision to drop the plan was surely a relief for the moribund government of Olivares, who thus avoided yet another distraction, possibly a military one, in Andalusia. That explains

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[215] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 411–12.
[216] AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, four letters, 27 June 1642.
[217] AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, Seville, 14 May 1642.

why it was not only Dávila and Andrade who quickly reported their own actions to Madrid, but also the three ministers in Seville who wrote to José González (one of Olivares's closest aides) the very day they found out the duke was on his way to Vitoria, hopeful of being compensated for their efforts.[218] Santaelices expressed satisfaction "because it is true that this area wished for the duke to stay, and it is said that the letter that prompted his return came from Seville, and I will look into this." The duke's departure thus avoided the need for strict vigilance in Andalusia: "Even though the duke will no longer be able to incite people here, even if he wanted to … I believe the king will not look good if he takes up arms against his vassals." Don Juan de la Calle was even more explicit regarding the alarm in Seville, though he agreed that Medina Sidonia would not have succeeded: "The duke's plans have had huge consequences on everything; his stay here riled up the nobility, and there was every sort of talk and intention. I am very glad to have achieved my wish." Pantoja, meanwhile, said that with the duke gone, "this land, which was in such confusion, will calm down and my lord the count [Olivares] will not have to worry." He added a note of support for Medina Sidonia, saying the duke had been persuaded with words, and that therefore Olivares "should continue giving him the favor and treatment his great house deserves."[219]

In July, Santaelices wrote a series of letters to Olivares with his opinion of the duke's trip and his intentions. All that can be deduced from them is that Medina Sidonia still figured that the king's weak position would enable the duke to speak for Lower Andalusia and claim what he believed was owed to him for his services, relying on popular discontent and such classic devices as freeing prisoners and passing out money. Santaelices wrote that Seville had reacted to the duke's arrival with enormous pleasure and that some people expected that their evil plans would now succeed; unfortunately he did not clarify what he meant, but it appeared to refer to the opposition to Olivares. Others simply hoped that the duke's open act of disobedience would force the king not to remove the nobility from their homes. The duke's departure meant that malcontents had to "clip their wings," he said. In any case, his advice was not to allow the duke to return home for the time being, given that the coals might still be warm in Andalusia.[220]

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[218] Pantoja was rewarded with an appointment, on 28 June 1642, as Santaelices's assistant in the presidency of the Casa de la Contratación, and the following year he was named president. AGI Contratación, leg. 5.785, lib. 1, 191v–192v and 198v–200v, 22 May 1643.

[219] AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, Seville and Cádiz, three letters, 28 June 1642.

[220] AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, Seville, July 1642.

On his way from Castilblanco to Vitoria, Medina Sidonia sent instructions to Lorenzo Dávila in Molina de Aragón, asking him to speak with the count-duke. Above all, he must tell Olivares that the duke was obeying the king's orders by going to Vitoria and that he would always recognize the *valido*'s favors. The duke justified his trip to Sanlúcar, aside from his desire to see his wife and make progress with the cavalry levy, by saying he wished to show everyone who had slandered him that there was no danger, given the ease with which he recommenced his journey to Vitoria. He did, however, point out that he had not disobeyed any express order from the king, and he said that news from Portugal, according to which Braganza intended to send a fleet from Lisbon, had prompted him to return to help defend his territory. Dávila should tell the count-duke all of this, he said, and also add that the post that Medina Sidonia was going to assume in Vitoria was of a lower rank than the posts of other noblemen, "because I do not have the title of Captain General." Dávila should also ask Olivares to allow him to serve in Sanlúcar, "with all the security that he wishes." And even if all this could not be granted, he trusted that Olivares might be able to give him a post as *mayordomo mayor* or *sumiller*, serving under His Excellency (i.e. Olivares), or some presidency or military rank in Flanders or Italy. And finally, he told Dávila, "you will beg His Excellency to respect my authority and reputation, asking him to give me [a seat on] the Council of State." Once in Molina, Dávila was to meet with José González before seeing Olivares, and then return to Sanlúcar to continue working on the levy. Days later, the duke sent Dávila a letter in Molina, telling him he hoped he had managed to regain his uncle's favor.[221]

Despite the duke's deluded optimism, made manifest in these instructions, the damage he caused himself with his trip to Sanlúcar was enormous. In the eyes of many of his clan members, the mission he had been assigned in Vitoria was essentially the last loyalty test upon which the future of the house of Medina Sidonia rested. That, at least, was what his uncle, the Patriarch of the Indies (a papal title), wrote him on 28 July, when the duke had just arrived in Salamanca. The letter is of particular interest as it came from a relative who was very close to the king; he warned the duke that he had every hope the latter would serve well in Vitoria, for there was a great deal at stake. He was quite clear: the house of

[221] AGFCMS, leg. 994, 1 and 11 July 1642. According to Dávila himself, he met with Olivares in Molina de Aragón; Olivares told him to immediately return to Sanlúcar, where he arrived on 21 August.

Medina Sidonia was so weak that its future depended exclusively on the king, and he even mentioned the possible end of the line.[222] The king's support, obviously, would come only if the duke were absolutely loyal and obedient.

But it was too late. Medina Sidonia and all his servants were arrested in August 1642 in Vitoria, where he handed over his weapons to the *alcalde de corte*, Jerónimo de Quijada. To the surprise of many, there was no unrest or uprising.[223] By 13 August he was a prisoner in the Coca castle.[224] Only don Luis del Castillo, the duke's *valido*, managed to escape, though he was arrested in Béjar, where he had sought sanctuary, and was sent, by order of the king, to the *alcázar* of Segovia.[225] Judicial proceedings against the duke began; the indictment included several sets of letters concerning the plot, among them those of Sánchez Márquez and Clara Gonzaga. There were also letters to the duke from his aides in the uncertain weeks following his last departure from Sanlúcar. In one document, the five notaries (*escribanos*) of the city of Medina Sidonia offered a discouraging assessment of the year during which their lord had been gone. The text seems to indicate their fear that the duke's absence would provide an opportunity for royal judicial officials to interfere in the ducal estate, undermining the notaries' own power.[226] The notaries chose a good moment to pressure the duke; they knew how much he needed money (in response to which they offered to buy their own posts) and also knew he would have great difficulty responding to an open challenge to his authority.

Indeed, the duke was aware of the damage his absence had inflicted on his seigneurial authority. Juan de Liébana kept him informed, telling him there was disorder in the ducal state and danger on the seas: "Everything suffers, as I have told Your Excellency; His Majesty's ministers get in our way instead of helping, and they are ruining the estate." Liébana said that in the face of this outside interference, all the duke's servants had closed ranks around *licenciado* Garibay, president of the ducal council in Sanlúcar and the duke's highest-ranking aide. Emphatically, he told the duke (again) that nothing so far had brought about any economic improvement. Pressure from the royal ministers was above all hurting the duke's

222 AHN Estado, leg. 8.754, Madrid, 28 July 1642.

223 The papal nuncio was surprised there was no reaction; ASV, Segreto-Stato, Spagna, 85, Madrid, 13 August 1642.

224 Quijada to the governor of the Council of Castile, AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, no. 31k, 13 and 18 August 1642.

225 AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, no. 31m and 31n, 20 and 24 August 1642.

226 AHN Estado, leg. 8.754, Medina Sidonia, 19 July 1642.

finances, but, Liébana said, Garibay would fight them off using mortgages as a defense, "and no one can do that better."[227]

Another leading ducal aide, don Esteban Belluga de Moncada, wrote a letter the same day as Liébana, saying Garibay and Juan de la Calle had been put in charge of raising the 1,000 cavalry that Medina Sidonia had not raised yet, and that the two of them, along with Belluga, Liébana, and Miguel Páez would form a war council in Sanlúcar. Enemy forces "will be daring now, knowing that Your Excellency is not in the city or near the coasts," he wrote.[228] The duke's agent in Seville, Sánchez Asensio, also participated in the cavalry levy; in a letter to his lord, he complained of the actions by royal ministers. He also complained, quoting inhabitants of Seville, about the inaction of the *asistente*, Seville's governor, probably because he was under the control of Santaelices, "who today is in charge of everything."[229]

Almost at the same time as the duke was arrested, his wife received orders from the king to leave Sanlúcar with her family. The man chosen to organize the departure of the family from their palace was none other than Juan de Santaelices. Being that at that point only he knew that Philip IV had decided to order the duke's arrest, his fear of disturbances was such that he assigned a large military detachment to be ready to enter Sanlúcar with weapons raised, if necessary. That possibility horrified him, as he understood that it would discredit the king, whose orders alone should be enough to force obedience. But his description of Sanlúcar shows the cause of his fears: "[There are] French, Portuguese, killers, fugitives, and sailors, and the dukes have always protected them such that no royal minister has ever dared imprison them." Though Santaelices probably was exaggerating the difficulty of his mission, his depiction of Sanlúcar is still indicative of the obstacles that royal judicial officials had always encountered there. In any case, he went, surrounded by his aides, many of whom had served for years in Seville and were well known. His fear was that once the local population saw that the duke's family had left, they would realize the altered status of the city and rise up. Santaelices provided detailed descriptions of his actions and contacts with religious figures and the duke's aides to persuade them that he only wished to get the house of

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227 AHN Estado, leg. 8.754, 20 July 1642.

228 The levy of 1,000 cavalry was very expensive; the cost of one horseman was calculated to be 3,421 ducats, and the entire company 20,300. AHN Estado, leg. 8.754, Sanlúcar, 20 July 1642.

229 AHN Estado, leg. 8.754, Seville, 22 July 1642.

Medina Sidonia out of its terrible predicament. If it was a "miracle," as he said, that there was no violence, it was even more miraculous that he made the duke's retinue understand that they could best serve their lord by obeying the king. Thus Santaelices found support in don Juan de Liébana, who helped persuade the duchess to leave Sanlúcar with all her children. Two reasons were presented to her: it was better not to give more ammunition to the duke's enemies, and any military attack along the coast would be blamed on the duke. He had been so successful, Santaelices said in his report, that he suggested that the duke's servants be rewarded for their loyalty both to the duke and to the king, and that the duchess, whom he praised lavishly, also be rewarded. Santaelices left Sanlúcar's judiciary and finances as they had been, in the hands of a ducal council led by Liébana, so as not to provoke discontent. On the military front, all was calm, he reported, though he said the French colony in Sanlúcar might pose a danger.[230]

The duchess of Medina Sidonia wrote to her father, the Marquis of Priego, that though she had believed her husband's affairs had been resolved, now she saw that they had not, given how they had treated her. Until she was assigned a place to live, probably in Castile, the king allowed her to go to her father's palace in Puente Genil. Though she complained of the harsh treatment, which did not take account of her recovery from childbirth nor the young age of her children, she said she must obey, "so justified replies and complaints cannot be termed rebellion … and because I want His Majesty to see I have been strong and diligent."[231] Priego, meanwhile, tried to mediate between his son-in-law and Olivares; the latter wrote to the marquis nearly a month later praising Priego's prudent attempts to defend the interests of his daughter and her husband and saying he, too, felt pain at the duke's madness (*locura*), which had nothing to do with the marquis and his clan, clearly a reminder that Priego's name had appeared among the list of alleged accomplices. But Olivares had no doubt as to Medina Sidonia's guilt, the "great and express burden he has placed on this lineage, which for so many centuries my ancestors respected with so many examples" of loyalty.[232]

The prosecution of Medina Sidonia began moving forward in December, led by Francisco Antonio de Alarcón and Antonio de Contreras. On 22 December, Santaelices, as a member of the Council of Castile, was given

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230 AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, exps. 31g, h, i, j; 7, 12 (2), 26 August 1642.
231 BNE, ms. 954, 4 August 1642.
232 BNE, ms. 954, 161–62, 12 September 1642.

instructions on what to investigate in Andalusia. His first task was to question witnesses in Seville, Cádiz, Sanlúcar, and El Puerto de Santa María about the appearance of "three fleets from France, Holland, and Portugal" in August 1641. He should pay close attention to testimony by Jacinto Pacheco, who should be asked "how long he was in Lisbon last year in 1641 and why he was there, what he did, if he was arrested, [etc.]." Santaelices also was to inquire about the duke's correspondence with Lisbon, and he was to seek out doña Jerónima de Velasco, the sister of Fray Nicolás, who lived in La Alameda. The instructions also mentioned a silk merchant in Sanlúcar whose daughter "was called by Fray Nicolás his *sindiquita*, and she appears to have a trunk of his (according to what the friar said) containing many important papers of his."[233]

Though these instructions clearly were aimed at seeking proof of Medina Sidonia's guilt, he could not formally be tried for the same crimes for which he already had been pardoned by the king. Therefore, the most solid accusation was that he had returned to Andalusia, to the city of Sanlúcar, without royal orders. This charge of disobedience paled beside the crimes for which he had been pardoned. In any case, the Council of Castile asked for all the documents regarding the case, both prior and subsequent to the duke's imprisonment, because "it is best that all the papers be in one place to best ensure the prosecution." The council had nothing with which to accuse all the duke's servants who were imprisoned with him in Vitoria and Coca.[234] We do not know if the council's request bore fruit, but it is clear that sending it all the papers was a way of undoing that part of the royal pardon concerning the duke's honor.

The council sent a memorandum to Philip IV containing some previous edicts relevant to the prosecution. In particular, the council pointed to a royal order on 26 November to "embargo and seize all the goods, fruits, and rents and jurisdiction of the said duke's estates." For the time being, the duchess of Medina Sidonia was permitted to administer these matters, notifying the council of each payment, keeping track of accounts,

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233 AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, Madrid, 22 December 1642.

234 Those held in Vitoria were Alonso de Cabañas, Juan de Huerta, Sebastián Vela, Antonio de Herrera, Alonso de Estrada, Felipe de Castañoso, Juan de Figueroa, Diego Rubalcava, Francisco Maldonado, Antono Piñatelo, Pedro Pareja, Bartolomé González, Domingo González, Amaro Mozo de Plata, Diego de la Torre, Antonio de Ribera, and Guillermo Flores. Those held in Coca were Juan de Olivares (the duke's *mayordomo*), Bartolomé Madrazo (*gentilhombre*), Fernando Rodríguez (chaplain), Simón Ramos (physician), Francisco Maldonado (accountant), Francisco Piñatelo (wardrobe), and Manuel Ramos Barriero. AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, 1 January 1643.

and proposing appointments to the council, "with the exception of the city of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, for which the Council will appoint a governor." By granting these powers to the duchess, the council was trying to give an appearance of normalcy in the seigneurial estate, which in fact was effectively in receivership. The council also decided that Alarcón and Contreras should continue their investigations against the duke.[235] In essentially taking over the Medina Sidonia estate, the council used the excuse that it had to manage the duke's levy of 1,000 cavalry. But the extraordinary judicial means being used against the duke gave rise to a complex and tricky overlapping of jurisdictions. On the one hand there was talk of managing the duke's finances; on the other, the levy had to go forward, which involved a great deal of expense.[236]

3.4 *From Loyalty to Rupture*

In interpreting these events, it is useful to focus on a word that appeared frequently regarding the plot: potentate (*potentado*). Some sources said the plotters' principal goal was to "become potentates." The king of Marrakech, in a letter to Medina Sidonia, referred to don Gaspar as "potentate of Castile, famed anchor of its councils."[237] The *Diccionario de Autoridades* -1739- defines *potentado* as "Prince or Sovereign who has absolute dominium over a Province or State but who is invested by another, superior Prince." The dictionary by Sebastián de Covarrubias -1611- says it is a neologism from Latin that began appearing in Castilian Spanish at the end of the sixteenth century.[238] The word appears in three direct accounts of the plot: there are references that João IV of Braganza used it in reference to the duke, the Countess of Castilnovo used it referring to the impression in Portugal of the Andalusian conspiracy, and the Marquis of Ayamonte used it in his first testimony.

In November 1640, Philip IV sent an order to the town council of Jerez de la Frontera with a preamble saying his greatest desire was to defend his vassals. The order in question was a new tax (*sisa*) on wine sales.[239]

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235 AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, 31 December 1642.

236 AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, 15 February 1643.

237 AGFCMS, leg. 2.417, 12 March 1637.

238 *Diccionario de Autoridades* (Madrid: Gredos, 1963 [1726–1739]), 342; Sebastián de Covarrubias, *Thesoro de la lengua española o castellana* (Barcelona: Alta Fulla, 1998 [1615]), 879.

239 AHMJF, Actas 1639–1641, fols. 704r–708v, 17 November 1640.

Jerez was one of the towns in Lower Andalusia where the nobility was least inclined to do its share for the wars in Catalonia and Portugal. In that regard, it is noteworthy that Medina Sidonia's requests for troops from Jerez throughout the month prior to the Portuguese uprising mentioned only the defense of Cádiz, which is close to Jerez and is the principal port in the region.[240] The town council of Sanlúcar, meanwhile, was quite worried toward the end of 1640 about self-defense, and it asked the duke to purchase a considerable amount of gunpowder and to return the gunpowder the duke had taken from the town to defend Fuenterrabía (in the Basque Country) two years earlier.[241]

A satirical anti-Olivares text published in 1642 described the situation in Spain as follows:

> War has moved from Italy and Flanders to Spain, where soldiers are king and they brazenly rob the people. What is war, in short? For many it means losses, but for others it is a good harvest … As to whether this eternal evil is the fault of Spain's bad government or divine punishment, I think it is both …[242]

Two things are worth emphasizing here, beyond the shade of corruption on military finances: war had come to Spain, meaning soldiers were a constant pressure on resources and on the population, and, second, the fault for this lay with the country's rulers, who after demanding enormous sacrifices had little to show for it but defeat.

Fray Antonio de Guevara, writing about war and peace, situated the debate in the context of the limitations on princes' ability to wage war. Kings should not start wars "because they have an obligation to the commonwealth, which they are obliged to preserve in peace and justice."[243] In his *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, Jean Bodin considered the "custody and defense of subjects" to be one of the normal and essential conditions of a well-ordered republic.[244] Quevedo, glossing holy scripture, wrote that "the people asked God for a captain to lead them; God gave them one, with promises of victory."[245]

With that in mind, the only source of legitimacy Medina Sidonia had for seizing power, or at least for making himself the potentate of Andalusia, was that he was defending the *patria*, unlike Philip IV, who

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240 AHMJF, Actas 1639–1641, fols. 966r–969v, 22 and 25 December 1640.
241 AHMSB, leg. 4.716, no. 14, fols. 3r–5r, 1 and 5 January 1640.
242 BNE VE 187-11, "Advertencias muy famosas," (Barcelona: Jaime Macheire, 1642).
243 Guevara, *Relox de príncipes*, book 3, ch. 13, 751–57.
244 Jean Bodin, *Los seis libros de la República* (Madrid: Tecnos, 1985) [1576], book 1, ch. 1.
245 Quevedo, *Política de Dios*, part 2, ch. 22, 217.

could guarantee no such thing. Similarly, when the French favorite Mazarin considered capturing the kingdom of Aragon, he did so thinking the Aragonese would wish "to remove the yoke of a lord [Philip IV] who could not defend them."[246] Indeed, since the start of the Catalan revolt, Medina Sidonia had refused to send troops outside the district of his captaincy general, arguing that his own region was in danger. Furthermore, the king was altering the terms of the traditional defense pact, violating use and custom by sending town militias away from their base. Pointing this out was the same as saying that Philip IV was a failed monarch, at least as concerned a defenseless Andalusia, which was just cause for rebellion. This does not mean to say that rebellion or conspiracy was the only possible response, but it was the most extreme outcome of this sort of reasoning. In Castile, and throughout the rest of the peninsular kingdoms, there were many options for opposition without rupture.[247] But violation of the pact and the defenseless status of the territory were highly useful arguments for someone who, for all the reasons we have seen, wished to expand his own power.

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If we compare the general outline of Medina Sidonia's conspiracy with other seditious acts in Europe during this period, it is clear it did not contradict the hypothetical logic of the times toward a Europe of "states" with borders more or less as we know them today. The mid-seventeenth century gave rise to many revolts, riots, and rebellions that had serious domestic impact (the two English revolutions are paradigmatic) as well as an impact on borders, as was the case with the revolts of Portugal and Catalonia; Spain lost Rosellón and Cerdanya after the Catalan revolt ended with the 1659 Peace of the Pyrenees. As Robert Menteith de Salmonet said in 1660, "We have seen Princes humbled, and some even reduced to the last Degree of affliction … Revolts have been frequent in the East and West."[248] France too was threatened by Condé and other noblemen during the Fronde.[249]

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[246] Cited by Xavier Gil Pujol, "Conservación y defensa como factores de estabilidad en tiempos de crisis: Aragón y Valencia en la década de 1640," in Elliott et al., *1640*, 44–101, 63.

[247] MacKay, *Los límites*, 31–73; Virginia Coloma García, "Navarra y la defensa de la Monarquía en los reinados de Felipe III y Felipe IV (1598–1665)," *Príncipe de Viana* 204 (1995), 163–182, 180.

[248] Cited by Robert B. Merriman, *Six Contemporaneous Revolutions* (Glasgow 1937), 5.

[249] Katia Béguin, *Les princes de Condé: Rebelles, courtisans et mécènes dans la France du Grand Siècle* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1999), 112–46.

In the context of an outdated hierarchy of political movements based on the success they achieve—measuring revolts, rebellions, and revolutions—an aborted plot like that of Medina Sidonia amounts to a barely relevant prior step. As Jean-Frédéric Schaub has said, Braganza's coup is regarded as a revolution only because it was successful.[250] But based on what we have seen, it seems clear that don Gaspar Alonso Pérez de Guzmán, ninth Duke of Medina Sidonia, plotted with his kinsman, the Marquis of Ayamonte, and with the knowledge and participation of a good number of leading figures in Lower Andalusia, to strengthen his political position and power to the detriment of the crown. To start with, the duke's obstructionism with regard to Philip IV's plans to respond immediately to the Portuguese revolt, though similar to the indifference of other high-ranking noblemen, was by far the most notable and had the greatest repercussions, among other reasons because Lower Andalusia was the greatest source of soldiers and supplies for the Hispanic Monarchy. His lethargy meant that *dom* João IV of Braganza was able to consolidate his attempt to take the Portuguese throne away from Philip IV, who had inherited it from his father and grandfather.

Juan Adam de la Parra wrote in his *Apologético*, that the success of Braganza's rebellion depended, first, upon deceiving the Portuguese people and, second, on making the Castilians believe that the Portuguese would obey Braganza (unlike the Castilians themselves with Philip IV.) "This lie," he wrote, "which circulated along the Algarve border, did more harm than an armed assault and discouraged Castile even more than Braganza's duplicity with Castile's enemies [France and Holland] in persuading them to send a navy to Andalusia." In other words, Braganza managed to make Castile believe that the Portuguese, French, and Dutch supported a seditious movement in Andalusia. Medina Sidonia, he implies, was deceived along with the rest.[251]

It is likely that Adam de la Parra's explanation was a desperate attempt to salvage Medina Sidonia's honor in the face of the insistent rumors of his disloyalty toward Philip IV. After all, saving the duke's honor was one of the king's concessions after Medina Sidonia's confession of September 1641. Whether or not it was Braganza's initiative, we must keep in mind

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[250] Schaub, *Portugal au temps du Comte-Duc d'Olivares.*

[251] Juan Adam de la Parra, *Apologético contra el tirano y rebelde Berganza* (Zaragoza 1642). I am grateful to Laura Manzano Baena for this reference. On Parra see John H. Elliott, "Nueva luz sobre la prisión de Quevedo y Adam de la Parra," *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* 169 (1972), 171–82.

that Medina Sidonia was accused not only of having conspired but also, though not explicitly, of having decisively favored the Portuguese coup by remaining passive on the Algarve border.

The Hispanic Monarchy's unrelenting succession of political and military disasters, whose principal result was just more war, created widespread discontent in Andalusia, and that was the context of the conspiracy to force the king to give in to Medina Sidonia's demands as spokesman or leader of Lower Andalusia. The plot clearly was audacious, given the lack of historical or institutional antecedents for Andalusia as a territorial unit. Nonetheless, the duke's enormous prestige, authority, and power, which he and his family had built up over decades and centuries, made the idea seem not so crazy after all, particularly given Philip IV's weak position.

It is also true that from Medina Sidonia's perspective, the situation in December 1640 was especially hopeless. His own position and his kinship with Olivares meant the monarchy's war needs placed great demands on him. Besides, the *valido*'s embattled regime offered scarce margin for hopping for future rewards. And the duke's treasury was in an alarming state, especially the revenue from Sanlúcar de Barrameda. After decades of warning the crown that commerce in Lower Andalusia was suffering badly on account of the wars and trade embargos, the Medina Sidonia were seeing their worst fears come true. Don Juan de Liébana wrote to his lord the duke in June 1641 describing the sad state of affairs, saying it would be a good idea to deal with a group of Polish merchants "so as to not make new enemies."[252] Ducal customs revenue figures for the 1630s show a series of disturbing irregularities. [See Chart 1]

Medina Sidonia's plans were both transformative, in that they included a new pact with the crown, and conservative, in that he wished to defend the interests of the Andalusian elite. The power grab came about not only because the opportunity was there, but, fundamentally, because the covenant that his father and grandfather had had with the crown and which had survived for half a century—essentially to provide military services in exchange for royal favors and grace—had been exhausted. There were several reasons for this: first, the cost of war was driving the dukes into debt. Second, the Medina Sidonia's expenses were not being compensated fairly, at least according to the accounts drawn up in the Sanlúcar palace. And third, any time there was hope for improvement, a new onslaught of defeats and calamities appeared.[253]

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[252] AGS Varios, Medina Sidonia, leg. 79-2, doc. 102, 8 June 1641.
[253] Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 273–348.

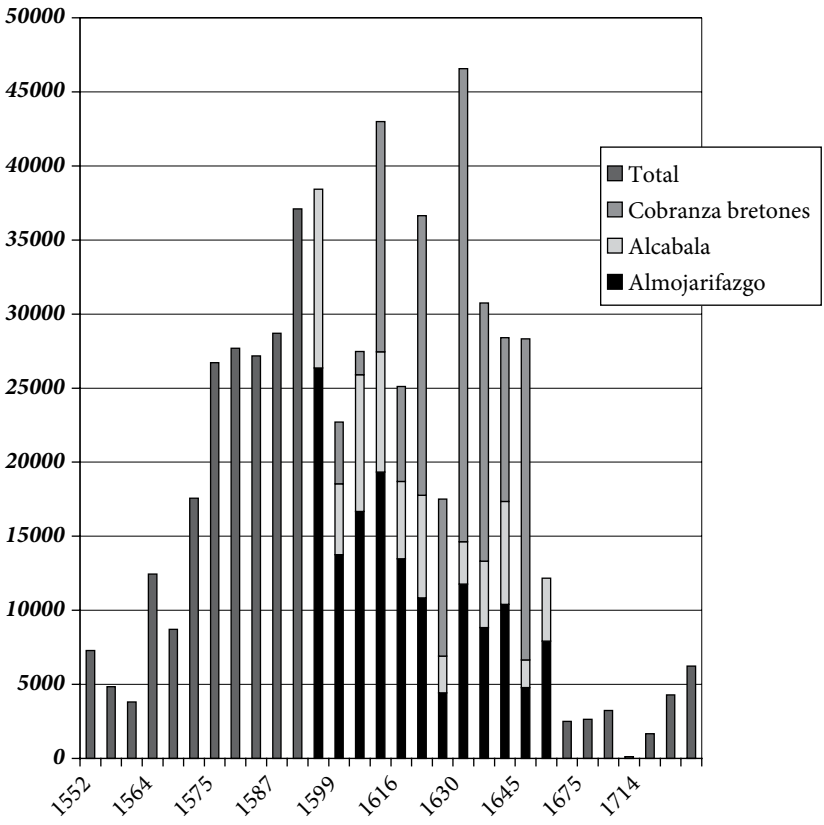

Chart 1. Incomes from the seignourial customs of Sanlúcar, 1552–1720.
Note: In ducats.
Sources: Columns in grey from P. Ponsot, *Atlas de historia económica de la Baja Andalucía,* Granada, 1986. The rest from AGFCMS, legs. 2.742 (year 1596), 2.782 (1599), 2.833 (1605), 2.867 (1610), 2.925 (1616), 2.979 (1620), 3.041 (1625), 3.074 (1630), 3.122 (1635), 3.161 (1640), 3.205 (1645) y 3.239 (1650).

The conspirators' employment of the opposition to Olivares was a way of quitting the count-duke's public role of protector and ally at court with respect to the Medina Sidonia. The duke was displeased with his uncle for two main reasons: his inability to win favors for the duke at court (i.e. not receiving a post in the State Council), and the failure of his international policy. But the displeasure went beyond Olivares to focus on Philip IV himself, the ultimate cause of this politics of prestige that was literally draining Castile of resources and impoverishing its subjects. The classic cry of "long live the king and death to bad government" with which the conspirators hoped to awaken Andalusians' latent hostility

toward the *valido* would have given rise, in August 1641, to a movement that might have forced the king to reconfigure his defensive policies and negotiate. In such a situation, forcing the king to replace his prime minister would have been the lesser evil, even though the only precedent in Castile was the 1453 fall of don Alvaro de Luna, John II's favorite.

Of course, Medina Sidonia was not the only noble house wracked by problems and contradictions; all the rest, though perhaps not to the same degree, had similar complaints. Why, then, was don Gaspar the only one to break with the monarchy? Here we must consider the individual personality of the man. Looking at a lifetime of decisions, one can see he leaned toward extremes, even flirting with disaster, perhaps because he was so conscious of belonging to a lineage with tremendous social obligations, chief among which was the obligation to show off one's opulence in accordance with Saavedra Fajardo's maxim that all power, like an arrow shot into the sky, must rise or fall, but is never stationary.[254] That was surely why don Gaspar soon after he became duke began increasing his expenses, waiting for the royal gratitude that never appeared.

His determination to break with the king may also have been the result of his own doubts. In his confession, he said that as the date of the coup drew near, he grew increasingly anguished, especially because Juan de Liébana told him to abandon his plan, which he did not do out of fear he would be betrayed.[255] It is true that his behavior in the conspiracy makes one think he was not sure, and that uncertainty probably had a great deal to do with the plan's failure. In contrast, what little we know about the Marquis of Ayamonte indicates his commitment to the coup was far greater. Even in his first, contradictory statement, he admitted he was the instigator, at least after the duke's aides also identified as ringleaders had sketched out the conspiracy plans.

Those aides, which certainly included Luis del Castillo, Fray Nicolás de Velasco, and Jacinto Pacheco, are probably those whose names appear in the proceedings as the "young men without obligations" who persuaded the duke to launch the plot. The expression is interesting, marking a separation between them and other aides who had obligations. The latter, leading farmers in Sanlúcar who formed part of the seigneurial administration and were closely linked to the merchant world of Seville, probably had much to lose if their lord were taken down. Those without

254 Saavedra Fajardo, *Empresas políticas*, 420–29.
255 BNE ms. 954, 145r–152v and AGFCMS leg. 994.

obligations, on the other hand, had the luxury of getting involved in political adventures. Luis del Castillo was tried, though I have not located the relevant documents; in any case, he was not convicted, as he was free at least by 1648.[256] Less is known about Velasco and Pacheco, though it appears that if they were members of the inner circle urging the duke to lead the conspiracy, this was the result not of don Gaspar's weakness but of the extremely complex and hopeless situation in which he found himself in the first half of 1641. But beyond conjecture, the available documents show the duke was caught in a intricate labyrinth. In the end, the shyness of his option of breaking the ducal house's traditional protective armor–its unshakeable loyalty–was probably the outcome of his older, leading aides, who did not approve it at all.

[256] Ayamonte's lawyer complained about this, as we shall see.

CHAPTER FOUR

PUNISHMENT (1643–1667)

Historians of early modern Europe sometimes refer to the "century of the Guzmáns" in the Hispanic Monarchy, pointing to that extensive clan's enormous influence over the governments of the Spanish empire. The century ended more or less with the fall of Olivares in 1643 or the death of Haro in 1661, though not everyone agrees that the latter belonged to the family. In any case, this century coincided with the Medina Sidonia's maximum power and splendor, supported by the growth of Lower Andalusia in general and the Guadalquivir basin in particular, including the cities of Seville, Cádiz, and Sanlúcar de Barrameda. Throughout the century of the Guzmáns, the Medina Sidonia also were linked by blood to the *validos* (when the king had one). So though they were geographically distant from the court, these Andalusian dukes managed to make their opinions and authority matter in the circles around the Catholic monarch. There are writings before 1641 claiming that the family's marriage practices were designed to protect their interests in Sanlúcar.[1] If that is so, the dukes' loss of the city in 1645 is the most outstanding marker of the sudden end of the Guzmán era of power and influence.

4.1 *The Fall of Olivares and Punishment without Verdict* (*February 1643–1648*)

In February 1643 the *valido* fell from power. Since the revolt of Catalonia, and certainly since the failure of the 1642 military campaign,[2] his authority had been so diminished that he was barely a shadow of his former self. Even so, his departure from the political scene had multiple consequences throughout the royal government, more apparent than deep. Medina Sidonia's conspiracy contributed to weakening Olivares, despite how little was said in public about the "matter of the duke." According to one of the *valido*'s fiercest enemies, Matías de Novoa, there were rumors in the weeks following Olivares's departure that he was gone only

[1] BNE mss. 2.345, fols. 208r–209r.
[2] Simón i Tarrés, "La Jornada Real de Catalunya," 265–68.

temporarily so that Medina Sidonia could be punished. Even at that very late date, it was considered unthinkable that the count-duke had not shielded his kinsman from the king's fury.[3] The rumor was false, but it was true that the *valido*'s downfall spelled disaster for the duke.[4]

Indeed, with Olivares gone, Medina Sidonia's true punishment began. The chronology would appear paradoxical in that Olivares's fall had in large part been engineered by the nobility's refusal to cooperate with him, and the duke had stood out in that regard. There are two reasons why the end of the *valido*'s regime did not alleviate the duke's punishment, but rather the contrary: Medina Sidonia was head of the Guzmán family, so the blame heaped on Olivares for having failed could hardly be used as an argument in favor of someone who toppled him; and because if the king had gotten rid of his prime minister as a result of seigneurial pressure, tightening the screws on Medina Sidonia was a way of reasserting his royal authority.

At any rate, no sooner had Olivares left the court than the Council of Castile began attempting (unsuccessfully) to broaden the indictment from disobedience to lèse majesté. To that end, the councilors went back to the beginning of the plot, going over all the information and testimony. In May 1643, Sánchez Márquez gave a second round of testimony, this time under interrogation, in which he told what he knew or remembered about the plot. The new proceedings were once again considered extraordinary.

In summer 1643, the authorities were ready to pass sentence on the duke for his trip from Garrovillas to Sanlúcar. But before doing that, given the trivial nature of the trip, no matter how disobedient, Philip IV once again asked the president of the Council of Castile if it were possible to retry the duke for the principal crime, that is, the conspiracy. Once again, the royal pardon saved him. The council president outlined the facts "coldly," according to his account, starting by saying that the 1641 plot was only an attempted crime. Furthermore, the duke's confession had been "secret, made not to a minister or a court but only to Your Majesty," after which the king pardoned the duke, which was why he was not imprisoned or assigned guards. He had been free for several months and even had been allowed to publicize his *desafío* and appear in Valencia de Alcántara.

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[3] Novoa, *Historia de Felipe IV*, vol. 86, 82.

[4] The most immediate causes of his fall were the king's journey to the Aragonese front, the defeat in Lérida, and the "conspiracy of women," in which the queen and some of her ladies managed to convince the king to remove Olivares. See Thompson, "El reinado, 472.

As for his trip to Sanlúcar, it merely delayed his arrival in Vitoria, "where he was captured and taken to Coca, and there are no other known crimes." With these "facts" in mind, he pointed out that there were contradictions in the judicial proceedings. For example, though the matter resided in the Council of Castile, a treasury official from the Council of Finance was trying to embargo the duke's property, saying the royal pardon did not protect property. The king issued a decree halting that attempt to undermine the duke's honor, being that honor was the essence of the pardon. Thus in the end, the duke was captured and accused only of going to Sanlúcar, a matter so minor that the Council of Castile even considered letting him go. The president also mentioned that for a time the duke's guards had been reduced. And there the matter remained awaiting resolution.

The president presented the king with options, each with moral dilemmas. He could retain the pardon and retry the duke, which entailed going back on his word; or he could free the duke, which might endanger *la causa pública*, or the common good:

> Both obligations are clear, as the Prince's word and pardon must be respected, especially if the other party confesses in light of them, for in that case it becomes a matter of contract or pact, which by the rules of commutative justice must be respected. It is also to the good of the commonwealth for princes to abide by their word and for it to be known that they act in accordance with their word.

The issue, therefore was to decide which of the two—the king's word or the good of the commonwealth—was more important and if the matter of the pardon could be raised and if the king could separate the two prosecutions so as to make the duke's private confession to the king a judicial matter. The president said that in his opinion it was useless to ask the duke to testify again about the conspiracy because he already had been pardoned. Besides, he said, don Gaspar "trusted Your Majesty's royal word, which extinguished and erased everything that had happened beforehand regarding the duke's life and honor." The only solution, which also was impossible, would be to get the duke to request that the pardon be rescinded.[5] In short, there was no way to judicially punish the duke more severely. The contract or pact, as the president called it, was, it is worth remembering, the work of Olivares, whose support of the duke outlived the *valido*'s power at court.

[5] AHN Estado, lib. 866, 62r–67v, nd, 1643. These are eighteenth-century copies.

Because this was a matter of conscience, the king also consulted with his confessor regarding the president's advice. The confessor replied that "the duke's indictment was so important in these kingdoms" and the house of Medina Sidonia so illustrious, that the matter must be treated with great care. Thanks to the duke's confession, he said, Andalusia was now better defended, and the king could not confiscate the duke's property, which would undermine his honor. He also said the duke had interpreted the pardon broadly as a pardon for everything, seeking in it a way of protecting his life, his honor, and his property, and the confessor questioned the Council of Finance's attempt to take the duke's property: "If this, which some call pragmatism [*conveniencia de estado*] and which in the court of truth is called cheating and deception, were to become part of the king's words and pardons, Your Majesty can imagine what sort of example it would set for Catalonia, where the rebels do not believe they can trust the royal word…" The confessor therefore agreed with the president that the old testimony prior to the pardon must be kept separate from the current prosecution, adding that only the judges should know about the pardon, if it came down to that. As for Sanlúcar, he said, "the best pretexts will cause the least offense to the duke."[6] This is the first evidence we have that the king was thinking of incorporating Sanlúcar into the royal jurisdiction (*realengo*), and it indicates that after Olivares's fall, Philip IV decided to punish the duke by taking his city. Therefore the threat to reopen the case of lèse majesté was a way for the king to get his hands on this most precious booty.

Philip IV returned the president's memorandum to its author, along with the confessor's opinion and his own note. Given Medina Sidonia's status and the force of the pardon, he said, and because "he trusted me before testifying, and given the utility of his statement for the security of the Andalusian coast, and for the good of my own conscience, it is right that I keep my promise." The king recognized there was no basis for accusing the duke of anything other than the trip to Sanlúcar, and he ordered that everything be conducted in secret, including preventing the judges hearing Ayamonte's case from seeing the duke's case file or knowing anything about it.[7]

So in September 1643, the prosecutor of the Council of Castile, Juan de Morales Barrionuevo, formalized his complaint against the Duke of Medina Sidonia based on the latter's disobedience in going to Sanlúcar

[6] AHN Estado, lib. 866, 42r–44v, August 1643.
[7] AHN Estado, lib. 866, 42r–45v, 24 August 1643.

in 1642. There was no one more obliged to obey the king than the duke, given the many royal favors he had received, yet he had returned home without permission when he had been ordered to go to Vitoria. As enhancements, the prosecutor cited the urgency of the moment and the very public nature of the duke's recent appointment, all of which triggered "scandal and notoriety throughout the kingdom." Even if he were not prohibited from going to Andalusia, the prosecutor added, the duke should have waited to receive the permission he requested; having not received it, he expressly violated his orders. The indictment requested that the duke be convicted and punished most severely for disobeying royal orders.[8]

In response, and at length, the duke's lawyers interpreted things differently. According to them, the duke should be acquitted and released because the prosecutor had not proven the charge of disobedience, but only presented it as an assumption. On the contrary, they said, the duke had gone to Extremadura on schedule with royal permission for a limited period in connection with the *desafío*, and he completed his term there on 19 December 1641: "Had the king's orders specified he was not to leave his post during his term, that prohibition ceased when the term ceased, and my client had the natural right he had before to travel to Andalusia or anywhere else on his estates." Furthermore, the letters the duke wrote to the count-duke from Extremadura proved there was no such prohibition. Rather, they proved Medina Sidonia's loyalty to Olivares, given that the duke's only desire was to fulfill the levy of 1,000 cavalry. Once he did that, he went to Vitoria. The lawyers went on:

> The favors and grants that my client and his House have received from Your Majesty and your glorious ancestors, though of the amount and quality described by your prosecutor and emanating from such generous hands, were all in compensation for the most memorable services that my client and his ancestors performed for the service and preservation of the crown, risking their lives and estates and setting an example both here and abroad, and thus the sons of this house are justly deserving of being renowned as "Bueno."

This recourse to genealogy was an old tactic by the Medina Sidonia. The lawyers finished by saying that even if their client should have awaited express permission to travel, he had already spent fourteen months imprisoned in Coca, which was more than enough. The matter did not

[8] BNE, ms. 9.442, 198r–v, Madrid, 10 September 1643; there is another copy in BNE ms. 722, 341v–343r.

merit such a fuss, they said (implicitly appealing to the pardon), and the duke should be acquitted.[9]

It is quite true that don Gaspar was being punished in various ways as a result of various decisions by various councils and juntas. The two most important instances were his being relieved of his military duties and his banishment from Sanlúcar and Andalusia. Regarding the latter, the seigneurial splendor of Sanlúcar was owed in large part to the protection handed out by its lords. With the duke gone, his power grew weaker by the day. Even worse, in December 1642 and January 1643, the Council of State and the Junta Grande took up the matter of the city's government, clearly suggesting they might appoint a governor whose salary would be paid by the duke. The same entities also considered candidates to take over military functions there, and the king chose the Marquis of Valparaíso (over the Count of Santisteban), who appears to have taken the post.[10] Medina Sidonia's authority also was weakened by having left the captaincy general. Again, not coincidentally, it was in the months following the fall of Olivares that authorities considered whether to fill the post or eliminate it. Thus an ad hoc entity called "the junta for matters concerning the Duke of Medina Sidonia," comprising don Juan Chumacero (recently appointed president of the Council of Castile) and the counts of Oñate, Castrillo, and Chinchón,[11] began looking for a replacement.[12] The solution, reached in 1644, was to appoint the Duke of Medinaceli as captain general, thus preserving the spirit of the post, which would remain in the hands of a high-ranking nobleman with power and prestige.[13]

Returning now to the judicial proceedings, by this time it was clear to the duke and his lawyers that the crown wanted to get its hands on the Sanlúcar *señorío*. In the face of this threat, the duchess of Medina Sidonia in December 1643 decided to show up in court—still reeling after the fall of Olivares, unsure of what would happen—and do what she could to settle her husband's affairs.[14] Her arrival with the duke's heir, the Count of Niebla, was carefully choreographed. As one of her servants wrote to her, there was no matter more important "than the honor and finances and

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9 BNE, ms. 9.442, 199r–200v, nd, 1643, signed by Alonso de San Martín.

10 AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, 28 December 1642 and 7 January 1643.

11 CODOIN vol. 95, 129.

12 Dolores M. Sánchez, *El deber de Consejo en el estado moderno: las juntas* "ad hoc" *en España, 1474–1665* (Madrid, Polifemo, 1993), 199; on the search for a replacement see Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 191–97.

13 Salas Almela, *Colaboración*, 52–60.

14 See Juan Jiménez Lobatón's letter to the duchess, 5 December 1643, with doña Juana's reply in the margin, 15 December 1643, in AGFCMS leg. 994.

defense of Sanlúcar." It was assumed that the duchess would find support with the queen, the Count of Oñate, don Luis de Haro (who was emerging as the next prime minister), and don Fernando de Borja. They, along with the duke's uncle, the Patriarch of the Indies, were expected to apply enough pressure to neutralize the negative impact of Olivares's fall from power. The duke himself still hoped he would be appointed to new, high-level posts and be able to live in Madrid.[15]

But the next few months would bring changes. The reason for allowing many of Olivares's creatures to survive their departed boss—to avoid the risk of the king himself being implicated or targeted by the attacks on the prime minister, with whom he was closely identified[16]—constituted a threat to Medina Sidonia. Once again, if the disappearance of Olivares was to a large extent imposed on the monarch, punishment of the disobedient duke could serve to vindicate the strength of the crown, in addition to avenging the damage caused at the Portuguese front. In any case, the opposition the duchess encountered at court meant the new line of defense was to simply save the duke's honor. In practice, this meant accepting that the only way of limiting the punishment was to hand over the *señorío* of Sanlúcar. Given how the prosecution of her husband was going, the duchess in October 1644 asked that the case be postponed until the king returned from the Aragonese front.[17]

It was clear that the duke would have to give in. So his agent in Madrid wrote to José González, saying that the Medina Sidonia and Priego lineages had always trusted in His Majesty's clemency in light of the great services they had provided the crown. Now, knowing that the king wished to have Sanlúcar, he offered it to him, "certain that His Majesty will be most pleased with the *señorío*, vassals, forts, castle, and port … and the duke is only sorry that the miserable state of his finances prevents him from offering his treasury as well." In other words, the duke would cede Sanlúcar with its revenues, but also with its debts.[18] Otherwise, he hinted, the king could allow the duke to retain his revenues as long as the duke continued paying the royal services he had offered. This seemed a more

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[15] When he appointed Juan de Villegas as his chamber aide, he specified that if he were living in Madrid, Villegas's salary would be different. AGFCMS, leg. 4.067, 408r, 12 November 1643. He also reviewed a list of the various lawyers working for the dukes in Madrid, all of whom would work for the duchess; three were contracted, with two backups. AGFCMS, leg. 1.026, nd, 1643.

[16] Thompson, "El reinado," 474.

[17] AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, 15 October 1644.

[18] For a summary of the Sanlúcar finances, see Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*.

practical solution for the king than compensating the duke with a similar estate elsewhere.[19]

The junta established for this purpose, comprising José González, the president of the Council of Castile, the Count of Chinchón, the Marquis of Castañeda, and don Antonio de Camporredondo, came up with a plan that included compensating the duke for the loss of his Sanlúcar vassals. As Medina Sidonia himself would remember years later, the compensation had been insinuated by Luis de Haro; shortly before Sanlúcar indeed was transferred to royal jurisdiction, Haro visited the duchess to say it behooved her to take the compensation now, as once the transfer was complete, it would be impossible to request anything.[20]

A memorandum from the junta to Philip IV summarized the duchess's proposal, which was that the duke offer the city of Sanlúcar to make up for the harm he had caused. The duke sent documents to the junta including a report about the city's growth since it was incorporated into the *señorío* in the early fourteenth century, a list of what the ducal house paid the king in the city, and the compensation request itself, which included offices, patronage, real estate, rights, stocks, and other revenues. The junta decided that José González should tell the duke's agent, Lorenzo de Rivera, that the king's benevolent solution—presenting the transfer of the *señorío* as a voluntary gesture by the Medina Sidonia that therefore could be compensated—responded less to necessity than to a desire to protect the duke's honor. The king could have been far more severe. Speaking directly, the junta reminded the duke that the king "did not capitulate nor did he require your consent to the incorporation of Sanlúcar, which must include all jurisdiction, *señorío*, vassals, rents, taxes, and all other rights; everything, from the leaves on the trees to the stones in the rivers, must belong to His Majesty. … There shall be no memory of the duke in that city nor shall any of his descendents have the opportunity to recover it or cause any further vexations." Adding insult to injury, the junta requested a list of all his Sanlúcar possessions, suggesting he would receive no compensation for anything not documented.

In reply, the duke's agent gave José González a counter-proposal, which was received more agreeably by the junta, though it continued moving ahead with the assessment of the duke's properties. For the time being, the junta told the king, the rents belonged to the duke. If the latter at some point could produce documents to prove ownership, in that case the king

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[19] AHN Estado, lib. 866, 74r–74v, nd, 1643.

[20] AGFCMS, leg. 1.026, Valladolid, 20 December 1649.

could compensate him for the loss of Sanlúcar and avoid further judicial complications. "As for the *señorío* and jurisdiction, he could be given some place in Old Castile, and the *patronazgos* [ownership of religious institutions] could be replaced with others that Your Majesty has in Castile." The king, as usual, signaled his approval with a laconic "do what you think."[21]

And thus the Medina Sidonia lost their oldest and most important seigneurial possession, the city of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, but they retained their rents. Obviously, being that the duke no longer had jurisdiction over commercial sectors in the city, the rents were infinitely smaller than they had been, particularly during difficult economic times. On 3 August 1645 the king informed the Council of Castile that he had decided to incorporate the city of Sanlúcar into the *realengo*; the principal cause, the most generic, was to ensure security. Given the enormity of the service by the house of Medina Sidonia, Philip IV had decided to compensate the duke with various towns in Castile whose inhabitants added up to the same number he was losing. As for the rents, the king essentially chose to postpone a decision; for the time being, the duke could continue collecting in order to pay off his debts.[22]

Thirteen days later, the king signed the decree incorporating Sanlúcar into the *realengo*.[23] The town's first royal governor would be Bartolomé Morquecho, a member of the Council of Castile and of the Order of Santiago, who was granted special powers to deal with the complex transfer process. He was authorized to create a new administration in compliance with Castilian law regarding municipal government.[24] One of his first measures, with obvious symbolic importance, was to systematically destroy the coats of arms of the Medina Sidonia on all administrative buildings, replacing them with the royal insignia.[25] Even the coats of arms on the ducal palace were removed, and the governor of the palace (the *alcaide*) was deprived of his keys and dismissed.[26]

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[21] AHN Estado, L. 866, 13 May 1645.

[22] AGFCMS, leg. 1.026, 3 August 1645.

[23] It is dated in Madrid, 16 August 1645. The order was received in the town on 23 August. AGFCMS, leg. 1.026.

[24] Morquecho put the municipal posts up for sale; they were valued at a total of 100,115 ducats. Some already had been sold, such as the administration of the *millones* tax (*alguacil mayor de millones*), sold for 4,000 ducats to Admiral Gonzalo Díaz Correa, according to a claim the following year by his son. AGS Consejo y Juntas de Hacienda, leg. 879, December 1645.

[25] See AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, no. 27b for a short list of these acts; Morquecho's appointment is in no. 27c, dated Zaragoza, 16 August 1645.

[26] AGFCMS leg. 1.026, draft of a letter claiming the duke's movable property in Sanlúcar. No date, around 1660.

The Duke of Medina Sidonia hoped that handing over Sanlúcar would clear his account. But his fall from favor only brought new and greater attacks on the remaining ducal resources. It is not clear exactly when the Council of Finance filed a new claim against the duke for the sales taxes (*alcabalas*) of his entire estate, but the threat against what little power remained was palpable in around 1646. Any new losses would have broken the duke's financial possibilities. Coinciding with that, the case against the Marquis of Ayamonte affected the duke in that the latter's defense strategy, consisting of blaming don Gaspar, endangered the duke's agreement with the king. A solution was worked out in 1647 by which the duke bought back the *alcabalas* in exchange for a new service to the king worth 200,000 ducats, of which 150,000 would be in silver and deposited in Flanders, and the remaining 50,000, in copper, would be deposited in Madrid and Seville.[27] This latest financial obligation placed the duke in desperate financial straits, but at least it signaled the end of the judicial pressure. The cycle of punishment was over. The king even gave the duke a small respite, allowing him to count as payments of his debts funds that the Royal Treasury had already took, such as a million maravedíes from the duchess of Braganza's dowry that were discounted from the treasury.[28] In Valladolid, where he was confined, Medina Sidonia could only hope that the Sanlúcar rents would improve and that he could one day ingratiate himself with the king.

4.2 *The Fall of a Great Seigneurial House (1648–1667)*

One of the essential facets of power in the Old Regime, particularly of the nobility, was personal authority over vassals. It was not the only facet, and there were other ways of making one's authority felt from a distance, both administratively and symbolically.[29] But the Medina Sidonia's concrete authority on their estates was very closely tied to their physical presence in the Sanlúcar palace. Their strategy to strengthen their house over two centuries had been based on the physical exercise of authority. That was why the first thing Philip IV did to minimize the danger in Andalusia was

[27] AGFCMS leg. 794. The settlement was signed in Sanlúcar on 9 September 1679 and 6 October 1684.

[28] AGFCMS, leg. 995, 12 April and 7 June 1647.

[29] Nobles often appointed governors to run their estates from the seigneurial palaces, symbolic expressions of their own authority. Santiago Aragón Mateos, *El señor ausente: El señorío nobiliario en la España del setecientos* (Lérida: Milenio, 2000), 21–49.

to remove the duke from his center of power, undermining his authority. Thus the duke's disobedience upon leaving Garrovillas set into motion a process leading to his definitive departure from Andalusia. For the rest of his life, he never gave up hope of returning. And the economic consequences of the punishment were fatal. Each new phase of the proceedings against the duke, including the confession and the pardon, involved a military, fiscal, or economic dimension, and together they destroyed the Medina Sidonia's power until they fell from that highest position they had always occupied in the Castilian social imaginary.

The period between the duke's arrest and the king's seizure of Sanlúcar was one of uncertainty. The ducal house's finances were on the point of collapse, and the extraordinary cost of the duke's trip to Madrid and then to Extremadura, along with the crisis of authority that came with his sudden absence, set off a remarkable accumulation of debts, and the specter of bankruptcy for the first time cast its shadow on the house of Medina Sidonia.[30] [See Table I] And instead of using the healthiest financial pockets, such as customs payments or the meat *alcabala*, which at that point were set aside to support the duke, his accountants and treasury aides pawned or sold the duke's rural properties.[31]

In September 1641 the duke's request for royal clemency reached the king along with an offer to provide 1,000 paid cavalry on the Aragonese border, as we saw earlier. A year later, expenses for this project were approaching 100,000 *reales*.[32] They quickly topped 400,000 once the first company of cavalry at last left for Molina de Aragón.[33] But before summer 1642, both the crown and the house of Medina Sidonia wanted to make it clear that this was not a punishment but rather a show of loyalty. So no one was surprised when the king offered his loyal vassal a way of reducing the onerous expense, to wit, permission to introduce prohibited goods from France into the ports of Sanlúcar, Cádiz, and Bilbao for a value of up to 300,000 ducats annually for three years.[34] By 1644 the allotted amounts had been transported, according to testimony by the notary

[30] On noble bankruptcy see Ignacio Atienza, "La quiebra de la nobleza castellana en el siglo XVII. Autoridad real y poder señorial: el secuestro de los bienes de la casa de Osuna," *Hispania* vol. 44 no. 156 (1984), 49–81; Bartolomé Yun Casalilla, *La gestión del poder: Corona y economías aristocráticas en Castilla* (*siglos VI–XVIII*) (Madrid: Akal, 2002), 197–219.

[31] AGFCMS leg. 995, 3 July 164.

[32] AGFCMS leg. 3.188, Alonso Sánchez Asensio's accounts for 1643.

[33] AGFCMS leg. 994, Seville, 9 October 1642.

[34] AGFCMS leg. 994, Aranjuez, 9 May 1642. On 27 June the duke gave Captain Juan Jiménez Lobatón authority over this concession and allowed him to sell certain of the duke's belongings.

Table 1. More compelling *censos* paid by the House of Medina Sidonia in 1643

I. Ordinary	
Concept	Amount (*)
Marqués de Belalcázar	1.583.310
Obras pías de Lope de Mendieta	956.000
Capitán Rodrigo de Escobar	551.732
Fábrica de San Salvador	190.150
Don Diego de Cárdenas	1.946.900
Don Diego Alberto de Fuentes	105.808
Herederos de Francisco Rodríguez de Paz	399.258
Don Guillén de Casaos y doña Magdalena Albón	141.789
Hospital del Viso	37.750
Casa de la Misericordia	708.800
Doña Beatriz de Medina	382.540
Capellanía del doctor Balsa	297.480
Juan Gutiérrez Tello	510.366
Don Gaspar de Viedma	133756
Don Francisco de Frías	311.312
Doña Leonor de Valdepeñas	183.168
Doña Beatriz de Esquivel	656.496
Doña Ana de Zúñiga	104.550
Herederos de don Alberto Ortiz de Zúñiga	538.356
Duquesa de Béjar	464.444
Herederos de Juan de Salazar	177.378
Capellanía de Leonor Sánchez	85.768
Don Melchor de Villasur	47.600
Conde de Orgaz	763.536
Don Francisco de Vallejo Robles	321.421
Canónigos de San Salvador	106.521
Don Lucas Pinelo	56.250
Don Andrés de Liñán	301.822
Simón de Pineda	52.500
Herederos de don Miguel de Suazo	1.001.451
Obras pías de Ambrosio Martel	319.723
Patronato de don Diego Pérez de Guzmán	876.622
Conde de Peñaflor	271.778
Convento de Santo Domingo Portacoeli	37.400
Capellána de Sebastián de Bian	46.875

Table 1. (*Cont.*)

Concept	Amount (*)
Convento de Santa María de Gracia	49.406
Nuestra Señora de Monserrat	54.237
Patronato de Doña María de Lorenzana	90.728
Monjas de la Pasión	127.560
Doña María de Retana	838.414
Patronato de Martín de la Torre	159.675
Doña Antonia de Orocampo Enríquez	1.033.417
Dª María Ibáñez de Maya y Jacinto de Arriaga	1.739.270
Herederos de Antonio de Aristizábal	844.368
Rodrigo de Saviola	405.000
Don Alonso Neli	315.000
Don Bartolomé de Carvajal	271.946
Fábrica de San Vicente de Sevilla	164.369
Doña Margarita de Astagarbeia	448.800
Don Francisco de Lugo	792.810
Convento de San Jacinto	182.750
Don Francisco Chacón de Valenzuela	144.894
Lope Rico de Loarca	331.813
Marqueses de Fuentes	4.155.456
Don Andrés de Cervantes	1.945.722
Convento de Barrameda	447.144
Herederos de Pedro de Vallejo	1.655.154
TOTAL	30.868.282

(*) In *maravedíes*.

II. Special debts

Concept	Amount (*)
Guardas del duque	1.496.000
Desempeño de la plata de Madrid	612.000
Cerramiento cortijos	374.000
Don Lorenzo Manuel y agencia de Madrid	374.000
Luis Pérez (Montilla)	204.000
TOTAL	3.060.000

Note: Both debts amounted up to 90.700 ducats.
Source: AGFCMS, leg. 995.
(*) In *maravedíes*.

Alonso Alcaudete.[35] Even so, the duke was forced to sell part of his jewels and silver when he was in Sanlúcar in the summer of 1642, which gave him 86,590 *reales* with which to pay off some old debts.[36]

But the liquidity crunch was the least of the duke's problems in those months. The worst was his delicate political situation, which offered multiple economic opportunities for anyone with a gripe against the ducal house. For example, the archbishopric of Seville took advantage of the situation to revive old lawsuits against the Medina Sidonia and won three favorable verdicts from the Vatican appeals court on 7 November 1642, in which tithes in the county of Niebla and towns in Huelva were taken away from the ducal estate. The duke appealed to the Council of Castile, which in 1644 also ruled against him.[37] In January 1643 another royal order gave Francisco de Arrieta, a royal notary, responsibility for the duke's entailed estates (*encomiendas*) in Seville; Arrieta would work under the orders of Juan de la Calle.[38] The succession of orders gave the duke's servants the impression that the king wanted to destroy the house of Medina Sidonia.[39]

Trying to halt this process from his prison in Coca, the duke gave a small group of close aides responsibility for his rents and estates, and he specified that they must make their decisions collectively.[40] This group slowly began trying to put his finances in order. They negotiated his mortgages (*censos*)[41] and some of the most urgent debts were consolidated to somewhat balance the ducal treasury. This effort to address the duke's obligations to the crown once he was no longer in Sanlúcar showed that his economic resources had clear limits. In 1642 he had to alienate some of his properties, a measure requiring the king's permission, given that alienation could mean that properties were separated from the *mayorazgo*. It was the first service of 1,000 cavalry that set in motion the first such sale, the pastureland (*dehesa*) of Valhermoso, within the city limits of Medina Sidonia.[42]

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[35] AGFCMS leg. 994, 19 February 1644.

[36] AGFCMS leg. 3.188, 216r.

[37] The tithes (*diezmos*) apparently began being collected by the Seville church in 1649. The lawsuit was reopened in 1705 and continued for decades, given that don Gaspar was unable to continue the judicial fight because of the war in Portugal. AGFCMS leg. 994, copies of 1642 and 1644 verdicts and summary of the case.

[38] AGFCMS leg. 1.026; printed, various dates.

[39] AGFCMS leg. 994.

[40] AGFCMS leg. 1.016; the duke's power of attorney was dated 16 April 1645.

[41] AGFCMS leg. 1.016, 29 April 1645.

[42] AGFCMS leg. 785, 6 November and 28 December 1643; the *dehesa* sold for 187,000 *reales*.

Meanwhile, in January 1646 Morquecho was replaced with Alberto Pardo Calderón as governor of Sanlúcar. By then, the city's declining rents were having a negative impact on the duke's creditors, who desperately tried to recover their debts from rents belonging to the rest of the seigneurial estate. From that point on, the pressure on the duke's rents was enormous, even though the king several times told creditors they could get paid only from the Sanlúcar revenue.[43]

The punishment, then, comprised banishment, loss of military jurisdiction, a diminished *señorío*, and economic contributions, though it is also true that the king promised to compensate Medina Sidonia for the loss of his city and allow him to retain its rents so as to pay his debts, both to the crown and to private creditors.[44] The peculiar status of Sanlúcar was described by the king in an order to the accountant Pascual de la Pecada; the king said that as long as the duke's legal rights to rents and properties in the city were under investigation, "all rents must be applied to and converted into payment of mortgages [*censos*] on the house of Medina Sidonia and other debts." The legal basis for indefinitely prolonging the situation, though it was never explicit, would seem to have been the crown's failure to compensate the duke for the loss of his vassals and rents in Castile. Seeking to achieve a delicate balance, then, Pecada was appointed to assist Morquecho.[45]

The duke continued demanding that he be compensated with vassals and rents, as promised, probably because he realized that his reputation would be helped if the handover of Sanlúcar were seen as a service rather than as a punishment. The Council of Castile, after reading a report from the Council of Finance, received the duke's petition favorably in June 1647, saying the duke could not be compensated for his rents at that point but that his jurisdictions and vassals could indeed be compensated. That way, Medina Sidonia would not be able to claim Sanlúcar by saying the crown had not kept its side of the bargain.[46] The council was absolutely correct; for more than a century, the Medina Sidonia continued

[43] AGFCMS, leg. 995, 7 November 1647, the first instance of royal efforts to assist the Medina Sidonia treasury; another, dated 19 July and received on 27 August 1648, is in AGFCMS leg. 1.026, along with copies of a 24 April 1654 writ.

[44] His leading creditors were: Bartolomé Morquecho (716,350 maravedíes per annum), the Augustinian Recollect nuns of Lisbon (1,122,000), Melchor de Guzmán (Marquis of Villamanrique and the ninth duke's brother, 184,875), the Marquis of Guadalcazar (469,722), the holy works (*obras pías*) of Lope de Mendieta (600,000), and three loans to the heirs of Captain Rodrigo de Escobar (435,000). AGFCMS leg. 3.209, nd, 1695.

[45] AGFCMS leg. 1.026, 16 September 1645.

[46] AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, no. 26, 17 June 1647.

asking that Sanlúcar be reincorporated into its *señorío*, as they were never compensated for their vassals.[47]

The official reason for transferring Sanlúcar into royal jurisdiction was to ensure Andalusia's defense, so it is interesting that several of the king's decrees mentioned the need to fortify the mouth of the Guadalquivir River, which the duke never would have been able to do by himself. There were precedents for incorporating *señoríos* for this reason,[48] but the invocation of defense here linked the episode to the crown's longtime belief that port cities should be under royal jurisdiction. Even Medina Sidonia later would refer to this principle as a "fundamental law," though he would do so to counter the transfer being termed a "confiscation," a word that harmed his "honor, credit, and reputation."[49] By insisting on Medina Sidonia's inability to defend Lower Andalusia, the crown was responding to the general military insecurity that had moved many to disobey the king and, in the case of the duke, conspire against him in 1641.

There were those at court who said don Gaspar was trying to stall or block the compensation of his vassals so he might not have to lose hope of ever recovering Sanlúcar. In a letter to Luis de Haro, he defended himself against these accusations, saying he was ready to accept whatever the king offered, and he asked the new *valido* to tell him which way Philip IV was leaning; if the king did not wish to speak about compensation, the duke said, he would remain "perpetually silent" on the matter.[50] In fact, he told his agent in Madrid to give a letter to the king, through Haro, temporarily renouncing any attempt at compensation. Given that the issue was being stalled, he said, he inferred that the king had changed his mind. He asked only that the secretary of the Royal Treasury or a similar entity certify the right of the Medina Sidonia, as stated in the incorporation decree, to pursue the matter "*when the time is right*."[51] But neither the compensation nor the reincorporation ever was carried out.

The duke managed to pay the 200,000 ducats for war costs in Flanders to counter the lawsuit against his *alcabalas*.[52] Clearly he could not raise

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[47] AGFCMS leg. 1.026, 30 October 1767, copy of a letter from the treasurer of Sanlúcar to the duke of Medina Sidonia.

[48] AGFCMS leg. 1026, 10 February 1646. One such precedent was the controversial transfer of of the *señorío* of the county of Ribagorza to the Crown of Aragon in 1591, which required armed force. See Sánchez, *El deber de consejo*, 104–105.

[49] AGFCMS leg. 1.026, nd, around 1651.

[50] AGFCMS leg. 1.026, 27 December 1651 and 5 January 1652.

[51] AGFCMS leg. 1026, 7 January 1652; emphasis in the original, though not in the fair copy in the same bundle.

[52] AGFCMS leg. 794; the duke signed the agreement on 12 April 1647.

this amount himself, especially as he was then banished to Valladolid, so he turned to the great Genovese banker Alejandro Palavesin, who fronted Medina Sidonia with 145,000 silver ducats in Flanders and 50,000 copper ducats in Madrid and Seville.[53] The agreement between the crown and the duke indicated that the amount paid in Flanders would be a short-term loan or contract (*asiento*) while the 50,000 in copper would be a straight loan with interest of 8 percent per annum. From then on, Medina Sidonia could negotiate with Palavesin and later with his successors only about the form in which the periodic payments would be made; almost always, they were against what remained of the Sanlúcar rents. Occasionally the profits from the salted tuna business also came into play, though the business was in decline.[54] There are several ways to interpret the choice of Palavesin to sign the *asiento* with Medina Sidonia. If, as Sanz Ayán has suggested, the Genovese allied themselves with Olivares's enemies in the early 1640s, then forcing Palavesin in 1647 to assume an *asiento* for a large amount that was difficult to negotiate might have been a way for Philip IV to test the banker's loyalty. Thus two of Olivares's opponents were linked.[55]

But the situation grew so desperate that in 1647 the duke had to sell off another load of properties in accordance with the permission the king had given him to alienate portions of his *mayorazgo*. In Sanlúcar, thirty-six properties were put up for sale; thirteen were urban lots and the rest were bonds (*juros*) and tributes, for a total value of 71,245 ducats.[56] In addition, many offices in the county of Niebla were sold, as were country houses and other properties, all of which were deposited in Seville at the disposal of Palavesin or to be invested to pay off other debts.[57] Outside of Sanlúcar and the county, the duke put several other pasture areas and country homes in *la frontera* and the Ronda mountains up for sale.[58] There was a third massive round of sales of entailed lands in 1658.[59]

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[53] The agreement with Palavesin was signed on 16 June 1647 by a notary, Francisco de Morales, in Madrid; AGFCMS leg. 794.

[54] Rents from certain rural establishments were also counted some years. AGFCMS leg. 794, accounts of 1679.

[55] Carmen Sanz Ayán, "Los banqueros del rey y el conde-duque de Olivares," in José Alcalá-Zamora, ed. *Felipe IV: El hombre y el reinado* (Madrid: RAH, 2005), 157–176, 169.

[56] According to a list apparently sent to the duke by the secretary Juan de Torres; AGFCMS leg. 1.026.

[57] In 1648 he sold a *deshesa* called Tiesa along with notarial posts in Calañas and other places in the county, adding up to 12,200 ducats; AGFCMS leg. 751, 10 June 1648.

[58] There were a total of thirteen *dehesas*, according to a list dated 29 May 1648; AGFCMS leg. 751.

[59] AGFCMS leg. 1.013, 11 October 1658.

So the *servicio* of 200,000 ducats lay heavy on the depleted treasury, and not just in Sanlúcar. The origin of the decline in rents was poor administration, either due to lack of attention or because the duke's aides were cheating him. In the period between 1645, when Esteban Belluga de Moncada wrote up a list of all Medina Sidonia's income, and the accounts drawn up in 1647 by Fernando Segura Galván, what most stands out is how many small tributes were still going uncollected. They added up to 14,515,623 maravedíes, versus the 4,041,979 that were being collected.[60]

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The Duke of Medina Sidonia passed through a series of jails in Old Castile and finally was confined in Valladolid [See Map 3]. He had started off, in October 1642, in the Coca castle, in the province of Segovia, where he had to pay for his own guards. Two years later the duchess asked the king for permission to travel to Coca to be with her husband, saying he was ill because of the unhealthy atmosphere there, and she was granted permission a few months later.[61] When the duke finally was allowed to live in Valladolid, he also was given free rein throughout the city, though he could not leave the city center. In 1648 the Council of State sent the king a memorandum with a petition from the duke enclosed asking to be allowed to extend his radius six leagues around the city so as to protect his reputation, appearing to be not a prisoner but in the king's favor. The council rejected the petition, saying Valladolid was a court city—one of Spain's two chancery appeals courts was there—and because the duke had received enough favors. The council even mentioned the possibility that the duke might escape. The king agreed with the council's denial.[62] Medina Sidonia was allowed to wander a bit outside of Valladolid only in winter 1664. That modest achievement, as it happened, would cost him his life, as his aged body could not stand the damp and cold in the dwellings where he stayed in the nearby town of Dueñas.[63]

It is doubtful that when he died don Gaspar was fully aware of how his deeds had irreversibly ruined the patrimony of his ancestors. Four years before the duke's death, a Dutch traveler in Valladolid, Lodewijck Huygens, wrote in his diary that several important lords lived there,

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[60] AGFCMS leg. 1.026, 3 November 1647, "Distinción de la relación de daudas atrasadas."

[61] AHN Estado leg. 8.753, exp. 7, 15 October 1644 and 19 July 1645.

[62] AHN Estado, leg. 8.753, exp. 7, 18 August 1648.

[63] AGFCMS leg. 2.165.

including the duke of Medina Sidonia. He commented only that the duke had fallen out of favor.[64] But the duke surely knew he had failed as prince of a great seigneurial estate being that he was unable to fulfill his primary obligation: at the very least, pass on his estate to his successor. Indeed, the tenth duke, Gaspar Juan, inherited a duchy that was missing its jewel, Sanlúcar de Barrameda, and he was forever shunned and never given royal posts, because of his father's crime. This was so even though Gaspar Juan in 1658 married the daughter of Philip IV's all-powerful *valido*, Luis de Haro, following the longtime tradition of the dukes of Medina Sidonia. Despite the expectations the marriage caused at court, where there were rumors that the duke would be rehabilitated and called upon to fill an important post, the wedding with doña Antonia de Haro had little effect on the lineage. Gaspar Juan was tenth duke for very few years, suffering frustration after frustration to his political aspirations. Philip IV's hatred of his father outlived the ninth duke, and even when the king himself died the following year, in 1665, Gaspar Juan could not overcome the ostracism. He died in 1667.[65]

4.3 *The Tragic Fate of the Marquis of Ayamonte*

It might appear surprising that the Duke of Medina Sidonia was not immediately physically punished, i.e. given a death sentence, after the plot was discovered, but Philip IV's extreme weakness at the time prevented that. It was assumed in Portugal that he and the Marquis of Ayamonte would be beheaded soon after their plans were uncovered.[66] Yet, as we have seen, once the king pardoned the duke for lèse majesté, the cases against him and the marquis were severed. The marquis was arrested and sent to Illescas, where he testified in autumn 1641. In July 1643, by which time he was in Santorcaz, he requested to be transferred—and was in fact moved- to Pinto, and later on he was sent to the *alcázar* of Segovia.[67]

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[64] Maurits Ebben, ed. *Un holandés en la España de Felipe IV: Diario del viaje de Lodewijck Huygens, 1660–1661* (Madrid: Doce Calles-Fundación Carlos de Amberes, 2010), 155–56.

[65] See Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 409–69.

[66] Castilian prisoners taken by the Portuguese at the Algarve border were questioned about this. CODOIN vol. 95, 147–49.

[67] AHN Estado leg. 8.753, exp. 7, 31 July 1643 and BNE ms. 722, 209r. For some news on the marquis's life, see Francisco López Becerra de Solé, *Miscelánea histórica*, Madrid: Fundación Conde de Cabra, 2005, ch. 5.

The case against the marquis, after his first testimony, was in the same sort of limbo as the duke's for a while. But after the duke's illegal trip to Sanlúcar, when the Council of State sought to retry Medina Sidonia for the conspiracy, the prosecution of Ayamonte also was revived. There probably were two reasons for this: to directly threaten the duke, whose honor depended on not being linked to the marquis, and to offer the king an opportunity to show his strength, if only with the weaker of the two ringleaders. But here too, prosecutors ran into the problem of the royal pardon, as they could not punish the marquis to a greater degree than they had the duke, the chief plotter.

It was in these circumstances, in Santorcaz, that Ayamonte testified for the second time. In the presence of a notary, he was questioned by a judge (*alcalde de corte*), Francisco de Robles, in just one session, on 8 June 1643. From this confession, one can infer that his first statement had been simply stayed, or set aside. A lot had happened during the year and a half between his first and second appearances, and this time the marquis modified his defense strategy, showing far more anger toward Medina Sidonia. To begin with, he cast doubt on the validity of his first statement, saying that though the notary (Guillén de la Carrera, who had died in the interim) had signed every page, the copy that Robles showed him did not contain his signature. Ayamonte also said Guillén de la Carrera had coerced him to confess his shared responsibility with the duke.[68]

Juan de Morales y Barrionuevo, prosecutor for the Council of Castile, nonetheless accused Ayamonte of the crime of lèse majesté *in primo capitae* and rejected the new version of the events given by the marquis to reject his first testimony. According to Morales, Ayamonte's statement that Olivares was behind the conspiracy and had framed Ayamonte made no sense, and it was absurd to think that a pardon would be issued for such a huge crime if it had all been made up. The prosecutor aimed well in pointing to the marquis's tricky position; he was trapped by his first testimony which, though extrajudicial, amounted to a confession. The prosecutor therefore requested the greatest physical and economic punishment possible.[69]

Ayamonte's defense lawyer, Gaspar López de Noguera, replied by pointing to technical errors on the prosecutor's part, starting with the lack of reliable verification of the September 1641 confession, which he anyway rejected as having been coerced. He also pointed at all those who had

[68] BNE ms. 722, 210v–221v.
[69] BNE ms. 722, 222v–224v.

denounced the conspiracy and argued that it was legally improper and damaging to his client to sever the cases of the marquis, the duke, and the duke's aide (Luis del Castillo) when there had been only one crime. He reviewed the four accusations against the marquis: attempting to turn Andalusia into a republic, promising to remove tributes, plotting to remove the count-duke, and agitating in favor of having the nobility meet in the Cortes. These were contradictory goals, the lawyer pointed out, as a free republic obviated both toppling Olivares and convoking the nobility. The lawyer cited Ayamonte's participation in Olivares's military defense and denied any concrete acts of rebellion, including plans for militarily attacking the king. He listed the obstacles in the way of any alleged republican aspiration, such as the presence of many high noblemen in Andalusia and the absence of proven contacts with cities in the region. This last argument is particularly noteworthy, as the lawyer was in essence challenging the prosecutor to name accomplices without whose help any conspiracy would have been impossible. Clearly, the crown would not allow names to be named, given the damage it would do to its own image and *reputación*. And finally, the lawyer stated that his client's obedience in going to Madrid as soon as he was summoned, rather than escaping to Portugal, was clear evidence of his innocence.[70]

After this, the case languished once again, and the marquis was not sentenced for another two years. Toward the end of 1646, another defense lawyer, Melchor de Cabrera, drew up a petition requesting a definitive resolution for Ayamonte, who by then had spent five years awaiting sentence. The lawyer described for the judges the enormity of the alleged crime, counterposing his client's "bloodline and the excellence of his person, which exclude any presumption of guilt," a standard argument of rank that did not preclude asking that the matter be dealt with in strict judicial terms. His second argument was a juridical one; there was no *corpus delicti*, as it could not be proven that Ayamonte intended to transform Andalusia into a commonwealth or help anyone rise up against the king. He once again refuted the marquis's first testimony, alleging that Guillén de la Carrera's coercion was the result of an agreement among the other conspirators to blame him (a circumstance that is mentioned only here.) The man in charge, the lawyer said, had been Medina Sidonia (though he did not name him), "owing to his humiliations and the lack of confidence shown in him." As proof he offered up Sánchez Márquez's

[70] BNE ms. 722, 343v–346v, date unclear but definitely 1644.

testimony, indicating the duke had asked the marquis to get involved because "Andalusia was asking the duke to remove the yoke of Olivares, who had levied sixty-three taxes and *donativos*." Medina Sidonia had wanted to present himself as the liberator of Andalusia, the lawyer went on, and thus gain popularity. There was no motive for the marquis to get involved, as he would not benefit from the coup. The lawyer admitted that his client did not like the count-duke, but there was a long tradition of animosity between the houses of Olivares and Medina Sidonia, on the one hand, and Ayamonte, on the other. In any case, his dislike of Olivares was personal, he said, a clear attempt at removing the political context and the accusation of lèse majesté.[71]

The most solid line of defense Ayamonte could have put forth was the glaring injustice of having been locked up for five years without trial.[72] Someone who had seen the petition we just referred to drew up a more literary one in defense of the marquis, blaming Olivares (now deceased) and the Duke of Braganza almost equally for the situation. The anonymous writer accused Braganza of having sought to ensure his own rebellion by spreading rumors that Medina Sidonia wanted to become king of Andalusia at the same time as the duke and Ayamonte were considering the possibility of forcing the king to remove Olivares. The coincidence of the events led the "marquis's enemies" to invent the conspiracy and blame him, with the help of people including Leonardo de Soria Camargo, who worked at undermining confidence in the king. But it was Olivares who was most to blame, according to the document. Starting with the marquis's first testimony in Illescas, when Ayamonte accepted blame in exchange for receiving command of the Sicily galleys and the hand of the Princess of Botera in marriage, Olivares was behind a plan that included giving favors to false witnesses.[73] Thus the similarity of Ayamonte's and Medina Sidonia's first statements did not signal veracity but rather that

[71] RAH 14/11479 (no. 5), printed document signed by Melchor de Cabrera and Juan Ruiz de Valdés. There is a better known manuscript copy in BNE ms. 722, 42r–87v, from late 1646 or early 1647.

[72] At that point he was in Segovia, and quite uncomfortable. He had not received the 4,000 ducats per year from his estate's rents to pay for food and legal costs, according to a petition presented to the Royal Council; AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261 nos. 28a and 28b, 16 January and 29 October 1646.

[73] Francisco Maldonado was promised that his daughter's husband would be given membership in a military order and a cavalry captain's salary; Leonardo Camargo was given the post of inspector general in Sicily; and Clara Gonzaga was given 500 ducats and a military order membership for her brother.

there was one person behind both. The document cited a letter from Medina Sidonia to Olivares, written as the duke was on his way from Valencia de Alcántara, saying the duke had done nothing that the count-duke had not ordered or advised, and that he hoped Olivares would get him out of the predicament in which he had put him. "This, sir, is the crime of the marquis," the writer proclaimed ironically, "this is the disloyalty, the conspiracy, with this assistance he hoped to make Andalusia rise up, and this is how he corresponded with the rebel. No, sir, it makes no sense, it strains credulity, and wise men would regard it as absurd."[74]

Despite his lawyers' denials on his behalf, Ayamonte shared other Andalusian noblemen and merchants' frustration and bitterness at the hopeless situation in the 1630s and 1640s. His most important source of revenue lay in international trade, and his river port was one of the busiest for ships as they arrived from America. Ship captains often alleged they were unable to navigate all the way to Seville, their official and only legal destination, and the increasingly frequent denunciations about ships' improper use of Ayamonte's port, which today can be read in royal archives such as the Archivo General de Indias, suggests that the marquis increasingly was engaging in fraud. Seigneurial authorities who found fortune on the margins of the Indies trade were taking risks and were vulnerable, but in 1640, beset by a series of military disasters, the future of legal American trade held little promise for them. Thus Ayamonte's trade activities, his economic dependence on his *relatives* –as he referred to his Portuguese friends and contacts in his correspondence to Medina Sidonia (see pages 95–96)– in the neighboring rebellious kingdom of Portugal, along with his antipathy toward Olivares and the sense that insurrection was imminent in Andalusia, all added up to a plausible reason to rebel. Though we know very little of the marquis's life before or after his imprisonment, he clearly was a key player in the conspiracy, probably the instigator, and the one most directly involved with the Portuguese rebels after the December 1640 uprising led by Braganza.

In late 1646 Philip IV wrote a memorandum regarding commutation of the death penalty, and he ordered the president of the Council of Castile, Juan Chumacero, and the president of the Council of Finance, the Duke of Villahermosa, to meet in secret to discuss the possibility. According to the king, justification for a pardon would include "that this gentleman was not the leader, and that the man who was the leader has been pardoned

[74] BNE ms. 8.180, 154r–158v; there are two copies in RAH 14/11.479, d.7, and AHN-N Osuna, C-284, d.29.

and is today walking the streets of Valladolid." He also mentioned Ayamonte's kinship with the greatest noble families of Castile, who would quite reasonably be very upset if the marquis were executed: "For my sins, the times are such that it behooves us not to anger the nobility, but rather to encourage and favor them … Events of the past, which so damaged this Monarchy, should open our eyes and prevent similar things from occurring in the future." But the king also considered arguments against clemency, including that the sentence had come from the Council of Castile and did not permit appeal. He also noted that his pardon was of Medina Sidonia, not Ayamonte:

> This matter caused such a scandal throughout Europe, there was no place where people did not know about it, and in some cases this news reached me personally. If they were to see that such a serious and great crime were not punished, the reputation of the judiciary and government of these kingdoms would suffer. Though it is true that we are in troubled times, yet for that very reason justice must have authority and be respected.[75]

The junta replied that, given the notoriety of the matter, the king could order that "the sentence be carried out with confiscation of property and that an appeal could be lodged regarding only the capital punishment." Separately, the king could ask the president of the council to delay the execution and apply the punishment only to the marquis's finances. The king agreed with this solution.[76] Months later, in August 1647, the marquis requested, now that his life had been saved, that the pardon be extended and confiscation of his estate cease.[77]

The council studied Ayamonte's successive requests that the conditions of his imprisonment be relaxed. It always compared the situation of the other accomplices, particularly that of Luis del Castillo, accused of having come up with the plan, whose fate after his arrest is a mystery other than the vague references made by the marquis's lawyer. As late as 5 May 1648, the council received complaints from Ayamonte that he could not even communicate with his lawyers, and he again requested that conditions be loosened.[78]

It is not clear why he was executed a few months later—at the same time as yet another conspiracy appeared, this one led by the Duke of Híjar. We do not have the death sentence, but we know it was issued by

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[75] AHN Estado, lib. 866, 1r–3v, 31 December 1646.
[76] AHN Estado, lib. 866, 3v–4v, 4 January 1647.
[77] AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, no. 28c, 4 August 1647.
[78] AHN Consejos, leg. 7.261, no. 28d, 5 May 1648.

the Council of Castile. No appeal was permitted. The Marquis of Ayamonte was executed in the *alcázar* of Segovia: "They cut off his head from behind, like a traitor, in accordance with the sentence, on Saturday, December 12, 1648, and they took his property and his estates, putting an end to his imprisonment and granting his soul to God." The decision had been made at the same time as death sentences were passed on those involved in the Duke of Híjar's conspiracy, uncovered shortly beforehand. The coincidence makes one think this was a late show of strength by Philip IV, who sorely needed one. It is nonetheless surprising that Ayamonte paid with his life while Híjar did not.[79] The marquis's properties were not handed over to the crown, however; Bartolomé Morquecho, regent at the Audiencia court in Seville, ruled that the marquisate be given to the marquis's sister, the marchioness (consort) of Mondéjar. The Council of Finance appealed this ruling unsuccessfully.[80] After news of Ayamonte's death was made public, the conspiracy was described as "baseless madness, which always ends with this sort of punishment. In cases of lèse majesté, it is not the execution that is punished, but rather the intent."[81]

* * *

After the fall of Olivares and the subsequent political turmoil in Castile, there were those who dared to openly criticize how titled noblemen and grandees were given important posts. It has often been said that Olivares's attitude toward the nobility was inspired by the tradition attributed to Philip II, aimed at reducing its power. Olivares himself used this argument in his famous secret *memorial* of 1624.[82] But not everyone thought Olivares's actions conformed with that goal. An anonymous writer, responding to Olivares's "detestable politics of twenty-two years" (meaning he was writing in around 1643), recommended that Philip IV firmly and clearly undercut the power of the nobility. The king must remain cordial but should go after their finances; the more they had to pay, the easier it would be to control them. The anonymous writer clearly wished Olivares had done the same, and the contrary examples of Braganza and Medina Sidonia hover over the text.[83] But no such attack on

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[79] Ezquerra Abadía, *La conspiración*, 1–28.

[80] Printed document, around 1650: "El licenciado don Juan de Valdés … con la marquesa de Mondéjar … sobre la confiscación del estado de Ayamonte…" BNE ms. Porcones 2/2.

[81] BNE ms. 8.180, 31v–32r.

[82] Elliott and De la Peña, *Memoriales y cartas*, vol. 1, 49–100.

[83] RB II/776, 75–101.

privilege took place during these years in which the crown underwent a crisis of authority. On the contrary, Philip IV's benevolence with Medina Sidonia, beyond the juridical problems of the 1641 pardon, were endlessly justified by the illustrious services the Pérez de Guzmán lineage had always offered the Castilian Monarchy. A contrary stance for Philip IV would have violated his pact with the nobility, on which the survival of the monarchy depended.

In the context of a society of orders, the fates of Medina Sidonia and Ayamonte constituted a sharp warning not to try anything similar in the future. Not only did Castile's most powerful and influential seigneurial house suffer, but the nobility completely failed to collectively react to the conspiracy, before or after it was uncovered. Before the duke was summoned to Madrid, noblemen were incapable of responding as a group, even though they could share most of the duke's positions. Nor did they react collectively when it was clear the duke was going to be punished and his family forever penalized, or when Ayamonte was beheaded, despite all the judicial irregularities in both cases. The relative secrecy surrounding the case, which formally protected Medina Sidonia's honor, meant news was absorbed gradually yet was always regarded as rumor, only more or less reliable, and that, too, reduced the opportunity for a collective response.

EPILOGUE

AN OVERLOOKED IMPERIAL TRANSFORMATION

Some historians have argued that the relative peace in Castile in the 1640s can be explained by the fact that the powerful had already gotten what they wanted, either through structural pacts reached decades earlier or through gains made after the fall of the hated count-duke of Olivares, who represented government by decree, a contrast to traditional Castilian politics.[1] But the absence of any serious protests other than Medina Sidonia's coup does not mean there was no cause for protest or will for changes. On the contrary, the duke's conspiracy shows that indeed there was open and seditious opposition to Philip IV in Castile. And the fact that Medina Sidonia did not triumph does not make his attempt chimeric, absurd, or peculiarly personal. Lack of determination among the conspirators, the bad luck of the delay in the arriving of the international fleet or of being betrayed, and wise moves later on by the crown combined to ensure that the flames were quickly snuffed out, though smoke continued to waft upward for several years.

It is therefore necessary, as this book concludes, to interpret the conspiracy in an imperial or Atlantic context. Breaking or loosening ties between Andalusia and the rest of the Castilian crown, as the conspiracy planned to do, can be seen as a consequence of what Ruggiero Romano called "contradictory junctures" (*oposte congiunture*), that is, the combination of an expanding colonial empire in America and a metropolis in crisis.[2] The duke's conspiracy, then, might have reflected a desire, surely shared by a large part of the Andalusian nobility and the merchant elites of Seville, to separate themselves from Philip IV's European policy and instead try to revitalize Andalusia's American and merchant activities. This would have been a way of holding on to the healthiest aspect of the empire, i.e. America, and breaking the ties between Andalusia and the weakest aspect of the empire, the old Hapsburg dream of European hegemony.

[1] Elliott, "Una sociedad," *passim*; Gelabert, *La bolsa*, 368–78.
[2] Romano, *Coyunturas opuestas*.

Such a desire would have been closely related to Philip IV's pressure on Andalusia over the Atlantic trade in the late 1630's. On 1 February 1637, the count-duke of Olivares and the Count of Castrillo, president of the Council of Finance, notified the Duke of Medina Sidonia that Bartolomé Morquecho was on his way to Andalusia to provide a very special service to the king. Without specifying what the service was, the two men asked the duke to do what he could to ensure that Morquecho's mission was successful.[3] The mission became public three days later when the king signed a loan request with the merchants of Seville, Cádiz, Jerez de la Frontera, and Sanlúcar de Barrameda for a total of 800,000 ducats to cover the Monarchy's needs for that year. Though in order to raise the money the cities in question had to increase customs rates between 1 percent and 1.25 percent, Sanlúcar offered just 0.5 percent. Philip IV pressured the duke to push the number higher, which the duke did, reaching 1 percent. The king, who was in a hurry to receive the revenue, also suggested to Morquecho that he help the duke purchase the rights to the increased tax in Jerez.[4]

That same year, owing to the Catholic Monarchy's continued commercial isolation, Olivares considered drawing closer to Poland, figuring that its commercial fleet might be able to alleviate the Castilian market. Philip IV asked Medina Sidonia to be very benevolent with four ships that were to arrive in Sanlúcar to do business. The duke not only was happy to comply with the king's orders, he wrote to King Wladyslaw IV of Poland, telling him that he (the duke) had managed to evade certain orders from Philip IV to search and embargo Polish ships with the aim of ensuring their trade. Wladyslaw replied with two very courteous letters before the end of the year.[5] Medina Sidonia wrote a similar letter to the King of England in 1637 saying he wished to serve him and his vassals as best he could, adding that he respected Charles's vassals more than Philip IV's or even his own. Again, the king replied very cordially.[6] Clearly, the duke wanted cargo ships to arrive at his port; he wished to treat them well and not hinder them by being too picky about royal orders or inspections. In fact, the number of European nations with which Castile could no longer traffic was seriously affecting the duke's income.

These examples illustrate several issues regarding Atlantic navigation and commerce just before the 1640 crisis. The Indies trade accounted for

[3] AGFCMS leg. 2.417.
[4] AGI Indiferente, 434, L. 8, fols. 71v–73r, and *passim*.
[5] AGFCMS leg. 2.417.
[6] AGFCMS leg. 2.417, 240r and 377r, 12 July and 30 November 1637.

a sizeable portion of the Hispanic Monarchy's military efforts; the trade was always suspected of fraud and therefore was susceptible to royal demands. At the same time, Lower Andalusia was threatened with economic isolation, which would especially harm merchants in Seville who dealt directly with Europe and the Indies, and the threat grew even more alarming after war broke out with France in 1635. Even worse, if an isolated Andalusia were unable to provide commodities to American markets, the beneficiary would be Seville's greatest enemy, the Northern European merchants who traded directly with the Indies. Such a turn of events would spell the end of Seville's trading monopoly. In this context, the Duke of Medina Sidonia and his town of Sanlúcar constituted a piece of the imperial structure that was both semi-autonomous, i.e. able to negotiate directly with merchants and monarchs, and critically important.

Earlier we discussed the impact of this combination of pressure and military commitment in Lower Andalusia in 1638–39. In 1640 the silver fleet did not arrive from America, meaning the crown could not pay the businessmen and bondholders whom it owed some 550,000 ducats, and of course the Indies merchants suffered as well. Philip IV's response, in order to cover his own financial obligations, was to borrow the amount of silver that had not arrived, offering to pay 8 percent in four months with a 1 percent penalty for each month of delay.[7] But by that time, it was clear that the king's promise was not held in high regard in Seville.[8]

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A few days after the count-duke of Olivares definitively left Madrid on 23 January 1643, obeying the king's order, one of his Andalusian protegés, don Juan de Santaelices, regent of the Audiencia of Seville, wrote to the king about the future government in Sanlúcar de Barrameda after the duke's banishment from Andalusia. Above all, the regent was in favor of preserving the Pérez de Guzmán jurisdiction, though he favored changing the form of government. This defense of seigneurial jurisdiction reflected fears that commerce would leave not Sanlúcar but Seville, he said, because merchants were anxious to avoid the many taxes they had to pay in Seville and would move to Sanlúcar where they could engage in fraud and contraband much more easily. As a result, the king would lose a considerable amount of rents emanating from Seville. So Santaelices suggested

[7] AGFCMS leg. 2.419, d. 422, 19 November 1640.
[8] Díaz Blanco, *Así trocaste…,* 119–183.

dividing the Sanlúcar government into two parts, one civil, the other military. The former should be governed by a judge with authority and prestige, but he should not be a nobleman; he should "punish, be vigilant, and protect." Santaelices proposed don Alberto Pardo Calderón and suggested Pardo also be appointed as judge at the Granada chancery appeals court so as to give him more authority in putting down contraband and fraud.[9]

Beyond his attack on the notion of noblemen occupying government posts, Santaelices defended the behavior of the duke's servants who remained in the city government and on the ducal estate. But it is clear from his letter that it was Medina Sidonia's presence at his ducal court that had prevented uncontrolled fraud and contraband in Sanlúcar, an admission that the city was no more a refuge for tax evaders than the region's other port cities, including Seville. However, in May 1643, the junta dealing with the Medina Sidonia affair recommended that the civil and military governments, both of Sanlúcar and of Lower Andalusia as a whole, remain united under the command of a great nobleman, given all the military activities in the region.[10] So, as with Philip II and the seventh Duke of Medina Sidonia in 1588, wartime needs forced Philip IV to allow a great lord of vassals to assume even more power, despite the interference that the noble in question would undoubtedly cause with taxes and commerce in Lower Andalusia. Philip IV chose the Duke of Medinaceli, who took over in 1645. The king appointed Pardo Calderón as civil and military governor of Sanlúcar; at least there, he took Santaelices's advice.

What was going on in Sanlúcar between the summer of 1641 and the transfer of the city to royal jurisdiction? The answer might explain why, beyond the fact that the crown always wished to control important ports and borders, the duke had to sacrifice Sanlúcar to placate the king. In fall 1641, don Juan de Góngora was sent to Cádiz and Sanlúcar to investigate possible fraud on the Indies fleet. The unusual circumstances of that summer, with the Medina Sidonia suspected of having conspired against the king, turned this ordinary inspection trip into an investigation of alleged fraud by the duke's protegés. In a letter to the king, Góngora said he was being hindered from carrying out his task, which was to remove from Sanlúcar, Cádiz, and El Puerto de Santa María those people suspected of hiding and smuggling silver from the fleet. Following that letter, the Council of Indies echoed his concerns, adding that the suspects were

[9] CODOIN vol. 95, 121–24, 9 Feburary 1643, inserted in a *consulta* from the Council of Castile, 16 October 1643.

[10] CODOIN vol. 95, 125–27, 27 May 1643.

many and were trouble-makers. Góngora mentioned one suspect in particular, an aide to Medina Sidonia and resident of Sanlúcar named Francisco de Silva, who he suggested should be summoned to Madrid "because he is troublesome and very protected by the Duke of Medina Sidonia and no one can stop him from doing what he wants." He was so brazen, Góngora added, that he walked freely through town even though he recently had killed a man. He was suspected of having accumulated some 100,000 ducats through fraudulent means. The council recommended that Góngora's suggestion be carried out and that Silva be sent to Madrid on the pretext of some royal service.[11]

It seems likely that the departure of the duke's remaining family members from Sanlúcar in 1642 made the city even more nervous, especially those who most benefited from the duke's protection. As early as 23 June 1642, the duchess has to appoint a new governor for the Sanlúcar castle because the former one, Jerónimo Maldonado, had decided to return to his hometown of Arcos de la Frontera.[12] Tensions among the duke's former protegés led to the appointment in 1643 of a ducal servant, Jerónimo Narváez, to control the Calle de los Bretones, the heart of the international commerce sector in Sanlúcar. The duchess's letter of appointment states first that her primary concern was the good and well-being of the estate's vassals; on the street in question, she said, "there are people from many different nations, from these kingdoms and from abroad, so it is necessary and right that care and vigilance be exercised here more than in any other part of the city."[13]

We know very little about how the city adjusted from being protected by its powerful lord to being watched by the crown.[14] The transition appears to have been traumatic. The elites on the city council, bereft of their old benefactor, continued unhappy even after the formal transfer to the *realengo* in 1645. Discontent in Sanlúcar prompted the king, who feared an uprising in Andalusia, to appoint harsh rulers for the city. The first one, Bartolomé Morquecho, took office accompanied by 600 soldiers

[11] AGI Indiferente General, leg. 762, 24 December 1641. The Silva in question might be Francisco Enríquez de Silva y Guzmán, the duke's military commander in Sanlúcar from 1636 to 1641; he died in 1649 during a major epidemic that swept through Andalusia. See Velázquez Gaztelu, *Catálogo de todas las personas,* 172.

[12] AGFCMS, leg. 4.067, 367r–368.

[13] AGFCMS leg. 4.067, 410, nd, summer 1643. The following year, a palace and garden guard was also appointed, Alonso Velasco, the duchess's former wardrobe gentleman. AGFCMS leg. 4.067, 9 February 1644, 447r.

[14] In large part, this is because the notarial archives of Sanlúcar were destroyed in the 1930s.

sent from Seville who took up residence in Sanlúcar's forts and castles, theoretically to defend the city but quite obviously also to watch and dissuade.[15] After centuries of exemption from billeting, Sanlúcar now had troops in its streets, which only exacerbated the resentment, so much so that in January 1646 don Luis de Haro paid, in his trip to Andalusia, a special visit to Sanlúcar and Cádiz to calm people's nerves.[16]

The Duke of Medinaceli's arrival in Sanlúcar as captain general was not easy, especially as he entered along with yet another contingent of soldiers, who were housed in the city's forts.[17] This new authority, the lord of one of Sanlúcar's most important rival towns, El Puerto de Santa María, posed a new hardship on the city's population, which had to choose between leaving or protesting.[18] Though Medinaceli lived in Sanlúcar during the first few years of his appointment, probably until Philip IV judged that the danger had passed, he moved back to El Puerto de Santa María as soon as he could request a transfer (1649);[19] he was still close by, but now on the Bay of Cádiz.

Clearly, Andalusia was a great worry to Philip IV's government during the 1640s. There are few more telling indications of this concern about burning embers in Seville than the count-duke's refusal to move there after his downfall, even to his nearby *señoríos*. He preferred to remain in the Castilian town of Toro. Perhaps he made that choice because he had some hope of still being able to influence Philip IV's government, but it is surprising that Olivares, who always declared himself to be a *sevillano* and who had invested vast amounts of money and influence in strengthening his seigneurial power in Seville, did not want to enjoy his last days there.[20] Possibly, knowing how unpopular he was in Andalusia, he felt safer in Old Castile.[21]

Despite traditional disputes among tax collectors, there was a close symbiosis between the cities of Sanlúcar and Seville, as Santaelices pointed out. While Seville's so-called commercial monopoly with the Indies was

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[15] AGS Guerra y Marina, L. 198, 274-v, 15 September 1645.

[16] A special junta devoted to Sanlúcar's fortification discussed how to punish people involved in disturbances in the city in 1645 and 1646. AGM, Aparici, vol. 24, docs. 3.362 and 3.363.

[17] AGM Aparici, vol. 24, docs. 3.362, 3.363, and 3.364.

[18] Domínguez Ortiz, "La incorporación," 226.

[19] Juan Pedro de Velázquez Gaztelu, *Estado maritimo de Sanlúcar de Barrameda* (Sanlúcar, 1998) [1774], 279.

[20] Antonio Herrera García, *El estado de Olivares: Origin, formación y desarrollo* (*1535–1645*) (Seville, 1990).

[21] Olivares's reply to the king's order to move to Seville is in Elliott, *El conde-duque*, 638–39.

limited to entities in the port that oversaw merchandise and trade, still Sanlúcar was keenly interested in preserving the monopoly, which made Lower Andalusia the kingdom's only re-export platform. But without Medina Sidonia's presence and support, Sanlúcar was on its way to inevitable decline. Falling revenue from commerce, which had begun even before the conspiracy unraveled, reached the point where it was plummeting; it would not recover until the eighteenth century, and then only partially. The explanation for why this decline in Sanlúcar's population and economic activity did not benefit Seville must be that linkages between merchants in the two cities were far greater than historians have thought. With the loss of the seigneurial Sanlúcar, merchants lost a convenient jurisdiction for doing business that was replaced by the far more expensive royal government. Santaelices was afraid Seville's merchants would move to Sanlúcar; instead they went to Cádiz which, though also *realengo*, at least offered a more comfortable port.

Using the excuse of Sanlúcar's incorporation into the royal jurisdiction, in 1645 Philip IV made a pretense of conducting a general inquiry into the state of commerce in Lower Andalusia. He ordered Juan de Góngora to carry out another inspection, this time of the Casa de la Contratación, authorizing him to check the books starting from 1630; the inspection does not appear to have led to anything other than a cursory rectification of generally sloppy anti-fraud activities.[22]

Until now, no one has linked Sanlúcar's change of jurisdiction and subsequent decline to the transfer of the Indies trade from Seville to Cádiz, which first occurred in 1680.[23] Before 1640, every time the possibility was raised of transferring the Indies trade headquarters from Seville to Cádiz, Sanlúcar and the dukes of Medina Sidonia made every effort to ensure that Seville and the lower Guadalquivir retained exclusivity. Though the eventual transfer of commercial activity from Seville to Cádiz was gradual,[24] by 1680 the Guadalquivir and the Bay of Cádiz were fairly equally matched, with the latter perhaps ahead. In fact, for at least a century there had been discussion about the geographic advantages of Cádiz over the

[22] I have not found the documentation from that inspection, but the king ordered the Casa de la Contratación to open its books to Góngora: AGS CJH leg. 879, Zaragoza, 18 and 29 April and 14 October 1645.

[23] Cádiz would definitively become the headquarters for the Indies trade in 1717; see Antonio García-Baquero, *Cádiz y el Atlántico* (*1717–1778*)*: El comercio colonial español bajo el monopolio gaditano*, 2 vols. (Seville 1976), vol. 1, 94–103.

[24] Albert Girard, *La rivalidad comercial y marítima entre Sevilla y Cádiz hasta fines del siglo XVIII* (Seville 2006) [1932], 43–45; Antonio García Baquero, *Andalucía y laCcarrera de Indias* (*1492–1824*) (Sevilla: Editoriales Andaluzas, 1986), 114–24.

Guadalquivir River, which was difficult to navigate. Similarly, Seville's institutional offensive against the competition from Cádiz could have been set off by the departure of its merchants. At the same time, the generous *donativos* that Cádiz offered the crown starting in 1645 might have been a response not only to having lost jurisdictions due to pressure from Seville (for example the elimination of the Indies court and loss of the *tercio de toneladas*, the chance to load ships to America up to 1/3 of its cargo in Cádiz) but also a reflection of its strengthened mercantile position vis-à-vis the old headquarters.[25] Nor does it seem a coincidence that in 1647, Philip IV gave in to Cádiz shipowners' longtime demand that their ships be outfitted by the merchants of Seville.[26] All this evidence suggests that Sanlúcar's jurisdictional transfer in 1645 constituted a substantial reason for the shift from the Guadalquivir to Cádiz.[27]

But it is also clear that the crown did not wish to punish Seville by acquiring Sanlúcar. In fact, for many years Seville was considered more financially secure than Cádiz and its bay. This can be seen both in the public registers of the Casa de la Contratación, which showed that Seville continued being the center of legal trade, and in royal orders, for example one from 1663 that reiterated that Seville remained the commercial headquarters. But there also are contradictory statistics that shed light on the shift from the Guadalquivir to Cádiz starting in 1645. For example, population contracted in Seville and Sanlúcar and it increased in Cádiz, the only city in Lower Andalusia where that happened during those years.[28] The Casa de la Contratación took notice of the trend and already in 1664 assumed Cádiz had grown substantially.[29] Also, Cádiz began overtaking Seville in the category known as bundles and unspecified packages, which generally referred to the re-export of European textiles to America, a business that until 1645 had been very important in Sanlúcar de Barrameda. An experiment in 1666 by which Cádiz merchants had to load their ships

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[25] For the opposite opinion, see García-Baquero, *Cádiz y el Atlántico*, 104–109.

[26] Lutgardo García Fuentes, *El comercio español con América, 1650–1700* (Seville: Diputación de Sevilla, 1980), 56.

[27] Manuel Bustos Rodríguez, *Cádiz en el sistema atlántico: La ciudad, sus comerciantes y la actividad mercantil (1650–1830)* (Cádiz: Sílex-Universidad de Cádiz, 2005), 48–60, discusses this question at several points without giving it the importance it deserves.

[28] Isidoro Porquicho Moya, *Cádiz: población y sociedad, 1597–1650* (Cádiz: Diputación Provincial, 1994), *passim*; Francisco Morales Padrón, *Andalucía y America* (Málaga: Mapfre, 1992), 135–37; José Luis Comellas, *Sevilla, Cádiz y el América. El trasiego y el tráfico* (Málaga: Mapfre, 1992), 241–45.

[29] Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, "La burguesía mercantil gaditana y el comercio de Indias desde mediados del siglo XVII hasta el traslado de la Casa de la Contratación", in *La burguesía mercantil gaditana (1650–1868)* (Cádiz: Diputación de Cádiz, 1976), 3–11, 4.

in the Sanlúcar port lasted only until 1679, at which point the crown recognized the advantages of Cádiz over the old capital city of the Medina Sidonia.[30] For these reasons, it is not surprising that the Consulado de Indias, the organization of leading merchants in Seville, in 1671 asked the king to allow them to load in Cádiz. As Santaelices well knew, capital has no *patria*, only interests.[31]

Thus we can provisionally argue that Sanlúcar's new juridical status was one of the factors, heretofore ignored, that ended up favoring Cádiz's bid to lead the commercial empire. The slow pace of the transfer, which took thirty-five years, and the attitude of the crown, still invested in protecting the institutional network of Seville, would seem to show that Philip did not see the Sanlúcar transfer as part of a vast plan to alter the American imperial system. If the latter occurred, it was due to more silent processes set in motion by the city's new status.

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To conclude, the significance of Medina Sidonia's conspiracy on the crisis of the Hispanic Monarchy in the 1640s can be summarized in four points, three referring to causes, the fourth to consequences.

First, Medina Sidonia and Ayamonte's conspiracy was an attempt to take advantage of an opportunity that was the result not only of the crown's weakness after the revolts of Portugal and Catalonia but also of growing dissatisfaction in Andalusia with the political program of the king and his *valido*. To a large degree, the unhappiness stemmed from a fear that Andalusia and the imperial routes were not properly protected.

Second, Medina Sidonia had several options in December 1640, and he chose to break, or at least loosen, the ties that bound his seigneurial house to the crown. For ten years he had resented the royal executive government, a necessity given the state of permanent war but which also showed signs of failure. In addition, involvement in military activities, which the Pérez de Guzmán had pursued for a half-century hoping it might contribute to their growth, began being unprofitable, both economically and otherwise. In this sense, Medina Sidonia rose up against a specific form of monarchy; the intersections of his interests and those of the empire were, at the very least, complex.

Third, and closely related to the previous two, Medina Sidonia found himself in a liquidity crisis that had no simple solution. The Indies trade was shifting toward new supply chains for the colonies through

[30] García Fuentes, *El comercio español*, 56–57, and Table 2, p. 475.
[31] ibid, 63–65.

contraband, and as a result Lower Andalusia's participation was diminished, which easily could have pushed the duke to challenge Philip IV's sovereignty. For a power base as extensive and varied as the Medina Sidonia in Lower Andalusia, such a step was not especially large.

And, finally, despite all the structural weaknesses of Philip IV's monarchy, the fact is that the 1640s were its time of survival, achieved through domestic transformations that historians have interpreted as a degree of decentralization. Generally speaking, the explanation that the monarchy survived the crisis through consensus and compromise, and because it was sufficiently weak that it had to back off from administrative reforms of the previous decades,[32] is a valid one. But despite the king's quick pardon of the duke, which showed the crown's weakness, the case of the Medina Sidonia conspiracy and similar seigneurial opposition (such as the group around the Duke of Medinaceli in 1639–40[33]) can be interpreted as a warning signal launched by the monarchy toward its Castilian vassals. Depriving the most powerful of his vassals of his most valued possession, the city of Sanlúcar, which set the duke apart from other noblemen and grandees, was a way of putting the brakes on any other conspiratorial intentions by other powerful Castilian social agents. As a result, Lower Andalusia underwent profound changes, particularly in Seville, where discontent diminished in tandem with its role in the Indies trade. In short, the "matter of the Duke of Medina Sidonia," as it was called, was yet another factor that helps explain the lack of conflict in Castile in the mid-seventeenth century, the vortex of the crisis.

[32] Gil Pujol, "Más sobre las revueltas", 365–83.
[33] Elliott, *El conde-duque*, 539–43.

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