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Patronage and Courtiership in Sixteenth-Century Spain: A Case Study of
Fernando de Valdés, Inquisitor-General

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A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the College of William and Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of
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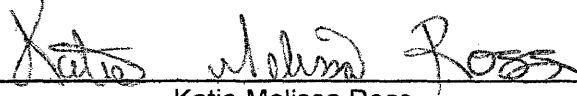
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APPROVAL PAGE

This Thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts



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ABSTRACT PAGE

Despite historiographical trends which have revised the image of the Spanish Inquisition as a domineering monolith of rigid orthodoxy, the treatment of individual inquisitors remains to be undertaken. In this thesis, I contend that inquisitors operated within a sphere of influence that extended beyond the Inquisition and into the royal court, where they served as political bureaucrats in government while also acting as ecclesiastical leaders and patrons. The manner in which they balanced multiple offices and duties while pursuing their own agendas for personal advancement, I argue, provides valuable insight into the socio-political culture of early modern Spain. Unfortunately, very little has been written concerning how these men achieved, maintained and even lost their predominance. This thesis aims, therefore, to contribute to the existing historiography by exploring the career of an inquisitor who was thoroughly enmeshed within the royal court, namely Inquisitor-General Fernando de Valdés.

Although Valdés is considered one of the most prominent inquisitor-generals of the sixteenth century, very little has been written about him beyond the context of his office. In reviewing his official correspondence, I discovered that he was, in fact, a very powerful patron with extensive networks of clients and allies. With Valdés' letters as my primary resource, I have explored not only the circles of clients and patrons with whom he communicated but his networking techniques and strategies as well. Analyzing his career through the lens of patronage, I believe, ultimately illuminates a larger socio-political milieu that functioned via the cultivation of informal, unofficial, and powerful relationships of patronage. Valdés' case study provides valuable evidence not only of the vicissitudes of crown service and the importance of royal favor, but the influence of an individual's work ethic and personal ambitions on sixteenth-century Spanish politics and religion. Thus, my research suggests reevaluating and complicating the role that individual inquisitors played in early modern trajectories of power.

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1. *Introduction*

Historically, Inquisitor-General Fernando de Valdés is infamous for his single-minded restructuring of the Spanish Inquisition and his ruthless persecution of heretics during the mid-sixteenth century. He is also known for his abuse of power and his desperate attempts to stay in the royal court long after he had lost the favor of Philip II. Inquisitors like Valdés had access to a large amount of influence, both secular and religious. Embedded in the royal court, they served as political bureaucrats in government while also acting as ecclesiastical leaders and patrons. By virtue of their position, they had connections to some of the most powerful individuals and groups in Spain; this gave them a notable role in court politics. The manner in which such men balanced multiple offices and duties while pursuing their own agendas is an issue that has important implications for the social and political culture of early modern Spain. Unfortunately, little has been published on the subject.

Indeed, although the Spanish Inquisition is integral to understanding the career of Fernando de Valdés, I discovered that much of the scholarship on that institution was of limited relevance when treating the inquisitor-general as a human being beyond his office. Beginning in the 1960s, historians turned away from studies that portrayed the Inquisition as a monolithic machine bent on dogma, persecution, and repression.¹ Their research revealed something that was much more contingent and vulnerable.² Under the influence of sociology and anthropology, scholars began to acknowledge that there was a dynamic relationship between local religious practice and official doctrine.³ As evidence of negotiation between ecclesiastical authorities and the public came to light, historians began to question the intentions and efficacy of the Inquisition. While the main focus of the scholarship was on the victims of the institution and local and regional attempts at resistance, treatment of the clergy and inquisitors was minimal at best.

In 1968, Julio Caro Baroja analyzed the bureaucratic role of the inquisitor in terms of his legal training. He defined a specific sociological type, the “genus inquisitorum.”⁴ Baroja’s work emphasized the inquisitorial office at the expense of the individual inquisitors. However, throughout the essay, he

¹ This shift was fueled, in part, by the death of Francisco Franco in 1975 and the resultant opening and accessibility of the Spanish archives to historians.

² For a survey of recent scholarship trends regarding the Inquisition, see Lu Ann Homza, “The Merits of Disruption and Tumult: New Scholarship on Spain in the Reformation,” forthcoming in *Archiv für Reformationgeschichte*, 2009.

³ Anthropologist Bill Christian’s seminal 1981 work, *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* provided much of the impetus for the combined study of the Inquisition and local religion.

⁴ Julio Caro Baroja, *El Señor Inquisidor y Otras Vidas por Oficio* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1968), 18.

cautioned that offices and titles were not simply interchangeable with the men who held them; he advised historians to take into account the intersection of the personal with the official.⁵ From this perspective, the office made the man just as much as the man made the office.⁶ Baroja's sociological category was later adapted by historians in an attempt to delineate a specific class of inquisitors based on shared familial, intellectual, and professional characteristics. The result was a series of valuable prosopographical studies that unfortunately continued to conflate the inquisitorial institution with the individuals who worked for it.⁷

In volume two of *Historia de la Inquisición en España y América* (1993), Teresa Sánchez Rivilla classified inquisitors based on birthplace, family, education, and office; seven years later, in 2000, she created an exhaustive list that provided brief biographies for each member of the council of the Inquisition.⁸ Maximiliano Barrio Conde expanded Rivilla's categories in his essay "Burocracia Inquisitorial y Movilidad Social: El Santo Oficio Plantel de Obispos;" in addition to regional origin, socio-economic background, and education, he classified inquisitors according to their age upon entering and leaving office, their duration in power, and their salaries.⁹ Both Sánchez Rivilla and Barrio Conde illustrated that inquisitors constituted a religious, social, and intellectual elite. They also pointed out that such men tended to follow a fairly standard professional track, an unofficial *cursus honorum* in which they began with offices of minor importance and advanced through a combination of merit and networking.¹⁰ However, both historians' emphasis on prosopography allowed only broad generalizations. While such generalizations can provide a useful guideline for the analysis of inquisitors as a class, they can also easily devolve into nothing more

⁵ Ibid., 11-13.

⁶ The human nature of inquisitors did effect the way that they performed their jobs; yet, as Carlo Ginzburg noted, there was always a natural distance between the regular population and religious authorities. This distance was reinforced by the fact that inquisitors attempted to discover and correct the sins and heresies of the congregation and thus had to remain aloof when recording testimony. Ginzburg likened the inquisitor to an anthropologist who was essentially a foreigner trying to observe and interpret an alien culture. Carlo Ginzburg, "The Inquisitor as Anthropologist," in *The Inquisitor as Anthropologist: Clues, Myths and the Historical Method*, trans. John & Anne C. Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 156-164.

⁷ "Prosopography is the investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives." For more information regarding its theory and methodology, refer to Lawrence Stone, "Prosopography," in *The Past and the Present* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), 45-73. The definition quoted above is from page 61.

⁸ Teresa Sánchez-Rivilla, "Sociología de Inquisidores Generales y Consejeros," in *Historia de la Inquisición en España y América*, Vol. 2 (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1993), 715-730 and "Inquisidores Generales y Consejeros de la Suprema: Documentación Biográfica," in *Historia de la Inquisición en España y América*, Vol. 3 (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 2000), 228-437.

⁹ Maximiliano Barrio Conde, "Burocracia Inquisitorial y Movilidad Social: El Santo Oficio Plantel de Obispos," in *Inquisición y Sociedad* (Valladolid: Secretariado de Publicaciones e Intercambio Editorial, 1999), 107-138.

¹⁰ "The inquisitorial career constituted an authentic *cursus honorum* by which one generally began in a tribunal of less importance and ascended by seniority and merits to more prestigious ones or to the Council of the Suprema." Maximiliano Barrio Conde, "Burocracia Inquisitorial," 110.

than the compilation of traits into artificial categories that are too narrow to allow for the diversity of historical reality.¹¹

The study of individual inquisitors within the context of their own particular concerns and careers has been, with a few prominent exceptions, poorly represented in the scholarship.¹² The career of Inquisitor-General Valdés is one of the few exceptions, although the historiography still has notable gaps regarding him as well. Historians have traditionally focused on Valdés' official actions as inquisitor-general and archbishop of Seville: his consolidation and codification of the Inquisition, his suppression of heretical Protestant cells, and his bitter enmity towards the Archbishop of Toledo, Bartolomé Carranza. The typical assessment of Valdés has been highly negative. For example, nineteenth-century historian Juan Antonio Llorente considered him to be vile, sanguinary, and corrupt.¹³ American historian William H. Prescott described Valdés as if he were possessed of otherworldly power:

a person of a hard, inexorable nature, and possessed of as large a measure of fanaticism as ever fell to grand inquisitor since the days of Torquemada. Valdés readily availed himself of the machinery placed under his control. Careful not to alarm the suspected parties, his approaches were slow and stealthy. He was the chief of a tribunal which sat in darkness and which dealt by invisible agents.¹⁴

Such dramatically one-dimensional interpretations were challenged by José Luís González Novalín, who published his intellectual biography of Valdés in 1968.¹⁵ Novalín portrayed Valdés as an individual shaped by his environment, reactive to the circumstances and events of his surroundings. He revealed the prelate's more nuanced character by using his early life and educational background to elucidate his later ecclesiastical and political career. In his attempt to illuminate the intellect, personality, and motives behind Valdés' actions, Novalín restored some of the humanity that previous interpretations had lost. Moreover, he studied the inquisitor-general in a much wider context than the Inquisition.

¹¹ Barrio Conde did respond to this problem to a degree by using individual inquisitors to support his broader claims.

¹² The few notable exceptions have been José Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras' work on Archbishop Bartolomé Carranza, Gustav Henningsen's work on Alonso de Salazar y Frías, Maurice Boyd's research on Gaspar Quiroga, and Julio Caro Baroja's study of Diego de Simancas. The degree to which these works deal with the intersection of personal ambitions and professional duties varies. For a more detailed historiographical analysis, see Kimberly Hossain, "Arbiters of Faith, Agents of Empire: Spanish Inquisitors and Their Careers, 1550-1650," (PhD. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2006), 18-24.

¹³ Juan Antonio Llorente, *A Critical History of the Inquisition of Spain* (Williamstown, MA: The John Lilburne Company, 1967), 164; 434-5.

¹⁴ William H. Prescott, *The Works of William H. Prescott*, 22 vols. Volume 17: *Philip II* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1904), 39. For a discussion of the impact that Prescott's work had on the interpretation of Spanish history in the United States, see Richard Kagan, "Prescott's Paradigm: American Historical Scholarship and the Decline of Spain," *American Historical Review* 101 (April 1996): 423-46.

¹⁵ José Luís G. Novalín, *El Inquisidor General Fernando de Valdés: Su Vida y Obra*, Vol.1 (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1968).

Like the majority of his peers, Valdés was enmeshed in the politics of the Spanish royal court. In the absence of a government based on the separation of church and state, it was common for those in power to hold multiple offices in both the ecclesiastical and secular hierarchies. Valdés deftly maneuvered through the interconnected worlds of religion and politics to advance his career; in addition to an intense work ethic, he cultivated and employed networks based on patronage. This aspect of his career has not been explored at any great length even though it has important implications for the political and social history of early modern Spain. Valdés began to network before he became an inquisitor and he used patronage strategies to manage his ecclesiastical posts as well as his civil offices. Studying him in this context illustrates that his sphere of influence extended beyond the Inquisition into the royal court and allows for the analysis of a larger period of his career. Moreover, the use of a discrete case study provides a fresh perspective on the practicalities of how power was actually achieved and wielded on the ground.

Historians of early modern Spain have only recently begun to illuminate the role that networking and patronage played in the royal court.¹⁶ Italian, British, and French studies on the subject are much more numerous and therefore provide valuable guidance in the form of theory and methodology. Scholars agree that patronage constitutes a valuable analytical framework for the interpretation of early modern society's political culture, social structure, and values.¹⁷ In the absence of a formalized bureaucracy to regulate office-holding and advancement, power and prestige were gained through informal channels based on personal alliances. In the words of Ronald Weissman, patronage represented "the unwritten rules of the game, the way things actually got done."¹⁸ Ironically, the unofficial nature of patronage poses a challenge

¹⁶ Court studies are popular in the Spanish historiography, but historians have typically focused on the latter period of Philip II's reign and emphasize court culture in terms of aristocratic values and status display. Such is the case with José Martínez Millán's recent two volume work on the details of court life during the reign of Philip II. Analyzing the Spanish court via patronage networks has only recently become a topic of interest. Fernando Bouza has edited a volume concerning the trajectories of individual careers while Martínez Millán has published several articles concerning political patronage under Charles V and Philip II. Dealing with a slightly later period, Antonio Feros' book, *The King's Favorite: Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III 1598-1621* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), explores the politics of networking at the court of Philip III and the duke of Lerma.

¹⁷ Scholars also agree that patronage was a prominent system during other time periods as well. Victor Morgan traces patronage in England back to feudalism in the Middle Ages while Ronald Weissman argues that networking was an effective system as far back as Ancient Rome. For an in-depth study of Ancient Roman patronage, see Lily Ross Taylor, "Nobles, Clients, and Personal Armies," in *Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientelism*, eds. Steffen Schmidt, Laura Guasti, Carl Lande, and James Scott (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 179-192.

¹⁸ Ronald Weissman, "Taking Patronage Seriously: Mediterranean Values and Renaissance Society," in *Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. F.W. Kent and Patricia Simons (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 42. According to Ernest Gellner, "real patronage seems to me to be a system, a style, a moral climate. In a small, intimate society, quasi-patronal relationships hardly form a system.... In larger societies, patronage proper is an ethos: people know that

to its study. Alliances were not established by physical contracts and services were often ambiguous and hard to quantify in terms of tangible value.¹⁹ In addition, there has been extensive debate as to whether the specific terminology used by historians accurately reflects early modern understandings.²⁰ The use of letters, such as those of Inquisitor-General Valdés, offers an invaluable glimpse into the writer's contemporary world and provides specific details about the different affiliations as court. As Santiago Martínez Hernández noted, "letters were the place in which confidences, favors, and courtesies were exchanged, as well as advice, exhortations to fidelity and friendship, and recommendations."²¹ Valdés' letters therefore provide clues as to how and why patronage relationships were formed, who formed them, and what behavior and language maintained them.

Most scholars agree that the system of patronage was distinguished by relationships that were vertical, hierarchical, and asymmetrical. In the narrowest sense, patronage involved an individual dyadic relationship while in actual practice it constituted a multiplicity of interconnected relationships that formed a network. Alliances were voluntary and primarily utilitarian; clients received goods, protection, and advancement while patrons received loyalty, social prestige, and a power base.²² However, patron-client relationships could also be a complex combination of pragmatism and personal ties. Typically, affiliations

it is a way of doing things, amongst others. Ernest Gellner, "Patrons and Clients," in *Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Society*, eds. Ernest Gellner and John Waterbury (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1977), 1-6.

¹⁹ As Sharon Kettering explains, "Equivalence in relationships was difficult to maintain....An informal, indirect process of bargaining and negotiation characterized most patron-client relationships in which the interests, resources, and contributions of one participant were periodically weighed against those of the other." Sharon Kettering, "Gift-giving and Patronage in Early Modern France," *French History* 2.2 (1988): 143.

²⁰ In her studies of early modern France, Sharon Kettering recognizes that the vocabulary used today owes its usage to English social scientists. Such vocabulary includes the words "patron," "client," "clientage," "clientele," and "brokerage." These terms are problematic for French historians who prefer to use descriptive terms such as *fidèle*, *protecteur*, and *créature*. Moreover, Italian historians differentiate between *mecenatismo* (cultural patronage) and *clientelismo*, (political patronage). See Sharon Kettering, "Patronage in Early Modern France," *French Historical Studies* 17.4 (Autumn 1992): 847-8 and Dale Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2000), 8.

²¹ Martínez Hernández studied the communication between courtiers during the latter period of King Philip II's reign. He remarked that the study of their written correspondence constitutes a "first-rate source for understanding the formation, consolidation, and rupture of the principal factions [at court] as well as the relations between members of those factions." Santiago Martínez Hernández, *El Marqués de Velada y la Corte en los Reinados de Felipe II y Felipe III* (Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y León, 2004), 115.

²² Typically, the patron provided anything from the basic means of subsistence (food, land, and equipment) to loans of money and advice. He also used his power to provide political offices and favors, arrange lucrative marriages, mediate disputes, and to initiate contact with networks. Indeed, a patron's physical resources could actually be considered of secondary value in relation to the powerful individuals he knew and to whom he could offer access. In return, clients provided a variety of services from actual physical labor to information gathering on their patron's enemies. Moreover, clients demonstrated their loyalty by protecting their patron's reputation and name and campaigning in support of their patron's faction in politics and government. For more information, see James Scott, "Patronage or Exploitation?," in *Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Society*, ed. Ernest Gellner and John Waterbury (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1977), 22-25. Regarding an actual patron at work, refer to Anthony Molho's research on Cosimo de' Medici: "Cosimo de' Medici: *Pater Patriae* or *Padrino*?" *Stanford Italian Review* 1 (1979):5-33.

were built on pre-existing webs of kinship or friendship. Indeed, networks were in some respect nothing more than artificially constructed extended families. The household and family provided a model for the interactions between patron and client: patrons thought of themselves as fathers or heads of the household while clients thought of themselves as dependants and subordinates, much like women and children were considered in early modern homes.²³ As a result, patronage language reflected the interweaving of two different elements: patrons and clients utilized formalized, rhetorical references to loyalty, service, deference, and respect as well as more personal insinuations of friendship and intimacy.²⁴

Such language illustrated one of the foremost traits of patronage, its “implied moral obligations and overtones.”²⁵ Alliances were conducted on a face to face basis: emphasis was placed on fidelity to individuals as opposed to abstract principles and sense of self was conditioned in terms of duty to others.²⁶ In early modern society, defined by its preoccupation with honor and reputation, formal contractual obligations were substituted with moral obligations to ensure that alliances were upheld.²⁷ The patron and client were bound by the dictates of mutual reciprocity; if either failed to honor his commitment the alliance dissolved, often with damaging social repercussions.²⁸ In actual practice, patrons and clients rarely formed relationships that lived up to such idealistic standards. Patronage tended to be more pragmatic and was ultimately concerned with the reality of power, how it was acquired, exercised, and distributed. Thus,

²³ In practice, the lines between kin, friends, patrons, and clients were blurred and overlapping; a person could fall into more than one category. For an exhaustive interpretation of the relationship of patronage to kinship and friendship, see: Sharon Kettering, “Friendship and Clientage in Early Modern France,” *French History* 6.6 (1992): 139-158, and “Patronage and Kinship in Early Modern France,” *French Historical Studies* 16.2 (Autumn 1989): 408-435. Guy Lytle deconstructs the meaning of the word “friend” in his essay “Friendship and Patronage in Renaissance Europe,” in *Patronage, Art, and Society in Renaissance Italy*, edited by F.W. Kent and Patricia Simons (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987) 47-61.

²⁴ According to Kettering, such language was part of a highly stylized politics of politeness intended to elide the fact that patronage was, at heart, concerned with the practicalities of power and obligation. Kettering, “Gift-giving and Patronage in Early Modern France,” *French History* 2.2 (1988): 131-151.

²⁵ Weissman, 30.

²⁶ Ernest Gellner, “Patrons and Clients,” in *Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Society*, eds. Ernest Gellner and John Waterbury (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1977), 2; S.N. Eisenstadt and Louis Roniger, “Patron-Client Relations as a Model of Structuring Social Exchange,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22.1 (January 1980): 50.

²⁷ For an in-depth study of the concept of honor in early modern Spain, refer to I.A.A. Thompson’s essays: “The Purchase of Nobility in Castile, 1552-1700,” “Neo-noble Nobility: Concepts of *Hidalguía* in Early Modern Castile,” and “*Hidalgo* and *Pebrero*: The Language of ‘Estates’ and ‘Classes’ in Early Modern Castile.” All three essays can be found in Thompson’s *War and Society in Habsburg Spain: Selected Essays* (Brookfield, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1992). For a more recent interpretation on honor as a rhetorical device, refer to Scott Taylor, *Honor and Violence in Golden Age Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

²⁸ Acquiring the reputation of being parsimonious with one’s services and resources meant that an individual had much less chance of being considered either as a patron or a client. This, in turn, affected the very honor of the person in question. Honor was contingent on public recognition of an individual’s worth. If a person was seen as having lost their honor, such as in failing to maintain a reciprocal obligation in patronage, they then lost a sense of their own social value and identity.

alliances were often fleeting and commitments could change as necessity dictated. Rhetorical flourishes of language served to mask these harsher realities and perpetuated a more idealized version of the system in accordance with the early modern dictates of honor.²⁹

Although the majority of scholarly studies on patronage is derived from British, Italian, and French examples, the resultant theory and methodology can be applied effectively to Spain. According to Spanish historian José Martínez Millán, one of the foremost authorities on the courts of Charles V and Philip II, Habsburg politics displayed the characteristics of a system that functioned according to patronage; political power and social prestige were brokered predominantly through informal alliances.³⁰ The king was perceived as the center, or fount, of all patronage, typically referred to as *gracia* and *merced*, and all crown servants sought to be as close as possible to the royal court. The consistent challenges of royal absenteeism and regency government during the mid-sixteenth century enabled some ministers to assume predominant positions in the royal government and become patrons in their own right; this led to the rise of factions and subsequent battles over spheres of power.³¹ Martínez Millán has identified Inquisitor-General Valdés as one of the main factional leaders.³²

Yet until now, Fernando de Valdés has not been analyzed as a social and political patron, and a case study of his career can provide a valuable window into the workings of the socio-political world of the Spanish court, a world in which he was thoroughly enmeshed. In the sixteenth century, European government functioned in the form of personal monarchy: the sovereign ruled as well as reigned. Power was tempered by personality and influence was achieved through unofficial channels. The vicissitudes of Valdés' career serve as a discrete example of this larger socio-political milieu that operated according to relationships based on intimacy and informality. Not only does his experience as a patron complicate and

²⁹ Spanish courtiers were keenly aware of the realities of court alliances and even wrote "manuals" on how to be the ideal client. One such courtier, Alonso Barros, wrote that alliances could be formed with various priorities but the ones that lasted longest were the ones founded in utility since "the upper classes always have greater needs" that can be served by the lower classes. Moreover, servants that were known to have a certain talent or ability were always "esteemed more than others." Quoted in José Martínez Millán, "Las Elites de Poder Durante el Reinado de Carlos V a través de los Miembros del Consejo de Inquisición (1516-1558)," *Hispania* 48 (1988): 162-3.

³⁰ José Martínez Millán, "Las Investigaciones Sobre Patronazgo y Clientelismo en la Administración de la Monarquía Hispana Durante la Edad Moderna," *Studia Historica Historia Moderna* 15 (1996): 83-106.

³¹ In his two articles discussing elites during the reigns of Charles V and Philip II, Martínez Millán meticulously outlines the different members of various groups and their subsequent rise and fall at court. Refer to José Martínez Millán, "Las Elites de Poder Durante el Reinado de Carlos V a través de los Miembros del Consejo de Inquisición (1516-1558)," *Hispania* 48 (1988): 103-167 and "Elites de Poder en Tiempos de Felipe II (1539-1572)," *Hispania* 49 (1989): 111-149.

³² Martínez Millán, José, "Las Elites de Poder Durante el Reinado de Carlos V," 153-9.

humanize the traditional historical assessments made about him, but his career illuminates the larger European phenomenon of power-brokering and patronage as an informal means to ascendancy. Using methodological insights gleaned from British, French, and Italian patronage studies, in combination with Valdés' official letters, I explore the circles of clients and patrons that he cultivated during his career. I believe that Valdés' letters can provide valuable evidence not only of his networking techniques and strategies, but of his personal values, aspirations, and work ethic as well.

2. *Valdés' Early Patronage Career*

Fernando de Valdés' background resembles that of many of his fellow inquisitors. Born in Salas, Asturias circa 1483, he came from a family that was considered part of the middle nobility, a status that was reinforced through intermarriage with other noble houses.³³ His family was fairly large: he had six siblings, all of whom he favored and supported throughout his life.³⁴ Indeed, one of Valdés' enduring commitments was the aggrandizement of his patrimony: by the time of his death, the estate of Salas had become very wealthy and was entailed with noble status. The Valdés family was also very influential in the church; six of its members were bishops and constituted what historian Helen Rawlings has described as an "episcopal dynasty."³⁵ It was therefore only natural that Valdés decided to pursue an ecclesiastical career. Circa 1503, he began his study of canon law in Salamanca and obtained a bachelor's degree (*bachilleramiento*) around the year 1509.³⁶ He then petitioned for entrance to the college of Santa Cruz at

³³ The number of families that belonged to each level of nobility is hard to determine because Spaniards did not place great emphasis on delineating the difference between specific classes below the high nobility. Maximiliano Barrio Conde's research indicated four categories; by far the dominant social extraction was non-titled nobility. Barrio Conde, "Burocracia Inquisitorial," 118-9. As Teresa Sánchez Rivilla noted, "the majority of [inquisitors] enjoyed, from their birth, a privileged situation which they had inherited from their parents and ancestors, by virtue of which they could ascend more easily to the positions they undertook." Quoted in *La Inquisición en España y América*, vol. 2, 715.

³⁴ For a family tree of the extended Valdés-Salas lineage, refer to José L.G. Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 1-16. There is also strong evidence that Valdés had a bastard son, Juan de Osorio, whom he endowed with an estate which was to be held only until the latter's death and on the condition that he had no heirs. Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 9-12.

³⁵ Helen Rawlings, "The Secularization of Castilian Episcopal Office Under the Habsburgs, circa 1516-1700," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 38.1 (January 1987): 61.

³⁶ The archives are empty regarding Valdés' early education at Salamanca. Using the few surviving documents available to him, historian Florencio Marcos Rodríguez has tentatively pieced together the timeline described above for the conferral of Valdés' degrees. Refer to his essay, "El Archivo Universitario de Salamanca, como Fuente para Documentar la Vida Académica de Don Fernando de Valdés y su Fundación Salmantina," in *Simposio "Valdés-Salas: Conmemorativo del IV Centenario de la Muerte de su Fundador D. Fernando de Valdés, Su Personalidad, Su Obra, Su Tiempo* (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1968), 183-95.

Valladolid so as to pursue a licenciata degree (*licenciatura*). He was rejected three times and finally turned to San Bartolomé in Salamanca, where he was accepted in June of 1512.³⁷

Valdés thrived under the strict and highly regimented lifestyle of San Bartolomé.³⁸ Shortly after being accepted, he was entrusted with the task of inquiring into the Christian lineage of one of his classmates in Córdoba. By 1515, he had earned his degree in canon law (*licenciado en cánones*) and advanced his position at the college by becoming its rector. San Bartolomé's discipline and monastic austerity affected not only Valdés' work ethic but his intellectual and religious development. The college emphasized the study of law, particularly canon law, over theology and trained its students to be jurists (*juristas*) with legalist minds. Such training was preferred by the monarchy in its ministers and civil servants. As a result, jurists vastly outnumbered theologians in the government and formed a virtual corporate group of *letrados*, or learned men.³⁹

After his graduation from San Bartolomé in 1516, Valdés slowly accumulated several different offices and built an ever larger network of clients through which he wielded his power. In 1520, he was sent as part of a delegation to Flanders to discuss with King Charles, who had recently been crowned holy roman emperor, the conferment of the archbishopric of Toledo. In 1523, he served as an investigator (*visitador*) in Navarre to perform an administrative audit on the region.⁴⁰ Then, in 1524, Valdés was named as an advisor (*consejero*) to the Council of the Supreme and General Inquisition (*la Suprema*).⁴¹ Four years

³⁷ The college of San Bartolomé was founded in 1401 and opened in 1418. Originally, its purpose was to educate a small number of poor students in theology and canon law; no one with a patrimony or benefice above 15,000 *maravedís* was allowed to attend. By the sixteenth century, the college had gained considerable prestige and entrance was coveted by many sons of the elite. The fact that Valdés was refused entrance at Valladolid and accepted at San Bartolomé with its specific criteria has interesting implications for the actual wealth and influence of his family. Essentially, Valdés began his education with limited monetary means and relied on a familial network of contacts to smooth his way.

³⁸ Each student wore a distinct uniform consisting of a cloak of undyed wool with a hood. The day began at 5 or 6 a.m. with the obligatory attendance of mass, followed by a meal. Students had a diet that consisted mostly of diluted wine, eggs, and fish. Throughout the day, only Latin could be spoken and violations were severely punished. If a student needed to leave the school, he had to first obtain the permission of the rector upon pain of expulsion. Stafford Poole, *Juan de Ovando: Governing the Spanish Empire in the Reign of Philip II* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 27.

³⁹ *Letrados* were men trained in law at one of the major universities and who served in the civil bureaucracy, the church, or both. King Philip II tended to prefer them because he believed they were less susceptible to factions and nepotism than aristocrats. According to Barrio Conde, 89.26% of trained inquisitors were jurists and only 9.4% were theologians. He argued that such numbers were logical since from the time of Adrian of Utrecht, inquisitors were required to be jurists. Barrio Conde, "Burocracia Inquisitorial," 121.

⁴⁰ Navarre was annexed to Castile in 1512 and was still fraught with resentment towards the Habsburg government. Valdés was given the task of assessing the state of the administration and its accounts, for which he was paid two hundred ducats.

⁴¹ As Kimberly Hossain explains, the Spanish Inquisition evolved over time from a "handful of inquisitor delegates into a regularized institution consisting of a royal council [the Suprema], numerous local tribunals, and a wide variety of

later in 1528, he inherited the minor deanship of Oviedo from his uncle, don Jordán de Valdés. In addition to the deanship, he simultaneously held the offices of consejero and bishop of Elna and Orense, in 1529 and 1530 respectively. When Valdés was promoted to the bishopric of Oviedo in 1532, he ceded the deanship to his brother, Menén Pérez de Salas.⁴²

The early ecclesiastical posts of Elna, Orense, and Oviedo were little more than stepping stones in Valdés' overall career, intended as training posts before promotion. All three were impoverished dioceses located on the periphery; they had received limited clerical attention and provided annual salaries of less than 15,000 ducats a year.⁴³ Preoccupied with his job in the Inquisition, Valdés took possession of his posts and governed by proxy. He never even resided in Elna or Orense, although he did spend three consecutive months in Oviedo in 1535 to deal with dilemmas over money and reform of the cathedral chapter.⁴⁴ Four years later, Valdés experienced a series of promotions and transfers in recognition of his previous services; his new posts constituted a significant increase in his prestige and power.

He was first promoted to the bishopric of León, which was considered a moderately wealthy diocese of 10,000 ducats, only to be transferred five months later to the vacant diocese of Sigüenza. Sigüenza was an impressive promotion; the diocese boasted a salary of 44,000 ducats. Complementing his ecclesiastical ascendancy, Valdés was also elevated to the presidency of the Royal Chancellery at Valladolid in 1535.⁴⁵ He held that post until 1540 when he became the president of the Royal Council (*Consejo Real*).⁴⁶ In 1546/47 he was appointed to the highest offices of his career: the inquisitor-

official staff and loose associates." The Suprema, administered by the inquisitor-general, was created to oversee the various tribunals and duties of the Inquisition; it served an administrative function in addition to acting as a court of appeal. For more information, refer to Hossain, "Arbiters of Faith," 4-11 and Lu Ann Homza, introduction to *The Spanish Inquisition 1478-1614: An Anthology of Sources*, ed. and trans. by Lu Ann Homza (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006), ix-xxxvii.

⁴² Oviedo evolved into a virtual hereditary holding of the Valdés-Salas family whose members dominated the cathedral chapter. Such hereditary holdings were also very common in Italy; see Barbara Hallman, *Italian Cardinals, Reform, and the Church as Property* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

⁴³ Oviedo was called the Indies of Spain because of its foreboding geography and illiterate and poverty-stricken population. See Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 76-9. Valdés was definitely aware that his early offices were not very wealthy, a fact he pointed out to the emperor in 1538 as part of a request for financial assistance in the form of a pension or prebend. Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 48-9.

⁴⁴ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 76-9.

⁴⁵ The Royal Chancellery was the highest legal tribunal in Castile. After several reorganizations, it came to consist of sixteen judges in charge of civil suits in addition to judicial officials who handled criminal cases. The oldest chancellery was in Valladolid but part of its jurisdiction was given to Granada in 1505. The complex internal organization resembled a virtual court that was presided over by the president. Unfortunately, the archives are empty for the period covering Valdés' presidency and his actions have to be pieced together from his official letters.

⁴⁶ The president was named by the emperor for an unlimited term. Typically, Charles V preferred to nominate men who did not belong to the nobility, which he felt helped to avoid nepotism and factionalism. He chose bishops from the most prestigious dioceses while Philip II began to choose from the laity. The Royal Council, also known as the

generalship and the archbishopric of Seville. Seville provided a salary twice the amount of that of Sigüenza: 88,000 ducats a year.⁴⁷ Valdés retained these two posts for the next twenty years until his death in 1568; during those two decades he experienced the height of his predominance at court followed by an inexorable decline and fall from royal favor. By the time of his death, he was one of the most maligned individuals in Spain.

Despite his ignominious end, few inquisitors ever achieved such rapid and consistent elevation in both the ecclesiastical and civil bureaucracies as did Fernando de Valdés. Yet in terms of his socio-economic background, he was not unique among his peers and his initial offices constituted nothing more than a standard *cursus honorum*.⁴⁸ Valdés received a degree in canon law, entered the church bureaucracy, and performed minor services until he was named to the Inquisition in 1524.⁴⁹ The early part of his career, and of any royal servant's career, resembled a probation period: patronage got a client's proverbial foot in the door but he then had to prove himself by the execution of minor administrative tasks. In Valdés' case, his probation was conducted in Flanders and Navarre. Upon his successful performance, he then gained experience and contacts as he was appointed successively to more important and prestigious bishoprics as well as to political offices in the royal government.

Fernando de Valdés did not spontaneously emerge as a dominant figure at court; his ascendancy was based on a meticulously crafted career. In order to understand him at the pinnacle of his power as inquisitor general and archbishop of Seville, one has to first look to his earlier life and his initial forays into the political sphere. It was during those early years that he began to perfect his methods of power brokering and to negotiate the world of social networking. It was also during his early career when Valdés began to develop a sense of his personal aspirations, values, and work ethic, all of which matured over time with experience.

Council of Castile, oversaw the general administration of the government. The president was in charge of interpreting and applying laws to specific cases as well as handling appeals sent up from the tribunals of the Royal Chancellery. As president, Valdés was responsible for protecting the borders against raids, conserving the authority of the royal audiences in Valladolid and Granada, and preserving the royal prerogative in ecclesiastical matters. Refer to Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 119-127.

⁴⁷ Helen Rawlings provides a chart depicting the various salaries appointed to each diocese in her book: *Church Religion and Society in Early Modern Spain* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 58-67. It should be noted that although the chart shows Seville to be one the wealthiest dioceses, Valdés constantly complained of poverty due to the costs of maintaining the cathedral and its personnel, paying salaries, and contributing to pensions, taxes, and benefices.

⁴⁸ Maximiliano Barrio Conde provides more examples of comparable inquisitorial careers in his article, "Burocracia Inquisitorial y Movilidad Social: El Santo Oficio Plantel de Obispos."

⁴⁹ According to Barrio Conde, 46.98% of inquisitors began their service as consejeros like Valdés, "Burocracia Inquisitorial," 123.

Before he could become a powerful patron in his own right, Valdés had to prove himself a worthy client in the network of an established superior. In the early stages of his career, one of the most powerful men in the church and the royal court was the Archbishop of Toledo and Spanish regent, Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros.⁵⁰ Valdés' family had a prior connection to the cardinal: they assisted him in 1509 during the crusade in North Africa to conquer the city of Oran, and helped him to gain control of Navarre in 1512. Fernando de Valdés also possibly met the cardinal when the latter visited San Bartolomé in order to commission the publication of some writings.⁵¹ Building on these small foundations, Valdés launched himself into the court circle of Cisneros at the end of 1516. However, his attempts at networking were cut short as the cardinal died ten months later in 1517. Cisneros' death only exacerbated an already precarious political situation in Spain, provoked by the ascension of a new, and dubiously foreign, monarch to the Spanish throne in 1516. While the court was embroiled in power plays, intrigues, and regime changes, Valdés was given the task of assisting in the reassessment of the constitution of the college of San Ildefonso, which formed part of Cisneros' prestigious University of Alcalá. The constitution of San Ildefonso constituted the first official service performed by Valdés and provided an early training ground for his later administrative compositions and censures.

There is evidence that Cisneros was interested in using his influence to help the younger cleric advance; two weeks before his death, he wrote to King Charles to request that Valdés be considered for the abbacy of Covadonga or the modest benefices of Tanes and Caleao, all three of which were in Valdés' native region of Asturias. Despite Cisneros' efforts, the benefices and abbacy went to other contenders and Valdés' first efforts to profit from clientage failed. Fortunately, the future inquisitor-general was quite adept at making the most of his circumstances and developed an uncanny ability to take advantage of opportunities that presented themselves. Even though his time with Cisneros' circle was cut short, he

⁵⁰ Cisneros (1436-1517) was one of the most influential individuals in the court of the Catholic Monarchs and Charles I. He became a Franciscan friar in 1484 and was named the archbishop of Toledo by Queen Isabella in 1495. He became a cardinal in 1507. Cisneros was known as a zealous religious reformer and took an active role in the forced conversion of the Moors and promoted Spain's crusade in North Africa. He also served as regent twice upon the deaths of Philip the Fair (1506) and King Ferdinand (1516). Around the year 1504, he founded the prestigious university of Alcalá de Henares and undertook the publication of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible.

⁵¹ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 18.

managed to make lucrative connections with important men in the cardinal's network, such as Francisco de Mendoza.⁵²

Mendoza was a loyal servant of Cisneros who entered the service of the Chièvres family of William of Croy, Charles V's advisor, after the cardinal's death.⁵³ With Croy's support, Mendoza was named to the council of the Inquisition in 1518. He used his influence to act as Valdés' protector on several occasions. Historian José Martínez Millán believes that it was Mendoza who designated Valdés and Juan de Vergara, Cisneros' former secretary, to travel to Flanders in 1520 to discuss the conferment of the archbishopric of Toledo on William of Croy's nephew, also named William.⁵⁴ Although the evidence is incomplete, Valdés and Vergara were sent at the request of the cathedral chapter of Toledo, which was alarmed at the prospect of making a foreigner the Primate of Spain.⁵⁵

Mendoza played a part in Valdés' promotion to *consejero* in 1524 but his greatest contribution to the inquisitor's career was to introduce him to Francisco de los Cobos, the secretary and close confidant of Charles V.⁵⁶ Valdés' letters to the secretary illustrate the classic language and rhetoric of a loyal client. He greets Cobos as "magnificent" or "illustrious" sir in a display of deference and humbly closes his correspondence with the stock phrase "your servant who kisses the hands of Your Grace" in recognition of Cobos' superior position. As a client, Valdés also made a point to inquire after the health and wellbeing of the secretary's family and wished them many years of prosperity.⁵⁷ However, much more was required of him than mere words. Francisco de los Cobos was the head of a very strong faction in the court of Charles

⁵² Martínez Millán asserts that there is no substantial documentation of their relationship. However, he maintains that it is highly probable that Valdés and Mendoza knew each other while serving in Cisneros' household and that they were on good terms. "Las Elites de Poder Durante el Reino de Carlos," 148.

⁵³ While serving Croy, Mendoza also built a working relationship with Francisco de los Cobos, who had gone to Flanders to curry favor with the future king Charles after the death of King Ferdinand.

⁵⁴ Martínez Millán, "Las Elites de Poder Durante el Reino de Carlos," 148.

⁵⁵ Novalín believes that Valdés was sent because of his legal training and his connection to Cisneros; Vergara was certainly the one in charge and Valdés was only there in a minor capacity to assist. It seems likely that the two men travelled with the royal retinue of King Charles, who was in Germany after receiving the imperial crown of the Holy Roman Empire. They shared only the briefest professional contact; their mission was somewhat thwarted when Croy died in 1521 and Valdés acted as one of the signatories of the deceased's will. Afterwards, Valdés rarely interacted with Vergara; neither acknowledged their prior acquaintance when the latter was later put on trial by the Inquisition. Valdés did make the most of his brief mission. The travel allowed him to interact with some of the most influential men in the empire and to participate, if only superficially, in important court politics.

⁵⁶ Francisco de los Cobos secured his first post in the royal secretariat via the patronage of Queen Isabel's secretary Hernando de Zafra. Upon the death of King Ferdinand in 1516, he left Spain for Flanders in an attempt to curry favor with the future king Charles I. With Cisneros' recommendation, Cobos secured the patronage of William of Croy and became the trusted secretary of the king. Initially, he travelled abroad with King Charles as an advisor but eventually remained in Spain where he wielded great power and battled rivals such as Juan de Tavera until his death in 1547.

⁵⁷ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 92.

V and constantly clashed with his rival, Cardinal Juan de Tavera.⁵⁸ Valdés was obliged to support his patron, which drew him into his own personal rivalry with the cardinal.⁵⁹

In 1540, Valdés replaced Tavera as president of the Royal Council; before leaving office, Tavera had one of the council's members, Doctor Corral, exiled for allegedly revealing administrative secrets to his family members. Valdés immediately complained because the cardinal did not consult him on the matter as incoming president. A flurry of letters was sent between the emperor and his ministers in which each claimed that the other was overstepping his bounds; Tavera even sent a servant to Flanders to protest his ill treatment at the hands of Valdés, as well as the latter's deliberate disregard of the cardinal's opinion in matters of state.⁶⁰ Frustrated by such in-fighting, Charles V consulted his trusted secretary, Francisco de los Cobos on the matter. Cobos acted as an intermediary between the two men in a face-to-face meeting and described the event in a letter to the emperor.

According to Cobos, Valdés vowed that "he himself wanted to speak with the cardinal to satisfy him, because he desired nothing more than to come to an agreement concerning the duties he was charged with and he did not want to displease the cardinal...."⁶¹ President Valdés even went so far as to personally inform Tavera that if the cardinal took issue with anything he did, he was to speak to him so that he could make amends. Cobos continued to vouch for the president, arguing in his letter that Tavera's accusations were mistaken: "in terms of offices I have not found that any have been provided for without consulting him [Tavera]."⁶² Indeed, Valdés only felt "obedience and respect in all that is pertaining to the cardinal."⁶³

Cobos' letter to the emperor was hardly written in a disinterested manner. His portrayal of Tavera as contentious and taciturn contrasted sharply with that of Valdés, who appeared conciliatory and gracious.

⁵⁸ Both belonged to two different factions that had been forged during the battle over the monarchy from 1504 to 1516. Martínez Millán designated these bands the *felipistas* (supporters of Felipe el Hermoso) and *fernandinos* (supporters of King Ferdinand). Refer to his article, "Las Elites de Poder Durante el Reinado de Carlos V" for an extensive study of the evolution of these factions over time.

⁵⁹Tavera was named to the Royal Chancellery in 1522 and the presidency of the Royal Council in 1524; his ecclesiastical career was equally impressive: his uncle, Diego Deza, introduced him into the Inquisition and he was first made archbishop of Santiago of Compostela, followed by an appointment to the primacy of Toledo. Tavera left the Inquisition council when Cisneros came into power but he returned upon the cardinal's death; at the height of his power, he became Inquisitor-General. More importantly, he counted himself an intimate friend and confidant of Charles V, a relationship that proved very lucrative for the cardinal; the emperor named him de-facto regent upon his departure from Spain in 1539.

⁶⁰ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.1, 127-134.

⁶¹ "él mismo quería hablar al cardenal para satisfacerlo, porque no deseaba cosa más que acertar en las cosas de su cargo y de no descomplacer al cardenal...." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 57.

⁶² "Y en cuanto a los oficios, yo no hallo que se ha proveído ninguno sin consultarlo." Ibid.

⁶³ "la obediencia y respeto que en todo se tiene al cardenal." Ibid.

It was well known by the emperor that Tavera and Cobos disliked one another; the secretary stated as much in his letter: “in the affairs that I deal with, I assure Your Majesty that I handle them with him [Tavera] as I am accustomed to handling them with Your Majesty, only the one is done out of duty while the other is done willingly.”⁶⁴ Writing in 1543, Charles V warned his son about the “passions, partialities, and virtual factions that exist amongst my servants.”⁶⁵ He bluntly stated that Cobos and Tavera were the primary leaders of those factions and advised Philip to never commit himself fully to either one side but to work with both of them.⁶⁶ Thus, Charles V attempted to neutralize the impact that the jurisdictional rivalries between his ministers had on the function of government.

There is no mistake that Valdés was a protected member of Cobos’ network. The secretary even admitted in his letter to the emperor that he “continually warned Valdés to be careful not to do anything to cause Tavera to be discontented.”⁶⁷ Ultimately, the battle initiated by Doctor Corral’s exile was settled when the emperor ordered that he be returned to his post.⁶⁸ The reversal of Tavera’s decision constituted a minor coup for Valdés. Cobos capitalized on this victory by further promoting his client’s work to the emperor. In a letter from 1541, Charles wrote to Valdés that Cobos “has begun to inform us of some things you have communicated to him and of the care and work you have had and that you take in our service... which we greatly appreciate....”⁶⁹ The patronage of Cobos thus helped Valdés survive at court despite the best efforts of his rivals, and helped him to gain favor in the eyes of the emperor.

Valdés was clearly very confident in his patron’s favor: “I believe that Your Grace has such a desire to bestow favors upon me that I have no need to inform you of my affairs or to importune you with my letters.”⁷⁰ That being said, his aspirations extended beyond the patronage of the secretary to the greatest patron of all: the emperor. Cobos was a valuable intermediary between Valdés and Charles V. At the beginning of his career, Valdés typically reported his actions to both men; he wrote detailed reports to

⁶⁴ “Y en los negocios que yo trato, certifico a V. Md. que hago con él lo mismo que suelo con V. Md. sino que lo uno es por cumplir y lo otro por voluntad.” Ibid., 58.

⁶⁵ “las pasiones, parcialidades, y casi bandos que se hacían o están hechos entre mis criados.” *Niñez y Juventud de Felipe II*, vol. 2, ed. by José March (Madrid: Ministeria de Asuntos Culturales, 1941), 26.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 26-7.

⁶⁷ “prevenirle continuamente que esté muy sobre aviso que no se haga cosa que el cardenal tenga causa de estar descontento.” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.2, 57-8.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 58-9.

⁶⁹ “el Comendador Mayor de León, del mi consejo de estado, nos ha empezado a informar de algunas cosas que le comunicasteis y del cuidado y trabajo que habéis tenido y tomáis así en vuestro cargo...lo cual os agradecemos mucho” Ibid., 65.

⁷⁰ “Creo que vuestra merced tiene tanta gana de me hacer mercedes que no hay necesidad de avisarle mis cosas ni dalle importunidad con mis letras.” Ibid., 3-4.

Cobos and shorter summaries to the emperor. As Valdés became more powerful and rose in the hierarchy, his letters were directed only to Charles. Yet even at the pinnacle of his career, the inquisitor-general never wavered in his loyalty to Cobos. After the secretary's death in 1547, Valdés remained in contact with his widow and son and even defended their rights to the perpetual governorship (*adelantamiento*) of Cazorla against the Archbishop of Toledo, Bartolomé de Carranza.⁷¹ Although it could be argued that Valdés maintained his contact with the Cobos' family out of motives of sheer pragmatism, his loyalty also speaks to a more personal attachment and friendship.⁷²

Bolstered by his alliance with Francisco de los Cobos, Valdés rose in both the ecclesiastical and civil hierarchies and became a patron in his own right. In order to ensure the smooth function of his offices, he established an effective system: when promoted to a new post, he evaluated the existing administration and then systematically overhauled its structure and personnel to suit his own priorities. Inundating Charles V with detailed letters of recommendation, he sought to replace current officeholders with men from his own networks. Valdés was not unique in this tactic; regime changes were common in early modern government and it was only common sense for new leaders to surround themselves with men of confidence.⁷³

The greatest beneficiaries of Valdés' patronage were his own family members. Indeed, in early modern society, nepotism was a commonly accepted means to social advancement. Historian Barbara Hallman has explored this phenomenon extensively in her research of Italian cardinals. She concluded that early modern Italian culture was driven by a desire to protect family name and reputation. According to her findings, cardinals "shared remarkably similar values on the duty of charity toward their families and

⁷¹ In 1553, Pope Paul III had conceded to Francisco de los Cobos and his son, don Diego, the Marquis of Camarasa, the perpetual governorship (*adelantamiento*) of Cazorla. Carranza considered the governorship as part of his ecclesiastical prebend. He therefore contested the legitimacy of the papal bull issued by Paul III and succeeded in getting it repealed by Paul IV. This meant that the Primate gained very powerful enemies in the Cobos family, particularly María Mendoza who was the widow of Francisco de los Cobos. Her appeals against the decision were actively supported by Fernando de Valdés.

⁷² Early modern friendship included public alliances, referred to as "common friendship" by Castiglione, as well as private relationships between individuals. For a survey of the literature on early modern Spanish interpretations of friendship, see Antonio Feros, "The King's Favorite, The Duke of Lerma: Power, Wealth, and Court Culture in the Reign of Philip III of Spain, 1598-1621," (PhD. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1995), 103-118. For a broader analysis of theories of friendship, see Maurice Aymard, "Friends and Neighbors," in *A History of Private Life III: Passions of the Renaissance*, ed. by Roger Chartier and trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 447-91.

⁷³ Sharon Kettering's work on the patronage of Cardinal Richelieu in France and Neil Cuddy's research on the effects of the Scottish contingency at the court of James I all provide excellent examples of the importance of surrounding oneself with a group of trusted confidants.

servants.... These must be provided with suitable incomes, either from the cardinal's own pockets or from ecclesiastical benefices under his control."⁷⁴ Typically, cardinals supported their closest male relatives, brothers, nephews, and sons. In Spain, the uncle-nephew connection was also very strong; most of the prominent ministers in the government, including Valdés, entered office through the patronage of their uncles.⁷⁵

As bishop and president of the Chancellery and Royal Council, Valdés actively supported his family. He chose one of his brothers, Juan de Llano, as his proxy to take possession of the deanship of Oviedo and later renounced the office to another brother, Menén Pérez de Salas. Menén Pérez further benefited from his brother's generosity when he was first promoted to chief ecclesiastical judge (*provisor*) and then vicar-general of Oviedo.⁷⁶ When his brother died in 1546, Valdés ensured that the prebends in Oviedo remained within the family; they were conferred upon the Inquisitor-General's nephew don Álvaro de Valdés. Another nephew, also named Fernando, was given a prebend in Oviedo in 1535.⁷⁷ Valdés had less success for his family outside of Oviedo; in 1543, he wrote to Secretary Francisco de Eraso to inquire as to a delay in receiving the habit of Santiago for yet another, unnamed, nephew.⁷⁸ Eraso was ultimately of little assistance.

Valdés also used his networking for the benefit of his fellow graduates from San Bartolomé, the *bartolomicos*. According to historian Stafford Poole, "there is no doubt that the bartolomicos considered themselves an elite, no matter how humble their backgrounds."⁷⁹ Indeed, those who graduated from the college continued to maintain contact and assist one another later in life. Their network was so extensive, it originated the popular saying that "the world is full of bartolomicos" (*el mundo está lleno de*

⁷⁴ Hallman, *Italian Cardinals*, 97.

⁷⁵ Some of the more important uncle-nephew relationships at court were Diego Deza and Juan de Tavera, Francisco de los Cobos and Diego de los Cobos and Juan Vázquez de Molina, Juan de Tavera and Diego de Tavera, and the two Williams of Croy.

⁷⁶ Provisores were typically given the full powers of a bishop with the exception of specific episcopal powers such as the ability to ordain priests. They oversaw the day to day operations of the cathedral chapter, handled disputes and lawsuits involving the church, and took part in appointing new members to the chapter. The power of the provisor as the bishop's representative often brought him into direct jurisdictional dispute with the chapter, which resented any encroachment on their own authority.

⁷⁷ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 33.

⁷⁸ The Order of Santiago was the greatest of the three military orders in Spain. Control over its material resources, wealth, and lands was one the priorities of the Catholic Monarchs. The fact that Valdés attempted to place his nephew within the order speaks to his own sense of power and influence. *Ibid.*, 95-6.

⁷⁹ Poole, *Juan de Ovando*, 26.

bartolomicos).⁸⁰ Valdés became a prominent member of that network; fellow *bartolomico*, Ruíz de Vergara-Alventós, claimed that more people were provided for by his hand than at any other time.⁸¹ As bishop of Oviedo, Valdés used his influence to acquire the position of archdeacon of Villaviciosa and provisor of Oviedo for Diego Pérez. As archbishop of Seville, he made fellow alumnus Juan de Ovando his provisor. In a combination of familial and intellectual networks, Valdés assisted his brother and fellow San Bartolomé graduate, Hernando de Salas, to become the *oidor* (judge) of Granada and then Valladolid.⁸² In 1554, he also tried to promote Hernando to the Council of the Inquisition but faced opposition from Emperor Charles V.

Valdés was sought after by many who needed a patron at court. He was so besieged by aspirants that he begged Francisco de los Cobos in 1542 to maintain absolute secrecy as to the identities of selected nominees prior to the official release of a memorial. Otherwise, he would have to deal with “the quarrels that I get from an infinite number of people because they know they are not mentioned....”⁸³ With so many candidates for any particular post, the prelate was very critical in whom he chose to recommend; if aspirants were new to his network, he would subject them to rigorous evaluations as to the details of their personal and professional lives. While Valdés tended to honor personal contacts first and foremost, he also considered the education, experience, and merit of his petitioners. Upon surviving such scrutiny, his followers enjoyed considerable compensation that included social prestige, promotion to office, and wealth. Indeed, like any patron whose power resided in his ability to obtain rewards and benefits for his clients, Valdés was quite aggressive to secure the best interests of his network. He recommended men based on their loyalty and service to him as well as their appropriateness for the office in question. Thus the administration was run efficiently by men whom he could trust.

Valdés sent extensive recommendations to the emperor. His letters are full of notifications of vacancies and suggestions for replacements as well as constant repetitions of a fear that absences would delay the business of government. As he wrote to Charles V, “I beseech Your Majesty to provide for them

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁸¹ “por su mano salieron de él proveídas más personas que en otro tiempo,” Quoted by Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 15.

⁸² Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 15-16.

⁸³ “que son muy grandes las querellas que tengo de infinitas gentes porque saben que no van puestos en los memoriales....” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 82-3.

[the vacancies] however best it may serve you because, certainly, this is my greatest impediment....”⁸⁴

Valdés never missed an opportunity to recommend men in his own network. For example, in a letter regarding recent nominations for magistrates and treasurers (*alcaldes y fiscales*) in Valladolid, he recommended Diego de Córdoba, a fellow *bartolomico*, because he was “lettered and of age” in addition to having “other qualities that coincide in his person and make him appropriate for any dignity.”⁸⁵ A few years later, Valdés’ recommendation was even more glowing: he cited Córdoba’s experience, founded in “letters and wisdom, repose and honesty of personage,” in the hopes that the emperor would “employ him always in his service and reward him as he is accustomed to reward all those who serve him well.”⁸⁶ In a perfect example of mutual reciprocity, Valdés revealed that his primary motivation for supporting Córdoba was a sense of obligation; Córdoba had taken a post in Sicily at the inquisitor-general’s request.⁸⁷ Accordingly, Valdés praised his “letters and virtue, and the care and work with which he has managed to achieve what Your Majesty ordered in Sicily.”⁸⁸

Besides experience and merit, Valdés took factors of health and finance into consideration. For example, he wrote to Secretary Cobos that his friend doctor Nava was in poor health, which affected his ability to be present at audiences in the Chancellery. He recommended that Nava be given another post that would let him “honorably rest in his house, as he deserves.”⁸⁹ Valdés further illustrated a gentler side regarding Licenciante Pisa, who was dissatisfied with his office and very homesick. Valdés suggested to Cobos that Pisa be allowed to transfer to Granada since it seemed “a cruelty to have him here against his will.”⁹⁰

Valdés’ benevolent patronage extended to his clients’ families as well. He brought the emperor’s attention to the fact that many advisors, such as doctors Corral and Escudero in the Chancellery, had sons who were deserving of recognition and reward.⁹¹ He also wrote to Charles concerning Pedro Girón,

⁸⁴ “y así suplico a V. Md. lo provea como más fuere servido porque, cierto, es esto mi grande impedimento para los negocios de estos reinos.” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 62.

⁸⁵ “tiene letras y edad y otras cualidades que concurren en su persona, que la habilitan para cualquier dignidad.” Ibid.

⁸⁶ “que V. Md. le emplee siempre en su servicio para hacerle la merced que acostumbra hacer a los que bien sirven.” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 101.

⁸⁷ “Soy obligado de hacer este oficio porque, a mi ruego, tomó el trabajo de ir a servir a V. Md en aquel reino, y porque sé que es benemérito.” Ibid., 111-112.

⁸⁸ “por sus letras y virtud, y el cuidado y trabajo con que ha procurado acertar en lo que V. Md. le mandó servir en Sicilia.” Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 40.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 41.

⁹¹ Ibid.

another faithful servant whose sons were very poor, and hoped for the emperor's assistance in funding their education.⁹² When the oidor of Valladolid, Licenciado Esquivel, died, he left an impoverished wife "with many children and so much work that her need is painful."⁹³ Valdés mentioned her plight to Charles V in the hopes that he would see to her care.

Such compassion and humanity on the part of the inquisitor-general has rarely been acknowledged by historians. However, the detailed knowledge of the lives and situations of his clients also served a pragmatic function; it complemented Valdés' desire for an efficient administration because it allowed him to place the right men in what he deemed were the right positions. His reward was twofold: he proved himself a good patron by providing for his men and their families and pleased the emperor with efficient ministers in the government.

Valdés' attention to the politics of the royal court meant that he had less time to dedicate to his ecclesiastical duties; thus his relationship with the cathedral chapter (*cabildo*) in Oviedo was very antagonistic and combative.⁹⁴ The majority of Valdés' official letters from 1528 to 1539 were exchanged between him and the cathedral chapter. These letters were primarily concerned with issues of finance, appointments, and general arguments between members of the church and Valdés' representatives, the chief ecclesiastical judges (provisores) Diego Pérez and Menén Pérez de Valdés (Valdés' brother). The language of the letters is typical of patronage discourse, full of rhetorical flourishes regarding loyalty, honor, and service. For example, the *cabildo* humbly congratulated Valdés upon his nomination to the bishopric in June of 1532: "although this bishopric is small remuneration for your merits and loyal services, we beg your lordship ...to accept your election because, in addition to the service God and His Majesty will receive, we will count ourselves fortunate in having you as our master and prelate for the rest of our

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ The *cabildo*, or cathedral chapter, was a body of clerics that advised the bishop in his diocese. If the bishop was not resident, as was the case with Valdés, the *cabildo* generally oversaw the administration of the diocese with the prelate's representative, the provisor. As Stafford Poole recognized, the *cabildo* was "a large, self-sufficient, and independent corporate body, whose members had a strong sense of their own importance and were sensitive about questions of jurisdiction and protocol." Since members were not in the direct employ of the bishop but received their income from the church, they were not always amenable to his decisions. The antagonism between bishops and their chapters was a common problem in Spanish dioceses as the former attempted to assert their jurisdiction through their representatives while the latter fought for their rights and privileges against what they often viewed as episcopal infringement. Valdés' relationships with his chapters in Oviedo and Seville, the two dioceses that he held the longest, were very tumultuous. Poole, *Juan de Ovando*, 31.

lives.”⁹⁵ Valdés’ responses were equally magnanimous and gracious. He was careful to dissimulate his authority by referring to the cathedral chapter as his “beloved brothers” (*amados hermanos*).⁹⁶ In reality, such niceties thinly veiled the underlying tensions that grew out of cabildo complaints of absenteeism, poverty, and misconduct on the part of provisor Diego Pérez.⁹⁷

Between 1532 and 1533, the cathedral chapter was especially persistent in calling to mind Valdés’ obligation to reside in his bishopric “because, in addition to doing what your lordship is obligated to do, it would bring much consolation to your sheep to know their pastor and to be known by him.”⁹⁸ Another common complaint was that of the cabildo’s poverty and material necessity; a letter written to Valdés in 1533 openly accused his steward of not giving the cathedral the 15,000 maravedís that it was to receive, according to custom, upon the bishop’s possession of the diocese.⁹⁹ These were problems that Valdés was obligated to address as bishop and ecclesiastical patron.¹⁰⁰ Instead, he illustrated a clear preference to remain close to the royal court and its affairs in Valladolid and Madrid.¹⁰¹ He dealt with his episcopal duties by delegating authority to hand-selected men, editing the cathedral constitution, the *Breviarium Ovetense*, to clarify doctrine and procedure, and visiting Oviedo in 1535, the only visit in his six years as bishop.¹⁰² When such measures failed to relieve the cabildo’s in-fighting, Valdés responded in an exasperated and angry letter demanding that the clerics mind their own positions and forgo cliques and

⁹⁵ “Y, aunque para los merecimientos y muy leales servicios de V. Sría este obispado es pequeña remuneración, suplicamos a V. Sría que... acepte la elección y provisión del dicho obispado porque, allende del servicio del Dios y que S. Md. recibirá, toda nuestra vida nos llamaremos dichosos en haberle tenido por señor y prelado. Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 8.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 23-4.

⁹⁷ Pérez was accused of usurping the cathedral chapter’s authority to bestow benefices and giving them to men of his own choosing. For a more detailed narrative of the dispute between the cabildo and provisor, refer to Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 79-85.

⁹⁸ “porque, además de hacer V. Sría lo que es obligado... será mucha consolación para sus ovejas conocer su pastor y ser conocidas del.” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 9-10.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 10-11; 12-13.

¹⁰⁰ The duties of a bishop included preaching regularly, carrying out annual visitations and synods, promoting charity and education, attending provincial councils every three years, founding seminaries to teach priests, and supervising ordinations to holy orders. The laxity of Spanish bishops regarding these duties was one of the primary concerns of the Council of Trent. See: Rawlings, *Church, Religion, and Society*, 59.

¹⁰¹ Even when Valdés finally visited Oviedo, he took the time to report on administrative affairs concerning the court to Juan de Tavera. In 1543, Charles V decreed that bishops in the royal service were allowed to go to their dioceses for ninety days as long as they were not needed at court. Many bishops, however, tended to believe that the affairs of their dioceses could best be handled by their provisors, who had a more intimate knowledge of the daily affairs of the bishopric. Valdés was not unique in staying near the court; irresidency was a common complaint at time.

¹⁰² The *Breviarium Ovetense* took fourteen months to compose and was printed in 1535; about 1,000 copies were published for all the priests of the diocese. Valdés actually had to lower the price to make them more affordable. According to Novalín, copies of the first printing do not exist, but copies of the second printing done after Valdés had been promoted from the diocese have been found in Spanish archives. The contents dealt primarily with the reform of ritual, liturgy, and clerical behavior. For more information, refer to Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 92-4.

partialities (*corrillos y parcialidades*).¹⁰³ In a defensive tone, he claimed that he had always favored Oviedo and had acted as its protector, pastor and father; Valdés' implication was that the cabildo was ungrateful, disobedient, and disrespectful. They responded that it was never their intention to be ungrateful and were only defending their customs and rights.¹⁰⁴ Having obtained the moral upper hand, Valdés was quick to forgive, especially when he wanted to bestow benefices on his brothers and nephews in 1534 and 1535. The tone of his letters to the chapter always remained guarded and forcefully polite; when he requested a specific action or concession from the cabildo, he typically relied on exhortations of justice, moral conscience, and obligation. His relationship with the cathedral chapter thus resembled an elaborate chess match in which both players tried to outmaneuver one another with rhetoric. When Valdés was promoted to the bishopric of León in 1539, he assured his former cathedral chapter that he would always maintain an interest in their affairs and offered his services at any time they should be needed. In a self-effacing act, he also asked the cabildo members to forgive his faults, absences, and negligence in matters of the church in the name of brotherly love.¹⁰⁵ The letter was written in his own hand.

Valdés was aware that his dedication to the royal court came at the expense of his ecclesiastical duties; he therefore wanted to repair his reputation as a responsible patron and preserve as much of his symbolic and social capital as possible.¹⁰⁶ Such gestures as his letter to the cabildo, while not completely devoid of sincerity, were not selfless by any means. Just as Valdés was the patron of his own network, he was simultaneously a client desirous of advancement in the larger web of royal service. In a socio-political environment that functioned according to the dictates of patronage and personal monarchy, the royal court was considered the ultimate epicenter of power and reward. Like other ministers and bureaucrats, Valdés' goal was to become a vital member of that court with the ear of the king. In order to do so, he relied heavily on the strategic use of social networks. While his work ethic drove him to be efficient, organized,

¹⁰³ Quoted by Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 87.

¹⁰⁴ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 27-8.

¹⁰⁵ Valdés did remember Oviedo with a personal fondness in his will; his family had very strong ties to the bishopric. Yet it must be noted that it was also very shrewd of him to maintain good contacts that could prove useful later on in his career. For his letter to the cabildo, see Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 50-1.

¹⁰⁶ According to historian Karin MacHardy, social capital included networks, individual contacts, titles, and offices while symbolic capital included honor, status, and reputation. Once such resources were accumulated, in addition to the more traditional forms of capital such as land and wealth, they were parlayed by men like Valdés into predominance at the royal court. The ability to transform such intangible assets into a lucrative form of power depended entirely upon the acumen and ability of the individual. Karin MacHardy, *War, Religion, and Court Patronage in Habsburg Austria: The Social and Cultural Dimensions of Political Interaction, 1521-1622* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 15.

and methodical, his ambition drove him to effectively use his letters to advertise himself as a loyal crown servant worthy of reward.

3. *Ascendency at Court and Predominance as a Patron*

The letters of courtiers and ministers like Valdés illuminate the personality and ambitions of the individual writer. According to sociologist Paul McLean, who studies social networking in early modern Florence, such letters create a form of “patterned discourse” in which techniques of language and rhetoric are used as “interactional devices for the achievement of objectives, the portrayal of self, the representation of networks, and the erection of relationships.”¹⁰⁷ McLean went on to argue that Florentines utilized a variety of tropes (the subjunctive tense, pronoun choice, superlatives, fictive kinship, and assurances of loyalty) in their letters as a form of “rhetorical brinksmanship” in which they cultivated patronage networks for social and political advancement.¹⁰⁸ Upon close inspection of Fernando de Valdés’ letters, one finds compelling evidence of similar tropes and techniques.

In his letters to Secretary Cobos and Charles V, Valdés meticulously created the image of a servant absolutely devoted to the best interests of God and king: “I will work as much as possible to serve Your Majesty, which is the thing I most desire because I know that, by succeeding in this, God will be served.”¹⁰⁹ With a constant litany of diligence, care, and work (*diligencia, cuidado, y trabajo*) emphasized in letter after letter, Valdés was intent on making his service known to the highest echelons of royal government.¹¹⁰ He consistently portrayed himself as the devoted minister who was overwhelmed with work but determined to persevere. While serving in Navarre in the early 1520s, Valdés wrote to Cobos that it had been seventy-nine years since anyone had gone over the accounts of the kingdom and that it would be “impossible although I am working as much as possible to clarify all of this.” He insisted that he would

¹⁰⁷ Paul McLean, *The Art of the Network: Strategic Interaction and Patronage in Renaissance Florence* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 35; 122.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 51-53; 58

¹⁰⁹ “Trabajaré cuanto me fuere posible por servir a V. Md., que es la cosa que yo más deseo porque sé que, acertando en esto, será Dios servido.” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 30-1.

¹¹⁰ According to the Spanish dictionary published by Sebastián de Covarrubias in 1611, *diligencia* is “the solicitude, care and promptness taken to execute something... because everything that one does with love is undertaken with zeal and enthusiasm.” *Cuidado* is derived from the verb *cuidar*, meaning to take notice, think about, and observe. *Trabajo* constitutes “anything which brings difficulty or necessity and affliction of the soul or body.” Sebastián Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana o Española, según la impresión de 1611, con las adiciones de Benito Remigio Noydens publicadas en la de 1674*, ed. by Martín de Riquer (Barcelona: S.A. Horta de Impresiones y Ediciones, 1943), 385; 472; 971.

do everything in his power to complete his task.¹¹¹ A few years later, he made exactly the same claims: writing again to Cobos, Valdés referred to the presidency of the Chancellery as the “most laborious charge in the world,” but he assured the secretary that with the “help of God, His Majesty will be served and these kingdoms will benefit from my work here,” since he had “no more craving or desire but to accomplish here what I must to sustain this task with the authority that His Majesty gives me.”¹¹²

Valdés did not rely on mere rhetoric. Many of his letters, particularly those from 1542 to 1545, are dominated with reports regarding specific deeds and the detailed logistics of recruiting money, men, horses, and weapons for war with France.¹¹³ These reports reveal that the prelate had an impressive aptitude for accounting and finance. In addition, the purpose and language of the letters is strikingly similar to the *probanzas* of contemporary conquistadors. *Probanzas* were reports written by the conquistadors informing the king of the details of their accomplishments and services in the New World. The men who wrote them--Hernán de Cortés being one of the most famous--attempted to glorify their own actions while minimizing the efforts and deeds of their compatriots so to prove themselves worthy of reward; hence the name *probanzas de mérito* (proofs of merit). Such men hoped to gain social, symbolic, and economic capital in the form of offices, pensions, wealth, and property in exchange for their services, thus revealing that the patronage ethos had been transplanted across the Atlantic with the Spaniards.¹¹⁴

In Spain, Valdés' letters followed the same format: like any other devoted royal client, he reported his services with the expectation of reward. Unlike his letters to the cathedral chapter of Oviedo, in which he maintained an undertone of authority, his tone was one of deference and humility when addressing Charles V. He usually began by thanking the emperor profusely for any favor that he had bestowed upon him: “and thus I hope to always receive it, because without it my forces/strength would not be enough to satisfy in that which I owe and desire to be of service to Your Majesty.”¹¹⁵ When he petitioned for a favor,

¹¹¹ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 3-4.

¹¹² “es éste cargo el más trabajoso del mundo, y con todo no dejaré de hacer lo que me fuere posible. Confío en Dios, con su ayuda, S. Md. Será servido y estos reinos aprovechados con lo que aquí se trabajare.... no tengo más codicia ni deseo sino cumplir aquí con lo que debo y sostener este cargo con la autoridad que S. Md. me manda....” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 31-2.

¹¹³ As president of the Royal Council, Valdés was in charge of acquiring funds for the war. He did much more and took charge of coordinating men, weapons, and supplies. He reports every single detail of his work to the emperor in his letters. For more information about Valdés' service during the war, see Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 143-151.

¹¹⁴ Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 11-14.

¹¹⁵ “y así espero siempre recibirla, pues sin esto no bastarían mis fuerzas para satisfacer en algo a lo que debo y deseo servir a V. Md.” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.2, 36.

he typically assured the emperor that he requested it because it was reasonable and just and would help him better perform his duties to the royal government and God.¹¹⁶ When his petitions were not granted, Valdés did not merely accept the emperor's decision. While he meekly deferred to Charles V's wishes and was content to remain the humble servant who kisses the royal hands and feet, in practice he utilized an alarmist rhetoric of destitution and dire consequences to achieve his goals.

Valdés' professions of diligent work are exceeded in number only by his professions of poverty and necessity. As president of the Chancellery, he claimed that he suffered a great amount of financial hardship because he was forced to pay administrative costs from out of his own pockets.¹¹⁷ As he complained to Charles V, "In this reign, there are prelates that deserve a lot but none have served as much time or as continuously as I have since, all the time I have served, I have not failed to reside even three months, either from absence or other impediment, in the service of Your Majesty."¹¹⁸ Despite such selfless dedication, he was "the poorest president since the Chancellery's foundation."¹¹⁹ Valdés ingeniously intimated that the reputation of the Royal Chancellery itself was at stake since its president was in such dire financial straits. As he intimated to Secretary Cobos, it was "inconvenient for the president to be so poor...it would be a great failing if I were to be in debt, without credit for exchanges and merchants, in order to eat, something which could not be excused if not remedied."¹²⁰ Valdés also reminded Charles V ever so delicately that all of his predecessors in the Chancellery had received promotions and other compensation: "none of them have been in office as much time as I have without improving their situation in it, much to their advantage."¹²¹

Valdés' financial complaints continued when he was made inquisitor-general in 1547. One of his priorities was the procurement of permanent salaries and prebends for his clerics.¹²² His letters to Charles V and Philip II are a testament to his single-minded tenacity in achieving this goal; he constantly reminded

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 21.

¹¹⁷ Chronic lack of money plagued all of the royal councils. Over the sixteenth century, Spain was perpetually at war, fought inflation, and eventually witnessed the declaration of bankruptcy several times by King Philip II.

¹¹⁸ "en este reino hay prelados que merecen mucho, mas ninguno que más tiempo ni más a la continua haya servido a V. Md. que, todo el tiempo que ha que sirvo, no he faltado de residir en servicio de V. Md. tres meses por ausencia ni por otro impedimento." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.2, 48-9.

¹¹⁹ "el más pobre presidente que ha habido en esta cancillería, después que ella su fundó." Ibid.

¹²⁰ "es inconveniente para lo de aquí ser el presidente tan pobre, y...sería gran falta que yo anduviese empeñado, sin crédito por cambios y mercaderes, para comer, lo cual no se podrá excusar si no se remedia." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.2, 40-41.

¹²¹ "y ninguno ha estado en el oficio sin mejorarle en ello y con mucha ventaja tanto tiempo como yo." Ibid., 48-9.

¹²² For an analysis of Valdés' financial reforms, refer to José Martínez Millán, *La Hacienda de la Inquisición, 1478-1700* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1984).

them of “that which is pertaining to the perpetuation of the salaries of the inquisitors and the officials of the Holy Office” in nearly every letter he wrote.¹²³ Valdés reasoned that salaries were absolutely necessary for the proper function of the Inquisition because “the necessities and the costs are so great that we will not be able to sustain this business.”¹²⁴ In his alarmist fashion, he warned that, without money, the institution could not function; this meant that the prestige of the Inquisition, and the crown by extension, was in peril.¹²⁵

With his keen understanding of the tenets of the patronage system, Valdés was only ostensibly in a helpless position. Using subtle intimations of reproach in his letters, he was careful to represent himself as a humble client who was justified in expecting reciprocation for his service; he knew that the concept of obligatory reciprocity was the veritable glue which kept patrons and clients bound to each other. He therefore took advantage of the fact that Charles V and Philip II were expected to be generous patrons with the royal bounty and that it was their duty to reward his services.¹²⁶ Valdés also shrewdly laid his reputation on the line by linking it to that of the royal government. He knew that if the councils under his power failed to function properly both he and the royal court would suffer a terrible blow to their honor and status. He also knew that neither Charles V nor Philip II would allow that to happen; all the same, he never missed an opportunity to stress the necessity of avoiding calamity with a smoothly running administration.

Despite Valdés’ best efforts to earn the favor of the emperor, Charles V still had reservations about his ability to lead the Royal Council. In particular, he was concerned about Valdés’ obvious loyalties to Francisco de los Cobos. As he confided to Prince Philip in his secret instructions of 1543, the emperor believed Valdés to be

a good man; he is not, from what I gather, as weighty as what would be needed for such a council, but I neither find nor know of another who would do it much good. He would be better for a

¹²³ “de lo que toca a la perpetuidad de los salarios de los inquisidores y oficiales del Santo Oficio.” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.2, 111-112.

¹²⁴ “es la necesidad y gastos tan grandes que no se podrá sostener este negocio.” Ibid.

¹²⁵ Valdés sought to avoid such a fate by diligently pursuing a sinecure from the Pope that would allow the first vacant prebend of a church or cathedral to be given to the Council of the Inquisition as opposed to an individual beneficiary. The sinecure was conceded by Pope Paul IV in 1559 but its actual collection remained a difficult task.

¹²⁶ In humanist political theory as well as the mirror of princes genre of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it was recognized that the king’s prestige and honor were contingent upon his liberality in the distribution of the royal bounty. Richly rewarding his subjects for their services, the king thus displayed his superior status and maintained the loyalty of his men. In early modern Spain, the act of bestowing *mercedes* was viewed as the quintessential characteristic of kingship. Refer to Linda Levy Peck, “‘For a King Not to be Bountiful Were a Fault’: Perspectives on Court Patronage in Early Stuart England,” in *The Journal of British Studies* 25.1 (Jan 1986): 31-61 and Antonio Feros, “The King’s Favorite, The Duke of Lerma: Power, Wealth, and Court Culture in the Reign of Philip III of Spain, 1598-1621,” (PhD. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1995), 167-182.

chancellery than for a council, and more [so] after these passions run their course, without which, in my opinion, he does not function. And even though I greatly commend his close attachment with Cobos, it seems to me that he is very exposed, and that he would be more likely to do something that was not very lawful through Cobos rather than through himself, in order to please him; and Cobos would sooner ignite in him the passions that would undo him.¹²⁷

The emperor's concerns were offset by his esteem for Valdés' character and work ethic. He concluded by informing Philip that he believed the inquisitor would "not use his office except for good. Inasmuch as he does so, it is appropriate for you to favor him."¹²⁸

During the 1540s, Charles V was continuously out of the kingdom dealing with imperial affairs; as a result, a series of regency governments was set up to assist the young Prince Philip to rule. By virtue of his position as president of the Royal Council, Valdés assumed an active role in the government.

According to the emperor's instructions, he was to hold council with the prince regent regularly; this allowed Valdés to cultivate a lucrative friendship with the future king. Indeed, Philip's trust in Valdés was made apparent when he personally called the prelate to the Council of State to discuss marriage negotiations between Spain and France after the Peace of Crépy.¹²⁹ The future inquisitor-general's position in the regency government also advanced with the death of several important ministers; in addition to the loss of Juan de Tavera (1545), the court lost García de Loaysa (1546), Juan de Zuñiga (1546), and Francisco de los Cobos (1547). Valdés was one of the few men who remained from that previous era; his relationship with Prince Philip allowed him to survive the generational regime change. According to Novalín, Valdés' ascendancy is best understood in the context of his "familiarity with the prince, his fidelity and experience at his posts, and the deaths of other ministers."¹³⁰

It was partly through Philip's influence that Valdés was appointed to the archbishopric of Seville, left vacant by Loaysa in 1546. In a letter to his father, the prince regent wrote:

regarding the archbishopric of Seville, Your Majesty knows its importance and knows people on whom the office would best be bestowed; and I do not have to tell Your Majesty that I am certain that you will bestow it upon a person of letters, kindness, and experience, and the appropriate qualities: and I beseech Your Majesty to remember the president of the Royal Council [Valdés],

¹²⁷ "El presidente es buen hombre; no es, a lo que yo alcanzo, tanta cosa como sería menester para un tal consejo, mas tampoco hallo ni sé otro que le hiciese mucha ventaja; mejor era para un chancillería que para el consejo, y más después que estas pasiones andan, sin las cuales, a mi ver, no anda, y, aunque le encomendé mucho la conformidad con Cobos, paréceme que le es muy sujeto y que antes quedaría por Cobos que por él en hacer cosa que no fuese muy lícita, por complacerle, y antes él le encendería en las pasiones que se las desharía...." *Niñez y Juventud de Felipe II*, vol. 2, ed. by José March (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Culturales, 1941), 32.

¹²⁸ "creo que no usará de su oficio sino bien. Conviene que, en cuanto así lo hiciese, que le favorezcáis." *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 154-8

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 158.

for, upon seeing his service and work, I cannot help but remember him to you; and I swear to Your Majesty that he has not asked me to say this nor has he spoken of it.¹³¹

Philip's suggestion was approved by the emperor and Valdés was made archbishop of Seville in August of 1546. He was then named inquisitor-general at the beginning of January of 1547; Fernando Niño became the new president of the Royal Council.¹³² Such ascendancy in the ecclesiastical hierarchy was complemented by greater responsibility in the civil bureaucracy: based on his "merits, prudence and experience," Valdés was appointed in an advisory capacity to the Council of State with Juan Vázquez de Molina, the nephew of Francisco de los Cobos. He was also given an innumerable variety of tasks in the Council of Finance (*Consejo de Hacienda*). In 1547, he explored the possibility of obtaining subsidies from the workshops of churches and monasteries for the royal coffers. In 1552, Valdés was placed in charge of assessing taxation (*encabezamiento*) as well as safeguarding a deposit of 30,000 ducats that was to be held in Simancas and used for the repose of the emperor's soul after death.¹³³

As Novalín observed, "without becoming a favorite in the strictest sense, or even attaining the level of Tavera or Cobos, Valdés became one of the most trusted men of the prince."¹³⁴ In addition to his influence at the royal court, Valdés was invested with a considerable capacity for extensive patronage as an inquisitor-general; it was common practice for each new inquisitor-general to assume his post and replace members of his predecessor's network with men from his own circle. Valdés did just that and actively

¹³¹ "Para el arzobispado de Sevilla, Vuestra Majestad sabe de la importancia que es y conoce las personas en quien podría estar bien proveído; y no tengo que decir a Vuestra Majestad que tengo por cierto que lo proveerá en persona que tenga letras, bondad, y experiencia, y las buenas cualidades que convienen: y que suplico a Vuestra Majestad tenga memoria del presidente del Consejo Real que, por lo que sirve y trabaja, no puedo dejar de acordárselo y certifico a Vuestra Majestad que él no me lo ha pedido ni hablado." Quoted by Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 164.

¹³² Valdés was somewhat reticent about leaving the Royal Council to assume leadership of the Suprema (the Council of the Supreme and General Inquisition). A letter from Cobos to the emperor hinted at Valdés' hesitation: "as for the position of Inquisitor-General, [Valdés] thought he should consult with Your Majesty regarding the scruple he has about serving in that post...." Both Cobos and Valdés suggested that Charles V would be better served if Valdés remained president of the Royal Council "because he is so well informed regarding the affairs of [the council]." In their opinion, the Archbishop of Granada, Fernando Niño, was more appropriate for the inquisitor-generalship because he had "long experience regarding the affairs of the Inquisition." Such hesitation on the part of Valdés may be due to the fact that, as president of the Royal Council, he was much closer to the affairs and ear of Philip II. Certainly, he was aware of the decline that was initiated in Juan de Tavera's career after the latter had been replaced as president by Valdés and made Inquisitor-General. Now, Valdés was in the same position as the deceased cardinal and feared the power of his successor, Fernando Niño. For more information, refer to Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 163-6.

¹³³ The majority of Valdés' letters dating from 1552 consist of the logistics of overseeing the encabezamiento; there is a strong parallel between them and the letters exchanged earlier between Valdés and Charles V regarding the mobilization of resources for war with France. These letters also further showcase Valdés' aptitude for economics and accounting.

¹³⁴ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 154.

pursued key offices in the government and the Inquisition for his family, friends, and clients.¹³⁵ Indeed, many turned to Valdés for his assistance.¹³⁶ One of the most ardent petitioners was Diego Gracián de Alderete, whom Valdés met when both served under Francisco de Mendoza and Cisneros.

Unlike the inquisitor-general, Alderete was never able to ascend the socio-political hierarchy. With thirteen children and no money, he resorted to using his pen in the hopes of alleviating his situation; he wrote extensively to bemoan his fate with Latin verses of irony and satire. In 1550, he sought out Valdés for patronage. Valdés placed Alderete's name on various lists of nominations for positions in the Royal Council (1546), and the Chancellery (1553). He even wrote in his favor to Francisco de Eraso, claiming that Alderete had served the king loyally for a long time "as Your Grace knows, and I have been a witness to much of it and I know that he is virtuous and an honorable man with a wife and children...."¹³⁷ When Valdés' efforts proved fruitless, Alderete wrote a surprisingly audacious letter to him. He claimed that he had come to Valdés as an old friend in search of a patron. Since the inquisitor-general's aid was not satisfactory, Alderete essentially called him to task:

¹³⁵ Valdés named one of his nephews, doctor Menendo de Valdés, inquisitor of Valladolid while other relatives such as Diego Meléndez and Diego de Valdés were appointed *alguacil* (constable) of Granada and *notario de secreto* (notary of the secret) of Murcia, respectively. The beloved nephew of Valdés' brother Fernando, Juan de Valdés, was also made a member of the Inquisition Council, while the son of Valdés' sister María, Alfonso de Doriga, was given the position of inquisitorial secretary. In addition to his own family, the inquisitor general assisted loyal servants and their families: Valdés' secretary, Hortuno de Ibargüen became secretary of the Holy Office (*Santo Oficio*) while his relative, Juan de Ibargüen became *receptor de los bienes confiscados* (receiver of confiscated goods) in the districts of Castile, Galicia, and Asturias. In the royal government, Beltrán de Galarza, an ally of Valdés, was promoted to the Council of Finance; he also oversaw the affairs of the royal household (*Cámara*) with Vázquez de Molina and Hernando de Montalvo, another client with loyalties to the inquisitor-general. Pedro de Cortes, yet another ally, was placed in the Royal Council; both he and Hernando de Montalvo later became part of the Council of the Inquisition. Valdés also appointed Diego de los Cobos, Diego de Córdoba, Cristóbal Fernández Valtodano, Beltrán de Galarza, and Sancho López de Otarola, as *consejeros* to the Inquisition; illustrative of Valdés' continued support of his *bartolomico* heritage, three of these appointees were graduates of San Bartolomé (Cobos, Valtodano, and Galarza). To accommodate his newly appointed ministers, Valdés had to get rid of a number of men, most of who had been put in place by Juan de Tavera. Using the excuse that Tavera's men were not experienced enough in affairs of the Suprema, the inquisitor-general removed them from the council and transferred them to various bishoprics away from the court. This fact counters the usual assumption on the part of historians that being appointed to bishoprics was a reward. Clearly, it was also used as a weapon to dispose of one's enemies without directly attacking them. For more information on the individuals mentioned here, refer to José Martínez Millán's previously cited articles on elites in the courts of Charles V and Philip II. Also refer to Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 225-7 for an exhaustive list of everyone that Valdés assisted; in particular see footnote 90 on pages 227-8.

¹³⁶ One of the most famous men to do so was Ignatius of Loyola, who wrote to the inquisitor-general regarding an aspirant to the Jesuits. Upon their examination of the man, Pedro Ruíz de Alarcón, the Jesuits found that he had falsely testified in some inquisitorial procedures; thus Ignatius wrote to alert Valdés to the matter. The two men were clearly on good terms, as was indicated by Loyola's closing words: "And so I will say nothing else except that, in the name of all of this company, I humbly offer perpetual service to your Reverend Lordship, in the name of God. Who, in His infinite kindness to all, will allow us to always anticipate and completely fulfill your holy will." ("Y así no diré otro sino que humildemente en toda esta compañía me ofrezco al perpetuo servicio de V. Sría. Rvdma. en el señor nuestro. Quien por su infinita y suma bondad a todos quiera dar su gracia cumplida para que su santísima voluntad siempre sintamos y aquella enteramente la cumplamos.") Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 144.

¹³⁷ "como vuestra merced sabe, y de mucha parte de ello soy testigo de vista y sé que es virtuoso y hombre honrado y cargado de mujer e hijos...." Ibid., 149.

you will say, that with this I intend to complain about the scarce assistance I have received from you. I only want to tell you that, from that perspective, you owe me more than others, since I have loved, honored, and revered you exclusively for your virtue and probity, and for your erudition and singular knowledge, and, finally, for your purest customs and just for the name of Valdés, robust and adorned with such endowments; not for the splendor of your position which, although sublime and of archiepiscopal dignity, has been of no service to me nor my honor nor my advantage.¹³⁸

Valdés was finally able to acquire a chaplaincy for Alderete's son, Pedro Gracián de Torres, who was ordained in 1553. To show his appreciation, the writer dedicated a series of Latin verses to Valdés in his works, *Speravi*, *Enthusiasmos* and *Aitesis*.¹³⁹

Alderete is only one of the many clients that Valdés assisted; his case offers a small example of the sheer size and immensity of the inquisitor-general's network and provides an idea of the "human dimensions of a person that history tends to judge as impervious, heartless, ambitious, and selfish; whose liberality and munificence was, however, one of the themes most exploited by his first panegyrists."¹⁴⁰ Like other prominent patrons at court, Valdés earned his position and built his reputation on the strategic use of his patronage network. Yet "for the inquisitor-general to exercise an effective patronage so as to attract the social and bureaucratic elite, the collaboration of the crown was essential."¹⁴¹ This meant that even as Valdés gained prestige and power with his new offices, he had to compromise his personal ambitions with his responsibilities and duties as a royal client to maintain favor.

4. *The Fall from Royal Favor*

The period from 1547 to 1554 comprised the pinnacle of the inquisitor-general's career. Such predominance in the royal court was anything but secure as Valdés had to contend with a growing number of rivalries with other crown servants. In addition, it became increasingly difficult for him to remain in the good graces of Philip II and his father. Philip was frequently absent from Spain in the 1550s just as Charles had been in the 1540s. As a result, a new faction of men gained Philip's confidence; the figurehead of this

¹³⁸ "Dirás que con esto intento quejarme del escaso auxilio que de ti he recibido. Solo sé decirte que bajo aquel aspecto me debes más que los otros, pues te he amado, honrado, y reverenciado exclusivamente por tu virtud y probidad, por tu erudición y singular saber, y, finalmente, por tus purísimas costumbres y por el solo nombre de Valdés, robustecido y adornado con tales dotes; no por el esplendor de tu cargo que, aunque sublime y de dignidad archiepiscopal, de nada me ha servido ni para mi honra ni para mi provecho." Quoted in Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 60.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 58-63.

¹⁴⁰ "las dimensiones humanas de un personaje que la historia actual tiende a enjuiciar como impermeable y desencarnado, ambicioso, egoísta, cuya liberalidad y munificencia fue, sin embargo, uno de los temas más explotados por sus primeros panegiristas." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 228.

¹⁴¹ Roberto López Vela, "Sociología de los cuadros inquisitoriales," in *Historia de la Inquisición en España y América*, Vol. 2 (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1993), 781.

group was Ruy Gómez de Silva, the duke of Eboli and childhood friend of Philip. As Eboli garnered the future king's attention abroad, his allies in Spain became the new ministers in the government; needless to say, most of them were antipathetic towards the inquisitor-general and his network.

Valdés' response to such changes illustrated that he was fearful of falling out of favor. He was very sensitive about any slights to his reputation and honor; thus he openly complained when Antonio Eraso, the brother of Secretary Francisco Eraso, began to spread egregious slander about him and his officials in Seville. Valdés informed Secretary Eraso that

if it were not for the respect that I have for Your Grace, I would have informed His Majesty of the truth and complained about Antonio Eraso, without whose favor his supporters would not have dared such great and shameful impudence...I have felt this more because he is the brother of someone I admire...and with the name of Eraso he goes from house to house with little honor or authority... and thus he has incurred a low opinion with His Highness.¹⁴²

Valdés then wrote to the emperor four months later with the same complaints. He informed Charles that Antonio Eraso "told many people in the court and swore publically that he and his brother would exact vengeance upon me."¹⁴³ The inquisitor-general claimed that he was an innocent victim whose only desire was to serve the crown. He warned Charles about the effects of Eraso's irrational enmity: "being in the position he is in, he could do much damage, and Your Majesty could receive deception and disservice from someone who has shown himself to be this way in these affairs and others."¹⁴⁴ Such warnings were uncannily similar to those of the probanzas, in which conquistadors were motivated by self-preservation to warn the emperor about the false intentions of their greedy and self-serving rivals.

Valdés was not only anxious to protect his reputation but to jealously guard what he considered to be his sphere of influence against all encroachment. Thus, he constantly clashed with the president of the Royal Council, Fernando Niño, over matters of jurisdiction; their enmity was so virulent that Prince Philip complained to his father that nothing could be accomplished because both men would immediately begin to

¹⁴² "si yo no tuviera respecto a vuestra merced, ya hubiera informado a S. Md. de la verdad y quejándome de Antonio de Eraso, sin cuyo favor no usaran éstos ponerse en un atrevimiento tan grande y tan desvergonzado...y lo he sentido más por ser hermano de quien yo tanto quiero...y con el nombre de Eraso ande de casa en casa con poca honra y autoridad suya y del nombre que tiene, para hallar entrada por todas partes, y así ha ganado aquí poca opinión con S. Al." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 152-3.

¹⁴³ The reason for this overt threat was a counteraction previously undertaken by Valdés. He and Vázquez de Molina had been given money to disperse to the needy by the emperor. Apparently, a niece of the Eraso brothers attempted to receive a share of the charity but was refused by Valdés for not having the greatest need. Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 164.

¹⁴⁴ "estando en el lugar que tiene, puede hacer mucho daño, y podría V. Md. recibir engaño y deservicio de quien así se ha mostrado en este negocio y en otros." *Ibid.*, 165.

fight and compromise the affairs of the Suprema and the Royal Council.¹⁴⁵ When dealing with such enemies, Valdés typically resorted to alarmist rhetoric to get his way. For example, when the viceroy of Sicily, Juan de Vega, commandeered the local inquisitorial tribunal's headquarters and challenged its authority to judge cases, Valdés sent an impassioned letter to the Spanish regent, Princess Juana: "because of this persecution which has not been seen since the Catholic Monarchs founded the Inquisition....I beg Your Highness that you consider that this affair is not mine, nor the council's nor the Sicilian inquisitors', but God's, since it concerns His faith."¹⁴⁶ According to Valdés, the very existence of the Sicilian tribunal was at stake. His dire tone made a strong impression on the regent; Juan de Vega was removed from his post.

Unfortunately for the inquisitor-general, such strategies would not preserve him in Philip II's high regard for long. Beginning in 1554, Valdés had a series of disagreements with both Charles V and Philip II in which he seemed to blatantly disregard their orders. His fervent attempts at reparation and reconciliation only temporarily restored him to the king's good graces; he was ultimately cast out of the court. The inquisitor-general's slow decline began when he announced to the emperor that there were two vacancies in the Suprema; naturally, he recommended his own clients for the positions, both of whom were jurists. When the emperor informed Valdés that one of the positions should be filled with a theologian, the inquisitor-general discreetly disagreed and informed him that the Catholic Monarchs had long ago decided that theologians were unfit for the task.¹⁴⁷ When Charles V proved to be obstinate, Valdés rather pointedly informed him that if a theologian was appointed, his salary would have to be provided by someone else because "there is nothing with which to pay the salaries of those who now reside in the council."¹⁴⁸ Ultimately, the emperor's will proved superior and a theologian was appointed, but not before the inquisitor-general had damaged his own position.

Valdés only made things worse when he alienated Philip II in 1557. Having succeeded his father as king of Spain in 1556, Philip was in Flanders and was desperate for money to pay for his wars.

¹⁴⁵ The rivalry between Valdés and Niño paralleled that of Valdés and Juan de Tavera years earlier. Despite their efforts, neither Charles V nor Philip II ever managed to successfully mediate the disputes between their ministers. Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 206-16.

¹⁴⁶ "según la persecución les ha venido, cual nunca se vio después que los Reyes Católicos pusieron la inquisición Suplico a V. Al. considere que este negocio no es mío, ni del consejo ni de los inquisidores de Sicilia sino de Dios, pues se trata de su fe." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 160.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 154-6.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 156.

Accordingly, he instructed Ruy Gómez de Silva and the regent, Princess Juana, to obtain forced loans from wealthy nobles and prelates. The inquisitor-general was asked for 150,000 ducats, yet he supplied nothing but implausible excuses. His claims of poverty were belied by the fact that he was in the process of founding two new colleges, San Pelayo de los Verdes in Salamanca and San Gregorio in Oviedo.¹⁴⁹

Retired at Yuste, the emperor wrote an indignant letter to Valdés in which he expressed his astonishment at the prelate's behavior, considering that he was "such an old creature and servant of ours, and having for so many years enjoyed the fruits of that dignity."¹⁵⁰ Valdés responded to the emperor and Princess Juana by swearing that he was a fervent and loyal servant who had spent all of his money on improving the situation of his diocese in Seville, "and God is a witness that it is with all truth and desire and zeal to serve your Majesties...."¹⁵¹

The royal accountant, Hernando de Ochoa, had a different story to tell. In a report to Philip II, he described an uncooperative and petulant Valdés who took excessive offence at the charges of disobedience laid at his feet. According to Ochoa, Valdés offered to let him review all of his accounts to prove that he was not lying, since "the devil may take him if he ever had one hundred thousand, or eighty thousand, or sixty thousand, or thirty thousand ducats together because he always spent a lot and gave alms...."¹⁵² The two proceeded to argue heatedly about how much money the inquisitor-general actually had at his disposal; Ochoa pointed out to Valdés that "you never feed anyone in your household, nor have you set your table as

¹⁴⁹ Founding a college was a common goal of Spanish prelates who wished to showcase their generosity and leave a tangible intellectual and ecclesiastical legacy. Valdés founded San Pelayo de los Verdes in 1556 after first attempting to establish a college associated with the University of Salamanca. The faculty at San Bartolomé refused his efforts, which drove him to redirect his patronage elsewhere. He founded San Pelayo almost as a sheer act of will since he did not rely on the usual legal and ecclesiastical channels. The college was completely reliant on Valdés economically; he had full power to dispense his monetary donations any way that he pleased. The first years after the college's foundation were not completely organized in terms of admission and administration; Valdés selected the students based on his own personal criteria. He also paid for the housing, food, and supplies of the collegiate. The situation was generally the same for the college of San Gregorio in Oviedo. Valdés founded the school to teach poor Asturian students Latin, Christian doctrine, and grammar. As with San Pelayo, he retained the authority to oversee the constitution, ordinances, and statutes that governed the school. For more information, refer to B. Escandell Bonet, "El inquisidor Valdés en la creación de su 'Colegio de San Pelayo' de Salamanca: 1556-1558," and Eloy Benito Ruano, "La fundación del colegio de 'San Gregorio' de Oviedo," in *Simposio "Valdés-Salas: "Conmemorativo del IV Centenario de la Muerte de su Fundador D. Fernando de Valdés, Su Personalidad, Su Obra, Su Tiempo* (Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1968), 197-252.

¹⁵⁰ "y tan antiguo criado nuestro, y habiendo tantos años que gozáis de los frutos de esa dignidad...." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 168.

¹⁵¹ "que Dios es testigo que es con toda verdad y deseo y celo de servir a Sus Majestades...." *Ibid.*, 171.

¹⁵² "que los diablos le llevasen, si nunca tuvo cien mil, ni ochenta mil, ni sesenta mil, ni treinta mil ducados juntos, porque siempre había gastado mucho y hecho limosnas...." *Ibid.*, 173.

other prelates and gentlemen; and this is notorious, and all of the court knows it.”¹⁵³ The inquisitor-general acted in the only way he knew how: he wrote an anguished letter decrying the defamation of his reputation and honor. According to Valdés, the issue at hand was no longer a matter of what he owed but a matter of “diminishing and obscuring the credit and truth which I have always managed to acquire and conserve all of my life with God and with Your Majesty and with all the world with my great works and wakefulness and cares in Your Majesty’s service.”¹⁵⁴ Undoubtedly, Valdés believed in the truth of his own words. Yet his failure to acknowledge any criticism and alter his behavior accordingly only condemned him all the more in the eyes of the royal family. “For a man whose whole career depended on royal favor, Valdés was quite reckless in his dealings with the crown.”¹⁵⁵ As things turned out, he begrudgingly paid the requested loan in installments; the existing archives record a total of only 16,000 ducats delivered with promises of more.¹⁵⁶

While he was avoiding his financial obligations, Valdés further angered Philip II with his conduct in the archbishopric of Seville. Resident in his diocese for only one year (1550-1551), Valdés made the unprecedented move of appointing Gaspar de Cervantes both inquisitor and provisor to oversee the cathedral’s affairs. Both Charles V and Philip II wrote to Valdés directing him to separate the two positions. However, in a bold move, he proceeded to name Juan de Ovando to both offices in 1556. When Philip reproached Valdés for his behavior, the inquisitor-general claimed he had never received the original orders to separate the offices.¹⁵⁷ Utilizing the rhetoric of destitution in his letters once again, Valdés explained the horrible poverty of the cathedral and swore that he himself paid the salary of Juan de Ovando out of this “obligation that I have to the Holy Office, and with the understanding of the necessity that it has.”¹⁵⁸ He further justified his actions by stating that previous archbishops had also combined the offices

¹⁵³ “nunca disteis de comer en vuestra casa a nadie, ni habéis hecho plato como otros perlados y caballeros; y esto es notorio, y lo sabe toda la corte.” Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ “sino de disminuir y escurecer el crédito y verdad que yo he siempre procurado de adquirir y conservar toda mi vida con Dios y con V. Md. y con todo el mundo con my grandes trabajos y desvelamientos y cuidados en servicio de V. Md...” Ibid., 176.

¹⁵⁵ Poole, *Juan de Ovando*, 34.

¹⁵⁶ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 291.

¹⁵⁷ “I was never given such a letter or document and no one notified me.” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 163. This was clearly a lie since Princess Juana had written Philip from Valladolid to inform him that Valdés had indeed received the order and had responded that he would do as directed although he did not think it the most convenient thing for the church of Seville.

¹⁵⁸ “la obligación que tengo al santo oficio, y con tener entendida la necesidad que de esto hay.” Ibid., 163.

of inquisitor and provisor for the purposes of financial expediency. He concluded his letter by expressing his fear that there was a malicious conspiracy against him.¹⁵⁹

Philip was not appeased by Valdés' excuses nor convinced by his alarmist rhetoric and ominous tone; he openly accused him of disobedience. As evidence of the break-down in their relationship, all correspondence between the inquisitor-general and the royals ceased for several months. During that time, Philip II decided to remove Valdés from the court altogether and force him back to his diocese in Seville.¹⁶⁰ Knowing that such a fate signified his political exile and death, "Don Fernando fortified himself within the walls of the court and there was no human force that could make him cross the Sierra Morena."¹⁶¹ Princess Juana devised a clever plan to accomplish her brother's will: she recommended that Valdés accompany the body of Queen Juana the Mad to Granada for burial and then travel on to his archbishopric.¹⁶² Aware of the true intentions of the princess, Valdés insisted that affairs in the Inquisition prevented him from making the trip.¹⁶³ By June of 1558, Philip II was tired of this virtual game of cat and mouse and issued a direct order from Flanders that demanded Valdés reside in his diocese in compliance with the dictates of the Council of Trent. Philip also informed Princess Juana of his decision: "regarding the archbishop of Seville,

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 165.

¹⁶⁰ The residency of bishops in their dioceses was one of the priorities of the Council of Trent. The archdiocese of Seville had long suffered from a lack of pastoral attention on the part of its bishops. Indeed, although it was second only to Toledo in its wealth, Seville was known to be very cosmopolitan and open to ideas that were often conducive to religious ferment and cultural ferment. Many ecclesiastical leaders held the opinion that the diocese was morally lax, a "Castilian Babylon" that suffered from absentee bishops and a lack of religious knowledge. Valdés echoed this judgment in a note sent to Prince Philip: "I discovered many beneficed men of the church with many bad customs, leading dishonest lives with complete liberty, in offense to God and of bad example to their persons and habit, bearing and raising their children and grandchildren in their houses and accompanying the mothers of their children in and outside the church...." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 163. Needless to say, such sentiments were not conducive to a positive relationship between the archbishop and his archdiocese, especially since the archbishop was more concerned with staying at court than attending to his episcopal duties.

¹⁶¹ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 172.

¹⁶² Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 184-5.

¹⁶³ Valdés was reluctant to return to Seville because he had recently fallen out with the cabildo over the fates of two men: Juan Gil, usually referred to as doctor Egidio, and doctor Constantino Ponce de la Fuente. Both men were celebrated preachers in Seville known for their eloquence. Egidio was the official preacher of the chapter (*canónigo magistral*); he fell afoul of the Inquisition in 1549. Valdés did not agree with the way the local tribunal handled the doctor's trial and sent inquisitor Domingo de Soto to oversee the process. Egidio was sentenced to one year in prison in 1552 and was compelled to abjure some propositions on the grounds that they were tainted with Lutheranism. The cathedral chapter sought to replace Egidio with doctor Constantino, a very well educated man of *converso* background. However, Valdés favored Doctor Pedro Sánchez Zumel who was a client of Valdés' provisor Juan de Ovando. The inquisitor-general allowed Ovando to do everything in his power to impugn doctor Constantino's orthodoxy, lineage, and marital status. The cathedral chapter finally appealed to Rome despite Ovando's threats of excommunication. By the time Rome ruled in favor of Constantino, he had, rather conveniently, come under the suspicion of the Inquisition for heresy and died in jail. Needless to say, the cathedral chapter of Seville was seething with resentment towards the inquisitor-general. Rumors began to spread that Valdés had imprisoned a canon for not delaying the mass until the archbishop's arrival, a flagrant abuse of his powers. It was also whispered that Valdés used his authority as inquisitor-general to punish crimes that were not technically under his jurisdiction. Refer to Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 177-201 and Stafford Poole, *Juan de Ovando*, 27-47.

there is no need to deal with it, since I have already resolved the business and concluded with him; and, if he does not accomplish what I wrote to him about residing in his church, I want you to order him to do it without any more delay, and, if he excuses himself, he is not to be called to the Council of State....”¹⁶⁴

By the time King Philip’s orders had reached Spain, the princess regent had already received word from her father, the retired emperor, directing her to allow the inquisitor-general to stay at court. His commands were reinforced by a new letter from Philip revoking his previous decision. The reason for such a reversal was the discovery in 1557 of Protestant cells in Seville and Valladolid who were trafficking in books tainted with Lutheranism from Geneva. As a result, over one hundred people were arrested, including nuns and members of a Jeronimite monastery. The inquisitor-general, slowly making his way to Seville at the time, was directed to return to the court to handle the developing crisis. In Valladolid, about fifty-five people were arrested, a number of whom were well known prelates and nobles. Over the next few years, a series of trials and *autos de fe* was held in which many of the accused were burned at the stake in full public display.¹⁶⁵

While it is true that Valdés was devoted and intransigent when it came to preserving Catholic doctrine against heterodoxy, it cannot be denied that events took a fortuitous turn for his career as a royal client. As historian Stafford Poole noted, the prelate’s “zeal for orthodoxy went hand in hand with an increase of power.”¹⁶⁶ In his letters describing the events of 1557 and 1558, the inquisitor-general repeatedly insinuated that the royal court at Valladolid was the most in danger; for example, he reported that inquisitors had discovered that smugglers had sent many illicit books directly to the court.¹⁶⁷ Making good use of this alarming news, the inquisitor-general warned that “not even the royal court has been exempt” from the taint of heresy.¹⁶⁸ Clearly, he was intent on impressing the urgency of the situation: “these Lutherans have been of such importance that I would have been unable to resist coming immediately to Valladolid to consult with Her Highness [the regent, Juana] about certain details, even if I [had actually]

¹⁶⁴ Quoted in Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 294.

¹⁶⁵ The impact of the events of 1558-1559 on Spanish religion and the role played by Protestantism has been debated by several historians. For an extended discussion of the people and events involved in the discovery of the Protestant cells, refer to Thomas Werner, *La represión del protestantismo en España, 1517-1648*, vol. 1 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001).

¹⁶⁶ Poole, *Juan de Ovando*, 34.

¹⁶⁷ “Letters from the Suprema, Inquisitor-General Fernando de Valdés, and Philip II on Protestants in the 1550s,” in *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478-1614: An Anthology of Sources*, transl. and ed. by Lu Ann Homza (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2006), 180.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

found myself in Seville....”¹⁶⁹ Valdés’ allusions to a virtual religious crisis clearly meant that he would have to return to the court immediately; that this was convenient for his personal ambitions should not be overlooked. Indeed, the inquisitor-general was very careful to portray his reappearance at the court as something that he had no control over. Rather, he had been “forced” to return because of the pleas of the Suprema. Valdés went even further and claimed that he was merely following the dictates of divine will: “God was served by my being present to investigate and punish this heresy, for even with my meager talents, my attendance has been very important....”¹⁷⁰

United in a common cause, Valdés and King Philip were once again on good terms. Philip even admitted to the prelate that “you have been right in not making yourself absent from here [the court]”¹⁷¹ The king gave Valdés his permission to “proceed against the guilty with all rigor” yet the inquisitor was not satisfied with just the king’s permission.¹⁷² He wanted the Pope’s approval as well. Valdés sent his nephew Álvaro de Valdés, the dean of Oviedo, and Juan de Vedoya to speak with the Pope in May of 1558 and then wrote an extended letter to Paul IV in September, which was sent with correspondence from the Inquisition. The contents of the letter focused on the details of the discovery of heresy in Valladolid and Seville. Significantly, Valdés repeatedly insinuated that many prominent, renowned, and well respected men were involved: “these errors and heresies amount to a sort of sedition or mutiny among people prominent in lineage, religion, estate, and relatives.”¹⁷³ Over time, it would be revealed that Valdés spoke these words with a particular individual in mind.

In order to proceed against such an enemy, Valdés made three primary requests of the Pope. He naturally asked for money, since “from the work [of capturing the heretics] the Inquisition did not gain one *maravedí*.”¹⁷⁴ More importantly, he requested that inquisitors could “relax guilty people to the secular arm whom they fear or suspect might be likely to provoke a tumult in the Christian Republic....”¹⁷⁵ From Valdés’ perspective, “it seems appropriate for the judges to exercise exemplary justice on such people,

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 184.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ “Muy justo ha sido no hacer ausencia de ahí” Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.2, 210.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ Homza, “Letters from the Suprema,” *The Spanish Inquisition*, 189.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 188.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 190.

regardless of their secular, pontifical, or ecclesiastical rank....¹⁷⁶ Essentially, the inquisitor-general was asking for an unprecedented amount of license in dealing with the accused, license that was granted by the Pope in January of 1559.¹⁷⁷ In addition, the Pope also agreed to revoke all licenses to own, read, or publish banned books. This papal revocation complemented the new index of forbidden books that Valdés was in the process of publishing. It also played an integral role in the events surrounding the imprisonment and trial of the Archbishop of Toledo, Bartolomé Carranza y Miranda.¹⁷⁸

Valdés and Carranza had a long, contentious history. Carranza “taught, preached, and maintained that prelates’ residence in their dioceses is a matter of natural, divine, and human law,” a belief which brought the inquisitor-general’s chronic absenteeism under fire.¹⁷⁹ The archbishop also actively urged Philip II to investigate Valdés’ failure to visit his diocese in 1553 and impugned his loyalty to God and King by commenting “it’s no wonder that whoever does not obey the orders of God, would not obey those of a king.”¹⁸⁰ Other points of conflict centered on the theologian-jurist debate; Carranza had supported a theologian being put on the Council of the Inquisition, which made the archbishop “very angry as a result.”¹⁸¹ When Andrés Pérez was selected, Valdés’ brother, Hernando de Sálas, was denied a position.

It seems that Carranza never missed an opportunity to be contrary to or to criticize the inquisitor-general’s performance. In 1557, he encouraged Philip to simply seize the money that he had requested from Valdés. When the Protestant cells were discovered around that same time, the Primate pointed out that “though matters had been well taken care of in Valladolid, in Seville a greater remedy was needed,

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Professor Homza points out that a serious implication of Valdés’ request was that it allowed inquisitors to “relax people to the secular arm even if they confess and repent, rather than reconciling them to the Church.” Such capability was unprecedented. “Letters from the Suprema,” *The Spanish Inquisition*, 190, footnote 33.

¹⁷⁸ Carranza began his career as a theology student at Salamanca and a teacher at San Gregorio of Valladolid. Ordained in the Dominican order in 1520, he attended the first sessions of the Council of Trent in 1547. In 1554, he traveled with Prince Philip to England where he earned the future king’s confidence and played an important role in promoting English Catholicism under Queen Mary I. Carranza continued to travel with Philip to the Low Countries and was in Brussels when he accepted the primacy of Toledo in 1557. Spanish chronicler Cabrera de Córdoba wrote that Carranza’s appointment caused “envy and spite on the part of don Fernando de Valdés, Archbishop of Seville, Inquisitor-General, since he did not ascend [to the primacy], as his age and services deserved....” Quoted by Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 314. Córdoba wrote at a later period (he was born in 1559) yet he was correct in pointing out there was undeniable animosity between the two prelates. For more information on Carranza’s life and deeds, refer to J.I. Tellechea Idigoras, *El arzobispo Carranza y su tiempo*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Ediciones Guadarrama, 1968) and *Reforming Catholicism in the England of Mary Tudor: The Achievement of Friar Bartolomé Carranza*, edited by John Edwards and Ronald Truman (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2005).

¹⁷⁹ “Documents Pertaining to the Trial of Archbishop Bartolomé Carranza,” in *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478-1614: An Anthology of Sources*, transl. and ed. by Lu Ann Homza (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc, 2006), 205.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 206.

because the evil there was long-standing.”¹⁸² This was an oblique reference to Valdés’ attempts to stay at court despite orders to return to his diocese. Carranza was implying the inquisitor-general had neglected his pastoral duties to the detriment of the archbishopric.¹⁸³

In June of 1558 Valdés began to work against Carranza, who was travelling abroad with King Philip. He reported that an escaped heretic revealed that the archbishop’s house in Flanders was open to him, obliquely implying that Carranza was in collusion with the Protestants.¹⁸⁴ There were also some concerns regarding Carranza’s *Commentaries On the Christian Catechism*, published in Antwerp in 1558. The work became a subject of interest with the Inquisition when the bishop of Cuenca, Don Pedro de Castro, complained that the author had espoused Lutheran opinions regarding justification. When Carranza returned to Spain in August of 1558, he actually had a conversation with Valdés regarding suspicious books written in the vernacular. Valdés apparently remained silent on the topic of censorship and gave no intimation of his thoughts, which was cold comfort for the Primate of Toledo.¹⁸⁵

Carranza’s concerns were justified: when suspected Protestants Ana Enríquez and Francisca de Zuñiga testified that the archbishop had inspired doubt in them about their faith, the Inquisition confiscated his writings. Valdés was quick to assure King Philip that the process of censorship against Carranza was done “free of passion.”¹⁸⁶ Unconvinced, the archbishop of Toledo began a preemptive campaign to obtain positive critiques of his *Catechism* from several learned ecclesiastics at Salamanca, Alcalá, and Valladolid, including Domingo de Soto who was known to have ties with Valdés.¹⁸⁷ He also began to impugn Valdés’ character by accusing him of duplicity for not informing him that his work was under inquisitorial review. Valdés responded by having the *Catechism* censorship moved to Valladolid and declaring that there were to be no more unsolicited reviews of suspicious books; this prohibition included the entire faculty of the University of Alcalá. Carranza immediately demanded that he did not want the inquisitor-general to have any part in his work’s censure. In addition, he criticized Valdés’ selection of Melchor Cano, Domingo de

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ The “long-standing evil” was a reference to the controversy in Seville over the cases of doctors Egidio and Constantino in the 1550s. Refer to note 163 above.

¹⁸⁴ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 194-8.

¹⁸⁵ Homza, “Documents Pertaining to the Trial of Carranza,” in *The Spanish Inquisition*, 207.

¹⁸⁶ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.2, 161.

¹⁸⁷ For more information regarding what the critiques specifically said, see Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.1, 329-35.

Soto and Domingo de las Cuevas as the official censors of his *Catechism*.¹⁸⁸ However, he met with silence on the parts of the King and the Pope; even his own supporters urged him to comply with the decisions of the Inquisition.¹⁸⁹

In February of 1559, Valdés sent out a dispatch calling for the confiscation of all books in the vernacular which dealt with doctrine and were published outside of Spain since 1550. Obviously, this included Carranza's *Catechism*. In fact, in a separate dispatch sent to the tribunal in Seville, the intention of the confiscation was made blatantly obvious: "and so as not to appear that such diligence is made for only this book, it would be good if you were to publish edicts in which you order the confiscation of all books in the vernacular that touch on Christian doctrine, published outside these kingdoms since 1550."¹⁹⁰ Valdés' plans were accelerated when the papal brief he requested in September of 1558 was finally received in Spain in April of 1559. The brief allowed the inquisitor-general to act against high-ranking officials suspected of heresy; such officials had heretofore been exempt from inquisitorial jurisdiction. Valdés immediately sent his nephew Álvaro to Flanders to report to King Philip regarding the censorship of books. Álvaro also carried with him the signed confessions of various Valladolid prisoners implicating Carranza in their heresy. Faced with such evidence, Philip agreed to allow the Inquisition to proceed as it saw fit. Álvaro then travelled to Rome and was happy to report that Pope Paul IV also seemed wholeheartedly behind Valdés. In a letter sent to his uncle, the dean of Oviedo described the Pope's ecstatic praise of the inquisitor-general's work and his concerns for Valdés' health. Álvaro even insinuated that the Pope was favorable to the idea of rewarding his uncle with a cardinal's hat.¹⁹¹ With both the Pope and the Philip II behind him, Valdés was free to act: Archbishop Carranza was arrested in August of 1559.

¹⁸⁸ Interestingly, Cano was named first over de Soto. Apparently, the latter admitted that the *Catechism* was so long that he had someone else go over it and highlight the passages that needed a closer look. De Soto concluded his review in favor of the Primate's book, something which distanced him from Valdés' favor. De Soto was named a censor only at the specific request of Cano. Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.1, 331.

¹⁸⁹ Carranza wrote a series of letters directly to Valdés in which he offered to comply with any changes that the Inquisition dictated; Valdés' replies were vague and claimed that Carranza was not completely aware of all the details of the situation regarding his book and that he was too quick to "blame those who had no blame." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.1, 326-8. Also see Novalín's footnote 172 on page 328.

¹⁹⁰ "Y porque no parezca que se hace la diligencia por solo de ese libro, será bien publicuéis edictos en que se manden tomar todos los libros en romance que toquen a doctrina Cristiana, impresos fuera de estos reinos del año 50 acá." Quoted in Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol.1, 274.

¹⁹¹ [dijo] "que era muy justo que fuese premiado, que todos creyeron que en aquella congregación le echaba el capelo a V. Sría." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 255. Another obvious display of the Pope's favor was his treatment of Friar Hernando de San Ambrosio who was in Rome as an agent of Carranza. Upon learning about Ambrosio's attempts to gain support for his patron, the Pope threw him out of the cardinal's palace.

Upon being taken into custody, Carranza immediately responded by recusing the inquisitor-general with the charge of capital enmity.¹⁹²

The battle of wills between Carranza and Valdés thus expanded into a battle of patronage. Valdés had proven himself the early victor in the sense that he had effectively maintained the support of the two greatest patrons of the time, King Philip II and Pope Paul IV. During the inquisitor-general's recusation, the power of networks and clients became even more crucial. Essentially, the proceedings amounted to a veritable dual; the victor would be the prelate who most effectively utilized his network and resources as a patron. Carranza inflicted the first blow with twenty-five points of recusation against Valdés that were supported by a total of seventy-two witnesses.

The Primate of Toledo contended that Valdés used his network of followers to persecute him and that the inquisitor-general's "parents, kinsmen, and servants defamed me as a heretic."¹⁹³ He pointed out that it was known to everyone that Melchor Cano was his enemy since he had refused to help Cano receive an appointment from the Pope in 1557. Carranza produced several witnesses who corroborated his claims that Valdés and Cano only worked together because of their mutual hatred of the archbishop. According to Doctor Velázquez's testimony, "until this time, neither the archbishop of Seville seems to have been friendly with Cano, nor Cano with the said archbishop....the two had become friends because of the enmity that both shared against the archbishop of Toledo."¹⁹⁴ Bishop Frías agreed that the enmity between Carranza and Cano was "so notorious...that it was impossible [for Valdés] not to have known of it."¹⁹⁵ Indeed, it was even rumored that Valdés "gave [Cano and de Soto] gifts in the hopes of obtaining from them things against the said archbishop or his book or affairs."¹⁹⁶

¹⁹² Carranza recused Valdés, meaning that he challenge the inquisitor-general's ability to act impartially during the trial because of his personal bias toward the archbishop. This bias was termed capital (i.e. "murderous) enmity; if Carranza could prove that Valdés was motivated to act against him primarily because of the hostility between them, then Valdés would be excused from the proceedings and his own position would be undermined.

¹⁹³ Homza, "Documents Pertaining to the Trial of Carranza," in *The Spanish Inquisition*, 205.

¹⁹⁴ "hasta este tiempo, ni el señor arzobispo de Sevilla parece que tenía esa amistad con Cano, ni Cano la tenía con el dicho arzobispo...habían tomado amistad el dicho Rmo. De Sevilla y Cano por la enemistad que entrambos tenían con el de Toledo." Quoted in José Ignacio Tellechea Idigoras, *El Arzobispo Carranza y Su Tiempo*, vol. 2 (Madrid: Ediciones Guadarrama, 1968) 121.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 131. According to Tellechea Idigoras, the foremost expert on the trial of Carranza, Cano had been called as a censor because Valdés, "a man impetuous and resolute in his actions, needed the weight of an eminent theologian like Cano to justify his decisions. Cano...frustrated by Carranza, finally had the occasion to impose in an effective manner his critiques of orthodoxy. Both contributed to the ruin of the disgraced archbishop." Quoted by Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 1, 336-7.

Archbishop Carranza assembled his own network of allies to substantiate the capital enmity that he alleged was demonstrated by Valdés and his clients. The most powerful of his supporters included the Enríquez family, represented by the Abbot of Valladolid and the Admiral of Castile, and Bartolomé de las Casas. The abbot, Alonso Enríquez, described the inquisitor-general in terms of an oppressive tyrant who was quick to crush his enemies: “the archbishop of Seville is adamant that nobody tries to place people in the Office of the Inquisition that he does not want and those who try provoke enmity and hate on his part.”¹⁹⁷ As Enríquez alleged, it was very easy to fall from Valdés’ favor; in his opinion, that is what happened with Domingo de Soto: “because he did not say bad words or anything shameful about the archbishop of Toledo, and about the propositions of the book, he had not pleased the archbishop of Seville at all.”¹⁹⁸ The abbot summarized his testimony simply by stating that “I have heard it said that he [Valdés] is vindictive.”¹⁹⁹ The testimony of the Admiral of Castile maintained the same opinion.

Bartolomé de las Casas similarly attacked Valdés’ character: “the archbishop of Seville is a man impassioned against those with whom he is not on good terms.”²⁰⁰ In the friar’s estimation, the inquisitor-general was little more than a bully: “Master Soto was lost, because he wanted to leave and the archbishop of Seville would not let him.”²⁰¹ Regarding the censorship of the *Catechism*, las Casas maintained that “the book was not examined by learned theologians and religious people who knew how to do it properly and hand out Catholic censure.”²⁰² Indeed, Carranza accused the inquisitor-general of going so far as to use his power to silence and repress anyone who tried to support the archbishop of Toledo and his work: “he has even excluded the opinions of those whom he specifically asked to review the book if they ended up viewing it as Catholic....He reprehended teacher of divinity Friar Juan de la Peña about it, and reprehended and punished both Master Friar Pedro de Sotomayor, and teacher of divinity Friar Ambrosio de Salazar.”²⁰³

¹⁹⁷ “el señor arzobispo de Sevilla siente mucho que nadie trate de poner en estas plazas del Canto oficio personas, sino las que el quisiere y señalare y así tendrá odio y enemistad con quien en esto quisiere empacharle.” J. I. Tellechea Idigoras, *Fray Bartolomé Carranza: documentos históricos*, Archivo documental español, vol. XVIII, 1 (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1962), 110.

¹⁹⁸ “porque no decía malas palabras y afrentosas del arzobispo de Toledo y de las proposiciones de su libro, no se había contentado nada el dicho señor arzobispo de Sevilla.” *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 113. Valdés’ own cathedral chapter substantiated this antagonistic portrayal of him and claimed that the inquisitor-general actually threatened them by telling a cleric that “you know that I have the power to avenge myself on them, if I wanted.” Quoted in Tellechea Idigoras, *Documentos Históricos*, 377.

²⁰⁰ Homza, “Documents Pertaining to Carranza,” 210.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 209.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 210.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 206-7.

In all fairness, Carranza's supporters had their own agendas. The Enríquez family had long nursed a grudge against Valdés for not supporting their side in a marriage dispute. As for las Casas, he resented the inquisitor-general's preference for his rival Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda. The inquisitor-general had nearly as much right to claim capital enmity as did Carranza. Yet instead of attempting to explain or defend himself, he mostly replied to the charges by saying that he simply denied them or was unaware of why the charge had been brought forth in the first place. Such efforts were not very convincing, as was evidenced by the outcome of the proceedings. In February of 1560, Fernando de Valdés was ordered to

abstain from any knowledge of the case while the Reverend Archbishop of Toledo is imprisoned and prosecutor Camino tries to make the case against him. Whether by himself, with the opinion of others, or through an intermediary, the Archbishop of Seville shall not do or provide anything in this case, nor anything relating to it; nor shall he find himself present with the judges who undertake the case.²⁰⁴

While there was concern that Valdés could use his influence to sway the trial, he was still allowed to delegate his powers to others. He selected Pedro Ponce de León and Pedro de la Gasca who both declined.²⁰⁵ In their place, Valdés chose Diego García de Riego and Diego González; González pursued Carranza so intensely that he was accused of inappropriate and excessive behavior.²⁰⁶ However, for all intents and purposes, Valdés' power over the trial of Carranza had ended; his recused status was a serious blow to his reputation and honor.

The inquisitor-general tried to appeal his recusation to Rome with the help of Ambassador Francisco de Vargas and his nephew Álvaro, but he discovered that Carranza's network had preempted him. As Álvaro reported, "there are two cardinals here who are great enemies of the affairs of the Holy Office and are those about whom we have written to you, [and they] speak badly about Your Lordship...the one publicly and like a crazy person, the other secretly and not without malice."²⁰⁷ These two men were Juan Jerónimo Morone and Juan Bautista Cicada. Despite the efforts of his connections in Rome, Valdés did not manage to secure the new Pope's favor (his patron, Pope Paul IV had died in 1559). In 1567, the

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 211.

²⁰⁵ Pedro Ponce de León argued that Valdés had no jurisdiction or authority to delegate his power once he had been accused and advised the inquisitor-general to consult with the Pope on the matter. Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 274-6.

²⁰⁶ José Martínez Millán, *Instituciones y Elites de Poder en la Monarquía Hispana Durante el Siglo XVI* (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1992), 233-9.

²⁰⁷ "Aquí hay dos cardenales grandes enemigos de las cosas del santo oficio, que son los que otras veces hemos escrito que hablan mal en V. Sría...el uno públicamente y como loco, el otro de secreto y no sin malicia." Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 283.

trial of Carranza was transferred to Rome in spite of royal opposition from Philip II, and Valdés was strictly forbidden to have anything at all to do with the proceedings.

The recusation of 1560 initiated an inexorable decline in Valdés' career. As Novalín observed, "this process [Carranza's trial] was as fatal for the archbishop of Seville as it was for the archbishop of Toledo."²⁰⁸ Just as the inquisitor-general had spent his early career consistently rising in the hierarchy, he spent the end of it consistently falling. During the last eight years of his life, he received Rome's censure for disagreeing with the way the Council of Trent should be reconvened, and completely alienated King Philip by acting too slowly to convoke a synod in the diocese of Seville.²⁰⁹ Complying with the dictates of the Council of Trent, Philip wrote to Valdés in 1565 about holding the synod as soon as possible.²¹⁰ The inquisitor-general did not respond to this first announcement. Philip's second letter was consequently more urgent and reminded Valdés of his obligations as a servant of the church and crown.²¹¹ Valdés replied by saying that Seville was a special situation and that he needed to discuss important details personally with the king.²¹² Philip, clearly obsessed about the synod, sent a third letter in which he left a special note to Valdés written in his own hand: "I have a particular interest in this business, as the quality of it requires, and thus you would do me much pleasure in completing it right away."²¹³

By 1566, the synod had still not been convened and Diego de Espinosa was named Valdés' lieutenant in the inquisitor-generalship. From that point on, Espinosa was truly the one in charge. There were reports that the inquisitor-general was so decrepit with age and infirmity that he was barely lucid. Gonzalo González wrote to Francisco de Borja that Valdés only wanted to discuss his educational foundations and put them in order. In González's opinion, Valdés was "old and greatly affected." While the inquisitor-general was certainly well advanced in age, he was still more than capable of writing in Latin to Pope Pius V to recommend Diego de Vega for an office.²¹⁴

²⁰⁸ José Luis G. Novalín, "Ventura y desgracia de don Fernando de Valdés, arzobispo de Sevilla," *Anthologica Annua* 11 (1963), 94.

²⁰⁹ Novalín provides a good summary of events in his article, "Ventura y desgracia de don Fernando de Valdés."

²¹⁰ Novalín, *El Inquisidor-General Fernando de Valdés*, vol. 2, 289-90.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 292.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 293-4.

²¹³ "De este negocio tengo tan particular cuidado como la calidad dél requiere; y así me haréis mucho placer en que cumpláis luego lo que aquí se ordena..." *Ibid.*, 295.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 300.

Fernando de Valdés died on December 9, 1568 but he had ceased to exist as a powerful influence in the court and Inquisition long before that date.²¹⁵ However, a cursory glance at his will reveals just how extensive his networks were and how varied; the contents comprise a seemingly endless number of names and monetary designations that add up to thousands of ducats.²¹⁶ Valdés left money and property to an innumerable amount of relatives and servants in a display of personal loyalties. He also left wealthy legacies to his colleges and former dioceses on the condition that they be used for charity, pious works, and the commemoration of the anniversary of the inquisitor-general's death with prayers.²¹⁷ Lastly, Valdés set aside a substantial sum of money to erect his family tomb in the church of Santa María de Salas. Having himself portrayed as an alabaster and marble statue kneeling in prayer, he clearly wanted to project a particular vision of himself as a benevolent and pious man. Ironically, that vision has not been the one passed down through the ages.

5. *The Significance of Fernando de Valdés as a Patron*

Fernando de Valdés has been acknowledged as one of the most important inquisitor-generals of the sixteenth century. His life and career spanned a tumultuous period in Spain's history that witnessed the growth of empire, the reform of religion, and the threat of war. Unfortunately, historians have not acknowledged that the inquisitor was an individual just as complex as the world in which he lived; previous historical assessments of the man have relied too heavily on stereotypes and one-dimensional caricatures.

²¹⁵ Writing to Juan de Ovando in 1564, he was full of apologetic words because he could not manage to acquire a promotion for his client: "someday, please God, there will be some way of repaying you as I wish, and I will do it in such a way that you will not find yourself in any need...." (Quoted in Poole, *Juan de Ovando*, 53.) Growing tired of promises, Ovando eventually left Seville to reform the University of Alcalá, despite Valdés' warnings that the job of a reformer was not compatible with that of a provisor. Ovando later criticized the inquisitor-general's absence from Spain in a letter to Philip II, an example of just how self-serving alliances could be as well as how easily they could fall apart: "[While the archbishop was proceeding against heretics in Palencia and Zamora,] the Lutheran sect was being preached so publicly in Seville that I saw a letter from there from a heretic exile in Germany written to another of his disciples in Seville in which he said these words, "Happy Seville! Where the teaching of Martin Luther is preached as publicly as in Ulm."...I am an eyewitness because at that time he [Valdés] sent me as his provisor and inquisitor, and the first thing I encountered in the Inquisition was that they were employing well-known heretics to evaluate propositions and in the church the chapter wanted to put into the canonjía magistral Doctor Constantino, a bigamist with both wives still living and known for his evil teaching which was so accepted that they thought I was crazy for trying to oppose his election." Quoted by Poole, *Juan de Ovando*, 43-4.

²¹⁶ See Juan Uría Riu, "Los repartos de dineros entre los parientes del arzobispo Valdés Salas y algunas observaciones a la historia de su linaje," in *Simposio "Valdés-Salas,"* 291-345.

²¹⁷ Several of his funds were used to build hospitals, feed and clothe the poor, purchase livestock, and pay for preparatory schools where young girls could be trained in Christian doctrine and the skills of cooking, sewing and weaving. Money was also left to provide for these girls' dowries and to purchase livestock for farmers in the region. In Tridentine Spain, such acts of charity were believed to be redemptive and salvific and were thus beneficial to both the living and the dead. For more information concerning the Spanish understanding of death, refer to Carlos Eire, *From Madrid to Purgatory: The Art and Craft of Dying in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

One of the goals of this paper has been to complicate such interpretations and add depth to them by analyzing the man behind the inquisitor-general and the archbishop. In studying his official correspondence, I have discovered evidence that Valdés' sphere of influence extended well beyond the Inquisition and ecclesiastical bureaucracy to the royal court. Not only do his letters reveal a work ethic based on personal values of organization, efficiency, and diligence, but they illuminate Valdés as a patron who was motivated by a sense of responsibility towards his network of relatives, allies, and clients. Traditionally, Valdés has not been considered in the capacity of a patron; therefore, viewing him in such a light offers new insight into his role at the Spanish court as well as the importance of patronage to his career.

On a larger scale, Valdés' career illuminates the interrelatedness of civil and ecclesiastical service common to early modern Spain and Europe. The world of the royal court and the church functioned in a symbiotic form of mutual dependence; thus clerics and prelates also served as ministers and bureaucrats. Novalín understood the integrated nature of this system when he described Valdés as a bishop-courtier.²¹⁸ Valdés' performance as the inquisitor-general especially illustrated that the Inquisition was integral to the affairs of the government and the politics of monarchy by revealing just how enmeshed inquisitors were with the court. At the same time, his career demonstrated that the system did not always run smoothly. There were considerable conflicts of interest and jurisdictional disputes as ministers had to compromise their personal ambitions with their professional obligations. The inquisitor-general's career provides a case study of the realities of how that compromise was achieved in sixteenth-century Spain.

The world in which the inquisitor-general moved was not always predicated upon official channels of power. Indeed, the majority of business was transacted with the use of unofficial alliances between social, political, and intellectual elites. Power was brokered through the intimacy of face to face, human contacts that one garnered as a patron and client. As scholar Ernest Gellner concluded, "in an inevitably more intimate elite, where relations cannot be anonymous nor criteria universalistic, patronage must be endemic."²¹⁹ The ethos of patronage was complemented by an early modern mentality that esteemed honor, service, loyalty, and hierarchy. The letters of courtiers like Fernando de Valdés provide insight as to what types of behavior and language translated into successful patronage, as well as what types did not.

²¹⁸ Novalín, "Ventura y desgracia," 93.

²¹⁹ Ernest Gellner, "Patrons and Clients," 6.

Such letters were written in a “code” of rhetoric which had to be deciphered in order to understand what was truly being said, thus preserving the privileged nature of the correspondence. Courtiers used their letters to consciously portray specific self-images; such images were themselves a reflection of the values and mentality inherent in society.

Valdés’ letters depict a world in which service to the church or royal court resulted in personal reward, either with an office, a pension, property, or a title. Networking provided the gateway to such service as powerful patrons garnered positions for their lesser clients while bolstering their own prestige. The result was a socio-political environment in which alliances continually shifted as men tried to cultivate circles of supporters. Because human relationships were inherently dynamic, especially when power was concerned, the rise and fall of factions were inevitable. In most cases of upward mobility, merit counted for little and the right name counted for everything. Thus many capable men never managed even to rise in the hierarchy. The vicissitudes of this way of life were well known and bemoaned by the rejected and embittered.²²⁰

Valdés’ letters make it abundantly clear that the primary goal of all officials was to be given access to the royal court and the royal ear. Such access was granted to only a few and even those who enjoyed the king’s favor could not be sure that their future was secure. As the inquisitor-general’s career proved, it was all too easy to fall irrevocably from grace. Valdés was one of the last royal ministers of letrado background to successfully use his position in the civil and ecclesiastical bureaucracy to transform himself into a patron. Significantly, even though he was usually not in the physical presence of Charles V or Philip II, he managed to stay in power by remaining close to the councils and regencies that ran the government in Spain and by maintaining a continuous correspondence with the monarchs. In doing so, the inquisitor-general actually foreshadowed the seventeenth-century minister-favorite.

According to L.W.B. Brockliss, the minister-favorite was usually a political prelate who was not a “natural” courtier from the aristocracy or nobility. Instead of relying on his inherited lineage and titles, he earned his position through his competence as an able administrator. Typically, the minister-favorite earned respect from a new regime based upon his efficiency in a previous reign. He utilized patronage to survive at court and to expand his power base. The most successful minister-favorites wielded the

²²⁰ For an example, see Antonio de Guevara, *Menosprecio de Corte y Alabanza de Aldea*, ed. by M. Martínez de Burgos (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1952).

patronage system so effectively that they rose in royal favor to the point of assuming a position akin to the king's alter ego.²²¹ While Valdés did not achieve such heights in his own service, it could be argued that his career prefigured that of the duke of Lerma and the count-duke of Olivares in Spain, the duke of Buckingham in England, and Cardinal Richelieu in France.

The rise of the minister-favorite, known as the *valido* or *privado* in Spain, was to come well after Valdés' death; in the mid-sixteenth century, Philip II began to rule by *junta* and increasingly favored a government that relied less on personal connections and informal alliances and more on formal bureaucracy, routinization, and official channels. Historians of early modern European government have noted a gradual shift over time in the legitimacy of patronage in politics. The understanding of what constituted corruption and abuse of power was intimately connected with the evolving notion of the proper use of office. The accusations brought against Valdés reflected the subtle beginnings of this shift in thought. His greatest crimes involved personal enmity; it was considered particularly reprehensible that he had abused his position as an inquisitor-general and royal minister to pursue a private vendetta. Although early modern Spain was far from considering *mercedes* and *gracia* as bribes and venality, the seeds for a new interpretation of corruption in office were planted.²²²

Thus, Inquisitor-General Fernando de Valdés was much more than a caricature. He managed to rise to power faster and stay in control longer than most of his contemporaries. The reason for this was his strategic use of patronage and his persistence in performing the role of the diligent and loyal crown servant. Valdés quickly entered the confidence of Charles V and Philip II and convinced them of his worth as a royal client. He shrewdly redistributed the rewards he garnered to his own clients, making him a formidable patron in his own right. When he was in peril of falling out of favor, Valdés tended to use alarmist rhetoric to make himself seem essential to the court and its function. Such tactics eventually failed to impress Philip and Valdés' career and network fell apart. Ultimately, the inquisitor-general's case study illuminates the day to day realities of how authority was gained, wielded, and lost. It also provides context

²²¹ L.W.B. Brockliss, "Anatomy of a Minister-Favourite," in *The World of the Favourite*, eds. J.H. Elliott and L.W.B. Brockliss (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 280.

²²² For theories of early modern corruption, see Robert Harding, "Corruption and the Moral Boundaries of Patronage in the Renaissance," in *Patronage in the Renaissance*, eds. Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 47-64. Also refer to Linda Levy-Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England* (Boston: Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1990) and H.G. Koenigsberger, "Patronage and Bribery During the Reign of Charles V," in *Estates and Revolutions: Essays in Early Modern European History* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1971), 166-75.

and new lines of inquiry for the practice of politics in early modern Spain. In the current historiography, Spanish inquisitors have not been studied beyond the context of the inquisitorial institution and their individual careers have barely been examined at all. My case study of Fernando de Valdés attempts to expand upon the existing scholarship and emphasize that inquisitors were also integral members of the royal court who were thoroughly enmeshed in its politics and patronage. Exploring how Valdés balanced multiple offices and duties to church and state while pursuing his own personal ambitions not only increases our knowledge of the intricacies of early modern Spanish political and social culture, but enhances our understanding of early modern trajectories of power.

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