Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century: Slaves and Freedmen

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IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY Negro, Moorish, and Morisco slaves[1] made up a sizable and conspicuous part of the population of Seville, a town that became, as a result of the opening of the New World, the most famous and important city in Spain.[2] Throughout the century slaves abounded among the crowds that filled the streets of that teeming metropolis, ''new Babylonia'' as it was called by the literary figures of the period.[3] They could be found in all the focal points of the city—along the wharves, in the *Arenal* (a promenade along the riverside where Sevillians liked to meet), and in the public squares and marketplaces. To many contemporaries the presence in Seville of so many slaves did much to create the cosmopolitan atmosphere for which the city was well known. Some observers went so far as to claim that there were almost

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[1] People usually referred to Moorish and Morisco slaves as *esclavos blancos.* The Moors were most often North African prisoners of war; the Moriscos came from Granada. A large free Morisco population, primarily native Moslems who had been converted to Christianity in the first years of the sixteenth century, also lived in Seville. In addition, many other Moriscos migrated into the city from other parts of Andalucía during the course of the century, especially in the years following the Alpujarras Rebellion, 1568-1570. By the end of the sixteenth century, the flow of Moriscos had increased to such a degree that city authorities believed that there was a greater possibility of a full-scale Morisco rebellion in Seville than in any other area. See Jaime Vicens Vives (ed.), *Historia social y económica de España y América* (Barcelona, 1958), III, 140; Celestino López Martínez, *Mudéjares y Moriscos sevillanos* (Seville, 1935), 53; and Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *Orto y ocaso de Sevilla* (Seville, 1945), 57-58.

[2] The discovery of America, more than anything else, transformed Seville from a provincial Andalusian port city into a prosperous international metropolis. ''Was not Seville and all Andalucía before this event the furthest point and the end of all land, and now it is the middle to which come the best and most esteemed of the Old World . . . to be carried to the New World.'' Fray Tomás de Mercado, *Summa de tratos y contratos* (Seville, 1587), A2.

[3] Luis Vélez de Guevara y Dueñas, *El diablo cojuelo* (Madrid, 1951), 144. Seville's population increased from 49,395 in 1530 to 90,000 in 1594, making it the largest city in Spain. Ramón Carande Thobar, *Carlos V y sus banqueros* (Madrid, 1943), 387.

as many Negro and Moorish slaves as free citizens; others compared the city to a giant chessboard containing an equal number of white and black chessmen.[4]

While contemporary writers often exaggerated the size of the unfree population of Seville, there is no doubt that in the sixteenth century it harbored the largest slave community in Spain. We can never know their exact numbers throughout the century, but we do have fairly satisfactory statistics from a census taken by church officials in 1565. In that year Seville had 6,327 slaves, out of a total population of 85,538 people, that is, one slave for every fourteen inhabitants.[5] Although this account does not tell us what proportion of these slaves were Negroes, Moors, or Moriscos, other sources lead us to believe that Negroes outnumbered the other two groups, especially in the second half of the century.[6] The majority of slaves in Seville, therefore, would appear to have been Negroes.

Sixteenth-century Sevillians found nothing new or unusual about the existence of these numerous slaves in their city. Negro slavery had been a part of its life for many centuries. We do not know when the first Africans were introduced into Seville after its reconquest from the Moslems in 1248, but the chroniclers tell us that by the end of the fourteenth century many Negro slaves had been brought there by merchants engaged in the trans-Saharian trade. During this period the municipal authorities tried to ease the rigors of servile life by allowing the Negroes certain privileges, such as the right to gather together on feast days and perform their own dances and songs. Eventually it became customary for one of them to be named by city officials as *mayoral* (steward) over the rest, with authority to protect them against their masters, defend them before the courts of law, and settle their quarrels.[7] In a similar manner the Church, although primarily interested in conversion, also tried to ameliorate the physical conditions of slavery. During the last years of the fourteenth century the Church expressed its charitable intentions by establishing the Hospital of Our Lady of the Angels in the parish of San

[4] Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, "La esclavitud en Castilla durante la Edad Moderna," *Estudios de historia social de España*, II (1952), 377-378.

[5] Justino Matute y Gaviria, *Noticias relativas a la historia de Sevilla* (Seville, 1886), 51. In comparison, Lisbon had some 10,000 slaves out of a population of 100,000 in 1552. João Lúcio de Azevedo, *Épocas de Portugal econômico* (Lisbon, 1929), 75.

[6] The deeds of purchase and sale involving slaves among the Sevillian Protocols give ample proof of this statement.

[7] Diego Ortiz de Zúñiga, *Anales eclesiásticos y seculares de la muy leal ciudad de Sevilla, metrópole de la Andalucía* (Madrid, 1796), III, 78. On the trans-Saharian trade in slaves see Antonio Rumeu de Armas, *España en el África Atlántica* (Madrid, 1956), I, 163-166.

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Bernardo to serve the Negro population. A short time later the Church made a further gesture toward incorporating Negroes into the spiritual fold by creating a Negro religious confraternity to run this hospital. In subsequent years many wealthy Sevillians helped to maintain Our Lady of the Angels; a notable donor was the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who at his death in 1463 left one thousand maravedís for the poor of this institution.[8]

The duke's donation to the hospital of Our Lady of the Angels came at a time when Seville had already begun to feel the effects of the opening of West Africa by the Portuguese. Greater numbers of Negro slaves were coming into the river port, as Andalusian shipowners, including members of the highest nobility, competed with the Portuguese in organizing raiding expeditions on the West African coast. It was not until 1479 that the Spaniards finally recognized the Portuguese monopoly, and even then they did so reluctantly. Throughout the second half of the fifteenth century, Negroes were brought directly into the ports of southern Spain by Spanish shippers. Others were transported overland from Lisbon by Spanish and Portuguese merchants, a practice which accounts for the presence of Negro slaves in such frontier towns as Huelva, Badajoz, and Jerez de los Caballeros.[9] By the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Negro population of Seville had grown so large that the Catholic Kings decided to place them under greater royal supervision and control. In 1475 they appointed Juan de Valladolid, a royal servant, who was known popularly as the "Negro count," *mayoral* of the Seville Negro community.[10]

After the discovery of the New World the constant demand for a source of cheap labor to work the mines and plantations of America increased the flow of Negroes into Seville during the sixteenth century. The city soon became one of the most important slave centers in Western Europe, second only to Lisbon. In fact the first Negro slaves introduced into the New World came from Seville, and some of them had been born in that city.[11] During the first decades of

[8] José Bermejo y Carballo, *Glorias religiosas de Sevilla* (Seville, 1882), 381. The exact date of the construction of the Hospital of Our Lady of the Angels is not known, but it occurred during the period in which Gonzalo de Mena was Archbishop of Seville, 1393-1401.

[9] Rumeu de Armas, *España en el África,* 123-128, 149-154; Domínguez Ortiz, "La esclavitud en Castilla," 372.

[10] The royal decree dated November 8, 1475 announcing this appointment can be found in the Municipal Archive of Seville (hereafter cited as AMS), Tumbo de los Reyes Católicos, I, fol. 197 ff. It is also mentioned in Ortiz de Zúñiga, *Anales,* III, 78.

[11] Salvador Brau, *La colonización de Puerto Rico* (San Juan, 1930), 87.

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the sixteenth century, the Spanish monarchs, anxious to keep the colonies free from religious taint, insisted that the slaves sent to America be Christians—i.e., that they should have been born in Spain or have resided there long enough to be baptized. In 1510, for example, King Ferdinand gave permission to ship as many as two hundred slaves from Seville for sale to the settlers of Hispaniola or for work on the royal properties there.[12] Eventually slaves were shipped directly from Africa to America, though they continued to come to Seville, as well.[13] Throughout the century, merchants, sea captains, and others brought slaves to the Sevillian market located in the heart of the business district.[14] Here slaves were bought and sold amidst the noise and bustle of street vendors hawking their wares and future conquistadores recruiting men for their New World expeditions.[15] Apparently they were not exhibited and sold at the block as was the custom elsewhere. Instead a group of slaves and their owner would go about the streets accompanied by an auctioneer who called out to onlookers offering them for sale. According to Cervantes in *El trato de Argel,* Christian slaves were sold in this same manner in Morocco.[16]

The range of slave prices was wide and depended on the age, sex, and physical condition of the slave. An able-bodied slave brought a high market price, the average price being slightly lower. The lowest price would be for children, because of the element of risk and the expense of rearing them to a profit-bearing age. We can estimate some approximate average prices on the basis of figures taken from the numerous deeds of purchase and sale among the Sevillian Protocols. During the first decade of the sixteenth century, the average price paid for a slave in Seville was about twenty ducats; in the second and third decades of the century prices fluctuated

[12] Clarence H. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America* (New York, 1947), 219.

[13] Ship captains reported to officials of the Casa de Contratación on their return to Seville instead of on their outward voyage. This permitted direct transport from Africa to America while at the same time the captains complied with the regulation that all slaves had to be registered at the Casa de Contratación. Georges Scelle, *La traite négrière aux Indes de Castille* (Paris, 1906), I, 142; Elena F. Scheuss de Studer, *La trata de los negros en el Río de la Plata durante el siglo XVIII* (Buenos Aires, 1958), 52.

[14] Antonio María Fabié y Escudero (ed. and trans.), *Viajes por España de Jorge de Einghen, del barón de Rosmithal de Blatna, de Francisco Guicciardini y de Andrés Navajero* (Madrid, 1879), 382.

[15] Alonso de Morgado, *Historia de Sevilla,* reprinted by the Sociedad del Archivo Hispalense (Seville, 1887), 167. Both the recruitment of men for the various expeditions and the contracts between merchants and New World captains took place here. Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, *Historia general y natural de las Indias* in *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles,* CXVIII (Madrid, 1959), 400.

[16] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *El trato de Argel* in *Comedias y entremeses* (Madrid, 1920), V, 229.

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between thirty or forty ducats.[17] At mid-century a prospective buyer would have to pay from eighty to ninety ducats for an adult slave and by the last quarter of the century, a hundred ducats or more. Prices of slaves rose steadily during the course of the century, for like other commodities they were caught in the great inflationary wave that overwhelmed all Spain during this period.

Though the branding of slaves was a common practice, this cruel custom was not applied to all, nor was it considered an absolute necessity. We have many examples of unbranded slaves during this period. Some people branded their slaves as a kind of insurance. John Brooks points out that the branding of Carrizales' slaves in Cervantes' *Celoso extremeño* "may be considered significant of his character and plans."[18] Moreover, branding was specifically used as a punishment for refractory and runaway slaves. Carrizales branded his four "white slaves" but did not apply this same treatment to his two Negro slaves, perhaps because contemporary opinion held that Moorish and Morisco slaves were deceitful and potential runaways, while Negroes were trustworthy and loyal to their masters.[19] When they did occur, brands were not uniform in shape or location. The most frequent brand consisted of an S and a line (*clavo*), standing for *esclavo,* on one cheek and the owner's initial or mark on the other.[20] But several other kinds were also in use. In 1500, for example, we have mention of a slave branded with a fleur-de-lis on one cheek and a star on the other. In another instance, a slave bore the full name of his owner on his face.[21]

Most of the slaves branded and sold in Seville were destined for domestic service in the city's households. Slaves were employed in

[17] In 1528 an inventory of property belonging to the Marquis of Priego placed the value of twenty-one slaves at 294,350 maravedís or 14,000 maravedís (37 ducats apiece); J. Paz, *Serie de documentos . . . del Archivo de Medinaceli,* I, no. CXXXIV, as quoted in Domínguez Ortiz, "La esclavitud en Castilla," 399.

[18] John Brooks, "Slavery and the Slave in the Works of Lope de Vega," *Romanic Review,* XIX (1928), 234-235.

[19] Cristóbal Suárez de Figueroa, *Plaza universal de todas ciencias y artes* (Perpignan, 1629), fol. 321v.

[20] Fray Pedro de Vega, *Declaración de los siete salmos penitenciales (1606),* salmo V, vers. 19, disc. 2, as quoted in Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *El rufián viudo* in *Comedias y entremeses* (Madrid, 1918), IV, 185.

[21] The slave's face bore the following inscription: "Francisco de Aranda en Sevilla 29 de mayo de 1539." Archivo de Protocolos in Seville (hereafter cited as APS) May 29, 1539, Oficio I, Libro I Manuel Segura, fol. 881. For the slave with the fleur-de-lis and the star, APS, September 5, 1500, Oficio IV, Libro II, Francisco Segura, fol. Al principio del legajo. Both documents are also cited in José Gestoso y Pérez, *Curiosidades antiguas sevillanas,* serie segunda (Seville, 1910), 86, 89.

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the kitchen, laundry room, and stable.[22] They served as doorkeepers, as nursemaids for children, as attendants of adults, as valets, porters, and waiters. Contemporary literature tells us that an especially desirable accomplishment of the female slave was the ability to make fruit preserves and jellies.[23] Since scientific treatises of the day taught that water taken by itself was harmful, orange flower, quince, peach, pear, and cherry preserves were kept on hand and offered to visitors, together with iced water.[24] The master usually took some male slaves with him on his daily activities, perhaps as an escort on foot if he was riding. Merchants like the one portrayed by Cervantes in *El coloquio de los perros* usually went to the Exchange followed by a Negro servant.[25] Slaves also did odd jobs in connection with their master's business. Such was the case of Juan Fernández, a mulatto slave belonging to the inspector of weights and measures in the municipal meatmarket. When Fernández was called upon to testify in a lawsuit involving his master in 1598, he stated that "he always accompanied his master on his daily round of business, and that on the day in question he had delivered, on his masters orders, a special luncheon to several members of the city council."[26]

Another especially desirable quality in a slave was the ability to sing, play, and dance, as music and dancing were popular pastimes during the period. Negroes showed particular fondness and aptitude for both music and dance and were often in great demand as entertainers at private parties and public celebrations. Loaysa in Cervantes' *Celoso extremeño* noted that three of his Negro pupils, all of them slaves of wealthy aldermen, played and sang well enough to perform in any dance or tavern.[27] Moreover, Negroes were among the most accomplished interpreters of the numerous popular dances of the day, including the two favorites, the Zarabanda and the Chacona. Several of these dances—the Guineo, Ye-Ye, and Zarambeque or Zumbé—had a distinctly African flavor and were probably introduced into Spain by Negro slaves.[28]

[22] Brooks, "Slavery in Lope de Vega," 235; Félix Lope de Vega Carpio, *Servir á señor discreto* in *Obras de Lope de Vega* (Madrid, 1913), XV, Act I, 573: "Vete á jabonar, mulata."

[23] Félix Lope de Vega Carpio, *La Dorotea* (Madrid, 1955), Act I, scene i, 124: ". . . y le daría más: dos esclavas mulatas, conserveras y laboreras. . . ."

[24] Brooks, "Slavery in Lope de Vega," 240-241.

[25] Alonso de Castillo Solórzano, *La niña de los embustes—Teresa de Manzanares* (Madrid, 1929), 214: "No tenía coche, sino andaba en un macho regalado, acompañándole dos negros."

[26] Francisco de Ariño, *Sucesos de Sevilla de 1592 á 1604* (Seville, 1879), 348.

[27] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *El celoso extremeño* in *Novelas ejemplares* (Madrid, 1957), II, 112.

[28] For a discussion of these dances see Emilio Cotarelo y Mori, *Colección de*

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In the wealthier homes of the city slaves were considered a necessity—part of the conspicuous consumption of the period that called for long entourages of servants and for coaches, costly wearing apparel, and ornate home decoration. Nevertheless, the ownership of slaves in Seville was not confined to the wealthy classes—nobility and rich merchants—but widely distributed among all levels of the population. The deeds of purchase and sale among the Sevillian Protocols clearly show that artisans of various occupations, professional people such as physicians, lawyers, apothecaries, clergymen, and even religious orders owned household slaves. Indeed almost every family of some means had two or more of them.[29]

Treatment of domestic slaves varied, depending greatly on the character of the owner, though in general their position did not differ substantially from that of the free servants. There is even some evidence that in Spain slaves received better treatment than free servants.[30] Many slaves were closely bound to their masters and had their full confidence. Female slaves were particularly close to their mistresses; in the plays of Lope de Vega they are usually portrayed as their confidantes and go-betweens in their love affairs.[31] The religious life of the slave was of great concern to the owner. Much care was taken to see that slaves performed their religious duties and that children of domestic slaves were duly baptized. Godparents, sometimes prestigious ones, were provided for slave children. As members of the Christian community, slaves were buried in their parish churches and in some instances in family vaults. It was also customary to have requiem masses said for them at the expense of their former owners.[32] On the other hand, like free servants, slaves who committed misdemeanors were often whipped. More serious offenses could bring a form of punishment known as *pringar* or *lardear*—the dropping of pork fat, melted by a large taper, or the wax of the taper itself on the naked skin. Cervantes indicates that this was the regular punishment for fugitive slaves, but it was also

Entremeses, Loas, Bailes, Jácaras y Mojigangas desde fines del siglo XVI á mediados del XVIII in *Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles* (Madrid, 1911), XVII, ccxxxiii-cclxxiii.

[29] Manuel Chaves, *Cosas nuevas y viejas* (Seville, 1903), 36.

[30] Jean Bodin, *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), Book I, ch. v, 44. He condemned the Spaniards for branding their slaves, however.

[31] Elvira in Lope de Vega's *Servir á señor discreto* and Esperanza in *Amar, servir y esperar* in *Obras de Lope de Vega* (Madrid, 1917), III.

[32] Juan de Mata Carriazo, "Negros, esclavos y extranjeros en el barrio sevillano de San Bernardo," *Archivo hispalense,* XX (1954), 130-132. For the baptismal certificates of slaves belonging to Sevillian printers see Joaquín Hazañas y la Rúa, *La imprenta en Sevilla* (2 vols., Seville, 1945-1949).

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used on household servants as a means of exacting information from them.[33] Another more drastic method of dealing with incorrigible slaves was to "sell them overseas," i.e., to the Spanish colonies, or to donate them to the crown to be used as galley slaves. There were even some masters who chose to free slaves who proved to be rebellious and troublesome; in other words, they turned them out to starve.[34] Delinquent slaves seem to have been the exception, however, and individual acts of violence committed by slaves against their masters were infrequent.[35]

Although most slaves were well behaved, the existence of a large servile population created security problems for the municipal government. The city fathers feared that the urban slaves, led by the Moriscos, might band together and seize the town, and the official uneasiness on this score found expression in a series of municipal ordinances restricting the movements of slaves.[36] Slaves were prohibited, for example, from carrying arms except in the company of their masters or in the performance of their regular duties. The government also placed severe limitations on the number of slaves permitted to assemble at any given time in public places such as taverns, inns, and cheap restaurants.[37] City officials expressed concern about the gangs of slaves who frequented the Sevillian taverns both day and night, and who often became intoxicated and disorderly. A tavern brawl or any disturbance involving slaves was considered especially dangerous to public order. Furthermore, many taverns served as meeting places for members of the city's underworld who were quick to take advantage of slaves. Unscrupulous tavern owners in league with criminal elements encouraged slaves to steal in order to repay debts and later resold the booty for their own profit.[38]

Municipal legislation curtailing the actions of slaves may have served to reassure the city fathers, but these regulations like so many other municipal ordinances were difficult to enforce. Effective policing of Seville was nearly impossible, for the city, overflowing with

[33] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *La Gitanilla* in *Novelas ejemplares* (Madrid, 1952), I, 65: ". . . que me lardeen como un negro fugitivo." A white servant named Beltrán is given this same treatment in Lope de Vega's *El acero de Madrid* in *Obras escogidas* (Madrid, 1952), I, Act III, scene ix, 992.

[34] Domínguez Ortiz, "La esclavitud en Castilla," 389.

[35] *Ibid.* There are very few such incidents recorded in the chronicles and documents of the period.

[36] No such uprising ever took place, but the Moriscos attempted to organize a conspiracy in 1580. The plot was discovered, however, and the leaders were apprehended and punished. Stricter police regulations for the Morisco population resulted from this event. See López Martínez, *Mudéjares y moriscos*, 54-55.

[37] AMS, Carpeta 24, no. 194; Chaves, *Cosas*, 37.

[38] López Martínez, *Mudéjares y moriscos*, 53.

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wealth, vice, and poverty, presented the most favorable conditions for the shelter and protection of criminals. In the words of Cervantes, Seville was "the refuge of the outcast."[39] Criminals could usually escape the law by simply moving from one district to another, or even by fleeing to the Indies. Law officials and criminals often worked together—too many police officers were like Cervantes' "constable in charge of vagabonds" who, according to Monipodio, the thieves' chieftain, "was a friend and never came to do us harm."[40] Thieves' jargon (germanía) was used in common speech throughout the city, and everyone went about armed for protection. Even small boys imitated their elders, carrying small swords at their sides.[41] Faced with so many disorderly and criminal elements the city government was hard put to maintain public order.

The presence of large numbers of slaves must have exacerbated the serious problem of policing the city. The municipal authorities had the power to curb the activities of slaves when public security was involved, but they could not interfere in the relationship between masters and slaves or in any way reduce the authority of owners. Slaveholders could be as arbitrary as they pleased with their property, while slaves, on the other hand, were subordinate to their masters' will. The owner could free his slaves whenever he was inclined to do so, but he usually did this by inserting a provision in his will.[42] Manumission by will had advantages, for the master retained the services of the slaves as long as he needed them; the prospect of freedom encouraged good conduct on the part of the slave; and the slaveholder could depart this life with a freer conscience. Sometimes wills included trust provisions directing the slaveholder's heir to free a particular slave or slaves at his own death or after a given number of years of service. That such an arrangement could lead to difficulties, can be seen in the case of Ana, a mulatto slave belonging to the Sevillian aristocrat, Juan de Pineda. When Pineda died in 1526, he willed Ana to his grandson Pedro, with the proviso that she receive her freedom after ten years of service. Two years later Pedro died suddenly. Like his grandfather, he chose not to free Ana, but to include a trust provision for her in his will. Accordingly she was

[39] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Coloquio de los perros* in *Novelas ejemplares* (Madrid, 1957), II, 235.

[40] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Rinconete y cortadillo* in *Novelas ejemplares* (Madrid, 1952), I, 175.

[41] Luis de Peraza, "Historia de la imperial ciudad de Sevilla," as quoted in Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Rinconete y cortadillo* (Madrid, 1920), 70.

[42] The following conclusions are based on a study of wills and property inventories from the Sevillian Protocols. See also Hazañas for published testaments of Sevillian printers.

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required to spend eight more years of servitude with Pedro's uncle (also named Juan de Pineda). Finally in 1537 Ana received her freedom, and one year later she emigrated to America.[43]

On the other hand, it was not always necessary for slaves to wait until the death of their owner, for they often received their freedom in return for special services, for money payments, or for both. In 1580, for example, Diego Bello, a Seville resident who had just returned home from a trip to Peru, freed his slave Tomé because of "the services that the said slave had rendered him, especially on the voyage from Peru, in addition to the payment of 100 pesos."[44] The enfranchisement of slave children was a particularly frequent occurrence. There were even some slave owners who because of special circumstances freed the unborn children of slaves. The priest Álvaro de Castro acted in this manner in 1526 when on the eve of his departure for Cuba he freed the yet unborn child of his slave Catalina as compensation for her separation from her husband Antonio, also a slave of the priest, who had to remain in Seville.[45]

Besides domestic slavery there existed in Seville (as well as in the rest of Andalucía) the systematic exploitation of slave labor for profit. Many Sevillians considered the ownership of slaves an excellent capital investment and a profitable source of income. Some people were totally dependent on the earnings of their slaves, for they had no other way of obtaining a living.[46] The use of slaves to earn money for their owners added another class of laborers to the city's large unskilled working force. They were a common sight on the Seville waterfront, where they worked as stevedores. Many could be found performing menial tasks in the famous soap factories or in the public granary.[47] Others earned a living as porters, street vendors, and bearers of sedan chairs. There is also some evidence that they served as *corchetes* (constables), a rather unpopular calling in sixteenth-century Seville.[48]

Though the Negro slaves worked at many occupations, the city's guilds refused to admit them. On the other hand, there were no

[43] On March 16, 1538 Ana registered at the Casa de Contratación as a passenger to New Spain. *Catálogo de pasajeros a Indias durante los siglos XVI, XVII y XVIII* (Seville, 1942), II, no. 4724, 282 (hereafter cited as CPI).

[44] APS, October 22, 1580, Oficio VIII, Libro IV, Alonso de Cívico, fol. Principio del legajo.

[45] *Ibid.*, January 13, 1526, Oficio V, Libro I, Francisco de Castellanos, fol. 111.

[46] Domínguez Ortiz, "La esclavitud en Castilla," 401.

[47] AMS, Escribanía del Cabildo, siglo XVI, tomo 4, no. 45. For slaves in the Sevillian soap factories see Morgado, *Historia de Sevilla*, 156.

[48] William E. Wilson, "Some Notes on Slavery During the Golden Age," *Hispanic Review*, VII (1939), 173.

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restrictions against their employment by master craftsmen in their shops.[49] We know that Negroes, both slave and free, were employed in many Sevillian printing shops, and that other craftsmen purchased slaves for use in their establishments.[50] Moreover the Sevillian Protocols indicate that they were used in the trade between Seville and the New World. Several interesting examples of Negro slaves employed as business agents in America emerge from these documents. As early as 1502, a Sevillian merchant, Juan de Córdoba, sent his Negro slave and two other agents to sell merchandise for him on the island of Hispaniola. Seven years later Juan de Zafra, a Negro slave, was commissioned by his master, the well-known Sevillian physician Dr. Álvarez Chanca, to sell goods in the New World. Zafra remained in America for several years, and at his death in 1515 he was still performing the duties of a commission agent for his master. Most famous of all the Negro traders in America was Pedro Franco, who was freed by his master Franco Leardo, a wealthy and prominent Genoese merchant of Seville, just a few months before he left for America.[51] Leardo gave him three hundred ducats and sent him to Panama as his agent, most probably under the usual four-year partnership contract (*compañía*).[52] Besides Leardo several other Sevillians entrusted him with merchandise to be sold in the New World. Unfortunately Pedro Franco was not able to live up to the terms of his contract with Leardo, for he died within a year after his arrival on the Isthmus. In his last will and testament he left all of his property to his former master.[53]

Slaves who worked at outside jobs to support themselves and

[49] Domínguez Ortiz, "La esclavitud en Castilla," 386. "Colored people," Moriscos, and descendants of Jews were ineligible for membership in the guilds.

[50] *Ibid.;* APS, June 23, 1513, Oficio IV, Libro II, Manuel Segura, fol. carece "Indias"; APS, November 8, 1525. See also José Gestoso y Pérez, *Ensayo de un diccionario de los artífices que florecieron en Sevilla desde el siglo XIII al XVII inclusive* (3 vols., Seville, 1899-1901).

[51] For Pedro Franco, APS, April 26, 1515, Oficio IV, Libro II, Manuel Segura, fol. 676v; for Juan de Zafra, *ibid.*, April 16, 1509, Oficio IV, Libro II, Manuel Segura, fol. 1060; for the Negro slave of Juan de Córdoba, *ibid.*, January 8, 1502, Oficio IV, Libro I, Francisco Segura, fol. Principio del legajo.

[52] CPI, I, no. 5, 78, September 13, 1538. The commercial partnership or *compañía* used in the sixteenth-century trade between Spain and the New World was in its simplest form an association between two individuals in which one party furnished the capital and remained at home while the other carried the investment to its destination. Since the traveling associate contributed only his services, he received a percentage of the profits—usually one-fourth. When "all invested both money and labor," the profits were divided. Mercado, *Summa*, ch. ix.

[53] Enrique Otte, "Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y los genoveses," *Revista de Indias*, XXII (1962), 519; APS, April 29, 1540, Libro único, Alonso de Cazalla, fol. 994.

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their owners usually did not reside in their masters' homes. Although they could be found scattered throughout the poorer sections of Seville, their traditional quarter was the parish of San Bernardo, located outside the city walls in a swampy region dominated by a foul-smelling stream called the Tagarete. This was a poor parish inhabited by working people—gardeners employed in the nearby Alcázar, employees of the municipal slaughterhouse, and bakers who worked in the many baking establishments in the district.[54] It was also a high crime area and one known for its numerous ruffians and bullies, many of whom occasionally worked at odd jobs in the slaughterhouse.[55]

By the last quarter of the century the population of San Bernardo had increased so greatly that Church and municipal authorities decided to divide San Bernardo and to create a new parish, that of San Roque. The chapel of the Hospital of Our Lady of the Angels was chosen to serve as a temporary parish church for San Roque, and, maintained by the Negro religious confraternity, it remained the center of the district's religious life until the completion of the church of San Roque in 1585. Nine years later the confraternity purchased three lots opposite the new church and built a chapel that they occupied in the last years of the century.[56]

In addition to the parishes of San Bernardo and San Roque there were several other Sevillian barrios especially noted for their numerous Negro, Moorish, and Morisco residents. Many Moors and Moriscos, both slaves and freedmen, lived in Triana (the favored quarter of the seafaring population of Seville) and in the outskirts of that district. In 1580 sailors from the Sicilian fleet, which had anchored in the Guadalquivir off Triana, invaded the quarter, attacking the Moriscos and carrying many of them off as galley slaves.[57] The Sevillian authorities, angered and shocked by this incident, and fearful of its consequences for public order, ordered the immediate freeing of the Moriscos and the restoration of their property. Fur-

[54] Carriazo, "Negros," 123. The Alcázar of Seville was built by Pedro I of Castile (1350-69) as a royal residence.

[55] In the *Coloquio de los perros* Berganza tells Cipión that "he may assume that all those who work there [the slaughterhouse] from the lowest to the highest, are persons of elastic conscience, cruel, fearing neither man nor devil. . . . Rarely does a day go by without fights and wounds, and at times, deaths. They all pride themselves on being tough and having a touch of the ruffian. . . ." Cervantes, *Coloquio de los perros*, 217-218.

[56] On December 12, 1604 the alderman Juan de Vargas Sotomayor sold the confraternity three lots opposite the church of San Roque. Bermejo y Carballo, *Glorias*, 383, 385.

[57] This incident is described in López Martínez, *Mudéjares y moriscos*, 64-66. The Triana quarter lay across the Guadalquivir River and outside the walls of the city; a wooden pontoon bridge connected it to the metropolis.

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thermore, they wrote a detailed account of this episode to Philip II, who eventually directed the commander of the fleet to comply with the orders of the Seville city council.

Like Triana the parish of San Ildefonso also contained a sizable population of slaves and freedmen. During the second half of the sixteenth century there were enough mulattoes there to justify the creation of a religious confraternity. The confraternity maintained its own chapel in the parish church of San Ildefonso with a private entrance through a back door that opened into a small side street, called appropriately the ''Street of Mulattoes.''[58] Contemporary literature also tells us that the plaza in front of the church of Santa María la Blanca was a favorite meeting place for Sevillian Negroes.[59] Some of them must have lived in the neighborhood, although no evidence of their residence there has survived.

Among the Negroes who assembled in the Plaza de Santa María la Blanca were many freedmen and women. Although most Sevillian Negroes were slaves, the city also contained a significant free Negro population. Enfranchisement was not a step toward economic and social betterment, however, for Negroes and mulattoes remained on the lowest rungs of the social ladder, whether slaves or freedmen. Ex-slaves continued to work in unskilled and menial jobs and to reside in the same neighborhoods as before their emancipation. A combination of discrimination and unfavorable economic conditions prevented freedmen from rising in society. The artisans feared Negro competition and jealously excluded them from the few skilled positions which the inadequate Sevillian industry afforded. Even unskilled jobs were at a premium in Seville because of the steady flow of landless peasants from the countryside into the town. The streets of Seville were soon overrun with beggars, vagabonds, and unemployed, many of whom found no other solution than to join the Sevillian underworld.[60] Chronic unemployment and severe food shortages were the realities of life for the majority of Sevillians throughout the sixteenth century. Popular discontent and lack of bread led to several riots during the period, the most important being the uprising of the Feria district in 1521.[61]

[58] This street disappeared with the destruction of the church of San Ildefonso in 1794. Bermejo y Carballo, *Glorias,* 179.

[59] For the description of such a gathering see ''El entremés de los mirones'' in Cotarelo y Mori, *Colección de entremeses,* 162.

[60] Luis Zapata, ''Miscelánea,'' in *Memorial histórico español* (Madrid, 1859), XI, 49.

[61] In 1521 the residents of the impoverished Feria district seized a quantity of arms from the Duke of Medina Sidonia's palace. Taking as their standard a green Moorish banner that had been preserved in their parish church of Omnium

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Competition for jobs strained relations between freedmen and the white Sevillian laborers. The whites showed their contempt for Negroes with the customary sidewalk jeer (*estornudo*).[62] On the individual level, however, Negroes and whites mixed freely, and contacts were friendly. Miscegenation and common-law unions were frequent. Many Sevillians, including members of the clergy, maintained illicit relations with female household slaves, and in some instances recognized their illegitimate children. Among the servant class miscegenation was common practice, and mixed marriages were not unknown.[63]

Although Negro freedmen and slaves lived on the fringe of Sevillian life socially and economically, they enjoyed full membership in the Church. True religious conversion among newly baptized Negroes was unusual, but by the second generation many had become sincere and pious Christians. The very willingness of Negroes to become Christians and to remain faithful to their new religion facilitated their popular acceptance. In addition, their incorporation into the social and ritual activities of the Church accelerated the process of their hispanization. Through their parish churches and their confraternities slaves and freedmen took part in all the city-wide religious celebrations of the period. The Negro and mulatto brotherhoods marched in full regalia in the many religious processions, including those of Holy Week. On one such occasion, the dress and the insignias of the Negro brotherhood were so elaborate and costly as to draw censure from the clergy.[64] In another instance, according to the chronicler Ortiz de Zúñiga, a member of the Negro confraternity sold himself as a slave in order to cover the high cost of his group's participation in a religious festival.[65] Negro performers also took part in the *autos* connected with the festival of Corpus Christi. In 1590 the city government paid eight ducats to Leonor Rija, a mulatto, to appear on a float in the Corpus Christi celebration and

Sanctorum, they ran riot through the city. After three days of continuous pillage, violence, and disorder, they were finally put down by the armed nobility. See Ortiz de Zúñiga, *Anales*, III, 325-326.

[62] Lope de Vega referred to this custom in his *Servir a señor discreto*, Act II, scene iii, 587. See also Francisco Gómez de Quevedo y Villegas, *Boda de Negros* in *Obras completas* (Madrid, 1952), 379.

[63] Conclusions in this paragraph are based on a study of wills, deeds of purchase and sale, and letters of enfranchisement among the Sevillian Protocols. See also the statements of Negro and mulatto passengers to the New World in CPI, I-III.

[64] Bermejo y Carballo, *Glorias*, 386.

[65] Ortiz de Zúñiga as quoted in Domínguez Ortiz, ''La esclavitud en Castilla,'' 394.

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to sing, dance, and play the guitar together with four other mulatto women and two men.[66]

If it was difficult for freedmen to improve their status in Seville, they might seize the opportunity to emigrate to the New World. The registers of the Casa de Contratación indicate that many Negro freedmen crossed the ocean to America during the sixteenth century.[67] Most of these emigrants were single men and women, but we can also find instances of women with young children and of family groups. A good example was the Bonilla family—husband, wife, and two children—who signed up at the Casa de Contratación in 1515. Many freedmen accompanied their former masters to the New World as servants. In 1538, for instance, the freedman Bernardo declared that he was traveling to Florida as a valet of his ex-master Captain Pedro Calderón. A year later another freedman by the name of Domingo went to Peru with his former owner the adventurer Lope de Aguirre, whose later exploits in the Amazon region won him the unfortunate epithet of "the tyrant." Many newly freed women came to America as ladies' maids or as members of the large and varied entourages that customarily accompanied wealthy families emigrating to the colonies. Such was the position of Quiteria Gómez, a former slave, who with three other servants—one white male and two white females—traveled with the widow Francisca de Carrera and her seven children to Peru during 1555. Doña Francisca's two sisters made up the rest of the party, fourteen persons in all.[68]

On the other hand, not all the Negroes who crossed the Atlantic went westward. In the second half of the sixteenth century there was a countermigration of Negroes from the New World to Seville. Many Spaniards, having enriched themselves in America during the first decades of the sixteenth century, eventually returned home and took up residence in Seville, where they could maintain their contacts, usually commercial, with the Indies. These returning Spaniards, nicknamed "*indianos,*" invested their newly found wealth in elegant town houses, staffed with Negro slaves from the colonies. Don Álvaro in Castillo Solórzano's novel *La niña de los embustes—Teresa de Manzanares* was a typical *indiano* who, with 50,000 ducats obtained in Lima, two white servant boys, and four Negroes, established him-

[66] José Sánchez Arjona, *Anales del teatro en Sevilla* (Seville, 1898), 81.

[67] The Registers are incomplete and cannot be used for statistical purposes. They do, however, give us some idea of types and backgrounds among the Negro and mulatto passengers to America.

[68] CPI, III, no. 2538, 180, 1555; for the Bonillas, *ibid.*, I, no. 1997, 141, August 16, 1515; for Bernardo, *ibid.*, II, no. 4481, 267, February 27, 1538; for Domingo, *ibid.*, III, no. 163, 12, March 15, 1539.

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self in Seville, spending his days at the Casa de Contratación.[69] Creole slaves, as the Negroes from the colonies were called, also served in the homes of wealthy Sevillian merchants who were engaged in the trade with the Indies. The witty and attractive creole slave Elvira in Lope de Vega's *Servir a señor discreto* was the maid and confidante of Doña Leonor, the daughter of such a New World trader.[70] The charm and beauty of the creole slave women soon made them a solicited commodity in the Sevillian slave market, as can be seen from the numerous deeds of purchase and sale which appear among the Sevillian Protocols. In 1580, for example, Diego de la Sal, a Sevillian aristocrat who traded with the New World, purchased a "twenty year old creole slave named Isabel de García" from a returning Spaniard.[71] In time many of these creole slaves obtained their freedom either through purchase or the death of their owners, after which they sought to return to America. This accounts for the numerous references to them as passengers to the New World in the Casa registers during the last quarter of the sixteenth century.

Negro slaves and freedmen left many marks on Sevillian life of the sixteenth century. Whereas Moors and Moriscos remained on the fringes of Sevillian society, isolated and disliked by all, Negroes and mulattoes freely accepted Christianity and Spanish culture. As a result, they were eventually incorporated into the economic, social, and religious life of the city. When contemporary writers introduced Negro characters into their plays and novels, they only reflected the significant place that freedmen and slaves held in their society. The ethnic variety that characterized sixteenth-century Seville set it apart from other Spanish centers and increased its similarity to the cities of the New World. To this ethnic variety the Negro made a unique contribution.

[69] Castillo Solórzano, *La niña de los embustes*, 124.
[70] Lope de Vega, *Servir a señor discreto*, XV, 572.
[71] APS, January 4, 1580, Oficio, IX, Libro I, Pedro Almonacid, 353v.

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