



*Royal Sites as Core Element of Early
Modern Monarchies: Social
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Abstract: A great deal of research has been published on royal sites, although up until now studies have focused primarily on their artistic heritage. This article brings a more holistic approach to the study of these sites in order to reconsider their role in the construction of European identities in the early modern period, drawing mainly from the field of court studies. This article examines the social role played by royal sites in terms of integrating the population of the Castilian kingdom from the reign of Philip IV (1621-1665) onwards. During his rule the bonds between the royal possessions and the central court were tightened more than ever before, and, as a result, the material resources of these royal sites were used to provide those servants with retirement deals, creating a system of social welfare for those directly or indirectly related to the royal households and royal sites, especially at the middle and lower levels of society.

Keywords: Royal sites; Spanish monarchy; Seventeenth century; Castile

The significance of early modern European royal sites

Royal sites in Europe are more than just the curious residences of royal families who lived isolated from society, as writers and historians of the nineteenth century often portrayed them. Although some attention is paid to the tradition of the royal hunt and town planning in the many excellent studies of these buildings, the other spaces that developed around them, which were also crucial components of early modern royal sites, have so far been neglected.

It is first necessary to define the term “royal site,” taking all of its components into consideration.¹ In the early modern period, the term was applied to properties belonging to the ruling dynasty where the ruler and other members of the dynasty resided or occasionally stayed, or to other states associated with the running of the monarchy and the court. These sites included not only residences, but also forests, gardens, agricultural spaces, factories, and urban spaces. We should also include the royal monasteries and convents founded and/or supported by the royal family, so closely linked to the dynasty, to which a royal apartment or a dynastic funeral chamber was attached or where some members of the ruler’s family—usually female—could profess their vows. These spaces set new trends in art, fashion, and education, and constituted a diverse, global network that made royal power more visible and effective. At the same time, however, and perhaps more importantly, royal sites served as centres of power that helped shape early modern European monarchies, especially in the seventeenth century, when different monarchs used them to address challenges to their authority.

This function of royal sites can be viewed within the context of the late medieval and early modern discourses which gave form to and justified royal power. The tradition of the princely mirrors, which recovered and adapted to feudal traditions the classicist idea of the *Oeconomica*, the

¹ José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, “Los Sitios Reales como elementos clave de las monarquías europeas de la Edad Moderna: una aproximación,” *Studia Historica. Historia Moderna* 42, no. 2 (2020): 197–217.

doctrine of the rule over the household, from the late Middle Ages onwards, explains how kings were represented as *pater familias* who ruled over the monarchy like a father over his family, the royal household being the centre of their political power.² According to the *Oeconomica* doctrine, the royal family was not restricted to kings and their relatives, but also included the servants working in the royal households who belonged to the noble families loyal to the king. The king's family thus included members of the most important noble families, who in turn were organized as large "extended" families with wide ramifications at a local level. The power of the king as head of the royal family therefore extended across the monarchy and beyond his direct rule over the royal domains, encompassing political authority over the aristocratic families who had their own local networks within the monarchy. Central to the idea of the *Oeconomica* was the concept of virtue: as the head of a large household, the *pater familias* was not only responsible for providing materially for the household; rather, ruling over a family also implied moral authority, which was expressed primarily in a fair distribution of the economic benefits. On a wider scale, as the household was the centre of the political rule over the monarchy, these virtues, such as magnificence, were also expressed at a political level.³

The royal sites were the embodiment of this idea, and this explains why these complex spaces not only included the palaces and their gardens and hunting grounds, but also agricultural land, factories, and urban centres, all of which played a role in providing materially for the household. At the same time, the *Oeconomica* doctrine gave form to and justified not only the royal households, but also those of the heads of the other aristocratic families of the kingdom. The royal sites thus had to represent the authority of royal political and social power. This explains why their households were not only more splendid, but also why their organization was much more complex. In the first place, the royal household was not concentrated in one palace, but organized over a constellation of palaces which housed the royal family in different periods of the year. As the surrounding territories all had their particular characteristics, they also performed different functions in the economic and social organization, and eventually the material provision of the household. In addition, through this constellation the kings also expanded their direct political rule over wider territories. In the second place, the members of the royal dynasty likewise needed to distinguish themselves from the rest of the noble families, and this explains why they also organized their households on a major scale. Their palaces and surrounding territories formed part of the constellation of royal sites.

A great deal of research has been published on the Spanish constellation of royal sites (*Sitios Reales*), although previous studies have focused primarily on their artistic heritage.⁴ Recent works have

² Many studies on the *Oeconomica* have been published since the classic studies by Daniela Frigo, *Il Padre di famiglia. Governo della Casa e governo civile nella tradizione dell'economica tra Cinque e Seicento* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1985); Roberto Lambertini, "A proposito della costruzione dell'*Oeconomica* in Egidio Romano," *Medioevo. Rivista di storia della filosofia medievale* 14 (1988): 315–370; Cesare Mozzarelli, ed. "*Familia*" del principe e famiglia aristocratica (Rome: Bulzoni, 1988). A historiographic review in Hans Derks, "Über die Faszination des 'Ganzen Hauses,'" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 22 (1996): 221–242. Lastly, Guido Guerzoni, "'Familia,' 'corte,' 'casa.' The Este Case in Fifteenth-Sixteenth Century," in *La cour de Bourgogne et l'Europe. Le rayonnement et les limites d'un modèle culturel*, ed. Torsten Hiltmann, Werner Paravicini and Frank Viltart (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2013), 515–541.

³ The concept of magnificence as a virtue has recently been studied in depth in Gijs Versteegen, Stijn Bussels and Walter Melion, ed., *Magnificence in the Seventeenth Century: Performing Splendour in Catholic and Protestant Contexts* (Leiden: Brill, 2021).

⁴ See for example Fernando Checa Cremades and José Miguel Morán Turina, *Las Casas del Rey. Casas de Campo, Cazaderos y Jardines. Siglos XVI y XVII* (Madrid: Editorial El Viso, 1986), or José Luis Sancho Gaspar, *La arquitectura de los Sitios Reales: catálogo histórico de los palacios, jardines y patronatos reales del Patrimonio Nacional* (Madrid: Patrimonio Nacional and Fundación Tabacalera, 1995).

provided a more interdisciplinary analysis of these sites, which has helped identify the role of royal sites in the political, social, cultural, and economic development of the Spanish monarchy as a whole.⁵

This article examines the social role played by royal sites in terms of integrating the population of the Castilian kingdom from the reign of Philip IV onwards. During this period, the bonds between the royal possessions and the central court were tightened more than ever before, and this made it possible to use the material resources of these royal sites to provide those servants with retirement, creating a system of social welfare for those directly or indirectly related to the royal households and royal sites, especially at the middle and lower levels of society.

This work therefore brings a new approach to the study of royal sites, using the example of seventeenth-century Castile and drawing mainly from the field of court studies, which considers the court to be the main political system of this historical period and royal sites one of its core elements.⁶ Traditionally, the court was divided into three parts: the royal or princely households, the councils, and the courtiers. This paper argues that, at least in the case of the Spanish monarchy from the seventeenth century onwards, royal sites should be included as a fourth element within this system.

Royal sites of the Spanish monarchy from late Middle Ages to Philip III's reign: the significance of the Junta de Obras y Bosques

During the late Middle Ages, the ruling monarchs of the various kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula used, built, and refurbished buildings across their territories with the intention of turning them into places of residence both for themselves and for their peripatetic courts, establishing their ownership over these sites and making numerous improvements to them.⁷ The Reyes Católicos (Catholic Monarchs), for example, used these sites as a vehicle of expression for the new territorial entity that was emerging.⁸

From their reign onwards the main system of royal sites, later strengthened in the early modern Age, was linked to the buildings that constituted the preferential living spaces of the Castilian Trastámara dynasty, which reigned from 1369 to the period of Queen Joanna of Castile (r.1504–1555), between Segovia and Toledo. This system was passed on to the Spanish Habsburgs, and it remained in place throughout the early modern Age except for the period when Philip III decided to create a new system of royal sites based around Valladolid after he moved the capital to that city (1601–1606).⁹ This did not mean to say that the rest of the royal residences in other parts of the peninsula lost their status of royal sites. Indeed, some were used as viceroys'

⁵ See the relevant chapters in José Martínez Millán and José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, ed. *La Corte de Felipe IV (1621-65). Reconfiguración de la Monarquía Católica*. 4 vols. (Madrid: Polifemo, 2015), or some of the works compiled in Concepción Camarero Bullón and Félix Labrador Arroyo, ed. *La extensión de la corte: los Sitios Reales* (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2017).

⁶ José Eloy Hortal Muñoz and Gijs Versteegen, *Las ideas políticas y sociales en la Edad Moderna* (Madrid: Síntesis, 2016), especially Chapter One. For the most current research on the court, see Jeroen Duindam, "Rulers and Courts," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History, 1350-1750: Cultures and Power, Volume 2*, ed. Hamish Scott (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 440–477.

⁷ All the processes involved in this brief evolution and related historiography are covered in José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, "La integración de los Sitios Reales en el sistema de Corte durante el reinado de Felipe IV," *Libros de la Corte* 8 (2014): 27–47.

⁸ Numerous scholars have produced research on these sites in medieval times, such as Fernando Chueca Goitia, *Casas Reales en monasterios y conventos españoles* (Bilbao: Xarait Ediciones, 1982), and Miguel Ángel Castillo Oreja, ed., *Encuentros sobre patrimonio. Los alcázares reales* (Madrid: Fundación BBVA, 2001). In times of the Reyes Católicos, see Rafael Domínguez Casas, *Arte y etiqueta de los Reyes Católicos. Artistas, residencias, jardines y bosques* (Madrid: Alpuerto, 1993), 1–547.

⁹ Explained in depth in Javier Pérez Gil, *Los Reales Sitios vallisoletanos* (Valladolid: Universidad, 2016).

residences and others to control the territory—such as the royal sites of Andalusia, which included landmarks like the Alhambra of Granada, the Alcázares of Seville, and the Alcázares of Córdoba. An *alcaide*—a post of Muslim origin first regulated under Alfonso X the Wise (r.1252-1284)—was placed in charge of each of these residences.

Indeed, although Charles V (r.1515-1555) initiated some important projects—the construction of the palace bearing his name in the Alhambra, the refurbishment of El Pardo and the Alcázar in Seville, and so on—it was his son Philip II (r.1555-1598) who would become the first monarch to design a specific, organized plan for shaping the royal sites while still a prince. Consequently, as a number of art historians have shown,¹⁰ Philip oversaw the design of a system with three key objectives: the creation of the Junta de Obras y Bosques (Board of Works and Woodlands);¹¹ the appointment of a master architect, Juan Bautista de Toledo,¹² to lend unity of style to all royal construction projects; and an organized hierarchy of craftsmen that would follow a systematic set of instructions.¹³ As a result, in addition to ordering the construction of his *magnum opus*, the monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial, the “Prudent King” also bought the Casa de Campo and transformed it into a royal site and refurbished several existing buildings, turning them into veritable Renaissance palaces, such as Aranjuez, Valsain, and the *alcázares* of Toledo and Madrid, while continuing work on El Pardo.

Of all these decisions, the most significant was the creation of Junta de Obras y Bosques, the germ of which was Philip II’s establishment of the Secretariat of Obras y Bosques in 1545 when he was still prince. The Junta de Obras y Bosques was a committee set up for the management, maintenance, construction, and alterations/extensions of the various royal sites, as well as the protection and conservation of their “natural” surroundings. The Junta was therefore also a permanent committee with wide-ranging, exclusive powers, among them—unusually—regulatory; it enjoyed exclusive jurisdiction over certain territories and matters and its structure included a prosecutor.

Thanks to the core role that the Junta played in the system of royal sites, these royal geographies had a fundamental part in promoting princely splendour and tightening the Crown’s political grip on its Iberian territories due to its significance in shaping court space, especially when Philip II decided to establish the capital of the Spanish monarchy permanently in Madrid in 1561.¹⁴

What has not yet been explored, however, is the crucial role these sites played in the “Prudent King’s” confessionalization of the monarchy and the image of this process that he wished to promote

¹⁰ For example, Fernando Checa Cremades, “Felipe II y la ordenación del territorio en torno a la Corte,” *Archivo Español de Arte* 232 (1985): 392–398; Checa Cremades and Morán Turina, *Las Casas del Rey*; and Virginia Tovar Martín, *El espacio territorial madrileño circunscrito a los Sitios Reales en el reinado de Felipe II* (Madrid: Artes Gráficas Municipales, 1998).

¹¹ See María Victoria García Morales, “Los artistas que trabajan para el Rey: la Junta de Obras y Bosques,” *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Historia del Arte* 3 (1990): 123–136; Francisco Javier Díaz González, *La Real Junta de Obras y Bosques en la época de los Austrias* (Madrid: Dykinson, 2002); and María Teresa Fernández Talaya, “La Real Junta de Obras y Bosques,” *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños* 54 (2014): 389–411. More recently, José Martínez Millán, “La descomposición del sistema cortesano: la supresión de la Junta de Obras y Bosques,” in *Europa e America allo specchio. Studi per Francesca Cantù*, ed. Paolo Broggio, Luigi Guarnieri Calò Carducci and Manfredi Merluzzi (Rome: Viella, 2017), 159–186.

¹² This process is addressed in José Manuel Barbeito Díez and Javier Ortega Vidal, “Los artífices de las obras reales,” in *Jardín y naturaleza en el reinado de Felipe II*, ed. Carmen Añón Feliú and José Luis Sancho Gaspar (Aranjuez: Doce Calles, 1998), 245–273.

¹³ Various instructions are listed and analysed by Luis Cervera Vera in “Instrucción de Felipe II para continuar las obras del Alcázar de Toledo,” *Anales Toledanos* 33 (1994), 137–162.

¹⁴ For example, Checa Cremades, “Felipe II y la ordenación del territorio,” and Tovar Martín, *El espacio territorial madrileño*.

across the kingdom.¹⁵ Confessionalization was a political and ideological process based on implementing a strict system of social beliefs, for which it was necessary to reform and centralise the administration by helping give shape to its component institutions so that the Crown could control the message it wished to convey. The Junta de Obras y Bosques played a key role in this respect, as the royal confessor was a permanent member and the institution furthermore bestowed the title that allowed him to exercise his office.¹⁶ The presence of the confessor therefore helped modulate the religious message and the image of the monarch to be conveyed through the royal sites in the principal kingdom of the monarchy, which was Castile. Indeed, the action of the Board of Works and Woodlands was focused on Castile because all the residences that came under its management belonged to that kingdom, as Gil González Dávila argues in his *Teatro de las Grandezas de la Villa de Madrid* in 1623:

The Royal Alcázares, Houses and Woodlands covered by the *Junta* are the Alcázar Royal Palace of Madrid, the apartment in the Royal Monastery of San Jerónimo, the Casa Real del Campo, the Castle and Woodlands of El Pardo, the House of Vaciamadrid, the Alcázares of Seville and the Palaces and Woodlands of the Lomo del Grullo; the Alcázares of Toledo and Segovia, the Royal House and Woodlands of Valsaín, the Royal House of Fuenfría, the Mint and Machine Room of Segovia, the Royal Houses of Valladolid, their vegetable garden and riverside land, the Royal House and Woodlands of El Abrojo, the Royal House of Aondeguilla, the House and Woodlands of La Quemada, which formed part of the estate of Aranjuez along with its Royal House, as well as the house of Aceca and the apartment of Nuestra Señora de la Esperanza, the woodlands and pastureland, the *fabrica ecclesiae* and patronage of San Lorenzo el Real and conservation of its woodlands; the Alhambra of Granada and Soto de Roma, the Royal Archive of Segovia and the stables of Cordoba.¹⁷

¹⁵ For a study of this process, see José Martínez Millán and Carlos Javier de Carlos Morales, ed. *Felipe II (1527-1598). La configuración de la monarquía hispánica* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1998), 99–213.

¹⁶ Archivo General del Palacio Real, Madrid (hereafter AGP), Administración General, bundle 853.

¹⁷ Gil González Dávila, *Teatro de las grandezas de la villa de Madrid. Corte de los reyes católicos de España* (Madrid: Thomas Iuntí, 1623), 521–522 [Los Alcaçares, Casas y Bosques Reales que comprehende la Junta son, el Alcaçar Palacio Real de Madrid, quarto del Monasterio Real de San Jerónimo, Casa Real del Campo, Castillo y Monte del Pardo, Casa de Vaziamadrid, Alcaçares de Sevilla y los Palacios y Bosque del Lomo del Grullo; los Alcaçares de Toledo y Segovia, Casa Real y Bosque de Valsaín, Casa Real de Fuenfría, Casa de la Moneda del Ingenio de Segovia, Casas Reales de Valladolid, su huerta y su ribera, Casa Real y Bosque del Abrojo, Casa Real de Aondeguilla, Casa y Bosque de la Quemada, heredamiento de Aranjuez con su Casa Real y la de Aceca y el quarto de nuestra señora de la Esperanza, los bosques y dehesas deste heredamiento, la fabrica y patronazgo de San Lorenzo el Real y conservación de sus bosques; la Alhambra de Granada y Soto de Roma, Archivo Real de Segovia y cavalleriza de Cordova.]



Figure 1. *Map of the Royal Sites around Madrid (c.1600)*, courtesy of María Luisa Walliser Martín.

Therefore, we will now refer exclusively to the royal sites of the kingdom of Castile. Sites belonging to other kingdoms were managed by the corresponding viceroys of each kingdom or by specific institutions belonging to each one of them. Unfortunately, there are not many studies on the institutions that managed the royal sites in those kingdoms during the Habsburg period¹⁸ except for the Hofwerken/Ouvrages de la Cour in the Netherlands.¹⁹ Similarly, the few studies carried out on the royal sites of the secondary courts of the Spanish monarchy only examine a few buildings individually from the perspective of the history of architecture or art, or discuss spiritual aspects of some of the religious houses.²⁰ What we do know is that, while it is true that not all the progress made in Castile was possible in other kingdoms of the monarchy, the bodies which managed the royal sites were nonetheless gradually institutionalized and centralized in most of

¹⁸ This subject is discussed in the volume (to be published by Brepols in 2023) resulting from the symposium “Building the Presence of the Prince: The Institutions Related with the Ruler’s Works as Key Elements of the European Courts (XIVth–XVIIth Centuries),” held in Utrecht (Netherlands) on 8 and 9 November 2019 and directed by M. Hurx and J. E. Hortal Muñoz. This volume systematically studies the institutions that managed the European royal sites from a more cross-disciplinary and transnational approach and, with respect to the Spanish monarchy, includes papers on Portugal, the Netherlands, and the viceroyalties of America and Italy.

¹⁹ Bibliography in José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, “La importancia de la articulación del territorio y la ocupación de los espacios de poder en los territorios flamencos durante la Revuelta de los Países Bajos: Ouvrages de la Cour y Tour de Rolle,” in *Territoires, lieux et espaces de la révolte. XIVe–XVIIIe siècles*, ed. Paloma Bravo and Juan Carlos D’Amico (Dijon: Éditions universitaires de Dijon, 2017), 109–126.

²⁰ A few exceptions are, for Naples, Antonio Ernesto Denunzio et al, ed., *Dimore signorili a Napoli. Palazzo Zevallos Stigliano e il mecenatismo aristocratico dal XVI al XX secolo* (Naples: Intesa San Paolo, 2013). There are very numerous studies on this kingdom in the eighteenth century, for example Giovanni Cirillo and Antonio Grimaldi, *The Europe of ‘Decentralised Courts.’ Palaces and Royal Sites: The Construction of the Political Image of the Bourbons of Italy and Spain*, *Cheiron* special issue 2 (2017). A study focusing on Sicily is Giovanni Lanza Tomasi et al, *Dimore di Sicilia* (Venice: Arsenale, 1998).

them, though several, such as Naples, Sicily, and Aragon, among others, have yet to be studied in greater depth.

The interest shown by Philip II in giving shape to a system of royal sites in Castile continued during the reign of his son Philip III (r.1598-1621). However, the new king's efforts were not focused on the royal sites around Madrid but on building a new system around Valladolid, as stated earlier. The real driving force behind this change of strategy was his *valido* or official favourite, the Duke of Lerma, who became the *alcaide* of these royal sites, while also incorporating some of his own territories into this new system of royal sites.²¹ For several years the King and his court spent seasonal sojourns at these sites around Valladolid, but the permanent return of the court to Madrid led to the decline of this embryonic system and most of these places fell into oblivion.

Later on, the significant change in Philip III's attitude towards the royal sites around Madrid after the fall of Lerma in 1617 is worth noting, because this was precisely when the monarch issued the orders for work to begin on his one and only major building project involving royal sites around the city other than the construction of the Monasterio de la Encarnación (Monastery of the Incarnation), the Pantheon of Kings in the Monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial,²² and various other smaller-scale projects in Aranjuez and El Pardo. Meanwhile, during Lerma's *valimiento*, the maintenance of the royal sites around Madrid was not neglected. This is evident, for example, from the repairs carried out after the fire in the palace of El Pardo in 1604.²³ In fact, Philip III issued instructions for construction work to be performed on the royal sites in 1615, which remained in force until they were renewed in 1646.²⁴

It is worth considering that it was Lerma who decided to overhaul the "Prudent King's" system. First of all, he tried to eliminate the Junta de Obras y Bosques in order to personally take over all aspects of royal building projects, and when he proved unsuccessful at doing so, he decided to place his "followers" in strategic positions to manage the Crown properties.²⁵ These actions set in motion a trend that gained prominence under the reign of his successor, during which the monarch's confidant secured appointments for himself and his family as governors at various royal sites; for example, the Duke of Lerma was appointed as governor in perpetuity of the Alcázar of Toledo, the Casa de Campo, and the Royal Houses in Valladolid, while his son, the Duke of Uceda, was governor of the Alhambra from 1604 to 1624.²⁶

Previously, those who held governing posts at these sites had been figures of minor importance at court, except for isolated cases such as Anthoine of Cröy at El Pardo in 1555, or Don Juan de Ayala at Aranjuez in 1562, or when appointments were made based on family ties or the

²¹ Bernardo José García García, "Espacios de la privanza. Las residencias del favorito como extensión de los Reales Sitios en tiempos del duque de Lerma (1599-1618)," in *Felix Austria. Lazos familiares, cultura política y mecenazgo artístico entre las cortes de los Habsburgo. Family Ties, Political Culture and Artistic Patronage between the Habsburg Courts Networks*, ed. Bernardo José García García (Madrid: Fundación Carlos de Amberes and European Science Foundation, 2016), 393–438.

²² Agustín Bustamante García, "El Panteón del Escorial. Papeletas para su historia," *Anuario del departamento de Historia y Teoría del Arte UAM* 4 (1992): 161–215.

²³ See Alicia Cámara Muñoz, "Obras en las Casas Reales en torno a Madrid durante el reinado de Felipe III, o como conservar el pasado," *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños* 25 (1988): 129–138.

²⁴ Regarding this document, see José María Azcárate Ristori, "Instrucción para las construcciones reales en el siglo XVII," *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología, Universidad de Valladolid* 26 (1960): 223–230.

²⁵ For these manoeuvres, see Díaz González, *La Junta de Obras y Bosques*, 127–143.

²⁶ After a legal conflict with the Marquises of Mondéjar, as explained in José Contreras Gay, "La guarnición militar de la Alhambra en el siglo XVII," *Anuario de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea* 6 (1980): 7–29.

proximity of the sites to their own properties. This was the case of the Duke of Lerma at Valladolid, the marquises of Mondéjar at Granada, the counts of Chinchón at the Alcázar of Segovia, and the Count-Duke of Olivares at the Reales Alcázares of Seville. Furthermore, Lerma drew up plans to sell some of the royal sites, such as Vaciamadrid, El Cigarral in Toledo, and La Fuente del Sol.

There is no doubt that the above changes made during Philip III's reign became fully consolidated during that of his son.

Drawing closer to the royal court: royal sites and the power of the *validos*

As stated previously, monarchs in early modern Europe governed as *pater familias*—in other words, through patronage and personal relationships and by conferring favours, rewards, and sinecures. This allowed them to expand their networks of loyal subjects and strengthen their bases of power. The royal court played a crucial and active role in this process, providing a political space where these relationships could coalesce and evolve.

The Spanish monarchy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries included several territorial units that had their own political systems and their own princely courts prior to their integration into the Spanish monarchy. Under Charles V (1515-1556), this monarchy opted to use the court to gather together territories that had been inherited as well as those obtained through annexation or conquest, in order to provide architectural structures in all of the kingdoms. This political and social configuration spurred the following developments. Firstly, it led to the proliferation of royal households, given that that royal households had helped shape these kingdoms socially as well as politically. To safeguard their autonomy, these respective households also had to be retained even when the king was not in residence. As a result, any change made to the political structures of the monarchy inevitably affected the organization of the royal households, which were gradually consolidated over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under the household of Burgundy.²⁷

By the reign of Philip IV (1621-1665) this system had virtually collapsed.²⁸ The main cause of its decline was that many of its subjects could no longer be incorporated into the royal household and therefore remained outside the protective umbrella that the monarch, as *pater familias*, had provided up until then, because the very constitution of the monarchy prevented it from successfully absorbing the various social groups of the different kingdoms as the household had done in previous reigns.

Indeed, this process would end when Philip IV adopted a new series of measures for economic purposes, such as cutting costs in the royal households. As a result of these changes, access to most mid- and low-level posts in royal households became more and more restricted, limited mostly to people hailing from families with a long tradition of service. This made it impossible for new officers to join the royal entourages, despite their service to the monarch.

The so-called “patrimonialization” of the posts was supported by the monarchs, and some servants received privileges, such as the ability to pass their posts on to their sons or *para con quién*

²⁷ For a study of this process of integration, see José Martínez Millán, ed. *La Corte de Carlos V*, 5 vols (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2000); José Martínez Millán and Santiago Fernández Conti, ed. *La Monarquía de Felipe II: la Casa del Rey*, 2 vols (Madrid: Fundación Mapfre-Tavera, 2005); José Martínez Millán and María Antonietta Visceglia, ed. *La Monarquía de Felipe III: la Casa del rey*, 4 vols (Madrid: Fundación Mapfre, 2008); Martínez Millán and Hortal Muñoz, *La Corte de Felipe IV*; and José Eloy Hortal Muñoz and Félix Labrador Arroyo, ed. *La Casa de Borgoña. La Casa del Rey de España* (Louvain: Leuven University Press, 2014). The conclusions are summarised here.

²⁸ Explained in detail in Martínez Millán and Hortal Muñoz, *La Corte de Felipe IV*.

casare [children's spouses] over one or even two generations. The breakdown of this integration turned Philip IV's more than forty-four-year reign into a quest to reshape the monarchy and one of the main tools he used for the kingdom of Castile was the royal sites, expanding their role and giving them far greater social significance than before as part of the wider reforms that were being instituted in the monarchy.

Philip IV's *valido*, the Count-Duke of Olivares, would become the driving force behind this strategy because his personal experiences had made him aware of the importance that royal sites had for the development of local communities. He had inherited the governorship of the Reales Alcázares of Seville and devoted a number of years to managing this project personally. Olivares wanted the royal sites to attain their potential in terms of their ability to represent the royal identity. For example, when an appointed viceroy was leaving for America, he spent his final night at the Reales Alcázares. The royal standard was raised at this site for the occasion as if the monarch himself were there.²⁹ The Alcázar of Toledo, the various royal sites in Segovia, Aranjuez, and the Alhambra, among others, would each have a different impact on their local communities. Because of this, Olivares was aware that controlling these sites would give an immense boost to his "Castilianist" project and help him extend it throughout the kingdom, given that these sites were closely linked to the monarchy. For example, all the inhabitants of Aranjuez had to serve the king.³⁰

To gain control of these royal sites, Olivares tried to take over the Junta de Obras y Bosques,³¹ which he clashed with on various occasions, especially after the office of the superintendent of Obras Reales (Royal Works) was created, a post given to the Marquis of Malpica in 1621.³² To achieve his objectives, he attempted to bring the office under his control by appointing people he could trust, such as Juan Bautista Crescenzi, whose appointment enabled him to design a building plan; it could not, however, be developed, as the artist died in 1635.³³ He also dismissed the royal architect, Gómez de Mora, who was close to Lerma, his predecessor as *valido* under Philip III. Additionally, he decided to leave the palace of Buen Retiro outside the jurisdiction of the board.³⁴

Olivares would later increase his influence over different royal sites in order to place his own supporters in important posts, guaranteeing his control over royal visits. In Aranjuez, for instance, he appointed as governors Don Melchor de Alcaraz (1625-1628), Don Juan de Toledo y Meneses (1628-1631), Don Diego Fernández de Zárate (1632-1636, 1637-1646), and Sebastián Antonio de Contreras y Brizuela (1636-1637, 1646-1654). Likewise, at El Pardo he supported the *alcaldes* and *guardamayores*, the Marquis of Flores Dávila (1623-1631), and Don Diego Ramírez de Haro (1631-1645). All of these men had personal relationships with Olivares and held important positions at court.³⁵

²⁹ Regarding the importance of the Reales Alcázares of Seville in its surroundings, Ana Marín Fidalgo, *El Alcázar de Sevilla bajo los Austrias* (Seville: Guadalquivir, 1992).

³⁰ As discussed in Carmen Díaz Gallegos, "El Real Sitio de Aranjuez, ejemplo de urbanismo barroco en España: sus calles y plazas," *Reales Sitios* 87 (1986): 29–36.

³¹ For these disagreements, see Díaz González, *La Junta de Obras y Bosques*, 183–200.

³² For the history of this office, see María Victoria García Morales, "El superintendente de obras reales en el siglo XVII," *Reales Sitios* 104 (1990): 65–74.

³³ There are numerous publications about Crescenzi, but for his role as superintendent, see René Taylor, "Juan Baustista Crescencio y la arquitectura cortesana española," *Academia. Boletín de la Real Academia de San Fernando* 48 (1979): 63–126.

³⁴ Olivares' association with this royal site is analysed by María Teresa Chaves Montoya, "El Buen Retiro y el Conde Duque de Olivares," *Anuario del Departamento de Historia y Teoría del Arte UAM* 4 (1992): 217–230.

³⁵ See Martínez Millán and Hortal Muñoz, *La Corte de Felipe IV: Volume II*, CD, which contains all of the relevant biographical information on Philip IV's servants, royal households, and royal sites. The examples used on the following pages have been taken from this CD. In this case from pages 2479–2480 and 2509.

Olivares then developed a new control strategy consisting of appointing himself directly as governor of various royal sites in addition to the post he held in Seville. The first of these appointments was at the royal residence of San Jerónimo on 27 July 1630—which eventually became the palace of Buen Retiro, where he was the first governor from 8 November 1633 onwards. He also became the first governor of La Zarzuela on 16 February 1636 and of Vaciamadrid on 29 July 1634, a property that he would later split off from the Crown and incorporate into his own family's possessions.³⁶ Evidently, he could not personally perform the duties of the many offices he held in the sovereign's entourage, which is why he appointed a series of prominent men that he could rely on to manage the sites on his behalf, such as his son-in-law, the Marquis of Leganés, whom he made deputy governor of Vaciamadrid (1636-1645),³⁷ and the Count of Puñoenrostro, who served as interim governor of the Zarzuela (c.1638-c.1646).³⁸ This was the only major palace built during his reign, apart from the Buen Retiro. The construction of these last two palaces marked the completion of the system of territorial reforms devised by Philip II. While the second was located to the east of the capital, an area where the royal family did not own any significant estates, the ring of properties around Madrid was completed with the Zarzuela, which had been built on the orders of the Cardinal-Infante, Philip IV's brother, but passed to the King after his death. As a result, it was possible to travel directly from the Alcázar of Madrid to San Lorenzo de El Escorial via the Casa de Campo and El Pardo.

Like Olivares, his successor Luis de Haro was aware of the importance of controlling the royal sites, and after the death of the Count-duke in 1645 he accumulated even more titles than his predecessor.³⁹ Between 1645 and 1650 de Haro obtained the governorships of Buen Retiro, El Pardo, Valsaín, and the Reales Alcázares de Sevilla, as well as the office of Master of the Horse (*Caballerizo mayor*) of the Royal Stables in Cordoba, holding all of these offices until 1661. His son Gaspar de Haro y Guzmán, 7th Marquis of Carpio and 3rd Marquis of Eliche,⁴⁰ would act as interim *alcaide* at practically all of these sites and would become incumbent governor of each of them after a brief period from 1662 until he was exiled in 1665, at which point the role passed to the Duke of Medina de las Torres (Buen Retiro) and the Count of Monterrey (Valsaín, El Pardo, and Zarzuela).

Throughout this process, it is worth highlighting the peculiarity of the case of the Monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial, where an *alcaide* was never appointed because of the privileges already enjoyed by the Hieronymite monks within the monastery. The Marquis of Navas made numerous unsuccessful attempts at being appointed governor of the sections of the building that did not strictly belong to the religious community, such as the royal palace.⁴¹

Ostensibly, the interest shown by the King's confidants in controlling the royal sites was part of their strategy of strengthening their own links with the court, which were much tighter from the reign of Philip IV onwards. At the same time, this strategy helped take a further step forward towards the maturation of the courtly political system, as it strengthened the favourites'

³⁶ AGP, Personal, boxes 518/8, 754/49, 955/29, and Registro 13, fols. 30r-v, f. 98v, 137v-138r, 159v, 181 v; Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid (hereafter AHN), Consejos, bundle 4422, fol. 1).

³⁷ AGP, Personal, box 543/19, and Registro 14, fols. 402r, 407v.

³⁸ AGP, Personal, box 857/15.

³⁹ AGP, Personal, boxes 325/48, 496/36, 668/2, and Registros 14, fols. 96r-v, 213r, 267r-v; Archivo General de Simancas, Valladolid (hereafter AGS), Casa y Sitios Reales, bundle 306, fol. 401.

⁴⁰ Regarding his connection with the royal sites, see María Asunción Flórez Asensio, "El Marqués de Liche: Alcaide del Buen Retiro y 'Superintendente' de los Festejos Reales," *Anales de Historia del Arte* 20 (2010): 145–182.

⁴¹ Discussions of this topic can be found in AGP, Personal, box 738/10.

control over the court space as a whole.⁴² Indeed, at the time the *validos* managed to take over three types of offices that were key to controlling the space where the monarch went about his main tasks: firstly, the post of *sumiller de Corps* (groom of the Stole) of the Household of Burgundy (and in the Count-Duke of Olivares's case also that of *camarero mayor* (lord chamberlain) of the Household of Castile) to control the Royal Chamber and, accordingly, the most private areas of the royal residences;⁴³ secondly, that of Master of the Horse, in order to control the space around the monarch when he left the palace to appear before his people or undertake longer journeys;⁴⁴ and third and last, by securing either personally or through his "followers" the governorships of the main royal sites of Castile, as stated earlier.

Social integration and welfare under Philip IV: the role of the royal sites

As a result of the aforementioned development of the system of Castilian royal sites, these places drew attention on account of their splendour because of the increasing number of individuals employed to serve at them, who were in most cases of higher standing than they had been under previous monarchs.⁴⁵ At the same time, royal sites were discovered to be important places for creating opportunities for patronage for the different *validos*, helping consolidate their power and strengthening their patronage networks in a process of top-down integration. The Junta de Obras y Bosques was undoubtedly one of the main tools used by the *validos* in this process, as it allowed them to manage the huge volume of requests that were received in relation to the staff of the royal sites during Philip IV's reign.

It is worth noting that during the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century, in the monarch's absence, these royal sites were looked after and guarded by a minimal number of servants who were often related to one another. The royal family only visited some sites regularly during this period, such as Aranjuez, San Lorenzo de El Escorial, and Valladolid (when the court settled there from 1601 to 1606).

All this changed during Philip IV's reign as great court patrons were in charge of these royal sites and had closer links with the court. As a result, from this point onwards, one of the few ways for new individuals to join the royal households was by serving firstly at the royal sites, something that would have been impossible under earlier regimes. For example, the main chaplains at Aranjuez could be transferred to the royal chapel through a chaplaincy of Castile until 1625 and through one of Santiago from 1625 onwards. Even Gaspar Alonso de Reluz managed to secure a post in the royal chapel without being the main chaplain.⁴⁶ Similarly, some physicians at this site

⁴² On the spatial dimension of the court and the role of the royal sites in these matters, José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, "Courtly and Ceremonial Spaces in Spanish Royal Sites: An Evolution from the Renaissance to the Baroque," in *Power and Ceremonial. Rituals and Ceremonies of Courts and Representative Bodies from the Late Medieval to the Modern Era*, ed. Anna Kalinowska and Jonathan Spangler (London: Bloomsbury, 2021), 87–104.

⁴³ The Duke of Lerma (1599-1618), the Duke of Uceda (1618-1621), the Count-Duke of Olivares (1621-1626), the Duke of Medina de las Torres (1626-1636), and, once again, Olivares (1636-1645) served successively as *sumiller de Corps*.

⁴⁴ The Duke of Lerma (1599-1618), the Duke of Uceda (1618-1621), the Duke of Infantado (1621-1622), Olivares (1622-1645), the Marquis of Carpio (1645-1648), and Don Luis de Haro (1648-1661) were masters of the horse.

⁴⁵ Regarding the evolution of the type of individuals who lived at the royal sites in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, "El personal de los Sitios Reales desde los últimos Habsburgos hasta los primeros Borbones: de la vida en la periferia a la integración en la Corte," in *Siti Reali in Spagna e in Italia. Tra Madrid e Napoli: aspetti e temi di una storia del territorio*, ed. Lucio D'Alessandro, Félix Labrador Arroyo and Pasquale Rossi (Naples: Università Suor Orsola Benincasa, 2014), 75–95.

⁴⁶ Studied in José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, "Los capellanes de los Sitios Reales durante el reinado de Felipe IV," *Libros de la Corte* Special issue 3 (2015): 96–97.

were also appointed to the royal household of Castile, and after completing eight years of service at Aranjuez they were promoted to the Royal Alcázar.⁴⁷

In addition to these collective examples there are other isolated cases. For example, Alejandro Pingüeta, a watchmaker at Buen Retiro (1635-1641), became the groom of the fourrier's department (1641-1667),⁴⁸ and Joaquín Cobos, concierge of the palace of San Lorenzo de El Escorial (1615-1656), was appointed yeoman of the fourrier's department (1642-1657).⁴⁹ Naturally, the royal hunt was the section of the household that had the greatest contact with royal sites, since most of the huntsmen lived in villages that belonged to El Pardo—such as Fuencarral or San Sebastián de los Reyes—and there were at least twelve former servants of royal sites who were integrated into the *caza de volatería* (falconry) and *montería* (hunting) departments.⁵⁰

Furthermore, since the different means of granting favors were diminishing, members of the royal households were rewarded with various offices at the royal sites. This occasionally enabled them to combine both posts and accordingly strengthen the link between court and royal sites. As a result, these beneficiaries enjoyed social prosperity in certain environments. Religious servants were given chaplaincies at the Reyes Nuevos in Toledo,⁵¹ or in Aranjuez,⁵² while laymen received other benefits. For example, Don Eugenio de los Ríos, yeoman of the bakehouse (1648-1652), was appointed concierge of El Pardo (1652-*c.*1674);⁵³ Alonso Gutiérrez de Grimaldo, yeoman of the jewels (1622-1645) and wardrobe (1633-1645), obtained the same posts at Buen Retiro (unknown-1645);⁵⁴ and Don Juan de Castro Villafañe, who acted both as the keeper of the offices of harbinger (1607-1627) and gentleman of the household (1624-1651), was also appointed clerk of the counting house and surveyor of the Alcázar of Segovia and royal houses of Valsaín and Fuenfría (1635-1639), as well as main guard of Valsaín (1637-1639).⁵⁵ There is no need to further highlight the movements between the royal hunt and royal sites, but the special link

⁴⁷ Amongst others, doctor Lázaro de la Fuente, a physician at Aranjuez (1616-1625) and in the household of Castile (1625-1651) (AGP, Personal, box 16931/28, and Registros 11, fols. 535v-536r and 13, fol. 136r-v); doctor Bernardo Serrano de Minaya, in Aranjuez (1628-1630) and Castile (1630-1646) (AGP, Personal, box 995/13, and Registros 12, fol. 321v, and 13, fols. 36r); AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundle 307, fol. 259); and the licenciado don Gabriel Gómez, Aranjuez (1630-1635) and Castile (1630-*c.*1659) (AGP, Personal, box 438/59, and Registros 13, fols. 36r-v, 168r, and 15, fols. 38v-39r; AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundles 307, fol. 259 and 308, fols. 79-80).

⁴⁸ AGP, Personal, boxes 681/38, 832/9, 840/32, 857/9.

⁴⁹ AGP, Personal, box 16793/14.

⁵⁰ Like Jusepe Méndez de Molina, *alcaide* and *guardamayor* at Valsaín (1629-1632), as well as deputy *alcaide* of El Pardo (1632-1646), also appointed foot huntsman (1639-1646) (AGP, Personal, box 666/34 and /37, and Registros 12, fol. 634v, 13, fols. 6v, 12v, 13r, 79v, 80r, and 14, fol. 223r); Archivo Histórico de la Nobleza, Toledo (hereafter AHN, Toledo), Frías, box 591, docs 36, 37, and box 592, doc 96), and Juan Bautista Montero, guard at the Casa de Campo until 1632 when he was appointed as riverside sampler (1632-1650) (AGP, Administración General, bundle 627, and Personal box 699/16).

⁵¹ There are eleven chaplains of the royal chapel who obtained a chaplaincy of the *Reyes Nuevos*, e.g. doctor Jerónimo de Salcedo, chaplain of Castile (1621-1641) and of the *Reyes Nuevos* (1626-1641) (AGP, Real Capilla, box 85, no fol., and Registro 6151, fol. 25v), don Diego de Herrera Gutiérrez, altar chaplain (1640-1649) and of the *Reyes Nuevos* (1648-1653) (AGP, Personal, box 7799/6, and Real Capilla box 84, no fol.), and don Jacinto March de Castellví y Lerma, chaplain of Aragón (1632-1664) and of the *Reyes Nuevos* (?-1664) (AGP, Personal, box 7797/5, and Registro 6151, fol. 34v). We even find opposite cases, such as three chaplains who first served at the *Reyes Nuevos* and then went on to become chaplains of Castile, such as Don Juan de Rojas, *Reyes Nuevos* until 1629 when he was appointed chaplain of Castile (AGP, Personal, box 913/10); Don Antonio Fernández del Campo y Angulo, in 1654 (AGP, Personal, box 7802/13, Real Capilla, box 84, no fol., and Registro 6151, fol. 49r); or the famous writer Calderón de la Barca in 1663 (AGP, Personal, box 7804/10, and Registros 6145, fol. 510 and 6151, fol. 55v).

⁵² As occurred with Martín de Ocaña, who was altar chaplain (1625-1638) and cantor (1629-1638) of Castile, as well as chaplain at Aranjuez (1637-1638) (AGP, Personal, box 750/20, Real Capilla box 121/1, and Registro 13, fol. 228r).

⁵³ AGP, Personal, box 16793/14.

⁵⁴ AGP, Personal, box 491/28.

⁵⁵ AGP, Personal, box 463/20, and Registro 13, fols. 169r, 232r-v, 277v; AHN, Consejos, bundle 4423, fol. 21.

between the royal guard and royal sites is also worth mentioning, as more than twenty guards served in both.⁵⁶ Lastly, well-known architects, sculptors, and painters, such as Sebastián and Antonio de Herrera Barnuevo,⁵⁷ Juan Gómez de Mora,⁵⁸ Alonso Carbonell,⁵⁹ and Diego de Silva Velázquez,⁶⁰ became beneficiaries of this policy.

The king's possessions were used on several occasions to reward servants who did not receive regular wages for their duties in the royal households due to a shortage of resources in the royal treasury. In fact, there were moments when the King decided to prioritize these payments over performing certain necessary construction work on royal buildings.⁶¹ Sites like the Lomo del Grullo in Seville, the Ingenio de la Moneda de Segovia (Mint and Machine Room of Segovia),⁶² or San Lorenzo de El Escorial and all its surrounding property,⁶³ were used for this purpose. However, there were three sites that enjoyed special economic importance as part of this strategy, because they were used to pay rewards and sinecures to their own servants as well as to others without specific links to the sites.⁶⁴

The first site was Aranjuez,⁶⁵ where wheat and barley were granted as payment in kind to individuals, such as Antonia de Marquana y Alviz, daughter of the royal secretary Francisco Alviz, who received a yearly income of 400 ducats for her entire life,⁶⁶ or royal convents such as that of the Encarnación which received 300 *fanegas*⁶⁷ every year by standing order from Queen Margaret of Austria-Estiria.⁶⁸ The second site, the lesser-known Soto de Roma in Granada, was mainly used for the royal family's hunting activities until the reign of Philip II. Thereafter the forests were used for their timber, which was necessary for shipbuilding. Sustainable exploitation of the woodlands

⁵⁶ See José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, "La unión de la Corte, la Casa y el Territorio en la Monarquía Hispánica de los siglos XVI y XVII: las Guardas Reales y los Sitios Reales," *Revista Escuela de Historia* 18 (2017), available at http://www.scielo.org.ar/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1669-90412017000100007&lng=es&nrm=iso.

⁵⁷ The former was yeoman of the fourrier's department and great master of royal works at the Alcázar de Madrid from 1662 to 1671 (AGP, Personal, box 507/40, and Registro 15, fol. 141v). The latter, Antonio, was sculptor of the fourrier's department (1605-1646), and quantity surveyor of royal carpentry works (1627-1645), and a *reservado* of the latter office in 1645-1646 (AGP, Administración General, bundle 853, no fol., Personal, box 506/15, and Registros 14, fol. 91r-v, and 25, fol. 48v; AHN, Consejos, bundle 4429, fol. 46).

⁵⁸ Yeoman of the fourrier's department and master tracer of the royal works (1611-1648) (AGP, Administración General bundle 649, no fol., Personal box 448/6, and Registros 11, fols. 161r, 414v-415r, 432v, and 14, fol. 202r).

⁵⁹ Grand quantity surveyor of royal works (1627-1660), yeoman of the fourrier's department (1634-1660), and great master of the works of the Alcázar de Madrid (1648-1660) (AGP, Personal, boxes 200/23, and 16752/23, and Registros 12, fol. 289v, 13, fols. 38v, 39r, 174r, and 14, fols. 180v, 190r).

⁶⁰ Court painter (1623-1660), valet of the chamber (1643-1646), clerk of the counting house and surveyor of the works at the Alcázar de Madrid and surrounding royal houses (1647-1660), guard and surveyor of the *sala ochavada* (1647-1660), and harbinger of the palace (1652-1660) (AGP, Personal, box 1084/9, and Registros 12, fols. 179v-180r, and 14, fols. 66r, 148r-v, 149v; AHN, Consejos, bundle 4426, fol. 156). For all the offices he held in the palace, Feliciano Barrios Pintado, "Diego Velázquez: sus oficios palatinos," *Reales Sitios* 141 (1999): 2-17.

⁶¹ AGP, Administraciones Patrimoniales, Aranjuez, box 14131.

⁶² For coin minting since Philip II's reign see Victoria Soto Caba, "La primera fábrica de monedas: El Real Ingenio de Segovia," *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma, Serie VII, Historia del Arte* 4 (1991): 95-120.

⁶³ Regarding the economic use of its meadows, José Antonio Martínez Bara, "Noticias sobre las dehesas del Monasterio de San Lorenzo del Escorial," *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños* 5 (1970): 109-119.

⁶⁴ The same occurred in other places, such as the royal sites of Valladolid where, for example, doña Isabel de Mercado received an allowance as well as the salary of her husband, the physician of the chamber doctor Ruíz, although to a much lesser extent (AGP, Personal, boxes 160/12, 933/42, 1063/48, 1111/65).

⁶⁵ There are excellent studies on economic exploitation, such as Carmen Magán Merchán and Jesús Espinosa Romero, "La evolución económica de un Real Sitio: Aranjuez en tiempos de Felipe II," *Reales Sitios* 153 (2002): 2-13.

⁶⁶ AGP, Administraciones Patrimoniales, Aranjuez, box 14131.

⁶⁷ This Castilian measurement of capacity is equivalent, in most cases, to 55.5 liters.

⁶⁸ AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundle 302/2 fol. 150.

had to be implemented to prevent deforestation.⁶⁹ The third site, El Pardo, was where the King sourced the firewood he used to reward his officials, as well as the religious houses of the Capuchins, Trinitarians, Carmelites, Santa Isabel, and the Barefoot Franciscans of Barajas, a tradition initiated by Philip III.⁷⁰

At this point, it is necessary to consider the impact that Philip IV's new strategy for improving social integration of the kingdom of Castile had on the royal sites. This system involved creating a system of social welfare for anyone directly or indirectly related to royal households and royal sites.⁷¹ Of course, most of the resources that were going to be used for this system were taken from the royal sites themselves. The system established two categories, the *reservados* (reserved) and the *pensionistas* (pensioners). The *reservados* were officials who had served for several years and had to retire because of old age or health-related issues. They could collect their entire wage or part of it, or another reward, without being obliged to serve. The *pensionistas* received a pension from the Junta de Obras y Bosques for being relatives of royal servants. The difference was based on what their prior service to the Crown had been.

These categories began to take shape at the beginning of the Spanish monarchy. Under Charles V there is barely any record of the use of a system of *reservas* except for with respect to the royal guards, who were pioneers in this process.⁷² The document known as the *Tour de Rolle* was particularly significant in this regard. It was granted by the monarch in 1548 to the guard of Corps and established that certain offices of the royal patrimony in the seventeen provinces of the Low Countries were reserved for all the archers who retired or returned to their native province, which they could do after ten years of service, and would be allocated *à tour de rôle*, that is, in turns, in order of length of service.⁷³

It was during the reign of Philip II that reserved posts began to appear more clearly in the royal household, though they were very few in number, as well as the abovementioned practice of granting offices to the spouses of incumbents' children, *para con quién casare*. The figure of the *reservado* continued to gain momentum during Philip III's reign, especially after the court was moved to Valladolid, chiefly to alleviate the significant income shortages experienced by the assorted servants who accompanied the monarch to the Castilian city as a result of their transfer.

At the same time, various confraternities began to emerge at the court, particularly to help integrate the people of different nations into court life and encourage them to mingle by providing them with a meeting point, which was usually the chapel of some church. These confraternities likewise gave rise to an important social welfare system as they provided for widows, orphans, burials, and other expenses after a member died, as well as granting loans to members in need. Their funds came from the membership fees paid by their various members, as well as from fines and gifts from prominent people at the court. The most significant confraternities were undoubtedly those linked to the royal household, especially the royal guard as they were made up of people of various nationalities. We thus find the Brotherhood and Confraternity of Our Lady of Good Remedy and the Incarnation for the Spanish Guard, which was founded in 1582 while

⁶⁹ Félix Labrador Arroyo and Koldo Trápaga Monchet, "Forestry, Territorial Organization and Military Struggle in the Spanish Monarchy," *Environmental History* 23 no. 2 (2018): 318–341.

⁷⁰ Some examples can be found in AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundle 302/2 no fol.

⁷¹ This issue is discussed in detail in José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, "Reservados y pensionistas: Una nueva vía de integración de los reinos en la Casa Real," in Martínez Millán and Hortal Muñoz, *La Corte de Felipe IV*, 2:2283–2341.

⁷² As studied in José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, *Las guardas reales de los Austrias hispanos* (Madrid: Polifemo, 2013), for the guard of archers of the Corps (232–248), for the Spanish guard (312–318), and for the German guard (375–380).

⁷³ Studied in relation to court space in Hortal Muñoz, "La importancia de la articulación del territorio."

the guard was in Lisbon;⁷⁴ that of Saint Andrew of the Flemish for the archers of the Corps, which was up and running in Valladolid in 1605;⁷⁵ and that of Saint George for the German guard, established between 1606 and 1608.⁷⁶ Also linked to the royal households was the Royal Brotherhood of Kings' Servants, founded in 1604 in Valladolid,⁷⁷ and the Brotherhood and Confraternity of Saint Ildephonsus, established by Archduke Albert in Lisbon in 1588, which accompanied him to Madrid and Brussels to provide shelter to the members of his royal household in those various destinations.⁷⁸

However, it was during Philip IV's reign that a large-scale welfare system was fully developed thanks to the closer link the royal sites and their resources enjoyed with the court through the *validos*. This can be seen in the following tables (charts 1 and 2), which show the number of people who attained the status of *reservado* or *pensionista* during this reign, listed by the royal household and section to which they belonged.

SECTION	RESERVADOS	PENSIONISTAS
Household of Burgundy		
Royal Chapel	66	10
Household Offices	46	117
Royal Chamber	23	38
Royal Stables		
Stables	102	203
Pack animals	36	52 ⁷⁹
Royal Guards		
Guard of Archers of Corps	103	28
Spanish Guard	93	0
German Guard	50	0
Household of Castile		
Hunting		
Falconry	22	5
Hunting	26	4
General	14	8
TOTAL	581	467

Chart 1. *King's households*⁸⁰

⁷⁴ As studied in Hortal Muñoz, *Las guardas reales*, 312–314.

⁷⁵ Hortal Muñoz, *Las guardas reales*, 238–242.

⁷⁶ Hortal Muñoz, *Las guardas reales*, 377–378.

⁷⁷ Studied in Rafael Sánchez Domingo, “La Real Hermandad de Criados de los Reyes de la Casa de Felipe III,” in *Evolución y Estructura de la Casa Real de Castilla*, ed. Andrés Gamba Gutiérrez and Félix Labrador Arroyo (Madrid: Polifemo, 2010), 1: 263–295.

⁷⁸ José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, “La espiritualidad castellana en las diferentes Cortes de la Monarquía: La Hermandad y Cofradía de San Ildefonso de Lisboa, Madrid y Bruselas,” *Anales del Cincuentenario/Annales du Cinquentaire* no. 5 (2011–2012): 191–218.

⁷⁹ We only found lists of pensioners up to 1627, so this number might be substantially higher (AGP, Administración General, box 5644/10).

⁸⁰ This information has been taken mainly from the following AGP sections: Administración General, Histórica, Personal and Registros; AGS, Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas; and AHN, Consejos Suprimidos. See Martínez Millán and Hortal Muñoz. *La Corte de Felipe IV*, CD at Vol. II.

SECTION	<i>RESERVADOS</i>	<i>PENSIONISTAS</i>
Royal Chapel	2	1
Household Offices	75	44
Royal Chamber	37	55
Royal Stables	22	3
TOTAL	136	103

Chart 2. *Queen's Households*⁸¹

During Philip IV's entire reign there were around 7,500 servants in the king's households and 2,500 in the queen's, so the percentage of *reservados* and *pensionistas* amounted to around fourteen in the king's entourages and ten in the queen's.⁸² The difference could be attributed to the fact that some offices in the queen's household were meant for noblemen's widows, especially in the Royal Chamber, such as the *camarera mayor* (High Stewardess) or the *dueñas de honor* (Mistresses of Honour). The ladies-in-waiting rarely received a pension (or *reserva*) as they left the post when they got married, in which case they were entitled to a million *maravedís* as a dowry. The same system applied to the maids (*mozas*) of the chamber, although they only received half a million *maravedís*. In both cases, the sum of money could also be used as a payment to enter a convent.⁸³

The number and "rank" of *reservados* and *pensionistas* shows that this strategy was designed to further integrate servants of a certain type, those that served in middle- and low-level posts in royal households. The nobility was rewarded with other bonuses such as monetary pensions, new titles, and viceroalties. Interestingly, in the King's quarters there were only four stewards,⁸⁴ one gentleman of the chamber,⁸⁵ one gentleman of the *boca*,⁸⁶ and one gentleman of the household,⁸⁷ but no lord steward, groom of the stole, master of the horse, or captain of the guard. In the Queen's quarters, however, there was one lord steward, the 7th Count of Altamira (1663-1669),⁸⁸ one *camarera mayor*, the Countess of Eril (1674-?),⁸⁹ one *dueña de honor*, the Countess of Ullivervall

⁸¹ This chart includes the royal households of Elisabeth of Bourbon (1615-1644), the Infanta Margaret (1644-1649), and Mariana of Austria (1649-1679). Aside from records of the King's Households, the information was obtained from other sections of the AGP in Reinados. See Martínez Millán and Hortal Muñoz, *La Corte de Felipe IV*, CD in Vol. II.

⁸² We should take into account the fact that there were other royal services during this reign, such as that of Don Juan José of Austria, where, for example, there was one *reservado* in the royal chapel, five in the household offices, one in the royal chamber, eight in the royal stables, six in his guard, and fifty-two pensioners. On Don Juan José of Austria's household, see Koldo Trápaga Monchet, *La actividad política de don Juan [José] de Austria en el reinado de Felipe IV (1642-1665)* (Madrid: Polifemo, 2018).

⁸³ As occurred with Doña María de Tello (AGP, Personal, box 1026/8), Margarita de Agramonte (AGP, Administración General, bundle 649), Josefa Ortiz (AGP, Administración General, bundle 649), or Doña Francisca de Marbán y Villagrán (AGP, Personal, box 617/2).

⁸⁴ Don Gómez Manrique Mendoza (1636-1640) (AGP, Administración General, bundles 629, 644), the Marquis of Malagón (1643-1647) (AGP, Personal, box 608/11), and the Counts of Castro (1646-1662) (AGP, Administración General, bundle 644), and Montalbán (1646-1666) (AGP, Personal, box 695/21).

⁸⁵ The Prince of Esquilache (1639-1658) (AGP, Personal, box 2216/77).

⁸⁶ Don Jerónimo Funes y Muñoz (c.1658) (AGP, Personal, boxes 381/30, 794/22, 2643/13).

⁸⁷ Don Fernando de Soto y Verrio (1661-c.1668) (AGP, Administración General, bundle 866, and Personal, boxes 1011/33, 1013/1).

⁸⁸ AGP, Personal, box 521/26.

⁸⁹ AGP, Personal, box 16868/35 and /36.

(1651),⁹⁰ one master of the horse, Don Fernando de Borja (1659-1665),⁹¹ and two stewards.⁹² This was mainly under the reign of Mariana of Austria, when lavish rewards of this kind were common.

On the other hand, we are aware of the existence of around 370 examples of both categories of the system for people related to the royal sites (a total of approximately 2,000 servants are recorded, amounting to just under twenty per cent), as shown in Chart 3:

ROYAL SITE	<i>RESERVADOS</i>	<i>PENSIONISTAS</i>
<i>Junta de Obras y Bosques</i>	0	4
<i>Obras Reales (Royal Works)</i>	3	9
Alcázar de Madrid	1	19
Alcázar de Toledo	0	8
Aranjuez	35	155
Casa de Campo	12	31
Buen Retiro	0	2
El Pardo	7	23
San Lorenzo de El Escorial	1	4
Alhambra de Granada	0	1
Segovia	1	8
Alcázar de Segovia	1	2
Ingenio de la Moneda	0	15
Valsain	0	8
Valladolid	1	19
TOTAL	62	307

Chart 3. *Royal Sites*⁹³

As for *pensionistas*, under Philip II it was already customary to grant widows an allowance after their husbands' passing, as we can see in several memorials sent to the Junta de Obras y Bosques.⁹⁴ Servants associated with the Junta itself and the royal works received a food allowance in addition to a pecuniary remuneration for their post. The amount of money or goods (*especies*) they were paid was fixed under Philip IV,⁹⁵ when it went from 200 ducats per year for family members of the High Master of the Works (*maestro mayor de las obras*) at the Alcázar de Madrid and the royal residences surrounding it (El Pardo and Casa de Campo), to the daily *real*⁹⁶ that was given to the apothecary of Aranjuez. At first, these sinecures were not permanent. In theory they had to

⁹⁰ AGP, Personal, box 1105/19.

⁹¹ AHN, Consejos, bundle 4423, fol. 30.

⁹² Don Pedro de Granada Venegas (1634-1643) (AGP, Administración General, bundle 644, and Personal, box 687/19; AHN, Consejos, bundle 4423, fol. 55), and the Marquis of Castañeda (1644-?) (AGP, Administración General, bundle 644, and Personal, box 16769/28; AGS, Estado, bundles 2962, 2963, 2968).

⁹³ This information has been taken mainly from AGP, Registros 11–15, which are the “*Libros donde se asientan todos los despachos tocantes a obras y bosques*” [Books where all the offices related to works and woodlands are set down] for the last years of Philip III's reign and the entirety of Philip's IV reign, as well the sections of the Administración General, Administraciones Patrimoniales, Personal, and other Registros in the same archive. AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundles 304-314 were also consulted, where all decisions taken by the *Junta de Obras y Bosques* between 1600-1665, and the Tribunal Mayor de Cuentas, bundles 1569–1572, that refer to particular royal sites, are recorded. It should be realized that there were many more, and that there are gaps in the records available for some of these royal sites.

⁹⁴ Like the one kept at AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundle 305, fol. 112.

⁹⁵ A table containing all the rewards related to every office at the royal sites can be found in Hortal Muñoz, “El personal de los Sitios Reales desde los últimos Habsburgos,” 88–91.

⁹⁶ Castilian currency used from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. It was made of 3.35 grams of silver.

be renewed every two years,⁹⁷ but from the 1640s onwards they were granted for the span of a lifetime or more with the possibility of passing them on to the next generation. This renewed and strengthened the bonds between the king and his servants. Although the process was managed by the Junta de Obras y Bosques, it was the king, with the support of the *valido*, who had the final say.

As for the *reservados*, concessions depended on each royal site. Records show that they maintained positions of importance only at Aranjuez, Casa de Campo, and El Pardo, as well as at Buen Retiro, although we do not have much information about this site.⁹⁸ Aranjuez was where the *reservados* gained most prominence. They collected their wages through “reservation”; in other words, they continued to receive the same wage after retiring as they had received while working. They were paid with monetary rewards as well as in kind, particularly *fanegas* of wheat or barley. These rewards were allotted to every officer, starting with the governors themselves. Sebastián Antonio de Contreras y Brizuela, who was a *reservado* in 1654, serves as an example.⁹⁹ There were also two chaplains who received 180 ducats per year,¹⁰⁰ one sexton who received two *reales* daily,¹⁰¹ one master builder and construction foreman,¹⁰² one constable,¹⁰³ and two clerks who received 400 ducats yearly that could be shared with their wives and children;¹⁰⁴ as well as two distiller’s aides,¹⁰⁵ two gardeners,¹⁰⁶ one mayoral of the mares,¹⁰⁷ one mayoral of the camels,¹⁰⁸ two “ordinaries,”¹⁰⁹ a main guard,¹¹⁰ a *sobreguarda*,¹¹¹ a pond-worker and guard of the sea of Ontígola,¹¹² a ferret hunter,¹¹³ and fifteen guards.¹¹⁴

⁹⁷ See for example, AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundle 309, fol. 74.

⁹⁸ As can be seen in the “*Memoria de los ofizios acrezentados en el Sitio Real de Buen Retiro desde su creación, con noticia de los que estubieron unidos y de las plazas de bordinarios que se podrán suprimir como fuesen bacando en aumento de la Consignazi3n aplicando su ymporte para reparos y manutenzi3n del Sitio*,” in AHN, Estado, bundle 1412 no fol., s.d.

⁹⁹ AGP, Personal, box 16802/3, and Registros 13, fols. 184v-185v, 208r, 14, fols. 143v-144r, 382r, 385r, 424r, and 15, fol. 133v.

¹⁰⁰ Like Bartolomé de Erías (1634-?) (AGP, Personal, box 16868/32, and Registro 13, fols. 10v, 142v, 143r, 152v; AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundle 307, fol. 467).

¹⁰¹ Alonso García (1644-?) (AGP, Registro 14, fol. 75r-v).

¹⁰² Diego Agudo, who received 25,000 *maravedís* yearly plus 20 *fanegas* of wheat and 3 of barley yearly, as well as 5 *reales* daily (AGP, Personal, box 17/7, and Registro 15, fol. 79v).

¹⁰³ Pedro de Castro, who received yearly 30,000 *maravedís*, 24 *fanegas* of wheat, and 36 of barley (AGP, Registros 12, fol. 294v, 13, fols. 140v-141r, and 14, fol. 32r-v; AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundle 307, fol. 204).

¹⁰⁴ As occurred with Pedro Martínez de Haro, *reservado* in 1628, who decided in 1634 to give 200 ducats per year to his wife, keeping another 200 for himself, an amount that was passed on to his son after his death in 1636 (AGP, Personal, boxes 496/39, 641/14, and Registros 12, fols. 106v, 108r, 267v-268r, 315v, and 13, fols. 160v-161r).

¹⁰⁵ Salvatore Bruno (1628-1631) (AGP, Administración General, bundle 897, no fol.), and Sebastián Rugero (1633-?) (AGP, Registro 13, fols. 123v-124r).

¹⁰⁶ Juan Ruiz (1656-?) (AGP, Personal, box 928/50, and Registro 14, fol. 442v; AGS, Tribunal Mayor de Cuentas, bundle 1568, no fol.) and Mateo Guerra (1665-?) (AGP, Registro 6708).

¹⁰⁷ Jerónimo Vasco (1653-?) (AGP, Personal, box 1070/2, and Registro 14, fol. 360r).

¹⁰⁸ Juan de Guelves (1639-1645) (AGP, Registro 14, fols. 119v, 468v).

¹⁰⁹ Alonso Redondo (1631-?) (AGP, Registro 13, fol. 50v), and Marcos de Escamilla (1632-?) (AGP, Registros 13, fol. 94r-v, and 23, fols. 110r, 126r).

¹¹⁰ Juan Martínez de la Higuera “El mozo” (1658-1670) (AGP, Personal, box 641/26, and Registros 14, fols. 281v-282r, 384r, and 15, fol. 26r).

¹¹¹ Pedro Vasco, who received 27,000 *maravedís* and 40 *fanegas* of wheat and barley every year (AGP, Registros 11 fol. 711v, and 12, fol. 249v).

¹¹² Tomás de Peralta (1663-?) (AGP, Registro 15, fol. 181r).

¹¹³ Francisco Cano (1655-?) (AGP, Registro 14, fol. 423r).

¹¹⁴ The pension could cover the whole salary or half of it. It consisted of 30,000 *maravedís*, 36 *fanegas* of wheat and another 36 of barley every year.

At the Casa de Campo, the most important office that was “reserved” was that of the deputy *alcaide*, of which there were three.¹¹⁵ They were assigned the salary that they had received while they were actively employed, 20,000 *maravedís* yearly,¹¹⁶ five *reales* daily, and twenty-four *fanegas* of wheat and thirty-five of barley at Aranjuez. They were also given a chaplain,¹¹⁷ an orchard-worker,¹¹⁸ a pond-worker,¹¹⁹ four gardeners,¹²⁰ a doorkeeper,¹²¹ and a guard.¹²² All of these workers earned the same salary they had received when in service, except the gardeners who received a daily allowance of two or three *reales*.

Lastly, at El Pardo there were seven *reservados*: two lieutenants of *alcaide* who received sixty *fanegas* of wheat and sixty of barley per year,¹²³ a main guard who received 60,000 *maravedís*, forty *fanegas* of wheat and forty of barley per year,¹²⁴ three equestrian guards who received half of their salary (two *reales* daily),¹²⁵ and a fox hunter,¹²⁶ who received two *reales* daily. Of course, all of the wheat or barley came from Aranjuez.

Conclusion

As we have seen throughout this essay, the Spanish monarchy was structured around the court from the reign of Charles V onwards, in order to organise the many territories and kingdoms the monarch received through inheritance and aggregation. The kingdom of Castile soon became one of the main sites, especially after Philip II decided to establish the capital in Madrid and confessionalize the Spanish monarchy. The creation of the Junta de Obras y Bosques was a milestone achievement of this process as it helped structure and lend coherence to the Castilian royal sites.

The significance of these spaces in the courtly political system gradually increased from this moment onwards, reaching a peak when the *validos* began to secure governorships of the royal sites for themselves or their “followers” in the seventeenth century. All this made it possible during the reign of Philip IV for the monarch to use these places’ resources as a chief means of attempting

¹¹⁵ Andrés de Soto (1622-1627) (AGP, Registros 11, fols. 198r, 298v, 480r, 685r, 745v, and 12, fols. 33v, 85v, 107r, 118r, 126v, 288r; AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundle 305, fol. 181), Mattheo de Reynalte (1636-1640) (AGP, Personal, box 873/21, and Registros 12, fols. 275r, 293r-v, and 13, fols. 17r, 87r-v, 184r), and Juan María Forno (1643-1645) (AGP, Personal, box 1033/16, and Registros 13, fols. 182r-v, 286v, 14, fols. 28v, 45r, 51v-52v, 144v-145r, 25, fol. 288r, and 26, fols. 2v-3r).

¹¹⁶ Castilian currency from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. A *real* was equivalent to 34 *maravedís*.

¹¹⁷ Licenciado Martín de Segura y Puebla (1644-?) (AGP, Registros 11, fol. 524r, 13, fol. 233r, and 14, fol. 65v).

¹¹⁸ Gabriel Llorente “El Viejo” (1634-1647) (AGP, Personal, box 587/36, and Registros 13, fol. 180r and 14, fol. 147v).

¹¹⁹ Marcos Montero (1627-1644) (AGP, Registro 12, fols. 307v-308r).

¹²⁰ Miguel de Aragón (1628-?) (AGP, Registro 12, fol. 339r), Felipe Alfaro (confirmed in employment 1658-1665) (AGP, Administraciones Patrimoniales, boxes 72, 73), Miguel de Aragón (1659-1663) (AGP, Registro 15, fol. 63r), and Francisco García Pantoja (1659-?) (AGP, Registro 15, fol. 36r).

¹²¹ Antonio Baldini (1637-?) (AGP, Registros 13, fol. 203r and 24, fol. 295r; AGS, Casa y Sitios Reales, bundle 309, fol. 79).

¹²² Pedro de la Torre (1631-?) (AGP, Registro 12, fol. 71r-v).

¹²³ Jusepe Méndez de Molina (1645-1651) (AGP, Personal, box 666/34 and /37, and Registros 12, fol. 634v, 13, fols. 6v, 12v, 13r, 79v, 80r, and 14, fol. 223r; AHN, Toledo, Frías, box 591, docs 36-37, and box 592, doc 96), and Bartolomé Garrido (1664-1666) (AGP, Personal, box 425/29, and Registros 14, fols. 118v-119r, 310r-311v, 377r, and 15, fol. 189r; AHN, Consejos, bundle 39461/3).

¹²⁴ Bartolomé García (1664-?) (AGP, Registro 15, fol. 193v).

¹²⁵ Francisco Bravo (1633-1636) (AGP, Registro 13, fols. 116v, 190v), Francisco Morquecho (1662-?) (AGP, Personal, box 719/14), and Antonio Domínguez (1663-1671) (AGP, Personal, boxes 16856/6 and /8 and 16857/6 and Registro 15, fol. 182r).

¹²⁶ Juan de Morales (confirmed in employment 1655-1662) (AGP, Personal, box 708/59, and Registro 13, fol. 222r).

to reshape his monarchy, especially in the kingdom of Castile, though the royal households began to lose their previous efficiency at integrating the kingdoms' elites. As a result, the royal sites took on the role of integrating many Castilian elites, especially those belonging to the middle and lower social levels, through various strategies such as: transferring servants from the royal sites to the royal households and vice-versa; granting favours in kind to members of the royal households; and using their natural and economic resources to fund a highly developed social welfare system both for people who had previously served in the royal households or the royal sites themselves, and for their families.

There is no doubt that historians and art historians alike have carried out excellent studies on the architectural design and spatial distribution of royal sites in Europe, paying close attention to ceremonial pomp and courtly feasts, which have been interpreted in relation to early modern propaganda. This has also been the case of research on the Spanish monarchy. Although many studies have approached the subject from an interdisciplinary perspective, and have greatly contributed to a better understanding of the history of royal sites, these places have seldom been seen as centres that helped provide political and social structures for early modern monarchies and contributed to the cultural development and economic progress of European society. A more holistic approach reveals similarities between the different roles of early modern European royal sites, roles that go beyond mere representation and propaganda, as this paper has shown.