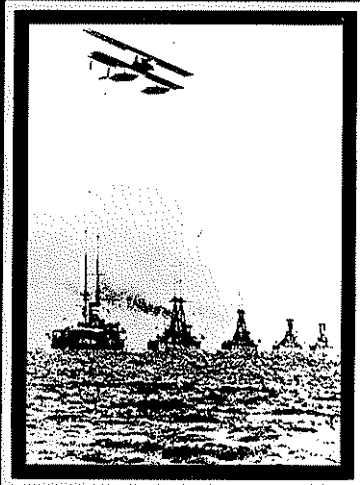
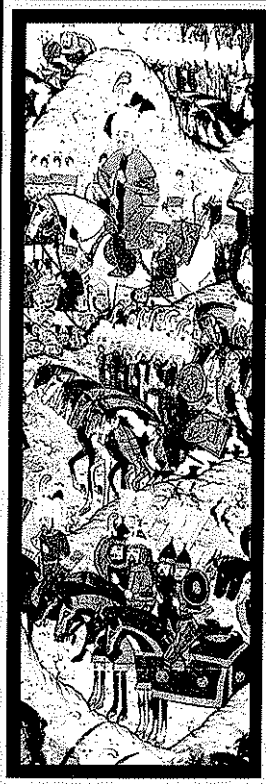


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The Spanish Army in Italy, 1734

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I. Introduction

In the two decades that followed the Treaty of Utrecht, the western Mediterranean was dominated by the efforts of the new Bourbon dynasty in Spain to regain the influence and possessions it had lost in Italy. Milan, Sardinia and Naples were awarded to Austria; the island of Sicily went to the Duke of Savoy, who later transferred it to Austria in exchange for Sardinia. It was certainly true that Milan, though integrated since 1529 into Spanish politics, had never really become Spanish. However, the Spanish presence in the south of Italy and the islands went back a long way and had numerous roots. Sardinia had been conquered by the kingdom of Aragon in 1325, Sicily in 1409; and at the end of the fifteenth century Spain was able to conquer the kingdom of Naples. This centuries-old Spanish presence in Italy disappeared as a result of the Utrecht treaty. Only the port of Longon on the island of Elba remained in Spanish hands. This enclave, half-way between Corsica and Tuscany, became a strategic base of prime importance for Hispanic-Italian politics during the first half of the eighteenth century.¹

Philip V wished to re-establish, in its former configuration, the Spanish presence in the Mediterranean. The king and his sons 'recognized themselves as heirs to the Mediterranean tradition of the Aragonese monarchs that Ferdinand the Catholic and Charles V tried to carry out regardless of the consequences'.² They tried to proceed with 'a Mediterranean policy, called to restore, as far as possible, Spanish influence on the routes and shores of this sea'.³

The expansionist policy pursued by Philip V after Utrecht has led many historians to consider Spain as still being one of the significant powers in international relations in the first half of the eighteenth cen-

¹ M. Gomez, 'El pensamiento de Carvajal y la política internacional española del siglo XVIII', *Hispania* LVIII (1955), pp. 117-37.

² A. Bethencourt, *Patrimonio en la política internacional de Felipe V* (Valladolid, 1954), p. 8.

³ J.M. Jover, *Política mediterránea y política atlántica en la España de Feijoo* (Oviedo, 1956), p. 92.

ture.⁴ The weak point in the Spanish monarch's foreign policy was always the ineffective functioning of the diplomatic service. No professional diplomacy existed during his reign, and other means of negotiation were scarce. One result of these limitations was the weakness of Philip's alliances, negotiations and treaties. Another was Spain's emphasis on force as opposed to negotiation.

One development of this period which had a general impact on the European chancelleries was the revival of Spanish military power. For a time it seemed that Spain really did have the means to carry out its revisionist policy. The revival of the shipyards led to the construction of a great number of excellent ships; at the same time there was a general renaissance in military spirit.⁵

The state's strongest point, however, was the army. Since the War of the Spanish Succession, Spain's military forces had made notable progress in numbers, organization and efficiency. The 12 000 soldiers present in the peninsula upon the arrival of Philip V at the beginning of the century had increased to about 100 000 by the end of the war in 1713. After peace was declared in Utrecht, the prime objective of the Bourbon ministers was the reconstruction of the navy, something which greatly excited the Spanish. The army did not attract so much popular attention. In fact, it had suffered a kind of mutation during the War of Succession. Tempered on the battlefield, modernized on the European model, within a few years it had become an efficient operational instrument. One of the most significant reforms was the 'Royal Ordinances for the Infantry, Cavalry and Dragoons' of 1728, which governed Spanish military life until 1768. These enumerated in detail everything related to recruitment of soldiers, makeup of units, officers and the commands, arms, equipment, manoeuvres and discipline.

This army was the principal instrument of the Italian policies of Spain's Bourbon sovereigns. Beginning in 1734, it earned a well-deserved reputation for courage, resilience and efficiency in arguably the most demanding of eighteenth-century military operations – a large-scale, long-term overseas expedition.

This development was primarily due to Joseph Patiño, the intendente of Extremadura and Catalonia during the Spanish Succession war. He was named Intendente General de Marina in 1717, and was Minister responsible for the most important affairs of the Spanish government from 1726 to his death in 1736. In 1715 he was charged by Philip V with organizing the Majorca expedition. 'For it was a per-

⁴ See M.S. Anderson, *Eighteenth Century Europe, 1713–1789* (London, 1961), pp. 23–4; D. Hill Jayne, *History of Diplomacy in the International Development of Europe* (3 vols, London, 1914) III, pp. 400, 438, 468, 505; R. B. Mowat, *A History of European Diplomacy, 1451–1789* (London, 1928), chs 26–7; and J.S. Levy, *War in the Modern Great Power System, 1495–1975* (Lexington, KY, 1983), p. 33, on the end of Spanish power.

⁵ C. Duffy, *The Fortress in the Age of Vauban and Frederick the Great. 1660–1789* (London, 1985), p. 98.

sonal desire of the monarch,' Patiño wrote. 'I was ordered to prepare all the armament for that expedition and to organize everything as fast as possible. Although means were scarce, I tried to collect the armament; after a few days the expedition was able to sail, and finally achieved the surrender of Majorca.'⁶

Two years later Cardinal Alberoni, prime minister from 1715 to 1719, explained to Patiño the monarch's resolution to send a new expedition to Naples. 'I was surprised by such determination', Patiño wrote,

and I asked how an expedition to Naples could be possible without transport ships, an ample supply of food and, above all, troops and ammunition. I knew very well the bad conditions of the army: the cavalry lacked horses and saddles, all the troops lacked uniforms and their quality as soldiers was very low. At the same time it was necessary to take into account the risk of this expedition. After I expressed my ideas to the king, he changed his mind and replaced the expedition to Naples by one to Sardinia.⁷

The result was successful, even though the king decided to send the expedition to Sardinia before it was ready because 'any force is enough to conquer this island'.⁸ The success of the Spanish army in Sardinia made the king plan a new expedition to recover Sicily the next year. Patiño pointed out that, although the conquest was easy, 'it was terrifying to consider its consequences. How would it be possible to avoid assistance from England to Sicily? From France? From Germany? How could we face that huge force?'⁹ He considered that 'Spain could never instigate a maritime war unless it was a sudden attack that could be finished in a single campaign. It would be impossible to employ enough men, although there was enough money, due to the large unpopulated areas of Spain and also due to a lack of free lines of communication to send men to increase and supply the troops.' In spite of his complaints, Patiño started to work after the prime minister, Alberoni, assured him that 'the king wanted to follow through with this expedition and wanted also to send 30 000 men, the artillery and everything necessary to make it successful'.¹⁰

The expedition's organization and preparation were carried out in Barcelona. The Vizconde del Puerto, a witness of this effort, summarized the work of Patiño:

I saw him in Barcelona and also on Llobregat's beaches, enduring the sun of July and August from morning till night, and eating there

⁶ A. Rodríguez Villa, *Patiño y Campillo: Reseña histórico-biográfica de estos dos Ministros de Felipe V* (Madrid, 1882), p. 20.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁸ M.A. Alonso Aguilera, *La conquista y el dominio español de Cerdeña, 1717-1720* (Valladolid, 1977).

⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 35.

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 38, 39.

some *fiambre* in order to avoid delays and chaos in the delivery of supplies and other important matters concerning the navy. Later I saw him in Barcelona's port from morning to evening, giving orders for ships sailing to Sicily and at the same time dealing with 50 different workmen. Nothing could disturb him or make him anxious; he took charge of everything from the outset, sharing this huge task with several co-workers who sent him all the necessary news.¹¹

Sicily was taken easily by the Spanish force. But after the Spanish navy was destroyed by the English fleet in Cabo Passaro, Spanish troops were left isolated on the island. Alberoni failed to establish a satisfactory agreement with the other states, so that, in spite of the great Spanish military effort and some victories such as Francavilla, diplomatic pressure forced Spanish troops to evacuate Sicily and Sardinia – a chapter closed with Prime Minister Alberoni's expulsion from Spain.

II. Spain and the Polish Succession War

In 1733 a new era dawned for the politics of Philip V and for the Spanish army. In February, Augustus II, King of Poland, died. For nearly two centuries the elective system of the Polish constitution – a strange kind of republic governed by a king – had caused a serious internal crisis with each change of ruler. In 1733, however, the Polish Crown became a target of international rivalry. Once again Austria and France found themselves in confrontation, each interested in having an influence over one of the largest states in eastern Europe. The court of Versailles supported the claims of the father-in-law of Louis XV, Stanislaus Leszczyński. Austria, Russia and Prussia signed a secret treaty undertaking not to allow Stanislaus to ascend the throne, considering it dangerous to have as a neighbour a monarch so closely related to the King of France. These states joined forces to support Augustus III, son of the deceased King of Poland, and sent troops to the border to prevent the Polish from electing their own king. The ambassadors entrusted with the mission of supporting (at all costs) the chosen candidate fought over the vote of the Polish Diet by resorting to promises and gifts. In 1733 the new succession crisis would give rise to armed conflict. The election by the Polish Diet of Stanislaus Leszczyński in July 1733 provoked a reaction by Augustus III, who, helped by Russian and Austrian troops, took the port of Danzig where Stanislaus had taken refuge. The latter was forced to flee.

The Polish succession war was also a pretext for those European powers who wanted to resolve other matters. For France, it offered the chance to strike another blow against Austria and expel it from Italy with the help of Spain, which was ready to take advantage of any situ-

¹¹ Vizconde del Puerto, Marqués de Santa Cruz de Marcenado, *Reflexiones Militares y Políticas* (Madrid, several edns).

ation to return to the Italian scene. On 26 September 1733, an alliance treaty was concluded in Turin between France and Savoy by which the smaller state received the promise of Milan, the certainty of obtaining financial aid and the support of an army of 40 000 soldiers. The wording of the treaty clearly showed the feeling of the French towards the Austrians: 'Everyone knows that the house of Austria has long abused the exorbitant power it has gained ...'. On 10 October France declared war on the emperor. The court of Versailles sent an army to the Rhine and another to join the troops in Savoy, which entered Milan on 3 November.

These events, and the promises of Cardinal Fleury, the French prime minister, were enough to gain the trust and support of Spain. A few days later, the First Family Compact between the two powers was signed in El Escorial. Fleury's anti-Austrian politics were combined with the dynastic aims of Philip V's second wife, Elizabeth Farnese. She sought the enthronement of her sons, Charles and Philip, in Italy, as the Spanish throne was destined to be occupied by Ferdinand, Philip V's son by his first marriage. With the treaty the queen was able to guarantee that her son Charles would get Parma and Piacenza and later, when the grand duke died, the succession of Tuscany. Although the Infante Charles had left for Tuscany in 1731 to assure his position and had, according to the *Gaceta de Madrid* of 15 April 1732, entered Florence amidst the acclamations of the crowds, the First Family Compact was essential to guarantee him these territories.

At the same time, this treaty demonstrated the political objectives of the Spanish prime minister. Patiño aimed at overcoming the strictly dynastic interests of Elizabeth Farnese, integrating them with Spain's general interests. Patiño strove to make the Queen's Italian hopes a part, from then on, of the Spanish Mediterranean political project. Support for this project would be centred in the Balearic Isles, Oran and the Italian duchies, as well as in the establishment of a naval base in Cartagena. Patiño probably had to make concessions to the queen, but his aim of achieving an equilibrium between regions, and finally of neutralizing Italy, was achieved in Philip V's second reign by those who had their political training under the minister.

III. The Expedition to Italy

As a consequence of the First Family Compact, Patiño set about preparing the forces needed to land on the Italian peninsula to fight alongside the French against the Austrian troops. The formation of such an expeditionary force required simultaneously the organization of an adequate logistic network and the design of a viable strategic plan, both of which were fundamental for the success of the expedition. The size of the enterprise and the diplomatic stakes involved made it necessary to enlist competent professionals. José Carrillo de Albornoz,

Count Montemar, an expert in Mediterranean matters, was appointed general commander. The support services were entrusted to the quartermaster-general of the campaign army, Joseph del Campillo y Cosio, an officer who had worked with Patiño for a long time and who had been trained under the influence of an experienced court administration.

Spain had at its disposal an army and fleet maintained on a war footing since the expedition to Oran in 1732, when this fortress, which had been in the hands of Muslims since 1708, was recaptured by a fleet and an expeditionary army led by the Count of Montemar. The Oran experience served as a reference for the expedition that began its preparations in Barcelona in 1733 and was bound for Italy. Many of the soldiers and officers from the new expedition to Italy, and also several commanders such as the Count of Montemar, had experience in the Oran operations. The campaign army's training was centered in Catalonia, where several towns and villages lodged the troops awaiting their embarkation. The city of Barcelona was transformed into the expedition's depot.

All in all, the initial project foresaw the preparation of a force of 34 infantry battalions and 38 cavalry squadrons, the total monthly cost of which would be 2 381 125 copper- and silver-alloy *reales*, including wages, the 'prest' (money given daily to the soldiers) and the bounty for arms and saddles, but excluding the provision of supplies and utensils.¹² Later on, and once operative on the battle-ground, these figures would rise significantly. In addition to the troops from the peninsula, the expedition also planned to include the forces present in Tuscany and in the port of Longon, whose monthly expenditure, according to a printed form produced by the Italian treasury in May of 1733, totalled 1 034 768 *reales*.¹³ All in all, the monthly expenditure of the expedition was calculated at around 3 415 893 copper- and silver-alloy *reales*.

With these estimates, in the spring and summer of 1733 the final preparations of the regiments destined to participate in the expedition took place. Many of these units were in a deplorable state, mostly owing to desertion. In order to bring them to a war footing, a voluntary recruitment system was carried out by unit officers, because of the advantages of quick recruitment, with men selected by colonels of the regiments or captains of the squadrons in exchange for a bonus for each soldier enlisted.

Once in Italy, two other procedures were used to reinforce the units. The foreign regiments were strengthened by Italian volunteers and German prisoners and deserters; the Spanish infantry and cavalry units were increased by consignments of conscripts and vagabonds sent from

¹² See statistics on the total cost of the 'prest', rewards, and other expenses of the troops during a campaign, 1732-3. AGS [Archivo General de Simancas], GM [Guerra Moderna], supplement, leg. 228.

¹³ Monthly cost of the Spanish military forces in Tuscany and Longon in 1733. Table drawn up by the Italian treasury in May 1733, AGS, GM, suppl., leg. 228.

Spain. These contingents of inexperienced soldiers were concentrated in Valencia, Barcelona or Alicante, whence they set off for Italy. On their arrival they were inspected and put at Montemar's disposition so that he could distribute them amongst the weakest regiments.

The troops also had to be equipped and supplied. During the eighteenth century, the Spanish government used two traditional systems to obtain military equipment and supplies: a centralized system, *sistema por administración*, carried out by the army itself, and a decentralized one, *sistema de asiento*, undertaken by private contractors. Both had disadvantages for the government, which had to struggle against squandering and waste in the first case and swindling and deception in the second. Patiño had a particular battle with the rapacity of the contractors, some of them very powerful. The most powerful contractors from the court had commissions in all the important cities. These agents, obeying the contractors' orders, tried to stir up the population against the measures adopted by Patiño.

Soldiers required uniforms and equipment. All infantry, cavalry and dragoon soldiers had the right, in theory, to a full uniform every 30 months (40 months depending on the period) and to half a uniform every 15 months. Despite these regulations, delivery of the uniform by the military administration was very often late. Cavalry horses had never been easy to breed in Spain, because the land was not fertile. This fact had obliged, and would oblige, the monarchy to promote and encourage the breeding of horses through means of tax benefits and other concessions. At the same time, the mobilization of the cavalry and its concentration in Barcelona required a larger infrastructure than that needed for the infantry. It was necessary to prepare space for stables and to look for barley, matters which put to the test the Principality of Catalonia's capacity for organization.

Count Mariani was appointed director of the artillery branch. He was given the responsibility of supervising 'all the costs run up by the movements of the depot, the construction of batteries, convoys and transportation such as those in the inspections, detachments and distribution of the convoy's cattle and all other things relating to the artillery corps'.¹⁴ But together with the heavy artillery, it was necessary to equip the corps with small arms, muskets and pistols, which were gathered from all the stores on the peninsula and were also manufactured in Plasencia.

One fundamental aspect of the organization of a field army was to assure the provision of food supplies. The soldiers had the right to a daily ration of bread. Its provision required a specialized team – a director, two officers, four service corps officers, someone to watch the store, two helpers and bakers. Baking required the transportation of iron ovens, which were in Cartagena, and the necessary materials to install them in the most appropriate place. Normally a contractor was

¹⁴ Order to Count of Mariani, San Lorenzo, Oct. 1733, *op. cit.*

hired to supply the necessary quantities of grain and the utensils and materials for the cooking of the bread for the whole duration of the campaign. On this expedition, however, a contractor was provided for a few months in the hope that suppliers could be hired in Italy on better terms for the royal treasury.

The prompt supply of bread was considered a matter of vital importance in all the campaigns of the period. Frederick the Great of Prussia, aware of this importance, clearly stated his concern for this matter on several occasions. On one particular occasion he complained that he was no longer the one who led the army – ‘the flour and the barley are now the leaders.’ In 1752 this great strategist tried to bring together the parts for 48 ovens because, as he stated, the fact that he ‘did not have enough in the 1744 campaign’ left him in a very awkward situation’. In Austria’s army, loaves of bread were prepared by ‘bread companies’ equipped with mobile and efficient ovens which were the envy of some foreign states. According to Christopher Duffy,¹⁵ one oven alone was capable of making a maximum of five batches of loaves weighing six pounds, every 48 hours. If from every batch an average of 200 loaves were produced, a maximum of 1000 loaves or 3000 rations were produced daily. As a general rule, the army’s ovens could not produce more than 3000 daily rations every 48 hours.

In all armies, the soldier received his ration of bread, but he had to buy his meat from the regimental butcher – a civilian businessman who was supervised by the military authorities. Even though the state was not directly involved in this business, the authorities assured that enough livestock was sent to the front in order to keep the troops supplied. These animals were herded behind the baggage.¹⁶

For transportation of supplies and artillery, the campaign army also used a private company. When necessary, essential transport was hired from civilians – carts, carriages and beasts of burden. When contracting these services, it was necessary to differentiate between ‘heavy carriers’, horses or mules, and ‘lighter carriers’, donkeys. Once the time had come, at the end of the journey, the army would approach whomever they had to pay, and pay them cash in hand. To work out the cost of baggage transportation, the number of leagues travelled and the weight loaded were taken into account according to Table 1.

In addition to recruitment, supplies and equipment, all expeditions required a command and a service system that needed to be organized on the peninsula and moved out to the front. Appointing the staff, the service corps, the chaplaincy and the sanitary service and forming the team of guides were matters of vital importance to the final preparations of the expedition. Once all the staff had been designated and Count Montemar was named general captain of the campaign army,

¹⁵ C. Duffy, *The Army of Frederick the Great* (New York, 1974), p. 135.

¹⁶ C. Duffy, *The Army of Maria Theresa: The Armed Forces of Imperial Austria, 1740–1780* (New York, 1977), p. 128.

Table 1 Cost of baggage transportation¹⁷

Type	Load	Journey	Cost
Heavy carrier	10 <i>arrobas</i> (110 kg approx.)	1 league (5 km approx.)	1.5 <i>reals</i>
Lighter carrier	6.5 <i>arrobas</i> (74 kg approx.)	1 league	1 <i>real</i>

the appointment of the officers who had to command the regiments, battalions and squadrons took place. In general, according to the quartermaster-general Joseph del Campillo's estimates, the expedition included an excessive number of noble officers, who, with their luggage and other privileges, were more of a nuisance than a help. For this reason, Campillo asked Patiño to 'relieve the army of two thirds of the general officers, with their excess of luggage, which both hinders and impedes the marching and the supplies. The only way to resolve this is by not letting them come. Furthermore, the fact that there is a multitude of officers means that three of them are leading every two battalions and in this way their status is suffering'.¹⁸ Not all these officers were underemployed aristocrats. A campaign was a good opportunity to gain recognition or glory. Many of the expedition's officers were old veterans who had participated in almost all the previous campaigns, including the succession war, and whose only way of life was to stay with the army whilst waiting for some compensation from the monarch – an unfilled command or a superior rank – for many years of service and other military merits. In general, after 27 or 30 years in the army, a military officer had attended a large number of 'functions': he had participated in numerous battles, expeditions and sieges; he had suffered all kinds of wounds; and he had at some time been held prisoner by the Moors and the king's other enemies.

One of the essential services of the expedition was the medical department. Patiño spared no effort to give the expedition the best possible health care, providing the hospital and the campaign pharmacy with the best specialists and the most modern material. He provided all possible means to get the best surgeons on the peninsula to join the expedition and form part of the campaign hospital: 'When there is an expedition, the best surgeons must always be taken out of the Spanish hospitals'¹⁹ – and be sent to the campaign hospitals in Livorno and in Porto Ferrajo on the island of Elba.

An army chaplain with the authority of a vicar-general was named to supervise religious services during the campaign. Once again, the experience gained during the Oran expedition, together with other

¹⁷ Real Cédula, El Pardo, 16 Mar. 1740. Nov. Recop. [Novísima Recopilación], III, bk 6, title 19, law 15.

¹⁸ Campillo to Patiño, Ceprano, 28 Mar. 1734, AGS, GM, leg. 2050.

¹⁹ Patiño to Campillo, Madrid, 2 Apr. 1734, *op. cit.*

requirements such as moral virtue and intellectual achievement, were the qualities most highly esteemed.

One of the services on which the success of the operations unquestionably depended was a reliable and speedy mail service. During the preparation for the expedition, Montemar had the relay corps at his disposition for the journey from Madrid to Barcelona, in order to send quickly whatever matter concerned the royal service. During the campaign, an extra mail service was organized so that news from Spain arrived weekly to the ports of Livorno and Naples and vice versa. Thanks to this postal service, Philip V and Patiño were relatively well informed of the development of all the operations taking place in the war in Italy, and therefore able to send more or less appropriate orders. Patiño repeatedly demanded that each member of staff and the Quartermaster-General Campillo regularly send him the latest news.

IV. The Life of the Spanish Soldiers in Italy

The life of the soldiers directly depended on the good management of the army and the treasury service corps. This is why, in the European armies of the eighteenth century, military administration constituted the true strength of a state's war effort, and the primary efforts of military reformers of the period were devoted to administration, with the aim of improving the quality and quantity of all aspects of the upkeep of their troops. However, other elements that escaped the control of the military administration influenced the life of the soldier: climatic conditions and the unexpected misfortunes of active service. When, at the end of December 1733, the expedition left Barcelona for Livorno, bad weather conditions prevented the expedition's ships from all arriving at the same time in Italy. The infantry, which managed to disembark without serious problems, had to suffer the consequences of the late arrival of 'all the ingredients for the baking of bread and the bakers, the campaign hospital, and everything else apart from the troops that are essential in an army'.²⁰ In this way the delay in the naming of Campillo as the quartermaster-general of the campaign army put Montemar in a difficult situation.

All that belongs to the Treasury is without a leader because, even though Fondesviela gives some guidelines on how to form stores . . . because he holds the post temporarily and he has never been much in charge of it before, I doubt very much whether he does it well. It is not possible for an army to function without bread or hospitals and these are taking a long time to arrive, and such is the case for the convoy.²¹

²⁰ Montemar to Patiño, Pisa, 6 Jan. 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2053.

²¹ Montemar to Patiño, Pisa, 5 Jan. 1734, *op. cit.*

Spain's decision to direct the expeditionary army to the south of Italy to regain Naples and Sicily obliged the troops, in the spring of 1734, to march 245 miles. The spring and summer of that year were characterized by a serious drought which was even more acute in the south, and had a tremendous effect on the marching soldiers and on their rations of bread. The drought made it necessary not only for grain and flour to be sent from Spain but also for it to be bought in Tuscany. The quality of both of these consignments was so poor that the suppliers did not want to accept them. When the experts examined what had come from Tuscany, they stated that 'the seed with which the wheat was mixed, what it was made of, is known to be harmful and that sent from Spain has such a bad smell, which was without a doubt acquired on embarkation, and for this reason it was necessary to sell it without being able to distribute it amongst the troops due to the bad impression they have of it'.²²

The thing that could most negatively affect the troops was the deficiency of the 'prest' – the soldiers' daily pay – and the delay in the payment of their wages. Campillo had calculated that a delay in payment of two or three months could be tolerated by the soldiers, but the inadequate payment of the prest could not. Even though the troops that Montemar sent on the Sicily expedition took the island with ease and were well received by the natives, they suffered many hardships over the following months due to the fact they were a long way from Naples, the region's most important supply centre. Marquis Gracia Real, who led the Sicily expedition, wrote to Madrid stating that 'the troops do not receive any consideration; after their incessant toils they are not well attended to'.²³ On that island the soldiers suffered from currency inflation and the corresponding increase in price of foodstuffs.²⁴ Furthermore, billeting in quarters and barracks instead of in camps forced the soldiers to pay with their own money for the firewood needed to cook with, and for the oil for lamps. In Spain those supplies were received by troops free from the royal treasury or from the inhabitants of the area they found themselves in. All this, according to the Marquis of Gracia Real, 'makes it impossible for the troops to cook and consequently to survive'.²⁵ The delay in payment of the troops' wages also affected them considerably. On 3 August 1734, Campillo wrote to Patiño stating that the soldiers had not been paid since February and for this reason he received a multitude of 'mortifications that Your Excellence could only understand by knowing the mood of the troops and by knowing on whom they usually vent their anger'.²⁶

²² Campillo to Patiño, May 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2050.

²³ Marquis of Gracia Real to Patiño, Palermo, 9 Sept. 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2052.

²⁴ Spanish troops received their sustenance in Neapolitan *cequies cavlines*, currency which in Sicily lost value. When Spanish troops were paid in silver they usually lost 4 grains of silver in every *tarin*, a considerable loss in a prest so limited. *Op. cit.*

²⁵ *Op. cit.*

²⁶ Campillo to Patiño, Naples, 3 Aug. 1734, AGS, GM, leg. 2050.

The survival of the troops was determined to a large extent by the good relations that Spain had with the Italian states. It was essential that the troops remain well disciplined and in harmony with the inhabitants when travelling through the territories on which they relied for their upkeep. The welcome and collaboration of the natives in the various territories varied according to the state. In the Duchy of Tuscany, civilian collaboration in troop provisions always went hand in hand with insinuations and mistrust. This was understandable, given that in the 1729 Seville Treaty, Spain had obtained the right to maintain garrisons in Parma and Tuscany, and the burden of the upkeep of the troops was resented amongst the inhabitants of this duchy. On the other hand, the papal government offered all kinds of material assistance to the Spanish troops when they inevitably had to cross this territory when marching south – a visible sign of support from the pontiff, Clement XII, for the French–Spanish decision to expel the Austrians from Italy.

One rather peculiar case in local relations with the Spanish troops occurred in Genoa, where several quarrels showed that the Spanish soldiers were not welcome. For example, on 8 August 1734, a Spanish corporal went for a walk outside the city walls. On returning he tried to get in through the Besaño gate and was stopped by the sentry; 'being surprised by this he told the officer on guard that he was a soldier of the Spanish troops and if he did not believe him he said he could arrest him, on hearing this the guard replied to the officer that if he was a Spanish soldier he should go back there, because he had only come to spy.'²⁷

This hostility derived in part from the activity of Spanish recruiters in the Republic of Genoa. There existed an agreement for the mutual return of deserters between France and the Genoese Republic, and for this reason Spanish recruiters were ordered to abstain from recruiting French deserters. They took no notice and continued their activities in a covert way, also luring soldiers from the army of the King of Sardinia, who was so angry at such a continuous desertion on the part of his troops – more than 1200 men were lured to the Spanish army – that he took a series of measures in order to call a halt to the desertion. He set up cavalry patrols outside the gates of his cities and on the roads, stopping the soldiers from escaping, and ordered that captured deserters be executed. However, the Spanish recruiters, among whom was Carbonel, who had agreed to deliver 4000 soldiers to the Spanish army, asserted 'that the king of Sardinia cannot complain to the Republic of Genoa, because he cannot prevent the recruits from being recruited in my house and being sent directly to our boats from the office. In this way, recruiting is done quietly and happily for the Spanish corps.'²⁸ In June 1734 the Genoese government, exasperated by

²⁷ Bernardo de Espeleta a Patiño, Genoa, 8 Aug. 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2051.

²⁸ Marquis of San Felipe to Castelar, 29 Mar. 1734, *op. cit.*

this continuous recruitment, imprisoned several Spanish recruiters. The Madrid government had to request the recruiters' freedom through diplomatic channels.

The Spanish government logically expected that the collaboration on the part of the Italian states would include material assistance as well as help with the very serious problem of desertion. The multiplicity of the Italian states and the proximity of their borders meant that there was a clear incentive to desert. Montemar, who knew that desertion was lethal for an army, told Patiño:

In spite of having taken as many measures as imaginable to stop this desertion, I do not know whether they will be enough. The biggest problems are the multiplicity of sovereigns in this area and their zeal for independence. All want to defend their territories, but I have pressed them in order to be allowed to follow the deserters everywhere, even in the Papal State.²⁹

Among other measures, Montemar sent a circular to all the villages in the state of Tuscany requiring them to 'win over and then hand over the deserters from our troops, with the stipulation of their being pardoned for their crime, and six pesos will be given to the civilian who hands over a deserter.'³⁰

When passing through the Papal States, the army experienced a rare kind of desertion, motivated by the desire of many soldiers to see the city of Rome. Once their curiosity was satisfied these deserters usually returned to the army, taking advantage of Montemar's forbearance; he considered their return as an excellent advertisement for conditions in the Spanish army.³¹

The highest desertion rates were in the foreign corps, especially in the Walloon guards, the Borgoña regiment and the Naples regiment. In contrast to this, the Spanish regiments, such as those from Castile, Soria, Zamora, Navarre and the Crown regiment, were always full.³²

The desertion of enemy troops was for Montemar's army both a valuable source of information and a means of recruiting soldiers. There were many 'Tudescos', as the Germans were called, who deserted Austrian ranks, especially when they were defeated and before falling prisoner. In this way, wrote Campillo, 'after these castles surrendered, all the corps began to be filled'. Only in cases of extreme necessity, however, were the foreign regiments reinforced with Austrian prisoners;³³ in general, all of them were sent to Spain as prisoners of war. On 21 September 1734, Campillo wrote to Patiño describing the qual-

²⁹ Montemar to Patiño, Pisa, 4 Jan. 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2053.

³⁰ Montemar to Sebastián Eslava, Sienna, 14 Feb. 1734, *op. cit.*, suppl. leg. 229.

³¹ 'Deserters who fled in order to see the city of Rome have returned thanks to the general pardon and the indulgence granted by Montemar, who has offered them the possibility of joining the ranks in the corps of their choice.' Campillo to Patiño, Naples, 12 May 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2050.

³² Campillo to Patiño, Naples, 7 Sept. 1734, *op. cit.*

³³ Marquis of Gracia Real to Patiño, Gela (Sicily), 18 July 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2052.

ity of the 1492 imperial prisoners that had been put on board for Spain: 'amongst them the cavalry were good people but the infantry were not up to much.'³⁴ The humane treatment of prisoners formed part of the general framework in which this century's campaigns have been characterized. Before being put on board for Spain, the Austrian officers held prisoner were granted freedom of movement by the Spanish authorities in Livorno, as long as they promised not to escape: 'The Austrian prisoners who were found at Port Longon are staying in the fortified town of Livorno,' writes the Count of Gauna to Patiño. 'After the officers have once again given their word of honour to remain free but under my orders in this city of Livorno, they will be sent to Barcelona.'³⁵

The greatest wastage in Montemar's army was due not to desertion but to illness. Campillo summarizes the state of the troops in June 1734: 'Even though they have suffered from a lot from illnesses, there are few dead and scarcely any deserters', and some time later: 'There have not really been that many deserters . . . the biggest problem has been the illnesses.' The attempt to send the best possible surgeons to Italy was motivated by the fact that the soldiers were bound to fall ill sooner or later. It became normal for Montemar's army to leave behind, on their marches, a large number of soldiers who would be attended to in the best way possible. 'On each march a hospital has been needed to be left behind because of the sick, in all more than 4,000 sick have been attended to. The hospitalization is more expensive than the production of the bread and an agreement has been reached as regards treatment with convents, brotherhoods or individuals and very few of these people have died or been lost.'³⁶ Apart from humanitarian motives, the careful attention paid to the sick was due to the fact that once they had recovered they constituted the best reinforcements that could be hoped for. Montemar was very aware that a recovered veteran soldier was worth more than any new recruit.³⁷

The Marquis of Gracia Real describes the daily life of the soldiers in Italy:

It is so normal for the troops to have illnesses because after an embarkation they sleep in cloisters open to the inclemency and the harshness of the winter and the humidity of that country, without any straw to lie on, because even though they were given a little bit of well-threshed straw on entering the state of Tuscany, within a few days it turned into dust and it was more of a hindrance than a help. They were also given a little firewood, which was scarcely enough for them to cook once a day and, even though this was

³⁴ Campillo to Patiño, Naples, 21 Sept. 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2050.

³⁵ Count of Gauna to Patiño, Livorno, 27 Nov. 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2052.

³⁶ Campillo to Patiño, Naples, 24 May 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2050.

³⁷ 'I urge you to collect all the convalescent soldiers, because these recruits are the best and the regiments that came here rather weak are becoming stronger thanks to them.' Montemar to Eslava, Campo de Aversa, 1 May 1734, *op. cit.*, suppl., Leg. 229.

borne in mind, it was not taken into account. In this way the army has left almost 4000 sick in the states of Tuscany, from the Papal State and this kingdom, but they are recovering, because up until now 1300 have rejoined us, and a similar number from the Papal State and from this one are expected to arrive one of these days from Livorno.³⁸

Many health teams established and organized themselves in the port of Livorno, given that the troops coming from Spain disembarked there and were often suffering from contagious diseases caught during the sea voyage or from accidents or misfortunes during the journey. The number of sick that were attended to monthly in the Livorno hospitals averaged 1000. In April the number of healed soldiers was 1080, and in May, more than 900.³⁹ Cases of typhus and other contagious diseases nevertheless reached high figures, always exceeding the number of deaths in battle.

V. Logistic and Financial Problems

'It seems to be true that the military leader who commits the fewer possible errors in battle comes out triumphant. But it is even more true that the logistic plan that secures the most resources and uses the least, is what wins wars.'⁴⁰ The strategic objectives of an eighteenth-century expedition had to be supported by an appropriate logistic and financial network, without which the most ambitious projects were rendered infeasible.

In the eighteenth century, logistical problems became dominant military concerns. A deficiency in arms and ammunition supplies reduced an army to a defenceless mob, but a shortage of water, food and warm clothes resulted in an army that was hungry, thirsty, numb with cold and, therefore, also inefficient.⁴¹ During wartime, an adequate or inadequate logistic structure determined victory or defeat.

The provision of adequate supplies during a campaign determined the friendliness of the relations with the occupied country, from a good network of stores to an abundant and rapid means of communication and transport. As a consequence, one of the most pressing logistic matters was to be found in the troops' marches and unexpected movements. In these cases, the service corps had to overtake the main body of the army to prepare supplies and lodging and to provide the necessary money.

Montemar's army in Italy benefited from two factors. The Italian

³⁸ Marquis of Gracia Real to Patiño, Naples, 8 June 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2052.

³⁹ *Op. cit.*

⁴⁰ K. Macksey, *For Want of a Nail: The Impact on War of Logistics and Communications* (London, 1989).

⁴¹ A. Raquejo Alonso, *Historia de la administración y fiscalización económica de las fuerzas armadas* (Madrid, 1992), p. 66.

terrain had been well known by the Spanish for several centuries, and nothing hindered the quick transportation and fluid connection between the two Mediterranean peninsulas. The logistic system of his army worked to establish the Mediterranean ports of the Iberian peninsula as bases, from where all types of undamageable equipment and material on the journey were sent: *matériel*, arms, gunpowder, ammunition, tents, German boxes and even horses, due to the poor condition of the Italian horses. However, it was necessary to procure on Italian soil other kinds of product, such as wheat, straw and barley. Foodstuffs could not be imported because they would be spoiled upon arrival at their destination. When occasionally grain, wheat or barley was sent from Spain it became very damp and had bad effects if eaten, due to the long journey.

These products of prime necessity were purchased and stored in Italy under good conditions for the army. This was possible because of Spanish knowledge of Italian laws and society. When it came to choosing suppliers, Campillo gave more importance to their having ample money and prestige than to accepting what seemed to be advantageous contracts. He knew all too well that very often the supplier had to enter into serious debt in order to meet his obligations. Those selected were Duke Brunasi, elect to the Naples Popolo, 'who has at his discretion the town of Naples and it is very much in his interest to lead the town at this time and the Duke of Berreta, who had supplied the Austrians in Sicily and, therefore, had much experience'.⁴²

The advantages of having a general store for the supply of grain were obvious. Quartermaster-General Campillo saw the store as the only means of supplying a field army that was continually on the move, whose 'sudden' marches did not give enough time to prepare anything, and whose dispersal made it a constant problem to supply provisions. Furthermore, supplying the troops on their march to Calabria, an area that itself had become impoverished due to drought and the continual passage of troops, would have been very expensive. However, even though at the beginning it seemed that costs were going to be high, according to the rough calculations carried out by the campaign accountant's office, Campillo achieved a profit of 25 per cent on the basis of devaluation of costs of grain and straw.

Apart from grain, other food needed by the soldiers could be obtained only from Italian sources. In general, soldiers marching anywhere, like a swarm of locusts, would eat all the reserves that local communities had. Horses required vast quantities of fodder, and a large number of them were needed to pull the baggage in the carriages. Experience had led some states such as Tuscany to organize a supply system that, while providing the soldiers with what they needed, benefited the local communities. This system was based on a coupon method: Italian merchants received receipts in exchange for products

⁴² Campillo to Patiño, Aversa, 2 May 1734, AGS, GM, leg. 2050.

sold to the army. These were then exchanged for money by the quartermaster-general.

Another logistics problem was the need to billet the troops in the towns through which they passed or in which they settled. In Spain the royal treasury was responsible for billeting, and this cost was borne by the taxpaying population. In Italy, however, the cost of billeting, the so-called 'duty' (*gabela*), was borne by the soldiers themselves. The billeting tax was charged in the local products bought by the Spanish soldiers. The grand duke's ministers, taking the number of troops into account, set up a monthly tax that the Spanish soldiers had to pay in foodstuffs for their billeting. In 1732 at Livorno, the rate of monthly tax was 300 *cequies* per person. In general, the tax collected produced more money than the troops had spent in terms of billeting. It was therefore necessary to negotiate with the grand duke so that he would hand the surplus over to the Spanish soldiers. In 1732 and 1733, the tax surplus was distributed amongst the soldiers. However, when the 1734 war started, the number of troops had risen considerably, and, after negotiations, the soldiers benefited by getting the monthly tax reduced from 300 to 150 *cequies* per soldier. These negotiations between the duke and the Spanish troops were a source of argument and conflict that lasted for the whole campaign. Each year the tax had to be renegotiated, and negotiations could last several months.

The upkeep of an army on campaign was undoubtedly more expensive than that of an army in peace time. If, on top of this, the campaign army was not operating on national territory, then costs shot up exponentially. The yearly income of the Spanish monarchy has been calculated at around 21 million *escudos*, each *escudo* being worth 10 copper- and silver-alloy *reales*.⁴³ If the expenditure of this campaign in one month, according to the report sent by the Italian treasury, totalled 7 650 762 copper- and silver-alloy *reales*,⁴⁴ a higher amount than budgeted at the beginning of the expedition, the cost of the campaign army in Italy amounted to approximately 3.5 per cent of the entire state's monthly income, and therefore more than 40 per cent of the annual budget.

Of the amount budgeted for the army in Italy, war costs, including the pay of the infantry, cavalry and dragoon formations and the staff, accounted for 49 per cent. Food supplies accounted for another 35 per cent. Of what was left, 10 per cent was spent on transport costs, the war navy and the merchant navy needed to transport troops, provisions or mail. The other 5 per cent constituted what was known as the 'Tuscany Expenditure', a miscellaneous fund which, amongst other things, included the domestic expenses run up by Prince Charles.⁴⁵

The large amount of money needed for the upkeep of the campaign

⁴³ A. Domínguez Ortiz, *Sociedad y Estado en el siglo XVIII español* (Madrid, 1976).

⁴⁴ ACS, GM, leg. 2050.

⁴⁵ Table drawn up by the general treasury of the Spanish army in Italy, *op. cit.*

army made it necessary to maintain a constant stream of specie, which was obtained by every possible means. There was no regular timing for sending money from Spain to Italy: Patiño sent Quartermaster-General Campillo everything as soon as it arrived. Bills of exchange were most commonly used, especially when, because of the harsh winters, money 'in kind' could not be sent from Spain. These bills were drawn on the banks in commercial centres, the most preferred of which was Naples.

The advantage in using bills lay in the fact that money was received in the respective currency of each Italian state. On the other hand, if money was received in cash from Spain it had to be melted to make the local currency. This system was one of the most commonly used at the beginning of the campaign. At the request of Campillo it was decided to send the silver 'in kind', that is to say, in bars without any marks on them, which, once in the Florence mint, were made into the country's currency. The silver, which at first came from Spain, ended up coming directly from America in the form of thick Mexican silver or Mexican pesos,⁴⁶ on ships that when coming from America stopped off in Cadiz. From there they were redirected to the port of Livorno. Once the Mexican silver had arrived it was melted and reduced to 'king's kind', unmarked bars which were easily accepted by the bankers who, in turn, provided the country's currency. In the time that the silver took to arrive and be melted, Campillo fought to get loans in order to be able to pay the prest. This was not a problem when the bankers found out that new consignments of silver were about to arrive or that they were in the process of being recast.

Financial management was not easy for the service corps and the treasury. The handling of large sums and the constant mobility of the troops made accurate accounting, and therefore control of expenditure, difficult. Very early on Madrid was suspicious of whether the funds were being correctly managed. Patiño started to demand that Campillo make a comprehensive inspection of expenditure and reduce costs. In order to send the amount of money needed, Patiño repeatedly insisted on the necessity for Campillo to send regular reports on the 'precise state and news of the progress of everything in Italy'.

Very early on, Campillo was accused of negligence. In response to this accusation he began to defend his actions, maintaining several arguments, amongst which he highlighted that the cost of an army on campaign had always been higher than that of an army in peacetime. Furthermore, the continual movement of the troops made the task of the treasury, which did not even have at its disposal a table to do the accounts, extremely difficult. Thus, controlling the total expenditure was almost impossible because of the lack of reliable information about the money in existence in other towns.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ The thick Mexican silver cost two *reales de vellón* more in every *doblón*. *Op. cit.*, suppl., leg. 228.

⁴⁷ Campillo to Patiño, 10 Aug. 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2051.

The biggest costs were incurred in Tuscany, because it was the most expensive state. The worst financial management was in Genoa, where there were big discrepancies that Campillo's administration were unable to explain. The root of these accounting voids lay in the ease with which the expenses, to which money had not been assigned, increased without anyone controlling them

in a way that it is feared they will equal the daily household expenses of the army. In general, things are undertaken without being planned or studied; it is the treasury who suffers and the quartermaster-general is the only one who sees, observes and feels this, and he cannot prevent the money being spent on undoing mistakes made at the beginning.⁴⁸

One problem which contributed to worsening the army's financial administration was the difficulty in coordinating the administration's actions with the decisions of the commanding general due to personal differences between Campillo and Count Montemar. Campillo's complaints were continually received in Madrid; about the lack of information on Montemar's strategic plans, his uncommunicativeness, the continual changes in plans and for not communicating these changes to Campillo in good time.

Campillo's administration followed some guidelines that remained unchanged throughout the campaign in the south of Italy. As the consignments of money were not constant, and some of the operations were not essential, he always aimed to meet the urgent costs and maintain a surplus to pay for sieges or sudden attacks. Amongst the most important expenses were the soldiers' *prest* and the army's operations. For example, on 10 August 1734, in order to be able to meet the cost of the *prest* and help with the Gaeta and Pescara sieges, the quartermaster-general owed 50 000 pesos in Tuscany 'that I left unpaid, giving several reasons'. He paid neither the cost of food supplies nor fodder that the army had consumed when passing through the Papal State, 'apologising for not settling the account, causing delays in the accountant's office and raising objections over the payment. All so as not to run the risk of precluding any of the army's operations.' In this way, he also owed 240 000 pesos to the provision suppliers, whom he had not paid for three months of supplies; but, as he reasoned, 'I have been able to delay them and lead them on in such way that we have never been better supplied.'

Such manoeuvres allowed the quartermaster-general to attend intermittently to the necessities of the army; but, at the same time, as was well known, such practices focused on his person 'all the hate of the troops and of the world'.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Campillo to Patiño, Naples, 3 Aug. 1734, *op. cit.*

⁴⁹ 'Attracting to myself the hatred of the whole army, I have managed by holding back the *prest* of August, together with a further amount, to cover the usual expenses and those of the embarkation for Sicily. The sieges of Gaeta and Pescara and the

VI. The Strategic Objectives

As the Spanish army advanced towards the south of the Italian peninsula, popular demonstrations of support in the kingdom of Naples increased. The inhabitants of Castel Novo, Valmente and Frosinove welcomed Infante Charles with great shows of affection. The Austrian viceroy retreated towards Bari, without having received the reinforcements he was expecting from the Empire. The Spanish troops advanced quickly, taking towns, cities and fortresses. When this news reached the Spanish court, Philip V issued a royal decree in which he expressed his wish the kingdom of Naples to be for the Infante Charles, who would be his legitimate heir. With this declaration, Philip V, as the legitimate king, handed over his rights to his son. On 10 March 1734, Prince Charles entered triumphantly into the capital. In the royal palace, he received the local council and representatives of the nobility. On 14 March, he passed a decree in Civita-Castellana in which he granted the Neapolitans a general amnesty, confirmed their privileges, laws and customs and suspended all the impositions and taxes established by the Austrian government. On the 15th, the succession of Charles was made public. The news was greeted with great happiness by the people of Naples. From that moment on, Spanish strategy concentrated on driving the Austrians completely out of the south of Italy and of Sicily.

The general commander of the army had not only to maintain his troops but also to plan the operations in accordance with the orders from Madrid. The general order to expel the Austrians from the south of Italy had to be carried out using an operative plan that Montemar had to develop, opting sometimes for open confrontation and at others for sieges, moving the army in one way or another or selecting the troops and commands for each of the military engagements. In the eighteenth century decisive battles were scarce compared with previous centuries. As a result of that, historians frequently speak of 'soft' wars characterized by skirmishes, more or less decisive encounters and, especially, by besieging strategic fortresses, cities and enclaves.

Siege operations were still very important in this century: stripping the enemy of an important fortress, where arms, ammunition and supplies were stored, could be an extremely useful element in the final outcome of a conflict. Around 1730 there were still generals who thought that victory in battle was sometimes not even important, given that very often it could not be exploited. For this reason it is not surprising that open confrontation was often regarded as not worth the risks compared with sieges.⁵⁰ For the ten months taken in reclaiming

blockade of Capua are so costly as to exhaust the treasury.' Campillo to Patiño, Naples, 27 July 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2050.

⁵⁰ M.S. Anderson, *Guerra y Sociedad en la Europa del Antiguo Régimen* (Madrid, 1990), pp. 90–95 (*War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime, 1618–1789*, Leicester, 1988; 2nd edn, Montreal, 1998).

the south of Italy, Count Montemar's army experienced open confrontation only in the battle of Bitonto. Most of his conquests were carried out by besieging decisive strong points.

Battles in open field

The only significant prolonged 'open battle' fought by Montemar's army in Italy was the battle of Bitonto. The Austrian forces were defeated at Bitonto on 25 May in one of the most decisive battles of the century.⁵¹ It is true that political and diplomatic dynamism prevented Spain from totally exploiting this triumph. Nevertheless from a military point of view it was an important victory, won by the revitalized army without the support of allies, and one which deserves to be studied.

Montemar's decision to crush the Austrians in the south of Italy became irreversible when enemy spies and his own outposts informed him of the arrival of 8000 Austrian reinforcements. The troops assigned to confront the Austrians were the army's best. Amongst them were the Spanish regiment of guards, the Walloons and two dozen companies of grenadiers detached from their parent regiments (see Tables 2 and 3).

The confrontation began 9 miles from Bitonto, on an easily defensible ground chosen by the Austrians. Initially, Montemar tried to confront only the imperial cavalry, mistakenly believing that the infantry had not yet joined them. After more closely observing the enemy's positions he ordered that most of his cavalry move to the left flank, where he considered the terrain was more advantageous for outflanking the imperial lines.

In his plan of attack, Montemar intended to take advantage of the Austrian troops' vulnerable areas. The Austrian deployment took no account of the defensive potential of their position. Nor did they coordinate their infantry and cavalry. Montemar began by sending his strongest element, Maceda's Walloon guards and Swiss, against the enemy centre. Prefiguring their behaviour at Mollwitz on 10 April 1741, the Habsburg infantry wavered under the steady fire of the Spanish. Montemar knew how to take advantage of this moment of weakness to cast the rest of the troops into the fight, a decision which denoted the Austrians' defeat and immediately all that was in front of me began to flee'.

The dispersion and capture of enemy troops was a decisive factor in determining a complete eighteenth-century victory. Some of the Austrian infantry, amongst them their commander, General Rodosqui, managed to find refuge in the fortified town of Bitonto. From there, Rodosqui sent a message asking for an honourable surrender that would prevent them from becoming prisoners of war. When Montemar

⁵¹ J. Black, *The Rise of the European Powers, 1679-1793* (New York, 1990), pp. 86-7.

Table 2 The Spanish forces at Bitonto

<i>Regiments of infantry</i>	<i>Battalions</i>
Spanish guards	3
Walloon guards	3
Lombardy	2
The Crown	2
Swiss of Besber	2
Grenadiers: 22 companies from the Regiments of Guadalajara, Africa, Seville, Navarre, Soria, Naples, Royal Bourbon, Castile, Antwerp, Namur, Guards, Zamora and Burgundy.	
<i>Regiments of cavalry</i>	<i>Squadrons</i>
Brigade of royal carabinieri	600 horsemen
Company of grenadiers	150 horsemen
Bourbon	2 squadrons
Extremadura	2
Milan	2
Malta	2
Flanders	2
Andalusia	2
Dragoons of Pavia	2
Dragoons of France	2
Grenadiers: 2 companies, one from the regiment of Tarragona and the other one from Batavia	
Dragoons: from the regiments of Tarragona and Batavia	
Artillery: 150 artillerymen	

rejected Rodosqui's request, the Austrians continued to fire from the walls until night, when they finally gave in.

The Spanish cavalry rushed to capture the enemy horsemen, who because of their mobility and dispersion were escaping with greater ease. Most of the Austrian cavalry, headed by their leader, the Prince of Belmonte, Marquis of San Vicente, succeeded in finding refuge in Bari. When Montemar arrived at that city, after occupying Bitonto and taking many prisoners of war, he began a siege. Bari soon surrendered in the same way as Bitonto.

The Austrian relief force was for all practical purposes destroyed. The material trophies were obvious: captured generals, officers, men, flags, horses, tents, supplies and ammunition, all clear signs of triumph. According to Montemar's report, the military victory was so overwhelming that when the Prince of Belmonte had to send the news of his defeat to Vienna he felt it necessary to ask Montemar to release an officer to carry out this job. In contrast, the number of dead among the Spanish totalled 99 and the wounded 196, mainly among the Walloon troops, who penetrated the sector of the battle line providing the strongest resistance⁵² (see Table 4).

⁵² Marquis of Gracia Real to Patiño, Naples, 8 June 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2052.

Table 3 Disposition of the Spanish forces⁵³

<i>Column</i>	<i>Disposition</i>
1	Lieutenant General Marquis of Pozo Blanco Field Marshal Eustaquio la Vrevila Field Marshal Count of Zezile
2	Lieutenant General Duque de Liria Field Marshal Reinald Macdonel Field Marshal Melchor Abarca 7 companies of grenadiers 3 battalions of Spanish guards 1 battalion of Swiss
3	Lieutenant General the Duke of Castropiñano Field Marshal José Grimau Companies from the regiments of Bourbon, Milan and Flanders
4	Field Marshal the Marquis of Bay 7 companies of grenadiers, from the regiment of Lombardy and the Crown
5	Lieutenant General the Marquis of Chateaufort Field Marshal the Marquis of Tay Companies of Extremadura, Malta and Andalusia
6	Lieutenant General the Count of Maceda Field Marshal Juan Bautista de Gaxe and Luis Porter 8 companies of grenadiers 3 battalions of Walloon guards and 2 battalions of Swiss
7	Lieutenant General the Marquis of Mina Field Marshal the Marquis of Castelar Royal grenadiers; grenadiers from the regiment of Batavia, Tarragona, Pavia and France, plus 100 horse: 50 from the regiment of Tarragona and 50 from Batavia

Each column had at its head 50 pioneers.

The sieges

Once the Spanish hold on the south Italian peninsula was secure, the next objective was to take control of Sicily. Resistance on the island was limited. The garrisons received neither reinforcements nor help from the Austrians. Even though the governors of the Messina, Siracusa and Trapani fortresses received orders from the emperor to stock up on supplies for nine months, 'I deduce', wrote Montemar, 'that the Germans are not thinking of helping these kingdoms for the moment'.⁵⁴ In Sicily no open battle was necessary – just a few isolated confrontations and numerous sieges. In a short time Trapani, Termini, Melazzo, Augusta, Siracusa and Ciudadela de Messina were taken.⁵⁵

Often the resistance was no more than symbolic. According to M. S. Anderson,

⁵³ 'Estado de las tropas de que se componia el cuerpo que atacó al de los enemigos en el campo de Bitonto', report by Montemar on the victory of Bitonto, 27 May 1734, AGS., GM, suppl., leg. 229.

⁵⁴ Montemar to Patiño, Messina, 1 Sept. 1734, *op. cit.*, leg. 2046.

⁵⁵ Montemar to Eslava, Palermo, 30 Sept. 1734, *op. cit.*, suppl., leg. 229.

Table 4 Number of Montemar's soldiers dead and wounded in the battle of Bitonto⁵²

<i>Regiments</i>	<i>Dead</i>	<i>Wounded</i>
Walloon guards	31	113
Spanish guards	28	16
Swiss	16	25
2 companies grenadiers of Castile	4	6
1st company of Africa	3	3
2 companies of Zamora	1	9
1st company of Seville	–	3
2 companies of Navarre	3	3
2 companies of Naples	–	6
1st company of Namur	–	3
2 companies of Burgundy	6	2
Regiment of Lombardy	7	4
Regiment of the Crown	–	3
Total	99	196

When, in 1734, the Spanish forces attacked the Austrian Castel Nuovo garrison, in Naples, one Florentine observer wrote the following: 'The besiegers, as worried about the city as the besieged, make signs with a handkerchief when they prepare to fire and they warn the inhabitants so that they return to their houses; until they are safe they do not start to fire. Before destroying a house they wait until the inhabitants take out the furniture. When a cannon ball is fired, the smallest ones go running looking for it and the garrison waits for whatever amount of time necessary before firing the next ball.'⁵⁶

In this siege there were exactly three casualties on each side. That did not necessarily make such sieges farcical. Montemar's mission was to conquer Sicily, not destroy it. Bombarded towns could not pay taxes until rebuilt. At the same time, garrisons isolated with no hope of relief had no motives for enduring to the last man.

Capua's and Pescara's strong defences, however, made it necessary to employ bombardment as well as hunger. Both fortresses were of great strategic value, the first one to the north of Naples and the second in the Adriatic, opposite the Croatian coast, 'on the Fiume and Trieste border and on the edge of the Papal State'. The Capua siege could be compared with those of the previous century. Its siege demanded a big deployment of men and materials. The besiegers consisted of 14 infantry battalions and 12 cavalry and dragoon regiments, a large number of men for this operation. They used in this siege more

⁵⁶ H. Acton, *The Bourbons of Naples, 1734–1825* (London, 1956), pp. 20–21, cited in Anderson, *Guerra y Sociedad*, p. 191.

instruments and material than in other ones: 5000 *salchichones*⁵⁷ and 100 000 *piquetes*.⁵⁸ This material was easily manufactured thanks to the large quantity of vineyards found in the area around Santa Maria de Capua. Also, 60 heavy cannons with their respective ammunition and cart-horses, and the necessary loads, were used. For this siege the most outstanding engineers and artillerymen were employed: Juan Durreveste, a chief engineer, and Juan Pingarron specialized in the artillery.⁵⁹ Thanks to this effort, by September 1734 Montemar's troops had managed to achieve most of their objective: the conquest of Sicily and almost all of the south of Italy.

VII. Conclusions

The success of overseas military operations in the eighteenth century involved not only the previous phase of mounting a well-nourished and well-supplied expedition but also the continual upkeep of the troops at optimum levels. This required the efficient organization of recruitment, of sanitation provisions and transportation of materials on the battleground – artillery, light arms, blockade instruments, horses and food supplies. The acquisition of all these required large sums of money, and the means of obtaining it at the right moment.

Spain managed to raise and sustain a powerful expeditionary force and to obtain all the means necessary to emerge victorious in the south of Italy. 'However critical some commentators might be of their condition and however much their pay might be in arrears, the Spanish armed forces were large'.⁶⁰ Despite the campaign's financial, logistic and strategic difficulties, Spanish military efficiency and competence was greatly improved. The measures taken by Patiño, Montemar and Campillo to face the problems of the campaign proved adequate for the success of military operations. Spain's initial military objectives in Italy were fully achieved. By eighteenth-century standards it was a lightning campaign. There were scarcely 10 months between the disembarkation in Tuscany and the capture of Capua, the last operation needed to control the south of the peninsula.

In the north of Italy, however, Spain could not achieve its goals. Beginning in October 1734, the Spanish army made its way to the north of the Italian peninsula. Despite allied victories in Parma (29 June 1734) and Guastalla (19 September 1734) which permitted the control of Milan, the situation on the Lombardy front was precarious. Indeed, the imperial troops on this front had crossed the River Po, and while General Villars planned to protect Parma and Piacenza, his ally Charles

⁵⁷ *Salchichón*: a tight bundle of dry, thin branches used in wartime to cover walls, to burn down buildings, etc.

⁵⁸ *Piquetes*: spades used for sieges.

⁵⁹ Patiño to Campillo, Palace, 11 Sept. 1734, AGS, GM, leg. 2050.

⁶⁰ Black, *Rise of the European Powers* (New York, 1990), p. 86.

Emmanuel, King of Sardinia, only wanted to defend the Duchy of Milan. Philip V ordered Montemar to assemble in Naples with 25 000 men and head towards Lombardy to fight alongside the allies. Spain wanted to obtain Mantua, the last Austrian enclave in Italy, but the results were not those which the Spanish government expected. Differences between the allies prevented the Spanish army from achieving its objective. At the end of the war Spain's military gains were limited by the procedures and formalities of diplomacy. Peace negotiations, from which Spain was excluded, began with the secret proposals that Fleury sent to Charles VI in the summer of 1735. The third Treaty of Vienna of 1738 was undoubtedly a great success for French diplomacy. The Infante Charles lost his rights over Tuscany, a duchy with which the Duke of Lorraine, married to Maria Theresa of Austria, was rewarded, in exchange for the cession of the Duchy of Lorraine to Estanislao Leszcinski while the latter lived. Upon his death it would pass into French hands. The duchies of Parma and Piacenza, which had been intended for the Infante Philip, ended up in Habsburg hands in order to compensate for the loss of the Two Sicilies.

Nevertheless, the most important goal of the Spanish monarchy was fully achieved: the recovery of its Italian possessions. The Infante Charles was enthroned in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies and, some years later, as a result of the Austrian succession war, the Infante Philip would be established in the Italian duchies as well due to the victories of Camposanto in 1743, Velletri and Madonna del Olmo in 1744, and Bassignana in 1745. While these victories were negated by the Treaty of Aquisgran in 1748, they were in large part a consequence of the circumstances created by the expedition of 1734 – a forgotten example of military reform and power projection in an age of limited war.

Note on Currency

ducado: *ducat*, originally a gold coin, legal tender from the seventeenth century; worth 375 maravedis

escudo: any of various former gold coins of Spain, Spanish America and Portugal; worth 450 maravedis

maravedí: *maravedi*, a minor copper coin of Spain, discontinued in 1848

peso: a former silver coin of Spain and Spanish America, equal to 8 reales. The *peso de mina* was equivalent to 450 maravedis. It was no longer used by the seventeenth century, when *el peso fuerte* or *el peso de 8 reales* began to circulate; worth 272 maravedis and equivalent to 20 *reales de vellón*

real: old Spanish silver coin equivalent to 34 maravedis

vellón: old copper coin

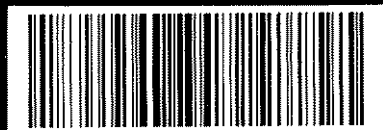
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