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The Failed Promise and the Success of the Spanish Lottery

> Betting allowed for an escape from reality, fantasising, and above all hope for a sudden change from a precarious and sad situation. But from early on it was not given any moral value.[1]

When, in 1763, Carlos III introduces the lottery in Spain, his rationale acknowledges the allure of the "fantasising" inspired by gambling, as well as its long history of moral dubiousness. Eager to secure new streams of revenue, his government sought to harness the power of fantasy – the players' hopes for spectacular, transformational riches – while touting the social benefits that would result from legalising and carefully administering this sort of play. Having reigned in Sicily and Naples, Carlos III charged his Italian minister, the Marquis de Squillace, with implementation, following the Neapolitan *lotto.* The same system as the more well-known Genoese lotto, it consisted of a draw of five numbers between one and ninety, and players could place bets on one or multiple numbers, in or out of sequence, deciding themselves the amount of money to wager. Seven years later the Viceroy of "New Spain" (Mexico and surrounding territories) is tasked with introducing the lottery in the Colonies, where the concerns of revenue generation and curtailment of rampant gambling were also paramount.[2]

"He who plays much is a *loco*, but he who does not play at all is a fool". Whether or not the attribution of this saying to Carlos III is apocryphal, it encapsulates a centuries-old attitude toward play: the Aristotelian notion of *eutrapelia*, or play in moderation, promoted in the Christian world by Aquinas. Given Carlos III's presence in Italy at the time of publication, it is worth pointing out that virtually the same formulation appears in Pietro Chiari's *La Giuocatrice di lotto* (1757): "to play in moderation is wise; but to want to ruin oneself by playing is foolish".[3] Beyond being the plausible source for the saying, this reveals a broader in-

1 Henar Herrero Suárez, *El monopolio de una pasión. Las reales loterías en tiempos de Carlos III* (1992), 25. Unless otherwise stated, all translations from Spanish are mine.

2 For more on the structure of the first Spanish lottery, see Herrero Suárez, *El monopolio de una pasión*, ch. 1, and Cecilia Font de Villanueva, "La aparición de la lotería en España, ¿qué reacciones generó?", in *Fortuna y virtud: historia de las loterías públicas en España,* ed. Roberto Garvía (Sílex, 2009), 127–131. For the lottery in New Spain, see José María Cordoncillo Samada, "La Real Lotería en Nueva España", *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 18 (1961), 193–331.

3 For the Chiari quote, and the modulations of lottery critique and promotion in the French and English translations of the novel, see Marius Warholm Haugen, "Translating the Lottery: Moral

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clination to justify lottery play in the tradition of *eutrapelia.* Spanish culture was steeped in debates surrounding licit and illicit forms of recreation, the dangers of gambling foremost among them. From the Middle Ages on, an abundance of Spanish tractates, legal documents, moralistic writings, and literary works expressed a preoccupation with gambling, in diverse venues, at every level of society, and through a head-spinning variety of games. Even relatively progressive thinkers who promoted the value of leisure and play were wary of the financial and moral peril of gambling – particularly with games of chance. This would seem an unpropitious backdrop for proposing a state lottery. And yet, as with other seemingly ineradicable vices, such as prostitution or drug use, the idea was that legalisation allowed for attenuating excesses through regulation and for channelling profits to worthy causes. The lottery was thus presented as a remedy to the perennial problem of gambling.

As the legal and literary records suggest, the lotteries largely failed to deliver on such promises. And yet Spain is one of the few European countries in which the lottery survived, without a hiatus, to the present day. Despite its deficiencies, which became apparent soon after inception, both the government and the playing public proved unwilling to do without. An examination of Spain's history of polemics surrounding licit and illicit forms of recreation, its record of legal pronouncements in the *Novísima recopilación* of 1805, and the short theatrical works, *El día de la lotería* and *El chasco del sillero* (1791/1792), will help us understand why the lottery was adopted in Spain, and how the problems it was meant to address were in some ways exacerbated by its popularity.

1 Early modern background and polemics surrounding play

One of the most celebrated Spanish formulations of *eutrapelia* appears in the prologue to Cervantes' *Novelas ejemplares:* "For one is not always in the temples [...] one cannot always attend to business [...] There are hours for recreation, when the afflicted spirit may rest".[4] Cervantes presents his collection of stories as a bil-

and Political Issues in Pietro Chiari's *La Giuocatrice di lotto* and Its French and English Translations", *Comparative Literature Studies* 59, no. 2 (2022): 261. For the attribution of the saying to Carlos III, see Isabel Blanco, *Tratado elemental teórico-práctico de la Lotería Primitiva* (Madrid, 1857), 7. Aristotle's treatment of *eutrapelia* is in *Ethics*, Book 10. For more on the topic of moderate play, see also, *infra*, Angela Fabris, "The Ambivalent Perceptions of the Genoese Lotto".

4 Miguel de Cervantes, *Novelas ejemplares* (Cátedra, 1989 [1609]).

liards game ("mesa de trucos") in the public square. Citizens could thus partake of "honesta recreación" in a common space, the rolling and colliding of balls involving both skill and chance. The extent to which games of pure chance could provide licit recreation was a point of disagreement, with the preponderance of judgements ruling in the negative. In the great early modern dictionary, *Tesoro de la lengua Castellana*, Sebastián de Covarrubias registers ambivalence in his definition of luck, or chance, *suerte:* "*Latine sors*, sometimes it signifies good fortune and sometimes ill. To cast dice and raffle to see who is lucky. Sometimes it is licit, sometimes it isn't".[5] The matter was complicated by the fact that there was little consensus regarding the nature of chance itself. Do the results of a draw or a roll of the dice represent the manifestation of divine will, or perhaps the working of a malign force? The moralist Adrián de Castro deemed gambling dens "nothing but altars where sacrifice is made to the devil, who was then adored in fortune's name".[6] In any case, there seemed to be little credence in the notion of pure chance, of randomness devoid of significance.

Such considerations aside, games of chance were found wanting in light of most "hygienic" concepts of recreation, which promoted the benefits of physical exercise and cognitive engagement, and thus favoured activities in which human agency and skill outweighed the aleatory element.[7] As the Dominican friar Pedro de Covarrubias put it in his *Remedio de jugadores*, "any coarse and vulgar person can do fortune's bidding: who does not know how to cast some dice upon a table?"[8] On the other hand, another anti-gambling tract, the Sevillian cleric Francisco de Luque Fajardo's *Fiel desengaño contra los juegos*, praised this characteristic, since it represented a non-agonistic accessibility:

> [T]he difference consists of luck or skill: those of chance and fortune, according to their principal end, which is recreation, are more licit than those of skill, since in the latter there may be distinct advantage, because as in these one wins in accordance to what one knows, necessarily he will defeat the one of lesser talent; which is very different from those of chance if, as they should, the players proceed subject to fortune.[9]

5 Sebastián de Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana o Española* (Editorial Alta Fulla, 1989 [1611]).

6 Adrian de Castro, *Libro de los daños que resultan del juego* (1599), 11–12.

7 For an overview of the early modern debates on play in Spain, see Michael Scham, *Lector Ludens* (Toronto University Press, 2014), ch. 1.

8 Pedro de Covarrubias, *Remedio de jugadores* (Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid, 1543), fol. 37r.

9 Francisco de Luque Fajardo, *Fiel desengaño contra la ociosidad y el juego* (1603) (RAE, 1995), 77.

As we shall see, Roger Caillois would identify such accessibility as a key component of the compensatory function that lottery play afforded the lower classes in more advanced, industrial societies.[10]

There existed in these debates the category of "indiferente", designating games that were neither perilous nor beneficial in their own right. In such cases, the way in which they were played was key – just as Sebastián de Covarrubias indicated in his definition of "suerte". One determining factor was the extent to which the activity invited excessive engagement. Physical recreation, for example, tends towards moderation, since exertion imposes natural limits in the need to rest. While the relative facility of games of chance could be seen as positive (accessibility) or negative (no cognitive or physical abilities are cultivated), it is the prospect of material gain that makes the issue combustible. To better appreciate this, we recall the tenets of *eutrapelia*, which relate to the proper relationship between play and work: one partakes of moderate recreation to recuperate, in order to return to more serious matters. The enticements of riches would seem to disqualify the lottery as a form of play, as Huizinga's seminal definition indicated: "It is an activity which proceeds within certain limits of time and space, in a visible order, according to rules freely accepted, and outside the sphere of necessity or material utility".[11] With the lottery, "material utility" – in the form of money – is inseparable from the game.

What were the implications of the prospects for material gain? While the actual threat to the social order of a *nouveau riche* class created by the lottery was negligible, the underlying values such hopes could encourage might well be destabilising. As Luque Fajardo formulated it, "the poor would rather by ignominious means ('mala vida') become rich, than through their trades preserve their poverty ('conservar la pobreza')".[12] Beyond disapproval of ill-gotten gains through gambling, Luque Fajardo suggests the poor should be content to "preserve their poverty" through honest work ("oficios"), that is, continue to toil away in the humble state that is their lot.

For many, however, the relationship is more complicated, gambling is not simply a means to opulence. Blaise Pascal gives the most suggestive early modern account of how the play impulse combines with hope for gain:

> Anyone can spend a life free from boredom by gambling just a little every day. If every morning you give them the money they would otherwise win, on condition that they do

10 Roger Caillois, *Man, Play, and Games* (The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961), 111–128; 145–160.
11 Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* (Beacon, 1950), 132.
12 Francisco de Luque Fajardo, *Fiel desengaño contra la ociosidad y el juego*. 1603. RAE, 1995 [1603], 177.

> not gamble, you make them unhappy. You will say perhaps that they are looking for the entertainment, not the winnings. Make them therefore play for nothing; they will not become excited and will get bored. So it is not simply the entertainment they are looking for; tame uncommitted entertainment will bore them. They have to become excited and deceive themselves, imagining that they would be happy to win what they would not want to be given on the condition that they did not gamble.[13]

With his belief in humankind's depraved nature and fundamental *ennui*, Pascal gives an entirely negative account of the fantasy inherent in gambling: the excited mind is a deceived and distracted one. For Pascal such play offers no recreation of the body and spirit (as *eutrapelia* would have it), but rather provides a distraction necessitated by our inability to be in repose: "I have often said that man's unhappiness springs from one thing alone, his incapacity to sit quietly in one room".[14] This is a far cry from Aristotle's contented "good man", who enjoys periods of solitude because "his mind is well furnished with subjects for contemplation".[15]

Pessimistic though he is, Pascal identifies in the abovementioned passage a subtle property of play: the prospective monetary gain is not the primary motivation; yet its complete absence would compromise the game. The stimulation of risk is a necessary component. Hans-Georg Gadamer insists on the presence in play of risk, which heightens the engagement of the player: "The attraction that the game exercises on the player lies in this risk. One enjoys a freedom of decision which at the same time is endangered and irrevocably limited".[16] One places a bet, deciding upon a particular combination ("extracto simple / determinado", "ambo", "terno", etc.), specific numbers that may have special meaning to the player, a lottery vendor one may consider lucky. The money paid may well vanish, but, in the interim before the draw, the player entertains new possibilities of being. Following the draw, itself an elaborate spectacle, the cycle begins anew.[17] Since the real-world relevance of the lottery is the money wagered and its transformational potential,

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13 Blaise Pascal, *Pensées and Other Writings* (Oxford World's Classics, 2008), n. 168, "Diversion", 47.

14 Pascal, *Pensées*, n. 168, 44.

15 Aristotle, *Ethics* (Penguin, 1976), 294.

16 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (Continuum, 1995), 106.

17 For an account of the aspirations of early modern lottery players in the Low Countries, as expressed in the comic verses attached to their tickets, see, *infra*, Marly Terwisscha van Scheltinga, "If I Had the Great Prize", and Jeroen Puttevils, "Criticising the Lottery in Its Cradle". Examining the lottery cycle, Marius Warholm Haugen notes the socially cohesive dynamics of collective commiseration following the draw (given that the vast majority lose), followed by renewed hope as the players anticipate buying tickets for the next go-around (*Le Rêve du gros lot: l'imaginaire culturel de la loterie en France (1757–1836)*, ch. 2, "Le Cycle de la loterie", monograph manuscript).

it does indeed seem wrong to disqualify the lottery as play because of the prospect for monetary gain, as Huizinga would do. The "lottery fantasy" depends upon it. Play, like art, may function according to its own terms, without regard for external utility. But this *autotelos* is rarely absolute: "The player, sculptor, or viewer is never simply swept away into a strange world of magic, of intoxication, of dream; rather, it is always his own world, and he comes to belong to it more fully by recognising himself more profoundly in it".[18] The dream of the lottery player, spanning the purchase of the ticket to the conclusion of the drawing, involves reflection upon the players' relationship to their world. The extent to which the process results in a deeper belonging (to that world) or recognition (of oneself) varies greatly, as this volume illustrates.

Since placing a bet involves the risk of financial speculation, the hopes for a disproportionate return on one's outlay, early modern raffles and lotteries collided with age-old prohibitions against usury. The first Bourbon King of Spain, Felipe V, prohibited unauthorised raffles and games of chance in these very terms: "the damages resulting from them are very grave, and they cause scandals and other offenses to God, especially with the usury committed in such raffles".[19] As financial markets and development projects became more complex, however, usury's stigma began to fade. In his study of the origins and development of the concept of risk, Wolf Kittler argues that "the term risk was coined in order to circumvent the sin of usury".[20] A high return was a necessary incentive for the uncertainty of an investment. As Kittler points out, important figures in the process include Pascal, with his "géométrie du hasard" advancing probability theory, and John Locke, whose elevation of "right reason" gave philosophical justification for speculation about the world. Although such a stance might serve to underline the contrast between, as Kittler phrases it, the "Catholic renunciation of the world" and Max Weber's Protestant promotion of capitalism, Spanish theologians had in fact long been engaged in the casuistry of financial interest, in large part due to the exigencies of transatlantic trade, a consequence of the American colonies.[21] Such nuanced thinking about the permissibility of returns

18 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 133.

19 *Novísima recopilación de las leyes de España* (Agencia Estatal, Boletín Oficial del Estado, Biblioteca Jurídica Digital, 1993 [1808]), vol. V, Lib. XII, Tít. 14, Ley II, 1716, repeated in 1717 and 1744. See also Herrero Suárez, *El monopolio de una pasión*, 28–29.

20 Wolf Kittler, "Risk", in *The Routledge Companion to Media and Risk*, ed. Bishnupriya Ghosh and Bhaskar Sarkar (Routledge, 2020), 58.

21 For the "Escuela de Salamanca" theologians and the importance of the casuists in overcoming medieval tabus on usury, the rise of credit, contracts, exchange rates, and other aspects of incipient capitalism, see especially Domènec Melé, "Early Business Ethics in Spain: The Salamanca

in different circumstances would help prepare the culture for a recreational game based on financial speculation.

2 Promises of economic benefit and social order

Early lottery tickets bore the names of women who stood to benefit, in the form of dowries, should their ticket be drawn. Additional proceeds would be earmarked to other charitable institutions – "beneficencia," or "beneficiata" in Italian.[22] The relationship between the Spanish lottery and a broader program of Enlightenment reforms and innovations is a subject of debate. A cautious assessment might hold that it was introduced with good intentions, few of which were realised. Carlos Petit has argued that the lottery was part and parcel of a "coherent plan" that included agrarian reform and increased agricultural productivity, industrial development, transatlantic trade, sumptuary laws, and the expulsion of the Jesuits.[23] Historians subscribing to the "enlightened despot" view of Carlos III generally see the lottery in such a progressive light, as an institution promoting social order and economic improvement. José Antonio Vaca de Osma, for example, mentions the founding of the lottery and other charitable organisations as ingredients in a thoroughgoing and successful modernisation of Spain.[24] A curious French *Tableau* on the "Loterie Royale" of Spain registers both its charitable character and technological innovation: "The drawing was done in Madrid, for foundlings; the numbers arrived by telegraph, a modern invention".[25]

Others offer a more qualified account, in which the monarch, wary of contagion from events in France, balanced concerns over the maintenance of his own power with reforms of varying degrees of efficacy and follow-through. Thus substantive infrastructure improvements (factories, roads and postal routes) occurred alongside middling educational reform and reactionary moves such as the shuttering of the progressive periodical *El censor* in 1787.[26] Some worthy projects were

School (1526–1614)", *Journal of Business Ethics* 22, no. 3 (1999): 175–189. For the "escolásticos" who set the foundations for justifying lottery winnings, see Font de Villanueva, "La aparición de la lotería en España", 153.

22 See Herrero Suárez, *El monopolio de una pasión*, 39–43.

23 Carlos Petit, "El envite ilustrado. Real Lotería y proyectos de poder en el siglo XVIII", *Precedente: Anuario Jurídico* 13 (2018): 21.

24 José Antonio Vaca de Osma, *Carlos III* (Rialp, 1997), 208.

25 Charles Nodier, *Théâtre de la guerre, ou Tableau de l'Espagne* (Nadau; Lelong; Sanson, 1823), 282. My translation.

26 Ricardo García Cárcel, *Historia de España Siglo XVIII* (Cátedra, 2002), 157–222.

stymied by circumstance, such as the poor harvests between 1759–1765, which made liberalisation of the grain markets impossible.[27] Other reforms were complicated by a perception of foreign influence and a defence of local customs – for example the wearing of capes and large-brimmed hats, and gambling, both of which Carlos III attempted to prohibit. Such tensions culminated in the popular uprising ("el motín de Esquilache") that brought down Squillace and other Italian minsters. Given the cultural tumult following the appearance of the lottery, it is notable that, implemented by Squillace and overseen by the director of the Naples lottery, José Peya, this Italianate baby was not thrown out with the bathwater. "Native" figures such as Aranda, Campomanes, and Olavides rose to prominence after the *motín de Esquilache*, promoting the alleviation of poverty, including the creation of a major charitable institution, the Hospicio de San Fernando. This was social welfare with an Enlightenment bent, proposing rehabilitation of the urban poor through hygiene, rational organisation, and vocational training.[28] The lottery would contribute to such initiatives with a percentage of its proceeds.

To the charitable benefit was added the other major justification for introducing the lottery: it would improve social order by replacing more unruly forms of play. The lottery would harness the irrepressible desire to gamble, while attenuating it through State administration. But the moderating effect was questionable; in fact, the opposite may have resulted. For a window into the state of gambling in the years following the introduction of the lottery in Spain, we can look to the Spanish law code of 1805, the *Novísima recopilación de las Leyes de España.* Reflecting the code's unwieldy growth by accretion, the section on prohibited games ("De los juegos prohibidos" Vol. V, Lib. XII, Tít. 23), contains laws from the fourteenth century onwards dealing with cards, dice, and gaming houses. The first entry from Carlos III is in 1764, the year following the commencement of the Spanish lottery. Here we find the monarch attempting to support the public order campaign not only by reaffirming previous prohibitions against betting and games of chance ("juegos de envite, suerte y azar"), but also by voiding privileges for playing that had been given to certain estates ("Derogacion de todo fuero privilegiado").[29] By 1771, the exasperation is palpable: "Having discovered with much displeasure, that in the Court and other towns of the kingdom various games have been introduced…".[30] The king expresses chagrin at learning of the survival of prohibited games, as well as the introduction of new ones. He also attempts to limit the amount one can wager on licit games (those of skill rather than chance)

27 Joseph Pérez, *Historia de España* (Austral, 2011), 298–305.
28 García Cárcel, *Historia de España Siglo XVIII*, 196.
29 *Novísima recopilación*, vol. V, Lib. XII, Tít. 23, Ley XIV.
30 *Novísima recopilación*, vol. V, Lib. XII, Tít. 23, Ley XV.

and prohibits betting on credit or with items of value (jewels, garments, furniture). Moreover, he stipulates temporal boundaries on playing and places a ban on most games (licit or illicit) in particular venues, such as taverns, inns, cafés, and other public houses.

In 1786 – twenty-three years after the lottery's introduction – Carlos III again feels the need to re-assert and promulgate the laws of 1771, many of which were in themselves reminders of previous ordinances ("Observancia de la anterior pragmática prohibitiva de juegos de envite, suerte y azar").[31] In addition to having apparently zero effect on gambling across all sectors of society, the Spanish lottery seemed to create new problems specific to this state-sanctioned game. The king was compelled to reassert the prohibition of foreign lotteries in 1774, and in 1787 even had to contend with unsanctioned raffles based on the lottery drawing ("rifas á los extractos de la lotería").[32] Such innovative types of subsidiary gambling, also in the form of "loterías de cartón" ("cardboard lotteries") played in cafés and private residences were a trans-European phenomenon.

Of course, alongside the desire to attenuate gambling and its social ills was the project of monopolising gambling to ensure the financial success of the state-sanctioned lottery.[33] The first order for a monopoly is, after all, to eliminate competition. While the legal record suggests that neither of these goals was achieved completely, the latter was sufficiently successful to ensure a revenue stream that proved substantial enough to override other concerns, securing the lottery's survival.

3 Recreation and economic speculation in the Enlightenment state

It is curious that Gaspar Melchior Jovellanos, a central figure of the Spanish Enlightenment, wrote extensively about public recreation and economic issues, all without treating the lottery. He was, of course, aware of it, and his diaries contain two suggestive references. On Friday, 12 June 1795, as part of a sequence of mundane events, he mentions that "we played the lottery" ("jugamos a la lotería").[34] It

31 *Novísima recopilación*, vol. V, Lib. XII, Tít. 23, Ley XVI.

32 *Novísima recopilación*, vol. V, Lib. XII, Tít. 23, Ley XVIII, and Tít. 24, Ley III, respectively.

33 The "Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act" of 2006 in the United States shows how little has changed: putatively concerned with the deleterious effects of games based primarily on chance, the law is also motivated by an interest in harvesting the revenues generated by new innovations in gambling. See Scham, *Lector Ludens*, 85–86.

34 Jovellanos, *Diarios*, http://bibliotecavirtual.asturias.es/i18n/consulta/registro.cmd?id=3088.

is unclear whether or not he refers to a form of syndicate play, in which each in the group purchases a portion of the ticket. However, playing the lottery is mentioned alongside other sociable activities of the day, such as card playing, "tertulia" (social gathering for conversation or debate), and dining. Five years later (Monday, 6 June 1800), we see the following sequence: "the Italian theatre in Madrid suppressed; the Hospital indemnified with 20,000 *reales* in each lottery; a national theatre ordered to replace it [Italian theatre], without any dances other than national ones". Such references to the lottery as part of the fabric of daily life and society are significant because they relate to central preoccupations of Jovellanos: the place of recreation in society, and economic and poverty reform. In fact, the 1795 reference is sandwiched between observations and commentaries on just these topics. On Thursday 11 June, Jovellanos refers to the custom of the "mayas", the local beauties who collect charity during religious festivals: "on holidays the *mayas* walked about the village singing and getting handouts from house to house". To this traditional form of collecting alms, Jovellanos adds a critique of the use of the charity house in León: "A good and simple façade [...] which one cannot look upon without pain. Why make frightful prisons of these sanctuaries from misery? Why diminish in liberty what one gives in assistance?" Here Jovellanos laments a controversial development in eighteenth-century poorhouse ("hospicio") reform, which was meant to forward the goals of poverty alleviation and public utility. Implementing forced labour, punishment and strict controls, they came to resemble less charitable shelters than penal colonies.[35]

As Jovellanos himself observed in the January 1800 diary entry, lotteries contributed to such charitable institutions. This does not necessarily mean that he saw the lotteries as part of a progressive program for reform. Jovellanos' advocacy of a didactic theatre for the upper classes and benign "diversions" (games and dances of their own design) for the commoners would seem to endorse the existing social structures: "[I]t is appropriate indirectly to hinder the entrance of poor people who work for a living, for whom time is money, and for whom even the most chaste and refined theatre is a pernicious distraction. I have said that commoners do not need spectacles; I say now that they are harmful".[36] Provided the labouring classes are given time and space to cultivate their own rustic diversions,

35 See Victoria López Barahona and Alberto Morán Corte, "El Hospicio como disciplina del pobre en la España Moderna: entre la 'Misericordia' y la Penalidad", in *De los controles disciplinarios a los controles securitarios. Actas del II Congreso Internacional sobre la Historia de la Prisión y las Instituciones Punitivas*, ed. Oliver Olmo and Cubero Izquierdo (Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2020), 97–112.

36 Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, *Espectáculos y diversiones públicas. Informe sobre la Ley Agraria* (Cátedra, 1998), 214–215.

they remain contented and are able to return more productively to their work. One is tempted to interpret Jovellanos' passing references to the lottery as approval of a recreational habit of the upper classes (the same set which comprises the *tertulias*), one that contributes to the *hospitales*, but does little to change the status quo.[37]

The lottery did, however, enjoy great popularity with the lower classes, and Jovellanos' promotion of economic speculation is notable in this light. Following Adam Smith, he advocated private property and small land holdings, so that commoners could participate more fully in the economy. This would create a system entailing both more dynamism and more risk: "When any citizen can aspire to wealth, the natural vicissitude of fortune makes it pass quickly from some people to others".[38] Rather than immense accumulations of unproductive wealth, Jovellanos imagines a more fluid system, without monopolies, price fixing, or decadent nobility living off their vast holdings:

> When capital employed in land brings a high return, investment in land is a useful and profitable speculation, like in North America; when it brings a moderate return it is still a prudent and safe speculation, like in England; but when this return is reduced to a bare minimum, either nobody makes such an investment, or it is only done as a vain and arrogant speculation, as in Spain.[39]

In his promotion of economies – unlike the Spanish one, still mired in feudal "orgullo y vanidad" – that encourage speculation with the possibility of substantial returns, Jovellanos is consonant with Locke's economic-philosophical circumvention of usury by embracing productive risk. As Kittler put it, "[t]o speculate on the future, from now on, is no longer a sin, but a virtue".[40] While the lottery may not represent a rational investment, its emergence within a culture of increasing interest in risk, speculation, and probabilities, is perhaps not coincidental.[41]

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37 For an argument regarding the basic conservatism of Jovellanos' thought, as well as the Spanish Enlightenment in general, in which culture was an instrument to consolidate the absolute power of the Bourbon Monarchy, see Jaime Tortella, "El legado cultural," in García Cárcel, *Historia de España Siglo XVIII*, 329–390.

38 Jovellanos, *Espectáctulos y diversiones públicas. Informe sobre la Ley Agraria*, 304.

39 Jovellanos, *Espectáculos y diversiones públicas. Informe sobre la Ley Agraria*, 308.

40 Kittler, "Risk", 58.

41 The link between lottery play and financial speculation is more explicit in the English context, in part because the early British lotteries were a sort of hybrid between game and investment, involving tickets that guaranteed a percentage yield. See Bob Harris, especially chapter 4, "Lottery Adventures and Adventurers", in *Gambling in Britain in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge

4 Lottery literature in eighteenth-century Spain: two satirical *sainetes*

Apart from the proliferation of manuals explaining the rules and administration of the lottery, and those which purported to help players increase their chance of winning through mathematical calculations, pseudo-cabbalism, and dream interpretation, Spanish literary production relating to the lottery was initially meagre. The nineteenth century will see a greater output, and with results that go beyond the primarily satirical focus of the few eighteenth-century works. The extent to which Enlightenment satire on the irrationality of hoping for a lottery win gave way, through Romanticism, to a more positive valuation of the lottery fantasy, is a subject for further study.

Near the end of the eighteenth century there appear two *sainetes* – brief comic theatrical pieces that were often performed during acts or at the end of longer plays – that deal with the lottery: *El día de la lotería* (1791) and *El chasco del sillero* (1792). The second work is actually a sequel of the first, with the peculiarity that the shoemaker becomes a chair-maker in the second play. Although a minor mystery of authorship and composition resides in these discrepancies,[42] for present concerns the salient issue is the fact that the protagonist is an "artesano", a craftsman. Both plays deal with the popular classes, and the relationship between work, leisure, and money. True to form, the *sainetes* contain songs, farcical humour based on marital strife ("camorras"), low character types, regional accents and linguistic tics, physical mishaps and human folly. Lottery playing is represented as part of this folly, although the satire is broader than one might expect, implicating the players, the game, and the social conditions it was meant to improve. In fact, despite their brevity, the works in question contain a concentrated elaboration of the concerns discussed above.

University Press, 2022). For the expression of a "bourgeois-rationalist version of the lottery fantasy" in Italy, see Haugen, "Translating the Lottery", 27–28.

42 The pieces are sometimes attributed to Sebastián Vázquez. See Mireille Coulon, "El teatro breve en el siglo XVIII. El sainete", in *El teatro en la España del siglo XVIII*, ed. Judith Farré, Nathalie Bittoun-Debruyne, and Roberto Fernández (Ediciones de la Universitat de Lleida, 2012), 177–195. However, another *sainete*, titled *La lotería* (circa 1800), has Manuel Hidalgo listed as author, and the play is simply a transcription of *El día de la lotería* with the main character changed to a chair-maker, thus making it retroactively consistent with its continuation, *El chasco del sillero*. The *sillero* may also refer to the play's travesty regarding the type of "seat" in which the disillusioned protagonist returns home (see below). To my knowledge, the issue has yet to be elucidated.

El día de la lotería is set on a street scene outside the cobbler's workshop. Paco, the shoemaker, is plying his trade at a table, his wife, Marica, sitting nearby mending a shirt. Townswomen toil with laces and embroidery, and sitting at the cobbler's bench is a student bent over a pile of papers. The play opens with the women singing joyously:

> *Singing.* May all be celebration,
> all happiness and revelry,
> for we hope that we'll win
> the Lottery.
> *Mar.* ¿Why so happy, neighbours?
> *Neighb.* This is how we entertain ourselves.[43]

We might call this a popular manifestation of the lottery fantasy, the hope of a win diverting and sustaining the townspeople (the verb "entretenerse" can mean both to entertain and to distract). The play begins with an example of Bentham's "pleasure of expectation", a recreational benefit that could outweigh the "momentary pain of disappointment" of not having a winning ticket.[44] This suggests a value in the playing independent of the small chance of making money. Such views would, as noted, emerge more prominently in the nineteenth century, for example in Galdós's *Fortunata y Jacinta*, where the recreational lottery play of the Santa Cruz family yields happiness, harmony across the classes, and material benefits.[45] In the widely distributed periodical, *El Enano*, promoting both the lottery and bullfights (and naming itself after the popular eighteenth-century lottery talisman, "El enano afortunado," or "Lucky dwarf"), such a positive image is boldly expressed: "The lottery is moral because it is voluntary, and because dowries are drawn for orphan girls, because it is a fair game and it gives hope".[46] Unlike Henry Fielding's play, which announces a satirical purpose with its opening song ("A lottery is a Taxation, / Upon all the Fools in Creation"),[47] *El día de la lotería* initially projects an atmosphere of festivity.

Dissonant notes, however, are forthcoming, and signal the satire that is to predominate. Students are often associated with the picaresque milieu in Spanish comedy, and this one is busy devising schemes to swindle the townspeople by

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43 Anon., *Saynete intitulado El día de la lotería, primera parte*, Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid, T/9798(29), 1791.

44 Bentham's unpublished writing on the lottery is cited in Stephen M. Stigler, *Casanova's Lottery. The History of a Revolutionary Game of Chance* (University of Chicago Press, 2022), 205.

45 Benito Pérez Galdós, *Fortunata y Jacinta* (Cátedra, 1992), I, 10.

46 *El Enano*, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Hemeroteca Digital, 1853, no. 117.

47 Henry Fielding, *The Lottery* (Harrison and Co., 1779).

claiming an ability to predict the winning numbers. As Caillois noted, "[w]ith superstition, the corruption of *alea* is born".[48] The latinate terms, numerology, dream interpretation ("las esmorfias"), cabbalah, "philosopher's stone" – all ridicule the delusions of contemporary players, and the charlatans who promised ways of controlling chance.

Marica represents the voice of reason, as she laments the zeal with which her husband plays:

> *Mar.* The day of the Lottery
> I lose ten years of life,
> because my husband is
> of the terrible *Luteros*
> that exist in the world.[49]

Her wordplay "lutero" (Lutheran) for "lotero" (lottery player) casts the credulous players in a heretical light. And yet, she, too, will succumb, infected by her husband's delusions of grandeur. In short, the plot trajectory is a downward arch from festive, frenzied expectation, to exploitation, rash action, and destitution. So carried away is the couple that they abandon their plodding yet productive cobbling business, and the climactic scene finds Marica throwing the contents of their house from the window as her injured husband returns to break the news that they have not won. The sequel, *El Chasco del sillero*, offers little in the way of redemption.

The plays deflate the image of the lottery as recreation or as a contribution to social order through *beneficencia*, delivering a more thoroughgoing satire than the simple plot portends. The players are credulous fools, susceptible to exploitation by swindlers like the student. But the lottery itself, as a social and economic institution, also comes in for unfavourable scrutiny. Affirming Huizinga's judgement, the *sainetes* clearly point to the hopes for "material utility" as the main perversion of play when it comes to the lottery. *El Enano* would later claim that the happy anticipation of a big prize encouraged work and savings – in order to be able to buy tickets: "The Lottery is civilising and even moral, because the idea of obtaining a big prize brings family happiness, and stimulates savings and work in

48 Caillois, *Man, Play, and Games*, 46. Caro Baroja enumerated the strategies for subjugating chance, from appeals to dark powers, prayer, and dream interpretation, to faith in propitious circumstances (particular vendors, numbers, times, and days), and combinatorial mathematics ("La lotería", *Revista de dialectología y tradiciones populares* (1985), 19).

49 Anon., *El día de la lotería, primera parte*.

order to acquire the means to try one's luck".[50] While this certainly borders on the facetious (in line with the publication's partisan and piquant tone), Caillois identified an important compensatory function of the lottery within societies that espouse the virtues of work and dogged accumulation of wealth: "Under these conditions, *alea* again seems a necessary compensation for *agôn*, and its natural complement. [...] Recourse to chance helps people tolerate competition that is unfair or too rugged. At the same time, it leaves hope in the dispossessed that free competition is still possible in the lowly stations in life, which are necessarily more numerous".[51] Again, this hope is ambivalent: on the one hand, a morale-boosting fantasy that may sustain people through difficult circumstances; on the other, an "escape valve", or "opium", that helps keep the lower classes docile in their state. This is why Caillois stipulates that, while it complements *agôn*, chance must always remain subservient to competition and contained within limits. Otherwise, it threatens the central tenets of industrious societies.[52]

In both *El día de lotería* and *El chasco del sillero*, this compensatory function is tainted precisely by the play overspilling its boundaries. The *sainetes* would thus seem to confirm the early modern admonition of Luque Fajardo regarding zealous gamblers transgressing their modest role in society. And, as Carlos III himself recognised during the early years of the Spanish lottery, the play of the toiling classes must be restricted: "I order to prohibit that artisans and craftsmen of any trade, skilled masters and apprentices alike, and labourers of all types play during work days and hours".[53] As we saw, Jovellanos noted that, for the labouring classes, time equals money, and excessive recreation reduces productivity.

While still in possession of her wits, Marica entreats her gambling husband to consider the material consequences of his delusion: "Look, look at the shirt I'm mending for you here: better you didn't gamble, and you could buy two". In an aside, the student then enumerates the everyday items he can buy with the money swindled from Patricio: "six for cheese, four and a half for bread [...] and two quarters for tobacco, make up the entire two *reales*".[54] As the contagion overtakes Marica, she is distracted from mending shirts and patiently procuring

50 *El Enano*, 1865, no. 979. Biblioteca Nacional de España, Hemeroteca Digital (https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es).

51 Caillois, *Man, Play, and Games*, 115.

52 Caillois, *Man, Play, and Games*, 157–158. Mihai Spariosu makes a similar point in his discussion of the primary play types in what he termed "rational societies", in *Literature, Mimesis and Play* (Tübingen, 1982). For more on the ambivalent trope of the lottery as "opium", see, *infra*, Marius Warholm Haugen, "Plus de loterie".

53 *Novísima recopilación*, Vol. V, Lib. XII, Tít. 23, Ley XV, 1771.

54 Anon., *El día de la lotería, primera parte*.

bread and oil, and begins to imagine the "terno" – guessing three of the five numbers drawn – that her husband is certain of winning. Patricio thus sets up the expectation that will provide a deflationary punchline following the lottery drawing: "with the *terno* coming my way [...] seeing that I return in a chair, or a coach, throw all of our things from the balcony; for men with money like me don't live amidst such tatters". The odds of winning a *terno* were about one in twelve thousand, which meant that, in the absence of a rigorous system of receipts, a *lotero* could safely pocket for himself the money paid for the ticket – which is what the student presumably does.[55] Patricio will, indeed, return in a chair, but, as we will presently see, it is a different kind than the one anticipated.

There is a correspondence between key scenes in *El día de lotería* and contemporary (and later) graphic representations of the lottery. The motifs are clearly part of a broader geographical and temporal cultural imaginary. The cobbler, for example, as an emblem of the modest labourer who dreams of opulence, appears in lottery fictions from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries in England, France, Denmark, and Argentina. The comic motif of the "premature defenestration" appears in both French and Danish fiction of the period, and the expression "tirar la casa por la ventana" ("throw everything out the window") was known in Latin America in the eighteenth century. A Scandinavian popular ballad ("skillingsvise") titled "Tallotteriet", and predating our plays by two decades, contains many correlations: a cobbler and his wife, with delusions of grandeur; an ill-advised gutting of the house; a return in an equivocal carriage.[56] Though it would be interesting to locate the original source, of primary interest here is how such comic motifs are deployed. The comedy can be more polyvalent than the "types" themselves suggest.

A curious example in Spain is the *fin de siècle* series of images "before and after" the lottery, designed by Apeles Mestres as part of a promotional campaign for the great Barcelona chocolatier, "Chocolates Amatller". By the logic of deflation, they depict captioned scenes with lofty expectations of ticket holders (all manner of luxuries, marital felicity, social status) prior to the drawings, followed by scenes of despondency and destitution when the actual numbers are revealed. In between the two frames comes the stylish logo of the chocolatier. One sequence resonates strikingly with *El día de lotería:* a man arrives home laden with sybaritic delicacies (including a preponderance of phallic objects, which are absent in the

55 For the odds on different bets, see Stigler, *Casanova's Lottery*, 214, and Garvía, *Fortuna y virtud*, 28.

56 See, *infra*, Inga Henriette Undheim, "Lottery Dreams". An anonymous French story using a similar motif, entitled "Le Bureau de loterie", identified by Marius Warholm Haugen, was published in the revue *L'Écouteur aux portes, petite revue morale et satyrique* (Louis Janet, 1825).

play), announcing to his surprised wife that she can "throw the house through the window" in anticipation of winning "el gordo" – the big prize (see figures 1 and 2). After the interlude promoting the chocolates, we see the crestfallen man presenting to his wife a bedraggled newspaper publishing the results of the drawing. When she asks what they shall eat now, dried cod ("bacalao") is his reply. In our play, prior to literally throwing the contents of the house through the window, Marica had noted the scarcity of bread and oil, to which Patricio replied, "With biscuits from Guizado we will dine, and with cinnamon, which will do us even better".[57] As in the chocolatier graphics, the delicacies will not materialise.

In the case of the popular graphic series, "Expresiones de jugadores" (see figure 3), we have what can only be a direct correspondence between our play and the images.[58] To the right, we see a group clustered outside the lottery office, where the numbers have been posted, with a few figures gesticulating nearby. Herrero Suárez identifies some of the stock characters in the engravings, quotes from the accompanying verses, and notes that the images register the social reality and atmosphere on days of drawings: "[T]he day of the lottery was a festive day, a magic day in which without effort the course of one's life could be altered completely".[59] Indeed, the *sainete*'s opening song sounds again when the townspeople await the posting of the numbers ("May all be celebration, all happiness and revelry, for we hope that we'll win the Lottery").[60] But the denouement is far from festive or "magical". When Patricio returns in a chair, it is not due to transformational riches, but to his being kicked by the muleteer's horse, resulting in two broken legs. Nevertheless, upon hearing her husband is being carried home in a chair ("silla de manos"), Marica exuberantly commences the defenestration:

> *Mar.* Neighbors, I have won
> the Lottery. I'm going to throw
> from the balcony onto the street
> the pots, pans, paintings,

57 Anon., *El día de la lotería, primera parte*.

58 To my knowledge, this link has not been examined. Herrero Suárez cites the verses that accompany the image in question, while seemingly unaware of the *sainete* (165–166). Font de Villanueva makes a cursory reference to the *sainetes*, but does not mention the image. José Altabella points out the influence of the "Expresiones" image on the short narrative *La mejor lotería*, by Antonio de Trueba (1881), a story which, in contrast to our play (which seemed to have gone unnoticed by Altabella), provides a happy ending. See Altabella, *La Lotería nacional de España: 1763–1963* (Dirección general de tributos especiales, 1962), 208–209). The skilling ballad "Tallotteriet" (1773), belongs to this constellation. See, *infra*, Undheim, "Lottery Dreams".

59 Herrero Suárez, *El monopolio de una pasión*, 167.

60 For more on the carnivalesque associations with lottery, see, *infra*, Jeroen Puttevils, "Criticising the Lottery in Its Cradle".

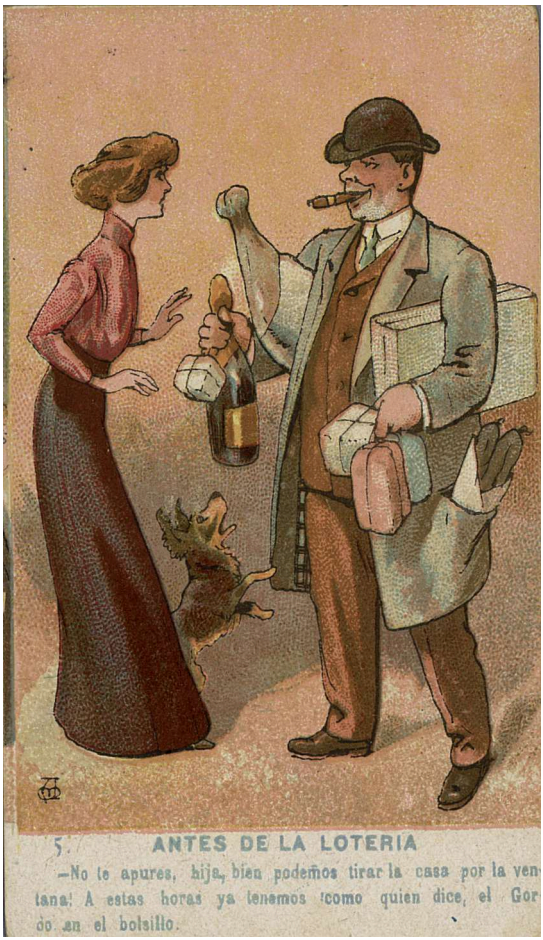

Figure 1: Apeles Mestres (1880 – 1920), "Antes de la lotería. Después de la lotería". Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid, EPH/586/1-EPH/586/20. Biblioteca Digital Hispánica: https://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000052833&page=1.

> chairs, clothes, brooms, bellows,
> and everything I have in the room.[61]

Marica's words are a fairly direct description of the engraving, in which we see, among other household objects, pots, pans, and a chair hurtling toward the street. The actual verses that appear below the engraving refer to rubbish ("trastos car-

61 Anon., *El día de la lotería, primera parte*.

Figure 2: Apeles Mestres (1880 – 1920), "Antes de la lotería. Después de la lotería". Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid, EPH/586/1-EPH/586/20. Biblioteca Digital Hispánica: https://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000052833&page=1.

camales") thrown from the window, "Since now my husband arrives / Rich from the Lottery". Marica also enjoins the shop apprentice, Paco, to jettison all the objects of his trade. Anticipating his imminent promotion to page of the nouveau riche Patricio, he complies ("Tira los trastos de la Tienda"), putting behind him his life of labour: "From today the Devil may take the shoe shop".

Continuing right to left in the engraving, in the lower foreground, there is a man leaning out of the *silla de manos* with a despairing gesture as he sees the contents of his house flying through the air and recognises the misunderstanding. It is

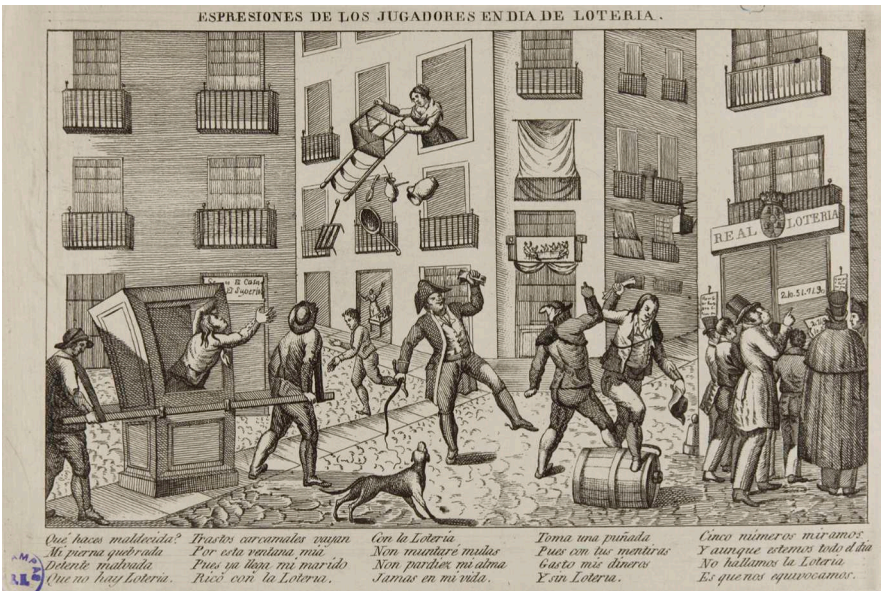

Figure 3: Anonymous (nineteenth century), "Expresiones de los jugadores en día de Lotería". Biblioteca Nacional de España, INVENT/18155 Microfilm.

certainly our Patricio, in the play's climactic moment: "Woe is me, my wife has thrown it all away upon seeing me in a chair!"[62] Marica faints when she realises what has happened, and Patricio and Paco bring her into the house in defeat, "Cobblers with broken and ruined furniture". The townspeople confirm the bathos: "¡Pobres gentes!"

It is this great disappointment which gives the title to the *sainete* sequel appearing the following year (*El chasco del sillero*, 1792). "Chasco" means letdown, disillusionment. The stage direction has the townswomen singing again, but with an altered lyric ("mudada la letra"): "We also thought we'd be rich, and it all became the dream of the cock".[63] The "cock's dream" may refer to Chanticleer and the medieval fables of vanity and deception. More intriguingly, it could be a

62 The engraving contains the following verses: "What are you doing, cursed woman? / My broken leg / Stop, evil woman / There is no lottery". That the engraving contains text that diverges from the play, though equivalent in spirit, suggests that the image came first, serving as inspiration for the *sainete*. Had the engraving been made based on the play, it would seem logical to find lines directly from the *sainete* for the relevant passages.

63 Anon, *El chasco del sillero, y segunda parte del Día de la lotería* (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid (1792) T/9798(28).

reference to Lucian's dialogue, *The Dream, or the Cock*, in which a cobbler's delusions of grandeur are deflated in a praise of poverty. One should, according to the cock's counsel, remain "close to the earth," like Daedalus. "You mean temperate and sensible people," replies the cobbler Micyllus, demonstrating his comprehension.[64] Well known among humanists in Spain, the dialogue examines the same premise of Luque Fajardo in his admonition against the social ambitions of gamblers: one should recognise the dignity, or at least decorum, of being content in one's state.

El chasco del sillero deals with the aftermath of the catastrophe represented in *El día de lotería*, Patricio in crutches, Marica mentally unmoored, and the student scheming anew. Patricio has learned his lesson, as he rejects the student's assurance of a successful second go at the lottery, repenting of his previous folly: "Luego me arrepentí del contrato". The use of the word "contract" recalls an argument of defenders of the lottery, who emphasised the voluntary nature of participation, which made it less a tax than a contract, and thus a licit form of recreation.[65] Huizinga, we recall, stipulated that play be "according to rules freely accepted". Patricio now exercises his freedom by *not* putting up money for another drawing; the optimistic cycle of lottery play is broken.

Patricio expresses resentment toward the muleteer, whose horse's kicks broke his legs. The muleteer responds that there was no malice or negligence, that it was all just an "acaso", a chance occurrence. Amidst the frenzied speculation surrounding the lottery, and the elaborate schemes to conquer *fortuna*, Patricio's battered body becomes the work's central emblem of chance, *un acaso*. Beware the seductions of *alea:* a wayward horse kick is, in the milieu of the play, more probable than winning the lottery. "Did I win the *terno?*" asks the hopeful Patricio ("alegre"). To which the student replies, with a picaresque witticism, "No, but definitely the *ambo*, which the horse gave you: not one of your numbers was drawn".[66] The *ambo* here does not refer to a correct bet on two numbers, but rather to the legs ("ambo" = both) of Patricio.

What is left for the players? Marica's lottery fantasy has modulated into insanity, reaching its peak when she sets the shop ablaze: "Neighbours, come out and see the *iluminación* I've made in my house". It is tempting to speculate that this

64 Lucian, *The Dream, or The Cock* (Loeb Classic Library, 2024), 219.

65 See Font de Villanueva, "La aparición de la lotería en España, ¿qué reacciones generó?", 144–145 and 150–153. For the Crown's need for additional revenue, but reluctance to propose new taxes, see Herrero Suárez, *El monopolio de una pasión*, 19–24. For issues surrounding the designation of the lottery as a tax in England and the Low Countries, see, *infra*, James Raven, "Imagining Trust and Justice", and Puttevils, "Criticising the Lottery in Its Cradle".

66 Anon., *El chasco del sillero*.

"illumination" is an ironic reference to the Age of Reason, the goals of which, as we have noted, the lottery was meant to support. And here emerge the broader implications of the play's satire. It is not only the folly of the simple townspeople, their delusions of grandeur, failure to appreciate the odds, and susceptibility to fraud, that is targeted. There is also a strong sense that they are compelled by circumstances. As one of the hopeful townspeople puts it at the outset, "Today we'll all stop begging, and going hungry". Patricio expresses it in a way that links marital discord with financial distress: "Let's forego these spats, since I reckon we'll escape our squalor".[67] To again refer to Luque Fajardo's formulation, the humble state ("pobreza") of the townspeople is undignified, untenable, nothing to "conservar". Rather than greed or hubris, the players are motivated by pressing material need, which points to an insufficiency in the contemporary economic conditions. Anticipating Caillois's comments regarding the lottery's compensatory function within a cruel system, Julio Caro Baroja's "antropología de pobreza" contended that lotteries thrive in inverse relation to prospects for social mobility and decent living standards through work.[68] The lottery would thus function as a sort of "safety valve", protecting the interests of the status quo against malcontents.

The play's resolution strengthens this indictment of both social conditions and the lottery as an institution. Having lost his wife, house and business, Patricio resigns himself to life in the poorhouse (*hospicio*):

> Well, my friend,
> home and spouse have gone;
> since she is now behind bars,
> I'll put myself in the poorhouse,
> where I'll write the life
> of the Unfortunate Chairmaker.[69]

In a resounding irony, the same charity that the Spanish lottery ostensibly supported, and which formed a major part of its justification as a channelling of the gambling impulse toward socially beneficial projects, is the very place where the protagonist ends up, as a direct *result* of the lottery. As one of the laws promulgated under Carlos III put it: "By the cited decree Your Majesty established in the City of Madrid, in imitation of the Court of Rome and others, a lottery or *beneficiata* to serve the hospitals, poorhouses and other charitable works".[70] Patricio's playing, as it turns out, has contributed nothing to the Hospicio,

67 Anon., *El día de la lotería, primera parte*.
68 Caro Baroja, "La lotería", *Revista de dialectología y tradiciones populares* (1985), 7–19.
69 Anon., *El chasco del sillero*.
70 *Novísima recopilación*, vol. V, Lib. XII, Tít. 23, Ley XVIII, 1774.

meant to improve the lot of society's unfortunate; it has, rather, taken him out of the realm of productive labour and placed him among the ranks of the needy.

The relationship of the lottery to Enlightenment in Spain was not illusory; but it differed in important ways from how it was promoted. Employees of the lottery itself did enjoy comparatively good work conditions, including some progressive benefits of job security, insurance, and pensions.[71] But it did little to moderate the play impulse and harness its energies in the service of social programs that would alleviate poverty and contribute to greater opportunity. Rather, the rationality and infrastructure improvements characteristic of the Enlightenment could be seen, for the lottery, as instruments to maximise profit and consolidate the power of the State:

> The absolutist 'enlightened' power, both temporal and spiritual, had the expertise to transform this income into another of its representations, manipulating the arguments and adapting the reality to its needs, using the traditional means, adorning the formal structure with absorbing, engaging, and ostentatious displays that fed illusions and hopes, and channelled the escapism typical of a debilitated economic situation. All of these means were greatly favoured by the deeply-rooted passion for gambling.[72]

The legal record, which shows the Crown's increasing inability to contain the gambling innovations inspired by the introduction of the lottery, and satirical works such as the *sainetes*, not to mention the elaborate pageantry of the drawings themselves, substantiate Herrero Suárez's damning assessment. Zollinger's account of "lottery entrepreneurs" supports the notion that, while the lottery did not necessarily contribute to improved social conditions, it developed in a symbiotic relationship with contemporary advances in communications (e. g. the postal networks, to which it both contributed and from which it benefitted), analysis (e. g. advances in probability theory), and transnational implementation of business models.[73] Despite all of the moral arguments for and against the Spanish lottery, the deciding factor seems to have been economic.[74] But unlike in England,

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71 Herrero Súarez, *Monipolio de una pasión*, 96 – 97 and 172.

72 Herrero Súarez, *Monipolio de una pasión*, 172.

73 Zollinger describes these entrepreneurs as "specialists skilled at synthesising information in order to make a profit by exploiting data, concepts and ideas, the significance of which other people are not always aware of. In doing so they create organisations, that is enterprises". Manfred Zollinger, "Entrepreneurs of Chance: the Spread of Lotto in XVIII Century Europe", *Ludica* 12 (2006): 86. For the lottery's stimulation of serious thinking about combinatory mathematics, for example in the 1796 *Tratado teórico-práctico* by Herranz y Quirós, see Font de Villanueva, "La aparición de la lotería en España", 133.

74 Font de Villanueva, "La aparición de la lotería en España", 148 – 152.

where the opaque and complex administration made the lottery untrusted and untenable as a revenue stream, leading to its demise, the steady reforms of the Spanish lottery's administration and structure, including increased efficiency and transparency, strategic adjustment of ticket prices, and transition from lotto to blanks and prizes lottery, managed to secure its survival in perpetuity.[75]

5 Conclusion

Some final reflections on the game's popularity are in order. As the *sainetes* and Caro Baroja's study suggest, much of the ticket-buying can be understood as the result of material need: the lottery held out hopes, however implausible, for an escape from poverty. In this light, lottery playing was an index of socio-economic conditions, the health of the system in inverse relationship to the amount of play. But Caillois rightly lamented the insights that are lost by the omission of gambling in Huizinga's book. For despite – or, as our observations above suggest, even because of – the outlay of money, the lottery is a *game*, voluntary, ordered in time and space; and its cognitive-imaginative dimension is dependent upon the hopes for riches, occurring during the anticipatory period between ticket purchase and draw.[76] Though as Director of Special Taxes he was not a disinterested figure, Francisco Rodríguez Cirugeda provided some insight into the allure of this particular type of play: "The more rigid existence becomes, the more pigeonholed and ordered; the more one sees the future as predetermined within structures in which all is channelled, foreseen, assured, the more one will desire the unexpected blow that changes everything and opens surprising perspectives which in quotidian events have no place".[77] Discussing the relationship between gambling and the adventure, Georg Simmel notes that "despite its [the adventure's] accidental nature, its extraterritoriality with respect to the continuity of life, it nevertheless connects with the character and identity of the bearer of that life [...] transcending, by a mysterious necessity, life's more narrowly rational aspects".[78] It is appro-

75 For the English lottery, see James Raven, "The Abolition of the English State Lotteries", *The Historical Journal* 34, no. 2 (1991): 371–389. Herrero Suárez treats the reforms in the Spanish lottery throughout the eighteenth century (75–101), and Cordoncillo Samada does so for "New Spain" (33–61).

76 For this "second phase", see Haugen, *Le Rêve du gros lot*, ch. 2.

77 Francisco Rodríguez Cirugeda, "Introducción", in José Altabella, *La Lotería nacional de España: 1763–1963* (Dirección general de tributos especiales, 1962), 8–9.

78 Georg Simmel, "The Adventure", in *Essays on Sociology, Philosophy and Aesthetics*, ed. Kurt H. Wolff (Harper and Row, 1965), 246.

priate that, in addition to "The Adventure", Simmel was known for his philosophy of money, and its opening up of boundless possibilities of identity and experience. Venturing one's money on the prospect of spectacular gain by choosing propitious numbers, the lottery player partakes of an adventure, an exhilarating departure from quotidian existence. The *alea* of pure chance veers into vertiginous *ilinx*, a plunge into disorder – or "voluptuous panic"[79] – from which one might emerge transformed. Amidst their grinding routines of work and marital conflict, Marica and Patricio glimpse the possibilities of such play (different house, social standing, mode of transportation), before it all falls apart. Given the social reality undergirding the *sainetes*, and the Enlightenment emphasis on rationality and order, the odds were stacked against a positive representation of the lottery fantasy.

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