

KELLY DONAHUE-WALLACE

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

*Printmakers in
Eighteenth-Century Mexico City:
Francisco Sylverio, José Mariano Navarro, José Benito
Ortuño, and Manuel Galicia de Villavicencio*

FROM THE FIFTEENTH century to the nineteenth, printed images immortalized kings, documented inventions and curiosities, recorded coronations and funerals, and disseminated religious ideologies. In colonial New Spain, woodcuts and engravings aided in the conversion of indigenous populations, helped to maintain peninsular hegemony, expressed local ideas and concerns in the face of an imperial system, and created a vocabulary of national identity in preparation for Mexico's separation from the metropolis. Nevertheless, despite its centrality to viceregal culture and society, the Mexican print remains an under-researched aspect of colonial artistic production. The causes of the scholarly disinterest are multiple and include a lack of systematic collection then or now as well as traditional art historical marginalization of works primarily directed toward popular audiences and produced in multiples with mechanical interference and labor divisions. Even as scholarly interest broadens in its appreciation for diverse art forms, Mexican colonial printmaking remains veiled in shadow; but today the problem is limited archival research. Without firm data concerning the identities and working practices of the artists, it is difficult to consider thoroughly their images. The purpose of the following paragraphs, therefore, is to continue to present new documentary research on a group of Mexican printmaker/publishers active in the mid-eighteenth century to

broaden our understanding of these artists and the printmaking profession in general and to encourage further research.¹

Francisco Sylverio de Sotomayor (1699-circa 1763)

Published accounts of Francisco Sylverio's career claim he made at least 1,245 numbered engravings between 1721 and 1763.² At his shop located on calle de las Escalerillas, Francisco engraved and published prints with the help of his son, Juan Manuel Sylverio Sotomayor, who operated the *tórculo* or roller press.³ There he contracted with individual customers and typographic printers for devotional images, heraldic devices, and book illustrations.

Archival evidence reveals that Francisco Sylverio was born *circa* 1699 in Mexico City.⁴ The Creole engraver and his wife, Ana Martínez, produced at least five children.⁵ At the time of the 1753 census, Sylverio was 54 years old and his children ranged in age from twenty to seven. His household also included a fourteen-year-old *mestiza* maid named Caetana, demonstrating the

1. In addition to the catalog of Mexican printmakers by Manuel Romero de Terreros, *Grabados y grabadores en la Nueva España* (Mexico City: Ediciones Arte Mexicano, 1949), two recent publications have added new information on several printmakers. See María de los Ángeles Sobrino Figueroa, "Grabados y grabadores novohispanos en la colección del Museo de Soumaya", *Memoria (Museo Nacional de Arte)* 7 (1998): 109-116 and the research of María Teresa Martínez Peñalosa in *Imprentas, ediciones y grabados de México barroco*, exh. cat. (Mexico City: Museo Amparo/Backal, 1995).

2. Romero de Terreros, *Grabados y grabadores*, 531. A newly discovered list of all print publishing firms operating in Mexico City in 1768 does not include Sylverio's shop, suggesting that the engraver had died. See Archivo General de la Nación (hereafter agn), t. 1079, exp. 1, fols. 2-7.

3. agn, Matrimonios, t. 70, exp. 22, fols. 246-250 cited in Sobrino Figueroa, "Grabados," 114 and Kelly Donahue-Wallace, "Prints and Printmakers in Viceregal Mexico City, 1600-1800," (Ph.D. diss., University of New Mexico, 2000), 53. I disagree with Sobrino Figueroa's claim that Juan Manuel was also an engraver. Instead, Juan Manuel identifies himself in the documents as an *impresor de estampas* or intaglio press operator, not an *abridor de láminas* or engraver like his father. Further, unlike all other printmakers identified in known documents, Juan Manuel was illiterate and could not sign his name to his marriage document. All other press operators found in the known documents are likewise illiterate.

4. agn, Matrimonios, t. 157, exp. 64, fol. 2v.

5. agn, Matrimonios, t. 157, exp. 64, fol. 2v.

relative prosperity the engraver and his family enjoyed.⁶ In 1762, when Sylverio witnessed his son Juan Manuel's wedding, he provided more personal information, stating his full last name as Sylverio de Sotomayor and confirming his Creole identity. He also revealed that he had re-married, naming Ana Ruiz Fonseca as his bride, and that his home on calle de las Escalerillas belonged to the family of his new daughter-in-law, María Rosalía Guerrero.⁷

As with his personal biography, newly discovered documents help to expand our knowledge of Sylverio's career. A February 1731 report written at the Royal Factory of Playing Cards by overseer Francisco Giuliast discussed the promotion of a block-cutter named don Francisco Sylverio. Giuliast requested that Viceroy Juan de Acuña confer "a general commission to don Francisco Sylverio, a person of his satisfaction and in whom concur[red] the necessary zeal and efficiency." He also asked the Viceroy to "name him Block-cutter of Planks and Cards of this Royal Concession." The Viceroy agreed, writing, "With the present [document] I name [Francisco Sylverio] Block-cutter of Planks and Cards for the Royal Concession of this court so that as such he cuts all [the blocks] he is ordered to in the time required [and] makes them new and not in any other form... according to the instructions provided."⁸ Acuña also appointed Sylverio to the position of General Commissioner charged with investigating illicit playing card production and questioning witnesses and permitted him to carry a weapon.⁹

6. Romero de Terreros, *Grabados y grabadores*, 531 includes a partial description of the 1753 census record for Sylverio. The full census entry can be found in agn, Padrones, t. 52, fols. 216v-217r. Eduardo Báez Macías, "Planos y censos de la ciudad de México," *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación* 8 (1967): 1017, also transcribes the census entry, but mistakenly adds that Sylverio was a *mestizo*.

7. agn, Matrimonios, t. 157, exp. 64, fol. 2v.

8. "...[Q]ue se confiere comisión General a Don Francisco Sylverio, persona de su satisfacción y en quien concurren la eficacia y celo que es necesario y que le nombrase por Abridor de Tablas y Barajas del mismo Real Estanco... Por el presente le nombro por Abridor de Tablas y Barajas del Real Estanco de esta corte para que como tal abra la que se le ordenare a los tiempos que convenga hacerlas nuevas y no en otra forma, y según la instrucción que se la diere..." (All translations mine unless otherwise noted.) agn, Ordenanzas Naipes, t. 12, exp. 70, fol. 237r.

9. agn, Ordenanzas Naipes, t. 12, exp. 70, fols. 237r-237v. This governmental position may explain why Juan Manuel gave his father's name as "Sup[erintendente] don Francisco Sylverio" in 1758. agn, Matrimonios, t. 70, exp. 22, fol. 249. Sylverio did not mention his position at the Royal Factory of Playing Cards at Juan Manuel's 1762 wedding, leading to the conclusion that he no longer worked for the government.

Exactly how Sylverio's presence at the Royal Factory of Playing Cards should be understood is difficult to determine. It stands to reason that lacking a guild or other institution for learning his craft, Sylverio looked to the workshops of the playing card industry to train his hand, taking advantage of this preparation to open subsequently his own print publishing firm. In fact, Sylverio's career with the Royal Factory of Playing Cards coincided with much of his single-leaf print and book illustration production, suggesting that the printmaker sought every opportunity to exercise his art. Therefore, despite a gap of nearly two centuries, we find a printmaker using playing card production to facilitate his entry into the profession, just as Juan Ortiz and other early block-cutters had in the sixteenth century.¹⁰ Another significant piece of information provided by this document is that Sylverio was not solely a copper plate engraver, but also a block cutter. Perhaps his woodcut playing cards helped to bolster his productivity to the astounding 1,245 works he appears to have claimed. Likewise, we are left to wonder what designs this skilled printmaker may have created for the *espaldillas* or back sides of his cards.

José Mariano Navarro (1742-circa 1809)

As with other printmakers of the colonial era, José Mariano Navarro's biography and career remain largely unstudied. Romero de Terreros's research demonstrated that Navarro produced at least 70 single-leaf engravings and book illustrations between 1764 and 1809 at two shops in Mexico City, one on calle de Manrique and the other on calle de los Donceles.¹¹ Romero de Terreros's study further revealed that the change in shop location occurred

10. Sylverio may not have been the only known eighteenth-century printmaker to work in the Playing Card Factory. In 1761, a shortage of playing cards led Factory officials to seek help from don José de Andrade, who they hired as *asiento* or overseer with a temporary contract. The hiring record described Andrade as "hábil, inteligente y capaz" and stated that he "conoce la infinidad de menudencias precisas e indispensables como la compra de papel y demás materiales." agn, Ordenanzas Naipes, t. 14, exp. 46, fols. 31v-32r. This description raises the possibility that Factory administrators hired the engraver José de Andrade (active 1755-1780). His efforts illustrating imprints for the Biblioteca Mexicana likely provided him with the knowledge Factory administrators sought.

11. Romero de Terreros, *Grabados y grabadores*, 516-518.

sometime before 1769 when Navarro aggressively promoted his new locale, inscribing an engraving of the Sacred Heart with an invitation to customers to buy “this and other saints” at the Donceles address.¹² Previous scholarship has also brought to light an engraved anatomy study with an inscription referring to a 1771 *certamen pictórico* or pictorial debate Navarro sponsored at his studio for local artists.¹³ Otherwise, little is known about his life. Fortunately, new research has uncovered data that not only helps to elucidate Navarro’s career but also to reveal aspects of the colonial printmaking profession and its patrons.

The earliest reference to José Mariano Navarro to emerge from the archives is the artist’s 1762 marriage document. According to that record, Navarro married María Josepha Ferrer y Espejo on March 6, 1762 at the Sagrario Metropolitano in Mexico City. The Creole couple hailed from the Bishopric of Puebla: María Josepha from the city of Puebla and José Mariano from the town of Amosoque. At the time of their wedding, the pair had lived only seven months in Mexico City, arriving in September, 1761.¹⁴ This information was confirmed at the 1771 wedding of Ignacio Antonio Chávez when Navarro, witnessing the nuptials, stated that he remained married to María Josepha and was currently 29 years old. Further, he identified his profession as *abridor de láminas* or copper plate engraver, and revealed that he and his wife lived behind his studio located, at that time, in front of the Royal Mint in a house owned by the *Vicario General* of the Cathedral.¹⁵ Another witness at the same 1771 wedding was the engraver Juan José Náxera, with whom Navarro appears to have had a lengthy professional relationship, as demonstrated below.

While marriage records have gone far toward expanding our knowledge of Navarro’s biography, Inquisition documents elucidate his professional activities. On July 28, 1768 Inquisition authorities met to discuss the recent unauthorized publication of a sermon titled *Hermosura de la iglesia*. The Inquisitors were frustrated by the fact that the printer, Felipe de Zúñiga y

12. The inscription read, “J[oseph] Navarro se[ulpsit] Mex[ico]Calle de los Donzeles está su imprenta donde [h]ay esta [estampa] y otras de varios S[anto]s Nuevos de este año de 1769.” Cited in Romero de Terreros, *Grabados y grabadores*, 516.

13. Efraín Castro Morales, “Un grabado neoclásico”, *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas* 9, núm. 33 (1964): 107-108.

14. Archivo del Sagrario Metropolitano, Libro de matrimonios de españoles, t. 25, 1760-1762, fol. 145 and Libro de Amonestaciones, 1761, fol. 48.

15. agn, Matrimonios, t. 105, exp. 26, fols. 332-333.

Ontiveros, like so many of his colleagues, did not submit examples of the text to the Holy Office before printing the book. They ordered that, under penalty of excommunication and a fine of fifty pesos, no typographic or print publishers “give or distribute to the public any paper, book, or print pulled on their presses without first providing [the Inquisitors] with an example.”¹⁶ To ensure general compliance, a representative of the Holy Office was sent to each typographic and print publishing firm in the city to read the proclamation. Over the next week, the cleric met with some of the most renown publishers in Mexican printing history, among them Zúñiga y Ontiveros and José Antonio de Hegal.¹⁷ He also visited eight print publish-

16. “...[N]o den ni saquen al público papel, libro o estampa, que se imprima en sus imprentas, que no se nos traiga un exemplar...” agn, Inquisición, t. 1079, exp. 1, fol. 2. Although the legalities of print publishing in colonial New Spain have yet to be studied thoroughly, this proclamation appears to have finally confirmed for printmakers that they were subject to the laws governing typographic imprints. Nevertheless, there is no evidence in the Inquisition records that any printmaker ever complied with this order. See Donahue-Wallace, “Prints and Printmakers,” 18-27 on the legality of print publishing so far as current research has revealed.

17. The value of this document (agn, Inquisición, t. 1079, exp. 1, fol. 1-11) for the history of printing and printmaking in viceregal Mexico City cannot be underestimated. Although the length of the file precludes its transcription here, a brief summary is in order. At the July 28, 1768 meeting, Inquisitors Julián Vicente González de Andía and Julián de Amestoy ordered that the publishers of Mexico City submit their imprints for approval. Inquisition notary José de Rábago was charged with visiting each of the typographic and print publishing firms and reading the Tribunal’s mandate to the owner or operator. On the pages following this order, the document records Rábago’s travels with brief statements of compliance and the signatures of those who heard the mandate. The notified parties were the following: Juan José Arizmendi at the typographic firm of the Heirs of María de Ribera, Francisco Xavier de Torizes at the Biblioteca Mexicana, typographic printer Felipe de Zúñiga y Ontiveros, typographic printer José Antonio de Hegal, typographic printer Francisco Xavier Sánchez of the Royal Treasury, engraver and print publisher José Mariano Navarro, engraver and print publisher Francisco Gutiérrez, overseer Juan José Adrina at the print publishing firm belonging to architect Cayetano de Sigüenza, print publisher Juan de San Pedro Ortuño, engraver and print publisher Juan del Prado, Petra de Monterrey at the print publishing firm of Manuel Galicia de Villavicencio, engraver and print publisher José Benito Ortuño, and print publisher Salvador Hernández y Zapata. The remainder of the document chronicles the difficulty of enforcing the new policy, first with the unauthorized publication of an archepiscopal edict. Another blow to the order came in the form of a 1770 letter from Viceroy the Marquis of Croix complaining that a confidential document intended solely for the king should not have been submitted for approval. The final entry in the archive records the return of the viceroy’s document, the Tribunal’s defense of its actions, and the amicable resolution to the problem.

ing firms, including the shop belonging to José Mariano Navarro. According to the document, the cleric arrived at Navarro's shop on calle de Tacuba on July 29, read the engraver the Inquisitors' declaration, and acquired his signature affirming future compliance. There is no evidence that Navarro (or any other printmaker) ever followed through on this promise.

From this brief reference to Navarro come two pieces of new information. First, in July of 1768, Navarro's shop was located neither on calle de Manrique nor on Donceles. This raises the possibility that the engraver operated in at least three different locations over the course of his career. Second, Navarro's signature on the document confirms that he, like all print publishers to emerge from the documentary record, including the seven others visited by the cleric in late July 1768, was at least literate enough to sign his own name. This supports the conclusion that print publishers existed in a respectable social milieu of typographers and other merchants, sharing their educational preparation.

Navarro's next appearance in the known documentation involves two Inquisition investigations. In 1767 and 1768, Inquisition authorities investigated the provenance of two engravings circulating in Mexico City. Both bore the image of Saint Josaphat and an inscription critical of Charles III and his expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain and its territories.¹⁸ The Inquisitors and representatives of the viceregal government, eager to squelch popular discontent before it boiled over into outright rebellion, collected the prints and attempted to trace them to their patrons and artists. The investigation revealed that one of the engravings was the work of José Mariano Navarro and his assistant Juan José Náxera and the other was engraved by Manuel Galicia de Villavicencio (discussed below). Needless to say, the Inquisitors called the engravers before them to explain their actions and motives.

Navarro testified for the first time in the Saint Josaphat matter on May 5, 1768. After identifying himself as an *abridor de láminas* and confirming the

18. The inscription read, "[S]an Josaphat Arzobispo de Polocia p[or] la ob[e]d[iencia] a la papa; decía: q[ue] lo eran suyos los enemigos de la Compañía de Jesús. [L]os tenía por sospechosos en el Catholicismo y los miraba como réprobos. Cap[ítulo] 3 fol[io] 48 de su vida." For a detailed account of both trials, see Donahue-Wallace, "Prints and Printmakers," 291-305. For an analysis of the role gender biases played in the trials, see Kelly Donahue-Wallace, "*La casada imperfecta*: A Woman, a Print, and the Mexican Inquisition," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, forthcoming in 2002.

biographical information discussed above, Navarro explained the circumstances of his commission. Acting on behalf of his brother, a Jesuit living in Guadalajara, a glass merchant named Manuel Gil de Estrada contacted the engraver just before the 1767 expulsion. Gil asked Navarro to reproduce, with some alterations, an earlier engraving of Saint Josaphat and to pull 2,000 copies of the image. Estrada provided the engraver with the model, the new inscription that would cause them all so much trouble, and his brother's instructions. Written on the back of the model, the instructions read,

I do not like this one. First, for the puerile face on the Jesuit. Second for all the black. I want lots of white in between. Third for the improper mill stone. The engraving must be done in quarto. The texts well done and airy. The lettering all well done and clear. In short, a first-rate work, not like this one...¹⁹

The offensive inscription was handwritten above and below the model image.

Navarro appeared for a second time in the Josaphat investigation on July 21, 1768 and revealed new information about the circumstances of the commission. He informed the Inquisitors that two states of his print existed. Upon receiving the first state, the patron Estrada discovered errors in the lettering and returned to Navarro's shop, paying the engraver four pesos to fix the mistakes. In doing so, the artist's signature, present in the first state, was removed to make room for the corrected text. Either Navarro or his assistant, Juan José Náxera, made the changes and pulled a second run of prints, anonymously this time, which apparently satisfied his client. Faint scratches left by the pumice he used to erase the faulty letters remained visible around the edges of the print, Navarro informed the tribunal.²⁰

The significance of the Josaphat Inquisition investigations to our understanding of José Mariano Navarro's career and Mexican colonial printmaking in general cannot be underestimated. First, the document explains, for the

19. "Esta no me cuadra. Primero por la cara pueril de la Comp[añi]a. Segundo por lo mucho negro, quero mucho blanco en media. Tercero por lo improprio de la piedra de molina. Ha de ser la lámina por cuarterón. Los textos bien pues y con aire. Muy Buena la letra de todo, y clara. En fin una obra primorosa, no como ésta..." agn, Inquisición, t. 1521, exp. 8, fol. 239v.

20. agn, Inquisición, t. 1521, exp. 9, fol. 264v.

first time, the printmaker's working practices, beginning with his use of printed models as sources of inspiration, which the artist felt no need to credit on his own version. It also presents new information about the type of oral and written instructions printmakers received from their patrons, which, lacking notarized contracts and other official written records, have remained entirely undefined until now. Further, the document describes the technique of correcting errors on the plate by erasing the offending passage with pumice then hammering the back side to even the surface. Likewise, we learn that Navarro's shop was prosperous enough to engage the services of a second engraver, Nájera, who later worked for the Biblioteca Mexicana typographic printing house.²¹ This new information remains anecdotal until future documentary research can confirm practices and patterns, but is invaluable for providing a first glimpse into this hitherto unknown profession.

José Benito Ortuño (active 1750-1808)

The only published information available on the engraver José Benito Ortuño is Romero de Terreros' statement that he owned a copy of Manuel de Rueda's *Instrucción para grabar en cobre* (Madrid, 1761) bearing Ortuño's signature.²² Beyond this brief reference nothing is known about this artist who was responsible for at least 37 engravings over the course of his career. Fortunately, several documents recently discovered in Mexican archives help to expand our knowledge of his life and work.

Although extant prints suggest that Ortuño began his engraving career in the 1750s, the first documentary evidence of his participation in the profession comes a decade later and appears in the archive of the Royal Mint.²³ In

21. Nájera also testified for the Josaphat investigation. See agn, Inquisición, t. 1521, exp. 9, fols. 268-269.

22. Romero de Terreros, *Grabados y grabadores*, 520. The text, in Romero de Terreros' collection, was inscribed with Ortuño's name and the date 1774. Rueda's treatise is available in facsimile. See Manuel Rueda, *Instrucción para grabar en cobre*, facs. ed. with preliminary study by Antonio Moreno Garrido (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1991).

23. Although printmaking and coin and medal engraving are quite different occupations, it is well known that artists participated in both disciplines. The most famous example in Mexico is, of course, Jerónimo Antonio Gil, the Spanish numismatist and founder of the Royal Academy of San Carlos who also produced a small body of engravings.

a 1761 report to Mint authorities, Principal Engraver Juan Fernández de la Peña warned of a dire shortage of engravers in his department. To remedy the problem, the royal bureaucrats decided to hold a contest to fill the position of First Official in the Mint's engraving office and hung banners out its windows to advertise the event.²⁴ Only two artists applied: José Benito Ortuño and Luis Gómez. Although the latter was already employed at the Mint, neither engraver demonstrated much skill, according to Peña. Ortuño specifically "d[id] not have any practice in sculpting, that is, in placing the punches in the formes and even less in making [the punches] or even taking them out of the matrices. His sample, which is a portrait of His Majesty, is made without method or intelligence in drawing, modeling or bas relief."²⁵ Peña's opinion of Gómez's work was only slightly better, but circumstances dictated he promote the engraver to the position of First Official. Ortuño was not hired and while the engraver does not appear again in the Mint archive, Peña's report continued on to make some revealing statements about the printmaking profession in eighteenth-century Mexico City.

To explain the lack of interest in the contest for First Official, Peña stated that "the salary is so limited that no [engravers] with sufficient skill [were] interested."²⁶ Further, those employees who already worked in the Mint's engraving office were angered at inequities in institutional practices, seeing "that other Mint employees, with more rest... enjoy better salaries without having to learn and spend seven or eight years as apprentices."²⁷ This state of affairs had been known to cause a young engraver to leave the Mint upon completing his training because, Peña explained, "retired in his house with less work, he earns more."²⁸ From Peña's complaint, we can assume that

24. agn, Casa de Moneda, t. 87, exp. 19, fols. 336-374.

25. "Benito Ortuño no tiene ninguna práctica de talla, esto es, de colocar los punzones en los cuadrados y menos de hacerlos por si, ni aún sacarlos de las matrices. Su muestra que es la del retrato de S[u] M[ajestad] está hecha sin método ni inteligencia de lo que es dibujo, modelo, y bajo relieve..." agn, Casa de Moneda, t. 87, exp. 19, fol. 349r.

26. "...[Q]ue el salario es tan limitado que ninguno que tenga la habilidad suficiente le apetecerá..." agn, Casa de Moneda, t. 87, exp. 19, fol. 357v.

27. "...[Q]ue todos los demás dependientes, con más descanso... gozan de mejores sueldos sin haber tenido que aprender y gastar en este siete u ocho años de aprendiz..." agn, Casa de Moneda, t. 87, exp. 19, fol. 358r.

28. "...[R]etirado en su casa con menos trabajo ganará más..." agn, Casa de Moneda, t. 87, exp. 19, fol. 358r. In fact, a 1772 royal decree on the quality of Mint coins and medals demanded that Engraving Office apprentices "se instruyen principalmente en el modelar,

other print publishers active in Mexico City had taken advantage of Mint training to open their own establishments in the interest of their wallets. Peña may have been thinking of engraver Antonio Moreno (1713-circa 1774) who, after refining his skills in the Mint workshop and ascending to the rank of First Official, left government service for the more lucrative print publishing profession.²⁹ Mint authorities, in fact, recalled Moreno to service during the 1761 crisis to help alleviate the backlog of work, describing him as “Antonio Moreno, another engraver who was an official of this Royal mint.”³⁰

Ortuño apparently did not let the Royal Mint’s rejection derail his plans to become an engraver. By 1768, in fact, Ortuño’s print publishing shop was among the firms visited by the Inquisition regarding changes in printing protocols. On July 30, the cleric found the shop on calle de San Hipólito near the Mexico City aqueduct and the Chapel of the Ecce Homo. When he inquired after Ortuño, who he described as an “engraver with the roller press for printing copper plates,” a housekeeper told the Inquisitor that neither José Benito nor his wife were available.³¹ The pair was, at that moment, involved in a duel. The cleric left instructions that Ortuño present himself on Monday, August 1, 1768 at eight in the morning to hear an important decree regarding prints. The record shows that the engraver arrived at the Inquisition offices sometime on the morning of Wednesday, August 3.

Manuel Galicia de Villavicencio (1730-circa 1788)

Manuel Galicia de Villavicencio engraved single-leaf prints and book illustrations in Mexico City from 1753 to 1788. Until recently, little was known about this artist (including his full name) despite his participation in several prestigious projects. Romero de Terreros credited Villavicencio with over 100

gravar laminas, y demás que pueda conducir al intento...” agn, Reales Cédulas Originales, t. 100, exp. 166, fol. 447r. No doubt this type of training only encouraged more apprentices to enter the printmaking market and abandon the viceregal institution’s rigid hierarchy.

29. Moreno’s promotion is described in agn, Casa de Moneda, t. 32, exp. 4, fol. 10r.

30. “Antonio Moreno, otro abridor que fue oficial en esta Real Casa...” agn, Casa de Moneda, t. 87, exp. 19, fol. 341v.

31. “Joseph Benito Ortuño abridor de láminas y con tórculo para la impresión de ellas y sus estampas...” agn, Inquisición, t. 1079, exp. 1, fol. 6v.

engravings but provided no other information.³² New research has revealed that Villavicencio owned and operated a print publishing firm with his wife.

Information about the life and career of Manuel Galicia de Villavicencio has come from several of the documents already described in this essay. Like Navarro, and Ortuño, Villavicencio's print publishing firm was visited by the Inquisition representative on July 30, 1768 regarding printing protocols. From that document comes the information that Villavicencio owned the shop on calle de la Polilla with his wife, Petra de Monterrey. Since her husband was unavailable during the cleric's visit, Petra heard the decree and promised to pass it along to the engraver.³³ She did not, however, sign the document due to her illiteracy.

In another coincidence, Villavicencio also testified in the 1768 Inquisition investigation of the Saint Josaphat engravings. In fact, his colleague, José Mariano Navarro, identified Villavicencio as the other anonymous engraver responsible for one of the versions of the offending image. Hearing this, the Inquisitors called Villavicencio to appear on July 22, 1768. Beginning his testimony, Manuel identified himself as an engraver and confirmed that his shop was located on calle de la Polilla. He also told the Inquisitors that although his first surname was Galicia, he preferred to go by Villavicencio, which the notary duly noted in the trial record.³⁴ He identified himself as a Spaniard and gave his age as thirty-eight years old.³⁵

Proceeding to describe the Saint Josaphat commission, Villavicencio explained that doña Manuela de Candia arrived at his shop in 1767 on the recommendation of José de Aranzubia, a roller press operator at the Biblioteca Mexicana typographic printing firm. Candia had in tow one of Navarro's engravings and asked Villavicencio to copy it. The engraver complied, charging her eight pesos and making a few alterations to the model. Along with iconographic corrections, Villavicencio changed the image of Ignatius of Loyola, he testified, "because Navarro's version looked like a woman."³⁶ Following his patron's wishes, the engraver did not sign the plate, although he

32. Romero de Terreros, *Grabados y grabadores*, 549-555.

33. agn, Inquisición, t. 1079, exp. 1, fols. 5v-6r.

34. agn, Inquisición, t. 1521, exp. 9, fol. 269v.

35. agn, Inquisición, t. 1521, exp. 9, fol. 275r.

36. "...[P]or que la de Navarro más parece mujer..." agn, Inquisición, t. 1521, exp. 9, fol. 270r.

considered this a breach of ethics. When Villavicencio finished the plate, Aranzubia printed a run of five or six hundred impressions in red ink, using the engraver's roller press. He also printed an extra edition of ten to twelve prints in black ink for Villavicencio. Hearing about the Inquisition interest in the Saint Josaphat prints, Villavicencio warned his client and turned his remaining copies over to a local priest. This did not satisfy Inquisition authorities who recommended that he, Candia, and Aranzubia be sternly warned not to repeat their impertinence and that the trio be fined for the Inquisitors' costs.³⁷ There is no evidence that Villavicencio's sentence was ever carried out.

As with Navarro's testimony, the information Manuel Galicia de Villavicencio provided in his 1768 appearance before the Inquisition goes far toward elucidating his career and working practices. Not only does he expand our understanding of his biography, noting that he, like most other printmakers found in the archival record, identified himself as Creole, but the engraver also explained much about the Mexican printmaking industry, including his familiarity with Navarro's work, his relationship with the roller press operator, and his fees for service. Although Navarro's and Villavicencio's descriptions of the commission process do not agree entirely, with one patron providing written instructions and the other oral, they begin to shed light on how eighteenth-century artists interacted with their clients.

The final archival notice concerning Manuel Galicia de Villavicencio similarly addresses his customers. An advertisement in the June 24, 1788 issue of the *Gazeta de México* took advantage of the late-eighteenth century fluorescence of regularly published gazettes to attract a literate clientele from across the city. The notice read, "The deceased D. Manuel Villavicencio's *imprenta de estampas* has moved to the calle de la Canoa number 12 and a thorough assortment [of prints] and various calling cards in the usual style can be found there."³⁸ The advertisement does not identify the new shop owner, nor has published scholarship placed later print shops on calle de la Canoa. Based on established practices in typographic printing, it stands to

37. agn, Inquisición, t. 1521, exp. 9, fols. 286v-287r.

38. "La imprenta de estampas del difunto D. Manuel Villavicencio se ha pasado a la calle de la Canoa número 12 y en ella se hallará un competente surtimiento y varios boletines para cumplimentar según se estila." *Gazeta de México* (México, D.F.), t. 3, núm. 11 (June 24, 1788): 84.

reason that Villavicencio's wife inherited the firm, contracting with another engraver to keep the shop in business.

The newspaper advertisement not only provides an approximate date for Manuel Galicia de Villavicencio's death, but also reveals new information about the public perception of the printmaker's art and his late-eighteenth century context. First, the engraver's heir clearly intended to capitalize on Villavicencio's substantial renown when he created the advertisement, promoting the name of the deceased engraver, not his living successor. This should come as little surprise since the oeuvres of few printmakers active in the last decades of the eighteenth century could compare with the volume and prestige of Villavicencio's more than one hundred known works. Second, the *Gazeta* announcement marks a new era in print marketing, when engravers no longer solely relied on shop location or inscribed advertisements at the foot of their images to solicit customers. Instead, engravers including Royal Academy artists José María Montes de Oca, Manuel López López, and José Joaquín Fabregat as well as non-academician José Simón de la Rea could rely on the wide distribution of the *Gazeta de México* and the *Diario de México* to attract a larger and, it should be noted, more sophisticated clientele.³⁹ Finally, the advertisement highlights the fact that the Mexican print publishing industry was extremely competitive. Lacking a guild and its corresponding anti-competition measures, the printmakers sought every opportunity to draw customers to their shops. And while this type of blatant commercialism has caused prints to exist on the margin of art historical study, Villavicencio's newspaper announcement provides some much-needed information for the document starved history of the Mexican printmaking profession. ♣

39. On the advertisements by Academy engravers and independent print publishers, see Donahue-Wallace, "Prints and Printmakers," 376-380 and 258-261. Romero de Terreros, *Grabados y grabadores*, 163, published one of the advertisements placed by Manuel López López.