

HisMundi

HISTORIA
DEL MUNDO
IBÉRICO

Redes y relaciones Europa-América

José María Imízcoz Beunza y Osvaldo Víctor Pereyra
(Editores)



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HisMundi

La Colección de Monografías **HisMundi** es fruto de investigaciones realizadas dentro de la *Red Interuniversitaria de Historia del Mundo Ibérico: del Antiguo Régimen a las Independencias* (Red **HisMundi**) y, en particular, es el resultado de una ambición historiográfica con una misma sensibilidad que cuenta con investigadores de las dos riberas del Atlántico en los mundos ibéricos: analizar fenómenos y procesos históricos con un enfoque comparativo, focalizando la atención en sociedades históricas que han experimentado historias compartidas, y también contrastadas, como fueron las ibéricas europeas y americanas desde 1492 hasta la formación de los estados en América Latina.

Este proyecto global y esta ambición parten de una iniciativa compartida por historiadores de las universidades nacionales argentinas de La Plata, Rosario y Mar del Plata, y de las españolas de Cantabria y el País Vasco. La Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación de la Universidad Nacional de La Plata se encarga de producir la presente colección de libros digitales que lleva como título *Historia del Mundo Ibérico: del Antiguo Régimen a las independencias*.

El objetivo es ofrecer encuadres óptimos para desarrollar la publicación electrónica anual de libros digitales científicos, coordinados bien por especialistas del entorno de la Red, bien por colegas de un alto reconocimiento investigador, que impliquen una colaboración de expertos contrastados en cada una de las materias de que se ocupe la obra. Las monografías permiten así avanzar en la cohesión de la red, en la coordinación de trabajos realizados en sus entornos universitarios y en la incorporación de investigadores de alto nivel académico a las materias específicas de cada libro, enfatizándose, en lo posible, en cada uno de ellos, un enfoque comparativo entre las experiencias históricas de los mundos ibéricos.

Cada volumen, conformado con la colaboración de un elenco de especialistas, es coordinado por dos editores científicos que se encargan de su confección, organización y orientación, así como de solicitar las colaboraciones oportunas a los investigadores que participan en el libro, e indican, a su vez, los ejes fundamentales de la obra en torno a los cuales deben girar todas las aportaciones, desde la singularidad de cada una de ellas. Los editores de cada volumen acuerdan la estructura, contenidos y colaboraciones del mismo, quedan también encargados de la redacción de una introducción que sirva de presentación historiográfica y subraye los elementos de novedad que, colectivamente, todos los autores aportan en la publicación al estado actual del conocimiento en la materia. En consecuencia, cada monográfico no se plantea como un compendio de informaciones sobre una materia sino como una aportación singular, realizada de manera conjunta bajo la organización de dos editores científicos.

Cada volumen sigue un meticuloso proceso de composición y, posteriormente, de evaluación, encargada por la Secretaría de Investigaciones de la FaHCE a dos miembros del Consejo Editor de la colección y a otros dos evaluadores externos de prestigio internacional con investigaciones acreditadas en la materia específica del libro. Estos informes son comunicados a los editores del volumen para que realicen, en su caso, los ajustes indicados en los mismos antes de su publicación.

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Fiscal Expenditures at the Margins of the Empire: the role of the Royal Treasury in the economic performance (Buenos Aires, XVIIth century). A Social Network Analysis approximation*

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To examine the mercantile dimension of fiscal expenditures is one way to inquire into the scope that royal resources spending had as boosters of the Hispanic-American economies during the Old Regime (Sánchez Santiró, 2015: 15, Jumar & Sandrín, 2015). In this sense, its possible impact on the local economic performance is another expression of the participation of Hispanic-American actors in the Royal Treasury’s interests, and confirms that the accumulation of local oligarchies intermediated the fiscal circulation of the regional surpluses captured by the royal treasuries. Therefore, the incidence of the royal resources spending on the local economy can be interpreted as a correlate of the negotiation that took part in the fiscal arena of the Empire (Irigoin & Grafe, 2008; Irigoin, 2016).

Of course, we are in the presence of a Treasury that cannot be understood separately from the private actors and their interests (Solbes Ferri, Dubet, Bertrand & Torres Sánchez, 2015). The delimitation between the *public* and the *private* spheres is still diffuse enough to retrospectively project the disbursement of the Real Caja as a *public* expense, even when those were the

expenditures of a local office that constituted an integral part of the *hispanus fiscus*. (Clavero, 1982/1983).

In this sense, the Royal Treasury in Buenos Aires participated in the logic that articulated the Real Hacienda throughout the whole Hispanic-American Empire. As in other fiscal districts of the Monarchy, and in accordance with the priority that all imperial governments gave to military activity during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Torres Sánchez, 2015: 27; Pincus & Robinson, 2016; González Enciso, 2008), the porteña fiscal office also destined a great deal of its disbursements in defensive aims, a general feature that was accentuated by the geopolitical condition of Buenos Aires as military stronghold of the Hispanic-American southeast margin.¹ We know some of the elementary mechanisms that linked the local disbursement of the Real Caja with the deployment of mercantile capital in the local economy: since the local defensive expenses -primarily, the salaries of the troops- depended on fiscal transfers coming from treasuries like the one of Potosí, the delays in the arrival of remittances of the Real Situado –as this system of remissions was known- stimulated merchants of the receiving city to anticipate goods on credit with inflated prices to a troop devoid of resources, in exchange for the future income of the Caja (Moutoukias, 1988; Wasserman, 2018a). Although this is explicative of some of the archetypal mechanisms through which fiscal resources were inserted in the mercantile circulation, it remains to examine the structural impact that the expenditures of the Real Caja had on economic performance; that is to say, the incidence that those disbursements exerted on the economic performance of the actors.

We therefore propose an approximation to the knowledge about the incidence that the expenditures of the Real Caja had on the local economic activity, analyzing the variations that exerted on the performance of the actors through the modifications in their respective betweenness centrality. This approach proposes, therefore, to address the relationship between the fiscal expenditure and local mercantile economy at the margins of the Spanish empire during the 17th century, appealing to basic indicators of Social Network Analysis. In this sense, we use an inductive analysis model

¹ * Spanish version of this research results can be seen in Wasserman (2018b).

Similar cases can be found in Cartagena de Indias, Puerto Rico or Havana (Meisel, 2012; Pacheco Díaz, 2012; Marichal y Souto Mantecón, 2012).

based on the actual interaction between social actors, empirically observed (Imízcoz, 2017: 19).

1. Methodological aspects

There are four key periods to study the development of Buenos Aires during the XVIIth century: 1619-1628, 1635-1644, 1656-1665 and 1676-1685. These four decades refer to historical inflections of different nature, which made both the local oligarchy and the diverse social sectors face different types of challenges:

-The end of the permits granted by the Crown to Buenos Aires' vecinos for their trade with Brazil, and the subsequent establishment of the Andalusia-Buenos Aires route by Navíos de Registro as the only and narrowly authorized commercial channel (1618-1622) in a context of port trade deterioration (Canabrava, 1944; Molina, 1966);

-The rupture of the unity of the crowns of Castile and Portugal (1640) that lead to the trading crisis in the port of Buenos Aires, as well as to the attempt to expel the Portuguese from Buenos Aires in 1643 (Ceballos, 2008: 253; Valladares Ramírez, 1993: 155; Trujillo, 2009: 341-358);

-The creation of the Real Audiencia of Buenos Aires and the renewal of commercial restrictions by the Crown around 1661-63 (García López, 2009);

-And the emergence of Colônia do Sacramento, with the consequent initial development of the Río de la Plata port complex around 1680-83 (Jumar, 2004: 166; Moutoukias, 1988: 160).²

Each of these four decades will constitute the time horizon used in the present paper for the reconstruction of networks of economic interaction and fiscal disbursements.³

² Based in Colônia, the small traffickers began to participate commercially in Río de la Plata, avoiding the traditional mediation imposed by the Buenos Aires oligarchy.

³ The documentary sources used come from the National General Archive of the República Argentina (hereinafter, AGN), Sala IX (hereinafter, IX), Fondo Escribanías Antiguas (hereinafter, EA), Tomos IX, 48-2-2; X, 48-2-3; XI, 48-2-4; XII, 48-2-5; XIII, 48-2-6; XIV, 48-2-7; XV, 48-2-8; XXI, 48-3-6; XXII, 48-3-7; XXIII, 48-3-8; XXIV, 48-4-1; XXV, 48-4-2; XXVI, 48-4-3; XXVII, 48-4-4; XXXI, 48-5-2; XXXIII, 48-5-4; XXXIV, 48-5-5; XXXV, 48-5-6; XXXVI, 48-5-7; XXXVII, 48-

For those key periods of the seventeenth century we have information provided by notarial records on diverse economic activities settled in Buenos Aires, including: credit transactions (*obligaciones de pago y cartas de deuda*)⁴, purchases and sales on credit (*escrituras de venta*)⁵, consignment of freight (*fletamentos*)⁶ and consignative census operations.⁷ In this way, a cluster of 1182 transactions of sale, commercial credit, long-term credit and commercial consignments nourish the net of visible economic interactions through its notarization.

Since businesses were notary deeded only if they met certain criteria (such as the amounts involved, the risks assumed and the relational distance between the parties)⁸, these transactions represent a segment of the total possible universe.⁹ But, for the same reason, the notarial deed is an instance

6-1; XLII, 48-6-6; XLIII, 48-6-7; XLIV, 48-6-8; XLV, 48-7-1; XLVI, 48-7-2; XLVII, 48-7-3; AGN, Sala XIII (hereinafter, XIII), Contaduría Colonial, 43-1-1; 43-1-10; 43-1-11; 43-1-13; 43-1-4; 43-2-1.

⁴ In Buenos Aires, the *obligaciones de pago* and *cartas de deuda* do not reveal typological nor morphological differences in the notarial protocol, presenting themselves as two different ways of designating the same documentary type according to the discretion or practice of the successive notaries who officiated in the registry (Wasserman, 2018a). We have recovered a total of 942 operations that channeled \$ 1,245,038.3, distributed as follows: 210 for 1619-1628 (mobilizing a total amount of \$164,447,7); 326 for 1635-1644 (\$356,310); 168 for 1656-1665 (\$231,927,9); and 238 for 1676-1685 (\$492,352,7).

⁵ Through notarial sales contracts only certain transactions took shape in Buenos Aires during the seventeenth century, namely: sales of rural and urban property, some slave transactions, the marketing of a few items of goods legally imported by the port, certain regional products (wine, yerba mate, tobacco, honey) and livestock (Wasserman, 2018a). We have collected a total of 101 sales operations on credit on the total or part of the sold value, which involved a total of \$ 95,052.55, distributed as follows: 21 for 1619-1628 (\$ 41919.3); 33 for 1635-1644 (\$ 22,789.35); 16 for 1656-1665 (\$ 7139.15) and 31 for 1676-1685 (\$ 23204.75).

⁶ The freights we have found are 46 operations and are distributed as follows: 8 for 1619-1628 (\$ 4,445); 24 for 1635-1644; 2 for 1656-1665 (\$ 1,419) and 12 for 1676-1685 (\$ 18,188.47).

⁷ The consignative censuses that we have surveyed are 93 and implied the accreditation of \$ 97,930.9, distributed as follows: 3 for 1619-1628 (\$ 3,031); 20 for 1635-1644 (\$ 15,159); 44 for 1656-1665 (\$ 62,398) and 26 for 1676-1685 (\$ 17,342.9).

⁸ Wasserman, 2014.

⁹ An analysis of testamentary declarations reveals that 10% of debts were notarized (and not through private instruments and oral commitments). This is due to the fact that notarial deeds were the preferred instruments for mobilizing high-value transactions: while only 9% of the certificates and 8% of the account books mobilized more than \$ 500, in 38% of the deeds the amounts credited exceeded that amount; and while only 3% of the *cedulas* and 6% of the account books mobilized sums higher than \$ 1000 per transaction, 25% of the notarial deeds channeled transactions that exceeded the \$ 1000 accredited (Wasserman, 2018a). In this way,

that makes visible transactions of different nature and allows reconstructing existing networks of economic operations. In other works, we have elucidated the fundamental role of the notary as informational broker and contractual link in a universe of asymmetric information, such as it was the port of Buenos Aires throughout the seventeenth century.¹⁰ Its intermediation defined the criteria of credit assignment on this segment of transactions notarially certified and, more particularly, on the subnetwork constituted by the actors that participated as creditors and debtors in payment obligations (operations of high amounts, usually used in the Atlantic or interregional trade). The contrast with kinship networks endorsed the importance of the scribe as an informational intermediary (Wasserman, 2015).

Turning our attention now to the funds mobilized by these operations (instead of the information and the criteria that defined who to deposit the securities and trust), we will investigate the role of the Real Caja de Buenos Aires in that economic network, incorporating it in these networks as a supplier node by means of its disbursement of resources. Given the centrality of the four periods previously mentioned, it is necessary first to reconstruct the elementary aspects of that commercial network in which credit, sales and chartering operations intersected.

The role of disbursements of the Real Caja de Buenos Aires on the merchant network can be elucidated through the study of the betweenness

the notarial traded operations segment is representative of transactions of high unitary value, in relational contexts that do not guarantee the fulfillment of commitments without appeal to the force of the royal legality.

¹⁰ Buenos Aires had a highly mobile population structure, in which the personal identities of the traffickers were not always mutually known or recognized. Towards the decade of 1610 about 2,200 stable inhabitants in Buenos Aires witnessed the passage of a floating population of 7,800 people (considering travelers, crew, passengers, slaves in transit, merchants from the interior, overseas merchants, carters, and soldiers in transit). Around 1622 some 2,400 people living in the River Plate town still testified to the arrival of 8,850 subjects during the five-year period 1621-1625. The stable population of 1633, estimated at about 3,300 people, served a mass of 4,300 individuals passing through Buenos Aires during the five-year period that runs between 1631 and 1635. The gap opened during the first half of the 1640s expresses the irruption suffered by maritime trade from the conflicts started in December 1640 between Spain and Portugal. The attempts of expulsion of the Portuguese and the epidemic of 1651 would be two hinges in the demographic evolution. The itinerant population would be reactivated from the mid-1650s, when the Dutch ships led the renaissance of the port, whose peak is visible around the beginning of the 1660s and when the stable population curve expresses its recovery after the drastic epidemic of 1651. See Wasserman, 2018a: 133 et seq.

centrality held by the actors participating in it. The betweenness centrality (hereinafter, BC) allows knowing the capacity of an actor to link subjects lacking mutual adjacency (who are not immediately in contact); in this case, this indicator models the capacity of an actor to position itself as a mediator in the distribution of resources over the network in which he participates (Scott, 2000: 86).¹¹

In this way, it is possible not only to understand the participation of each actor over the mobilized capital, but also their role as intermediaries in the value flows that link the network. Considering that here the links are defined by the flows of values, the degree of BC offers a concise image about the potential capability of the actors to take and redistribute capital in the network's context.

We will begin with the first of the decades analyzed (1619-1628), and then we will offer the results of the same analysis applied to the following three decades.

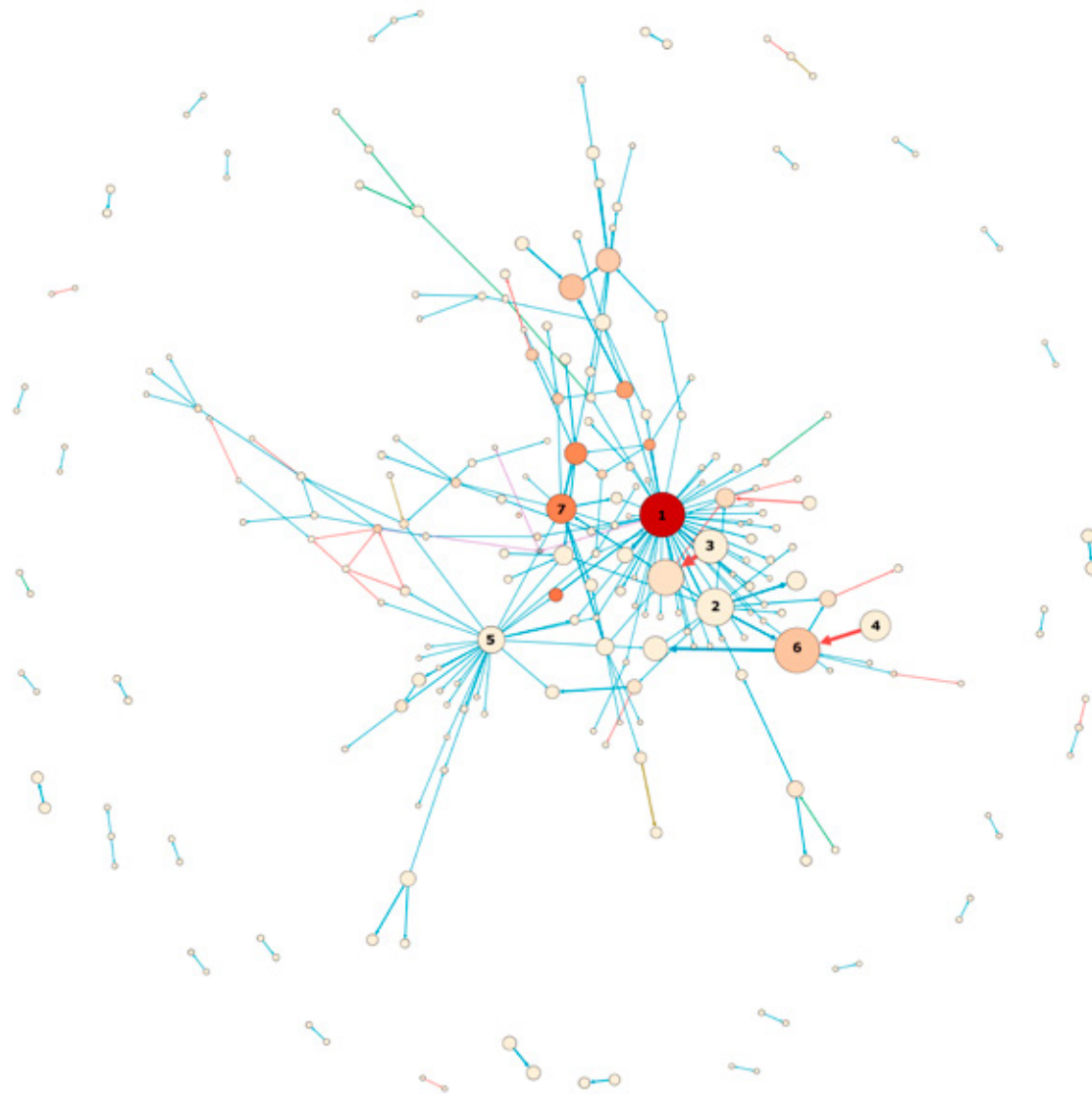
2. Credit, sales and freight: A Network of the porteña commercial economy

2.1. The 1619-1628 decade as an observatory

We start then from a commercial network constituted by economic actors that model nodes, and transactions that model edges (which, in turn, are defined as sales, commercial credit, consignative censuses and charters). This results in a network with ties whose directions follow the course of the money actually or nominally involved in each of the transactions represented.

¹¹ The betweenness centrality allows to identify the importance of an actor to put others in mutual contact; in this sense, that capacity will depend on the actor being located on the geodesic -or shorter- path between them. In this way, the degree of betweenness centrality of an actor will depend on its participation in defined amounts on the geodesic paths that unite the rest of the actors in the network, increasing the dependence that the connected nodes have on the intermediary -who comes to occupy a *structural hole*- (Freeman, 1979; Burt, 2002).

Graph 1. Notarized commercial network. Buenos Aires, 1619-1628.



Note: 1) Alonso Guerrero; 2) Diego de Vega; 3) Juan de Torres Brizeño; 4) Alonso Bello; 5) Juan de Tapia de Vargas; 6) Juan Andrea de León; 7) Juan de Silva.

For the period between 1619 and 1628, the number of actors involved in this commercial network was 235, who arranged a total of 242 notarized transactions and mobilized the sum of \$ 213,843 altogether.¹² As can be seen (*Graph 1*), the largest nodes are those with the greatest magnitudes of mobilized capital.¹³ Among them, there are Alonso Guerrero, Diego de Vega and Juan de Torres Brizeño, the very notable traders in the region. And if we carry out a cut on the actors that gathered 50% of the mobilized capital during the period (that is, the group of subjects with greater economic participation over the total of transactions of this decade), the payroll is circumscribed to seven characters, headed by those (*Table 1*).

Table 1.

Actors who collect 50% of the amount mobilized in the commercial network. Buenos Aires, 1619-1628

| <i>Total Amount</i> | <i>Actor</i> | <i>Share</i> | <i>% Share</i> |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| \$ 213.843 | Alonso Guerrero | 35384,7 | 17% |
| | Diego de Vega | 18736,2 | 9% |
| | Juan de Torres Brizeño | 14850 | 7% |
| | Alonso Bello | 11990 | 6% |
| | Juan de Tapia de Vargas | 9806 | 5% |
| | Juan Andrea de León | 9580 | 4% |
| | Juan de Silva | 6378,7 | 3% |

Note: Amounts expressed in silver pesos of eight reales.

¹² All sums are expressed in silver pesos of eight reales. The 242 transactions traded between 1619 and 1628 consisted of 210 obligations for \$ 164,447.7 (blue edges); 21 sales for \$ 41,919.3 (red edges); 8 charters for \$ 4,445 (green edges); and 3 censuses for \$ 3,031 (brown edges).

¹³ The size of the nodes illustrates their degree (defined by the edges or links that touch the node), weighted by the weight of each edge. The weight is defined, in turn, by the amounts credited in favor of the represented actor, by the value of his acquisitions as buyer and by the amount of the commercial items delivered to drivers for his chartering to the interior -weight that also defines the thickness of the edges-. The higher the BC, the darker the node.

Diego de Vega has been identified since early historiography as the head of the *Confederated* network, altogether with the Sevillian Juan de Vergara.¹⁴ Originally from Madeira, he had managed to develop a solid intercontinental association for the introduction of slaves and products through Buenos Aires, articulating the exchange with Bahia de Todos os Santos and Lisbon, connecting these circuits with the redistribution in Potosí and Chile through credit mechanisms and consignment of merchandise, which provided a wide mesh of debtors between Córdoba and Potosí, the Rio de la Plata and Brazil (Garzón Maceda, 1968: 27; González Lebrero, 2002: 76).¹⁵ Alonso Guerrero, in turn, was one of the wealthiest *vecinos* of Buenos Aires during that period, his economic power was based in long-distance commercial activities, particularly with the coasts of Brazil (Ceballos, 2008b: 255). Sevillano, was introduced into the local network of confederates through his marriage to Francisca Leal de Ayala, legitimate daughter of Mateo Leal de Ayala, who had been lieutenant governor after the poisoning of Governor Marín Negrón, and had been involved in the active contraband of the city during the 1610s.¹⁶

In the same way, Juan de Torres Brizeño actively participated in the slave trade, as evidenced by his acquisition in 1622 of a batch of 99 slaves with 27 “*crías*” (children) from Cristóbal Martín, which this vendor had obtained “in

¹⁴ The activation of Buenos Aires as an articulator of the Atlantic and the Peruvian economic space had among its organizers a collective of actors composed of merchants -mostly Portuguese- arrived in Buenos Aires from the permits of 1602. Quickly, they were called “Confederados” by governor Hernando Arias de Saavedra, head of the group until then locally dominant, which based its social reproduction on precarious agricultural activities and the exploitation of meager parcels. This group self-proclaimed its constitution as “vecinos Beneméritos” of the town, claiming to be children and grandchildren of conquerors, usually from Paraguay or Santa Fe. Soon, both groups they would be constituted as two factions of a local oligarchy in configuration (Gelman, 1984, Trujillo, 2009: 345, Perusset, 2006).

¹⁵ To measure the centrality of Diego de Vega not only in this group “conferederado” but in the Atlantic commercial networks to which that local “confederation” gave access, it is necessary to mention that Bárbara de Vasconcellos, her legitimate daughter, was married to Gonzalo Váez Coutinho, member of one of the greatest slave-trading houses that starred in the *asentista* policy developed by the Spanish crown at the beginning of the seventeenth century. AGN, IX, EA, Tomo 24, 48-4-1, ff. 320r-321r, 03/09/1638; Scheuss de Studer, 1958: 68; Vila Vilar, 1977: 40-42, 78, 122-123. Likewise, he maintained solid ties and enormous commercial turns with Diego López de Lisboa, also Portuguese and *convert*, father of Antonio de León Pinelo, future jurist who would compile the *Leyes de Indias*. Molina, 1961: 117 y ss.; Ceballos, 2008a.

¹⁶ In 1614 Mateo Leal de Ayala, as lieutenant governor, introduced with Rivera Mondragón more than 40 slaves in the Riachuelo, taking them to Peru without the payment of royal bills. Véase Molina, 1948: 474-482; Ceballos, 2008b: 145.

public auction” as result of a confiscation, by means of which he obtained the necessary documents to legitimately sell the 126 slaves.¹⁷

Juan de Tapia de Vargas was one of the most powerful *vecinos* of Buenos Aires. Granadino, had arrived in Buenos Aires around 1613, where he settled definitively in 1618. Soon he would be positioned among the main slavers from Buenos Aires¹⁸, with full participation in the local oligarchy.¹⁹ His career begins when in 1619 he is appointed captain of one of the two cavalry companies of the city, year in which he was also elected to representation in Cortes (trip that due to illness did not succeed).²⁰ In 1624 and 1632 he would serve as *alcalde ordinario de primer voto* in the Buenos Aires Town Hall, occupying towards 1631 the post of the governor’s lieutenant of the Río de la Plata by delegation of Francisco de Céspedes, who publicly recognized him by his meritorious services of arms for the Crown.²¹ He was *alférez real* too²² between 1631 and 1639 and *alguacil mayor del Santo Oficio* between 1630 and 1642 (Saguier, 1985: 154). The account books of the Royal Treasury show him officiating as an accountant for the Royal Treasury in Buenos Aires from 1643, a position that would soon be occupied by one of his sons-in-law, Agustín de Lavayén.²³

The Genoese Juan Andrea de León participated in the interregional circuits that linked the southern markets of the Peruvian space, together

¹⁷ AGN, IX, EA, Tomo 11, ff. 363r-364v, 01/06/1622.

¹⁸ Archivo del Extinguido Cabildo de Buenos Aires (hereinafter, AECBA) (1908), Tomo IV, Libro III: 17, 22/1/1618; Molina, 2000: 728; Gelman, 1987: 94.

¹⁹ He married in first marriage with Leonor de Cervantes, widow of Juan de Bracamonte and, after the death of her, contracted marriage in 1633 with Isabel de Frías Martel, daughter of the already deceased Manuel de Frías, ex-governor and general attorney of the government. From his first marriage his four legitimate daughters would be born, through which he would undertake important matrimonial strategies, such as the bond he establishes as father-in-law with Agustín de Lavayén (future accountant at the Caja Real de Buenos Aires) and with Felipe de Herrera and Guzmán (important shareholder to cattle in Areco). Archivo Parroquial de La Merced, Leg II, Exp 5, 126r; AGN, IX, EA, Tomo 25, ff. 486r-486v.

²⁰ AECBA, 1908, Tomo IV, Libro III: 175, 8/4/1619; 300 and ss., 23/9/1619.

²¹ AECBA, 1909, Tomo VII, Libro V: 208, 28/7/1631.

²² The first sale of this charge to Buenos Aires took place in 1631 and it was his buyer Juan de Tapia de Vargas. In 1639, however, as Tapia was unable to ride a horse during the parades, due to an illness he suffered in both legs, he was forced to resign his position. After the resignation of Tapia, the government of the city of Buenos Aires retained the alferazgo at the disposition of the Cabildo. (Saguier, 1985).

²³ AGN, XIII, Libro Mayor de Real Hacienda, XLIII-1-10-198, f. 379r.

with the Chilean *vecino* Andrés Bello. The businesses that connected Buenos Aires with Santiago de Chile through these agents are testified in the delivery that Andrea de León makes in Buenos Aires to Bello and his guarantor, Juan Bernardo Jaramillo, of some “forty-two slaves and one *cria*, which are all forty-three, all with their licenses signed by the royal officials”, for its selling in Santiago and Coquimbo.²⁴

Finally, Juan de Silva was an itinerant merchant also settled in Santiago de Chile. He participated in the slave traffic at a low scale²⁵ and he took advantage of his stays in Buenos Aires to deliver credit and consignment goods from Castile in Buenos Aires shops. In fact, in 1624 the storekeeper Nicolás Rivero declared that he owed him the bulky sum of \$ 800 “resulting from his merchandise that I sold in my store, of which I have a receipt and I have as a mortgage guarantee a black slave named Madalena and a *muleque* named Graviel”.²⁶

This first panorama allows to notice that some subjects excelled by the capital mobilized in the local economic environment: actors inscribed in the frames of commercial capital, inherently linked to slavery, although with different degrees of insertion in the local oligarchy. However, the utility of a relational approach to this segment of the economy lies in the possibility it offers to evaluate the participation of each of these actors in the universe of operations addressed. Since these transactions form a web of directional links (where money, goods and services follow defined paths), the density of the network²⁷ allows to obtain the most pertinent indicator to locate each actor according to its role: the degree of centrality conferred by its intermediation over the whole structure, or *betweenness centrality* (BC).

From 1619 to 1628, 86% of those who have participated in obligations, sales, charters and censuses do not report intermediation values above zero, which indicates that they received or provided values but did not occupy a relevant place in the performance of both functions simultaneously. In other

²⁴ AGN, IX, EA, Tomo 11, ff. 166r-177v, 25/01/1622. Juan Andrea de Leon also declared that he was “on his way to the Kingdom of Chile to collect the proceeds of the slaves, and in my company he carried eight slaves, six females and two males, all with their licenses from the royal officials of that port.”

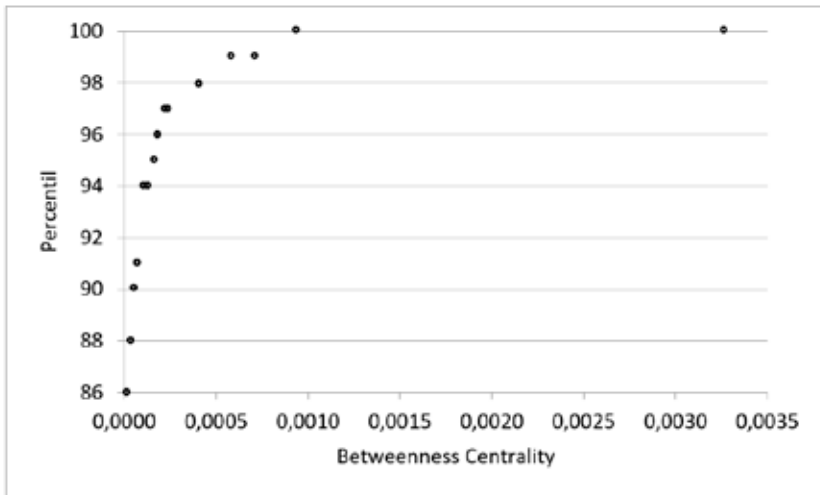
²⁵ AGN, IX, EA, Tomo 12, ff. 298r-299r.

²⁶ AGN, IX, EA, Tomo 13, ff. 227r-229v, 25/11/1624.

²⁷ General level of integration between its nodes, calculated as the proportion of existing links over all possible links (Scott, 2000: 70). In this case, over a directed network.

words, they did not act as mediators in the circulation of values within the network. However, 14% of the participating actors (33 subjects) do report BC values, and this offers measurability about their performance as links between the reception and distribution of value in the commercial transactions network (see *Figure 1*, which shows the distribution of the BC values among the 33 actors, considering that grouping in percentiles places them in the range from 86 to 100).²⁸

Graph 2. Betweenness Centrality in percentile ranges. Buenos Aires, 1619-1628



In this way, those subjects who concentrated 50% of the value put into circulation through sales, obligations, charters and consignative censuses, are not only identifiable from their position with respect to the mobilized value, but also according to their degree of BC, which in this case represents the extent to which each actor constitutes a channel for the distribution of funds put into circulation within the network.

²⁸ The algorithm used to calculate the betweenness centrality is the one offered by Brandes, 2001, executed in *Gephi 0.9.2*. See Bastian, Heymann & Jacomy (2009).

Table 2.

Betweenness Centrality of those actors who collect 50% of the amount mobilized in the commercial network. Buenos Aires, 1619-1628

| Actor | % Share | Betweenness Centrality | Percentil Range |
|-------------------------|---------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Alonso Guerrero | 17% | 0,003265 | 100 |
| Diego de Vega | 9% | 0 | 0 |
| Juan de Torres Brizeño | 7% | 0 | 0 |
| Alonso Bello | 6% | 0 | 0 |
| Juan de Tapia de Vargas | 5% | 0 | 0 |
| Juan Andrea de León | 4% | 0,00022 | 97 |
| Juan de Silva | 3% | 0,000715 | 99 |

As it can be appreciated, Alonso Guerrero was not only the main economic actor in the network throughout the analyzed period (mobilizing 17% of the value put into circulation within it), but his BC was the first among the 235 participating actors. Something similar happens with Juan de Silva, who put into circulation 3% of the value of the period and holds a BC in the 99th percentile -the second in importance after Guerrero- or with Juan Andrea de León, who mobilized 4% of the total value of transactions and acquired a BC in 97th percentile -fourth in importance. However, the four remaining actors of this group of subjects with main economic participation in the Buenos Aires trade between 1619 and 1628, lacked values higher than zero in terms of their intermediation. It is possible that actors such as Alonso Bello or Juan de Torres Brizeño had a high participation without needing the channeling of values; that is, without the need for a central location as links *between* actors in the network. But it is striking that two of the most notable merchants of the period, such as Diego de Vega and Juan de Tapia de Vargas, also lacked an important centrality as intermediaries for the channeling of funds in this complex network of transactions, taking into account the gravitation both exerted on the Buenos Aires economic development of the period (and the centrality that both held in other networks). In other words, the participation of both in the group of those who mobilized more values through credit, sales or charters to the regional

markets of the Peruvian economic space is not surprising; what is surprising is that they were not occupying an equally central place as intermediaries in the channeling of these funds. The Real Caja de Buenos Aires can offer an explanation about the participation of actors such as Tapia de Vargas or Diego de Vega. And this can contribute, simultaneously, to understand the impact of the Real Caja on the position of these actors in the trading economy of Buenos Aires.

Expenses of the Real Caja de Buenos Aires are registered in a section of its accounting books, called *data*²⁹, consigned in their respective *manual* and *mayor* books. During 1619-1628, the Real Caja de Buenos Aires disbursed a total of \$567,652.37 through 358 data items. These items allow knowing not only the amounts and the reasons for the disbursement of funds by the treasury (*Table 3*), but also the personal identity of their recipients.³⁰

Table 3.

Disbursements from the Real Caja de Buenos Aires, according to concepts. Buenos Aires, 1619-1628

| <i>Concept</i> | <i>Amount</i> |
|--|------------------|
| Transferences between Royal Treasuries | 401704 |
| Ecclesiastical Salaries | 76106,27 |
| Buenos Aires Royal Officers' Salaries | 42199,7 |
| Asunción Royal Officers' Salaries | 25439,8 |
| Refunds | 13816,4 |
| Garrison Salaries | 2958 |
| Chilean Garrison expenses | 2506 |
| Real Hacienda current expenses | 1255,7 |
| Notary Salary | 1000 |
| No data | 666,5 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>567652,37</i> |

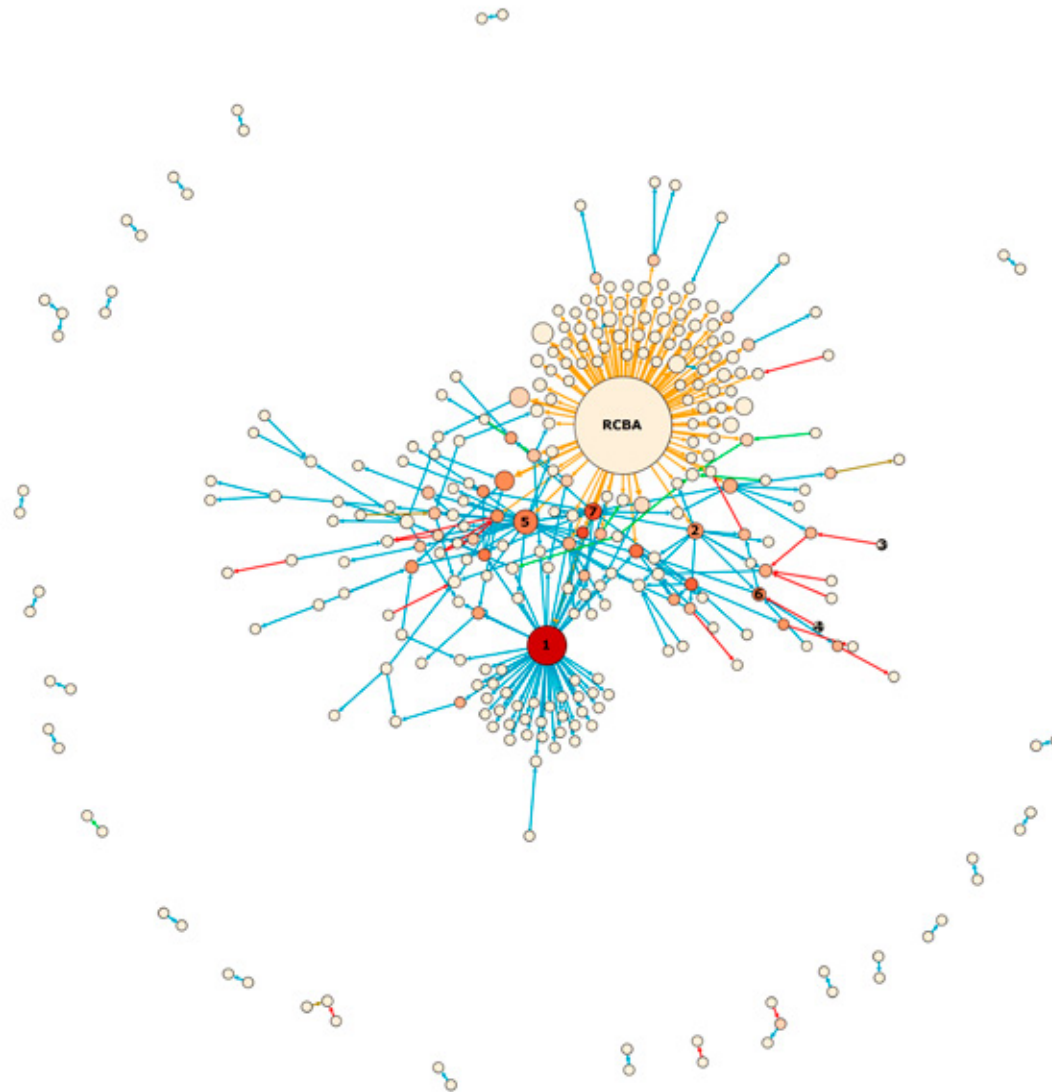
Note: the concepts are grouped according to the purpose of the disbursement, so that the same concept can be constituted by items from different branches or "ramos". Wasserman (2016).

²⁹ In this simple entry accounting system, the "cargo" records what the officer receives, while in the "data" it is settled what is paid. (Sánchez Santiró, 2013: 21).

³⁰ We have offered the data of this analysis in Wasserman, 2016.

The Real Caja and the recipients of its funds configure, then, a set of nodes and links that we have not yet incorporated into the analysis, because these disbursements (and, with them, the flows of values and their receivers) are not established in the notarial protocols but in the accounting books of the Real Caja. Its incorporation into the network of transactions that we have been analyzing implies, then, the appearance of new actors in the network (since many receivers of treasury funds did not participate in those credit, sales and freight transactions that we had been observing). But it implies, on the other hand, the multiplication of edges for some nodes that did participate in that network; this is the case of those who not only originally appeared buying, selling, crediting, or chartered merchandise, but also received funds from the Real Caja (flows of values with fiscal origin, that are now visible in the network). In such cases, the pre-existing nodes multiply the nature and quantity of their ties once the Real Caja is incorporated as a node. For 1619-1628, the number of actors went up from 235 to 303 once the Real Caja and its receivers are incorporated into the analysis (simultaneously incorporating, as edges, the cash flows that generate the disbursement between them) on a network that until now it was only constituted by the nodes and the edges defined from sales, credits and charters. This increase of 68 actors in the network represents the incorporation of those who did not participate in the particular notarized transactions; but 199 actors from those who received funds from the Real Caja were already participating in the sales, credits and charters network. Thus, among those 235 subjects who participated in this network, 199 (85%) were also recipients of funds from the Real Caja de Buenos Aires.

Graph 3. Inclusion of the Real Caja de Buenos Aires and its disbursements to the notarized comercial network. Buenos Aires, 1619-1628.

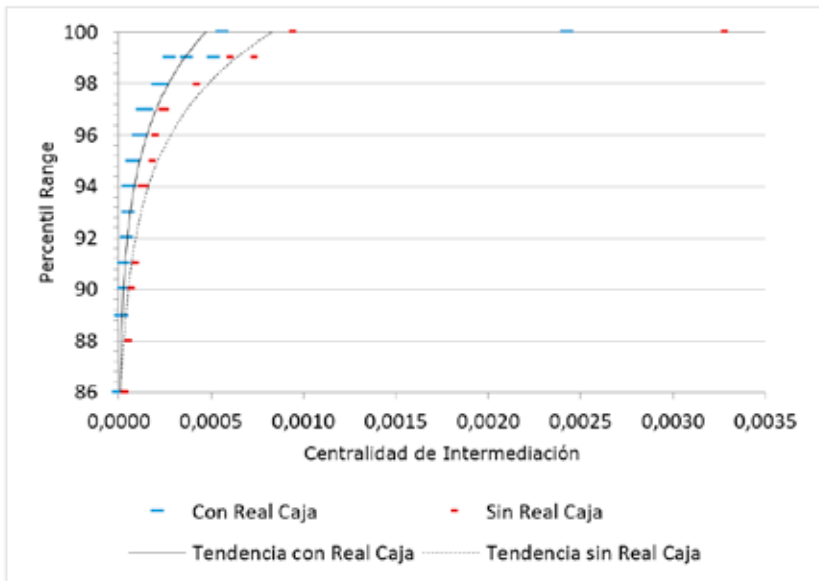


Nodes: RCBA- Real Caja de Buenos Aires; 1- Alonso Guerrero; 2- Diego de Vega; 3- Juan de Torres Brizeño; 4- Alonso Bello; 5- Juan de Tapia de Vargas; 6- Juan Andrea de León; 7- Juan de Silva.
Orange edges: disbursements from the Real Caja de Buenos Aires; blue: payment obligations; red: sales on credit; greens: charters; browns: consignative censuses.
The size of the node illustrates its weighted degree, weight that also defines the thickness of these. The higher the BC, the darker the node.

It is enlightening what happens with the BC degrees of those 235 actors once the Royal Treasury is incorporated into the analysis. First, 192 actors (81.7%) continued without reporting BC values above zero; although this implies a decrease of this segment lacking BC by 4.3% (compared to 86% before contemplating cash flows from the Real Caja). This indicates, however, that 81.7% of those who participated in both networks did not receive an influx from the Real Caja as a provider of funds that could be put into circulation.

But it also indicates that 18.3% of those 235 actors (43 subjects that appear both in the transactions of the commercial economy and in the receipt of funds from the Royal Treasury) do report intermediation degrees when the Real Caja appears in the analysis. Again, the presence of the treasury as a node increases the proportion of actors that show positive values in their function as links in the redistribution of funds (because before incorporating the Real Caja in the analysis this percentage was 14% of the actors in the net -Figure 2-).

Graph 4. Inclusion of the Real Caja in the notarized commercial network. Variation in the BC



Among these 43 actors that reported positive BC values when the treasury was incorporated in the analysis, 14 (32.5%) maintained the same degree of intermediation once the Real Caja appears in the network as a provider of funds (*Table 4*). This means that the provision of fiscal funds did not affect the centrality of these actors as links in the redistribution of resources, since these subjects' intermediary function derived from resources put into circulation *in* and *from* the commercial orbit, remaining relatively unrelated to the funds of fiscal origin.

Table 4.

Actors who keep BC values in the same percentil range

| Actor | BC Percentil |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Alonso Guerrero | 100 |
| Francisco Vázquez | 100 |
| Juan de Silva | 99 |
| Juan Rosillo | 99 |
| Francisco Álvarez | 98 |
| Francisco González | 97 |
| Juan Andrea de León | 97 |
| Juan Bernardo Jaramillo | 96 |
| Pedro Beltrán | 96 |
| Simón Pérez | 96 |
| Sebastián de Orduña | 94 |
| Diego Hurtado de Mendoza | 86 |
| Juan de Mena | 86 |
| Manuel Cabral | 86 |

As it can be seen, the BC did not change in the cases of Alonso Guerrero, Juan de Silva or Juan Andrea de León, who maintained their degrees of centrality in the same percentiles they had before incorporating the Real Caja in the analysis. This indicates that their roles as intermediaries in the

channeling of funds was not altered by the participation of the Real Caja de Buenos Aires and its provision of fiscal funds, since the provision and distribution of resources through their hands was restricted to the particular orbit of the economy mobilized by commercial capital. Nor does the BC of Alonso Bello or Juan de Torres Brizeño vary, who maintained a BC of zero value, ratifying that their high shares did not respond to a role of mediators in the transfer of resources. But in the remaining 29 cases of those that report positive BC values (67.5%), some participants (19 actors) slightly improve their degree of intermediation when the provision of funds from the Real Caja appears on the scene, while others (10 actors) pass from having no intermediation value in the commercial network, to holding positive BC levels once the treasury is present in the analysis.

Table 5.

Actors who improve the BC values after including Real Caja in the analysis

| Actor | BC percentil without Real Caja | BC percentil with Real Caja | BC Variation |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Diego López | 90 | 94 | 4,44% |
| Amador Báez de Alpoín | 86 | 89 | 3,49% |
| Nuño Hernández | 86 | 89 | 3,49% |
| Esteban de Salas | 88 | 91 | 3,41% |
| Pedro Fernández | 88 | 91 | 3,41% |
| Juan de la Sierra | 88 | 90 | 2,27% |
| Andrés Chacón | 91 | 93 | 2,20% |
| Juan López de Vargas | 91 | 93 | 2,20% |
| Juan de Vergara | 95 | 97 | 2,11% |
| Juan de Barragán | 88 | 89 | 1,14% |
| Pedro de la Pobeda | 90 | 91 | 1,11% |
| Cristóbal Martín | 91 | 92 | 1,10% |
| Félix Rivero | 91 | 92 | 1,10% |
| Juan Bautista Palavecino | 91 | 92 | 1,10% |
| Luis de Figueroa y Mendoza | 91 | 92 | 1,10% |
| Hernán Suárez Maldonado | 94 | 95 | 1,06% |
| [illegible name] | 94 | 95 | 1,06% |
| Pedro Flores de Ceballos | 94 | 95 | 1,06% |
| Gerónimo de Medrano | 98 | 99 | 1,02% |

These subjects, who improved their performance as intermediaries once the provision of funds from the Real Caja is incorporated into the analysis of the commercial network, show that the provision of fiscal resources was the

source of -at least- part of the resources put into circulation through their hands. Thus, the degrees of intermediation that these actors already held as resource brokers in the credit, sales and chartering networks are strengthened when the Real Caja appears as a provider of funds of fiscal origin in the analysis. And this, at the same time, makes explicit the role of the latter as a vertex in the flows managed by this segment of actors. Thus, the role of the Real Caja as an injector of resources in the particular economy can be seen in this group of traffickers who improved their position as intermediaries once the Buenos Aires treasury was made visible as a funds' provider. And said role of the treasury as a provider of fiscal funds that could potentially be used in the circuits of the commercial economy, is more clearly evidenced in those cases in which the actor lacked any degree of BC before incorporating the Real Caja into the analysis. In these cases, it is noticed that the centrality of the actors as intermediaries depends more sharply on the presence of the Real Caja as a provider of funds.

Table 6.

Actors who acquire positive BC values only after including Real Caja in the analysis

| Actor | BC percentil without Real Caja | BC percentil with Real Caja | BC Variation |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Juan de Tapia de Vargas | 0 | 98 | ∞ |
| Diego de Vega | 0 | 96 | ∞ |
| Juan Cardoso Pardo | 0 | 94 | ∞ |
| Juan Bautista Ángel | 0 | 89 | ∞ |
| Martín Martínez de Eulate | 0 | 89 | ∞ |
| Andrés Jordán | 0 | 86 | ∞ |
| Bernabé González Filiano | 0 | 86 | ∞ |
| Diego de Góngora | 0 | 86 | ∞ |
| Gonzalo de Carbajal | 0 | 86 | ∞ |
| Luis de Salcedo | 0 | 86 | ∞ |

Diego de Vega, participating with 9% of the value mobilized by sales, credits and charters between 1619 and 1628, had been constituted as the second protagonist of this market, behind Alonso Guerrero. His null role as mediator of funds contrasted nevertheless with the gravitation that is recognized as articulator, vertex and coordinator of interregional and intercontinental networks, as we had opportunity to explain. In fact, his positioning in the network changes when it joins the Real Caja de Buenos Aires as a node: the BC of Diego de Vega ascends from zero to the 96th percentile. The same happens with Juan de Tapia de Vargas. Its participation with 5% of the value mobilized in the market contrasted with its apparent lack of presence as intermediary and redistributor of funds. However, its degree of centrality in the intermediation of the network is adapted to the reality when the treasury of Buenos Aires happens to be considered as another node of the network: now Tapia de Vargas is located in the 98th percentile of BC, in the third position as mediator of funds among 303 actors.

The most marked variation in BC before and after incorporating into the analysis the provision of fiscal resources in commercial flows, is carried out by the most powerful merchants in Buenos Aires. These cases explain the fact that the location of both actors among the subjects with greater commercial activity (that is, greater participation in the local economic movement) responded, at least to a large extent, to their capacity to position themselves as intermediaries and redistributors of fiscal funds in the commercial economy. The evolution of these variables over the rest of the periods confirms the hypothesis.

2.2. The incidence of the Real Caja throughout the century

We propose then to observe the results that this same analysis gives when applied to the data collected for the decades of 1635-1644, 1656-1665 and 1676-1685. We will offer the general variables of each period and a succinct approximation to the respective groups that concentrated 50% of the value put into circulation in each case.

2.2.1. 1635-1644

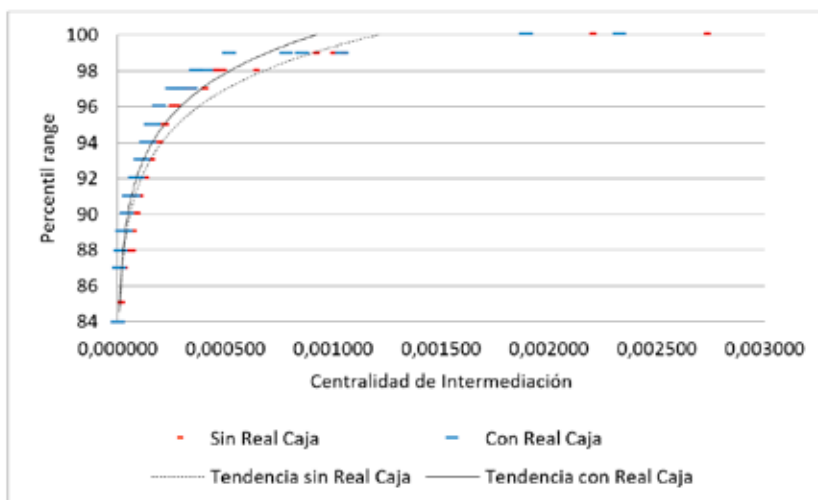
As can be seen, between 1635 and 1644, notarized transactions are relatively expanded, although the volume of disbursements of fiscal resources decreases considerably (Wasserman, 2016).

Table 7.*Commercial and fiscal networks. Buenos Aires, 1635-1644*

| Network | Quantity of actors involved | Notarized transactions or settled fiscal entries | Total Amount Mobilized |
|--|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Notarized comercial network | 322 | 403 | 394258,35 |
| Disbursements network of Real Caja de Buenos Aires | 145 | 198 | 238498,05 |

Regardless of the variations in the magnitudes between the previous period and this one, the effects of the incorporation of the Real Caja as a funds' provider are similar with respect to the BC grades of the actors that report positive values of that indicator.

Graph 5. Betweenness Centrality in percentil ranges. Buenos Aires, 1635-1644



In fact, considering the 322 actors that participate in the commercial network, once the cash flow of the treasury is incorporated, it is noted that 266 (82.6%) do not report BC values above zero. The 17.4% that do report BC values in the network

once fiscal flows are incorporated into it, offers the following distribution: 26 (46.42%) maintained its BC value; 18 (32%) improve its centrality; and 8 (14.28%) go from not reporting the value of BC to reporting them, evidencing that the flows of the Real Caja positioned them as intermediaries in the circuits of the commercial economy. Meanwhile, 7.16% of the actors saw their intermediation centrality decrease once the cash flow was incorporated.

Table 8.

Betweenness Centrality of those actors who collect 50% of the amount mobilized in the commercial network. Buenos Aires, 1635-1644

| Total Amount | Actor | Share % | BC percentil without Real Caja | BC percentil with Real Caja |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| \$ 394.258,35 | Pedro de Giles | 7% | 98 | 98 |
| | Martín Martínez de Eulate | 7% | 0 | 0 |
| | Juan de Tapia de Vargas | 6% | 99 | 99 |
| | Pedro de Rojas y Acevedo | 5% | 99 | 99 |
| | Juan Mejía Calderón | 4% | 0 | 0 |
| | Pedro de Morales y Mercado | 3% | 0 | 0 |
| | Álvaro Rodríguez de Acevedo | 3% | 0 | 0 |
| | Nicolás Salvago | 2% | 0 | 0 |
| | Blas de Montojos | 2% | 0 | 0 |
| | Marcos de Sequera | 2% | 96 | 97 |
| | Pedro Esteban Dávila | 2% | 0 | 87 |
| | Alonso Guerrero | 2% | 90 | 91 |
| | Bartolomé Maldonado | 2% | 0 | 0 |
| | Bartolomé de Onofre | 2% | 0 | 0 |
| | Alfonso Rodríguez | 2% | 100 | 100 |

Observing the group of actors that concentrated 50% of the value mobilized in notarized transactions, it is noted that trade was relatively less concentrated than in the previous decade. As can be seen, the incidence of the Real Caja de Buenos Aires is relativized, since almost half of the main players lack BC, and those who have positive levels of BC do not experience changes once the fiscal flows are incorporated into the analysis. Only two actors, Alonso Guerrero and Marcos de Sequera, relatively improve their positioning as links: this speaks of a greater participation of Guerrero in the funds of the Treasury with respect to their experience during the previous period. Marcos de Sequera, as infantry sergeant, depended on the Royal Treasury for his livelihood; but if it improved its position in the intermediation on the commercial network, it is because the resources disbursed by the Real Caja were capitalized in the commercial economy.³¹ Sequera had been actively participating in credit operations, mainly as creditor³², and it also acquired cattle from Diego López Camelo by credit.³³ Soon, the Real Caja de Buenos Aires would entrust him with driving the large sum of \$ 5,000 to Potosí, which were deposited in the Buenos Aires treasury by order of don Juan de Palacios, visitor to the Royal Court of La Plata, from the trial (*juicio de residencia*) of the governor Pedro Esteban de Ávila, and that money had to be remitted now by order of said visitor.³⁴ An injection of resources that Sequera would articulate with the commercial economy.

But it is enlightening, again, that an actor goes from not reporting BC value to reporting it once the fiscal resource flows are incorporated into the analysis. This actor is, precisely, the governor Pedro Esteban Dávila. If the provision of funds of fiscal origin were also fundamental for him, the BC indicator allows to understand that these values were dumped by Dávila in the economy of transactions. For instance, on June 2, 1635, Dávila delivered on credit the sum of \$ 7651,7 to the general depositary Bernardo de León³⁵; that same day, Dávila had withdrawn from the Real Caja de Buenos Aires

³¹ In fact, Sequera received land from Governor Dávila (including large areas in Arrecifes) as a reward for their merits (Molina, 2000: 707).

³² AGN, IX, 48-3-8, ff. 541v-543r; 48-2-2, ff. 151v-152r; 48-5-2, ff. 35r-36v.

³³ AGN, IX, 48-4-1, ff. 197r-198v.

³⁴ AGN, XIII, 43-1-10, ff. 321v y 394r.

³⁵ AGN, IX, 48-3-6, ff. 135, 135v.

the same sum originated in the collection of taxes on slave traffic (*licencias, aduanillas, manifestaciones de esclavos*).³⁶ Dávila is positioned as an actor with betweenness centrality when it is identified in the Real Caja the source of the resources that he potentially redistributes.

2.2.2. 1656-1665

Throughout the decade that runs between 1656 and 1665, a new expansion in the amounts mobilized into the commercial economy corresponds to the expansion of the disbursements made by the Real Caja de Buenos Aires.

Table 9.

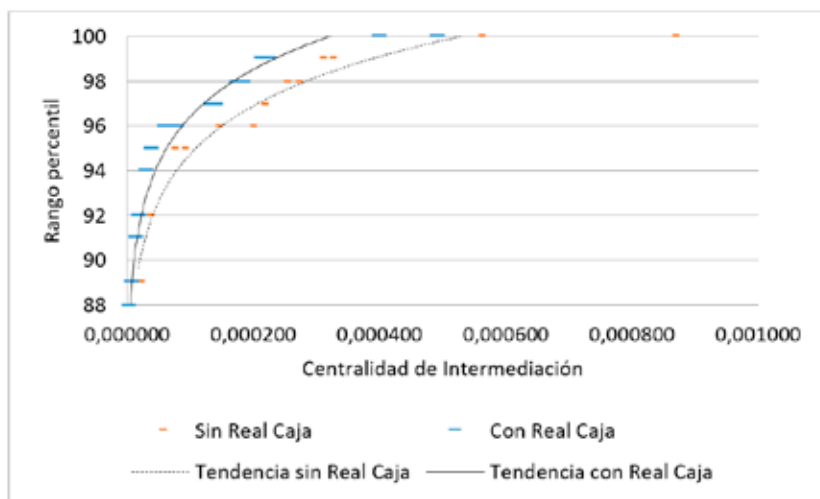
Commercial and fiscal networks. Buenos Aires, 1656-1675

| Network | Quantity of actors involved | Notarized transactions or settled fiscal entries | Total Amount Mobilized |
|--|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Notarized comercial network | 237 | 230 | 302884,05 |
| Disbursements network of Real Caja de Buenos Aires | 235 | 207 | 620671 |

And the impact of the fiscal funds flows on the economic performance seems to be similar to the incidence exerted during the two previous periods, considering the shift in the BC degrees of those actors that report positive values of this indicator.

³⁶ AGN, XIII, Contaduría Colonial, 43-1-4, f. 216v.

Graph 6. Betweenness Centrality in percentile ranges. Buenos Aires, 1656-1665



The greater participation in the funds mobilized by the commercial economy is given by the amounts involved in *census pupulares*.³⁷ Given that under-aged do not constitute actors for themselves, it is reasonable that the multiplicity of censuses decided on their behalf did not imply any betweenness centrality (then, they also lack values of BC when the Real Caja is included in the analysis).

³⁷ In the “censos pupulares”, the guardians of orphaned minors used the inheritance as guarantee of the mortgage, which reported annual returns similar to those rented by a consignative census; revenues that, in principle, would be destined to the support and upbringing of the minors in question.

Table 10.

Betweenness Centrality of those actors who collect 50% of the amount mobilized in the commercial network. Buenos Aires, 1656-1665

| Total Amount | Actor | Share % | BC percentil without Real Caja | BC percentil with Real Caja |
|---------------|----------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Under-aged | 13% | 0 | 0 |
| | Pedro Guerrero | 10% | 0 | 0 |
| | Sebastián de Casa de Bante | 9% | 0 | 0 |
| \$ 302.884,05 | Tomás de Rojas y Acevedo | 5% | 0 | 99 |
| | Ignacio de Maleo | 5% | 0 | 0 |
| | Amador de Rojas y Acevedo | 4% | 89 | 89 |
| | Juan del Pozo y Silva | 4% | 100 | 100 |

In this opportunity, a single actor of those who have participated in the concentration of 50% of the mobilized value acquires a BC range that he did not report when the Real Caja was not included in the analysis: it is Tomás de Rojas y Acevedo. Tomás de Rojas y Acevedo was the son of the captain and interim governor, Pedro de Rojas y Acevedo, and brother of Amador (who also figures in the segment of actors with greater participation in local commerce). Following in the footsteps of his father, he was totally inscribed in the local oligarchy; following in the footsteps of his maternal grandfather, Diego de Vega, the commercial instrumentation of this inscription allowed him to excel in the arena of Atlantic smuggling, standing out from the other two major creditors of the period -more particularly linked to local commerce and registry vessels-.³⁸

³⁸ This character exemplifies the diffuse limit between official and merchant: he was procurator in 1648, in 1654 *alcalde ordinario de segundo voto*, and *alférez*. Tomás became one of the protagonists of the prohibited commercial trade with Brazil during the government of Pedro Baygorri Ruiz, in collusion with him; so, in 1662 he would be arrested and taken to Spain ac-

The osmosis between trader and functionary was materialized in his links with Governor Baygorri, institutionalized through the mediation of the Royal Treasury. Rojas y Acevedo received funds from the Real Caja as agent of their beneficiaries³⁹ and the debts resulting from the slave sales were arranged in his name as creditor.⁴⁰ Between 1657 and 1658 Tomás de Rojas y Acevedo obtained \$ 4,125 from the Real Caja de Buenos Aires, as agent of the Paraguayan governor for the accrued salary (and he would receive that amount for that concept in 1660).⁴¹ In that same tone, on October 26, 1658, Tomás de Rojas y Acevedo -who was also captain of the garrison-, received from the Caja Real in Buenos Aires the sum of \$ 13,000 as a refund

as a return for what he loaned to the Caja Real for the payment of the officers and soldiers of the company of this garrison, by virtue of an order of Governor Baygorri, for not having arrived the money of the Situado which the captain Pedro de Izarra Gaete was supposed to bring from the Villa de Potosí.⁴²

More than \$ 17,000 came into his bags, and this money would find a correlation with the multiple credit operations that would be written in his favor, related to the marketing of Paraguayan *yerba mate* (*ilex paraguariensis*), San Juan wine and, of course, slaves.⁴³ For this actor, the reception of funds from the Real Caja was conditioning to develop (and not only to improve their position) in the commercial economy. The behavior of its betweenness centrality ratifies it.

2.2.3. 1676-1685

The last of the analyzed decades offers a new expansion of the amounts mobilized by transactions in the commercial economy, and a sharp contraction of the disbursements made by the Real Caja de Buenos Aires.

cused of contraband through trade with foreign captains, resale of slaves and merchandise. We know he was in Amsterdam in 1663 and in Portugal in 1667, where he died the following year (Moutoukias, 1988: 112, 200; Molina, 2000: 661).

³⁹ AGN, XIII, Contaduría Colonial, 43-1-11, 133v.

⁴⁰ AGN, IX, 48-5-4, 43r-44r, 73r-73v, 185r-186r, 143v-144v.

⁴¹ AGN, XIII, Contaduría Colonial, 43-1-11, 136v, 143v, 152v.

⁴² AGN, XIII, Contaduría Colonial, 43-1-11, 145v.

⁴³ AGN, IX, 48-5-5, 168r-168v, 532r-533r; 48-5-6, 123r-124r, 188r-188v, 200r-200v, 202r-202v; 48-6-1, 55r-57r; 48-5-6, 429v-430r.

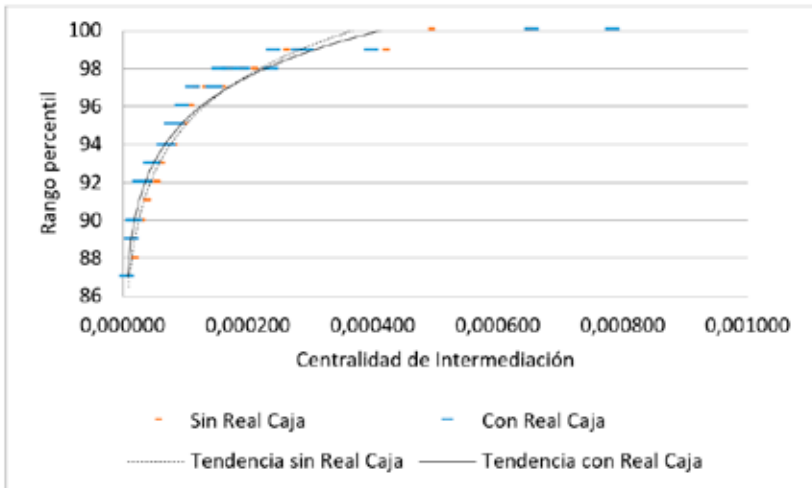
Tabla 11.

Commercial and fiscal networks. Buenos Aires, 1676-1685

| Network | Quantity of actors involved | Notarized transactions or settled fiscal entries | Total Amount Mobilized |
|--|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Notarized comercial network | 342 | 307 | 551088,82 |
| Disbursements network of Real Caja de Buenos Aires | 268 | 149 | 237222,6 |

In fact, the Real Caja no longer has the incidence that had been reported so far. This is evident in the fact that, for the first time, the incidence on the BC of the actors does not imply a shift of their respective curves.

Graph 7. Betweenness Centrality in percentile ranges. Buenos Aires, 1676-1685



It happens that, once Colônia do Sacramento was founded, the large commerce’s exchanges were restructured (Moutoukias, 1988: 173). The participation of small merchants was more accessible in this type of commercial traffic: the “arribadas maliciosas”, a way to legalize the smuggling

by declaring technical problems with the vessel, was usually mediated and conditioned by local oligarchic network. Then, it began to diminish in Buenos Aires because they become replaceable as a mechanism for the introduction of merchandise and slaves, becoming usual the entry of small-scale goods from Colônia to Buenos Aires (Jumar, 2004b: 166; Moutoukias, 1988: 160). The establishment of that permanent depot near Buenos Aires allowed the small traffickers to overcome the traditional dependency of the major Buenos Aires notables, provoking the reaction of many of them to the Portuguese presence in front of San Gabriel. Then, alongside this amplification of the capillary and low-scale traffic, the large Atlantic commerce experienced a high concentration in Buenos Aires, with its corresponding circumscription to a small group. And this made practically innocuous the incidence of the Real Caja de Buenos Aires as a provider of resources to position the main economic actors of the city as redistributors of capital.

Table 12.

Betweenness Centrality of those actors who collect 50% of the amount mobilized in the commercial network. Buenos Aires, 1676-1685

| Total Amount | Actor | Share % | BC percentil without Real Caja | BC percentil with Real Caja |
|------------------|---------------------|---------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| \$ 551.088,82 | Miguel Gambarte | 18% | 0 | 0 |
| | Miguel de Vergara | 18% | 100 | 100 |
| | Francisco de Retana | 16% | 0 | 0 |

Francisco de Retana and Miguel de Vergara were two exponents of the legal system of the Carrera de Indias in Buenos Aires, through which an equally systematic fraud was carried out. The Spaniard Miguel de Vergara was the holder of the licenses granted to the ships “San Hermenegildo” and “San Miguel”, carrying soldiers for the garrisons of Buenos Aires and Chile. Soon, it would be established as one of the main creditors of the region, through credit operations that evidenced its delivery in consignment of European merchandise for commercialization on the Potosí route.⁴⁴ The incorporation

⁴⁴ AGN, IX, EA, Tomo 43, ff. 188v-189r, 189v-191r, 467r-468r.

of the flows of fiscal origin in the commercial network, as can be observed, did not modify his position of centrality as a link in the commercial network.

Francisco de Retana had obtained the licenses to sail his ships to Buenos Aires. He arrived in 1685 with three ships (“Santísima Trinidad and Nuestra Señora de la Concepción”, “Jesus Nazareno”, and “San Miguel”) and would arrive again in Buenos Aires during the southern summer of 1693. According to the estimates offered by Jumar and Morineau, the ships of the Retana registry returned from Buenos Aires to Europe with \$ 1,500,000 in 1687, \$ 500,000 in 1693 and 800,000 in 1694 (Jumar, 2000: 129; Morineau, 1985: 235), while the pardons (*indultos*) amounted to \$ 25,000 in 1685 and \$ 85,000 in 1693 (Moutoukias, 1988: 97). This is explained by the fact that by 1680 Francisco Retana had dues in his favor for \$ 185,000 in Potosí, Tucumán, Chile and Santa Fe: the interregional links provided Retana with the concentration of metal in the port (Moutoukias, 1988: 184). And it allowed him to avoid the traditional dependence on the funds of the local Real Caja.

Miguel de Gambarte, meanwhile, was one of the main merchants of Buenos Aires in this last quarter of the century. Indeed, on August 22, 1680, Juan Báez de Alpoin was obliged to reintegrate him the very large sum of \$ 100,000 (\$ 50000 in each deed), through two notarial contracts.⁴⁵ Iriarte had arrived in Buenos Aires with Miguel de Vergara in 1669 and had settled down, selling off the Vergara’s freight along with Gambarte (Molina, 2000: 364). At this point of the century, once the reconversion of the traffic generated by the presence of Colônia took place, the circuit of the great commerce was then controlled by those who controlled the legal circuits of the Carrera de Indias through Buenos Aires. The recurrence to the funds of the Real Caja was, then, nonessential for the main traders of this period. Again, the behavior of their respective BC indexes confirms it.

3. Conclusions

When recovering the data integrally, a first feature that stands out throughout all the periods analyzed is the restriction of those who report BC values to a narrow set of participating actors, who hover around 16.4% on average.

⁴⁵ AGN, IX, EA, Tomo 44, ff. 566r-566v, 960r-961r.

Table 13.

Actors distribution accord to Betweenness Centrality after the inclusion of the fiscal disbursement in the analysis

| BC Condition | 1619- 1628 | 1635- 1644 | 1656- 1665 | 1676- 1685 |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A. No value | 81,7% | 82,6% | 84,38% | 85,67% |
| B. Positive value | 18,3% | 17,4% | 15,61% | 14,33% |
| <i>Keeps value</i> | 32,5% | 46,42% | 45,9% | 42,85% |
| As % of B | | | | |
| <i>Improve value</i> | 44,18% | 32,14% | 16,2% | 42,85% |
| <i>Acquire value</i> | 23,32% | 14,28% | 29,73% | 6,12% |
| <i>Decreases value</i> | - | 7,16% | 8,17% | 8,16% |

Considering that the BC, once the fiscal resource flows are included in the analysis, is indicative of the impact these flows have on the actors' positioning in the economy (and also expresses the extent to which these fiscal flows conditioned their participation in the commercial segment observed), it is noted that more than 83% of the actors that participated in the commercial economy notarized did not report an incidence of fiscal flows on their economic performance. And this would be accentuated throughout the century, as the percentage of subjects who do not report BC values progressively expanded (from 81.7% in 1619-1628 to 85.67% in 1676-1685). This indicates that fiscal expenditure had a vertically unequal impact on the economic performance of the actors participating in a Hispano-American Old Regime economy. But, for the same reason, it also indicates that for a narrow group of actors those resources of fiscal origin offered improvements in their respective commercial positions or, even, came to condition their privileged participation in the trade.

The observations on the groups that in each period concentrated 50% of the capital negotiated through the notary, allow to highlight the way in which the Real Caja affected with its disbursements on the economic performance of the actors. For many of them, the presence of these fiscal resource flows did not represent a factor that altered their betweenness centrality. In other words, the absence of these flows did not diminish their role as primary links in the commercial network. Alonso Guerrero, for example, was the actor with

the highest participation in the mobilized capital during his period (1619-1628) while holding the highest degree of CI, regardless of the flows of the Treasury. Something similar happened, for the same decade, with Juan Andrea de León or Juan de Silva. On the other hand, the flows supplied by the Royal Treasury was a determining factor for actors such as Diego de Vega or Juan de Tapia de Vargas to be important as links, intermediaries and redistributors of capital in the transactions of the notarized commercial economy. And it is likely that this was an expression, in turn, of the fiscal arm that nurtured the capital that allowed them to be part of that small group of actors with major commercial share.

The fiscal expenditure could then condition the participation of the most important merchants, but it did not “trickled-down” to the rest of the minor actors. The disbursement of funds by the Royal Treasury, therefore, contributed to reproduce the characteristic inequality of these Old Regime economies, offering a better position to the most powerful subjects of the region for the expanded reproduction of its capital in the trade orbit. This indicates that the participation of local actors in the interests and patrimony of the Royal Treasury was inexorably limited to those who had the capacity to negotiate; something that most of the inhabitants of the region lacked. The incidence of the disbursement of fiscal resources in the commercial economy was, therefore, unequal. And it promoted the positioning of those who, for extra-economic reasons in most cases, were part of the groups with the highest commercial share.

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