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**Irish Latin American Research Fund**  
**Application Form**

Name	Ryan Dominic Crewe
Address	34401 Anawood Way Westminster, California, 92683 United States
Telephone	Spain: 34-627265512 / US perm. address: 1(714)8949446
Fax	
Email	ryan.crewe@yale.edu
University or institutional affiliation	Yale University, Department of History
Member of the Faculty?	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, rank:
(OR) Student?	Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Principal advisor or thesis director: Stuart B. Schwartz
(OR) Independent Scholar?	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
Intended Product	Thesis <input type="checkbox"/> Dissertation <input type="checkbox"/> Book <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Article <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentary <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> (describe)
Date degree expected or date of project completion	January 2007
Title or research topic (please include the time period being studied):	AN IRISH 'EMPEROR OF MEXICO': THE EXILE AND REBELLION OF WILLIAM LAMPART, "DON GUILLÉN LOMBARDO" (1611 - 1659)  A study of the life of Don Guillén Lombardo, connecting the early modern histories of Ireland, Spain, and Mexico in the seventeenth century.
How did you learn about this research grant opportunity? (Please be specific)	I learned about this grant through an announcement in the H-LATAM email list for scholars of Latin American studies.
Proposed field trip: purpose, destination, dates of travel and proposed duration of stay (may be changed)	Research trip to the Biblioteca Cervantina, Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey, México. The purpose of the proposed trip is to transcribe the collection of Don Guillén Lombardo's personal papers at the Biblioteca Cervantina. The duration of the stay is two weeks, in order to carry out the transcription and negotiation of documents for digital reproduction.
Estimate of actual	\$1480 Us Dollars / 1.100 euro

**An Irish ‘Emperor of Mexico’:  
The exile and rebellion of William Lamport, “Don Guillén Lombardo” (1611 – 1659)**

“...he peregrinado por toda Europa, dexando los dulces arrullos de mi patria...”<sup>1</sup>

*Setting the Stage: An arrest in Mexico City*

On the evening of October 26, 1612, constables for the Mexican Inquisition made an extraordinary arrest in a humble district of this New World capital. Working off the tip of a suspecting neighbor, they detained a thirty-one year old Irish man known by the hispanicized name of Guillén Lombardo. In Lombardo’s apartment, they found papers written in his hand that announced a new reign in Mexico and declared him “Emperor of Mexico” based on a forged statement claiming that he was a son of King Phillip IV. This prospective king’s first decrees were already penned, laying out a revolutionary design that abolished slavery and the Indian *repartimiento*. Among his papers there were also letters to the Pope and several kings in Europe (except England) announcing that New Spain would henceforth be open to free commerce. Subsequent testimony by Ignacio, an indigenous collaborator from Zacatecas, revealed that Lombardo was relying on peyote-induced visions and astrology to discern the correct time to take power. This hidden king, once unmasked “como Segismundo,” would end tyranny in New Spain.<sup>2</sup> For the Viceregal authorities already occupied with suspected rebellious collaboration between Portuguese merchants and African slaves, this new conspiracy only compounded their fears. Rebellions were swarming around the Spanish Empire in Flanders, Catalonia, Naples, and most crucially, in Portugal. Political instability and ideological struggles among local Creole and Spanish elites only heightened the general paranoia. Lombardo’s threat raised the specter of an indigenous rebellion in the Spanish colony that could link with movements inspired by news of rebellions arriving in every fleet sailing into Veraacruz. And still the plot thickened with each step in the investigation following Lombardo’s arrest: over the previous two years of his life in Mexico, Lombardo – who bore no title in New Spain nor had any steady occupation – somehow had been aware of the political situation and maintained extensive contacts with the Spanish Crown and with several principal elites in New Spain. Over the next seventeen years, Lombardo’s danger to the elites and the Crown produced jurisdictional struggles over who would jail and try him – and thus acquire his intelligence. Even as he sat in the inquisitorial jail, he still manipulated events from behind bars, denouncing the Inquisition to all who would care to listen. His plots, fantastic though they were, touched various strata of society – including the Crown, Church, Inquisition, fellow Irish exiles in New Spain, and Indians – and left behind him scandals that went on for years.

For over three hundred years, the intriguing figure of Don Guillén has been left largely to speculation. Who was this Irish wanderer and how did he end up in New Spain with mysterious contacts with the most powerful sectors in the Viceroyalty, all while preparing a rebellion? What allowed him to do so? The effort to answer these questions follows a paper trail scattered around the Seventeenth-century Atlantic world, and tells a story linking Early Modern Ireland, Spain and Mexico.

*Wanderings and Plots: A brief narrative*

Four days after his arrest, Guillén Lombardo was called to testify before his Inquisitors, and gave a long narrative of his peregrinations.<sup>3</sup> Listening to what must have been a confusing rush of names and events, the court scribe scribbled down the first pages of what would become an immense body of documentation produced during his seventeen-year incarceration. It all begins in an Ireland only recently conquered by English armies after the Battle of Kinsale in 1601, and reduced to colonial settlement over the next decade. Born in the Southeastern port of Wexford around the year 1611 to a minor noble family of Norman descent, the Lamports, William’s possibilities were marked by his family’s alliance with the crushed Gaelic resistance to English colonization. The Lamports had long been engaged in piracy against English shipping in the Southern coast of Ireland, and continued their activities in the years following the defeat of the Irish armies on land.<sup>4</sup> Yet all was in vain. Known in Irish history as the “Wild Geese,” those native lords who had resisted Tudor rule and the Protestant Church in Ireland were steadily abandoning the island in the hopes that, from their exile in Spain, they could organize a reconquest. In 1617, the English executed William’s grandfather on the personal orders of

James I. By the time William was ten years old his family, like the “Wild Geese,” began to scatter across the sea.

After a few years studying at a Jesuit school in Ireland, William began university studies in England at Gresham College. He soon had to flee the country, he claims, because after publishing a treatise denouncing King James I, English authorities sought his arrest. His statements to the Inquisition then go on to tell how he wound up in a company of pirates in the Bay of Biscay; an occupation which, given his family history and the connections between Irish merchants and the ports of Western France, might have been familiar to him. After allegedly converting his pirate band to Catholicism and loyalty to Spain, William changed his identity to the hispanicized Don Guillén Lombardo de Guzmán, and entered the Irish exile community schools in La Coruña.<sup>5</sup> A year later, with the support of local Spanish and Irish nobles, he entered the Colegio de Irlandeses in Salamanca.<sup>6</sup>

Lombardo then began an astonishing rise to power that appears to have depended largely on the successful manipulation of his exile status. The next time we hear of him, either in his own testimony or in the Spanish records that we have thus far seen, Don Guillén is entering diplomatic service for the Spanish Crown around the age of twenty. He had the support of the most powerful Irish nobles exiled in the Spanish Court. The Catholic Monarchy granted full rights to promising exiles, and Don Guillén, like his compatriots, emphatically added “de nazion Yrlandes” after his hispanicized name. With the exiled nobles’ recommendation he entered the secret services of the Chief Minister of Spain, the Conde Duque de Olivares.<sup>7</sup> During the 1630’s, he carried out missions in war-torn Flanders (where the eminent Flemish painter Van Dyck painted his portrait), and organized Irish regiments there.<sup>8</sup> In 1637, he returned to the Spanish Court as a procurator to secretly distribute Spanish military funds to Irish exile groups that sought to reconquer the island. These efforts contributed to the Catholic uprising of 1641. In this period of Spanish imperial decadence, Guillén’s service to the minister corresponds to the cases of other servants in his employ: he served as a spy, operating secretly, distributing funds coming directly from the minister and, so he claims in his depositions, reporting solely to him.<sup>9</sup> Then, in 1640, preferring not to return with his recruited exiles to the wars in Ireland, Don Guillén ended up on the Indies Fleet bound for Mexico. Was he on a new mission to spy on Olivares’ behalf in Mexico?

Don Guillén arrived to a Viceroyalty of New Spain that was suffering deepening institutional crises. From a preliminary examination of his personal papers, it appears that Don Guillén sought to make connections with several major political figures in the Viceroyalty and was in constant communication with the Conde Duque de Olivares back in Spain. Meanwhile, he organized his uprising. Using his recruiting techniques developed in the service of the Spanish Crown, he began to organize a small disciplined force that would enable him to take power, declare himself king, abolish slavery, and establish free trade with the nations of Europe.<sup>10</sup> There were possibly other Irish exiles involved. He also maintained contact with two other compatriots in New Spain: Miguel Godínez, a Jesuit from Waterford who applied for a post in the Mexican Inquisition one year after Don Guillén’s arrest, and Fray Diego de la Cruz, a Franciscan from Dublin arrested by the Inquisition in 1659, the year of Don Guillén’s execution.<sup>11</sup> Our investigation situates Don Guillén’s plot among the many intrigues then consuming the political life of the Viceroyalty, as elites worried that the rebellion in Portugal would inspire local Portuguese merchants to link forces with Indians and escaped slaves. Several interests – the Crown, the Viceroy and the Inquisition – fought for the possession of this prisoner who seemed to know too much. In jail, he was a vociferous critic of the Inquisition: indeed after managing once to escape, he ran throughout Mexico City to post a tract against the crimes of the Inquisition rather than taking to the hills. For seventeen years the Inquisition held him on dubious charges of heresy – not treason or conspiracy, a civil offense that would have fallen under the Audiencia’s jurisdiction. In his final years, he slipped into madness and was executed in the *Auto General de la Fee* of 1659. Defiant to the end, he robbed the Inquisition of his own death by strangling himself on the executioner’s platform, right in the gaze of the gathered plebes below and the assembled elites viewing from their reserved balconies.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Methodology and Sources*

The case of Don Guillén brings to vivid life several processes in the history of the Seventeenth century Atlantic. His story is at once extraordinary and emblematic; his life is ideally one that can be recounted at the nexus between microhistory and the grand narratives of the Seventeenth century world. Don Guillén could very

well become for the history of the Atlantic world what Carlo Ginzburg's Italian miller Menocchio has become for the study of Early Modern Europe.<sup>13</sup> For Lombardo, like Menocchio, is a charismatic example of several movements taking place in the culture and societies of the Atlantic and the Spanish Empire. He never managed to rise to power as he aspired and did not earn an entry into any chronicle. Yet in his prolific writings and fitilious declarations we see at once the tensions between metropolises and colonies, contemporary discourses of tyranny and liberty, and myths of messianic kings and kingdoms that circulated throughout Europe and the Americas in this period. Through the social connections revealed in his documents, we can begin to reconstruct a network of Irish exiles linking Spain and Mexico, and his involvement in local politics in New Spain help illustrate the dynamism and diversity of popular politics in a tumultuous period in the history of Mexico City.<sup>14</sup>

To date, there is no extant study of Don Guillén in English. Those studies that do exist in Spanish are now over a century old. Two late-nineteenth century Mexican historians and one novelist interpreted his plots as early precursors to independence. Yet they offer little about Don Guillén's identity or his life outside of the Inquisitorial jail. Based principally on the Inquisition's record, these studies dismiss Don Guillén ultimately as a charlatan and impostor.<sup>15</sup> More recently, Fabio Troncarelli, an Italian historian, has written a well-researched historical study that nonetheless does not address the important role of the Irish exile community in Don Guillén's career nor does it convey the voice of this dynamic individual.<sup>16</sup> Given the sheer extent and variety of documentation that this figure generated in his brief lifetime – something unique indeed for individuals in the seventeenth century – our study will focus on Don Guillén's experiences through a critical analysis of his own records. His own writings in Spain and Mexico show a common strain of anti-colonial thinking, from his writings on the situation in Ireland to his correspondence with Bishop Juan de Palafox y Mendoza in New Spain.<sup>17</sup> This study sets aside the dismissals and instead asks how this unusual newcomer with a mysterious access to political power ultimately sought to topple the Mexican Viceroyalty.

The most pressing needs in order for this project to move forward regard three archival collections. In January 2006, I intend to spend several weeks in Monterrey transcribing and copying the five hundred folios in Don Guillén's personal papers. It is hoped that the collection will allow a thorough reconstruction of Don Guillén's life in Mexico City and his role in the Conde Duque's employ. His papers also include his declarations, poetry, letters, personal budgets, treatises, and official personal records. I had the opportunity to index and take preliminary notes on the collection in March 2005 during a week-long stay in Monterrey, but the collection still awaits a more thorough analysis. Shared with scholars of Mexican, Spanish, and Irish history, several documents in this collection will be of tremendous use to both the reconstruction of Don Guillén's life and to the period in general. This examination of the Monterrey documents is a vital step towards the following phases in my research plan. Following the stay in Monterrey, in February I will study Don Guillén's Inquisitorial trial records held in Mexico City. In the Summer of 2006, I intend to spend several weeks at the Archivo General de Simancas in Spain examining sources from the Spanish councils of state regarding piracy and Don Guillén's role in organizing Irish exile battalions.<sup>18</sup> The Monterrey documents will be vital to have on hand in order to corroborate them with these records in Mexico City and Simancas.

In the short term, the information collected and analysed in these research stays will allow me to move forward on a series of articles studying Don Guillén's discourse of rebellion in New Spain and his role in the transatlantic Irish exile community in the 1630's. These articles also have in mind the long-term objective, that of producing an extended study of the life of Don Guillén and the worlds through which he moved.

### *Conclusion*

Don Guillén Lombardo's life is a transoceanic story still waiting to be told. Born into a colonial war in Ireland, he made his way through several centers of power in the Seventeenth century world. Set in a tumultuous world, Lombardo's life speaks to the wider history of the Atlantic world through the many self-transformations that he undertook in order to adapt to new surroundings. In each setting, Lombardo reinvented himself and then sought the spotlight: be it in his "conversion" of his fellow pirates, his sitting for a Van Dyck portrait, his plots to become king of Mexico, or his theatrical death by his own hand that cast shame on his Inquisitors. These unexpected adventures form the narrative thread for the study, as we examine the historical contexts behind his life as an Irish exile, his remarkable access to power, and the dreams of liberty that led him to his tragic end.

## Notes.

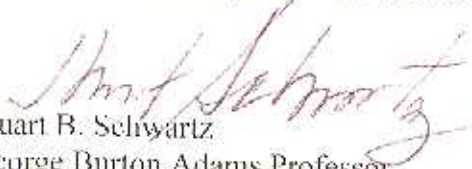
- <sup>1</sup> Don Guillén to King Phillip IV, 28 April 1642. Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey – Biblioteca Cervantina (ITMBC), Papeles de Guillén Lombardo, f.50r.
- <sup>2</sup> Don Guillén is most likely comparing his future emergence as “Emperador del Reino de Nueva España” to that of Calderón de la Barca’s hidden king Segismundo in *La vida es sueño*. ITMBC, Papeles, ff. 40r – 47v.
- <sup>3</sup> The following narrative is drawn from Lombardo’s first deposition, located in the Inquisition records sent to the Council of the Indies. Archivo General de Indias (AGI), México 4/271.
- <sup>4</sup> Fabio Troncarelli, “I leoni del mare. I Lamport di Ballycennegan, pirati e patrioti,” in Enrique García Hernán, Miguel Ángel de Bunes, Óscar Recio Morales, Bernardo J. García García eds. *Irlanda y la Monarquía Hispánica: Kinsale 1601 – 2001. Guerra, Política, Exilio y Religión*. Madrid: CSIC, 2003. pp. 295 – 311.
- <sup>5</sup> This section of Don Guillén’s testimony on piracy and his arrival in Spain has as of yet no corroborated evidence. A thorough scouring of records in the Archivo General de Simancas and the Archivo del Reino de Galicia may shed further light on this period.
- <sup>6</sup> Russell Library, St Patrick’s College, Maynooth, Ireland. Salamanca Archives, S. 33/J/15. Acts of a disciplinary review in the Colegio de los Irlandeses of Salamanca, in which Lombardo is called to testify. Salamanca, 1631.
- <sup>7</sup> Don Guillén’s “Probanza de méritos y servicios” and copies of his “pareceres” about Spanish policy in Ireland are held at the Biblioteca Cervantina in Monterrey. The Irish nobles listed as witnesses in the Probanza were members of Spanish military orders. Their records are held in the Archivo Histórico Nacional (AHN) in Madrid, and will help to reconstruct the network of Irish exiles at the Spanish court and New Spain.
- <sup>8</sup> Anton Van Dyck painted Guillén Lombardo’s portrait in 1634 in Flanders. Lombardo is shown with his coat of arms presenting his credentials to the representative of the Spanish Crown in Brussels, Jean Charles Della Faille. The painting is now housed in a museum in Budapest.
- <sup>9</sup> Several documents in Don Guillén’s personal papers at ITMBC and other records held in Simancas attest to this role. A parallel example of an Irish recruiter in the Crown’s employ is the case of Francisco Foisotte, who during the 1630’s and 1640’s coordinated Irish battalions and served as a Spanish agent working in Ireland. Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid, Colección Mascareñas, ms 2367.
- <sup>10</sup> Don Guillén’s personal papers will allow for a reconstruction of these efforts. He authored a treatise on militia organization, and wrote several letters to the Viceroy and the embattled Bishop of Puebla Juan de Palafox y Mendoza in which he offered to organize militias for them. ITMBC, Documentos de Guillén Lombardo.
- <sup>11</sup> Miguel Godínez, a.k.a. Michael Warding, applied for the post “as has been done for others from his nation of Ireland since currently no similar posts are available in that kingdom.” AHN, Inquisición 1319, exp. 2. Diego de la Cruz maintained close contact with Don Guillén and was tried for blasphemy and insulting the King. In his trial, the Inquisitors make much of his connections to “the prisoner Don Guillén.” AHN, Inquisición 1732, exp. 33.
- <sup>12</sup> Based on the official account of the Auto da Fé of 1659 by Raúl de Cepeda Martínez, *Auto General de la Fee [...] Celebrado a los 19 de Noviembre de 1659*. Mexico City, 1659. Copy held at the New York Public Library, Rare Books and Manuscripts. \*KE 1660. Inquisition, Mexico, Auto General de la Fé.
- <sup>13</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1992.
- <sup>14</sup> See Jonathan Israel, *Race, class, and politics in colonial Mexico, 1610-1670*. London: Oxford University Press, 1975.
- <sup>15</sup> See L. González Obregón, *Rebeliones indígenas y precursores de la independencia mexicana en los siglos XVI, XVII, y XVII*. México, 1908; José Turibio Medina, *Historia del tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en México.*, México, 1905; and V. Riva Palacio, *Memorias de un impostor*, México, 1872.
- <sup>16</sup> Fabio Troncarelli, *La spada e la croce*. Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1999.
- <sup>17</sup> See Cayetana Álvarez de Toledo, *Politics and reform in Spain and Viceregal Mexico: the life and thought of Juan de Palafox, 1600-1659*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- <sup>18</sup> AGIS, Consejo de Estado, 2055; 29 January and 13 February 1640. Council papers discussing Spanish plans to aid Irish exiles in invading Ireland and start a general rebellion there. Lombardo is named here as a “Maestro de Campo”, most likely due to his role as negotiator and procurator of Spanish funds to the Irish mercenaries.

The Irish Argentine Historical Society  
Maison Rouge  
1261 Burtigny, Switerland

Gentlemen,

I write in support of my Ph.d. student Mr. RYAN CREWE who is applying for a fellowship from the Irish Latin American research Fund. Mr. Crewe is an excellent student who is presently in Spain completing his doctoral research on the missionary efforts in early Mexico in comparison to those in reconquest Granada. While involved in that research he became interested in a rather singular case of the "Irish Emperor of Mexico." Don Guillen de Lampart (William Lampart) was a highly placed person at the viceregal court of Mexico who may have been an agent of the Count-Duke of Olivares. He became embroiled in politics and was eventually arrested and executed by the Mexican Inquisition under very strange circumstances, in part for seeking to separate Mexico from Spain. This is a subject I have long been interested in myself, and when Mr. Crewe showed interest in it, I turned over notes and archival materials I have collected over the years. He then, on his own initiative visited an archive in Monterrey, Mexico where some additional materials are housed and he hopes to turn this interest into a major study of this famous case. He is well prepared to produce something fresh and innovative because of his close connections to Ireland. Mr. Crewe has family there and travels each summer to Ireland where he has begun to investigate the family origins of Don Guillen as well as his positioning among the many Irish exiles in Spain in the early Seventeenth Century. This study will add a new dimension to the existing historiography of what has long been a controversial incident in Mexico where Don Guillen has sometimes been seen as a precursor of Mexican independence.

Mr. Crewe is an excellent student. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa honorary society as an undergraduate and he has had a fine graduate career at Yale. He is presently in Spain on a Fulbright grant and he next hopes to work in Mexico. He lived in Spain as an undergraduate and he speaks Spanish well. He has all the skills of research and paleography that he needs for this project. I think his potential as an historian is great and his interest in the Irish in Latin America is genuine. I recommend him to you with great enthusiasm and I hope to work with him closely on this project.

  
Stuart B. Schwartz  
George Burton Adams Professor  
Of History  
Master, Ezra Stiles College