



Felicitas and Bernardo: The Power Couple of Spanish Louisiana



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Venue

The Historic New Orleans Collection
(Williams Research Center), 410 Chartres
St, New Orleans, LA 70130

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Admission

Free, [RSVP required](#).

Credits

Presented by the Historic New Orleans
Collection with the support of the Cultural
Office of the Embassy of Spain in
Washington, D.C.

In this special lecture, Gálvez's expert Gonzalo Quintero sheds light on the figures of Louisiana's Governor Bernardo de Gálvez and his wife, Felicitas de Saint-Maxent.

The contributions of Bernardo de Gálvez to the development of New Orleans and the Thirteen Colonies' independence are, to an extent, relatively well known when it comes to the recognition of Spain's legacy in the United States. Nevertheless, the same cannot be said about his wife Felicitas de Saint-Maxent, a French creole widow born in one of the most notorious and prosperous families in New Orleans.

Gálvez's successes can't be really understood without analyzing the ins and outs of his marriage. This relationship disregarded social prejudices, going further beyond what in the first instance may seem one of the many convenience marriages so common among the aristocracy of the time. The acceptance of Gálvez's rule in a territory that had been controlled and colonized by the French for decades until little more than ten years has a lot to do with Felicitas and her family's support and advice. Moreover, Felicitas de Saint-Maxent was in charge of the Spanish Louisiana administration during the military campaigns led by the colonial Governor against the British during the American Revolution.

When Bernardo de Gálvez died in 1786 while carrying the role of Viceroy of New Spain, his wife relocated to Madrid, where she hosted numerous social gatherings and enlightened Francophile ideas. With the burst of the French Revolution, she suffered severe persecution from the Spanish authorities, passing away in 1798 after being finally acquitted of spreading revolutionary ideas.



ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Gonzalo M. Quintero Saravia is a Spanish diplomat, Doctor in History by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and Doctor in Public Law by the UNED. He is also a member of the Spanish Royal Academy of History, the Colombian Academy of History and a former Fellow at the Waterhead Center for International Affairs.

American History is one of his expertise areas, having published several books about Spanish historic figures in this part of the world, such as *Bernardo de Gálvez: Spanish Hero of the American Revolution*, *Pablo Morillo: general de dos mundos*, or *Don Blas de Lezo: defensor de Cartagena de Indias*.