

Identities in Motion

The Formation of a Plural Indio Society in Early San Luis Potosí,
New Spain, 1591-1630

Laurent Corbeil
Department of History and Classical Studies
McGill University, Montréal

September 2014

A thesis submitted to McGill University in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
degree of doctor in philosophy

©Laurent Corbeil, 2014

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	ii
Abstract	iv
Résumé.....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	viii
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Historiography, Methodology, and Concepts	15
Perspectives on Indigenous Peoples	16
Identity	25
Sources and Methodology.....	29
A Short Note on Terminology	36
Chapter 2: Origins.....	39
Multitudes	41
Background on Origins and Ethnic Relationships	51
Languages	62
Conclusion	69
Chapter 3: Migrations	72
Causes of Migration	76
Epidemics.....	78
Forced Population Congregations.....	83
Land Dispossession.....	85
Exploitation of Labour	89
Overall Causes of Migration.....	94
Group Migrations.....	94
Individual Migration	99
Conclusion	111
Chapter 4: Setting up San Luis Potosí	112
The Pueblos and Barrios de Indios	122
The Nature and Variety of Amerindian Labour.....	137
Conclusion	158
Chapter 5: Daily Spaces of Sociability	160
Living Spaces.....	163
Making Spaces their Own.....	173

Familial Relationships	178
Ethnicity	188
Conclusion	193
Chapter 6: Marriage and the Nuclear Family	195
Social Norms of Marriage.....	198
The Formation of an Indian San Luis Potosí	209
Gender and Conflicts in Couples	225
Conclusion	239
Chapter 7: Mobility and Violence Across the Conurbation.....	244
Mobility.....	248
Brawls, Drinking, and Other Violent Encounters	266
Conclusion	281
Chapter 8: The Construction of Formal Identities	283
The Community's Integrity and the Search for a Balance of Power	288
The Basis of a Complex Identity	301
Identity and the Protection of Community Members	312
Conclusion	316
Conclusion	318
Appendix 1	330
Abbreviations for Sources.....	336
Bibliography	337

Abstract

This dissertation analyzes the construction of *indio* identities in the urban society of San Luis Potosí, over a period of forty years from the arrival of the Tlaxcalans in the valley in 1591 until 1630. The development of indigenous groups in the city unfolded in two stages corresponding to the generation of migrants who established its foundations, and to the generation of their children, who consolidated social structures into tangible institutions. Distinguishing between formal political identities and more continuous and flexible processes of identification, the dissertation displays the range of possibilities available to indigenous peoples. I argue that indigenous peoples constructed formal, corporate identities around the *pueblos y barrios de indios* and around labour teams, appropriating to a degree the Spanish legal concept of *indios* and in keeping with the particular characteristics of each community. As well, I show that indigenous peoples informally identified with various sectors of San Luis Potosí's society, depending on their place of residence, their work, their familial relations, and their involvement in local and regional trade. Finally, I argue that socio-economic status and gender were more significant than was ethnicity in determining an individual's place in society.

The dissertation begins with an analysis of the origins of indigenous peoples in San Luis Potosí, and with the process of migration that brought them to this location in the late sixteenth century. Indigenous peoples came from more than ten cultural groups, including Tlaxcalans and other Nahuas, Tarascans, Otomis, Cazcans, Tecuexes, Cocas, and others. This variety was symptomatic of the great mobility of the indigenous population in the sixteenth century, and it suggests an exceptional ability to adapt.

Indeed, I observed widespread multilingualism and frequent exchanges between distinct indigenous peoples.

The study then turns to the transformation and construction of social networks among these migrants. I show how they settled in the Indian towns – called the *pueblos y barrios de indios* – in ore-processing facilities, charcoal-making operations, workshops, and other work sites. I argue that all of these places were not only sites of labour and commercial interactions, but also living spaces that indigenous peoples appropriated and shaped. These spaces became the basis of social relations, familial organization, ritual kinship, and gender roles. Finally, I analyse the development of formal identities through the legal, political, and discursive stands taken by indigenous peoples and authorities. I demonstrate that, through the adoption of formal corporate identities, indigenous communities could maintain their place in the city by creating collective personae that could appeal to the Spanish law. The apparent homogeneity of these communities, however, was accompanied by substantial internal heterogeneity.

Résumé

Cette thèse analyse la construction des identités autochtones dans la société urbaine de San Luis Potosí, pendant une période de quarante ans, soit de l'arrivée des Tlaxcaltèques en 1591 jusqu'en 1630. L'établissement des groupes autochtones dans la ville se déroula en deux étapes correspondant à la génération des immigrants et à celle de leurs enfants. Alors que les premiers mirent en place les fondations de la société urbaine autochtone, les seconds consolidèrent ces structures sociales en institutions tangibles. Distinguant entre les identités politiques formelles et les processus continus et flexibles d'identification, la thèse démontre que les Amérindiens avaient un large éventail d'affiliations possibles. D'une part, les Autochtones articulèrent des identités corporatives formelles liées aux *pueblos y barrios de indios* et aux équipes de travail, en s'appropriant en partie le concept légal espagnol d'*indios*, et tout en conservant les caractéristiques particulières de chaque communauté. D'autre part, je démontre que les Amérindiens eurent des affiliations informelles complexes en fonction de leurs lieux de résidence, de leur travail, de leurs relations familiales et de leur intégration dans les réseaux commerciaux locaux et régionaux. Finalement, je constate que le statut socio-économique et le genre avaient plus de poids dans la place sociale d'un individu que son ethnicité.

La thèse débute par l'analyse des origines des Amérindiens ayant immigré à San Luis Potosí, ainsi que par l'étude des expériences migratoires de la fin du XVI^e siècle. Ces Amérindiens provenaient de plus d'une dizaine de groupes culturels, incluant des Tlaxcaltèques et autres Nahuas, Tarasques, Otomis, Cazcans, Tecuexes, Cocas et quelques autres. Cette variété était le symptôme d'une grande mobilité de la population

amérindienne au XVI^e siècle, et elle suggère une habilité d'adaptation exceptionnelle. En effet, j'ai observé un multilinguisme très répandu et des échanges culturels fréquents entre groupes autochtones distincts.

L'étude se penche ensuite sur la construction et la transformation à San Luis Potosí des réseaux sociaux entre immigrants. Je démontre comment ils se sont établis dans les villages amérindiens – appelés *pueblos y barrios de indios* – dans les installations de traitement du minerai, dans les fabriques de charbon, dans les ateliers d'artisanat et sur d'autres lieux de travail. Ces endroits n'étaient pas seulement des lieux de travail et d'interactions commerciales, mais aussi des espaces de vie que les Amérindiens s'approprièrent et façonnèrent. Ces espaces devinrent la base des relations sociales, de l'organisation familiale, des liens de parenté rituelle et de la définition des rôles de genre. Finalement, la thèse analyse le développement d'identités formelles à travers les discours légaux et politiques des autorités Amérindiennes. Je démontre que l'adoption d'identités corporatives formelles permit aux communautés autochtones de maintenir leur place dans la conurbation, en créant une personnalité juridique pouvant faire appel à la loi espagnole. L'apparente homogénéité présentée par ces identités communautaires, cependant, était accompagnée d'une importante hétérogénéité interne.

Acknowledgements

Working on a dissertation involves collaboration with numerous people, and I wish to express my gratitude to everyone who supported my work in the last few years. First and foremost, I must thank my advisor, Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert, who was present at all stages of this project. Daviken put me in touch with excellent scholars in Mexico, suggested and analyzed academic works with me, and carefully read each chapter multiple times. Catherine Desbarats acted as second advisor, and her support never failed throughout the years. Her insightful comments greatly improved my writing and always lead me to a deeper analysis of the sources.

This dissertation has been supported financially by a number of institutions. The Fonds québécois de recherche – Société et culture awarded me a three-year doctoral scholarship. McGill University, through the Faculty of Arts and the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Office, funded parts of my research and conference travels. The Department of History granted me the Recruitment Excellence Fellowship and two Graduate Excellence Fellowships. Finally, the Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México financed my research in Mexico City and invited me to conduct research in their remarkable library by awarding me the Beca Teixidor.

Many professors have contributed to this dissertation at various stages and in various forms. In Mexico, Juan Carlos Ruiz Guadalajara, professor of history at the Colegio de San Luis, warmly welcomed and housed me in San Luis Potosí. He facilitated my access to the parish archives, gave me tips about the historical archives of San Luis Potosí, furthered my understanding of the history of the region and of Mexico, and

introduced me to the current local political and economic debates. Juan Pedro Viqueira at the Colegio de México and Felipe Castro Gutiérrez at the Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México each read the initial project and made valuable comments that reoriented my research and analysis. At McGill, Catherine LeGrand has been an attentive, resourceful, and generous mentor for writing, teaching, and career advice. David Frye, at the University of Michigan, introduced me to the fascinating world of Spanish paleography. Cynthia Milton, at the Université de Montréal, occasionally commented on my work and has been very helpful. I had very interesting and stimulating discussions with Dana Velasco Murillo of the University of California, San Diego, about mining and indigenous peoples in northern New Spain.

In the archives, I am grateful to the staff of the Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí (AHESLP) who guided me through the various *fondos* and always facilitated my research. In particular, the director Arq. Rafael Morales Bocardo, the Arq. Hugo Martín Loredo Valadez, and Ismael Sustaita Cruz have taken much time to help me find the sources I needed. The staff at the parish archives of El Sagrario and at the archdioceses of San Luis Potosí has been most helpful. At the Fondo Reservado of the Biblioteca Nacional de México, Rosario Paez Flores took time to speak to me about my research, and pointed me to a number of important resources. Each time I was in the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City, the staff was friendly and very helpful. I also wish to thank the curator of the Franciscan archives of the province of Zacatecas in Zapopán, Guadalajara, who warmly opened the collection to me.

My friends have contributed to this dissertation by reading and commenting on sections of it, listening and discussing its main themes and concepts, and giving me

enlightening insights. Sébastien Drolet, Laurie Laplanche, Sonya Roy, France Normand, Dominique Lasnier, Virginie Lasnier, Frédéric Giuliano, Caroline Truchon, Annick Brabant, Hélène Rompré, Douglas Smith, Laura Jordán González, and Daniel Rueck all supported my work in their own way. I can never thank you enough for all you did throughout the years. In the last year, Michele McArdle has been of outstanding support and gave me the last boost I needed to complete my dissertation. My appreciation for your brilliant comments, insightful tips, and warm encouragements is beyond words.

My family has always supported me. In particular, my mother Louise Labrie and my father Michel Corbeil have always understood my desire to learn more, to push the limits of my knowledge. They have supported me financially and morally, never with hesitation, always with encouragements. I also wish to thank my grand-parents, my aunts and uncles, and my father's partner Sylvie, all of whom accept my unusual life choices. My cousins, with whom I have a very special and valuable connection, have been very important supporters throughout the years and under all circumstances. Finally, my son Clément has transmitted to me his joy, curiosity, and love. I dedicate this dissertation to you, in the hope that you become whatever you want to be, and that you always follow your passions. The world is yours to discover.

À Clément

Introduction

Her name was María Isabel. She had been raised in Guadalajara, the Spanish capital of the western province of Nueva Galicia. She was from the neighbourhood of Mexicapan: she might have been a descendent of the Nahuatl conquerors of the province, most probably not one of the native Tecuexes. She married in her home city, had two children – one of whom was born in 1616 – and, with her husband, moved over 500 km north-east to San Luis Potosí. She and her husband worked for some Spaniards for a while, on a hill called Monte Caldera.

The place where María Isabel and her husband worked was named after its first owner, the famous *mestizo* Miguel Caldera, born to a Chichimec mother and a Spanish father. Caldera was an important cultural intermediary. He could dress and take the customs of Spanish high society, and then go to war using Chichimec weapons, climbing up the ridgetops where his enemies often hid. He is credited with the resolution of the great Chichimec War, and for convincing the Guachichils to establish themselves permanently, to undertake agriculture, and to serve Spaniards. But all this, María Isabel probably did not know.

After working for some time, María Isabel and her husband went back to Guadalajara, where he passed away shortly after. The widow again made the journey to San Luis Potosí with her children, and she worked for Gaspar González, again on Monte Caldera. Her employer sold his property around 1620, with his workers in the deal, including María Isabel. A priest from the low clergy, Gerónimo de Vega, bought the property and thus gained control over María Isabel. That control, however, was relative. María Isabel was free to leave Gerónimo de la Vega's property and cease to work for

him, but only once she had reimbursed any debts owing to him through work. And a debt she had, in cash and cloths, to the amount of twenty gold pesos.

His name was Juan Lázaro. He was born around 1594 in Tlazazalca, north-west of the province of Michoacán, not too far from Nueva Galicia. His mother tongue was Tarascan, but he also spoke Náhuatl. He moved to San Luis Potosí in his mid-teens and, like María Isabel, he started working for Spaniards. Involved in a court case in 1624, he first claimed to be a free Indian labourer and not to belong to any community nor to be in the service of any particular Spaniard. The Spanish miner Bartolomé Bocado, however, claimed that Juan Lázaro's mother had given him full authority over her son when her husband had died in 1610, a fact that Juan Lázaro acknowledged later. Whether he worked at the request of his patron or out of his free and own will, Juan Lázaro did indeed work for various Spaniards. Around 1615, he started working for Simón Luis, in his *hacienda* of Monte Caldera.

María Isabel and Juan Lázaro met there, in Monte Caldera, in 1622. They soon fell in love, and Juan Lázaro took María Isabel and her two sons along with him to live and work on Simón Luis' *hacienda*. For two years, they lived together. From what followed, it seems that both of them were deeply in love, and that they were ready to do everything to continue living together.

In February 1624, by *carnes tolenda* (carnival), Gerónimo de Vega discovered where María Isabel had been and retrieved her. Juan Lázaro protested, but in the meantime the hacienda owner Simón Luis had died and de Vega offered Juan to work on

his *hacienda*, so to stay with the one he loved. But Juan Lázaro was not in good health and could not work much for the time being, so that both men could not reach a deal. A few weeks later, by Easter, Juan Lázaro was in Santiago del Río – an Indian town originally settled by Guachichils, just outside of San Luis Potosí – where he knew some people, including some Tarascans from Tlazazalca. María Isabel had relatives in that neighbourhood and with their help she went to look for her lover. Upon finding each other, the couple decided to get married. On April 24, 1624, they presented themselves in the convent of San Francisco in the Spanish town and father Juan Larios celebrated the wedding. Their witnesses were *indios* they had known for a long time. Juan Lázaro presented two Tarascans, Diego Pacheco from his native town of Tlazazalca and Pedro Juan from the neighbouring Chilchota (five leagues from one another). Both men claimed to have known Juan Lázaro for over twelve years. María Isabel presented Ana Beatriz and Pedro Martín. While only the latter was native from Guadalajara, just like the bride, both had lived in that city and had known María Isabel for quite a long time, for they had seen her first husband die and being buried.

By 1624, both groom and bride had deep and far reaching contacts in San Luis Potosí, among its labouring force of *indios*, and in the barrio of Santiago del Río. Very soon after their marriage, Gerónimo de Vega fell upon them again and ordered that they return to his *hacienda* to work for him. This time around, their friends and relatives were shocked by the Spaniard's request and pleaded that the authorities of the neighbourhood intervene. The well-connected chief sheriff Juan Andrés was among those who intervened, as he too was an immigrant from the Tarascan village of Chilchota. Though an immigrant, he had forged strong ties to the community. Two years earlier, he had

married Isabel Petrona, who was a native from the neighbourhood, and his first witness had been Simón Cristóbal, the *alcalde* (mayor) of the community.

By May 29, 1624, the authorities of Santiago decided to intervene and contested de Vega's claim on the couple. The mayor Simón Cristóbal, Juan Andrés, and other Indians of authorities from Santiago wrote to the principal authority of San Luis Potosí, Juan Cerezo Salamanca (lieutenant-captain general of the Chichimec frontier and principal mayor of the jurisdiction), to present a criminal complaint against Gerónimo de Vega. They claimed that "an Indian of our village named Juan Lázaro married her [María Isabel] and brought her to live in our village; and while they were calm and cohabiting as husband and wife, the said Gerónimo de Vega took them on the public place of this village and with violence and force has brought them to his hacienda where he has kept the said Juan Lázaro during the whole month of May in chains and locks."

Notwithstanding this significant support, both Juan Lázaro and María Isabel ultimately declared that they were not members, and never had been members, of the Santiago community. María Isabel still had a debt towards Gerónimo de Vega, and by law she had to work for him. Probably in order to stay with his new wife, Juan Lázaro severed all his ties to Santiago and even declared that he would help her reimburse her employer by working for him. María Isabel's children, one of which was still in Santiago, were taken to de Vega's hacienda, and thus the family was reunited.

Unfortunately, Juan's first employer Bartolomé Bocado took note of the affair and remembered that his worker still owed him fifty pesos he had spent to cure him from a broken leg many years before. He claimed to retrieve Juan Lázaro's services. By then, however, the authorities of San Luis Potosí had first ruled in favour of Gerónimo de

Vega, and seemed confused at actions to take. For the historian, the case stops here, and the couple left no more traces to be found, not even the baptism of another child.¹

The subject of this dissertation is the transformation and the trajectories of indigenous identities in the formative years of the Mexican city of San Luis Potosí, where a great variety of indigenous peoples met on a daily basis. The story of María Isabel and Juan Lázaro captures much of what is at stake. They came from different cultural areas of Mesoamerica, both of which presented cultural blending in the colonial era, but most probably also in the pre-colonial times. Both of them migrated north to Aridoamerica and developed contacts in an Indian town dominated by people of Tarascan descent, but originally composed by local Guachichils, whom the Spanish had settled there. These social relations became significant in their daily life and they included familial, political, economic, formal, and informal components. I am thus seeking to understand how this complex and diverse indigenous society reorganized itself in a foreign setting.

Early San Luis Potosí is an ideal location to study the relationships between indigenous peoples as well as the transformation of their identities because it was situated on a cultural, social, and ecologic frontier. In the period under study, the Spanish town and the surrounding Indian towns were part of a colonial frontier, but the valley had been

¹ The criminal prosecution is in the Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí, fundo Alcaldía Mayor (AHESLP-AM), 1624, caja 4, exp. 2. The quote is from f. 3r: “[...]un indio de nuestro pueblo llamado Juan Lázaro se casó con ella y trajo al dicho nuestro pueblo a vivir; y estando quietos y cohabitando como marido y mujer, el dicho Gerónimo de Vega los cogió en la plaza de este pueblo y con violencia y por fuerza los llevo a su hacienda a donde ha tenido al dicho Juan Lázaro todo este mes de mayo con prisiones de grillos y cadena [...]” The marriage of Juan Lázaro and María Isabel is registered in the Archivo Parroquial de Tlaxcalilla (APT), *Libro de Bautizos y Matrimonios, 1594-1654*, f. 326v, April 24, 1624. The marriage of Juan Andrés and Isabel Petrona is in the same book, f. 321v, April 8, 1622.

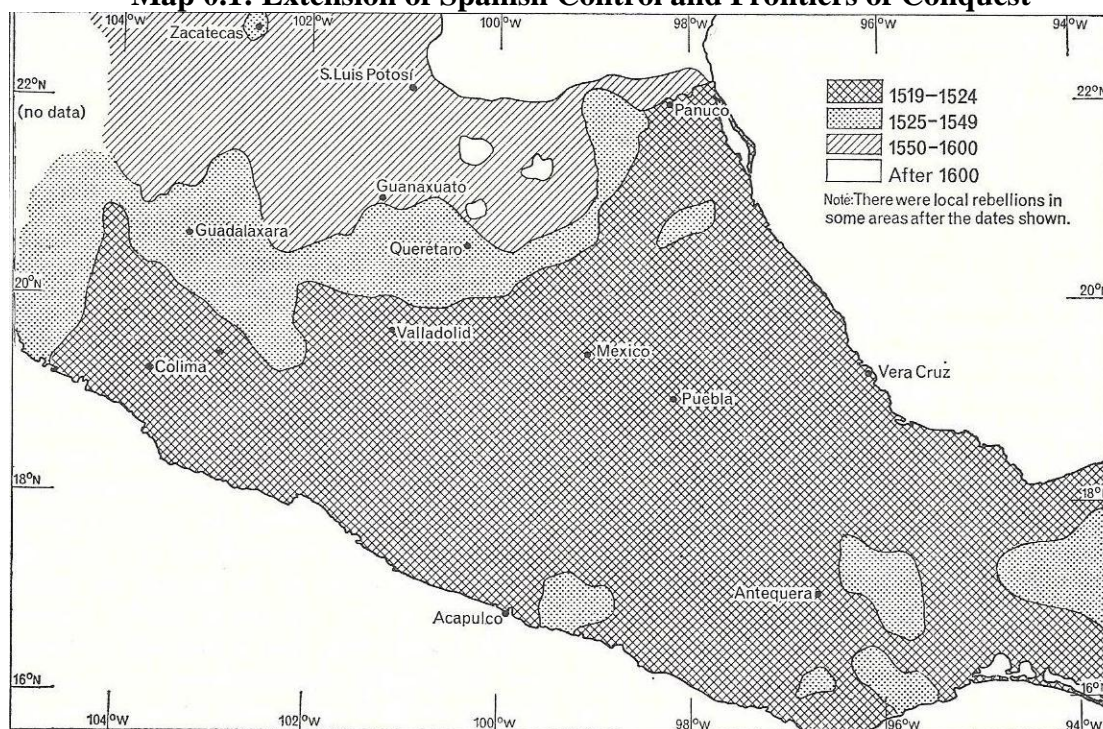
on the frontier between Mesoamerica and Aridoamerica for centuries.² Relationships between indigenous peoples of temperate climate, the Mesoamericans, and those of desert climate, known generically as Chichimecs, date from centuries before the colonial era. Archeologists have demonstrated that Chichimecs and Mesoamericans had been rubbing shoulders until around 1200 and that the former would have had significant impacts on the latter by way of constant colonisation from at least the thirteenth century on.³ In the sixteenth century, the contact region became the scene of the Chichimec War during which Spaniards and their Mesoamerican allies confronted Chichimec tribes for over forty years.⁴ Starting in 1585, worn out and wasting lots of funds in this war, Spaniards sided with the religious orders' opinion and transformed the region into a

² François Rodriguez Loubet, *Les Chichimèques: Archéologie et ethnohistoire des chasseurs-collecteurs du San Luis Potosí, Mexique* (Mexico: Centre d'études mexicaines et centraméricaines, 1985); María Isabel Monroy and Tomás Calvillo Unna, *Breve historia de San Luis Potosí* (Mexico: El Colegio de México, Fideicomiso Historia de las Américas, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1997); Beatriz Braniff C., ed. *La Gran Chichimeca: el lugar de las rocas secas* (Mexico and Milan: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes y Dirección General de Publicaciones, 2001); Alfredo López Austin and Leonardo López Luján, *El pasado indígena*, 2nd ed. (México: El Colegio de México, Fideicomiso Historia de las Américas, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001).

³ Vázquez Chamorro and Behar mention, among other things, the possible foundation of the State of Texcoco by Chichimecs. Cosentino highlights the ancestral genealogical ties between Chichimecs and Tlaxcalans. Rodriguez Loubet, *Les Chichimèques*; Germán Vázquez Chamorro, "Introduction," in *Historia de la nación chichimeca*, ed. Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl (Madrid: Historia 16, 1985), 13-14; Ruth Behar, *Las visiones de una bruja Guachichil en 1599: Hacia una perspectiva indígena sobre la conquista de San Luis Potosí* (San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis, 1995), 15; Jonathan E. Reyman, ed. *The Gran Chichimeca: Essays on the Archaeology and Ethnohistory of Northern Mesoamerica* (Aldershot, Brookfield, Hong Kong, Singapore, Sydney: Avebury, 1995); Monroy and Calvillo Unna, *Breve historia*; Delia Cosentino, "Genealogías pictóricas en Tlaxcala colonial: nobles afirmaciones del orden social," *Relaciones 105 XXVII*(2006).

⁴ The length of this war varies according to interpretations. Powell asserts it started with the foundation of Zacatecas around 1550. Eugene Sego thinks it started with the first confrontations between Chichimecs, Spaniards, and Mesoamericans in the 1520s. Carrillo Cázares sees its beginning in 1531 with the first northern rebellions. Philip Wayne Powell, *Soldiers, Indians, and Silver; The Northward Advance of New Spain, 1550-1600* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969; repr., 1952), 30-31; Eugene Sego, *Aliados y adversarios: Los colonos tlaxcaltecas en la frontera septentrional de Nueva España* (Mexico: El Colegio de San Luis, Gobierno del estado de Tlaxcala, Centro de Investigaciones Históricas de San Luis Potosí, 1998), 27-33; Alberto Carrillo Cázares, *El debate sobre la Guerra Chichimeca, 1531-1585; Derecho y política en la Nueva España* (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán y El Colegio de San Luis, 2000), 28-35.

Map 0.1: Extension of Spanish Control and Frontiers of Conquest



Source: Peter Gerhard, *A Guide to the Historical Geography of New Spain*. Rev. ed. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993: 8.

frontier of missions and colonisation.⁵ From then on, the Spanish authorities adopted a strategy of pacific conversion and of sending allied Amerindians to acculturate the Chichimecs. In 1591, the Spaniards asked their Tlaxcalan ally to send families north to help settle and acculturate the Chichimecs. In November of that same year, 230 Tlaxcalans settled in the valley of San Luis Potosí by the side of the local Guachichils, a group from the larger denominated Chichimecs. Together with the almost simultaneous arrival of Nahuas, Tarascans, and Otomis, this event led to political, economic and cultural transformations among all these indigenous peoples.

In order to understand the significance of the colonisation of San Luis Potosí by Mesoamericans, it is important to draw a parallel with the Conquest of Mesoamerica. The worst and most powerful consequence of the Spanish conquests on the pre-Columbian

⁵ Carrillo Cázares, *El debate sobre la Guerra*: 30-35.

American societies was their destructure and disarticulation. Not only did the leaders of these societies disappear or surrender control to the orders of the Spaniards, but the whole social fabric disintegrated to its core, right down to family networks.⁶ This social disarticulation was deepened by the strong emergence of epidemics in the decades following the conquests. These epidemics seem to have diminished, although they never completely disappeared, towards the very end of the sixteenth century.⁷ Corresponding to that moment, historians start to see a reorganization of indigenous societies across Spanish America.⁸ Some had already moved as allies of the Spaniards in the many conquests of that century, and had started to organize themselves in new communities. Others, such as those who arrived in San Luis Potosí, undertook long-distance migrations. This large movement of population, I argue, contributed to the construction of new indigenous identities. In short, San Luis Potosí represents what Serge Gruzinski has termed a “strange zone,” that is, a region where the multiple frontiers create new worlds, but where the historian should not look for any kind of ancestral stability.⁹ For most of the seventeenth century, this Spanish town – then city in 1656 – was part of a frontier of colonial conquest in constant movement towards the north. This stage lasted until around 1715 when Spaniards, considering the indios of the city well civilized, asked some of them to move further north to pursue the colonization of the North frontier, of

⁶ See Marcello Carmagnani, *El regreso de los dioses; El proceso de reconstitución de la identidad étnica en Oaxaca, siglos XVII y XVIII* (Mexico: Fondo de cultura económica, 1988).

⁷ Nobel David Cook, *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Elizabeth Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001); Suzanne Austin Alchon, *A Pest in the Land. New World Epidemics in a Global Perspective* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003); David Jones, "Virgin Soils Revisited," *William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (2003).

⁸ Nancy M. Farriss, *Maya Society under Colonial Rule; The Collective Enterprise of Survival* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); Carmagnani, *El regreso de los dioses*; Ann M. Wightman, *Indigenous Migration and Social Change; The Forasteros of Cuzco, 1570-1720* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990).

⁹ Serge Gruzinski, *La pensée métisse* (Paris: Fayard, 1999), 60-70.

which San Luis Potosí was no more a part.¹⁰ All along, the multiethnic character of San Luis Potosí was at the centre of the new construction process and had important impacts on the development of the conurbation.

The choice of 1591 as a starting point to this dissertation will appear obvious to most historians of San Luis Potosí because it is the year of the Tlaxcalan migration and of the first contact between that group and the Guachichils. Hence, my dissertation starts when interethnic relations started. The choice of 1630 requires further explanation. Usually, historians choose significant dates to start or end their narrative. The reception of the title of “city” in 1656 could have been a nice example, but the change in status was sought by Spaniards for their own advantage. I never found the slightest trace of possible impact on indigenous identities or group affiliation. That year appeared to me just as arbitrary as any other. The element that drove my search was the end of a cycle in the organisation process of the indigenous peoples of San Luis Potosí. As I read secondary literature and the documents from the archives, I realised that something was happening in the 1620s, that a new phase was emerging in indigenous San Luis Potosí. The chaotic settlement of the first years diminished, references to ethnicity as a marker of identity seemed to give way to economic and labour relationships, indigenous communities started to develop a discourse on their juridical and political identity, and there was a decline in the mining industry, which was the heart of San Luis’ economy. As I will argue throughout the dissertation, indigenous society had indeed reached an important turning point by 1630, and it is thus at this deep transition point that I will end my study.

¹⁰ Carmen Cordero de Burgos, "Un episodio en la colonización del norte," in *Girones de Historia*, ed. Tomás Calvillo Unna (Mexico: Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí, 1991), 53-57.

Most studies of the northern mines of New Spain observe a cycle of “discovery, abandonment, revival, and decay.”¹¹ In San Luis Potosí, the period from 1592 – the year Spaniards discovered gold and silver on the nearby Cerro de San Pedro – to the end of the 1620s corresponds roughly to the first *bonanza* of the mines. Many authors see a decline in silver production, economic activity, and demography in the second half of the 1620s.¹² According to Guadalupe Salazar González, there was a transformation of the economic production from strong and central mining operations accompanied by a complementary agricultural production towards the emergence of agriculture as the principal productive activity in the late 1620s. This was due to a decline in mining that had started in 1622 and that became critical in the 1630s.¹³ Alejandro Galván Arellano writes that “the decades of the thirties to the fifties was a critical period for San Luis in the seventeenth century due to the scarcity or almost absence of mining exploitation.”¹⁴ This phenomenon had a great impact on demography. First, Felipe Castro Gutiérrez observes that the Tarascan labour migration route – doubtless the most important – changed its course at the beginning of the 17th century and turned away from San Luis Potosí and towards the region of the Lerma and other northern mines.¹⁵ Second, a good

¹¹ Michael M. Swann, "Migration, Mobility, and the Mining Towns of Colonial Northern Mexico," in *Migration in Colonial Spanish America*, ed. David J. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 144. See also David A. Brading, *Miners & Merchants in Bourbon Mexico, 1763-1810* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 6-13.

¹² Guadalupe Salazar González, *Las haciendas en el siglo XVII en la región minera de San Luis Potosí; Su espacio, forma, función, material, significado y estructuración regional* (San Luis Potosí: Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, 2000); Alejandro Montoya, "Población y sociedad en un real de minas de la frontera norte Novohispana: San Luis Potosí, de finales del siglo XVI a 1810" (PhD diss., Université de Montréal, 2004); Alejandro Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo de la ciudad de San Luis Potosí en el siglo XVII* (San Luis Potosí: Facultad del Hábitat, Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, 2006).

¹³ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 57-65.

¹⁴ “Las décadas de los treinta a los cincuenta fue un periodo crítico que vivió San Luis durante el siglo XVII debido a la carencia o casi nula explotación de las minas [...]” Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 139.

¹⁵ Felipe Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos y el imperio español, 1600-1740* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, 2004), 50.

proportion of the population of San Luis Potosí left to seek work in other mining towns. Those who stayed, as suggests Salazar González, contributed to developing a new economic structure.

As I read the documentation from archives, I came to realize that this period (1591-1630) corresponded roughly to the first two generations of indigenous inhabitants of San Luis Potosí. The first generation was composed almost exclusively of migrants, except for the local Guachichils. The children of these migrants formed the second generation. They were born in San Luis Potosí. They had the dual, perhaps paradoxical, quality of being heirs of the “strange zone.” That is, they had access to the social networks established by their parents, but these networks were the results of the somewhat disordered organisation of migrants in Indian towns and on a variety of work sites all around the Spanish town. By the 1620s, when they did not leave, these second-generation Amerindian migrants often became the pillars of the integration of the ongoing immigration and the knots of power among the indigenous population. Indeed, they acted as keepers of a large part of the productive economy, as political representatives to the Spanish authorities, and as social glue through the various institutional corporations. The organisation and social structure of this second generation will be one of the main themes throughout this study.

My aim is to understand how indigenous identities were built and refashioned in the first forty years of San Luis Potosí. To this end, the dissertation moves from individual experiences towards the history of communities, and then to the whole valley of San Luis Potosí. The first chapter covers the historiography, the methodology, and the conceptual framework of the dissertation. The second chapter analyzes the origins of the

Mesoamerican population of San Luis Potosí. According to the parish records, indigenous peoples came from over one hundred and thirty communities scattered from Oaxaca to Jalisco (approximately 1200 km apart) and spoke at least ten different languages. Chapter three scrutinizes narratives of migrations and argues that most indigenous immigrants to San Luis Potosí moved in very small groups. They were attempting to start anew and to rebuild social ties they had lost in their home communities due to colonial oppression.

While the origins of indigenous peoples were diverse and while ethnicity remained a criterion of social distinction in San Luis Potosí, I argue in the next chapters that ethnicity was not the most important element of the indigenous social structure. In chapter four, I describe the establishment of Indian towns and of work sites, such as ore-processing facilities, charcoal-making operations, farms, and workshops. I emphasize the importance of indigenous peoples' agency in the construction of San Luis Potosí. As well, I demonstrate that indigenous peoples participated to the regional economy in various forms and that their skills, their relationship with Spanish entrepreneurs, and the possibilities to accumulate wealth became significant in structuring the indigenous society. In the fifth chapter, I study the forms of sociability of indigenous peoples on a daily basis. I argue that daily encounters, economic affinities, the appropriation of living spaces, and the formation of complex families served in organising indigenous communities, either as *pueblos* and *barrios* (towns and neighbourhoods) or as labour teams. In chapter six, I analyze the nuclear family as the basis of indigenous society. Through a study of marriage practices, I argue that the communities' structures, the various work sites, and the possibilities of social ascension were significant incentives in

the choice of a spouse, godparents, and witnesses. In the same chapter, I also analyze the transformation of gender roles within couples, and I show that indigenous men adopted the Spanish patriarchal understandings of these roles.

In chapter seven, I study the interactions between the corporate bodies that were formed throughout the town and region of San Luis Potosí. Using the itineraries of workers between work sites, commerce throughout the valley, violence, and drinking, I argue that indigenous identities in San Luis Potosí were also constructed by inter-community relationships, uniting and dividing corporate bodies. Finally, chapter eight studies the development of more formal indigenous identities. First, I examine the creation of the political and juridical discourse of the indigenous community of Tlaxcalilla in a lawsuit about their lands. I argue that the need for greater political power crystallized the community's official identity, while keeping an unofficial flexibility by integrating new members who did not necessarily correspond to the official discourse. I also study the use of the legal system by the community of Santiago del Río to defend its members. I argue that indigenous communities gained much power in displaying a strong corporate identity and that this served its individual members.

Tensions between indigenous cultures and Spanish colonialism will be at the centre of this dissertation. This does not mean that I will try to verify the degree or the authenticity of the indigenousness or indianness of the population. First, as I will explain in the review of the literature in chapter one, indigenous cultures were different from one another. They coexisted with one another in the pre-colonial era, shared similar elements of cultures and social structures, developed commerce, and showed affinities in political structures, but they also presented many differences. Even at the micro level, within

communities, ethnic groups could live together and confront one another. It is thus impossible to determine an essential indigenous cultural background and to attempt to unveil its perpetuation or transformation in a colonial town. Second, American, European, and African cultures coexisted and underwent a process of syncretization from the time of contact. By the time of the foundation of San Luis Potosí, after seven decades of colonization, no indigenous culture could be understood as “immemorial.” In consequence, the tensions between the indigenous cultures and Spanish colonialism will centre instead on the agency of Amerindians in their use of cultural referents (languages, historical memory or documents, modes of organisation, criteria for marriages, etc.) to achieve their goals (economic, political, legal, etc.) and on the attempts by the Spanish authorities to control the indigenous population and its organisation.

The general argument of the dissertation, which is reflected in its title, is that the identities of the indigenous peoples of San Luis Potosí shifted from ethnic identities rooted in their home communities to indio identities in the Spanish mining town. While the term indio referred to a juridical category defined in Spanish law and encompassing all individuals native from the Americas without ethnic distinction, indigenous peoples never perceived themselves as belonging to one single category. Hence, they created a plurality of indio identities defined by their internal structures and by the Spanish hegemony. In what follows, I will show the variety of paths on which indigenous peoples set foot to build this complex mosaic of belonging. This study confronts the historical model of ethnic segregation generally used to describe urban indigenous communities, and it sheds light on the interplay of ethnicity, mobility, class, and gender in the development of indigenous identities.

Chapter 1: Historiography, Methodology, and Concepts

In studying a colonial society, the central object of research is the dialectic relation between the colonizers and the colonized. However, this perspective is problematic because it covers up the complex ethnic and racial nature of the New Spanish society. I agree with Guillaume Boccara that the use of these two categories “tend to reify and to simplify indigenous realities.”¹ In the last thirty years, historians have tried to overcome the problem by showing the diversity of the colonized peoples. Recently, historians such as Laura Matthew have argued in favour of “displacing Europeans from the center of the narrative” so that the motivations and complexities of indigenous peoples come to be in the limelight.² My point of departure in this dissertation is that relations between indigenous peoples had as much of an influence on the development of the colonial society in Spanish America as relations between indigenous and colonizing populations.

This chapter provides an overview of the theoretical background, the sources, and the methodology of the dissertation. I start with a review of the historical literature on indigenous peoples in the last three decades. The perspectives of historians have been increasingly more complex and refined, enabling a better understanding of the lives of indigenous peoples under the Spanish colonial regime. I then turn to define identity, an important concept in this dissertation. Sources and the methodology are also described

¹ Guillaume Boccara, "Rethinking the Margins/Thinking from the Margins: Culture, Power, and Place on the Frontiers of the New World," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 10, no. 1 (2003): 60. On this dichotomy between colonizers and colonized, see also Cynthia Radding, *Wandering Peoples. Colonialism, Ethnic Spaces, and Ecological Frontiers in Northwestern Mexico, 1700-1850* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997), xvii.

² Laura E. Matthew, *Memories of Conquest. Becoming Mexicano in Colonial Guatemala* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 3.

and explained in the following section. Finally, I spend some time defining some key terms, such as indigenous peoples, Indians, indios, ladinos, Tlaxcalans, Nahuas, and Tarascans, that are used in this dissertation and have various meanings.

Perspectives on Indigenous Peoples

From the 1950s to the 1970s, historians such as Miguel Leon-Portilla, Charles Gibson, and Nathan Wachtel wrote important histories of Amerindians in New Spain and in the Andes as a corrective to a historiography that focused on Spanish colonizers and their institutions.³ However, until recently, the dynamics *between* indigenous groups have been scarcely studied. Indeed, according to Juan Pedro Viqueira, the focus of both anthropologists and historians began with the community as the principal unit of indigenous organization. Until the 1960s, anthropologists perceived indigenous community culture as an extension from the pre-colonial era, sometimes dating as far back as five centuries before the Conquest. Then, historians turned the idea upside down and argued that the indigenous community was a product of colonization. By the 1980s, in this debate between continuity and change, scholars argued that the community was both a product of colonization and a response to the need of the indigenous peoples to defend themselves.⁴

The first studies to investigate more rigorously the relations between Amerindians were published in the 1980s. Steve Stern and Karen Spalding, for instance, did not

³ Charles Gibson, *Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952); Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears; The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* [Visión de los Vencidos], trans. Lysander Kemp (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962); Charles Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964); Nathan Wachtel, *La vision des vaincus; Les Indiens du Pérou devant la Conquête espagnole, 1530-1570* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971).

⁴ Juan Pedro Viqueira, *Encrucijadas Chiapanecas; Economía, religión e identidades* (Mexico: Centro de Estudios Históricos, El Colegio de México; Tusquets Editores México, 2002), 47-74.

explain the development of the colonial system in the Andes uniquely from the Inca Empire perspective – as Wachtel had done in 1971 – but rather by considering the multitudes of indigenous groups that it ruled.⁵ In New Spain, Nancy Farriss and Marcello Carmagnani, who respectively studied Yucatán and Oaxaca, were two key historians to consider the cohabitation of various indigenous groups under Spanish rule.⁶ In spite of an evident effort to show the complexity of the Amerindian societies and the importance of the relations among them before the Conquest, the prime objective of these authors was to explain the reactions to colonisation and the establishment of the colonial system. Farriss demonstrated that inter-Amerindian relations were significant in the initial process of colonization, but did not consider their influence later in the colonial era. Carmagnani showed that the reconstruction of ethnic identities in the communities of Oaxaca was grounded on territorial, political, economic, and religious affinities. He admitted the presence of linguistic and ethnic differences inside single communities, but did not see their impacts on the construction of new identities. In the end, the first authors to discuss the existence of inter-Amerindian relations did not make them the centre of their analyses.⁷

⁵ Steve J. Stern, *Peru's Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest. Huamanga to 1640* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1982); Karen Spalding, *Huarochirí: An Andean Society under Inca and Spanish Rule* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984).

⁶ Farriss, *Maya Society*; Carmagnani, *El regreso de los dioses*.

⁷ Inga Clendinnen also considers the presence of multiple Mayan groups in Yucatán and the impact of their quarrels on the Spanish Conquest, but the object of her study remains the Conquest in itself. As well, Serge Gruzinski studies the acculturation of Nahuas and the transformation of their mentalities, but considers very little the influence of inter-Amerindian relations. Serge Gruzinski, *La colonisation de l'imaginaire; sociétés indigènes et occidentalisation dans le Mexique espagnol, XVI^e-XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988); Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517-1570*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

The 1990s saw the emergence of a new point of view, that of the natives, which led historians away from the earlier debate between continuity and change.⁸ Inspired by the larger “subaltern studies” – itself strongly influenced by the writings of Antonio Gramsci – historians paid more attention to the daily struggles of lower social groups as they were incorporated into hegemonic systems. They argued that indigenous peoples, despite having been colonized and acculturated, had influenced the development of the colonial state. Henceforth, Amerindians, among other subalterns, would not only have suffered a violent domination, but would also have participated in the establishment, structuring, and organization of power relations between the colonizers and the colonized.⁹ This idea of perpetual negotiation between different poles of power significantly influences this dissertation.

The common objective of these works from the 1990s was to understand the relations between caste-like categories established by Spanish colonialism, that is, between indios, castas, and Spaniards. Douglas Cope, for example, studied the relationships between these three groups in Mexico City during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He showed that racial criteria pervaded the social organisation of the city until the middle of the seventeenth century, to then gradually give way to the emergence of economic criteria in social organisation.¹⁰ Cope’s study is interesting

⁸ Murdo J. MacLeod, "Mesoamerica since the Spanish Invasion: An Overview," in *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*, vol. II, *Mesoamerica*, Part 2, ed. Richard E. W. Adams and Murdo J. MacLeod (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁹ On subaltern studies, among others, see Florencia Mallon, "The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History," *American Historical Review* 99, no. 5 (1994).

¹⁰ This hypothesis can also be found in the studies of economic history of the 1970s and 1980s that demonstrated the transition from a feudal economy to a capitalist economy in Spanish America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Among others, see Peter F. Klarén and Thomas J. Bossert, eds., *Promise of Development; Theories of Change in Latin America* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1986); Steve J. Stern, "Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System in the Perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean," *The American Historical Review* 93, no. 4 (1988).

because it showed the flexibility and adaptation of race to economic criteria.¹¹ However, Cope fails to distinguish between the concept of race and the more malleable concept of *calidad* (quality), which referred to moral and behavioral characteristics in addition to the physical differences between individuals. In the same period, another group of historians, notably French scholars such as Serge Gruzinski and Carmen Bernard, proposed to study the phenomenon of “métissage”, not only in its physiological sense, but also in its cultural aspects. According to these authors, the understanding of colonialism in the Americas needed studies of “mentalités”; of transfers, dialogues, and cultural brokers; of individual strategies; of the interests of economic, political, religious, and social sectors; and of the processes leading to the culturally mixed societies of the Americas.¹² In short, this literature of the 1990s gave the greatest importance to vertical relations between colonizers and colonized. The importance of these publications in the development of scholarly knowledge about Spanish America is beyond doubt. However, they would be

¹¹ R. Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1994). Hugo Nutini and Barry Isaac also discuss the passage from a society of estates based on a racial hierarchy to one of economic categorisation, but they place this transition later in the eighteenth century. Hugo G. Nutini and Barry L. Isaac, *Social Stratification in Central Mexico, 1500-2000* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 17-93.

¹² Gruzinski, *La colonisation de l'imaginaire*; Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "Los límites de las mentalidades," in *Memorias del simposio de historiografía mexicanista* (México: Comité Mexicano de Ciencias Históricas; Gobierno del Estado de Morelos; Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, UNAM, 1990); Carmen Bernard and Serge Gruzinski, *Histoire du nouveau monde. Les métissages (1550-1640)* (Paris: Fayard, 1991); Chantal Caillavet and Martin Minchom, "Le Métis imaginaire: idéaux classificatoires et stratégies socio-raciales en Amérique latine (XVI^e-XX^e siècle)," *L'Homme* 32, no. 122 (1992); Berta Ares Queija and Serge Gruzinski, eds., *Entre dos mundos. Fronteras culturales y agentes mediadores* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1997); Norma Angélica Castillo Palma, "Deux lectures des métissages mexicains: Le rapport mariages mixtes, illégitimité et phénotypes identités, Cholula, 1649-1796," in *Histoire des métissages hors d'Europe: Nouveaux mondes? Nouveaux peuples?*, ed. Bernard Grunberg and Monique Lakroum (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999); Gruzinski, *La pensée*; Bernard Lavallé, ed. *Transgression et stratégies du métissage en Amérique coloniale* (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1999); Jaime Valenzuela-Márquez, "Une société dépersonnalisée? Ordre colonial et référents identitaires à Santiago du Chili au XVII^e siècle," in *Transgression et stratégies du métissage en Amérique coloniale*, ed. Bernard Lavallé (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1999); Jacques Poloni-Simard, *La mosaïque indienne; Mobilité, stratification sociale et métissage dans le corregimiento de Cuenca (Équateur) du XVI^e au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2000); Louise Bénat Tachot and Serge Gruzinski, eds., *Passeurs culturels; Mécanismes de métissage* (Paris: Presses universitaires de Marne-la-Vallée et Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme Paris, 2001).

enriched by a deeper comprehension of the ties between groups of people and individuals of similar social status and between indigenous peoples from different origins.¹³

A major essay that criticized the understanding of social stratification only in accordance with Spanish categories was that of Stuart B. Schwartz and Frank Salomon. In this essay, the authors parted company with the literature on the reactions of the colonial state to miscegenation and instead considered its Amerindian origins and impacts.¹⁴ Other works published in the last two decades attempted similar analysis. Among them, Ann Wightman shows the importance of *forasteros* (foreigners) in the reconstruction of native societies under the colonial regime in the Andes. She argues that, by inserting themselves in new locations, the *forasteros* redefined kin groups and weakened community ties. As well, by entering the wage labour force, they contributed to transforming the Andean social structure from one based on caste to one based on class.¹⁵ Parting from his earlier perspective on colonialism as a phenomenon opposing two forces, Nathan Wachtel argues in a second book that, in the Andes, the Aymaras

¹³ Some historians, such as Conrado Hernández López and Boris Berenson Gorn, see since the 1990s a break up of history as a discipline in consequence of the plurality of thematic and henceforth a crisis of the discipline. I believe, like Guillermo Zermeño Padilla, that history was always in crisis in relation to its time – in 1947, for example, Edmundo O’Gorman wrote “Crisis y porvenir de la ciencia histórica” – and that the multiplication of perspectives is in fact much closer to the complex historical reality than the search for a uniform vein of narrative. Guillermo Zermeño Padilla, “La historia. ¿Una ciencia en crisis? Teoría e historia en México, 1968-1988: Una primera aproximación,” in *Memorias del simposio de historiografía mexicana* (México: Comité Mexicano de Ciencias Históricas; Gobierno del Estado de Morelos; Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, UNAM, 1990); Conrado Hernández López, “Introducción: tendencias y corrientes de la historiografía mexicana del siglo xx,” in *Tendencias y corrientes de la historiografía mexicana el siglo xx*, ed. Conrado Hernández López (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 2003); Boris Berenson Gorn, “El Péndulo de la memoria: metáfora de la historiografía del siglo XX,” in *Historiografía crítica del siglo XX*, ed. Boris Berenson Gorn (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2004).

¹⁴ Stuart B. Schwartz and Frank Salomon, “New Peoples and New Kinds of People: Adaptation, Readjustment, and Ethnogenesis in South American Indigenous Societies (Colonial Era),” in *The Cambridge history of the native peoples of the Americas. Volume III: South America. Part 2*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz and Frank Salomon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

¹⁵ The term *forastero* literally means “foreigner”, but in the context of the Andes studied by Wightman, it specifically designates Amerindians living in communities from which they are not natives. In other words, they are Amerindian migrants living in foreign Amerindian communities. Wightman writes she is the first to study the *forasteros*. Wightman, *Indigenous Migration*.

played an important role in the decomposition of the culture of the Uru, a smaller cultural group living in the Lake Titicaca region. He shows that acculturation already existed in the pre-colonial era, but that it was exacerbated after the Conquest. The Aymaras considered themselves, and were considered by the Spaniards, as more civilized than the Urus. This led a portion of the latter population to integrate into Aymara society, and the rest of the Urus to rebel. While the acculturation process diminished the cultural existence of the Urus, the Aymaras actively participated in the repression of their rebellious neighbours. In short, for Wachtel, the fading of Uru culture was an essentially indigenous process.¹⁶ Guillaume Boccara shows a similar process in the area of contemporary Chile and Argentina, although this one was constructive. He demonstrated that the relations between the different groups of Reches Amerindians led to one of the greatest instances of resistance to the Spanish invasion, and led also to the ethnogenesis of the Mapuches, that is, to the creation of an wholly new ethnic group. The Reches had been temporarily regrouping themselves in times of war in the pre-colonial era, but the perpetual need for self-protection from Spanish invasion crystallized the larger military alliance into a permanent ethnic identity.¹⁷ Published in the 1990s, these studies stood alone until the turn of the century.

The real breakthrough happened with studies of the actions of subaltern groups and of the relations between them. Much of the recent research takes as its point of departure the lengthy wars of conquest waged across Mesoamerica for much of the sixteenth century. Among many different works, one of the influential trends, called the

¹⁶ Nathan Wachtel, *Le retour des ancêtres: Les Indiens Urus de Bolivie XX^e-XVI^e siècle; Essai d'histoire régressive* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990).

¹⁷ Guillaume Boccara, *Guerre et ethnogenèse Mapuche dans le Chili colonial; L'invention du soi* (Paris et Montréal: L'Harmattan, 1998).

“New Conquest History,” aims to counterbalance the inequity of the Spanish account of the Conquest by integrating the writings of those who have been ignored by the historiography, mostly indigenous peoples.¹⁸ At the same time, there is a clear tendency in this trend to put forward the relations between indigenous groups, either by showing rivalries during the conquests of other indigenous societies or by demonstrating their micropatriotism. Matthew Restall is one of the pioneers of this trend. His book *Maya Conquistador* presents texts from the conquered peoples, as well as an analysis that emphasises the pre-colonial socio-political context and its transformation under Spanish colonialism.¹⁹ The articles published in *Indian Conquistadors: Indigenous Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica* testify to these rivalries between Amerindians political entities and identities.²⁰ The co-editor of this volume, Laura Matthew, has recently published another book on the subsequent cohabitation of the Nahuas, Zapotecs, and Mixtecs with the Mayas whom they had helped to conquer in colonial Guatemala. She demonstrates that new identities emerged out of both the presence of many indigenous cultures and colonialism. The privileges obtained by the indigenous conquerors distinguished them from other Indians, mostly from the local Mayas, and they favoured at the same time the creation of an all encompassing “Mexicano” identity for the conquerors. This identity gave them strength in union, but it prevented them from achieving higher status in colonial society.²¹ Salvador Álvarez and Ida Altman similarly study the clash of the

¹⁸ Michel R. Oudijk, "Nahua and Zapotec Colonial Experiences," review of *The Conquest all Over Again: Nahuas and Zapotecs Thinking, Writing, and Painting Spanish Colonialism*, edited by Susan Schroeder, *A Contra corriente* 8, no. 2 (2011).

¹⁹ Matthew Restall, *Maya Conquistador* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998). See also Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), in particular chapter 3, "Invisible Warriors; The Myth of the White conquistador".

²⁰ Laura E. Matthew and Michel R. Oudijk, eds., *Indian Conquistadors; Indigenous Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007).

²¹ Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*.

central and occidental Mesoamerican cultures in the same era.²² Even though the primary objective of the “New Conquest History” studies was initially to render a version of the Conquest oriented towards the views of indigenous peoples, the relations between these indigenous peoples were brightly highlighted and became a significant contribution, in particular with regards to the ensuing reconfiguration and construction of colonial identities.²³

Similarly, many other historians have recently considered the importance of the relations between Amerindians on the structures of the colonial society. In particular, “the modern Mexican historiography, as René García Castro writes, seeks to offer a more dynamic and changing image of the Indians, of the life inside the towns, of the ambitions, privileges, and prerogatives of the governing indigenous class and of its capacity to negotiate.”²⁴ A large section of García Castro’s study in fact analyzes the interactions between the Otomis and the Mexicas in the province of Matlatzinca, west of Mexico City. Federico Navarrete, for his part, contests the strongly anchored perception that

²² Salvador Álvarez, "Conquista y encomienda en la Nueva Galicia durante la primera mitad del siglo XVI: "Bárbaros" y "civilizados" en las fronteras americanas," *Relaciones* 29, no. 116 (2008); Ida Altman, *The War for Mexico's West: Indians and Spaniards in New Galicia, 1524-1550* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010).

²³ Other works related to this trend include Camilla Townsend, "Burying the White Gods: New Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico," *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 3 (2003); Matthew Restall and Florine Asselbergs, *Invading Guatemala; Spanish, Nahua, and Maya Accounts of the Conquest Wars* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007); Florine Asselbergs, *Conquered Conquistadors. The Lienzo de Quauhquechollan: A Nahua Vision of the Conquest of Guatemala* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2008).

²⁴ “[...] moderna historiografía mexicana que busca ofrecer una imagen más dinámica y cambiante de los indios, de la vida interna de los pueblos, de las ambiciones, privilegios y prerrogativas de la clase dirigente indígena y de su capacidad de negociar [...]” René García Castro, *Indios, territorio y poder en la provincia Matlatzinca. La negociación del espacio político de los pueblos otomianos, siglos XV-XVII* (Zinacantepec: El Colegio Mexiquense, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1999), 23. See also Luis Alberto Arrijoa Díaz Viruell, "Danna Levin y Federico Navarrete (coords.), *Indios, mestizos y españoles. Interculturalidad e historiografía en la Nueva España*, México, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Azcapotzalco, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, «Humanidades, Serie Estudios, Biblioteca de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades», 2007, 290 pp. ISBN 978-970-31-0856-5," *Historia Mexicana* 232 LVIII, no. 4 (2009): 1492.

native peoples would be the representatives of an absolute and immutable culture from the past. According to Navarrete, Amerindians lived in a variety of different ways in the pre-Hispanic era, built independent states, waged wars against one another, and made alliances. In that perspective, the word “Indian” is a label invented and imposed by the Spaniards in order to subjugate and exploit more easily the indigenous peoples of the Americas.²⁵

In addition to this research, a strong but recent tendency has been to study more intensely the important presence of indigenous peoples in the urban areas of Spanish America, a field which until very recently had been researched almost solely by John K. Chance.²⁶ Major new works in this field include those of Jacques-Poloni Simard, Jane Mangan, and Laura E. Matthew, as well as two edited books, one by Felipe Castro Gutiérrez and the other by Dana Velasco Murillo, Mark Lentz, and Margarita R. Ochoa.²⁷ On the whole, research on urban Indians points to the significance of daily interactions between ethnic groups to the organization of labour, markets, institutions, and gender roles in the cities and towns, as well as to the blurring of identities and the official

²⁵ Federico Navarrete, *Las relaciones interétnicas en México* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2004), 14-19.

²⁶ John K. Chance, "The Urban Indian in Colonial Oaxaca," *American Ethnologist* 3, no. 4 (1976); John K. Chance, *Race and Class in Colonial Oaxaca* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978); John E. Kicza, "Migration to Major Metropolises in Colonial Mexico," in *Migration in Colonial Spanish America*, ed. David J. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Felipe Castro Gutiérrez, "Los indios y la ciudad. Panorama y perspectivas de investigación," in *Los indios y las ciudades de Nueva España*, ed. Felipe Castro Gutiérrez (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 2010), 9-10; John K. Chance, "Introduction," in *City Indians in Spain's American Empire; Urban Indigenous Society in Colonial Mesoamerica and Andean South America*, ed. Dana Velasco Murillo, Mark Lentz, and Margarita R. Ochoa (Brighton, Portland, and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, 2012), 2.

²⁷ Poloni-Simard, *La mosaïque indienne*; Jane E. Mangan, *Trading Roles: Gender, Ethnicity, and the Urban Economy in Colonial Potosí* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Felipe Castro Gutiérrez, ed. *Los indios y las ciudades de Nueva España* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 2010); Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*; Dana Velasco Murillo, Mark Lentz, and Margarita R. Ochoa, eds., *City Indians in Spain's American Empire; Urban Indigenous Society in Colonial Mesoamerica and Andean South America* (Brighton, Portland, and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, 2012).

colonial categorization of the population. These works show that, throughout the colonial period, *calidad* and ethnicity as markers of identity were gradually replaced, although never completely eclipsed, by class and race. Daily life in specific spaces gradually transformed the affiliation of individuals from groups of origins with similar *habitus* to groups related to economic productivity and physiological characteristics. These distinctions of course involved discourses and practices. In short, because of the concentration of a great diversity of peoples in towns and cities of Spanish America, a major contribution of studies on urban Indians has been to flesh out the complex concept of identity.

Over the last fifty years, the objectives and the methodologies of those writing the history of indigenous peoples in the colonial era of Spanish America have changed significantly. In short, they went from a broad perspective that tended to envision natives as belonging to supra-regional groups such as the Aztecs and the Incas, to a more complex and blurred vision of myriad peoples interacting in multiple contexts and for different objectives. In the course of this process and in the minds of historians, indigenous peoples became active actors in history, people influenced by colonialism, but also agents in the fashioning of their societies. As a consequence of this change in perspective, the identities of indigenous peoples have become a significant matter for investigation, to which I will now turn.

Identity

The concept of identity will play a key role throughout this dissertation. Identity has been a very broad, all-encompassing concept defined and used in a variety of ways in

social and human sciences.²⁸ For that reason, many historians have been cautious with its use. Serge Gruzinski sees identity as a summary label that does not convey the multiple interactions between people.²⁹ For Frederick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker, identity, as an analytical concept, refers to so many different definitions that it loses its meaning. In particular, they point to the fact that identity is most often defined as “constructed, fluid, and multiple,” while in practice it is deployed to study specific groups as if they were immutable.³⁰ Consequentially, the historian is confronted with an analytical problem: the terminology used to conceptualise processes refers in fact to a stable, fixed state. As suggested by Boccara, historians should not seek the “‘essential’ aspects” of identities, but rather engage with “the process of production of sociocultural difference.”³¹

Because of this theoretical problem, I use in this dissertation two concepts. The first is identity, understood as a discourse displaying a sense of collectiveness. I describe identity as a formal, political stance used by indigenous authorities to gain or preserve specific community privileges such as land rights, and to protect community members from Spanish abuses. Identity as a political tool will be examined towards the end of the dissertation, to show how the transformations affecting the indigenous peoples living in San Luis Potosí sometimes translated into political discourses about their communities, their political power, and the law.

²⁸ Barbara L. Stark and John K. Chance, "Diachronic and Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Mesoamerican Ethnicity," in *Ethnic Identity in Nahua Mesoamerica: The View from Archaeology, Art History, Ethnohistory, and Contemporary Ethnography*, ed. Frances F. Berdan *et al.* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2008), 1.

²⁹ Gruzinski, *La pensée*: 48.

³⁰ Frederick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker, "Identity," in *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*, ed. Frederick Cooper (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2005), 59.

³¹ Boccara, "Rethinking the Margins," 60.

The second concept I will use is the one Cooper and Brubaker call “identification.”³² I will interchangeably use this term and “affiliation.” The use of this concept corresponds to the definitions of many other historians, such as Gruzinski, Jacques Poloni-Simard, Juan Pedro Viqueira, Boccara, and Barbara Stark and John K. Chance, who understand “identity” as a relational concept, not as a tangible object.³³ Identification thus describes processes of perpetual mutation and construction grounded in the active relationships between individuals and groups of people. It does not systematically reify the resulting groups and categories of peoples as having a fixed, easily circumscribed identity. Identification will be represented by the image of the mosaic suggested by Poloni-Simard: a compound of overlapping and blending elements of various “colours” in which the understanding or the internal representation of the “self” simultaneously touches many “others,” in accordance, discordance, or both. As suggested by Jacques Revel, this process takes place at the macro and micro levels. Individuals simultaneously construct their societies and are constructed by them.³⁴ In other words, a person can identify with, or be identified by, a given collectivity. It is worth noting, as well, that if a person can identify with a community without receiving recognition as a member by that same community, a collectivity can also identify an individual as a member although this individual refuses to be considered as such. In this last case, it is an imposed affiliation.³⁵ Thus understood, identification becomes an extremely complex subject of study and encompasses numerous elements.

³² Cooper and Brubaker, “Identity,” 71-73.

³³ Gruzinski, *La pensée*: 48; Poloni-Simard, *La mosaïque indienne*: 298-299 and 432-433; Viqueira, *Encrucijadas Chiapanecas*: 335; Boccara, “Rethinking the Margins,” 59-61; Stark and Chance, “Diachronic and Multidisciplinary Perspectives,” 2.

³⁴ Jacques Revel, “Présentation,” in *Jeux d’échelles; La micro-analyse à l’expérience*, ed. Jacques Revel (Gallimard; Le Seuil, 1996).

³⁵ Stark and Chance, “Diachronic and Multidisciplinary Perspectives,” 5.

The definition of identification I propose abandons the simple oppositions to integrate less clear-cut types of relationships. Boccara calls upon historians to turn their attention “to the themes of combined processes of ethnogenesis and ethnification, of multi-ethnic networks, and of interdigitated identities.”³⁶ In a nutshell, ethnogenesis is the creation of new ethnic groups through the agency of their members, while ethnification has been used to designate the creation of ethnic groups through colonial pressure. Here again, the tensions between agency and colonialism, and between continuity and change, are strong and central to the analysis. The themes of multi-ethnic networks and of interdigitated identities add to the tensions at play: they refer to strong ties and exchanges between peoples, without assuming that identities “mix” into a new single entity. On the contrary, these social processes tend to create openness, inclusivity, multilingualism, and cross-linguistic ties.³⁷ Finally, Boccara suggests pushing further the ideas of the middle grounds, proposed by Richard White, and of the mestizo mind (“la pensée métisse”), studied by Serge Gruzinski, “insofar as it allows us to rethink Colonial realities, not in terms of simple oppositions such as resistance/acculturation or nativism/hispanization but, rather, on the basis of more open notions such as mixture, metamorphosis, intermediation, and *passages*.”³⁸ Other recent studies, such as that by Matthew on the Mexicanos of Ciudad Vieja, Guatemala, suggest as well putting aside simple categories such as those of victims and conquerors in order to reach a more nuanced and subtle analysis of identities.³⁹

³⁶ Boccara, "Rethinking the Margins," 71.

³⁷ Boccara, "Rethinking the Margins," 73.

³⁸ Boccara, "Rethinking the Margins," 74.

³⁹ Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*.

Because this dissertation studies the indigenous peoples who settled in early San Luis Potosí, ethnicity will remain central to the analysis. However, it is impossible to perform a thorough investigation of identity without looking beyond cultural heritage and ethnic affiliation. Hence, the categories of gender, economics, politics, territory, and religious practices will surface at different points in order to capture the greater complexity of mosaic-like and interdigitated identities.

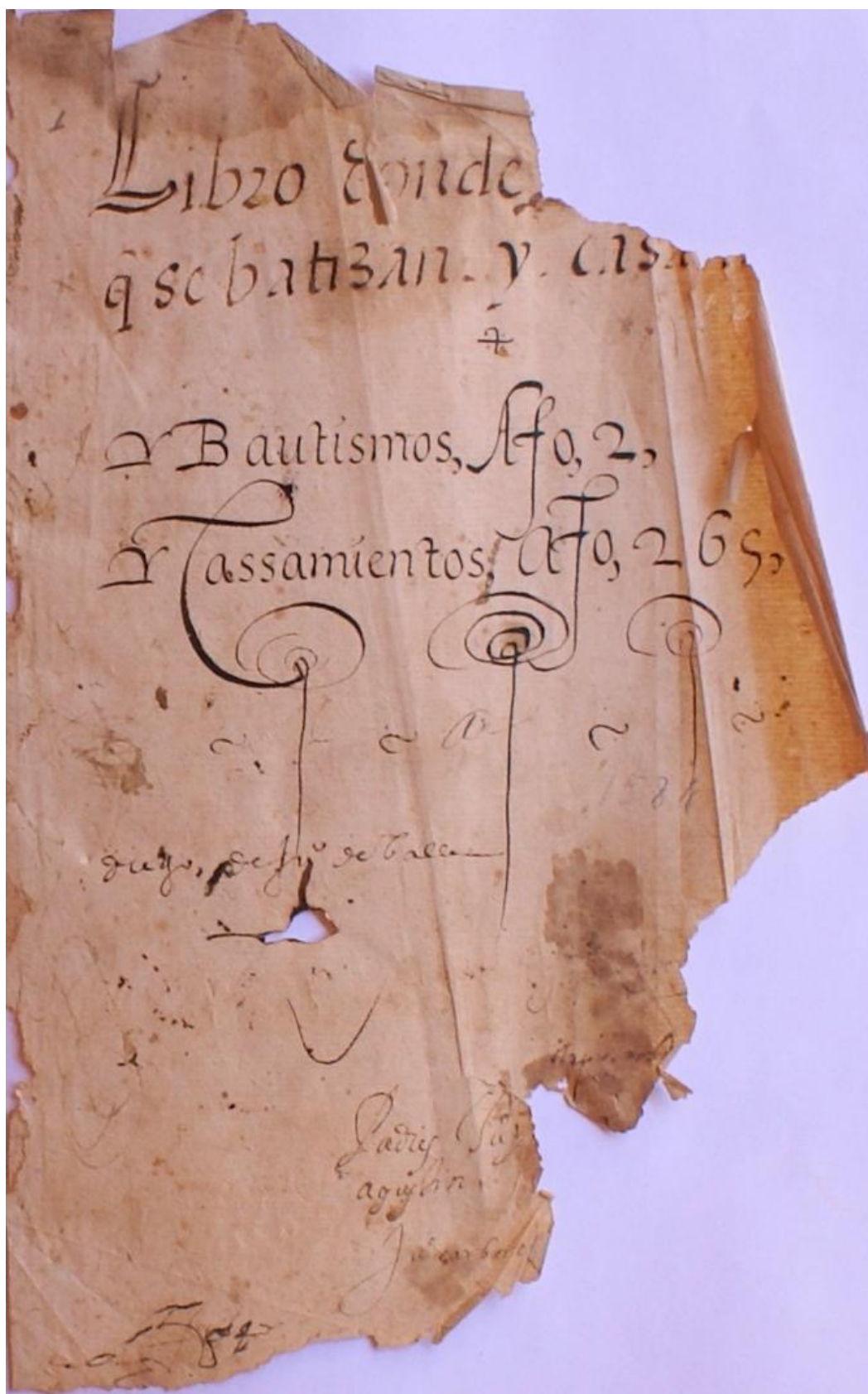
Sources and Methodology

I used two principal bodies of primary sources to write this dissertation. First, I consulted the parish registers of the two early parishes of San Luis Potosí, that is, those of Tlaxcalilla and those of El Sagrario. Second, I read the papers from the collection *Alcaldía Mayor* of the Historical Archives of the State of San Luis Potosí (AHESLP). I also used a few documents from the National General Archives (AGN) in Mexico City and I have found one document dealing with my subject in the *Fondo Reservado* of the National Library (BN). I have tried to find more documentation regarding the cultural transformation of indigenous peoples, that is, documents that would have dealt with religious confraternities (*cofradías*), religious practices and feasting, and funeral customs. However, after physically going to the Historical Archives of the Franciscan province of Zacatecas in Zapopán, Jalisco, after consultation with the archivists of the archdioceses of San Luis Potosí, and after consulting the databases of other archives like that of Celaya, I was forced to admit that such documentation, if it ever existed, could not be found. The same can be said of the papers from the Indian Republic, that is, from the indigenous *pueblos* and *barrios* around San Luis Potosí, which papers would have allowed a deeper

understanding of the indigenous political authorities. Unfortunately, according to Eugene Segó, a great amount of documentation, such as the civil archives of San Luis Potosí and the Franciscan records of Tlaxcalilla, were vandalized or destroyed during the many political struggles that the city lived from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries.⁴⁰

For the period under study, there were two principal books for priests to register the baptisms and marriages they had celebrated: the Indian book and the Spanish book. The most important for this research was the Indian book. I list it here as the *Archivo parroquial de Tlaxcalilla, libro de bautizos y matrimonios, 1594-1654*. As I read through this book, it dawned on me that the entries were not all and only from Tlaxcalilla. Sometime after the construction of the Franciscan monastery in the Spanish town, which lay close to the Indian town of San Miguel, the missionaries probably moved the book from Tlaxcalilla to that new church. There is no explicit mention of this, but it appears that, from the early 1600s, indigenous peoples from all the valley of San Luis Potosí were coming to be baptized by Franciscans and that the reference to Tlaxcalilla as the location of the events was gradually replaced by the more general reference to San Luis Potosí. Up to 1630, these records report over two thousand baptisms of Amerindian children and over five hundred weddings. The information they contain allowed retracing the origins of hundreds of indigenous peoples who had migrated to San Luis Potosí, as well as their choice of spouse and godparents. These data yield important hints regarding the social organisation of indigenous peoples, the relationship between place of origin and social

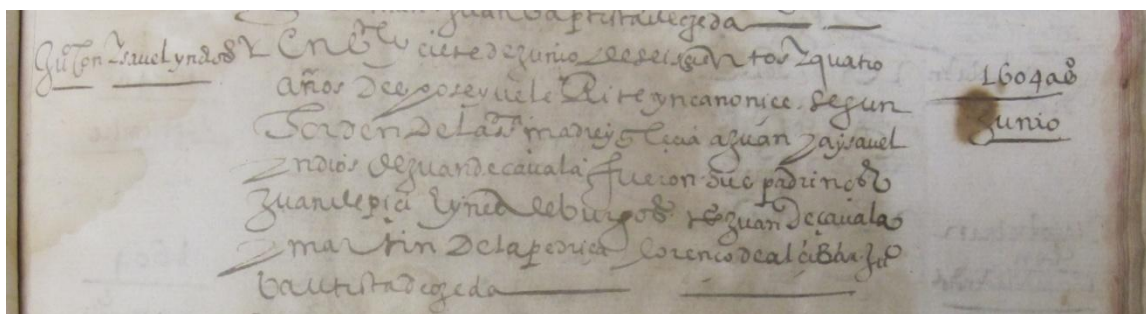
⁴⁰ Eugene Segó, "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies on New Spain's Northern Frontier: a comparison of success and failure" (PhD diss., University of Indiana, 1990), 177.



Archivo parroquial de Tlaxcalilla, libro de bautizos y matrimonios, 1594-1654.

insertion in San Luis Potosí, and the construction of social networks. I will further analyze their content in chapter two, as I analyse the data on communities of origin of the migrants.

In addition to this Indian book, I consulted the Spanish book that rests in the parish of *El Sagrario* in the center of San Luis Potosí. In total, it contained seventy-one baptisms and forty-six weddings involving only indigenous peoples as parents or spouses. In number, this book was much less important than the Indian one. However, the entries of this book most often indicated a significant relationship with the Spanish structure of society, either through work or social networks. The book was essential in order to cover the whole of Indian society and to understand better the tensions between both Indian and Spanish structures. Finally, on various occasions, both books served to complement the criminal records. I was able to retrace some individuals appearing in these records into the parish registers, complementing the description of their world with some extra pieces of their social networks and personal lives. The story of María Isabel and of Juan Lázaro in the introduction to this dissertation is a good example of such complementarity between both types of documents.



Example of an entry for a wedding, *Archivo parroquial de El Sagrario*, caja 1, libro 1.2, f. 8r.

The criminal archives are a mine of information for the historian. Not only do they include valuable data, but they also put flesh on the bones of living people: the garments of the actors, the pain they inflicted on each other by violence, the nature of relationships between peoples, and sometimes even hints of emotions. Nonetheless, I have not used these documents to understand violence, misconduct, or their causes. Instead, I use them as an important source to comprehend social and relational behaviors. As William Taylor writes, “I have found that the records of criminal trials furnish especially abundant and fairly continuous evidence of peasant behaviour as well as the voices of peasants themselves speaking of the world in which they lived.”⁴¹ These documents reveal norms, cultural premises, values, living patterns, and behavior. This information was of primordial importance for my inquiry. It shows how, where, when, and why people met. It also highlights the nature of encounters. That is, it discloses the political and economic relationships between individuals; their gender, social status, and power relations; the links between work, skills, ethnicity, community of origin, and languages spoken. Finally, it describes the physical setting of social encounters as well as their context, such as public places, works sites, the Spanish town, or the Indian towns. Because of the type of information I found in these criminal documents, my perspective will be that of micro-histories, because “they strive to render meaning and importance to the experience of social actors with regards to the set of structures and to the efficacy of the massive, anonymous, and unconscious social processes.”⁴² From the careful study of each case, I will be able to reconstruct more general social mechanisms I am seeking to

⁴¹ William B. Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979), 3.

⁴² « [...] elles s'efforcent de rendre à l'expérience des acteurs sociaux une signification et une importance face au jeu des structures et à l'efficacité des processus sociaux massifs, anonymes, inconscients. » Revel, "Présentation," 8.

put to light. I put in perspective individual strategies, including acts of violence, legal defences, and witnessing, with the social environment, its possibilities, and its constraints.⁴³ The methodology thus consisted in conducting a qualitative analysis of each case and in bringing out the general social mechanisms that could be identified. I have read the documents aiming to recover all of these elements and of writing a historical narrative of the social relationships between the indigenous peoples.

Despite their great richness, criminal records must be contemplated critically, and with an awareness of the intermediaries between the most often illiterate indigenous speakers and the resulting written accounts. First, as Taylor points out, the documents were not writings *by* indigenous peoples, but rather writings *about* them. In that sense, when read at the first level, they are an outsider's view.⁴⁴ Second, indigenous peoples did not all speak Spanish and one or two interpreters were often needed. These interpreters inevitably transformed the speech, if only by their choices of words. Languages carry concepts within their words, concepts that do not always translate well into foreign languages. Even unknowingly, interpreters could transform the meaning of these ideas, or they could plainly make mistakes.

Third, the notaries did not reproduce the speech *verbatim*. Instead, they summarized it. Most of the time, the text is written in the third person in forms such as "Juan Miguel indio said that..." In this summarizing process, notaries made choices, eliminated parts that did not seem important or emphasized others that were not necessarily significant from the point of view of the speaker. Kathryn Burns refers to this act as a "purifying" process, "deleting what he judged verbiage or rustic babble, and

⁴³ Jacques Revel, "Micro-analyse et construction du social," in *Jeux d'échelles; La micro-analyse à l'expérience*, ed. Jacques Revel (Gallimard and Le Seuil, 1996), 24.

⁴⁴ Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 3.

inserting better-sounding words for the witness's own."⁴⁵ As well, there could be more than one version of a document. Notaries often left the bulk of the work to their apprentices and only signed the documents, sometimes even before it was written, pre-signing stacks of blank pages. The apprentices took notes, then re-wrote the document in proper form on these pre-signed sheets of paper. Finally, there were many other actors involved, such as petty officials of the justice system, the legal representatives of each side (*procuradores* and *abogados*), and the judges and their legal advisors, all of whom sought to represent their own interests.⁴⁶ In that regard, it is plausible that notaries sometimes modified the testimonies of Amerindians in the criminal documents to fit their needs to control labour and to enhance their benefits in relation to the rest of Spanish society, for example giving privileges to friends and harming competitors. The integration of notaries into the lettered city of San Luis Potosí was undeniable, especially in the case of Matias Pardo who had started his career in San Luis as a relatively small notary and who became one of the six most prominent *hacienda* owners in the valley.⁴⁷

These shortcomings do not completely prevent the use of archival documentation. They require, however, the historian's careful attention to possible misrepresentation or distortions of the speeches of the people involved. In what follows, I pay particular attention to possible mistranscriptions, doubtful statements, and incoherences. Often, I cannot bring to light a definitive knowledge of specific actions and motivations in certain cases, but I can nonetheless reach general conclusions about the cultural norms of social relationships. Most of the time, I draw these conclusions after describing, analysing, and

⁴⁵ Kathryn Burns, *Into the Archive. Writing and Power in Colonial Peru* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 90.

⁴⁶ Burns, *Into the Archive*: 88-90.

⁴⁷ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 83; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 145.

comparing a few different stories. While imperfect, the process remains one of the best ways of grasping the transformation of the indigenous society.

A Short Note on Terminology

In this dissertation, I use a set of terms that are under debate. In particular, the use of *indigenous peoples*, *Amerindians*, and *Indians* can be problematic and requires a short explanation. The term Indian is widely used among U.S. historians to describe the large category of people who can trace their origins in the Americas, versus the peoples originally from European, African, and mixed descent. There seems to be a tacit agreement that, for lack of a better word, it is correct to use that term to express succinctly a complex reality.⁴⁸ Here, I do not wish to debate this specific matter. The use of term Indian in the literature derives in part from the Spanish *indio*, which Spaniards widely used in the sixteenth century and which had clear caste connotations. Indian and *indio* differ because the latter was a colonial construction while the former is used with a contemporary meaning. Since my objective in this dissertation is to understand the construction of identities, and since the result of this construction often led to the use of the term *indio* by the very people who were labeled as such by the Spaniard, I decided to use the word *indio* only and specifically in occasions that correspond to the construction of that identity. That is, I used it when Spaniards used it – in order to show the colonial imposition of the term – or when people identified themselves in the documents as *indios* – thus contributing to the construction of that political self-identity. I will use the term Indian when discussing the work of other historians who use it. Throughout the

⁴⁸ The bibliography of this dissertation contains numerous English titles using the term Indian to encompass all peoples of indigenous descent.

dissertation, however, I needed to refer to groups of peoples from diverse ethnic origins, but who all came from Mesoamerica and Aridoamerica. In order not to confuse these with an indio identity in construction, I interchangeably used the terms “indigenous peoples” and “Amerindians.” These terms are also constructions, but they were not used in the period under study, and I believe they allow diminishing the confusion between the constructed identity and the historical analysis.

As much as possible, I tried not to use general terms referring to ethnic identities such as Tarascan, Mexican, Tlaxcalan, and Otomi, because they carry historical and contemporary meanings not always accepted by the peoples they serve to describe and because they have triggered debates among historians and anthropologists. For instance, Pedro Márquez Joaquín and others have written on the uses of the terms Tarascan and Purépecha, highlighting the depth of the problem. Both terms may have existed before the Spanish Conquest, but the colonial regime almost exclusively used the former. Wanting to challenge modern colonialism, the peoples themselves have emphasized the use of Purépecha starting in the 1970s. It is not clear, however, what they called themselves in the pre-colonial era, and this situation leaves the historian to make a choice between its documentation and the current political ethnonym.⁴⁹ In other words, the terminology referring to ethnic identities is imposed both by the colonial regime and by the historian.⁵⁰ In fact, such strict identities, as I already mentioned in the definition of identity, never encompassed all the members of a cultural area, and their meanings are

⁴⁹ Pedro Márquez Joaquín, ed. *¿Tarascos o Purépecha?: voces sobre antiguas y nuevas discusiones en torno al gentilicio michoacano* (Morelia: Insituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo; El Colegio de Michoacán; Gobierno del Estado de Michoacán; Universidad Intercultural Indígena de Michoacán; Grupo Kw'anísduyarhani de Estudiosos del Pueblo Purépecha; Fondo Editorial Morevallado, 2007).

⁵⁰ For an analysis of the use of ethnic terminology by the colonial regime to enforce its power on indigenous peoples, see Boccara, "Rethinking the Margins."

constantly changing. When possible, I identified individuals with their place of origin – which can render a more complex view of their cultural affiliation – and with the languages they spoke. At times, however, I had to use specific terms referring to these ethnic identities, mostly for the sake of clarity, concision, lightness of the text, or to avoid unnecessary repetitions.

Finally, I use extensively the word *ladino*, which I found profusely in the documentation. Ladino must not be confused with its contemporary meaning, which refers mostly to the mixed and “white” population of southern Mexico and Guatemala, and which is often associated with landowners, exploitation, and racism. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, ladino referred instead to Amerindians who could speak Spanish and who were at least partially integrated into Spanish culture.⁵¹

In sum, this dissertation focuses on indigenous peoples as central actors of the colonial story. I seek to understand how they organized themselves and how they envisioned their own identity. The interactions between all sectors of society and the development of social relationships are an important key to this study. The following seven chapters are the results of this investigation.

⁵¹ Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española*. Madrid: Luis Sanchez, impresor del Rey N.S., 1611), f. 511. <http://fondosdigitales.us.es/fondos/libros/765/16/tesoro-de-la-lengua-castellana-o-espanola/>; *Diccionario de Autoridades*. Tomo IV (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1734), Search for "ladino". <http://web.frl.es/DA.html>; Bernard Lavallé, *L'Amérique espagnole de Colomb à Bolivar* (Paris: Belin, 2004), 145; Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*: 231-267.

Chapter 2: Origins

Immigration was a very important phenomenon in San Luis Potosí because of the absence of a settled population before the 1590s and because of the need for labour in the nearby mines. From 1591 to 1630, men, women, and children poured into the valley, coming from over one hundred and thirty communities spread out across the north of Mesoamerica, from Xalapa on the Gulf coast to Jalisco on the western side, from Oaxaca in the south to Zacatecas in the north. They came to live beside the local, semi-nomadic Guachichils who had just reached an agreement with the Spanish Crown and had established themselves in permanent settlements. This chapter will address the diversity of the Amerindian population of San Luis Potosí in order to understand the cultural, historical, economic, and political backgrounds of the inhabitants of the valley. I argue that the differences in origins of indigenous peoples will have to be considered in analysing their social interactions, but that intercultural relationships did not represent a totally new phenomenon. As I explain and describe the intricacy of Mesoamerican cultural, ethnic, and geographic arrangements, I will make clear that the immigrants transferred that complexity to the north of New Spain.

In recent years, scholars have increasingly studied the movements of indigenous peoples during the wars of Spanish conquest across Mesoamerica. Almost all of them point to the fact that the conquering armies were composed in their great majority of a diversity of Mesoamericans: Nahuas, Tarascans, Zapotecs, Mixtecs, and others. Accompanied by their families, many of these indigenous soldiers established themselves in the areas they had helped conquer. This phenomenon influenced local hierarchies

among ethnic groups and interethnic mixing.¹ San Luis Potosí was not conquered, but the opening of the mines attracted a multiplicity of indigenous peoples who formed a society as complex as that in the areas of conquests. Using the baptism and marriage records from the Indian parish of San Luis Potosí, I reconstituted a demographic image of the town and of its Amerindian population. The result is an extremely diverse and complex Amerindian population.

Diversity was already a feature of the pre-colonial era. Indeed, many scholars now think that interethnic rivalries and regional politics played a significant role in the Conquest itself, and in the subsequent establishment of the colonial system.² Describing the background of the indigenous inhabitants of San Luis Potosí is essential to understand better their experiences of migration, their settlement patterns in the valley, as well as the social, economic, and political relationships they built with each other. For that reason, in the second section of this chapter, I will briefly describe the backgrounds of the different cultures present in the valley and I will insist on the fact that interethnic and intercultural encounters continued in San Luis Potosí.

Finally, I will show through an analysis of the uses of indigenous languages, that Amerindians were not only aware of other indigenous cultures, but that they understood them at least in part, well enough to speak more than one language. Indeed, complexity did not mean only that different peoples lived side by side. It also signified that they interacted, entered into cultural exchanges, and intertwined. A recent issue of the journal *Ethnohistory* presents works about different regions of New Spain about the use of

¹ Álvarez, "Conquista y encomienda."; Altman, *The War for Mexico 's*; Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*.

² Townsend, "Burying the White Gods," 683; Pablo Escalante Gonzalbo, "El México Antiguo," in *Nueva historia mínima de México*, ed. Pablo Escalante Gonzalbo *et al.* (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 2004; reprint, 2008), 56-57; Matthew and Oudijk, *Indian Conquistadors*.

Náhuatl as a *lingua franca* and as a vehicular language in a multiethnic and multilingual context. Using a variety of sources, from documents in Náhuatl to Church and administrative papers in Spanish, they show that the use of this indigenous language cut across social categories. Of greater significance for this dissertation, Yanna Yannakakis writes that Náhuatl was used in quotidian communication in settings where it was not the native tongue and that it is possible “to speculate about the possibilities of immersion through the intimacy of everyday interactions, whether sexual, ritual, or commercial.”³ As well, Laura E. Matthew and Sergio F. Romero show that Náhuatl was widely used in Guatemala, mostly as a consequence of the presence of Nahua conquistadors in the area. However, even though bilingualism was not present everywhere, the language was influenced and transformed as a consequence of interactions with peoples of the area speaking Pipil.⁴ In other words, languages were an important element of the interdigitation of cultural elements on a daily basis. Overall, indigenous peoples in San Luis Potosí came from a variety of places in Mesoamerica, but this variety did not translate into segregation, either in their home communities or in San Luis Potosí. It rather gave birth to a colourful mosaic.

Multitudes

Amerindians came to San Luis Potosí from many places, which I will try to identify here. First, however, I show the importance of the indigenous immigrant population that established itself among the local Guachichils in the mining town. I will

³ Yanna Yannakakis, "Introduction: How Did They Talk to One Another? Language Use and Communication in Multilingual New Spain," *Ethnohistory* 59, no. 4 (2012): 672.

⁴ Laura E. Matthew and Sergio F. Romero, "Nahuatl and Pipil in Colonial Guatemala: A Central American Counterpoint," *Ethnohistory* 59, no. 4 (2012).

also discuss the sources from which San Luis Potosí's main ethnic characteristics can be reconstructed. Finally, I will explain the distribution of ethnic affiliations of Amerindians with regards to their origins.

Determining the size of the Amerindian population of the town is not an easy task for historians, and it can best be done by comparison with the Spanish population. Alejandro Montoya stresses that the number of Spaniards increased sharply in the first years after the foundation of the town. In 1592, there were seventy Spanish *vecinos* (citizens), while only two years later their number had risen to five hundred. Since only the Spaniards who took economic and political responsibility in the town were considered citizens, the total Spanish population has been estimated to be higher. In order to compare these numbers with those of the Amerindian population, Montoya points out that between 1594 and 1596, Spaniards baptized an average of eight children annually, while Amerindians baptized twenty of their children each year. This proportion grew respectively to seventeen and one hundred and nine for the year 1597, again showing the importance of the Amerindian presence in the suburbs of the Spanish town.⁵ Based on these numbers of baptisms, the population of San Luis Potosí between 1594 and 1596 presented a ratio of two Spaniards for five Amerindians. In 1597, this ratio had changed to one to five. Since the Spanish population had grown from seventy to 500 individuals, I estimate the Amerindian population at 175 people in 1594 and 2,500 persons in 1597. Of course, these numbers are only an estimation based on baptisms, but they give an idea of the size of population of each of the two groups. Other sources indicate that there were 5,000 indigenous workers in the area (including the mines) by 1600, 6,000 by 1603, and 7,000 in the 1620s. Because these estimates only counted men, the total population of

⁵ Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 101-102.

Amerindians in the valley and in the mines in the 1620s can be estimated at somewhere between 15,000 and 28,000, depending on the number of women and children.⁶

Understanding the geographic provenance of the indigenous population of the town is an arduous and uncertain task. To estimate population sizes and characteristics, scholars have used early censuses, tribute lists, and church records.⁷ Unfortunately for our purposes, in San Luis Potosí, the urban indigenous population was exempt from tribute payment, and the priests rarely complied with the demands from the bishopric to count the people of their flock. Censuses were indeed ordered by the Church in 1623 and 1631, and they were supposed to be recorded by Fray Juan Larios, but they are either lost or unreliable.⁸ The remaining sources are the parish registers of Tlaxcalilla, which consist of baptism and marriage records, and which can shed indirect light on the issues at hand. To my knowledge, no historian has handled them with the exception of Eugene Segó, who refers solely to their first pages, and of Montoya, who tabulated the number of baptisms and marriages.⁹ These parish records include the baptisms and marriages in all

⁶ *Informaciones de oficio y parte Cristóbal Gómez de Rojas, 1600*. AGI, Audiencia de México, leg. 223, n. 13, f. 3r. Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 107. Memorial de Lucas Fernández Manjón, vezino del pueblo de San Luis Potosí. (Madrid, 1627), 1v. British Library 725.k.18 (7).

⁷ Austin Alchon, *A Pest in the Land: 150-172*. Among the best known examples of the use of such documents are the studies of Sherburne Cook and Woodrow Borah: Sherburne F. Cook and Woodrow Borah, *The Indian Population of Central Mexico, 1531-1610* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960); Sherburne F. Cook and Woodrow Borah, *The Aboriginal Population of Central Mexico on the Eve of the Spanish Conquest* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963); Sherburne F. Cook and Woodrow Borah, *Essays in Population History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971-1979).

⁸ According to Montoya, the first count was done in 1623 and compiled by the Franciscan Fray Juan Larios. That document, B.N.M, Fondo Franciscano, 58/1159, was apparently lost sometime between 2003 and 2009, and despite multiple searches carried out by the archivists of the National Library of Mexico, I was not able to consult it. The data Montoya presents in his doctoral dissertation relates more to the spatial organization of the migrants in San Luis Potosí than to their ethnic origins. Alberto Carrillo Cázares also refers to a *padrón* (census) for 1631, but he does not have much confidence in that source because it was only a partial census of the population and contained many errors. Alberto Carrillo Cázares, *Michoacán en el otoño del siglo XVII* (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán; Gobierno del Estado de Michoacán, 1993), 18-26; Peter Gerhard, *A Guide to the Historical Geography of New Spain*, Rev. ed. (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 236; Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 126-129.

⁹ Because they are now in the parish of Tlaxcalilla, these records are referred to as being part of the *Archivo Paroquial de Tlaxcalilla* (APT), but they were most probably written down in the convent of San

the indigenous *pueblos* and *barrios* around the Spanish town and even the other Spanish establishments, such as *haciendas* and *estancias*, that employed indigenous workers.¹⁰ Because they are fairly representative of the Amerindian population of early San Luis Potosí, these records permit the construction of statistical data on the relative presence and importance of each ethnic group in and around the town.

Before entering into the details of the data, it is important to analyse the documents themselves and to explain how they were produced. The book of Indian baptisms and weddings was probably initially a series of sheets of paper later bound together in two sections, one for each sacrament. They were written by Franciscans of the parish of Tlaxcalilla and from the main Franciscan convent, which was situated to the south-west of the Spanish town, a few hundred meters from the pueblo de indios of San Miguel. With the exception of the first page, where a list of short baptism entries appears, the first part of the document is composed of short paragraphs that list the date of the baptisms, the names of the baptized children, the parents, and the godparents, followed by the celebrant's signature. It is worth noting that most indigenous peoples in these records had Christian names, apart from a few of them who kept native names such as Suchil, which is Otomi for "flower." The second section of the document, that for the weddings, was similar in form, but with a few more details. Because weddings required both witnesses and godparents, more individuals appear in the document. The priest often

Francisco, as it is indicated in many entries. This may bring some confusion as Franciscans were established both in Tlaxcalilla and in the Spanish areas of the town, but the important matter for this research and for the time period covered is that it is the register comprising all data regarding *indios*. For the two studies that used the registers partially, see Segó, *Aliados y adversarios*: 163-164; Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 104 and 126-129.

¹⁰ The acts of *defunción* (death) were written down only later, after the period covered by this study. The other parishes started writing their own records only in the 1650s, until then using those of Tlaxcalilla. There are also records from the central Spanish parish called *El Sagrario*, but these are not used in this chapter because they contain very little data on the Amerindian population as a whole.

Y en 1. de noviembre se bautizo
 Fran^{co} hijo de Fran. y de Maria
 Genafu su mujer y padrinos
 padri nos Ju. y madalena
 N. Francisco
 de Torres

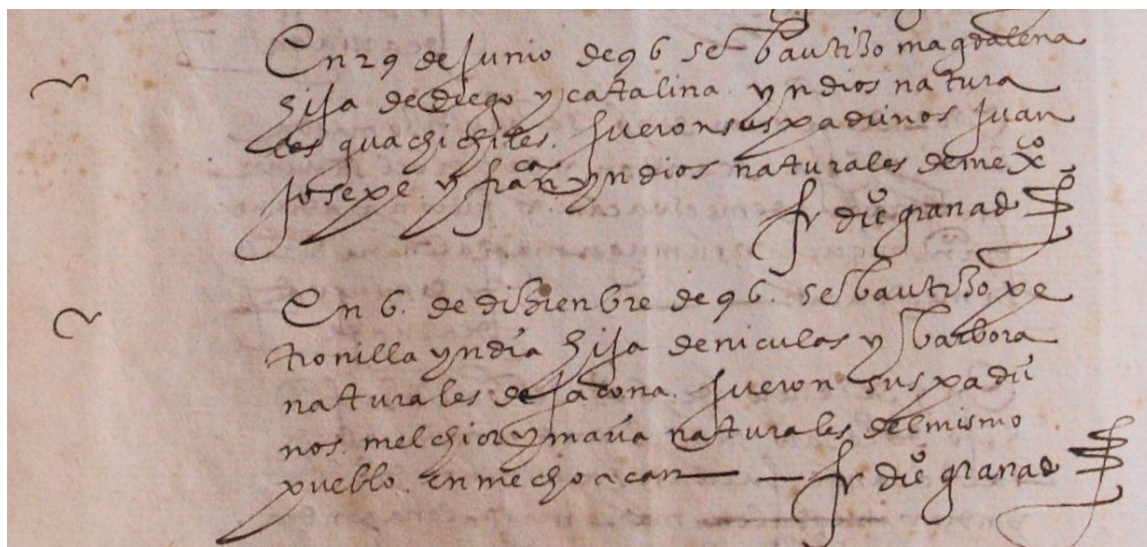
en 9. de noviembre se bautizo
 mi hija de mateo rodriguez y de
 catalina Zumuger natural de
 de mi. chiacan fueron padrinos
 nos. alv. rodriguez y maria y pedro.
 N. Francisco
 de Torres

en 4. de noviembre del año 19. se bau-
 tizo maria india chimeca natural
 de Santa bar. bista fueron padrinos.
 Ju. bautista y sumu ger. Justina hloz
 caltecos.
 N. Francisco
 de Torres

Y en siete de noviembre del dicho año
 se bautizo maria hija de Fran. y margarita
 su mujer india hlozal teos. fueron
 padrinos. bernardo y su mujer luyza
 hlozal teos. N. Francisco
 de Torres

en siete de noviembre del dicho
 año se bautizo maria hija de
 Diego y de catalina. su mujer natu-
 ral de unala fueron padrinos con pa-
 dro. p. mel chier y maria Fran.
 su mujer natural de se que an si tlan
 N. Francisco
 de Torres

mentioned the names of the parents of the newlyweds, and they added some details on the connections between all these people. In both sections, the friar sometimes wrote the name of one or more employers of the participants. Because this was done with much more frequency for weddings, it might signify the presence and interest of Spaniards in the event. As time passed, the name of the parish where the event took place started to appear following the date.



Excerpt from the *Libro de bautizos y matrimonios*, 1594-1654, f. 4v.

With regards to the origins of individuals, the most interesting information contained in the parish records are the ethnicity and home community of the people present in the document. Franciscans understood the ethnic categorisation of this society in terms of the Spanish vision of New Spain. In this sense, for them, ethnicity was construed according to the broad, colonialist racial categories of *indio*, *español*, *mestizo*, *negro*, or *mulato*. Priests almost always assigned one of these categories to the individuals whom they married or baptized. In this respect, parish records show us how the Franciscans placed the inhabitants of the *pueblos de indios* within the overall society of San Luis Potosí. In short, the friars saw their flock as belonging to one single category,

that of *indios*, and they most probably tried to impose, although indirectly, this vision of social categories on their parishioners.

Notwithstanding this colonial perception, friars had to take into account the specificities of individuals, mostly because indigenous peoples seldom spoke Spanish. In their daily interactions with the indigenous communities, Franciscans spoke a variety of Mesoamerican languages, such as Náhuatl, Tarascan, and Otomi.¹¹ This means that, while Franciscans perceived their parishioners as *indios*, they also had a sense of the specific characteristics of the individuals. Since there are no references to languages in the *Libro de bautizos y matrimonios*, this characteristic of the Amerindian society of San Luis Potosí is mostly evidenced by the records of criminal trials. These show very clearly that most Amerindians did not speak Spanish – those who did were signalled as people who were *ladinos en lengua castellana*. In other words, Franciscans had to know the individuals they attended in order to communicate with them.

These specificities did not translate in the documents as an acknowledgment of Mesoamerican ethnic characteristics and diversity. The friars seldom wrote down an ethnic affiliation for indigenous peoples. However, they consistently made an exception when they referred to the Guachichils, probably because the friars thought they had to pay greater attention to these late converted. For this chapter, the most important information registered by the friars was the geographic origin of the Amerindian inhabitants of San Luis Potosí. This was not consistently given. Between 1594 and 1630, origin was mentioned for 38.5 % of all the individuals appearing in the book. Table 2.1

¹¹ A document from 1623 of the Franciscan Province of Zacatecas, to which the parish of Tlaxcalilla belonged, is very clear on this aspect of the work of missionaries. BNM, Fondo Franciscano, caja 11, exp. 173. See also the third section of this chapter for more details on indigenous languages and their use by the Franciscans.

presents the availability of the data in the parish records of the Franciscans. It is evident that the population of the parish was mostly Amerindian, as it was supposed to be. The few Spaniards registered were mostly witnesses of marriages or godparents of baptised Amerindian children. I kept these and other non-Amerindians in the statistics even though they did not pertain directly to the pueblos de indios because they show the open nature of the indigenous society and its links with the whole valley of San Luis Potosí. In fact, even among indigenous peoples, many individuals lived outside of the communities, on work sites such as haciendas, but nevertheless had strong and longstanding social ties to the communities. Although the majority of the individuals do not have a recorded place of origin, the proportion of Amerindians with a registered home community is sufficient to be representative of the whole population.

	Number of Individuals	Percentage
Amerindians	4,833	38.5 %
Spaniards, mestizos, and mulatos	360	2.9 %
Unknown	7,373	58.7 %
Total	12,566	100.0 %

At times, the origin of indigenous peoples as written by the Franciscans was very general and referred to large regions such as the “province of Michoacán.” Most of the time, however, friars recorded precise toponyms. There is little reason to believe that Franciscans distorted what their parishioners reported to them. First, some of the town’s names were written with their original indigenous names. This was the case, for example,

of Guayangareo, which was called by Spaniards by 1594 Ciudad de Valladolid.¹² Second, when the Amerindians came from Mexico City, friars occasionally mentioned the neighbourhood of their origin. Third, the fact that the priests mentioned 130 different towns suggests that they and their parishioners wished to be fairly precise. Finally, in the section relating to weddings, friars sometimes mentioned what itinerary the migrants had taken, in a clear effort to capture aspects of their backgrounds and lives.

On the basis of this information, I extrapolated the ethnic and cultural affiliation of each individual, even though the complexity of Mesoamerican societies rendered this exercise difficult. These ethnic affiliations thus have to be taken as approximate cultural identifications I established on the basis of Peter Gerhard's research.¹³ For example, I decided to use the dominant language of each town and to attribute it to the people who came from there. Appendix 1 gives greater detail on the languages used in each of the 130 home communities of indigenous peoples. It is important to mention that included among the 4,833 Amerindians are individuals who were registered more than once. I decided not to eliminate them for several reasons. First, repetitions could not always be identified, and I think that their partial elimination would have skewed the data, giving false representative importance to some ethnic groups and removing it from others. Second, repetitions acknowledge, to a certain extent, the importance of individuals in a community and in the conurbation. Indeed, each time an individual marries, baptises a child, acts as a witness, or becomes a godparent, that person creates ties in the community. The addition of these roles renders a clearer view of the relative importance

¹² Carlos Herrejón Peredo, *Los orígenes de Morelia: Guayangareo-Valladolid*, 2nd ed. (Mexico and Zamora: Frente de Afirmación Hispanista and El Colegio de Michoacán, 2000).

¹³ These cultural identifications were assigned according to the language of the majority in each source community. For greater details on these source communities, see map 2.1 and table 2.2. Gerhard, *A Guide*.

of these Amerindians and of their affiliated ethnic group in San Luis Potosí, even if not their exact numbers. In the end, the result must not be understood as exact statistics on the ethnicity of the immigrants to San Luis Potosí, but rather as a representative image of each ethnic group in relation to the others.

	Number of Individuals	Percentage
Indios (generic identity)	495	10.2 %
Chichimecs	163	3.4 %
Tlaxcalans	232	4.8 %
Nahuas (without Tlaxcalans)	860	17.8 %
Otomis	798	16.5 %
Tarascans	1,311	27.1 %
Western Amerindians	564	11.7 %
North Frontier	390	8.1 %
Others	20	0.4 %
Total	4,833	100.0 %

Overall, table 2.2 shows that Amerindians came from a diversity of origins and spoke many different indigenous languages. According to the parish records, the most important ethnic groups in the conurbation were the Tarascans, the Nahuas, and the Otomis.¹⁴ Together, they represented 61.4 % of the Amerindian population. As can be seen on map 2.1 (p. 71), they comprise the majority of home communities of the immigrants. Some had travelled as far as from Oaxaca, although their small numbers presumably mean that they did not travel directly but rather veered off towards San Luis

¹⁴ Linguists generally distinguish between Otomis and Otomianos, the former referring to a specific ethnic category and the latter to a broader linguistic trunk including Otomis, Mazahuas, Matlatzincas, and Ocuiltecos. For clarity and since only few Mazahuas, Matlatzincas, and Ocuiltecos moved to San Luis Potosí, I have decided to use only the term Otomi. On the difference between Otomis and Otomianos, see Yolanda Lastra, *Los Otomíes: su lengua y su historia* (Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2006), 32-34.

Potosí after other journeys, to Mexico City for example. Most immigrants, however, came from the north of Mesoamerica, close to the frontier with Aridoamerica. The Otomis from Jilotepec, for example, were among the first to move across that frontier to help the Spanish establish outposts and agricultural villages among the Pames, a group of people considered as Chichimecs because of their hunter-gatherer way of life, but closely related to the Otomis by language and culture.¹⁵ Tarascans were also used from early on in the mining industry, including the mines established in the north in the 1550s, such as Guanajuato. The peoples from the west, mostly those from north-eastern New Galicia, such as the Cazcans, Tecuexes, and Cocas, were living on the principal commercial roads between these mines and the major cities of New Spain. In total, the 12,000 Amerindians (including those of unknown origins) appearing in the parish records of San Luis Potosí came from over 130 home communities, which means that, on average, there were about ninety individuals coming from each source community over a period of forty years. In other words, their migrations were undertaken individually or in small groups, and their experiences were multiple and varied. But before exploring that question, let us first turn to the background of these peoples.

Background on Origins and Ethnic Relationships

As the evidence reviewed so far suggests, Amerindians in San Luis Potosí were a diverse lot. To understand the significance of this diversity and its impact on the establishment of the town and its further development, I must first present more details on the cultural origins of these peoples. In this section, I will present each cultural group

¹⁵ Yolanda Lastra writes that Otomi and Pame are both issued from the Otopame tronc. Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 32-34. See also Jacques Soustelle, *La famille Otomi-Pame du Mexique central* (Paris: Institut d'ethnologie, 1937), 491-509.

in the same order they appeared in table 2.2. However, as I go along, I will be attentive to showing the points of contact between these different groups of peoples, as well as the internal variety within each group. The objective is to show that further cultural and social interactions in San Luis Potosí did not emerge *ex nihilo*, but from a long history of inter-ethnic contacts across Mesoamerica.

The inhabitants of Aridoamerica were collectively known by the Spaniards as the Chichimecs. They were semi-nomadic peoples who occupied the land in very different ways from the Mesoamericans and the Spaniards.¹⁶ From 1550 to 1590, Chichimecs resisted the entrance of Spanish conquerors and colonists, who considered them barbarous and uncivilized. In the area of San Luis Potosí, the Chichimec group was known as the Guachichils. They had been living in small groups accustomed to creating political and kinship bonds through exogamous marriages and seasonal migrations on large territories that demanded constant negotiation with other groups. The different bands made agreements on the use of natural resources, created political alliances and enmities, and maintained important and far-reaching commercial ties. They had had contacts with Mesoamericans in the pre-Columbian era; and, in the sixteenth century, they started to integrate various components of the Spanish culture, mostly material entities such as horses, clothing, and weapons. Most Spaniards thought they were barbarous bands of animals without souls, but their reaction to the Spanish invasion proved otherwise. Indeed, they considered Spaniards as invaders and kept them at respectful distance for four decades, using hit and run military strategies, defeating the

¹⁶ Rodriguez Loubet, *Les Chichimèques*: 156; Monroy and Calvillo Unna, *Breve historia*: 42-46; Beatriz Braniff C., "Introducción," in *La Gran Chichimeca; El lugar de las rocas secas*, ed. Beatriz Braniff C. (Mexico and Milan: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes and Editoriale Jaca Book Spa, 2001), 7-12.

Spaniards' native allies, plundering Spanish outposts, and using Spanish materials back on their enemies.¹⁷

When the Spaniards proposed a peace agreement in the late 1580s, some disagreement emerged amongst the Guachichils. One faction decided to move farther north and to join other Chichimec groups in their fight against the invaders, while a second faction agreed to the Spanish terms and opted to settle down on their traditional territory, but in a defined, newly founded village. In exchange for their settlement, the Crown provided them with food and clothing supplies, and imposed the presence of some four hundred Tlaxcalan families in the new establishments of San Esteban (at El Saltillo), San Andrés Chalchihuites (by Sombrerete, north-west of Zacatecas), Colotlán (south-east of Zacatecas), and Mezquitic (near the future San Luis Potosí). There, the Tlaxcalans had the mandate to “civilize” the Chichimecs and to teach them agriculture.¹⁸ Of course, the process was to be supervised by the Spanish authorities and Franciscan missionaries, the latter being very important actors in the negotiations that led to peace. According to historian Eugene Sego, the Guachichils who had accepted the peace warmly welcomed the Tlaxcalans when they settled down in 1591, expecting to create important bonds with them through marriage and god-parenting and to take advantage of their privileges as

¹⁷ Philip Wayne Powell, "The Forty-Niners of Sixteenth-Century Mexico," *Pacific Historical Review* 19, no. 3 (1950).

¹⁸ Primo Feliciano Velázquez, *Historia de San Luis Potosí*, vol. I: *De los tiempos nebulosos a la fundación del pueblo de San Luis Potosí* (Mexico: Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística, 1946), 416-418; Powell, *Soldiers, Indians, and Silver*; Monroy and Calvillo Unna, *Breve historia*: 70-75; Tomás Martínez Saldaña, *La diáspora tlaxcalteca; Colonización agrícola del norte mexicano* (Tlaxcala: Tlaxcallan, Ediciones del Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala, 1998), 59-80; Sego, *Aliados y adversarios*: 42-46. Sego points out that 401 men were recruited, but that they were not all heads of families. For more details on the debates around the Chichimec War and the decisions to replace it by a strategy of cultural integration, see Carrillo Cázares, *El debate sobre la Guerra*: 28-35. In fact, Spanish authorities already used indigenous allies on the northern frontier (mostly Tarascans, Mexicans, Otomis and Cazcans); but until 1590, they were used as warriors and settlers in fortifications to defend the *Camino Real*, rarely as agents of acculturation.

allies of the Spaniards.¹⁹ As well, they turned to the Catholic faith and welcomed the Franciscans in order to receive their protection. In sum, for this group of Guachichils, the 1590s meant the end of a four-decades-long war, the establishment of fixed and policed communities, the conversion of their principal economic activities from hunting and gathering to agriculture, and cohabitation with hundreds of newcomers. The transformations were drastic.²⁰

The Tlaxcalans were, in the eyes of the Spaniards, almost the opposite of the Guachichils. Their influence in the pre-Columbian world had been significant; and even though they spoke the same language as the Mexicas, they had been the main opponents to Tenochca power based at Mexico-Tenochtitlan.²¹ Their own political influence reached out of their territory to neighbouring states. For the Spaniards, the Tlaxcalans had been pagans, but they had allied quickly with the conquistadors, had officially accepted the Catholic faith, and had sent numerous warriors across Mesoamerica to fight alongside the Spaniards. Because of their help, they had received many privileges under the Spanish regime. They formed an urban center, obtained the status of city, and constantly sought to keep their autonomy within the Spanish regime.²²

The Tlaxcalans spoke the same language as the majority of the peoples of central Mexico: Náhuatl (the speakers of that language are called Nahuas). Prior to the Conquest,

¹⁹ Segó, "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies," 61-64.

²⁰ Monroy and Calvillo Unna, *Breve historia*: 76-86; Segó, *Aliados y adversarios*: 64-66.

²¹ Note that pre-colonial Tlaxcala was not a political unit, but rather a loose military confederation formed to face external threats and to preserve autonomy without a central head of state. See James Lockhart, *The Nahuas after the Conquest: A Social and Cultural History of the Indians of Central Mexico, Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 14 and 19-23; R. Jovita Baber, "Empire, Indians, and the Negotiation for the Status of City in Tlaxcala, 1521-1550," in *Negotiation within Domination: New Spain's Indian Pueblos Confront the Spanish State*, ed. Ethelia Ruiz Medrano and Susan Kellogg (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2010), 21.

²² Michel R. Oudijk and Matthew Restall, "Mesoamerican Conquistadors in the Sixteenth Century," in *Indian Conquistadors; Indigenous Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica*, ed. Laura E. Matthew and Michel R. Oudijk (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 28-63; Baber, "Empire, Indians, and the Negotiation," 19-24.

their history had been highly connected to all the other Nahuas and their social and political organization was ostensibly the same. The Nahuas formed the dominant cultural group in central Mexico when the Spaniards arrived. They had migrated from northern Mesoamerica and southern Aridamerica starting around AD 900 and claimed Chichimec heritage. In the course of the next six hundred years, they came to dominate the peoples of the valley of Mexico and those of Tlaxcala and Puebla. They did not form, however, a uniform and homogeneous group. Rather, they migrated and waged wars in ethnic groups, sometimes creating alliances against their enemies. The best known of these groups were the Mexicas, who were of Chichimec descent. They established themselves in Tenochtitlan in the fourteenth century and, after forming the Triple Alliance with Texcoco and Tacuba a century later, achieved political hegemony in the form of what is known as the Aztec Empire. When the Spaniards arrived, the political landscape changed quickly and alliances soon fell apart dramatically.

The greatest divide, even in the pre-colonial era, opposed the Mexicas to the Tlaxcalans. This significant split among the Nahuas is of importance to the study of Amerindian San Luis Potosí because the processes of migration and establishment that will be described were completely different for each faction. After the fall of the Mexicas and the alliance between Tlaxcalans and Spaniards, the rivalries between both entities persisted in the sixteenth century, but in new forms. While the Tlaxcalans were able to negotiate a fairly good socio-political standing and a certain degree of autonomy under the colonial regime, most of the other Nahuas became lesser vassals who had to pay tribute in money and kind.

Otomis composed another important group of Amerindian immigrants to San Luis Potosí. In fact, in the valley, there were other members of the Otomiano linguistic branch, which comprises four languages: Otomi, Mazahua, Matlatzinca, and Ocuilteco.²³ In the parish records and in the criminal files, I have found individuals of all four linguistic backgrounds, although Otomis were clearly predominant. This is in part due to the fact that Mazahuas and Matlatzincas were relatively small groups of people. They were situated mostly to the west of the Nahuas and often served as buffers between the Mexica and Tarascan military powers. Such was the situation of Charo – called Matalcingo in Náhuatl – and of Yrapeo, both of which were inhabited by a majority of Matlazincas, but were controlled by the Tarascans. The village of Tlalpuxagua was inhabited by a majority of people speaking Mazahua, but in the same political situation as the other two. The area of Metepec, including Tapaxco and Xocotitlan, included intertwined speakers of Otomi, Mazahua, and Matlatzinca, but was controlled by the Mexicas.²⁴

In Mesoamerica, among Otomiano languages, Otomi was the most important in numbers of speakers, geographic coverage, and political significance. Otomis had inhabited central Mesoamerica for thousands of years even before the domestication of maize. They were always present in the area, even under the great civilizations of Teotihuacan and Tula. The story presented by Yolanda Lastra is one of a people constantly on the scene, but alternately autonomous and dominated. In the decades prior to the Conquest, the Mexicas controlled much of the Otomi territories – situated to the north – or, at least, were in a position to exact tribute from them. Some Otomi towns were conquered more than once by the Mexicas for defaulting on payment. However, the

²³ Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 32-34.

²⁴ Gerhard, *A Guide*; Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 26-34.

Mexicas' perception of the Otomis was ambivalent. On the one hand, they despised them for being lazy sub-humans who ate early corncobs instead of ripe ones. On the other hand, the Mexicas believed the Otomis had been the rulers of Tula, the great Toltec civilization of the tenth to twelfth centuries, from which they derived their legitimacy as rulers of the whole area.²⁵ Throughout the reign of the Triple Alliance, Otomis were enemies, rebels, or conquered people. They were never united in these stances, however. At times, some Otomis allied with the Mexicas in their wars against the Tarascans or Meztitlán, while others fled from invasions to neighbouring polities such as Tlaxcala. The Otomis were seen as fierce warriors by the Tlaxcalans; after great triumphs over Mexican invasions, Otomi captains were rewarded, some receiving daughters of nobles and thus becoming themselves members of the elite. When the Spaniards arrived, the first people from Tlaxcala they encountered were actually Otomi warriors.²⁶

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Tarascan Empire was the second largest and most powerful in Mesoamerica. The area it covered, Michoacán, had never seen such a great empire before. Until around the mid-fourteenth century, the area had mostly been home to a diversity of small states. Then, there were a series of regional wars in the area of the Patzcuaro lake and diplomatic efforts led to the creation of a stronger and larger political entity. According to the *Relación de Michoacán*, written around 1540, this first stage of expansion had as its central figure a Chichimec ruler named Taríacuri. Archaeologists doubt the real significance of potential Chichimec migration in the area, as had been the case in the central valley of Mexico, but some small groups might have

²⁵ The history of Tula, of its ethnic composition, and of its politics still leaves historians and archeologists wanting. According to Lastra, the Otomis were perceived by the Mexicas as allies of the Toltec-Chichimecs and to have ruled over major cities of the Toltec state, and Mexicas derived legitimacy from it. Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 85-92.

²⁶ Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 73-108.

been important in the formation of the empire. Then, in a series of lightning conquests between approximately 1420 and 1440, the area controlled by Patzcuaro expanded rapidly. In the next decades, the empire reached the Pacific coast to the south, Colima and the Chapala Lake to the west, and collided against the Mexicas' expansion to the east.²⁷

Significantly, many of the migrants to San Luis Potosí came from the fringes of the Tarascan territory. Much as was the case with the Otomis under Mexica and Tlaxcalan domination, the Cocas, the Sayultecans, and some other groups on the western frontier of the Tarascan Empire were in constant contact with this expanding power.²⁸ As mentioned, the Matlazincas and Mazahuas acted as buffers between the Tarascans and the Mexicas, but they also constantly entered in other forms of relationships with both states and peoples, incorporating linguistic and other cultural elements to their way of life. The northern frontier villages were mostly a mix of Tarascan, Otomi, and Chichimec cultures. In consequence, these peoples on both sides of the Tarascan border were accustomed to political, economic, and intercultural exchanges.

Despite the existence of these porous frontiers in the fifteenth century, the Tarascans as a cultural group within western Mesoamerica had few historical relations with central Mesoamerica. Enduring political relations apparently started only with the imperial era, when both Tarascan and Mexica polities had reached great territorial size. Perhaps more significant was the uniqueness of the Tarascan language in Mesoamerica. Despite some regional variations, linguists have been unable to link it to any other

²⁷ Ulises Beltran, "Tarascan State and Society in Prehispanic Times; An Ethnohistorical Inquiry" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1982), 17-28; Helen Perlstein Pollard, *Taríacuri's Legacy; The Prehispanic Tarascan State* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 13-15.

²⁸ Some of these groups have been difficult to identify with precision for Gerhard.

linguistic family in the area.²⁹ Furthermore, if metallurgy did exist in some parts of Oaxaca and in the western Maya area, the Tarascans were the only ones manipulating such advanced techniques as hot hammering.³⁰ This pre-colonial knowledge of metallurgy and mining would lead Spaniards to recruit Tarascans extensively to work in mines across New Spain. Tarascans also sought fortunes in boom-town silver mines on their own steam. Their skills, their specific historical culture, and their important presence in San Luis Potosí gave a particular role to the Tarascans in the valley, and it will be taken into account throughout the dissertation.³¹

Regarding the relationships between the Tarascans and the Triple alliance, the two states became dire enemies in the fifteenth century and, although they maintained diplomatic ties, they fought great battles against one another. However, when the Spaniards arrived, the Mexicas sent various emissaries to Zuanga, the *cazonci* (ruler), and sought to reverse the nature of their relations with the Tarascan Empire to gain direct help against the Spaniards. But Zuanga was suspicious of the Mexicas. When he finally received confirmation from his own spies that Tenochtitlan was being destroyed, he died of smallpox, leaving his inexperienced son to confront the European warriors. The Tarascan Empire was not conquered properly speaking; armies faced each other at the doors of the capital, Tzintzuntzan, but did not fight. The Spaniards established their system of *encomienda*, but left the *cazonci* his autonomy and court of governors to attend

²⁹ Some linguists have linked it to Chibchan languages of southern Central America and northern South America, but the relationship is hard to establish. Pollard, *Tariácuri's Legacy*: 15-16.

³⁰ See Dorothy Hosler, Heather Lechtman, and Olaf Holm, *Axe-Monies and their Relatives* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1990); Dorothy Hosler, *The Sounds and Colors of Power: The Sacred Metallurgical Technology of Ancient West Mexico* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994).

³¹ The historical and cultural information of the Tarascans come from J. Benedict Warren, *The Conquest of Michoacán: The Spanish Domination of the Tarascan Kingdom in Western Mexico, 1521-1530* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985); Pollard, *Tariácuri's Legacy*: 3-17; Claudia Espejel Carbajal, *La justicia y el fuego. Dos claves para leer la Relación de Michoacán*, vol. I (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán, 2008), 87-163.

him. This went on until 1530, when the *cazonci* was tried and executed by the Spaniards who by then fully controlled the vast region.

Other Mesoamericans who migrated to San Luis Potosí came from regions further to the west, mostly in New Galicia and south of Lake Chapala. According to my sample, these peoples represented 11.7 % of the Amerindian population in the conurbation. They were fewer because the source populations themselves were relatively smaller than those in central Mesoamerica. Population estimates presented by Gerhard show that the indigenous population of New Galicia (excluding the area south of Lake Chapala) represented 8.3 % of the total indigenous population of New Spain at the beginning of the seventeenth century.³² It thus seems that the western Mesoamericans migrated in smaller absolute numbers, but in greater relative proportions to populations of origin compared to the other Tarascans, Nahuas, and Otomianos. The peoples from north-eastern New Galicia were drafted as mine workers and cart drivers to the north. Furthermore, because many of the first miners of Zacatecas had passed through Guadalajara in the 1540s and 1550s, the first roads to reach the new mines passed by indigenous locations such as Juchipila, Nochistlan, Teocaltiche, and Tlaltenango, names frequently found in the parish records of San Luis Potosí and initially peopled by Cazcans.³³ In short, the attraction to San Luis Potosí – and other mining towns in the north – was important in the west and the roads and connections did exist as much as for the other indigenous groups.

³² Peter Gerhard, *The North Frontier of New Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 24. There were 855,000 Amerindians in New Galicia in 1519 and 83,000 about a century later. Gerhard, *A Guide*: 23. There were 22 million and 1 million Mesoamericans in the whole of New Spain around the same periods of time. The conjuncture of these numbers renders the percentage of 8.3 % of New Galicians by the beginning of the seventeenth century (83,000/1,000,000).

³³ Powell, "The Forty-Niners of Sixteenth-Century Mexico."; Altman, *The War for Mexico's*: 194-203. The *Relación geográfica del pueblo de Teucaltiche* indicates that the production of corn, beans, chilli, cotton, squashes, and maguey were so great that they were frequently sent to Zacatecas in large quantities. See René Acuña, *Relaciones geográficas del siglo XVI: Nueva Galicia*, vol. 10 (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1988), 301.

The history of the peoples from the west was directly related to the post-classic migrations of Chichimecs from Aridoamerica to Mesoamerica. Linguistically, the Cazcan, Coca, Tecual, Tecuexe, and Sayultecan languages are all related to the Yuto-Aztec family, which also counts Náhuatl as a principal tongue. In short, the people from the west were, like the Mexicas, Chichimecs migrating and settling in Mesoamerica between 1200 and 1500. According to archaeologists and historians, they would have settled in relatively small states of scattered farmers across the diversified landscape of this region. These societies did not have monumental architecture, urban complexes, or theocratic socio-political structures, but they used agricultural technologies such as irrigation that enabled them to support large populations. Most of them were conquered by Nuño de Guzmán and his army of Nahuas and Tarascans in the 1520s. The many small cultural groups were literally crushed by the Spaniards and their Mesoamerican allies. They were then reduced to *encomiendas* and often relocated to new ecological niches. They were also forced to live with the indigenous allies, and because of extensive cultural disarticulation and losses, they often adopted Náhuatl as a *lingua franca*, albeit keeping their own language, and had to rebuild entirely new communities.³⁴ Very few factors attached individuals to their land and cultural groups, and many decided to migrate.

In table 2.2, I point out that 8.1 % of the indigenous peoples of San Luis Potosí claimed to be natives from towns on the north frontier, such as Zacatecas, San Miguel, Saltillo, and San Luis de la Paz. It is hard to determine the characteristics of this part of

³⁴ Eric Van Young, "The Indigenous Peoples of Western Mexico from the Spanish Invasion to the Present," in *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*, vol. II: *Mesoamerica*, part 2, ed. Richard E. W. Adams and Murdo J. MacLeod (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 142; Álvarez, "Conquista y encomienda."; Altman, *The War for Mexico's*: Chapter 3-4.

the population because they were mostly a mix of all the cultural groups I have described so far. They were significant in the valley, however, because they had already experienced to a great extent the post-Conquest movements and encounters of the Amerindian populations. The presence of these migrants suggests that migration itineraries were not always direct, from the place of origin to San Luis Potosí, but rather that families and individuals could keep moving over many decades, and that children of migrants, born in these Spanish settlements, could also decide to migrate. In San Luis Potosí, the population coming from towns established by the Spaniards increased in the 1610s and 1620s.

Languages

Amerindian migrants to San Luis Potosí thus came from a diversity of communities and cultures; these cultural groups, moreover, had had important relationships between them prior to the Conquest. The existence of such relationships means that indigenous peoples could communicate among themselves in different languages, either in multiethnic communities or between cultural areas. In this section, I will show that indigenous peoples in San Luis Potosí often spoke more than one indigenous language. This will shed light on the subsequent migration process and the establishment of Indian towns and neighbourhoods.

The processes of intercultural exchanges had started even before the arrival of Mesoamericans in San Luis Potosí, and even prior to the landing of Cortes in Veracruz. Indeed, a great proportion of Amerindians had been living in multiethnic communities and often spoke multiple indigenous languages. Otomi speakers frequently lived among

Náhuatl speakers on the central plateau.³⁵ Carlos Paredes Martínez highlights the complex ethnic composition of the town of Guayangareo (now Morelia) on the north-east frontier of Michoacán, that was in constant contact with Chichimecs, settled by Otomis and Matlatzincans, conquered and populated by Tarascans in the fifteenth century, and then repopulated under the Spanish by different groups of Náhuatl speakers.³⁶ The *Relaciones geográficas* of the 1580s, which mention in the chapter five of each *Relación* the indigenous languages spoken in each region, often state that multiple languages coexisted. For example, the *Relación geográfica* of Teocaltiche, a town in New Galicia from which came some immigrants of San Luis Potosí, says about the natives: “Their principal language, and that which they speak among themselves and use, is called *Caxcan*, which, it is said, means ‘there is none’ in Spanish; and, as well, all of them speak *Mexican* [Náhuatl] and, some, understand *Spanish*.”³⁷ In order to gather the information necessary to write the *Relación* of Chilchota, a town in Michoacán, the Spanish authorities had to appoint an interpreter, an Amerindian called Joaquín, who spoke Tarascan, Náhuatl, and Spanish.³⁸ Such interethnic relations between groups of people living on the same territory existed everywhere in Mesoamerica.³⁹

³⁵ Soustelle, *La famille Otomi-Pame*: 449-487; Gerhard, *A Guide*: 5 and the various entries regarding central Mexico; Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 104-108.

³⁶ Carlos Paredes Martínez, “Grupos étnicos y conflictividad social en Guayangareo-Valladolid, al inicio de la época colonial,” in *Lengua y etnohistoria purépecha; Homenaje a Benedict Warren*, ed. Carlos Paredes Martínez (Morelia: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo; Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 1997), 315-318; Herrejón Peredo, *Los orígenes de Morelia*: 15-33. Herrejón Peredo reports that archeological studies of the site have uncovered a highly active commercial and cultural center that had contact far away into Aridamerica, to the West, and to Teotihuacán. He also confirms the highly culturally complex population.

³⁷ “Su principal lengua, y la que entre ellos hablan y usan, se llama *caxcana*, q[ue], como está d[ic]ho, quiere decir en castellano ‘no hay’; y, también, todos ellos hablan *mexicano* y, algunos, entienden *en castilla*.” “Relación geográfica del pueblo de Teocaltiche,” in Acuña, *Relaciones geográficas*, 10: 302. Emphasis on languages already in the original.

³⁸ The document reads: “[...] nombraba y nombró, por intérprete deste juzgado, a Joaquín, indio deste pu[er]to, ladino en lengua *mexicana*, *tarasca* [y] castellana.” “Relación del partido de Chilchota”, in René

Historians of San Luis Potosí have divided the evolution of the spoken languages in the Indian towns and neighbourhoods into three steps. First, they see a multiplicity of languages, but sharply distinguished and kept apart from each other by spatial demarcations and geographic assignments corresponding to the *pueblos* and *barrios*. Then, Náhuatl would have become the first *lingua franca* of San Luis, around the mid-seventeenth century, soon to be followed by Spanish at the beginning of the eighteenth century. What is astonishing about this vision of language evolution is that historians mostly attribute the forces of change to Spanish actors, primarily the Franciscan missionaries.⁴⁰ In our view, this interpretation leaves aside both a very vivid and complex process of intercultural exchanges, and the agency of Amerindians. From the testimonials in the criminal records, it appears that the Amerindians themselves were responsible for the evolution of the spoken languages in San Luis Potosí. Thus the trajectories of languages were significantly influenced by interaction, not by distinction and mutual exclusion.

In a document of 1623 from the Franciscan Province of Zacatecas, four Franciscans in the convent of Tlaxcalilla in San Luis wrote that the indigenous peoples in the region spoke many different tongues: Náhuatl, Tarascan, Otomi, Tepehuan, Tepecan, Guachichil, Concha, and Coca. In response to the religious authorities' worries that not

Acuña, *Relaciones geográficas del siglo XVI: Michoacán*, vol. 9 (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1987), 98. Emphasis on the languages in the original.

³⁹ Chance explains the same phenomenon between Zapotec, Mixtec, and Nahuatl groups in the Oaxaca Valley. Chance, "The Urban Indian," 606-607.

⁴⁰ See in particular Rafael Montejano y Aguiñaga, "La evolución de los Tlaxcaltecas en San Luis Potosí," in *Constructores de la nación. La migración tlaxcalteca en el norte de la Nueva España*, ed. María Isabel Monroy Castillo (San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis y Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala, 1999), 79-87; José Antonio Rivera Villanueva, "La influencia tlaxcalteca en la vida política de los pueblos indios de San Luis Potosí (1590-1620)," in *Constructores de la nación. La migración tlaxcalteca en el norte de la Nueva España*, ed. María Isabel Monroy Castillo (San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis y Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala, 1999), 89-102.

all the Amerindians could be attended to, they said that the friars were able to speak many indigenous languages, some up to four different ones.⁴¹ This document strengthens the idea that many indigenous languages coexisted in the region of San Luis Potosí and shows that it was not necessarily the Amerindians who had to adapt their communication skills, but also the missionaries and some other Spaniards. In fact, some of the scribes did not need interpreters to write down confessions and testimonies because they understood an Amerindian language, most often Náhuatl. Furthermore, interpreters at times might be Spaniards, such as in the criminal proceedings against the Indian Alonso, in which the interpreter is “Juan de Morales, a Spaniard who understands Tarascan.”⁴²

Interpreters were essential to the administration of justice in San Luis Potosí. When an Amerindian presented himself in front of a judge, either as a witness or as a confessor, it was often indicated whether or not he or she spoke Spanish. Notations such as “ladino en lengua castellana y la suya,” which could be translated as “knowledgeable in the tongue of Castile [Spanish] and his own,” were very frequent. When indigenous peoples did not speak Spanish, one of their languages can often be identified by the nomination of an official interpreter. Most of the time, interpreters were Amerindians who had learned Spanish and, sometimes, multiple indigenous languages as well. Such was the case of Antonio Ortiz who was said to be an “Indian knowledgeable in Tarascan,

⁴¹ BNM, Fondo Franciscano, caja 11, exp. 173.

⁴² “Juan de Morales español que entiende la lengua Tarasca.” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1603, caja 1, exp. 26, f. 2r. Similarly, the Spaniard Juan de Zavala apparently spoke Tarascan. In the judgement against his Tarascan *criado* Juan Bautista in 1593, he acted as interpreter between the scribe and his *criado*. See AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1593, caja 1, exp. 2, f. 4-5.

Mexican, and Castilian.”⁴³ Yet, at other times, two interpreters were needed to translate from one indigenous language to another to Spanish.⁴⁴

The most interesting contribution of these pieces of information is the evidence that most indigenous people spoke more than one language, but that these did not necessarily include Spanish. There were migrants from Nueva Galicia speaking Tarascan, Tarascans speaking Náhuatl, and Otomis speaking Náhuatl. A fascinating aspect of this multilingual environment is that individuals interacted with each other in third languages, often invisible to the historian. For example, it is impossible to discern the common language of an Amerindian man and a Chichimec woman who were tried because they formed an illegal (unmarried) couple in 1594. The man, Pedro Alonso, spoke Náhuatl, but it is equally possible that he spoke Pinome, the language of his home community Zacualco, and perhaps Tarascan, because Zacualco might have been a Tarascan conquest in the early sixteenth century.⁴⁵ The woman, Francisca, spoke a Chichimec language (probably Guachichil) and Spanish. Despite Francisca’s having been raised by and working for a Spanish man, the document indicates that the lovers saw each other, among other probable places, along one of the rivers of San Luis Potosí where many other Amerindians attended to daily tasks. This suggests that they were probably speaking an indigenous language to communicate. Besides, Pedro Alonso does not seem to have spoken Spanish very well because he needed an interpreter to communicate with the Spanish authorities. Thus, at least one of the members of the couple was trilingual. The case, taken in its entirety as presented by the Spanish notaries, suggests that Francisca, in

⁴³ “[...] indio ladino en tarasco mexicano y castellano [...]” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1598, caja 1, exp. 13.

Other examples may be found in AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1592, caja 1, exp. 4, and A-44, 1593, caja 1, exp. 2.

⁴⁴ Two examples can be found in AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 5 and 1602, caja 1, exp. 4.

⁴⁵ The language of the majority of the indigenous peoples of Zacualco was Pinome, but Gerhard writes that the Tarascans were probably in control of this area by the early sixteenth century. Gerhard, *A Guide*: 239.

addition to Guachichil and Spanish, also spoke Tarascan. As well, it indicates that she had frequent contacts with the different communities of the conurbation. Indeed, all the action took place around a highly frequented river, where, among other social interactions, women washed cloths and men passed by. On this site of daily sociability, most of the Amerindian actors and witnesses needed interpreters in Tarascan. This shows that, notwithstanding the uncertainties of the case, the origins and linguistic skills of individuals were diversified and complex.⁴⁶

The historian can also observe ties between different linguistic groups through criminal acts. A criminal proceeding, in which the Indian alcalde of San Miguel accused other Indians of robbing tallow and other livestock products, presents the linguistic diversity of that barrio through the witnesses and accused. At first, the hints of bilingual indigenous peoples are fairly easy to detect. Indeed, the plaintiff, Francisco Diego who was from the region of Aranza in Michoacán and thus probably spoke Tarascan, addresses the Spanish authorities in Náhuatl. No interpreter was needed at that point because the scribe wrote that he, the scribe, understood that language well. The case got more complex when the authorities took the confessions of the accused robbers, three indigenous men: Juan Bautista from San Felipe in Michoacán, Pedro Hernández from Guaniqueo (Michoacán), and another Juan Bautista from Querétaro (Pame and Otomi territory). While the first Juan Bautista spoke Náhuatl, the other two men needed an interpreter to be understood. Our problem as researchers is that the languages spoken by this interpreter are not listed and we have to form hypotheses: first, the interpreter may have spoken Tarascan, Otomi, and either Náhuatl or Spanish; second, Pedro Hernández may have spoken Tarascan and Otomi, and the interpreter may have spoken at least

⁴⁶ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 18 and 19.

Otomi; third, the second Juan Bautista may have spoken Tarascan and Otomi, and the interpreter may have spoken at least Tarascan.

The element that might help to determine the indigenous languages spoken by these individuals is that the three accused had to communicate among themselves, and that their common language could not be Náhuatl. It is most probable, because the first Juan Bautista spoke Tarascan and Náhuatl, that they all spoke Tarascan. In spite of this mystery, the most significant contribution of this document, in regard to indigenous languages and the organization of the immigrants in San Luis Potosí, is that the Indian villages and neighbourhoods were not exclusively monolingual. This particular case shows that the inhabitants of San Miguel spoke at least Náhuatl, Tarascan, and Otomi.⁴⁷

The context of the origins of indigenous peoples suggests that intercultural relationships were common across Mesoamerica. Different languages often coexisted in the same communities and some individuals were fluent in more than one of them. The encounter of Amerindian ethnic groups in San Luis Potosí was not a new phenomenon in itself, but it did take new forms, which will be the subjects of the chapters to come. The origin of individuals, however, appears to have had an impact on the process of transformation of indigenous cultures in regards of one with the others. Some of them, such as the Nahuas and Tarascans, had a strong presence in San Luis Potosí and influenced the other groups' culture more than the other way around. On the contrary, the peoples who migrated from Nueva Galicia were probably those to acculturate and blend in among all other groups the fastest. The Cazcans, Cocas, and Tecuexes represented fairly small groups in terms of geographic coverage and cultural diffusion prior to the Conquest. Then, the process of the conquest and their settlement among Tarascans,

⁴⁷ AHESLP, AM, 1608, caja 1, exp. 10.

Nahuas, and Otomis allied with the Spaniard in the sixteenth century triggered an important transformation of their culture and of their uses of indigenous languages. This history of their origin eased their linguistic acculturation in San Luis Potosí. In the historical literature on the mining town, they are always mentioned as “others,” never in specific terms, and they were seemingly integrated into all the other cultures. In all the documents from the *alcaldía mayor* up to 1630, there is not a single interpreter found for one of their languages. Hence, all the Amerindians coming from that region had to express themselves, at least before Spaniards, in Tarascan, Otomi, Náhuatl, or Spanish.

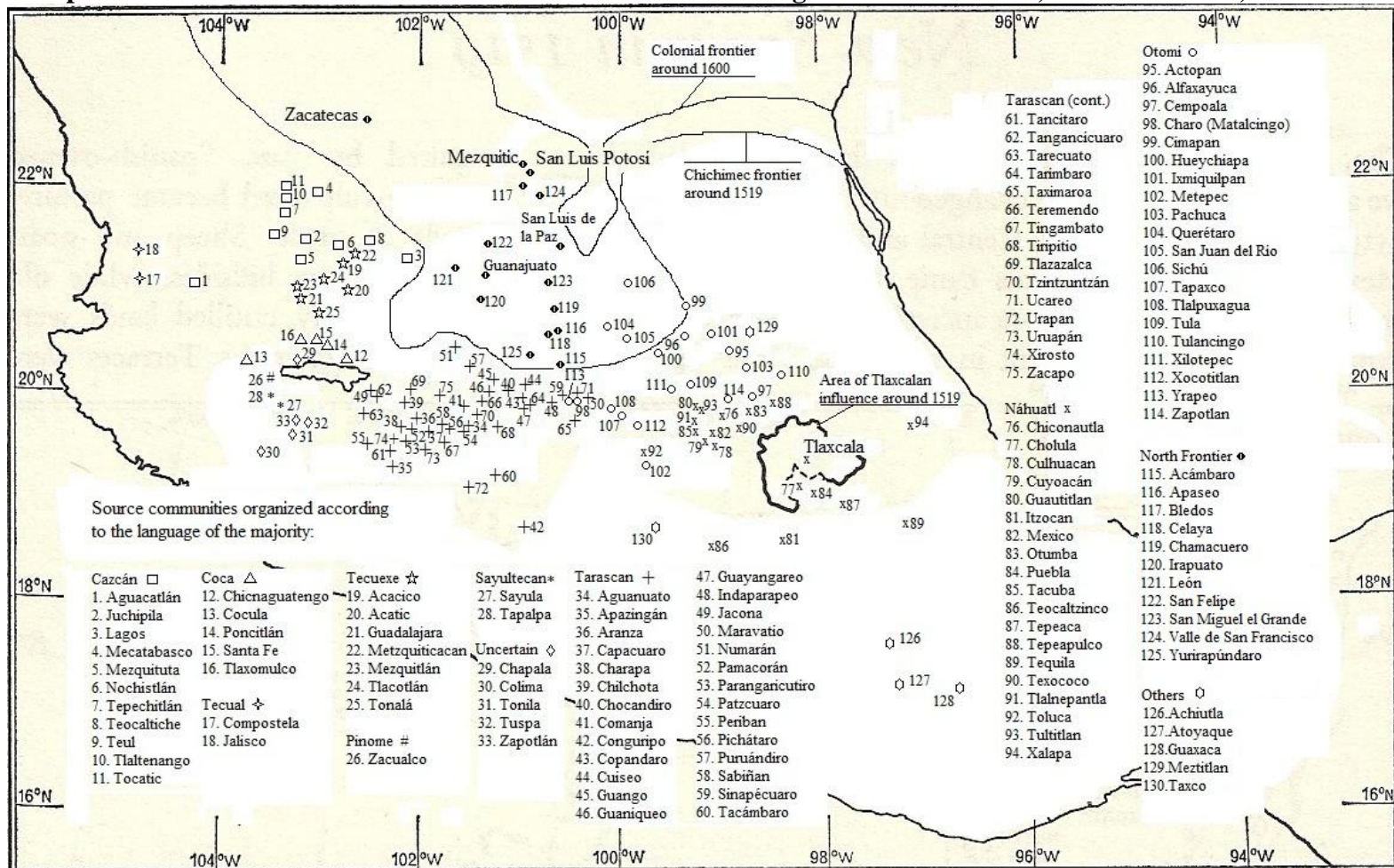
In sum, analysis of the languages used by the indigenous peoples who migrated to San Luis Potosí indicates that the process of cultural exchanges between groups did not start with their encounters in the mining town, but rather earlier, in their home communities. It also shows that relationships between ethnic groups were not limited to political and economic encounters between diplomats, warriors, and merchants, but that they also involved many sectors of the Mesoamerican societies. Multilingualism seems to have pervaded the population of San Luis Potosí and to have had its origin in a long lasting history of encounters.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown that the Amerindian population of San Luis Potosí presented a great diversity in its origins. A small portion came from the local semi-sedentary Guachichils, but the core of the population was constituted of immigrants from a wide variety of Mesoamerican locations. This diversity translated in the mining town in a plurality of historical backgrounds and cultural heritage, but not into ethnic segregation.

Indeed, I have shown that the peoples moving to the valley had long standing histories of contacts among themselves, sometimes positive, yet at other times negative. Some of these peoples, such as the Otomis and the Nahuas, or those on the frontiers of large States, had even lived together on a daily basis in the pre-colonial era. The linguistic knowledge of indigenous peoples is one example of this intricacy of ethnic groups and Mesoamerican cultures. This has to be kept in mind as the ensuing stories of Amerindian migration, establishment, and daily life in San Luis Potosí unfold in the next chapters.

Map 2.1: Source Communities of Amerindians in the Parish Registers of Tlaxcalilla, San Luis Potosí, 1594-1630



Sources: APT, libro de Bautizos y Matrimonios, 1594-1654; Peter Gerhard, *The North Frontier of New Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); Gerhard, *A Guide*. Discrepancies may arise among historical studies regarding the orthography of place names or the language of the majority in some source communities. Gerhard himself uses many graphemes for a single location. To draw this map, I considered only the information given by Gerhard for greater uniformity. Finally, the official name of Guayangareo was Ciudad de Valladolid, but the Amerindians continued to identify themselves with the old name.

Chapter 3: Migrations

Migrations were a significant phenomenon throughout New Spain, and, according to historian David Robinson, they were “ubiquitous.”¹ The Indigenous peoples living in San Luis Potosí came from a diversity of places. The composition of the town was thus a multi-ethnic one, regrouping different cultures of Mesoamerica and the local Guachichils. This diversity had an impact on the organisation of the indigenous social sector of the town by favoring the interdigitation of cultures. Migrations played an important role as well in transforming Amerindian patterns of identification. The experience of moving onto foreign lands and across territories increased contacts with other ethnic groups – an already existing phenomenon seen in chapter 2 – and expanded the possibilities of affiliation and of developing interethnic relationships, albeit without necessarily severing the ties to the homeland.

Historians of northern New Spain emphasize pull factors in explaining the arrival of thousands of Mesoamericans in the mining districts. That is, they put forward the economically favorable conditions of the mines as an important lure to the migrant population. Ignacio del Río, for instance, writes about the significance of wage labour in the whole region.² Peter Bakewell and Dana Velasco Murillo describe mine working in Zacatecas as onerous, but they add that Spanish miners succeeded in attracting

¹ David J. Robinson, "Introduction: Towards a Typology of Migration in Colonial Spanish America," in *Migration in Colonial Spanish America*, ed. David J. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1. In the same chapter, he also writes “[...] migration was often the rule, rather than the exception, in colonial Spanish America.” (13) and “[...] migration was an essential feature of colonial Spanish America.” (17) Michael Swann and Tamar Diana Wilson, also summarize the complex and pervasive phenomenon of migration in New Spain. Michael M. Swann, *Migrants in the Mexican North; Mobility, Economy, and Society in a Colonial World* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1989), 2-25; Tamar Diana Wilson, "The Culture of Mexican Migration," *Critique of Anthropology* 30, no. 4 (2010): 399-408.

² Ignacio del Río, "Sobre la aparición y desarrollo del trabajo libre asalariado en el Norte de Nueva España, siglos XVI y XVII," in *Estudios históricos sobre la formación del Norte de México*, ed. Ignacio del Río (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2009), 27-46.

indigenous labourers by giving them relatively good pay, and because these workers could glean leftover ore and avoid tribute obligations.³ David A. Brading writes that the labour force in the mining districts became mobile in search of ever better payment possibilities.⁴ In San Luis Potosí, Guadalupe Salazar González as well as María Isabel Monroy and Tomás Calvillo Unna argue that the possibility to glean ore, to process it, and to sell it, as well as the good living conditions in the ore-processing facilities were the main factors in attracting the Amerindian labour force.⁵

These pull factors were certainly important in attracting Mesoamericans to the north, but they were only one pole of a complex calculus through which peoples decided to take the serious decision to leave their home town. As David Robinson argues, the decision to migrate was conditioned by a set of networks, such as family, kinship, community, and work relations, in regard to which the potential migrant had to calculate the affective and rational costs of leaving.⁶ The other pole was constituted by the push factors. According to Douglas Butterworth and John K. Chance, the “push-pull hypothesis” should consider all aspects of the option to migrate: the push factors are the conditions found in the homeland that trigger the decision, while the pull factors, such as those presented above, condition the choice of destination.⁷ Among the push factors I identified to have prompted indigenous migrations in the late sixteenth century were epidemics, forced resettlements, land dispossession, and labour exploitation, all of which

³ Peter Bakewell, *Silver Mining and Society in Colonial Mexico, Zacatecas, 1546-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 125-126; Dana Velasco Murillo, "Urban Indians in a Silver City, Zacatecas, Mexico, 1546-1806" (PhD Diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2009), 56-57.

⁴ Brading, *Miners & Merchants*: 146.

⁵ Isabel Monroy Castillo and Tomás Calvillo Unna, *Historia regional de San Luis Potosí* (México: SEP, CONALEP, Limusa, 2000), 96-100; Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 301-306.

⁶ Robinson, "Introduction," 3-10.

⁷ Douglas Butterworth and John K. Chance, *Latin American Urbanization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 39-50.

were exacerbated in this period.⁸ A good example of the push factors is found in Ann Wightman's study of the *forasteros* in the Andes. She presents this movement as one of resistance, mostly as a consequence of the Toledo reforms, of population resettlements, of land dispossession, and of Spaniards' abuses of power.⁹ In a similar way to Wightman, I argue that this movement from central New Spain to the north was one of resilience and resistance, in the midst of what Felipe Castro Gutiérrez has called "la crisis de fin de siglo:" the crisis of the late sixteenth century.¹⁰

In San Luis Potosí, as elsewhere in northern New Spain, there were two forms of migration: those in large and organized groups and those undertaken by individuals or small groups. The first form consisted in the collective movement of people, often entire portions of communities, and involved the intervention or control of the State, that is, of the indigenous and Spanish authorities. Its roots can be traced to the pre-colonial era. The Mesoamerican late post classic (1200-1520) was characterized by a great mobility of human groups, by waves of migrations from its northern areas to its center, and by the militarization and expansion by conquest of many states, like that of the Mexicas.¹¹ During the Conquest of Mesoamerica by the Spaniards, this pattern continued, albeit supervised by the Spanish conquerors. Thousands of Mesoamericans took part, voluntarily or not, in the conquests of sometimes far away indigenous polities and,

⁸ John K. Chance, Tomás Jalpa Flores, and William B. Taylor mention the epidemics, the land dispossession, and the labour exploitation as destructive elements for the indigenous population of New Spain. Chance, "The Urban Indian," 614-615; Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 1; Tomás Jalpa Flores, "Migrantes y extravagantes. Indios de la periferia en la ciudad de México durante los siglos XVI-XVII," in *Los Indios y las ciudades de Nueva España*, ed. Felipe Castro Gutiérrez (Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010), 80.

⁹ Wightman, *Indigenous Migration*: 6.

¹⁰ In his study of the Tarascans, historian Felipe Castro Gutiérrez spends a whole chapter on "La crisis de fin de siglo." He writes "Hacia fines del siglo XVI, sin embargo, ocurrieron varias innovaciones y circunstancias que, cuando se conjuntaron, provocaron una crisis tras la cual ya nada fue como antes." Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 51.

¹¹ López Austin and López Luján, 1996, p. 55-75.

accompanied by their wives and other family members, they often established themselves in the regions they had helped conquer. These groups of migrant soldiers asked – and sometimes obtained – privileges for their help to the Spanish authorities. The recent literature on “Indian Conquistadors” shows that this type of migration often created strong ethnic identities that opposed one another in the arrival communities.¹² In San Luis Potosí, the Tlaxcalans migrated in this way and developed a strong ethnic identity linked to legal, political, and economic powers.

Notwithstanding this continuity, the imposition of the Spanish regime slowly transformed the nature of migration. William B. Taylor writes that migration “reached new dimensions in the sixteenth century.”¹³ The phenomenon became more individualized as people moved alone or in small groups, and it was less formally controlled by agents of the State. Bakewell and Velasco Murillo discuss the importance of this type of migration in Zacatecas already by the 1550s.¹⁴ The pull factors of the northern mines and the urbanization of central Mexico exacerbated development of individual migration and, by the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, thousands of Amerindians moved individually or in small groups from one city to another or from a rural area to an urban one.¹⁵

Despite the ubiquity of migration across New Spain, historians have paid fairly little attention to the consequences for the societies of destination. Through analysis of the experience of the indigenous migrants to San Luis Potosí, I show that migrations were

¹² See, for some examples, Restall, *Maya Conquistador*; Matthew and Oudijk, *Indian Conquistadors*; Altman, *The War for Mexico's*; Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*.

¹³ Felipe Castro Gutiérrez is clear on this aspect of Tarascan migrations, but we also see this phenomenon in all migrants to San Luis Potosí. Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 45. Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 16.

¹⁴ Bakewell, *Silver Mining*: 15 and 115-128; Velasco Murillo, "Urban Indians," 53-59.

¹⁵ For examples of the scale of these migrations in central Mexico, see Chance, "The Urban Indian.": Jalpa Flores, "Migrantes y extravagantes," 79-104.

not simple processes or direct moves from one place to another. Rather, they involved adaptation, the creation of cultural and linguistic bridges, and the integration, assimilation, and syncretism of diverse cultures. In this context, the migrants had the common quality of being “polybians,” that is, according to Tamar Diana Wilson, people who “adapt their being to different modes of existence as they opportunistically move in and out of different life spaces.”¹⁶ This capacity for adaptation must not be understood solely in economic terms because entering multiple economic niches was only possible through a variety of kinship, friendship, and ritual networks.¹⁷ Hence, I argue that indigenous migrants were looking not only for better economic opportunities, but also to rebuild proximate and extended social networks. As a consequence, the modes of affiliation and identification increasingly became flexible.

Causes of Migration

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, a number of events and assaults on indigenous communities combined to provoke a social crisis, which transformed the social fabric of indigenous communities and debilitated personal networks. The indigenous peoples who migrated to San Luis Potosí had lost a large proportion of their family and friends, they had witnessed the deconstruction of their social networks in their home communities, and they had been deprived of the basis of their economic and productive activities. Hence, I argue, the affective, social, and material “costs” of migration were relatively low.

¹⁶ M. Kearney, *Reconceptualizing the Peasantry: Anthropology in Global Perspective* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 141, quoted in Wilson, “The Culture,” 411.

¹⁷ Wilson, “The Culture,” 412.

First, from 1576 to 1581, there was a major general typhus epidemic throughout Mesoamerica that greatly depopulated indigenous towns. It was followed by a series of smaller regional epidemics that furthered diminished the indigenous population. As I will show in detail, the death of so many indigenous peoples severed familial and social ties at the local and regional level. Children were left orphans, adults lost their partners, commercial relations were damaged, relations of power were transformed, fields were left unattended, and elders died with their knowledge and cultural references without being able to fully transmit this heritage. As Susan Austin Alchon writes, the result was “the erosion of traditional economic and political infrastructures.”¹⁸ As the local epidemics were still raging and as the indigenous population was trying to recover from their losses, starting in 1593 the Crown ordered the congregation, that is, the forced resettlement of the scattered rural pueblos into centralized towns. This action reshuffled social and kin ties, contributing to the loss of points of reference and to a sense of hopelessness. In addition to these destructuring events, Spaniards increasingly expelled indigenous peoples from their lands. The diminished indigenous population had left lands unattended, which the Spanish considered vacant and often reappropriated. Such land seizures impeded the reconstruction of indigenous populations and left them dependent on the Spaniards. Furthermore, Spaniards often put the newly acquired land to new use and transformed its constitution and the balance of the regional ecology, leaving indigenous peoples with little knowledge of their changed surroundings. Finally, the exploitation of indigenous labour in Central Mexico was also a cause of migration, as individuals sought better working and living conditions. Here, the mix of the push and pull factors appear as evident.

¹⁸ Austin Alchon, *A Pest in the Land*: 126.

This crisis prompted indigenous peoples to find alternatives to their way of life whenever they could, and migration, as an escape, was one of their options. I will review each of these factors and explain how they led to long journeys and to the establishment of thousands of Mesoamericans into the north of New Spain. I have decided to concentrate my discussion around the Nahuas, Otomis, and Tarascans because of the current state of research, the availability of data, and the considerable presence of these three groups in San Luis Potosí compared to other indigenous peoples. (They accounted for 61.4 % of the total indigenous population: see chapter 2). Appendix 1 details how each factor affected each of the 130 home communities mentioned in the parish archives of Tlaxcalilla. It will serve to show specificities and regional variations.

Epidemics

Epidemics had many important consequences that influenced indigenous peoples in their decision to migrate. The last quarter of the sixteenth century began with an epidemic of typhus. Epidemics had started during the war on Tenochtitlan in 1520, but that of 1576-1581 was among the three worst in New Spain.¹⁹ Death rates presented by historians vary from three hundred thousand to two million deaths in its first year alone. The whole epidemic may have taken around 30-50 % of New Spain's indigenous population.²⁰ The "virgin soils" theory regarding the propagation of epidemics in the

¹⁹ Typhus is the most widespread modern diagnosis for the epidemic, but some authors suggest it might also have been bubonic plague. Because these interpretations are based on symptoms, it could also be that the epidemic was a cross-infection. See Austin Alchon, *A Pest in the Land*: 70.

²⁰ Gerhard estimates the number of deaths at three to four hundred thousand in the first year, but writes that the indigenous population of New Spain passed from 2.6 million to 1.8 million from 1570 to 1581, a diminution of 30 %. Francisco Guerra writes that around 2 million Indians died in the whole of New Spain of that epidemic of typhus in 1576. Austin Alchon estimates the human costs of this epidemic to 50 % of the population. Gerhard, *A Guide*: 23-24; Francisco Guerra, "Origen y efectos demográficos del tifo en el

New World – which emphasizes the Amerindians’ lack of immunity to European diseases – has recently been challenged and replaced by circumstantial and organizational explanations. First, the rural environment may account for the cyclical presence of diseases, because the population was not in perpetual contact with the vectors of contagion, as was the case in European urban areas. A few years of lesser contacts with urban centres or main commercial roads allowed the population of a locality to recover, but its children remained unexposed to the virus which made the whole population more vulnerable to diseases and increased the risk of the destruction of the whole community.²¹

Second, and perhaps more important in explaining the phenomenon of migration, was the fact that colonialism worsened the impact of epidemics. Indeed, the costs of war in human lives and the destruction of economic and political indigenous structures during the sixteenth century made Amerindians more vulnerable in the face of epidemics. The sudden blow of an epidemic put to a halt all productive and daily activities, including preparation of meals and medical attention. A good example of this was recorded by the contemporary observer Bernardino de Sahagún. Describing the typhus epidemic of 1576, he wrote: “as was the case with the mentioned [plague of 1545], many died of hunger and of not having anybody to care for them or give them the necessities; it happened and it happens in many houses that everyone in the house is sick, without anybody to give them a jar of water.”²² In short, this new perspective argues that the epidemics were lethal mostly because of the social disorganization and destructuration provoked by

México colonial," *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 8, no. 3 (1999): 273; Austin Alchon, *A Pest in the Land*: 69.

²¹ Fenn, *Pox Americana*: 22-28.

²² “[...] como también en la otra arriba dicha [1545], muchos murieron de hambre, y de no tener quien los cuidase, ni los diese lo necesario; aconteció y acontece en muchas casas caer todos los de casa enfermos, sin haber quien los pudiese dar un jarro de agua [...]” Bernardino de Sahagún, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, 3:303-304, cited in Guerra, "Origen y efectos," 293.

colonialism.²³ In turn, by annihilating families, epidemics furthered the destruction of the transmission chain of native knowledge and oral culture.²⁴

A closer look at the home communities of the immigrants to San Luis Potosí shows that a great majority of the rural Nahua, Otomi and Tarascan villages mentioned in the parish records were highly affected by the typhus epidemic of 1576-1581. They may have lost over 40 % of their populations in the decades of the 1570s and 1580s. Felipe Castro Gutiérrez writes that the Tarascans were so deeply affected by the typhus epidemic that villages were completely abandoned or left with very few families.²⁵ Exceptions were found to the north of Tarasco zone, in territories newly colonized by the Otomis such as Querétaro, a locality mentioned in the parish records of San Luis Potosí.²⁶ However, the Otomis experienced another plague from 1604 to 1607 in the same communities that had been affected by the earlier typhus. In fact, although the typhus of 1576-1581 was the most important illness at the end of the century, many other smaller or more local sicknesses also struck during the years of the migrations to San Luis Potosí. Table 3.1 shows the repetitive occurrence of various diseases in the home regions of the immigrants to San Luis Potosí.

²³ Cook also acknowledges the importance of food, water supplies, and attendance to the sick person. However, he does not create a causal relation between Spanish colonialism and the strength and destructive powers of diseases. Jones, on the contrary, argues that this was “[...] a story of populations made vulnerable.” (741) Austin Alchon similarly writes: “The violence and social crises that resulted from the imposition of European colonialism greatly exacerbated native American mortality and ultimately undermined indigenous social, political, and economic institutions.” (144) Cook, *Born to Die*: 14; Austin Alchon, *A Pest in the Land*. See especially chapter 5: “New World Epidemics and European Colonialism”; Jones, “Virgin Soils,” 703-742.

²⁴ Austin Alchon, *A Pest in the Land*: 139-144; Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 51-56. See also Gibson, *The Aztecs*: 228-230.

²⁵ Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 52.

²⁶ The causes of depopulation in the 1570s and 1580s in Querétaro are discussed in its *Relación Geográfica* of 1582. The Spanish authorities do mention sicknesses, but seem to worry much more about Chichimec attacks on the new settlements and *reales de minas*. Acuña, *Relaciones geográficas*, 9: 224-230.

Table 3.1: Important Plagues in the Home Regions of the Migrants, 1576-1616

Years	Nature of plagues	Places affected
1576-1581	<i>Cocoliztli</i> or <i>matlazáhuatl</i> (probably typhus)	East to west, from Yucatán to Chichimecas
1587-1588	<i>Cocoliztli</i> (typhus or measles)	Mexico, Toluca, Tlaxcala
1590	Influenza	Unspecified (many deaths)
1592-1593	Various diseases affecting children	Valley of Mexico
1595-1597	Plague (several diseases)	Toluca and South
1601-1602	<i>Cocoliztli</i>	Xochimilco and Cholula
1604-1607	Unspecified	Valley of Mexico and among the Otomis
1615-1616	Various diseases, accompanied by drought and famine	Valley of Mexico

Source: Gerhard, *A Guide*: 23.

A large proportion of Mesoamericans moving to San Luis Potosí in the 1590s were in their twenties.²⁷ In other words, these young adults had lived through the epidemics as children. Across indigenous societies of the Americas, the experience was shattering. People came to question their relation with their gods, believing they themselves had broken the reciprocity dynamic by adopting some Catholic practices. They experienced depression and there were mass suicides.²⁸ Many people found a good alternative to counter the social and affective impacts of high mortality rates in the complex families. This social body, which already existed in the pre-colonial era, grouped individuals related to one another by political and ritual kinship. However, as

²⁷ No statistics were gathered on the age of the migrants because the APT does not give that information. However, the criminal documents of the AHESLP-AM often give that information and show that most of the Amerindians it included were young adults, who were mostly between 18 and 30 years old. See also Swann, "Migration, Mobility," 170-172.

²⁸ Austin Alchon, *A Pest in the Land*: 109-116.

high numbers of children became orphans in the wake of epidemics, it took new forms by including individuals who had weaker connections to the family. For example, Robert McCaa, using the censuses of Morelos of the late 1530s right after two important epidemics, writes that 2.5 % of the children who were less than five years old and 6.9 % of those between five and nine years old had lost both their parents. The percentages were even higher for children who had lost one of their parents.²⁹ Most of these children were incorporated into complex families to which they belonged. However, considering the very high rates of mortality of the epidemic of 1576-1581, it is most probable that many of them were incorporated into other families or that they found themselves alone.

The significance of epidemics as a push factor to migration is undeniable, mostly among young people. There were some regional variations, however. My documentation, as I will explain in greater detail later, suggests that the Otomis migrated in small steps over the years before arriving in San Luis Potosí, while Tarascans tended to move directly from Michoacán to the mining town. It is worth noting that, according to Gerhard, Tarascans were seldom affected by the smaller regional epidemics of the later sixteenth century. Thus the typhus of 1576-1581 pushed Amerindians out of their home towns, but it did not immediately push them to San Luis Potosí. Indeed, there is a whole decade between the end of the epidemic and the first arrival of Mesoamericans on the town's site. However, it prompted many young people to find solutions to their losses, and movement was an important response.

²⁹ Robert McCaa, "Matrimonio infantil, 'cemithualtin' (familias complejas) y el antiguo pueblo nahua," *Historia Mexicana* 46, no. 1 (1996): 32-33 and 44.

Forced Population Congregations

Between 1593 and 1605, the King issued a royal decree for New Spain that forced the resettlement of the scattered indigenous population into single planned villages. This policy, called *congregación*, formed a core element of the colonisation process in the sixteenth century. Known as *reducciones* in the Andes, it was a major part of the Toledo Reforms of the 1570s. Indeed, the viceroy of Peru Francisco de Toledo thought the indigenous population was disorganized and difficult to control, which made taxes and tribute difficult to collect. According to Wightman, the resettlement policy of Toledo was a major factor in the decision of Andeans to migrate.³⁰ A similar situation was in place in New Spain, where the Church and civil administrators viewed the scattered and depopulated villages of the Nahuas, Otomis, and Tarascans as difficult to control. The *jueces de congregación* (congregation agents) were in charge of carrying out the relocation of peoples, with the official objective of facilitating their religious conversion.³¹

This process had deep and destructive effects on indigenous societies, because it forced Mesoamericans into new villages organized according to the European ideal of the geometric grid pattern of early modern times. Instead of living close to the land they cultivated, indigenous villagers found themselves living in small urban areas. This transformed their social, economic, and political structures. Indeed, urban habitats not only had different forms than rural ones, but they also had different functions expressed

³⁰ Wightman, *Indigenous Migration*: 1-6.

³¹ "Congregaciones (031)," *Guía general de los fondos, secciones y series que resguarda el Archivo General de la Nación de México*, <http://www.agn.gob.mx/guiageneral/> (accessed September 15, 2011); Gibson, *The Aztecs*: 283. See also Francisco de Solano, "Urbanización y municipalización de la población indígena," in *Estudios sobre la ciudad iberoamericana*, ed. Francisco de Solano (Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas, Instituto "Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo", 1983).

in a different way of life. For instance, work, rituals, and interpersonal relations diverge significantly because of the strong presence in rural areas and virtual absence in urban ones, of agriculture.³² In the Andes, for example, Kennet J. Andrien writes that "the congregation of dispersed groups into these new towns, however, also brought together different ayllus [kinship groups] and even ethnic groups for the first time, and it further disrupted traditional Andean patterns of vertical exchanges."³³

Even though large numbers of Amerindians moved willingly to towns and cities of New Spain, the planned congregation villages had very little appeal to most of them. The difference between already established towns and the new congregations was that the first had existing institutions and economic and social networks, while the second obliged the communities to reshape themselves entirely. An individual migrating to a city could integrate him/herself into the market economy by selling foodstuffs from his/her hometown, becoming an apprentice, or being hired as domestic in a Spanish house. These individuals slowly made their place in their new setting, but most often kept ties to their homeland. In this way, they created links between rural production and urban distribution systems. The congregations, on the contrary, were built from scratch and they took the people away from their existing fields, which were the basis of their productive activities. In addition, the home towns and the support of kindred disappeared, which complicated

³² See Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos: 75-76*, for the examples of the Tarascans. Jay Kinsbruner, *The Colonial Spanish American City; Urban Life in the Age of Atlantic Capitalism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 1-12 and 23-32, explains the forms and functions of urban areas, the differences between urban and rural habitats with the essential marker being agriculture, and the emergence of the ordained and structured urban place. For a case study of the effect of urbanization on indigenous societies in the Andes, see Poloni-Simard, *La mosaïque indienne*: especially chapter five. See also Francisco de Solano, *Ciudades hispanoamericanas y pueblos de indios* (Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas, 1990), especially chapter XII: "El pueblo de indios. Política de concentración de la población indígena: objetivos, proceso, problemas, resultados," 333-353.

³³ Kennet J. Andrien, *Andean Worlds; Indigenous History, Culture, and Consciousness under Spanish Rule, 1532-1825* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), 50.

the creation of economic ties. As a result, many indigenous communities objected to the forced congregations.³⁴ This often took the form of legal complaints to the Spanish authorities. The Otomis from Metepec – a community that appears in the parish records of Tlaxcalilla – for example, felt that congregation would adversely affect them and decided to oppose the decision.³⁵ However, most of these legal attempts to resist did not work and congregation proceeded apace. In consequence, Amerindians had the option to integrate into the new communities or to flee, an option many decided to take.

According to the characteristics attributed by Peter Gerhard to the Nahua, Tarascan, and Otomi communities, 95 % of the rural communities mentioned in the parish registers in San Luis Potosí had gone through successful or attempted congregation.³⁶ In other words, a majority of the immigrants to the mining town had experienced forced resettlement. Given the disruption caused by congregation on indigenous societies and the attempts at resistance, either by legal means or by flight, I consider these reforms as a strong push for migration.

Land Dispossession

Another major issue that Mesoamericans faced was the dispossession of their land at the hands of Spaniards. I argue that this was another significant cause for migration.

³⁴ For voluntary urban migration, see Chance, "The Urban Indian," 610; Castro Gutiérrez, "Los indios y la ciudad," 17; Jalpa Flores, "Migrantes y extravagantes," 79-104; Chance, "Introduction," 6. For resistance, see Gibson, *The Aztecs*: 284; Gerhard, *A Guide*: 27.

³⁵ AGN, IC, RPI, congregaciones, vol. 1, exp. 159. According to Taylor, Otomi communities were especially affected by congregations. Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 15. Many other examples of congregations and contestations from indigenous peoples can be found in the "Guía General" of the AGN for villages mentioned in the parish records of San Luis Potosí. The point, however, is not to enumerate them all, but to show that congregations had great impacts on the native communities. To see where congregations took place among the villages mentioned in San Luis Potosí, see appendix 1.

³⁶ According to the data presented by Gerhard, six out of the ninety-two villages, towns, and cities in the Nahua, Tarascan, and Otomi areas can be considered as urban in form and function. The other eighty-six were in rural settings. See appendix 1 for details.

Spaniards did not have the legal means to take over indigenous lands outright. In theory, the King considered Indians as vassals and the *república de indios* was protected against Spanish encroachment. As many historians have shown, however, indigenous peoples spent a great deal of time gathering proof of their land rights and presenting these in the colonial courts.³⁷ For their part, Spaniards used the general pressures of the colonial system to buy the lands of Amerindians who had no other options. They petitioned the Crown to receive more lands to compensate for the loss of workers in their *encomiendas* and *haciendas* due to disease. They transformed the productive nature of the land, mostly in the Otomi area, which had deep environmental consequences. Each of the Nahua, Tarascan, and Otomi regions confronted different causes of the land dispossession problem. I will consider land dispossession in light of the general depopulation resulting from epidemics and in accordance to regional variations.

Of the Nahua and Tarascan localities mentioned in the parish records of Tlaxcalilla, only 15 % and 21 %, respectively, experienced land encroachment by Spaniards. These percentages may appear low, but Charles Gibson and Peter Gerhard point out that the growing land acquisitions by Spaniards and the creation of large haciendas happened at the same time as congregations. In other words, they believe that “land-hungry Spaniards” were behind this policy as well, in order to be able to buy vacated land from indigenous communities.³⁸

³⁷ Susan Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation of Aztec Culture, 1500-1700* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995); Yanna Yannakakis, *The Art of Being In-between; Native Intermediaries, Indian Identity, and Local Rule in Colonial Oaxaca* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008); Ethelia Ruiz Medrano, *Mexico's Indigenous Communities. Their Lands and Histories, 1500-2010*, trans. Russ Davidson (Bolder: University Press of Colorado, 2010), 1-78; Yanna Yannakakis, "Indigenous Peoples and Legal Culture in Spanish America," *History Compass* 11, no. 11 (2013).

³⁸ Gibson, *The Aztecs*: 282-285; Gerhard, *A Guide*: 27.

According to James Lockhart, however, the pressure on Nahuatl lands in central Mexico, was relatively low until the mid-seventeenth century. He points to the diminution of the population, which left sufficient vacant lands for Spaniards, and to the possibility for indigenous peoples to sell their lands permanently.³⁹ Writing before Lockhart, Gibson states that land grants to Spaniards intensified from the 1580s to 1618, and that by the 1590s “Indians retained only small amounts of land throughout the Valley [of Mexico].”⁴⁰ The combination of both interpretations indicates that, while indigenous peoples of the central valley did not suffer from outright dispossession, they did sell their vacant lands after the epidemics and congregations of the late sixteenth century. This practice was apparently a response to other pressures: tribute payment and lack of food, for which liquidities had to be gathered. These land sales were responses to colonial pressures and to Spaniards’ growing taste for land.

Statistically, the Tarascans also appear to have experienced little Spanish encroachment on their land, mostly because there were relatively fewer Spaniards in that area.⁴¹ Castro Gutiérrez, however, asserts that indigenous communities did lose large areas of land. According to him, the indirect cause of contradiction between statistics and reality as lived by the Tarascans was the sudden diminution of the indigenous population, which had two consequences. First, the communities did not have the sufficient population to cultivate all their lands, and many areas were left vacant. Second, the

³⁹ Forms of landholding in both pre-colonial and post-colonial times were not clear cut. Some lands were commons, others were privately owned by individuals or couples, and a large range of other possibilities existed between these two extremes. Land sales could affect all of these and took a variety of forms, from direct possession by the buyer to exclusive right to use the land without possession. The sales of individual properties often affected the communities as well, as they lost any rights on these forever. Lockhart, *The Nahuas after the Conquest*: 163-176. See also Allan Greer, "Commons and Enclosure in the Colonization of North America," *American Historical Review* 117, no. 2 (2012).

⁴⁰ Gibson, *The Aztecs*: 279.

⁴¹ Gerhard, *A Guide*: 349.

population decline meant for the *encomenderos* a significant loss in revenue from tribute collection. They thus repeatedly petitioned the Crown to acquire more land in the form of *labores* (agricultural farms) and *estancias de ganados* (ranches).⁴² From the official Spanish perspective, these lands were “vacant,” but for indigenous communities, these *labores* and *estancias* meant loss of future possibilities and the obligation to regroup, among other places, in the new congregated villages. Hence, in Michoacán too, Spanish encroachment most probably contributed to the displacement and migration of many Tarascans.

Finally, the Otomi area was affected more thoroughly by land pressures. As the northern frontier expanded with the pace of silver and gold discoveries, the Spanish cattle and sheep haciendas followed northward and Spaniards sought more seriously to appropriate land.⁴³ Out of the twenty source communities in that region, fifteen suffered from forms of Spanish land encroachment that ended in outright appropriation. This was mostly the case of the newest Otomi communities settled on Pame land, north of the old Chichimec frontier, an area that always attracted Spaniards.

A deeper study of this land encroachment highlights another dimension of Spanish colonisation of Mesoamerica: environmental transformation and degradation, particularly in areas affected by sheep grazing. In the Otomi Valle del Mezquital, Elinor Melville writes that “intensive irrigation agriculture shifted to extensive pastoralism; the region was transformed from a complex and densely populated agricultural mosaic into a

⁴² Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 55-56.

⁴³ Gerhard, *A Guide*: 385. There was a similar situation in Cempoala: “Most of the land here was acquired by cattle and *pulque* haciendas in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with a consequent influx of non-Indians.” (68)

sparsely populated mesquite desert.”⁴⁴ The sudden arrival of sheep in this area transformed the landscape and soil, completely changed the species of plants that could grow, and obliged the indigenous peoples to develop new subsistence techniques or leave.⁴⁵

The common experience of the Nahuas, Tarascans, and Otomis was the reduction of community lands and displacement of the population. In addition to the aftershock of epidemics, the consequential transformation of the social fabric and the weakening of personal networks eroded the possibilities for Amerindians to react against these land losses. This loss of their means of production left indigenous peoples with few options, and migration probably appeared as a tempting way out of this misery.

Exploitation of Labour

The last element of the crisis at the end of the sixteenth century was the exploitation of labour. This is where the push and pull factors of migration complemented each other most strongly. First, colonial forms of labour exploitation increased at the end of the sixteenth century and significantly disadvantaged indigenous peoples. Second, San Luis Potosí, like other mining districts of the north, represented a contrasting and attractive site of economic opportunity for indigenous labourers. Overall, I argue that the combination of worsening labour conditions at home and of more attractive ones in the north represented a significant incentive to migration.

At the very beginning of the colonial era, the work force and the tribute of indigenous states had been given to individual Spaniards in *encomienda* (a grant of

⁴⁴ Elinor G. K. Melville, *A Plague of Sheep: Environmental Consequences of the Conquest of Mexico* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 14.

⁴⁵ Melville, *A Plague of Sheep*: 13-59; Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 120-124.

authority). Spanish *encomenderos* did not own the land, but rather a part of its labour power and its production. Although the degree of coercion varied from one *encomendero* to another, it is clear that their primary objective was to make gains in money and in kind, and very few were primarily concerned with the well-being of the indigenous peoples under their command. Even though they began to be phased out by the New Laws of 1542, encomiendas were kept by certain Spanish families well after that date. Out of the seventy-nine Nahua, Otomi, and Tarascan rural localities mentioned in San Luis, 49 % were still held in encomienda by 1590, and often well into the seventeenth century (see Appendix 1). Numerous indigenous peoples migrating to San Luis Potosí had thus been living under the coercive hand of a Spaniard who legally extracted labour from them.

In order to replace encomienda, the New Spanish authorities established the system of the *repartimiento* (rotational labour drafts) in the 1550s. According to Gibson, this system was also “one of compulsion and abuse.”⁴⁶ In the region of Mexico City and its surroundings, most Indians used in the *repartimiento* worked in agriculture on wheat farms and on public and private works in the city. For the Tarascans in Michoacán, drafted labour took many forms, but they most frequently worked in the mines of Guanajuato, which opened in 1545. In that setting, writes Castro Gutiérrez, Amerindians were paid for their labour and worked in better conditions than in most other places – say in comparison to the mines of Potosí in Peru or those of Taxco in New Spain.⁴⁷ An official called the *juez de repartimiento*, however, assigned them to a specific miner and they could not negotiate their salary or change employer.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Gibson, *The Aztecs*: 224 and 233.

⁴⁷ Robert S. Haskett, "Our Suffering with the Taxco Tribute: Involuntary Mine Labor and Indigenous Society in Central New Spain," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 71, no. 3 (1991).

⁴⁸ Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 230-240.

In the 1580s and 1590s, the exploitation of labour became even harsher as the great diminution in population caused by the typhus epidemic led to new methods of recruitment, with greater stress on communities. Indigenous elites, initially exempted from the repartimiento, now had to work as draft labourers. Periods of work grew in both length and frequency, and the quotas of participating tributaries increased significantly. In the 1550s, tributaries had to work an average of 2 % of their time in the repartimiento system. By the late sixteenth century, this quota had passed to 4 to 5 % for the months of November through April and to 10 % for those of May through October.⁴⁹ This system affected whole communities and brought them no benefit at all. Tarascans, for example, considered tribute and ecclesiastical payments as their share in a reciprocal system wherein they received protection from the King and religious services from the Church. In contrast, the repartimiento did not bring them any advantage. They presented many petitions for exemption to the Spanish authorities, but the opportunities to evade were few.⁵⁰ This situation affected indigenous communities throughout New Spain.⁵¹

In contrast to the exploitation of labour in encomiendas and in the repartimiento system, the opening of mines on the northern frontier, including San Luis Potosí, represented an attractive lure to Mesoamericans, in particular to the relatively proximate and experienced Tarascan mine workers.⁵² Arriving on the mining sites, Amerindian mine workers received relatively good pay and had the right to keep part of their daily mineral extraction as additional payment. The portion of the ore they could keep was

⁴⁹ Gibson, *The Aztecs*: 226-232.

⁵⁰ Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 218-240.

⁵¹ In addition to the regions covered here, we should mention the same phenomenon in the Mixtec and Zapotec area, where many rural families moved to the city of Antequera in the hope of encountering better living conditions. Chance, "The Urban Indian," 614.

⁵² Dana Velasco Murillo notes that many Amerindians defected from the mines of Cuernavaca, Peru, Potosí, Sonora, and Nueva Vizcaya, but argues that in Zacatecas this onerous work was well paid and Amerindian workers there avoided tribute obligations. Velasco Murillo, "Urban Indians," 56-57.

called the *pepena*. These working conditions were pervasive across the northern mines, in cities such as Zacatecas.⁵³

Ignacio del Río writes, on the basis of the *Descripción geográfica* (1602-1605), that Indian workers in Zacatecas could make an average of one hundred pesos annually out of the *pepena*, and that, if that amount is added to their annual salary, they made almost the same amount of money as a salaried Spaniard.⁵⁴ In San Luis Potosí, del Río says that, in 1642, apart from receiving some of the best salaries in the kingdom, the mine-workers received shelter and rations of water, meat, pepper, corn, and firewood.⁵⁵ In comparison, I will take the case of a man who received a sentence for a criminal offense in 1594 to work in the mines for four pesos per month.⁵⁶ This punitive salary was similar to those of unskilled agricultural workers in central Mexico, who earned an average of three pesos per month. For skilled labour, the salary was double.⁵⁷

It is hard to determine the exact salaries of indigenous peoples in San Luis Potosí, because they could negotiate with their employers or go to work for another one, which made salaries fluctuate and the results of oral, unrecorded discussions. In fact, the Spaniards considered Amerindian workers so important that they even fought one another

⁵³ Monroy and Calvillo Unna, *Breve historia*: 96-100, write that the *pepena* was called *tenate* in San Luis Potosí, but, at least in the documents we used, the first term was the most common. The RAE writes that the term derives from the Náhuatl “*pepena*”: “escoger, recoger, rebuscar,” which could be translated to “gleaning.” *Diccionario de la lengua española*, 22nd ed., Real Academia Española, s.v. “*Pepeña*”, <http://lema.rae.es/drae/?val=pepena> (accessed September 15, 2011).

⁵⁴ del Río, “Sobre la aparición,” 42-43. Salazar González also indicates that the *pepena* was the principal attraction for Amerindians to work in the mines. Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 303-304.

⁵⁵ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 301; del Río, “Sobre la aparición,” 42-43. Del Río writes that mine workers received four *reales* a day, while Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 205, says that around the same time, indigenous workers in Michoacan were paid one and a half to two and a half *reales* per day.

⁵⁶ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 1.

⁵⁷ According to Charles Gibson, unskilled labourers were paid one *real* per day and worked six days a week. Since one *peso* was worth eight *reales*, the central valley workers earned about three *pesos* per month. Gibson also presents other prices that strengthen the argument that salaries were higher, and thus more attractive, in the North. Gibson, *The Aztecs*: 250. For San Luis Potosí, Guadalupe Salazar González indicates that by 1631 the labourers in the mines of San Pedro earned ten *reales* (one *peso* and two *reales*), but she does not mention for how many days of work. Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 301.

and “stole” the best workers from their neighbours. This practice, called *sonsaque*, consisted in offering better salaries and working conditions to Amerindians to attract them to one’s own service.⁵⁸ A criminal prosecution presented in January 1594 illustrates very well the importance of this problem:

“Domingos Gallegos [...] has drawn out and taken from my service a married Indian man and an Indian woman [...] giving them money and making them promises of salaries and sending one of his slaves to call them various times [...] for which reason he has committed an offence against the royal decrees [...] that a Spaniard who draws out the service that is not his own incurs a penalty of two hundred pesos [...]”⁵⁹

The authorities of San Luis Potosí took this situation very seriously and jailed Domingos Gallegos, who then claimed that he was on the edge of bankruptcy and had no time to waste on the matter. The document stops at that point and does not give further information, but it clearly shows that Amerindian labour was very important to Spanish miners and to the economic development of the town, and that demand was greater than supply. Obviously, exploitation of Amerindian labour was still present in the north, but the general working conditions appear to have been better there than in central Mexico and to have provided a strong incentive for immigration.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 297; Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 106-107; del Río, "Sobre la aparición," 41-42.

⁵⁹ “Beatriz Ruiz [...] digo que me querello criminalmente de Domingos Gallegos [...] que [...] me ha sonsacado y llevado de mi servicio un indio y una india casados [...] dándoles dineros y haciéndoles promesas de salarios y enviando a una esclava suya a llamar diversas veces [...] en lo cual ha cometido delito yendo contra las ordenanzas reales [...] que el español que sonsacare el servicio ajeno incurra en pena de doscientos pesos [...]” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 3.

⁶⁰ On the “push-pull hypothesis” in migrations, see Butterworth and Chance, *Latin American Urbanization*: 39. For general studies on the northern mining conditions, see Kicza, "Migration to Major Metropoles," 193-211; Swann, "Migration, Mobility," 143-181; del Río, "Sobre la aparición," 27-46. For studies on Zacatecas, see Bakewell, *Silver Mining*: 124-128; Velasco Murillo, "Urban Indians," 56-58.

Overall Causes of Migration

In sum, the crisis of the end of the sixteenth century was characterized by important epidemics and the severe diminution of the Amerindian population, by the congregation of the survivors into new communities, by the ensuing spoliation of lands, by the degradation of the ecosystems, and by overall labour exploitation. The destructuration of Mesoamerican societies and communities was a pervasive phenomenon across the territory. As Robinson notes, “migration from adversity, or to opportunity, became one of the most important ‘solutions’ for colonial Indians.”⁶¹ Facing extraordinary crises, many Mesoamericans undertook the voyage to the north. For the most part, they were men, but important numbers of women also migrated. Their skills varied greatly, and they performed jobs as mine workers, cart drivers, merchants, and artisans. For the most part, they brought with them from the south the traumatic experience of social dislocation, and sought to find a better life in the north.⁶²

Group Migrations

Migration was a ubiquitous phenomenon across both Mesoamerica and Aridoamerica, and was not entirely new. Pre-colonial and early sixteenth century patterns of migration consisted in the collective movement of people, often entire portions of communities. The State – the indigenous or Spanish authorities – often participated in these operations, either planning them or sending local noblemen to lead their people. The objective was to colonize a conquered area or to integrate it into the State’s realm. It

⁶¹ Robinson, "Introduction," 10.

⁶² According to Robinson, the individual characteristics such as ethnicity, spoken language(s), sex, age, work, skills, networks, life heritage, and status (marital, social, economic, and political) are all important to understand the experiences of migrations. Robinson, "Introduction," 4-5.

is important to mention this type of migration because it matches the Tlaxcalans' experience in their movement to San Luis Potosí.

Collective migration was significant in the pre-colonial era and it influenced the formation and organisation of polities. For example, Carlos Paredes Martínez describes the subsequent arrival of large groups in the town of Guayangareo (now Morelia) in Michoacán. He writes that the Chichimecs, albeit hunter-gatherers who migrated according to the seasons, always had an influence on the region. The town was first settled by a group of Otomis and then by Matlatzincans, a group linguistically affiliated to the former. In the fifteenth century, Guayangareo was conquered and populated by the Tarascans who were then in a large process of expansion. Finally, the town was repopulated under the Spanish by groups of Náhuatl speakers.⁶³ The successive migrations to this town were always organized and served a process of colonisation. In the case of the Tarascan and Nahua arrivals in particular, the establishment of groups of people was planned by the administrators of the expanding empires. There are numerous other examples of similar migration processes throughout Mesoamerica.

These collective movements seem to have increased under Spanish rule. Large groups of Mesoamericans accompanied, willingly or through coercion, the Spanish conquerors in their ventures into Michoacán, Nueva Galicia, the Gran Chichimeca, Yucatán, and Guatemala. Often, these indigenous conquerors established themselves in the conquered regions.⁶⁴ These groups retained a deep affiliation with their homeland and

⁶³ Paredes Martínez, "Grupos étnicos," 315-318; Herrejón Peredo, *Los orígenes de Morelia*: 15-33. Herrejón Peredo reports that archeological studies of the site have uncovered a highly active commercial and cultural center that had contact far away into Aridamerica, to the West, and to Teotihuacán. He also confirms the highly culturally complex population.

⁶⁴ See, for example, Restall, *Seven Myths*: 44-63; Matthew and Oudijk, *Indian Conquistadors*; Álvarez, "Conquista y encomienda," 135-188; Altman, *The War for Mexico's*; Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*.

gradually came to identify themselves with both their origins and their new community. For example, Laura E. Matthew studied the Nahua allies of the Spaniards in the conquest of Central America who came to call themselves “Mexicanos.” These people settled in Ciudad Vieja, in barrios separated from other ethnic groups and only later included other indigenous peoples. The most important elements in making sense of the identity of these early migrant-warriors were their affiliation to a territory and to a lineage.⁶⁵ In this sixteenth-century early phase of colonial migrations, community identification was important and endured even in complex ethnic settings.

The Tlaxcalans who moved to San Luis Potosí participated in a similar colonisation process. In 1590, the Crown reached a peace agreement with the Chichimecs, against which the Spanish had been at war for over forty years. In order to “help” the hunter-gatherer group settle down, the Crown promised to send Mesoamericans, who in definitive acted as colonisers and agents of acculturation. For this purpose, an important agreement, called the *Capitulaciones*, was signed between Tlaxcala and the Viceroy in 1591 so that Tlaxcalans would be sent north.⁶⁶ According to this document, Tlaxcalan migrants would become *hidalgos* (lower nobility) in perpetuity, free from tribute and payment of taxes, as well as from personal service. They would receive lands in the Chichimec countries, lands that were protected from Spanish encroachment or appropriation. Finally, the migrating Tlaxcalan authorities received permission to carry arms and ride saddle horses, a privilege that Spanish commoners did

⁶⁵ Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*: 132-230.

⁶⁶ Eugene Sego writes that the governor and the *cabildo* (composed of *principales* or noblemen) of Tlaxcala participated in the negotiation process, but that no historian has been able to identify clearly the names of the Tlaxcalan signatories of the *Capitulaciones*. Sego, "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies," 44.

not have.⁶⁷ However, historians Eugene Segó and Andrea Martínez Baracs show that, notwithstanding all these advantages, the initial four hundred families envisaged by this colonizing venture were hard to gather, and those who composed the first migration were almost all young, poor, and with little chance of social mobility in Tlaxcala.⁶⁸

The voyage of the nearly one thousand Tlaxcalans to the north was something exceptional and needed an important degree of organization to transport food, farming equipment, weapons, and other supplies. The vice-regal government rented over one hundred two-wheeled carts, each pulled by a minimum of six oxen or mules, to transport the materials, people, and their personal belongings. The specific group that would settle near San Luis Potosí came from the *cabecera* (head community of a larger administrative territory) of Tepetícpac and included 230 individuals.⁶⁹

The whole column left Tlaxcala early in June 1591 in the direction of Mexico City, in order to reach the *camino real* (royal road) to Zacatecas. The group was so important to Spanish plans to colonize the north that, when they arrived at Mexico City, they received a visit from Viceroy Velasco himself. Then the colonists passed through the Otomi territories of Xilotepec, San Juan del Río, and Querétaro. They entered the northern area and passed by San Miguel el Grande and San Felipe. Before reaching

⁶⁷ These privileges were written down in the document entitled “Capitulaciones del virrey Velasco con la ciudad de Tlaxcala para el envío de cuatrocientas familias a poblar en tierra de chichimecas – 1591”. The document was copied in Primo Feliciano Velázquez, *Colección de documentos para la historia de San Luis Potosí*, vol. I (San Luis Potosí: Imprenta del Editor, 1897), 177-183. The AHESLP has published a facsimile of this book in 1985, from which was taken the copy (that I consulted) presented in Martínez Saldaña, *La diáspora tlaxcalteca*: 159-165. English translations can be found in Philip Wayne Powell, *Mexico's Miguel Caldera; The Taming of America's First Frontier, 1548-1597* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1977); Segó, "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies," 173-174. The Capitulaciones are also explained in Andrea Martínez Baracs, "Colonizaciones tlaxcaltecas," *Historia Mexicana* 43, no. 2 (1993): 195-250; José Antonio Rivera Villanueva, *Los Tlaxcaltecas: pobladores de San Luis Potosí* (San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis, 1999), 7-8.

⁶⁸ Segó, "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies," 39-64; Martínez Baracs, "Colonizaciones tlaxcaltecas," 214-222; Martínez Saldaña, *La diáspora tlaxcalteca*: 73-77.

⁶⁹ Segó, "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies," 50; Martínez Saldaña, *La diáspora tlaxcalteca*: 59-74.

Zacatecas, they stopped at Cuicillo in early August and were divided in four groups – corresponding more or less to the four cabeceras of Tlaxcala – by the governor of Nueva Vizcaya.⁷⁰ The group from Tepetícpac went east and reached the Guachichil settlement of Mezquitic in early November. Shortly afterwards, a detachment of Tlaxcalans founded Tlaxcalilla, on the site of the present centre of San Luis Potosí. Displaced a year later when the Spaniards discovered silver and gold on the hill of San Pedro, Tlaxcalilla was definitively established about one kilometre north of the Spanish town alongside the Guachichils of the recently settled barrio of Santiago.⁷¹

The 230 individuals who migrated from the cabecera of Tepetícpac to San Luis Potosí included eighty-six families. However, only forty-four children made the journey which suggests that most of the families were couples without children. On the other hand, very few of the Tlaxcalan migrants were single. Only thirteen men and one woman undertook the voyage without a spouse.⁷² Most of the migrants were young and probably expected to gain much from this voyage and from their settlement in new lands that they legally controlled, even against possible Spanish establishment and encroachment in the area.

⁷⁰ Marínez Saldaña places Cuicillo near León, but this is most improbable as this latter town was on a secondary road off the *camino real* and actually quite far from Zacatecas. All other descriptions of that voyage place Cuicillo South-east of Zacatecas.

⁷¹ The organization and migration of the Tlaxcalans, as well as the encounter between the Guachichils and the Tlaxcalans are described by many authors: Velázquez, *Historia de San Luis Potosí*, I: *De los tiempos nebulosos a la fundación del pueblo de San Luis Potosí*: 416-418; Martínez Baracs, "Colonizaciones tlaxcaltecas," 229-243; David Frye, *Indians into Mexicans; History and Identity in a Mexican Town* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 43-70; Monroy and Calvillo Unna, *Breve historia*: 70-77; Martínez Saldaña, *La diáspora tlaxcalteca*: 59-74; Sego, *Aliados y adversarios*: 42-66; Montejano y Aguiñaga, "La evolución," 79-83; Rivera Villanueva, "La influencia tlaxcalteca," 89-102; Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 39-44; Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 65-68; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 31-39.

⁷² Martínez Saldaña presents a table in which there are ninety-nine adult men and eighty-seven adult women. In the underneath note, he writes that there were eighty-six marriages, leaving thirteen single men and one single woman. He also adds that they were all young and without children: "[...] todos ellos jóvenes y la mayoría sin hijos." Martínez Saldaña, *La diáspora tlaxcalteca*: 77. See also Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 184-203; Sego, "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies," 52-53.

The Tlaxcalans of San Luis Potosí were among the last Mesoamericans to migrate as a corporate group. Among the other indigenous peoples of the valley, they were the exception and they always retained a particular status with regards to their identity. As I will show throughout this dissertation, this does not mean that Tlaxcalans remained closed on themselves, but that the patterns of affiliation of this particular community, even for newcomers who were accepted and integrated to it over time, was always distinct from all other communities of San Luis Potosí. That is to say, the pattern of migration had a direct impact on both processes of identification and formal political identity. I will now turn to another form of migration, which led to other forms of affiliation among the indigenous peoples of San Luis Potosí.

Individual Migration

During the second half of the sixteenth century, migrations gradually took a new course. They became less controlled by agents of the State and they were no longer large, collective movements. The Otomis, Nahuas, Tarascans, Cazcans, Tecuexes, Cocas, and others did not collectively organize or coordinate their journeys to the northern mines; nor did they receive any aid from the viceregal government. In fact, Spanish exploration and settlement of the north was, for the most part, an individual enterprise. Migrations became an individual or small group experience. This private and individual nature of migrations had significant consequences on affective relationships and patterns of identification, on economic structures of San Luis Potosí, and on the diversity of its population. There are no records or compilations of the Mesoamerican migration at the time, but two criminal cases from October 1592, from “el cerro del Potosí,” testify to the

presence on Spanish haciendas de beneficio of a Nahua from Toluca, a Tecuexe from Tonalá, and two Tarascans from Cuitzeo and Uruapan. This means that the presence of Amerindians was already diversified and that immigrations from different parts of Mesoamerica had already started a few months after the discovery of the mines.⁷³

The Otomis from Jilotepec were the first to start the northward movement, and this they did very early in the 1520s. Through them, we can glimpse the slow changes in patterns of migration. David Charles Wright Carr divides this migration in four phases.⁷⁴ The first, from 1521 to 1540, was a “clandestine” phase of migration, when Otomi rulers such as Coni, Nicolás de San Luis Montañez, and Mexici, moved north with an undetermined number of followers. Some of them, such as Coni, had been merchants and already had contact with the Pame natives of the area. As the Spanish expansion caught up with them, they decided to integrate themselves into the colonial system and founded new settlements farther north.⁷⁵ This was the second phase, which ended at the beginning of the Chichimec war in 1550. The third phase involved the participation of the Otomis – as well as other Mesoamericans – against the Chichimecs, which prompted Yolanda Lastra to write: “the Spanish expansion towards the north [...] was carried out with the help of indigenous peoples, above all with that of Otomis from Jilotepec.”⁷⁶ The postwar phase, ending around the mid-seventeenth century, saw the resumption of Otomi northern

⁷³ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1592, caja 1, exp. 2 and 4.

⁷⁴ David Charles Wright Carr, *Querétaro en el siglo XVI: Fuentes documentales primarias* (Querétaro: Dirección de Patrimonio Cultural, Secretaría de Cultura y Bienestar Social, Gobierno del Estado de Querétaro, 1993). Cited in Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 131-141.

⁷⁵ Nicolás de San Luis Montañez had already been incorporated in the system as an interpreter for the Spaniards in Michoacán. Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 132-133.

⁷⁶ “[...] la expansión de los españoles hacia el norte [...] se llevó a cabo con la ayuda indígena, sobre todo de guerreros otomíes de Jilotepec.” Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 141.

migration and settlement.⁷⁷ It is not surprising, then, to find numerous Otomi migrants in San Luis Potosí coming from both their homeland in the Valle del Mezquital and from the newer northern settlements such as Querétaro, San Juan del Río, and Sichú. Because connections between these migrants and their homeland remained active, the slow pattern of migration and town settlement unfolding throughout the century inspired relatives in the Valle del Mezquital to undertake the same enterprise. After all, their migrating counterparts had found benefits in settling the area in the name of the Spaniards.

This movement was strengthened and broadened by the discovery of silver deposits in Zacatecas in 1546. San Miguel el Grande had already been established by the Franciscans and a small group of Otomis and Tarascans in the early 1540s, but the settlement was only truly developed when the road from Mexico City to Zacatecas was completed at the end of the same decade. Spanish settlements were founded at San Miguel in 1555 and at San Felipe around 1561. The area around Guanajuato was occupied only in the 1550s, again by Otomis and Tarascans.⁷⁸ The whole area slowly developed despite the Chichimec war, and Amerindians from central Mexico and from western Mesoamerica followed in the Tarascans' and Otomis' footsteps. They were employed as mine workers and as *tamames* (indigenous peoples who carried merchandise on their backs for Spaniards and other travelers). At the same time, the *camino real* had to be defended and the Spaniards founded a series of *presidios* (military settlements) with the dual objective of securing the frontier and growing food to supply the northern mines. Most of the working staff and fighting soldiers were Mesoamerican migrants. The

⁷⁷ Soustelle, *La famille Otomi-Pame*: 491-509; Wright Carr, *Querétaro en el siglo*; Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 131-141.

⁷⁸ Gerhard, *A Guide*: 121 and 237.

Cazcans, from the older roads between Guadalajara and Zacatecas, became very active in all three domains: fighting, transporting, and settling.⁷⁹

By 1591, the Chichimec war was coming to an end and the first settlers arrived in the area of San Luis Potosí.⁸⁰ The reasons and means of the Mesoamerican migration varied greatly from one individual to another. My documentation suggests that many did not necessarily intend to stay in the north for a long time: rather they planned to return to their homelands after accumulating some capital. Such was the case of the Tarascans Juan de Morales, Lázaro Sureque, and many other peoples from their village of Jacona who worked for a while in San Luis Potosí for Agustín Román, then went back to their home community for about a year, and afterwards undertook the seventy-league (approximately 290 km) voyage north once again.⁸¹ Some migrants circulated from town to town, looking for ever better opportunities in the developing northern mines. Others opted to settle down. A number of Amerindians found themselves in between both situations, as they lived close to the main colonial roads and acted as transporters for Spanish miners and merchants. Others decided to become merchants themselves and, relying on extensive networks, traded all sorts of goods in the north.

Notwithstanding the largely ungoverned and individual character of the migrations, the news of the silver and gold strike at Cerro de San Pedro ("hill of Saint Peter," where the mines of San Luis Potosí were located) in March 1592 spread quickly, and Mesoamericans promptly arrived on the site. Those seeking to work in the mines could either undertake the journey themselves or leave home following the

⁷⁹ Bakewell, *Silver Mining*: 4-42; Velasco Murillo, "Urban Indians," 53-55.

⁸⁰ In official terms, the war was over. However, factions of Chichimecs which did not want to be integrated under the Spanish domination left the area and went further north, where skirmishes continued for decades. Monroy and Calvillo Unna, *Breve historia*: 76-77.

⁸¹ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1603, caja 1, exp. 18.

enganchadores (recruiters) who travelled throughout Mesoamerican communities recruiting workers for Spanish mine-owners. On the other hand, there was almost no coercive control of the Amerindian workers, such as the *encomienda* or the *repartimiento*. Apart from the significant exception of Chichimec slaves taken in battle, most workers were relatively free in comparison to central New Spanish indigenous workers.⁸²

In order to explain better the experience and significance of migration for Mesoamericans, I will use a specific example found in the criminal records of the *alcaldía* mayor of San Luis Potosí. The case consists of a criminal proceeding against two Amerindians, Ana and Francisco Jacobo, who were accused in 1594 of *amancebamiento*, that is, of living as a couple without being married. Here, I reproduce an excerpt from Ana's confession because it gives many details on her life and migration experience.

[...] She said that her name was Ana and she could not tell us her age, but from her features she looks like she is over twenty-five and she said that she is a native of Puebla de los Angeles [...]

[...] She said that she is married to the indio Juan Alonso, but that her said husband left her in Mexico City four years ago.

Asked if she knows the indio Francisco who is in jail = She said she knows him.

[...] She said she has known sexually the said Francisco for two years and that in the said time they have been together in Teocaltiche and Zacatecas and in the carts [transport enterprise] of Alvaro Carrello.

Asked how long she has been in this town and mines [of San Luis Potosí] = She said that it had been more or less six months and that they had been in the service of Domingo Gallegos in his charcoal-making operations and that a few days before now they left his service and that they had been in the house of Casilda de Morales for three weeks.⁸³

⁸² In 1625, at the beginning of the mining crisis, the republic of miners in San Luis Potosí petitioned the Crown to have the right to use the *repartimiento*, but they never received a response. See Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 297.

⁸³ [...] dijo que se llama Ana y no supo decir la edad y en su aspecto parece ser de más de veinte y cinco años y que es natural de la Puebla de los Angeles [...]

[...] dijo que es casada con Juan Alonso indio y que a cuatro años que el dicho su marido la dejó en la ciudad de México.

Preguntada si conoce a Francisco indio que está preso = dijo que lo conoce.

[...] dijo que ha dos años que conoce al dicho Francisco carnalmente y en el dicho tiempo han estado juntos en Teocaltiche y Zacatecas y en las carretas de Alvaro Carrello.

Puebla de los Angeles, Mexico City, Teocaltiche, Zacatecas, and San Luis Potosí; from the late 1580s to November 1594, when her confession was taken, Ana had walked more than one thousand kilometres. In fact, she probably traveled even more because she accompanied her lover in his work as a muleteer transporting goods between towns. Since Ana is said to be about twenty-five years old in 1594, I can infer that she was born sometimes around 1570 in the city of Puebla de los Angeles. She grew up hearing Náhuatl as the language of the majority; but if she visited the villages around Puebla, she most probably also heard Otomi from time to time. Still a child, around six or seven years old, she witnessed the relentless typhus plague and the death of a large part of the native population around her. At the same time, an influx of other native peoples to Puebla transformed her world. She nonetheless lived through these traumatic events and reached the age of marriage. With her husband Juan Alonso, she moved over a hundred kilometres away to Mexico City. Unfortunately, in 1590, her husband left her, but Ana remained vague as to where and why he might have gone. At that time, immigration to the colonial capital was extremely important and it is possible that, amidst this highly confusing and somewhat chaotic society, Ana could not find the support and the networks necessary to her well-being. She decided to leave. Maybe because she had lost her relatives in the earlier epidemics, or because she could not go back to Puebla, or for other unknown reasons, she decided to move further west, until she reached Teocaltiche, a Cazcan town in New Galicia, five hundred kilometres from Mexico City. Ana left no account of this trip, but it is most probable that she passed through Otomi, Matlatzinca,

Preguntada que tanto tiempo ha estado en este pueblo y minas [de San Luis Potosí] = dijo que habrá seis meses poco más o menos y que han servido a Domingo Gallegos en las carboneras y de pocos días a esta parte se salieron del servicio del susodicho y que ha tres semanas que están en casa de Casilda de Morales. AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 1, f. 1v.

and Tarascan territories and entered into relations with these peoples and cultures. Then, in Teocaltiche in 1592, she fell in love with the eighteen-year-old indio Francisco Jacobo and decided to live with him.

With the foundation of the great mining town of Zacatecas in 1548, Teocaltiche came to be positioned on one of the major roads along which silver was sent to Mexico City, to Veracruz, and off to Spain. The Cazcans, who had been farmers established in small scattered communities, transformed their way of life and economic activities after the conquest and the Mixton War.⁸⁴ By the 1590s, many had become very active transporters of merchandise to and from the silver city. Francisco Jacobo was one such cart driver and Ana set out on the road with him. For more than a year, the lovers worked in the transport enterprise of Alvaro Carrello, a Spaniard established in Zacatecas. Arriving in San Luis Potosí in May 1594, they were employed in the charcoal-making operations of Domingo Gallegos. In October, they decided to change employers and were hired by Casilda de Morales. On November 10th, their life together was cut short when the couple was arrested on the charge of living in a consensual union. As their lawyer argued, Spanish law did not stipulate severe punishment for such an offence, but the confession of Ana regarding her earlier marriage convinced the *alcalde mayor* to take measures to separate the lovers. Marriage was not an option because Ana was still legally married.⁸⁵ She was to continue her work in the house of Casilda de Morales, while

⁸⁴ The Mixton War was the last large movement of Cazcan – and probably Tecuexe – resistance against the Spanish invasion. It took place from 1540 to 1542 between Nueva Galicia and Zacatecas. Bakewell, *Silver Mining*: 4-5 and 36; Altman, *The War for Mexico's*: 121-151.

⁸⁵ The *Recopilación de leyes de las Indias* indicates on that matter: “Si se averiguare, que algún Indio, siendo ya Christiano, se casó con otra mujer, ó la India con otro marido, viviendo los primeros, sean apartados, y amonestados [...]” In other words, the law prevented indigenous peoples from marrying a second time if their first spouse was still alive, but the enforcement of the law depended on the capacity of the court to prove the facts. España, *Recopilación de las leyes de los reynos de las indias*. Madrid: Iulian de

Francisco Jacobo was to work in the mines of Cristóbal Gómez de Rojas. They were not allowed to see each other ever again, either in public or in private.⁸⁶

Ana and Francisco Jacobo had lived through the deep transformations of the pre-Columbian societies and appear to have lost much in the course of their young lives. Their arrangement as partners in life had many affective and economic advantages. This example illustrates the agency of indigenous peoples and their actions designed to improve their lot in trying circumstances. It also sheds light on further ways in which colonialism shattered lives. Their journey was long and unpredictable. Their settling in San Luis Potosí was probably an opportunistic move, as they changed work relatively often and appear to have desired better working and living conditions. Such was the experience of hundreds of migrants who arrived in San Luis Potosí in the decades after 1592.

Skilled mine workers such as the Tarascans, who had worked in Taxco, Guanajuato, and other places in the repartimiento system, were a particularly good source of labour for the Spanish. Some of these labourers, such as silver refiners, were particularly valuable to the Spaniards by virtue of their specific knowledge and extensive training. In order to find these skilled workers, Spanish miners sent lots of recruiters, mostly to Michoacán. These recruiters were at times accused of forcing Tarascans into unwanted working contracts. However, according to Castro Gutiérrez, it seems plausible that the majority of these labour agreements were undertaken voluntarily by Amerindians. He writes that recruiters often offered up to eight months in advance salary and paid for the travel costs to the mines and back. Most workers understood these

Paredes, 1681), Libro VI, Título I, 188v. <http://fondosdigitales.us.es/fondos/libros/752/14/recopilacion-de-leyes-de-los-reynos-de-las-indias/?desplegar=8191&desplegar=8190&desplegar=8193>.

⁸⁶ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 1

contracts as temporary arrangements and did in fact go back to their home communities at the end of the contract. For example, in 1627, a worker called Juan Baltasar, who was in jail, asked to be set free because he had to go back to Mexico City where he had left his wife and children. He had clearly traveled to San Luis Potosí only as a contractual worker and had planned to go back home.⁸⁷ With time and the attraction of wages, many of these contractual labourers went back to the mines several times and finally settled permanently with their families in the northern towns.⁸⁸

Not all Mesoamerican immigrants to San Luis Potosí became mine workers. The town also attracted artisans such as shoemakers, carpenters, bakers, and a variety of other skilled craftsmen. Such people were drawn by the needs of the growing population for a variety of essential goods: clothing, food, houses, etc. I found no direct evidence of their migration process, but I assume it resembled that of the Amerindian merchants and carriers who quickly arrived en masse to the area. Many *arrieros* (muleteers) and carters were required to move the produced silver and gold to Mexico City (approximately 400 km away) and to bring back all sorts of goods and equipment. In addition, because San Luis Potosí was on one of the principal roads in the north, merchants were constantly passing through the town. My documentation shows that many indigenous peoples, understanding the profitability of such great commerce, arrived in the mining regions with carts and entered the economic realm through commercial exchanges. Most of them did not necessarily intend to establish themselves in town from the beginning. Rather, they moved around from villages to towns until they found sufficiently attractive opportunities to settle down.

⁸⁷ AHESLP, AM, 1627, caja 4, exp. 3.

⁸⁸ Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 46-49. For Spanish appreciations of high skilled Tarascan labor in San Luis Potosí, see Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 299-300.

A good example of the importance of indigenous carters in the migration to San Luis Potosí is given in the parish entry for the wedding of Diego Martín and María Marta in 1626. Therein, Friar Francisco de Santa María wrote about the three witnesses: “all of whom have known him [Diego Martín] for many years because they are from the same village and they have walked together working as muleteers until he settled down in the village of Santiago where he now lives.”⁸⁹ The bride, for her part, is said to be a “natural,” that is, a native, of the village of Santiago, which lends further weight to the idea that, after long wanderings as muleteers between towns and cities, these men from Irapuato finally decided to settle in the area of San Luis and to marry. This case is also important because of the home community of the men. Indeed, Irapuato was a small rural farming and cattle raising settlement that developed into the granary for the nearby mines of Guanajuato. Previously inhabited by Chichimec tribes, it had been settled in the 1550s by a variety of Mexicans, Tarascans, and Otomis, but had started to lose population in the early seventeenth century as a consequence of decline in the silver production of the mines.⁹⁰ Although this is not mentioned specifically in the document, it is highly probable that this group of men had been carriers of foodstuffs from Irapuato to Guanajuato and that, because of the contraction of the economy, they had decided to move to other mining areas and continue the same trade.

Studying the migration process from the Chalco region to Mexico City, Tomás Jalpa Flores argues that merchants and carriers were important migrants because they were the most likely to make various contacts between the different peoples and

⁸⁹ APT, Libro Bautizos y Matrimonios 1594-1654, folio 331r, June 4th, 1626. The quote in Spanish reads: “[...] todos los cuales han muchos años que le conocen porque son de su mismo pueblo y han andado con él ejerciendo el oficio de arrieros hasta que se vi avecindar al pueblo de Santiago donde reside [...]”

⁹⁰ Gerhard, *A Guide*: 121-123.

locations. They had contacts among the elite and into the principal public spaces of the city, such as markets, ports, and neighbourhoods, and they acted as intermediaries between a variety of people.⁹¹ Hence their role in the construction of networks and identifications was important. Indigenous migrants like Francisco Jacobo, Diego Martín, and their friends were thus essential components of the migrant population of San Luis Potosí.

Many indigenous migrants did not come directly from their source community to San Luis Potosí, but rather stopped along the road and lived for some time, including a few years, in other towns in the north. Juan Juárez, Juan Diego, Diego Hernández, and Pedro Muñoz, for example, were all born in Mexico City and the four men had met there as children. At some point, they moved to Sichú and worked in the mines of that town. There they met Isabel Melchora who, in April 1624, would marry Juan Juárez in San Luis Potosí.⁹² In short, the five Amerindians had met in a place that was, for four of them, foreign territory before moving again together. The journey involved not just travel, but also the meeting of other cultures and the possibility of inter-ethnic exchanges and relations.

Very little data is available on the distribution of indigenous peoples according to sex, mostly because the information from the parish archives – couples baptizing their children or getting married – record an equal number of men and women. However, there are some clues from the criminal records that point to the fact that migrant women often travelled as part of a couple, or that they found a companion fairly quickly upon their arrival in San Luis Potosí. Also, there seem to have been many single men on work sites,

⁹¹ Jalpa Flores, "Migrantes y extravagantes," 83-84.

⁹² APT, Libro de Bautizos y Matrimonios 1594-4654, f. 326v, 09/04/1624.

but almost none living in the pueblos and barrios de indios. According to a list of labourers on the haciendas, *carboneras* and *cuadrillas* of San Luis in 1603, 30 % of the Amerindians present on these work sites were women, the great majority married to indio men.⁹³ In 1612, a list of tributary Amerindians for the neighbourhoods of San Miguel and San Sebastián numbered a total of 47 couples of indios, only seven single indio men and one single india woman.⁹⁴ According to Alejandro Montoya, this phenomenon was in part due to the habit of Spaniards and their recruiters to favour the contracting of Amerindian couples, because they were thought to be less susceptible to desertion than single men.⁹⁵

Women seem to have migrated alone as well, though on a smaller scale compared to men. Castro Gutiérrez cites a criminal document from the *Archivo Histórico Municipal de Pátzcuaro* (AHMP) in which two women were held responsible for illicit traffic in Tarascan women. While it is unclear whether this “commercial” network was one of prostitution or a matrimonial agency for single Tarascans in San Luis Potosí, it is one example, and probably not the only one, of an exclusively female migration stream into San Luis Potosí.⁹⁶ The case of Ana from Puebla, who apparently migrated alone from Mexico City to Teocaltiche in New Galicia, is another clue that men were not the only individuals on the move and that women were not always patiently waiting at home when their husbands left or died.⁹⁷ Women too used migration as a mean of building new

⁹³ AHSELP, AM, A-43, 1603, caja 2, exp. 13. This list reckoned 227 couples of indios, 323 single indio men, twelve single india women, and four india women married with non-indios. For the same document, Alejandro Montoya counted 190 couples of indios and 335 single indios. Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 108.

⁹⁴ AHESLP, AM, 1612, caja 3, exp. 4. The numbers for San Miguel are twenty-seven, five, and one; for San Sebastián they are twenty, two, and zero.

⁹⁵ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 300; Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 109.

⁹⁶ Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 49-50.

⁹⁷ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 1.

networks. In sum, while mining attracted large numbers of Amerindian men, the presence of women and of nuclear families in San Luis Potosí was significant.

Conclusion

The patterns of migrations engendered a great diversity in the characteristics of indigenous peoples arriving in San Luis Potosí in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This heterogeneity did not only appear in the form of ethnicity and place of origin, but also in life experiences, work skills, economic and political possibilities, and sexes. The causes of migration and the experiences of the colonial system by the Amerindians were different, although with some similarities. Epidemics, population congregations, land spoliation and environmental degradation, as well as labour exploitation were all experiences of suffering that disorganized indigenous societies and affected families and individuals. The resulting negative economic, political, and affective context prompted many peoples to migrate to the north. While the Tlaxcalan migration experience favoured the development of a formal identity (a subject addressed in chapter eight), most migrants to San Luis Potosí actively engaged themselves in their new community to create social contacts. In this light, even though indigenous peoples acted in a colonial setting, their agency in organizing the mining town is undeniable.

Chapter 4: Setting up San Luis Potosí

The arrival of Mesoamericans and Spaniards, and the settlement of the Guachichils in the valley of San Luis Potosí dramatically transformed and reshaped the landscape and habitat of the area. In this respect, the forty years under study were very important as they established the foundations of the yet-to-become city. The Spanish town was founded between two rivers and by a swamp, a lagoon, and numerous water springs in a semi-arid environment. The nomadic Guachichils living in the area were accustomed to sharing access to water between different bands, but they did not occupy the land in permanent settlements. Despite the presence of water and occasional flooding of the land, agriculture was not practiced there. The area as a whole was very dry and even the Spaniards, years later, did not practice large-scale intensive agriculture in the valley: only small-scale vegetable gardening was really possible.¹ The first permanent settlements in the valley were not associated with mining, were relatively small, and were probably unplanned. Historians think that the first settlement was a Franciscan mission amongst the Guachichils in 1583 that eventually became the barrio of Tequisquiapan, west of the conurbation of San Luis Potosí. However, it seems that Franciscans were never very successful in this location and very little documentation is left to render a good description. With the arrival of the Tlaxcalans in the fall of 1591, a group of these migrants and some Guachichils established Tlaxcalilla, a small village in the heart of the valley. Then, in the spring of 1592, the Spaniards discovered silver and gold on the Cerro de San Pedro, which resulted in the explosive development of an urban area and important industrial complex.

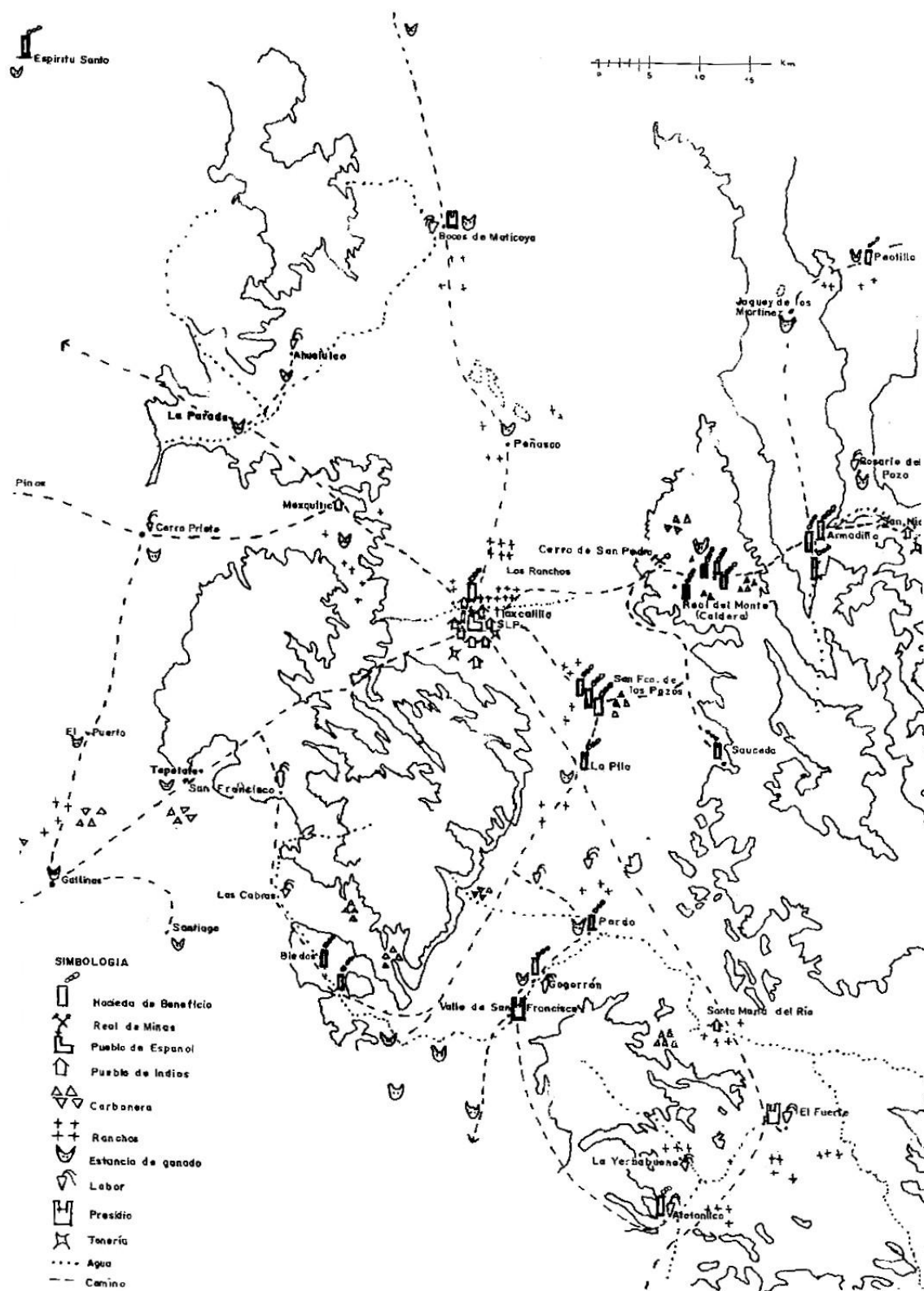
¹ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 151-167.

Within a few months after the discovery of the precious ores and for the rest of the period under study, the conurbation was organized around two poles: the Spanish settlement in the heart of the valley and the mines of Cerro de San Pedro, approximately fifteen kilometres to the east. During the next decade, indigenous peoples gradually settled in seven pueblos and barrios de indios around the Spanish centre. Spaniards established ore-processing facilities, concentrated close to sources of water, in between the settled areas. Between the Spanish town and the mines, a large number of ranches took form, which provided transport animals and food. From the early 1600s to 1630, the spatial organisation of San Luis Potosí was essentially the same, but all of its parts grew rapidly and became intertwined.

In chapter three, I asserted that indigenous peoples in San Luis Potosí varied in ethnic origins and experiences of migration. In this chapter, I describe the relationship between the diversity of indigenous peoples, the organisation of space in San Luis Potosí, and the structures of indigenous society. Meanwhile, I will further elaborate on the diversity of indigenous characteristics by adding economy and sex as important components of social interactions. As Cynthia Radding suggests, the stratification of indigenous societies in New Spain developed at the intersection of ethnicity, class, and gender.² Here, I argue that ethnicity was a marker of identification, but that it was not as important as historians of San Luis Potosí have suggested. Instead, I propose that Amerindians increasingly identified themselves, understood their social status, and affiliated with specific groups on the grounds of their specific occupations, skills, wealth, relationships with co-workers, sex, and living location. I will examine these elements first in the pueblos and barrios de indios, and second on the work sites of the conurbation.

² Radding, *Wandering Peoples*: 6 and 17.

Map 4.1: The Valley of San Luis Potosí



Source: Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 396.

While the basic structural elements were established early upon the settlement, I will use material from the whole period under study to show the expansion of both social and physical features of this society.

The historical literature on the cities of New Spain shows that the disposition of indigenous neighbourhoods did not usually follow a blueprint developed and imposed by Spaniards. The ideal of a well planned and gridded urban development – as it was appearing in Renaissance Europe – was seldom enforced in urban indigenous neighbourhoods. Felipe Castro Gutiérrez describes the general organization of the pueblos and barrios de indios in New Spain in these words: “a labyrinth of small streets, public places hidden on unexpected sites, irregularly designed blocks of houses, and houses disposed according to the resources or to the convenience of each owner, sometimes with ‘false doors’ that permitted to enter and exit with discretion.”³ This discrepancy between the European ideal of urban planning and the actual organisation of indigenous neighbourhoods was also observed in the cities of Valladolid and Mexico by Carlos Paredes Martínez and Alejandro Alcántara Gallegos.⁴

On the northern frontier of New Spain, this situation was juxtaposed, and collided with, the chaotic development of mining as a private and uncertain enterprise. In Zacatecas, for example, Dana Velasco Murillo explains that the indigenous migrants established their settlements close to mining operations and in accordance with economic

³ “[...] un laberinto de callejones, plazas escondidas en lugares inesperados, manzanas de diseño irregular y casas dispuestas según los recursos o la conveniencia de cada propietario, a veces con ‘puertas falsas’ que permitían entrar o salir discretamente.” Castro Gutiérrez, “Los indios y la ciudad,” 16.

⁴ Alejandro Alcántara Gallegos, “Los barrios de Tenochtitlan. Topografía, organización interna y tipología de sus predios,” in *Historia de la vida cotidiana en México. Mesoamérica y los ámbitos indígenas de la Nueva España*, vol. 1, ed. Pablo Escalante Gonzalbo (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica and El Colegio de México, 2004); Carlos Paredes Martínez, “Los barrios indígenas de la ciudad de Valladolid de Michoacán en la época colonial,” in *Urbi indiano. La larga marcha a la ciudad diversa*, ed. Virginia Molina and Oscar González (Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México, 2005).

incentives and the availability of resources. She makes clear that “their location was not the product of city planning.”⁵ Chantal Cramaussel argues that a similar contrast between the European chessboard ideal of urban development existed almost everywhere in Nueva-Viscaya and that only key social and power institutions, such as the Church, the cemetery, and the central plaza (*zócalo*) were always present. The major cause behind the apparently disorganized nature of urban development was the fundamental presence of the *haciendas de beneficio* (ore-processing facilities) in the regional economy. I will define in greater details the nature and functions of this site of production later in this chapter, but suffice it to say for now that Spanish miners established these plants where the resources allowed for it, rather than where it was best for urban development. Other factors, such as the geography of the land – in San Luis Potosí, the swamp, the lagoon and the numerous water springs – and the Spaniards’ unfamiliarity with the early modern ideals of urban development were other determining factors.⁶ This situation is described by Jorge E. Hardoy as being the “irregular model” of urbanisation.⁷ Following this historiographical line, I argue that the development of Indian villages in San Luis Potosí was not planned, but that they were established and evolved according to available resources and to the needs and wills of the population, both Spanish and indigenous.

The Amerindian population in San Luis Potosí did not only establish itself in the pueblos and barrios de indios. Many indigenous peoples lived on work sites run by Spaniards, such as haciendas de beneficios, carboneras, ranchos, and the like. I recall here

⁵ Velasco Murillo, "Urban Indians," 61.

⁶ Chantal Cramaussel, "Peupler la frontière. La province de Santa Barbara (Mexique) aux XVI^{ème} et XVII^{ème} siècles" (PhD dissertation, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1997), 142-174.

⁷ Jorge E. Hardoy, "La forma de las ciudades coloniales en la América Española," in *Estudios sobre la ciudad iberoamericana*, ed. Francisco de Solano (Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas, Instituto "Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo", 1983), 321.

that the estimated indigenous population in 1597, according to in-town parish records, was around 2,500 individuals, while the male working population, including the mines, was estimated at 5,000 in 1600 and 6,000 in 1603 (see chapter two). That is to say that the labouring population living outside the indigenous pueblos and barrios was significant. Amerindian labour was diversified in the nature of the performed tasks, in the degree of knowledge and specialisation, and in the type of relations with the Spanish employers. This observation can be linked back to the debate on the nature of the hacienda of the 1970s and 1980s. In a sense, the debate ended in a loose agreement that haciendas were economically capitalist because of their diversification in production and their constant relations with external markets, but socially feudal because of the hierarchic organisation that divided the ruling Spaniards from the Indian and Black workers.⁸ In the context of San Luis Potosí, the fact that indigenous labourers performed different tasks on haciendas de beneficio, from menial to highly skilled work, and the presence of diversified production, from mining in the Cerro de San Pedro to the construction of buildings, gives a somewhat different vision of social organisation. Indeed, Amerindians were able to negotiate their salaries to a certain extent, and they often obtained other advantages. In some cases, they could move from one work site to another and work for different Spaniards who promised to give them more and treat them better. This was especially true of the skilled workers and artisans. Coerced labour, at

⁸ Klarén and Bossert, *Promise of Development*; Steve Stern, "Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System in the Perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean: 'Ever More Solitary'," *The American Historical Review* 93, no. 4 (1988); Stern, "Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System."; Immanuel Wallerstein, "Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System in the Perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean: Comments on Stern's Critical Tests," *The American Historical Review* 93, no. 4 (1988); Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 26-31.

least in the context of the northern mines, appears to have been less significant compared to central New Spain.

For Peter Bakewell, the transformation from a colonial mercantilist economy to a free market economy from the beginning of the seventeenth century is demonstrated by the beginning of private investments by Spaniards in the mining industry and, precisely, by the transformation of the working organisation of Amerindians from coerced to free labour.⁹ John Tutino advances that the region of the Bajío and Spanish North America developed distinctly from Spanish Mesoamerica, into a dynamic commercial society as opposed to a conquest society, with silver mining at the heart of this development towards capitalism.¹⁰ This economy, argues Salazar González, depended on the diversification of production on haciendas de beneficio and other work sites, so that they could be autonomous, not depend on external production, and export their own diversified products. When the economic crisis began around 1630, the mining of gold and silver diminished, but the numerous other sectors of production, such as agriculture, stock raising, leather and clothing industries, and a variety of crafts, contributed to the survival of the regional economy.¹¹ In other words, the development of a regional market allowed for the continuity of production and commercial exchanges, and for the appearance of what Tutino calls a protean capitalist society.¹² The downturn in mining

⁹ Bakewell, *Silver Mining*: 225-235.

¹⁰ John Tutino, *Making a New World: Founding Capitalism in the Bajío and Spanish North America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 33.

¹¹ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 59-63.

¹² Tutino describes the Bajío and Spanish North America as a protean capitalist society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries because the concentration of economic resources and power had begun to affect the production of sustenance and production for exchange. The economic process shown by Bakewell and Salazar González highlights such a process in Zacatecas and San Luis Potosí. The mining industry prompted a boom in production for exchange – which was extremely diversified – and a few Spaniards, hacienda de beneficio owners for the most part, attempted to gain control over as much production as

had an impact on the economy, but it did not trigger a collapse. Bakewell has proved, as a matter of fact, that this supposed crisis was only a diminution in the amounts of silver shipped to Spain, not an economic downturn in New Spain.¹³

The transformation of the economic system from feudal to proto-capitalistic and the development of new forms of labour in northern New Spain were accompanied by a transformation in modes of identification. The nascent protean capitalist society saw the rapid development of exchange production and the beginning of economic concentration. Accepting this premise, I will analyse how both these developments affected the indigenous population in San Luis Potosí, their social status, and their modes of identification. In the Andean mining city of Potosí, Jane Mangan sees a direct causal relation between the economic integration of Amerindians and the transformation of ethnic identity.¹⁴ Above all, she shows that indigenous women who entered the market and exchange economy developed a variety of identities based on origin, language, physical features, traded products, dress, religion, and occupation.¹⁵ According to Jacques Poloni-Simard, this process of reorganization was influenced by the function, employment, and living location of an individual. For example, craftsmen were more likely to accumulate wealth and experience social ascension than domestics and servants, who often suffered from bad treatment and were allowed little social mobility.¹⁶ In fact,

possible, thus concentrating financial and commercial power in their hands. Tutino, *Making a New World*: 1-25.

¹³ For a summary of historical debates on the so-called economic depression of the seventeenth century, see Richard Boyer, "Mexico in the Seventeenth Century: Transition of a Colonial Society," in *Readings in Latin American History*, vol. 1, *The Formative Centuries*, ed. Peter J. Bakewell, John J. Johnson, and Meredith D. Dodge (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985).

¹⁴ Mangan, *Trading Roles*: 7.

¹⁵ Jane E. Mangan, "A Market of Identities: Women, Trade, and Ethnic Labels in Colonial Potosí," in *Imperial Subjects: Race and Identity in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Andrew B. Fisher and Matthew D. O'Hara (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009).

¹⁶ Poloni-Simard, *La mosaïque indienne*: 130-139.

according to Rebeca López Mora, craftsmen in Mexico City distinguished themselves from the other Amerindians because they mostly worked for Spaniards and thus became more familiar with European conceptions of the world. These craftsmen used that knowledge to gain political titles in the Amerindian neighbourhoods of the city.¹⁷ In a sense, they belonged to both worlds and understood both cultures without being ethnically perceived as *mestizos*.

If the relation between ethnicity, economic affiliation, and social status is relatively easy to perceive for men in the documentation on San Luis Potosí, the place of indigenous women in this scheme is harder to grasp. Women were clearly present in large numbers in mining towns of Spanish America. In Zacatecas, for example, Velasco Murillo indicates that women represented around 40 % of the labour force in the seventeenth century.¹⁸ This presence, however, did not translate into visibility in the colonial documentation. Velasco Murillo considers she has to work with a “small but varied corpus.”¹⁹ The Spanish understanding of gender roles, and the lower value they attributed to women’s work appear in my sources as result of a lack of documentation. For example, if notaries often wrote down the occupation of men in criminal records, such as carpenter, smelter, mine worker, and charcoal-maker, the characteristics they wrote down for women never clearly stated the nature of their work. At times, the historian finds some clues, but nothing straightforward or conclusive. Take for example,

¹⁷ Rebeca López Mora, "Entre dos mundos: Los indios de los barrios de la ciudad de México," in *Los indios y las ciudades de Nueva España*, ed. Felipe Castro Gutiérrez (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010), 75-76.

¹⁸ A census from 1622 indicates that women composed 42 % of the work force around Tlacuitlapan. A count including various work sites in Zacatecas in 1656 shows that women represented 39 % of the total indigenous labour force. Dana Velasco Murillo, "Laboring above Ground: Indigenous Women in New Spain's Silver Mining District, Zacatecas, Mexico, 1620—1770," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 93, no. 1 (2013): 4 and 9-10.

¹⁹ Velasco Murillo, "Laboring above the Ground," 8.

the description of the migration of Ana, described in chapter three, who moved to San Luis Potosí with her lover and then helped him in his work as a muleteer. In this case, nothing is specifically said about the nature of Ana's work; the historian can only assume that she worked with her lover, probably tending to the mules and maybe even driving the carts at times.²⁰ Historians have shown that indigenous women performed a variety of tasks and that they acted as domestic servants, petty traders, and caretakers for children. Most of these activities paralleled and complemented those of their male counterparts and were vital to the sustainability of the household and to the urban economy.²¹ Poloni-Simard, for example, suggests that Amerindian women integrated into the exchange economy of Cuenca and, thus, benefited from the same potential social mobility as men.²² Mangan observed a similar phenomenon in Potosí, but argues that this integration was mostly achieved through unofficial channels of exchange, uncontrolled by the Spanish administration.²³ In short, many of the same factors of identification affecting men probably also affected women. Place of origin, language, dress, skills, and occupation influenced the social position and the possibilities of affiliation of women. In Potosí, Mangan shows that twenty years after the foundation of the town, indigenous women traders acted as individuals, "seeking individual profits," and that their activities and wealth affected their identities.²⁴ In San Luis Potosí, the available documentation indicates that women were in their majority servants or domestic employees who worked

²⁰ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 1.

²¹ Radding, *Wandering Peoples*: 6 and 103-141; Mangan, *Trading Roles*; Mangan, "A Market of Identities."; Velasco Murillo, "Laboring above the Ground."

²² Poloni-Simard, *La mosaïque indienne*: 121.

²³ Mangan, *Trading Roles*: 9-13.

²⁴ Mangan, "A Market of Identities." Quote from p. 68.

for the benefit of the male workers, a situation similar to that of nearby Zacatecas.²⁵ Unfortunately, I have found no trace of indigenous women traders and merchants in San Luis Potosí. They most probably existed, but I will not be able to discuss their presence.

The Pueblos and Barrios de Indios

In the pueblos and barrios de indios, space and identification were not solely based on ethnicity. Rather, the organisation of these towns and neighbourhoods was grounded in a variety of elements: ethnicity, but also work, skills, and relationships with the Spaniards. This organisation, in turn, influenced social relationships and the affiliation of indigenous peoples with one another.

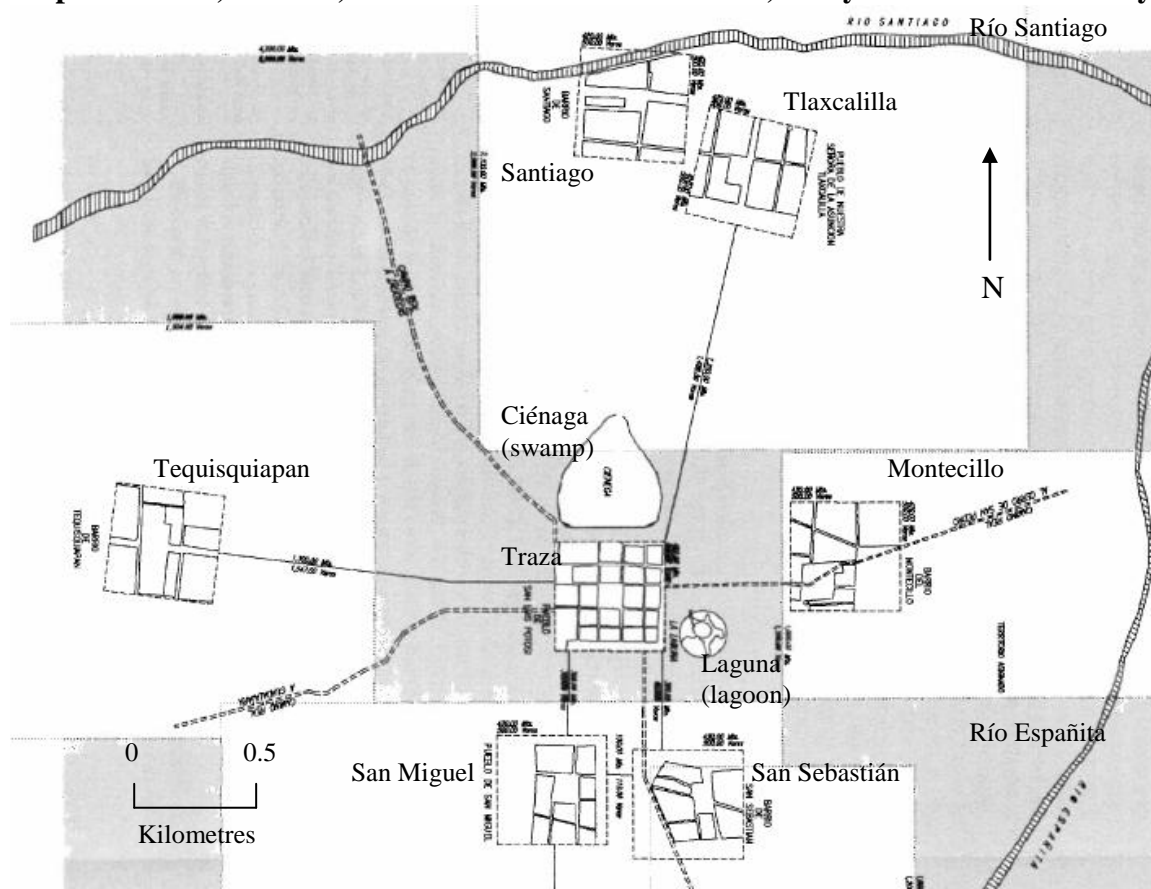
The early settlement of San Luis Potosí, between 1591 and 1593, was rather haphazard. Spanish authorities did proceed to a *reparto de solares* (distribution of tracts of land), but the first round of formal land concession only happened in 1593 and was merely an official acknowledgement of the existing occupancy of the land. At the time, many of the Spanish beneficiaries of this land distribution had already built infrastructure such as haciendas de beneficio or houses.²⁶ In addition, many of the conceded lots were

²⁵ Dana Velasco Murillo and Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva, "Mine Workers and Weavers. Afro-Indigenous Labor Arrangements and Interactions in Puebla and Zacatecas, 1600-1700," in *City Indians in Spain's American Empire; Urban Indigenous Society in Colonial Mesoamerica and Andean South America*, ed. Dana Velasco Murillo, Mark Lentz, and Margarita R. Ochoa (Brighton, Portland, and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, 2012), 115.

²⁶ In the documents of the *reparto de solares*, the notaries indicated the state of the infrastructures already built on the land that was then officially granted. Most often, parts of houses or facilities were already built, and a few Spaniards had already completed both their house and their processing facility by the time they officially received their tract of land.

situated outside of town in very imprecise locations. Vicente Roposo, for example, received a lot “by a tall mesquite tree” by the Santiago River.²⁷

Map 4.2: Traza, Pueblos, and Barrios of San Luis Potosí, Early Seventeenth Century



Source: Alejandro Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo de la ciudad de San Luis Potosí en el siglo XVII*, San Luis Potosí: Facultad del Hábitat, Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, 2006: 173.

A very similar process happened with Amerindian pueblos and barrios around the Spanish town. Indeed, I argue that most of the indigenous neighbourhoods were first established by the Amerindians themselves in accordance with the available resources. By the early seventeenth century, San Luis Potosí counted six official indigenous

²⁷ “junto a un mezquite grande” Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: XLV-XLIX and 296-328; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 35-39 and 229-232. See also the original documents in the AHESLP, AM, Tierras (A-35), 1593.

neighbourhoods and one site where indigenous peoples gathered to live, but which was not recognized by Spanish authorities as a barrio. To help the reader situate the different parts of the conurbation, I reproduce here a modified version of the map of early San Luis Potosí drawn by Galván Arellano.

Nuestra Señora de la Asunción Tlaxcalilla (hereafter Tlaxcalilla) was the first indigenous village to be founded.²⁸ It was established by the Tlaxcalan migrants beside the Santiago River in late 1592, about one kilometre north of the first Tlaxcalilla, which had been displaced by the foundation of the Spanish town. Its official status as a “pueblo” gave it full social, political, and religious institutions, independent of the Spanish town, under the principle of the two republics (Spanish and Indian).²⁹ As such, it had its own communal lands (although these were for the most part superimposed onto the Spanish communal lands), a church at its centre, and a governor as the supreme internal authority. The principle of the two separate republics held across the whole town and all its pueblos and barrios de indios, which meant that Tlaxcalilla’s governor was in fact the governor of the entire Amerindian population of San Luis Potosí. The strength of this governor originated in the absence of other pueblos de indios at its foundation, and in the Spaniards’ perpetuation of this power. As will be discussed later, the leaders of other Indian towns later disputed his authority, but it did not weaken in the eyes of the Spaniards. In 1620, the Viceroy, the Marques of Guadalcazar, reappointed Juan Vázquez

²⁸ Except when indicated otherwise, the information regarding the formation and characteristics of the pueblos and barrios of San Luis Potosí is taken from Segó, *Aliados y adversarios*: 159-180; Montejano y Aguiñaga, "La evolución," 79-87; Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 41-46; *Los siete barrios de San Luis Potosí*, (San Luis Potosí: H. Ayuntamiento de San Luis Potosí, Dirección de desarrollo cultural departamento de turismo municipal, 2003); Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 88-93; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 72-107.

²⁹ For a definition of these republics and for a history of their evolution, see Abelardo Levaggi, "República de Indios y república de Españoles en los Reinos de Indias," *Revista de Estudios Histórico-Jurídicos*, no. 23 (2001).

as governor of Tlaxcalilla and showed no doubt about this power: “he has been given charge to look after all other natives of whatever nations that may be in the neighbourhood of San Sebastian, San Miguel, [and] Santiago which are outside of San Luis, and they must be under his orders.”³⁰ The Indian republic and its governor nevertheless were subject to the Spanish authority of the *alcalde mayor* (principal mayor), who effectively intervened on various occasions, including in matters of violent crime or litigation between Amerindians and non-Amerindians.

Three hundred metres west of Tlaxcalilla, the Guachichils were settled into the barrio of Santiago del Río (hereafter Santiago). Its status as a barrio placed it under the authority of the Tlaxcalan governor of Tlaxcalilla, but it still had an *alcalde* (secondary mayor) to take care of internal affairs. Santiago shared the same communal lands as Tlaxcalilla.

To the west of the Spanish town was Tequisquiapan. Its civil organization is not clear, but it seems that this barrio, which had no Indian governor, depended directly on the Spanish town. It did have a church around which were erected the social and religious buildings, but it had no civil infrastructure, such as a community treasury or a prison.³¹ This barrio is seldom mentioned in the documentation for my period of study (1591-1630).

Three hundred metres to the south of the Spanish centre were three Amerindian neighbourhoods located very close to one another: San Miguel, San Francisco, and Santísima Trinidad. In time, the three would merge to form the village of San Miguelito;

³⁰ “[...] le han encargado cuide de todos los demás naturales de cualesquier naciones que sean de los barrios de San Sebastián, San Miguel, Santiago que están fuera del de San Luis para que estén a su orden [...]” AGN, IC, RA, Indios, vol. 7, exp. 451.

³¹ Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 74-76.

but during the period of this study, there is some confusion about their status. The neighbourhoods were officially founded in 1597 by Tarascans and Mexicas who had been living in Tlaxcalilla and had asked the *alcalde mayor* of San Luis Potosí to establish a new settlement, closer to the Franciscan church. Permission was granted and the three received the same communal lands and the title of *pueblo*. However, they lacked an Indian governor, and it is not clear if they depended on Tlaxcalilla or San Luis Potosí. There are some hints that the neighbourhood of San Miguel was considered superior to the other two. For example, in the registration of a wedding on August 3th, 1624, Friar Juan Baptista wrote that the witnesses were “Andrés Pérez, Indian citizen of the neighbourhood of San Francisco, and Andrés Hernández, citizen of the said neighbourhood in this small town of San Miguel.”³² Notwithstanding the uncertainty of their status, these three neighbourhoods were very important and their peoples were very active in San Luis Potosí.

The absence of a well defined status for San Miguel when compared to Tlaxcalilla might also be analysed and interpreted as an attempt by the Spanish authorities to better control the Indian population as a whole. Indeed, the lack of a formal status weakened the capacity of the inhabitants of San Miguel to identify with a specific community. It also meant doing without the official authority of a governor, an essential position in negotiating with the Spaniards. Also, debates and quarrels between San Miguel and Tlaxcalilla might have prevented strong collaboration between the two entities and thus prevented the organisation of strong political power and complaints against the colonial powers.

³² “[...] Andrés Pérez indio vecino del barrio de San Francisco y [...] Andrés Hernández vecino del dicho barrio en este pueblesillo de San Miguel [...]” APT, Libro de Bautizos y Matrimonios 1594-1654, f. 327v, 03/08/1624.

Just one hundred metres east of these three neighbourhoods, another *barrio* called San Sebastian shared communal lands with San Miguel until the early eighteenth century. Although it was close both in space and status to San Miguel, San Sebastian was different because it fell under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Augustinians. The neighbourhood was actually founded upon the arrival of this order in San Luis Potosí in 1603, after great debates among the Spaniards.³³

Finally, starting in 1600, some Amerindians working in the mines of San Pedro established themselves about five hundred metres east of the Spanish town, in a place called Montecillo (small hill). The community did not receive any legal status until the eighteenth century, but it is sometimes mentioned in the documents from the early seventeenth century.³⁴

Most historians describe the ethnic organization of the early population of San Luis Potosí as clearly determined and fixed along the frontiers of the villages and neighbourhoods surrounding the Spanish town, although they do not always agree on the ethnic distribution of this segregation.³⁵ In this view, Tlaxcalilla would have been exclusively Tlaxcalan, except for a separate neighbourhood – sometimes called San Juan – the population of which could have been Tarascan, Mexican, or Otomi, depending on

³³ Joaquín Meade and Rafael Almanza, *Los Agustinos en San Luis Potosí* (San Luis Potosí: Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí, 1989). Voir aussi AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1598, f. 229-233: "Pleito de los cofrades de la Santa Vera Cruz para que no se funde el convento de San Agustín."

³⁴ One kilometre south of San Miguelito was another such unrecognized settlement, which officially became San Juan de Guadalupe in 1676, but it does not appear in the documents I have consulted in San Luis Potosí for my period of study.

³⁵ For example, Guadalupe Salazar González writes that "[...] la zona presenta una segregación espacial por naciones, aunque eso no impidió que existiera movilidad de los indios en el espacio de la región [...]". Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 56.

the sources used.³⁶ Similarly, Santiago would have been Guachichil, and San Miguel would have counted three ethnic populations distributed across its three neighbourhoods. San Sebastian would have been Tarascan and Otomi, but it is unsure which group was the more important.³⁷ On the whole, most authors present incomplete information or disagree with one another.³⁸

Building from this image of spatially segregated ethnic groups in San Luis Potosi, historians have tried to determine the political powers of each ethnic group in the area. Most of them argue that Tlaxcalans had a status superior to the other Amerindian groups. Beyond the Capitulaciones that Tlaxcala and the Crown had signed in 1591, the King asked the Viceroy of New Spain to always privilege Tlaxcalans in relation to other indigenous groups.³⁹ Therefore, the common historical argument is that Tlaxcalans sought not to mix with the Guachichils or any of the other Mesoamerican migrant communities. On the other hand, the Guachichils would have worked hard to be

³⁶ On the ethnic exclusiveness of Tlaxcalilla: "Dado el deseo manifiesto de los tlaxcaltecas en el sentido de preservar una identidad y un territorio bien diferenciados, es posible que los 'forasteros' nunca fueran aceptados como miembros de la comunidad." Segó, *Aliados y adversarios*: 168, note 135.

According to some, the neighbourhood of San Juan was founded in 1597 by Tarascans inhabiting Tlaxcalilla. However, Montejano y Aguiñaga writes that the chapel built in 1597 became a part of the tarascan neighbourhood, called "Cañadas de los Tarascos", only in 1622. Montoya, referring to a count of population from 1623, writes about a Mexican suburb that would have been populated by Mexicans and Otomies, not by Tarascans. Eugene Segó, *Tlaxcalilla. Otra mirada a su historia* (San Luis Potosí: Centro de Investigaciones Históricas de San Luis Potosí, 1995), 25-27; Montejano y Aguiñaga, "La evolución," 83-84; Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 43; *Los siete barrios de San Luis Potosí*; Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 127-128; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 81.

³⁷ Galván Arellano and Montoya write that San Sebastian was predominantly Otomi, while Salazar González thinks it was primarily Tarascan, although she mentions the presence of Otomis. Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 43; Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 90; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 96.

³⁸ Montejano y Aguiñaga and Galván Arellano assert that each neighbourhood was inhabited by a specific indigenous group, without being able to present details on their distribution. Alejandro Montoya states that San Miguel was occupied by Tarascans. Montejano y Aguiñaga, "La evolución."; Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 88-93; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 84-86.

³⁹ Law xxxix of Book VI, Title I reads: "Que los Virreyes de Nueva España honren, y favorezcan a los Indios de Tlaxcala, y a su Ciudad, y Republica." The laws xxxix to xxxv concern these privileges granted to Tlaxcala. España, *Recopilación de las leyes de los reynos de las indias*. Libro VI, Título I, 193.

integrated in the Tlaxcalan community and benefit from the same privileges.⁴⁰ In short, historians write that all indigenous peoples sought to achieve the same goal: to be in a good political position in relation to the Spanish authorities.

My archival records suggest that such ethnic segregation was not the reality in which indigenous peoples lived. The authorities of Tlaxcalilla, as I will discuss in chapter eight, certainly displayed their official ethnic identity for legal and political purposes. However, in the daily lives of the pueblos and barrios, place of origin had much less significance in the organization of space and social interaction than argued in the historical literature. Tlaxcalans, for example, did not hesitate to make friends with their Tarascan neighbours for fear of losing political power in regards of the Spanish administration. The numbers presented in table 2.2 (see chapter 2) suggest that after their initial migration in 1591, the Tlaxcalans were not proportionally as important as some authors have suggested.⁴¹ Indeed, the presence in San Luis Potosí of Tarascans, Nahuas, Otomi, and even of Amerindians from the West was more important than that of the Tlaxcalans. Moreover, the exemption from paying tribute granted to the Tlaxcalans in the *Capitulaciones* was also given to other migrants to San Luis Potosí because Spanish miners needed their labour.⁴² It is thus possible that Tlaxcalans did not need to build a segregated ethnic space in order to keep their relative political powers. As will be demonstrated, Tlaxcalilla was in fact submerged by the numerous other Amerindians.

That indigenous towns were not exclusively organized around ethnic identities is best illustrated by the foundation of San Miguel. The pueblo was officially founded on

⁴⁰ Sego, *Aliados y adversarios*: 159-180.

⁴¹ See for example Montejano y Aguiñaga, "La evolución."; Rivera Villanueva, "La influencia tlaxcalteca."; Rivera Villanueva, *Los Tlaxcaltecas*.

⁴² Gerhard, *A Guide*: 236; del Río, "Sobre la aparición," 39.

April 14, 1597 by the Spanish *alcalde mayor* Luis de Valderama Saavedra following a special request from Mexicanos and Tarascos. Many historians have suggested, on the basis of the act of foundation, that these Mexicanos and Tarascans had petitioned the mayor as a consequence of their quarrels with the Tlaxcalans of Tlaxcalilla, and out of a desire to establish themselves in another part of town.⁴³ The document of the foundation, as transcribed by Primo Feliciano Velázquez, however, does not mention the existence of such quarrels or the desire of the Mexicanos and Tarascos to break away from Tlaxcalans. In fact, this historical interpretation, in my view, overemphasizes the role and power of Tlaxcalans among other Amerindians in San Luis Potosí and seems to ignore other elements such as the presence of Amerindians outside Tlaxcalilla and on Spanish work sites, the displacement of the Franciscan monastery from Tlaxcalilla to the southwest of the *traza* (Spanish centre of town), and the continuing cohabitation of Tlaxcalans, Mexicanos, and Tarascos in Tlaxcalilla after the supposed quarrels of 1597.

The act of foundation of San Miguel starts by a petition from seven Amerindians:

“Presented themselves Francisco Joquinque Mexicano, and Andrés de Rojas Tarascan, and Miguel Tuxeque y Luis Tarascan, and Diego Miguel Tarascan, and Andrés Tuxiqui y Luis Tarascan, and Felipe Angel Tarascan, and Francisco Mexicano all Indians; and they said that, as is well known, they are established in the town called Tlaxcalilla and that for greater convenience they want to come live and reside by the Franciscan monastery and settle and build their houses.”⁴⁴

⁴³ Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 332; Primo Feliciano Velázquez, *Historia de San Luis Potosí*, vol. 2 (Mexico: Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística, 1947), 23; Segó, *Tlaxcalilla*: 26; Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 43; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 87.

⁴⁴ “[...] Parecieron presentes Francisco Joquinque mejicano, y Andrés de Rojas tarasco, Miguel Tuxeque y Luis tarasco, y Diego Miguel tarasco, y Andrés Tuxiqui tarasco y Luis tarasco, y Felipe Angel tarasco y Francisco mejicano indios; y dijeron que como es notorio, ellos están poblados en el pueblo que llaman de Tlaxcalilla y que por mejor comodidad se quieren venir a vivir y residir junto del convento del Señor San Francisco y a poblar y hacer sus casas [...]” It is possible that the names Tuxeque and Tuxiqui are ethnonyms that designated Tecuexes, a group present in San Luis Potosí. However, I have found no other references to these two men in my documentation or in the literature that would confirm this possibility. Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 332.

The main explicit reason for the movement of population in this quote appears to be the movement of the Franciscans. The order kept its parish in Tlaxcalilla, but transferred the core of its resources and personnel to the new monastery on the south-western side of the conurbation. This new location was not very far from Tlaxcalilla, which itself was only about one kilometre north of the Spanish centre. But Amerindians from Tlaxcalilla who wished to visit the monastery had to make a detour through the Spanish town first, whereas previously they had been accustomed to just walk to the centre of their own pueblo.

In the next part of the act of foundation, the notary conveyed another, stronger reason for establishing a new settlement. Here, the *alcalde mayor* visited the site of San Miguel: “The said *alcalde mayor* in person went by the said Franciscan monastery and behind the garden of the said monastery he went walking and a large quantity of Indians was present and they said that this was the place and site where they want to receive the said grant.”⁴⁵ I interpret this passage of the act as meaning that the territory was already occupied by Amerindians and that the petition, visit, and act of foundation, which all took place on the same day, was merely the recognition of an existing informal situation.⁴⁶ As I will show, I suspect the presence of numerous indigenous labourers was at the origin of the pueblo. In addition, there is no proof that the seven Mexicanos and Tarascans who petitioned the *alcalde mayor* were representatives or leaders of a large population. I was not able to find these names again in the criminal documents and parish records, with the

⁴⁵ “[...] el dicho Alcalde Mayor en persona fue junto al dicho convento del Señor San Francisco y detrás de la huerta del dicho convento se anduvo paseando y estando presentes muchos indios dijeron que esta es la parte y lugar donde piden se les haga la dicha merced [...]” Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 332.

⁴⁶ Velasco Murillo also shows the importance of the Franciscans in attracting indigenous peoples and forming towns around the churches in Zacatecas. The process of the establishment of the population in the case she presents is not clear, and it is not sure if the native population established itself before the Franciscans arrived, but the arrival of the friars undoubtedly helped and favoured the development of these *barrios*. Velasco Murillo, “Urban Indians,” 63.

exception of that of Diego Miguel. However, four different Diego Miguels appear in the parish records between 1595 and 1601. The movement to settle in San Miguel was probably initiated by the labourers already living in the area, with little participation from any Amerindian elite. As seen earlier, San Luis Potosí's authorities had granted Spaniards lots they already occupied. In short, the settlement came first and the official grants merely sanctioned an existing situation. Spatial organization was not planned; it was the work of the population.

While ethnicity did not have a major impact on the foundation of San Miguel, I argue that work influenced the organization of the barrio's space. On a map of San Luis Potosí in the late sixteenth century, Salazar González shows that many Spaniards had haciendas de beneficio close to San Miguel.⁴⁷ The same author writes that "along the banks of the Tlaxcalilla river, the lagoon to the east (today the Alameda) and the back of the monastery of San Francisco, the majority of the haciendas de beneficio of the town of San Luis Potosí were concentrated there."⁴⁸ Furthermore, two documents from 1595 and 1596, thus before the official foundation of San Miguel, testify to the bustling activity that took place very close to the future site of the Indian town. The first document from November 1595 is a criminal investigation into a brawl between Amerindians that took place by the Franciscan monastery. Overall, it shows that many indigenous peoples lived and worked in the area. The Spanish *alguacil mayor* (sheriff) Alonso de Rivera testified that "he was walking his round and he heard loud voices from Indians who were throwing rocks at each other by the said convent [of San Francisco] which is the new one

⁴⁷ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 399.

⁴⁸ "[...] junto con las riberas del río Tlaxcalilla, la laguna al oriente (hoy la Alameda) y detrás del convento de San Francisco se concentraron la mayoría de las haciendas de beneficio en el pueblo de San Luis." Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 80.

that is being built now.” In the same document, another witness said “that while he was standing at the door of his house, which is right by the new San Francisco [...] he heard that towards the said monastery there were loud voices and disturbance, and from what he understood there were Indians who were quarrelling and throwing rocks at each other.”⁴⁹ There are no specific indications that indigenous peoples had built their own communities by then, but it is clear that they worked and lived on Spanish work sites. Those involved in the brawl worked for three different Spaniards: Pedro de Medina, Pedro de Umendia, and Juan de Oliva. The first two had their hacienda near the Franciscan monastery, and Oliva’s workshop was in the Spanish traza.⁵⁰ Another case from July 1596 complements this interpretation. Out of the four Amerindians involved, two worked for Juan de Valle who had his hacienda de beneficio close to the new monastery, and another worked as a bricklayer (*tapiador*) for the monastery. Again, this shows that, right by the site of the future San Miguel, Amerindians were living and working a year before the official foundation.⁵¹

All of this illustrates the high probability that many Amerindians were already living, as early as 1595 and possibly before, in the area that officially became San Miguel in 1597. My argument, thus, is that the existence of nearby Amerindians working for Spaniards has to be taken into account. They, as labourers living in the area, were the

⁴⁹ “[...] como alguacil andaba rondando y oyó dar grandes voces a indios que se estaban apedreando junto al dicho monasterio que es el nuevo que ahora se está haciendo [...]” “[...] que estando este testigo a la puerta de su casa que es junto a San Francisco el nuevo [...] oyó este testigo que hacia el dicho convento había grandes voces y alborotos y a lo que le parecía eran indios que estaban riñendo y tirándose pedradas [...]” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 2, exp. 19, f. 1v and 2r.

⁵⁰ Galván Arellano writes that Pedro de Medina’s lot was where the actual church of the Perpetuo Socorro is, between Tequisquiapan and the Franciscan monastery. Pedro de Umendia’s facilities were also probably close to San Francisco as, in March 1601, Francisco de Cárdenas registered a piece of land adjacent to that of Umendia, and because Salazar González located Francisco de Cárdenas’ hacienda neighbouring the same Franciscan monastery. AHESLP, AM, Tierras, 1595; Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 399; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 231.

⁵¹ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1596, caja 1, exp. 23.

agents of the spatial organisation of the barrio. In her study of Zacatecas, Velasco Murillo describes a similar process by which indigenous labourers founded communities outside mining and processing settlements.⁵² While the establishment of San Miguel was often explained in terms of frustration from Mexicanos and Tarascans against Tlaxcalans, my interpretation tells rather a story of unplanned development. In this light, the document of 1597 was less an act of foundation than an acknowledgment of the occupation of the land by numerous Amerindians.

My reading of the official establishment of San Miguel transforms the view of Amerindian social relations from one of political quarrels based on ethnicity inside pueblos and barrios de indios established by Spaniards to an organisation that was genuinely Amerindian. The process was not planned, but rather fluid and obeyed local contingencies. I argue that the official recognition of the community by the Spanish authorities in 1597 was precisely a reaction to a specific situation. In the act of foundation of San Miguel, after describing the exact territory given to the Indians, the *alcalde mayor* wrote: "I command to all persons of whatever status and condition, that in the aforementioned [pueblo of San Miguel] they do not bring disturbance, nor impediment of any sort under penalty of rigorous legal proceedings against them."⁵³ The Spanish authorities were giving legal protection to the inhabitants of San Miguel. The land already occupied by indigenous peoples was officially granted to the community and it could not be alienated by non-Amerindians. However, the initial establishment of the community was not directed by the Spanish authorities. Indigenous peoples had settled

⁵² Velasco Murillo, "Urban Indians," 61.

⁵³ "[...] mando a todas las personas de cualquier estado y condición que sean que en lo susodho no se les ponga embargo ni impedimento alguno so pena de que procederá contra ellos por todo rigor de derecho [...]" Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 333.

there to work in the nearby haciendas de beneficio and had organized the town themselves.

The case of San Miguel illustrates the creation of social groups in this developing urban context. Many Amerindians established their houses or small enterprises among other people, including mestizos and Spaniards, along the Santiago River and on the slopes east of San Luis, on the roads that lead to the mines on San Pedro. This slope, *el monte* in Spanish, would later become the neighbourhood of Montecillo. It started to be occupied very quickly in the 1590s, but was officially recognized as a *pueblo* only in 1754.⁵⁴ The first allusion to this location was made in a criminal proceeding of June 1594, when an Amerindian man had brought a woman to the hill east of the Spanish town where he knew some people who had built houses there.⁵⁵ According to Galván Arellano, the Spanish authorities acknowledged the occupation of this land and visited the area from time to time throughout the seventeenth century, but never considered it important enough to give it official status.

By establishing these settlements, indigenous peoples developed important and autonomous economic hubs. In addition to working for Spaniards, they built houses, farmed community lands, made a variety of products, engaged in market exchanges, hosted newcomers or temporary workers, and set up their own businesses. Lucas Ambrosio is a good example of this independent, economically active indigenous group. A native from Xochimilco, he lived in Tlaxcalilla, declared himself to have been the *alcalde* of the town in 1597, possessed a house, and owned horses. Lucas ran his house as a lodging facility for long-term and temporary visitors. The mulato Pascual went to

⁵⁴ Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 91-92.

⁵⁵ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 18, f. 1r.

Tlaxcalilla for his employer and spent a night in Lucas' house. Juan Miguel, a "mexicano" cook for the Franciscans, lived in Lucas' house and carried out occasional tasks for him, such as caring for his horses. A young Guachichil of about twelve years old named Daguello helped Juan Miguel in this task. Lucas Ambrosio shared his life and business with his wife and they had a child together. I have not found any specific characteristics of Lucas' wife, and there is no clear indication of her activities, but considering the nature of her husband's business, she was probably in charge of domestic work, of taking care of the lodgers, and tending to her child. As well, when a conflict arose between the Spaniard Juan Rodríguez del Carpio and Lucas, the latter sent his wife to discuss the matter. In the document relaying this information, del Carpio mentions he had sent his servant Pascualillo to buy salt in Tlaxcalilla, which indicates the presence and role of markets in Indian towns.⁵⁶ For San Luis Potosí, I have found no proof of women's involvement in petty trade, but historians have found such evidence in other towns and cities of Spanish America, and it was most probably the case here too.⁵⁷ In any case, the entrepreneurship of Lucas Ambrosio and his wife testify to the numerous and diversified economic activities within the Indian towns.

In sum, the Amerindians who established themselves in and around San Luis Potosí first organized themselves through unofficial channels. In the cases of Tlaxcalilla, San Miguel, and later San Sebastian, they later acquired official status. In this context, the ethnic segregation into neighbourhoods theoretically imposed by the Spanish authorities may have had very limited effect in practice. It is equally possible, and even most

⁵⁶ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1599, caja 1, exp. 5. See also the transcription of the document: Eugene Segó, *Un homicidio del siglo XVI en Tlaxcalilla: el caso de Pascualillo* (San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis, 1997).

⁵⁷ Poloni-Simard, *La mosaïque indienne*; Mangan, *Trading Roles*; Mangan, "A Market of Identities."; Velasco Murillo, "Urban Indians."; Velasco Murillo, "Laboring above the Ground."

probable, that the political competition between Amerindian communities in San Luis Potosí might not render a clear view of the full range of relations between indigenous peoples of different ethnic groups. These interactions were not only political, but also human. Amerindians made friends and lovers, they married and entered the kin groups of their spouse, they conducted economic exchanges, they committed crimes in bands or against one another, they worked together, and they also learned new skills from each other. In consequence, I temper the role of ethnicity and place it alongside other factors. Among these, economy and labouring occupations of indigenous peoples had a clear influence on identification.

The Nature and Variety of Amerindian Labour

San Luis Potosí and the Cerro de San Pedro composed a *real de minas* (an officially recognized mining district), that is, a complex of economic activities oriented towards the extraction and production of precious metals. There are different meanings to the expression *real de minas*. First, it takes its origin in the fact that the mines belonged to the Crown, that is, to the *real hacienda* (King's exchequer). In San Luis Potosí, the *real de minas* was first divided in two, with one part being the mining site and the other, the town, the processing area. In the documentation from the *alcaldía mayor*, the town's complete name was "pueblo de San Luis minas del Potosí," underscoring this division of functions between town and mining site.⁵⁸ In short, if the productive activities in San Luis Potosí started with the mining in the Cerro de San Pedro, they soon involved many more forms of labour. This meant the digging and extraction of the ores, their transportation out of the mines and then to the processing facilities, the refining of the precious metal,

⁵⁸ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 362-363.

and the transport of the refined metal to Mexico City. In order to operate that series of productive tasks, a number of other activities had to be performed: the making of charcoal to work the smelting furnaces, the cultivation of food and livestock rearing to feed the workers and employers, the organisation of merchandise transport, the construction of buildings, the making of clothing, and many other tasks. Amerindians took part in all these productive activities. Labour, production, and commerce were thus important factors in the organization of space and social relationships.

The most important working institution in San Luis Potosí was the *hacienda de beneficio* (ore-processing facility).⁵⁹ Once the minerals were out of the mountain, the miners had to mill, smelt, and refine them to remove all the impurities. This was done in the *hacienda de beneficio*, a complex of buildings that included mills to crush the ore, furnaces, and bellows. At the time, there were two processes to smelt silver ore. The first, relatively new but used to a very great extent, was the *beneficio por azogue* or *amalgamación*, which consisted in mixing the minerals with mercury. This had the advantage of greater results with metals of poor quality. However, it was expensive and could not be used when the metal contained lead. In San Luis Potosí, the metal was of high quality and was often combined with lead. It was smelted by the second process: the *beneficio por fuego* or *fundición*, that is, by melting the mineral. Even when the ore became poorer after some years of extraction, it had a high quantity of lead, and thus the first process could not be used.⁶⁰

In most *haciendas de beneficio* of San Luis Potosí, processing started upon the reception of the ores. A working staff trained and qualified to recognize the quality of the

⁵⁹ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 78.

⁶⁰ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 83-86.

minerals worked with hammers to separate the ore and the slag before storage. Second, other labourers washed the metal with very hot water. When dried, the metal was crushed in a mill generally powered by mules – although human and water power were also used in some haciendas. After each of these two phases, qualified workers sifted the mineral and made a selection of the pieces to keep and those to throw away. Workers would then make the *revoltura*, a mix of the crushed rocks with *greta y cendrada* (ashes of maguey or sotol) made on the hacienda or bought from a local source, and lead.⁶¹ This stage required some degree of technical skill because the proportion of each material had to be exact to obtain good results. They added water and put the mix in the furnace until it was completely filled. The mix was then heated with hot air sent from bellows at the bottom of the furnace. A worker was in charge of removing the *grasa* (foaming residues) that formed at the top, while another one constantly stirred the mix. The silver and lead then came out by the lower mouth of the furnace and was cooled to form a plate (*plancha*). Finally, in another type of furnace, a highly skilled *afinador* (refiner) refined this plate by heating it again to separate the lead from the silver. Most of the work, including the tasks requiring special qualifications, was usually performed by Amerindians.⁶²

This brief summary of the tasks performed on haciendas de beneficio (summarized in table 4.1) conveys the variety of skills necessary to the Amerindian workers. A division of labour existed with only a small number of individuals carrying out each task. Furthermore, while most of these tasks were manual, required little skill, and could be performed by almost any man hired by the employer, other tasks, such as that of *afinador*, required high skills that were often recognized not only by the

⁶¹ Maguey and sotol are plants of the dry lands of south-western North America and they grow in the area of San Luis Potosí.

⁶² Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 90-101 and 421-424.

Spaniards, but also by fellow Amerindian workers. For example, in April 1595, the Tarascan Miguel Bartolomé was described as “a very good craftsman in smelting and refining and he is very necessary for this work because he is among the best refiners and smelters in these mines.”⁶³ In this quote, the use of the word “craftsman” (*oficial* in the original Spanish document), is important because it shows that Miguel Bartolomé had gone through the special training of an apprentice to become a refiner. On the hacienda where he worked, this might have had a role in defining his identity in relation to other Amerindians. Indeed, Amerindians could reach positions of power on haciendas de beneficio, as it was the case for Mateo Hernández who was *capitán de cuadrilla* (chief of a labour team) for Joseph de Chagoyán in 1627. When Mateo got himself in trouble with a Spanish merchant in July, Chagoyan’s *mayordomo* (foreman) came to his rescue.⁶⁴ The skills of Amerindian workers had important consequences for their status both with the Spaniards and among other Amerindians, and a significant impact on their identity.

Women were numerous on these haciendas. A document from 1603 indicates that women represented 30 % of the indigenous peoples living on thirty-one haciendas and work teams.⁶⁵ As indicated in the introduction of this chapter, however, the documentation says little about the specific activities of these women. Velasco Murillo suggests that women and children might have contributed to the petty mining economy by straining pounded metal and gleaning left over minerals, but there is no other evidence that women directly participated in the extraction and processing of the ore. It is more

⁶³ “[...] muy buen oficial de fundida y afinada y muy necesario para el dicho oficio porque es de los buenos afinadores y fundidores que hay en estas minas.” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 6a, f. 19.

⁶⁴ AHESLP, AM, 1627, caja 4, exp. 7.

⁶⁵ AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1603, caja 2, exp. 13. The exact numbers are 240 indigenous women out of 806 indigenous men.

plausible that they worked in the domestic service area.⁶⁶ For example, women produced food, clothes, and other daily consumable products, and they accomplished domestic tasks for the whole group of workers. The majority of the women in the document from 1603 (214 women out of 240) were married to indigenous men working on the same hacienda. Hence, another of their roles was to tend to their children and family. Unlike the diversified skills and roles of men on haciendas, there is no indication that women performed greatly varied tasks. This observation might be an effect of their quasi-absence from the sources, but one way or another, the latter do not yield direct evidence of an economic hierarchy among indigenous women.

Table 4.1: Tasks and Workers Involved in the Smelting and Refining Process

Tasks	Workers' qualification	Number of workers
Unloading and storage	Peon (no special training)	2-4
Storage	Peon (guard)	1
Separate ore from slag	Qualified peon	2-4
Wash and dry metal	<i>Lavaderos</i> (washers)	2-4
Dry grinding of metal	Miller or primer	2-4
Sifting	Sifter	2
Prepare <i>cendrada</i>	Peon	2
Prepare <i>revoltura</i>	Qualified peon to put the ingredients	1
	Peon who mixes	2
Smelting	Peon (to activate the bellows)	1
	Peon (to prime/ <i>cebar</i>)	1
	Peon (to clean/ <i>desgretar</i>)	1
	Peon (to put the ashes/ <i>cenizar</i>)	1
Refining	Peon (to activate the bellows)	1
	Peon (to tend the fire)	1
	<i>Afinador</i> (refiner)	1
Total		23-31

Source: Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 421-424.

⁶⁶ Velasco Murillo, "Laboring above the Ground," 10.

Notwithstanding this general and seemingly universal description of the haciendas de beneficio, these working units varied greatly in size, number of workers, geographic location, and economic and productive features. When the Spanish town was established in 1592, most Spaniards established their haciendas de beneficio slightly out of town, *extramuros* as they said. In their majority, the haciendas were situated to the north and west of the town, on the banks of the Santiago River and around the *ciénaga* (marsh) that lies between Tlaxcalilla and the Spanish town. Others were closer to the centre of town, by the *laguna* (lagoon) and some wells. The rest were to the south-west, where the convent of San Francisco was built between 1595 and 1597. When the town was established, it was small and the haciendas were situated on its outskirts. Within a few years, however, the town reached the nearby sources of water where the haciendas had been established. The new houses intermingled with the haciendas de beneficio and their mounds of mineral waste, which gave a particular morphology to the mining town. By the 1620s, there were twenty-two haciendas de beneficio in or around the town, with over one hundred furnaces.⁶⁷

The most successful Spanish mine-owners participated in the early construction of the mining town, but quickly secured more extensive lands and built larger productive units that included far more than the production of silver. For example, by 1600 in the valley of San Francisco to the south-east of San Luis Potosí, Domingo Gallegos had established, along with his hacienda de beneficio, a *carbonera* (charcoal-making facility) and an *estancia* (small farm). He then bought the contiguous lands of Pedro Benegas, Francisco Cárdenas, Pedro de Anda, and Pedro de Arce, and sold the whole complex to the notary Matias Pardo. Along with the haciendas of Juan de Zavala, Pedro Arizmendi

⁶⁷ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 80; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 211.

Gogorrón, Francisco Cárdenas, and Juan de Valle, that of Matias Pardo was then one of the largest in the whole jurisdiction.⁶⁸ All of these Spaniards were directly related to the foundation of the town of San Luis Potosí and had first invested in it at their arrival. Juan de Zavala was the first to petition for a concession to refine silver. He established a hacienda east of the traza and west of the laguna; that is to say, only a little ways out of town. Pedro Arizmendi Gogorrón established his first hacienda on the Santiago River, right beside Tlaxcalilla, and received a small piece of land for his house on the eastern side of the town. By the end of the 1610s, he was the lieutenant-captain general of the Chichimec frontier and alcalde mayor of San Luis Potosí.⁶⁹ Francisco Cárdenas and Juan de Valle had chosen sites to the south-west, just by the site of the future Franciscan convent.⁷⁰

Both researchers Alejandro Galván Arellano and Guadalupe Salazar González write about the impossibility of knowing the precise form and composition of the haciendas that were in or close by the town because they were all subsequently destroyed with the gradual urban expansion and development. They both take as object of study the haciendas of Monte Caldera to the east of San Pedro where ruins allow for a thorough study of their architecture and organisation. As hinted by the description of the labourers' tasks, essential elements of the hacienda de beneficio included the *horno de fundición y afinación* (smelting and refining furnaces; typically two to three), a source of water, a wall of *fuelles* (bellows), and spaces to allow the incoming and outgoing of the minerals

⁶⁸ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 83; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 145.

⁶⁹ I did not find the exact dates of Gogorrón's term in office, but he appears as lieutenant-captain general of the Chichimec frontier and alcalde mayor of San Luis Potosí in 1617 and 1619. See José Antonio Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos para el estudio de los tlaxcaltecas en San Luis Potosí, siglos XVI-XVIII* (Tlaxcala: Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala and Fideicomiso Colegio de Historia de Tlaxcala, 2009), 69-126.

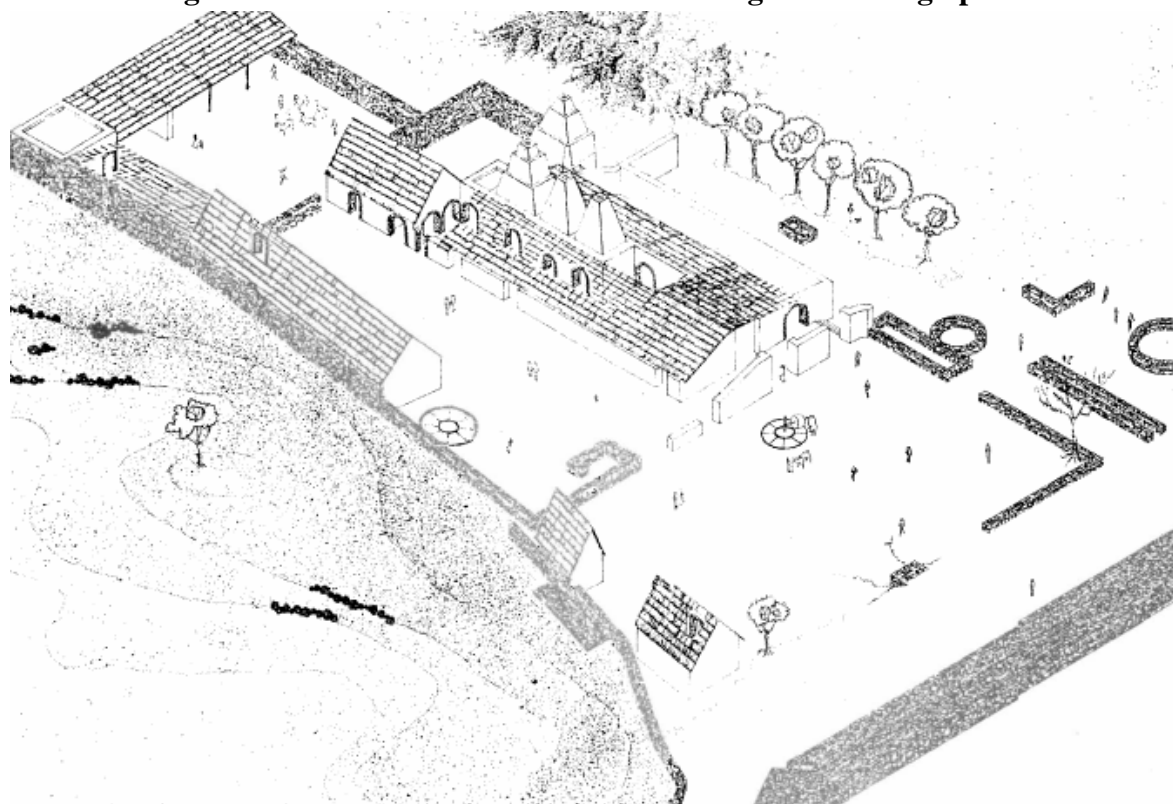
⁷⁰ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 399 and 485; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 229-232.

(*almacenes*). Other elements included carpentry and blacksmithing workshops, a chapel, gardens, a water reservoir, barns, stables, and offices. Some of the biggest had a separate *vivienda*, that is, a place for the workers to sleep, cook, eat, and carry all other familial tasks. These out-of-town haciendas were often quite large. Those of Pedro de Arizmendi Gogorrón in La Sauceda and in the Valle of San Francisco, for example, had up to eighteen furnaces and included all of the enumerated adjunct buildings. In contrast, the in-town haciendas were smaller and possessed less diversified materials, buildings, and spaces. According to Galván Arellano, in these latter haciendas, the living space for the workers was integrated into the complex and was probably much smaller than in those out of town (see figure 1).⁷¹ Another major difference was that in-town haciendas did not need their own chapel because it was possible for the workers to attend mass in the nearby churches of the Amerindian towns. Starting in 1603, each hacienda was assigned to a specific parish to prevent confusion and conflicts on Sundays, but this policy was apparently ineffective and workers apparently attended mass where and if they saw fit.⁷²

⁷¹ Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 211-216 and 267-273.

⁷² Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 136.

Figure 4.1: Hacienda de Beneficio with Integrated Living Spaces



Source: “Hacienda de beneficio con vivienda integrada en Real de Monte Caldera; Reconstitución histórico-arquitectónica. S. VII. Desarrollo de la arquitectura y el urbanismo en la ciudad de San Luis Potosí en el siglo XVII, Alejandro Galván Arellano.” In Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 271. On the image it is written “Este ejemplo nos es útil para inferir como fueron las que estaban en el pueblo de San Luis Potosí.”

The haciendas de beneficio were not the only productive units to use Amerindian labour. Owners of *ranchos* and *carboneras* were also large employers, but of a different type. The concept of rancho is very broad and includes a variety of work sites. According to Sebastián de Covarrubia Orozco, the word comes from the Italian “*raunire*,” that is, to reunite. In Spain, it primarily designated a military group on a *Real*. In other words, it is a group of people inside a larger institution.⁷³ In northern New Spain, it could take the form of a group of people, a human settlement, or a group of temporary houses. For example,

⁷³ “Termino militar, vale compañía, que entre si hazen camarada en cierto sitio señalado en el Real. Dijo se assi del verbo Italiano raunare, que vale allegar, o juntar en uno.” Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española*. Segunda parte, f. 2v.

groups of pacified Chichimecs were often settled in ranchos by the colonial administration. Of greater importance for San Luis Potosí, the rancho could also be a modest, independent site of production, an appendage to a larger exploitation, or a site for livestock rearing. Ranchos were the units using the vacant lands, very often through a rent of a plot of unused land on a hacienda or farm, or on the communal lands of Indian towns. Their inhabitants were mestizos, free Amerindians, mulatos, and free blacks. Most of these peoples had no status either among the Spaniards or in the Amerindian communities.⁷⁴

The type of products made in the ranchos varied. In San Luis Potosí, the most common were the *ranchos de carbón* (charcoal) or carboneras and the *ranchos de arrieros* (muleteers). Charcoal was essential to process the minerals and was the combustion material used in the furnaces on the haciendas de beneficio. Mineral coal was not known at that time, and Spaniards used charcoal, which had to be made from wood. Carboneras operated by *hacendados* (hacienda owners) were among the largest ranchos: they diminished the costs of buying the charcoal on the market. Just as on the haciendas de beneficio, many Amerindians worked in these Spanish-owned carboneras and had specific tasks. The carboneras of Pedro de Narvaez and those of Juan Pérez Almendral, for example, respectively employed fifty-two and thirty-six Amerindians in 1603.⁷⁵ As in the refining process, these indigenous labourers performed different tasks. On that of Francisco de Benavidez, the Tarascan Diego Francisco said in 1620 that he was working as *hachero* (lumberjack).⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 213-216.

⁷⁵ AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1603, caja 2, exp. 13.

⁷⁶ AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 3, exp. 14. Other examples were found in 1618, caja 2, exp. 12 and in 1620, caja 8, exp. 5.

The size of ranchos could vary significantly. For example, according to a list of 1603, the rancho of Martín de Lichea hosted thirty-one Amerindians, while that of Diego Muñoz counted only four (see table 4.2). Usually, the largest ranchos were owned by Spaniards and were situated on the land of a hacienda, as an appendage. Most ranchos, however, were small familial units, at times using free labourers, and usually counting only around five to seven individuals.⁷⁷ They could be on rented land or owned by the *carbonero*, most often close to or in woodlands of mesquite and oak. Small carboneras were often owned and operated by Amerindians. For example, the *indio* Juan Baltazar was a “citizen of the village of Tlaxcalilla close to this town where he has his own houses and mules,” and employed at least one other Indian, Juan Diego, as *carbonero*.⁷⁸ For the numerous Amerindians working on or owning carboneras, the work consisted in constructing the buildings, cutting wood, making the charcoal, and delivering it. In addition to those working for Spaniards and those owning their ranchos, a great number of Amerindian carboneros lived in the village of San Miguel and worked in the woods south of it.⁷⁹ According to this description, carboneras had two important effects on indigenous peoples’ social standing. First, the different tasks carried by Amerindians signified a social differentiation. Second, the possibility to own and run a carbonera could translate into higher economic status.

Ranchos de ganado (livestock farms) were other places of production where indigenous peoples worked in large numbers. These *ranchos* were small, domestic sites of breeding for a variety of mules, horses, goats, sheep, cows, and beef. Most animals

⁷⁷ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 214.

⁷⁸ “[...] es vecino del pueblecillo de Tlaxcalilla cerca de este pueblo donde tiene casas y mulas suyas propias [...]” AHESLP, AM, 1622, caja 2, exp. 22, f. 4v.

⁷⁹ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 217-225.

raised there were used for transport, for domestic consumption, or as suppliers of raw material to make cheese, tallow, butter, and leather. Ranchos normally counted very few workers, but they were numerous and they were found everywhere around the conurbation. Many Amerindians from the villages and neighbourhoods, who worked in their gardens on the communal lands, also worked on ranchos de ganado. Among these, the *ranchos de arrieros* (muleteers' farms) were the most important because they specialized in raising mules, which merchants and producers preferred to transport minerals, charcoal, wood, foodstuffs, and other goods necessary to the productive economy of San Luis Potosí. In fact, their greatest concentration was to the north-east of the town, along the Santiago River and between Tlaxcalilla and San Pedro.⁸⁰ Many Amerindians worked in this activity, such as the ladinos Francisco Jacobo in 1594 and Juan Rodríguez in 1603, or the Tarascan Diego Juan who was a cart driver for Antonio Arismendi Gogorrón in 1625.⁸¹ Again, the ranchos contributed to the great variety of work and possibilities for indigenous peoples.

In parallel to the rather small ranchos de ganado and to the gardens in the Amerindians villages, Spaniards engaged in large-scale agriculture and livestock raising. In contrast to the other sites of production mentioned above, fewer Amerindians worked on these two types of farms. First, Spaniards employed Amerindian workers on most of their *haciendas de labor* (large agricultural farms), but only a very limited number of this type of hacienda existed in the immediate vicinity of San Luis Potosí. Salazar González reports one such concession close to Tlaxcalilla around 1615, but most of them were

⁸⁰ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 225-233.

⁸¹ Information on the two muleteers can found respectively in AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 1 and A-44, 1603, caja 1, exp. 22. That on the cart driver can be found in AHESLP, AM, 1625, caja 1, exp. 23, f. 2v.

situated around Santa María del Río to the east. Spaniards also established *Estancias de ganado* (large cattle ranches) around San Luis Potosí, on which they used an Amerindian labour force. However, the producers needed only four to ten individuals to tend one thousand cattle and the impact on Amerindian labour was consequently small. Nevertheless, the few Amerindians who engaged in such agricultural and ranching labour contributed to the great variety of Amerindian forms of employment in San Luis Potosí.

Amerindians constructed the buildings, furnaces, mills, and other physical features of these haciendas, ranchos, and estancias. The larger haciendas often benefited from their own in-house staff of craftsmen, but the smaller ones and individuals in the town had to rely on an independent force of craftsmen composed of Spaniards and Amerindians, at times working side by side. In the villages around the Spanish town, indigenous peoples erected most of the buildings they used themselves or they hired specific skilled immigrants. In the whole conurbation, Amerindians were shoemakers, tailors, tanners, carpenters, blacksmiths, mud brick wall builders, masons, and bricklayers.⁸²

Some Amerindians learned their skills from Spaniards, although there is very little documentation concerning apprenticeship in San Luis Potosí in the years studied here. The only ones I found are those of Francisco de Paz, an orphan from Mexico City who was between twenty and twenty-five years old, and who entered the house of Andrés Jiménez in August 1626 as an apprentice shoemaker for two and a half years; Miguel, a young eight years old boy who was brought by his father, Sebastian Martín from Texcoco, to become apprentice tailor with Alonso de Caso for four years, also in August

⁸² The terms used in Spanish were *zapateros*, *sastres*, *curtidor*, *carpinteros*, *herrerros*, *tapiadores*, and *albañiles*.

1626; and Tomas González, an orphan from Celaya who was between fourteen and twenty-five years old, who entered the house of Juan Yniquez in April 1628 as an apprentice blacksmith for three years.⁸³ The characteristics of the apprentices varied and the length of their apprenticeship as well, but there were common general rules to the training, rules that did not differ according to *calidad* (quality) or social strata of the apprentice. The master had to give food and shelter, educate, and ensure of the health of the apprentice. He also had to furnish a full kit of clothing each year, including a cloak, breeches, a doublet, shirts, shoes, and a hat. The apprentice, for his part, had to stay in the house and service of his master at all times for the length of his apprenticeship. In the end, the master had to make sure the apprentice's capacities were those of a craftsman able to earn normal pay. Otherwise, the master had the duty to keep his apprentice and continue to teach him.⁸⁴ Interestingly, the equality in treatment of all apprentices, independently of their race, contributed to differentiation in status among Amerindians. Such training enabled indigenous craftsmen to gain salaries similar to any other craftsmen. In addition, native apprentices wore the same clothes as all other apprentices, which was conducive to raising their public social status.⁸⁵

These three records of apprenticeship are the only ones known to concern Amerindians. It is thus difficult to understand on a large scale the relationships between Amerindians who worked for Spanish masters. One thing for sure is that Amerindian

⁸³ The three writings of apprenticeship are in AHESLP, AM, 1626, caja 1, exp. 21, f. 5, 7, and 13.

⁸⁴ The writing of apprenticeship said: "le ha de enseñar el dicho oficio de tal zapatero hasta le dar oficial de él y de comer y criar, de curar de su enfermedades y un vestido de paño de la tierra cada año, capote, ropilla, calzones y jubón y camisas media y zapatos y sombrero [...] al cabo del dicho tiempo oficiado del dicho oficio de manera que como tal pueda trabajar y ganar cada día lo que un bueno oficial gana pena de que no lo cumpliendo a su costa lo acabe de aprender de más de lo cual le pagara cada día lo que otro oficial del dicho oficio ganase." AHESLP, AM, 1626, caja 1, exp. 21, f. 5. See also Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 271; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 186.

⁸⁵ Mangan discusses the importance of dress in showing one's social status among the mestiza traders of Potosí. Mangan, "A Market of Identities," 71-76.

apprenticeships did not begin in 1626. Salazar González, citing the Spanish bricklayer craftsman (*oficial de albañil*) Juan de Buitrago's testament, writes that he had a cuadrilla of bricklayers, but she is not sure whether these bricklayers were apprentices or free Amerindian craftsmen.⁸⁶ What can at least be inferred from his will is that there was a group of Amerindians working together as bricklayers already in 1606. Juan de Buitrago had come to San Luis Potosí from Zacatecas in 1596 to build the principal church in the Spanish parish. In town, he assembled a cuadrilla of about fifty masons and bricklayers.⁸⁷ There are no lists of these workers, but a criminal case from 1603 confirms that Buitrago employed Amerindians who lived in his *casa de morada* (principal house).⁸⁸ This place must have been large enough to contain a good number of workers because it contained small quarters for Amerindians with separate rooms, and a private jail.⁸⁹ The significance of this case lies in the characteristics of the Amerindian workers it mentions, who lived in Buitrago's house. These four persons are the gardener Alonso Miguel from Guadalajara, another gardener named Pedro Luis and his wife Francisca, and Alonso Vicente from Jacona in Michoacán who spoke Tarascan. This short list shows that Amerindians working for the same Spaniard could come from different areas of Mesoamerica, in this case, from the Tarascan and Tecuexe regions. As well, it suggests that Amerindians working for the same employer could be hired for different skills. Here, even though Buitrago generally employed craftsmen, he also employed Amerindian gardeners. Finally, the fact that Francisca lived with her husband in Buitrago's house hints that

⁸⁶ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 271.

⁸⁷ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 267; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 184.

⁸⁸ From Covarrubias' definition of the word *morada*: "La habitación ordinaria de cada uno. Dijose del verbo morar, aris. por detenerse, atento que en nuestra casa es donde más nos detenemos y estamos, y de allí ni más ni menos se dijo morar, que es habitar, y morador, el que habita en la tal morada." Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española*. Segunda parte, f. 555v.

⁸⁹ It is written: "[...] estando en las casas de morada del dicho Juan de Buitrago en un aposento de una casilla de indio [...]" AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1603, caja 1, exp. 26, f. 1r. For the jail, see f. 4r.

Spaniards hosted families on their in-town work sites, a situation that was far from exceptional.

Juan de Oliva was another employer of skilled Amerindian workers and craftsmen.⁹⁰ A series of criminal documents from 1594 and 1595 mention seven Amerindian *criados* of Juan de Oliva: Pedro Alonso, a *tapiador* (mud brick wall builder) from Zacualco; Gerónimo also *tapiador*; Juan Felipe, a Tarascan who was also *tapiador*; Francisco Hernández, a Nahua *albañil* from Texcoco; a young boy called Bernardino; Jacobo Felipe from Michoacán; and Pedro García.⁹¹ The exact tasks of the last two in the service of Oliva are not mentioned, but at the time of the events recounted in the documents, they were “desgratando ancendrada,” that is, they were cleaning left-over slag from the oven of Gerónimo Paez’ hacienda de beneficio at night. The exact reason of their presence in such a context is not known, but it is possible that they had been working two different jobs for different Spaniards, with their legitimate employer aware of this situation. The appearance of *tapiadores* and of one *albañil* is more understandable and confirms Oliva’s business in the construction of the town. These workers from divergent origins apparently all lived together in Oliva’s house, which was close to the *traza* among other Spaniards’ houses.

From the examples of Juan de Buitrago’s and Juan de Oliva’s *cuadrillas de indios*, it is possible to infer that the organisation of Amerindian craftsmen resembled that of Amerindian workers on the haciendas de beneficio. The architecture of the houses was probably different from that of the haciendas because there was no need for productive

⁹⁰ To know more about Juan de Oliva, see AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1603, caja 2, exp. 15 and Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 270.

⁹¹ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 18-20; 1595, caja 1, exp. 6a; 1595, caja 1, exp. 7; 1595, caja 2, exp. 19; 1597, caja 1, exp. 21.

infrastructure, but the presence of various rooms for Amerindians to live is quite certain. Galvan Arellano discusses of two types of houses in the Spanish town, a simple, one-storey one, and a more complex one laid out on two floors and usually used by merchants because they could use one room that opened on the street as a store. These larger ones had also various lodging spaces, a kitchen, a patio, a space for animals, and a garden. It is not clear how many individuals and families they could hold, but they surely served to create close ties between their inhabitants. According to Galvan Arellano, the number of Amerindians living in such Spanish houses was high.⁹²

Craftsmen could aspire to better social status because both Spaniards and Amerindians appreciated their skills, and because they could make profit out of their trade. In the indigenous towns, not all inhabitants had the skills to build houses and other buildings. Residents had to employ skilled workers for that purpose. Although they were not officially grouped in corporations, craftsmen grouped together in informal and local “corps de metier,” which favoured the creation of proximate ties.⁹³ This distinguished them from other indigenous labourers, both in space and economic standing.

The proximity of the craftsmen in space and activity to the Spanish society was perhaps the most determinant factor in their identification. As it was the case for the workers of Juan de Buitrago and Juan de Oliva, these Amerindians lived in the centre of the Spanish town, among preeminent Spaniards. The house of Oliva, for example, was situated between those of Juan de Zavala and Gabriel Ortiz de Fuenmayor. This geographical situation allowed them to create contacts among the Spanish society of San Luis Potosí and, sometimes, to ask for privileges with the support of Spaniards. In

⁹² Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 213-215.

⁹³ Poloni-Simard, *La mosaïque indienne*: 95-102.

December 1596, for example, the indio Cristóbal Miguel, who was born in Sayula, petitioned the alcalde mayor to be able to freely use the wood resources of a hill. Three Spaniards supported him in his demand and they all insisted that Cristóbal Miguel was a skilled carpenter (*oficial de carpintero*), very profitable to the town, and that he was a tranquil, pacified, and non-rebellious Indian who never drank.⁹⁴ In sum, Cristóbal Miguel enjoyed a good reputation among the Spaniards and this allowed him to gain privileges. His status was better than that of unskilled labourers.

In order to study the relations between Amerindians on all of these work sites, it is essential to discuss the relations between the *amo* (employer) and the *criado* (servant or worker). Most historians of the mines in northern New Spain agree that Amerindian labour there was usually non-coercive. Amerindian labourers received pay, food, and shelter. Yet, they always remained in the lower social categories. The word *amo* comes from its feminine *ama*, a woman feeding a baby: “que cria el niño.” In this sense, the masculine defined first the husband of the *ama*, and then “the men who maintained one who had to be raised” (“el señor que mantiene al criado”). *Criado* comes from the verb *criar*, to raise, feed, and educate. This same language came to define the relation that existed between employer and worker.⁹⁵ In San Luis Potosí, the *amo* had the patriarchal duty to raise the indio socially, economically, and spiritually. For example, in a case from 1594, the alcalde mayor sentenced a Tarascan woman to serve the Spanish woman Leonor Cortes for a salary of two pesos per month. In addition, he “notifies the said

⁹⁴ AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1596, caja 2, exp. 16.

⁹⁵ For Spanish definition of *amo* and *criado*, see Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española*. primera parte, f. 65r and 247v; *Diccionario de la lengua española*. Madrid: Real Academia Española and Editorial Espasa Calpe, 2001). <http://lema.rae.es/drae/>.

Leonor Cortes to educate her about the things of the service of God our Lord.”⁹⁶ Of course, the nature and the depth of the relation between the employer and the employee varied and depended in part on the size of the work site. While owners of large haciendas de beneficio usually knew little about their workers and only indirectly covered their obligations through the mayordomo and the chapel or local clergy, others lived more intimately with their criados, a situation resembling that of the craftsmen. At times, some Spaniards attended the marriage of their criados. For example, in the central parish on June 27th, 1604, Juan de Zavala was a witness to the marriage of Juan and Isabel, two Amerindians working for him. The other three witnesses were all Spaniards, a phenomenon that occurred frequently when Amerindians married in that parish.⁹⁷

A document from 1627 illustrates very well the tensions between amo and criado, as well as the limits of the power relations between both. The document is incomplete, but presents sufficient information for the purpose at hand. On July 9th, the *defensor de indios* (lawyer appointed to represent indigenous peoples) Gregorio de Fuentes filled a request so that his client, Juan Baltasar from Mexico City and fluent in Spanish, be freed from the public jailhouse and paid for his work by the Spaniard Antonio Maldonado Zapata, knight of the order of Santiago. The paper is accompanied by a detailed account of the things purchased by Juan Baltasar from Antonio Maldonado while he was working for him, and of the days worked. The balance, claimed Juan Baltasar, showed that his patron still owed him money. Juan Baltasar had to write a second letter for lack of response from the authorities. Therein, he stated that the authorities had been ill informed by Antonio Maldonado. Finally, on September 24, the *alcalde mayor* decided to set Juan

⁹⁶ “[...] se notifique a la dicha Leonor Cortes la doctrine e industria en las cosas del servicio de dios nuestro señor.” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 29, f. 6r.

⁹⁷ APS, caja 1, libro 1.2, f. 8r, 27 de julio de 1604.

Baltasar free with a very interesting statement: “There is not anyone who claimed anything from him [Juan Baltasar] and he is suffering in this prison for which reason I commanded and command that he be released from the prison so that he goes to serve whom he wishes and who will pay him the most for his service.”⁹⁸ The initial complaint from Antonio Maldonado and the order of arrest are not contained in the documentation. Nonetheless, Juan Baltasar was in jail at the latest by July 9th and was liberated on September 25th, a total of seventy-eight days for an unclaimed debt.

This situation shows, first, the power that Spanish employers had over their workers. They strictly controlled their narration of the events with the help of the local authorities. Antonio Maldonado only had to address the problem to the *alcalde mayor* to get his *criado* arrested. His status of knight in the order of Santiago would only have strengthened his power. The Amerindian Juan Baltasar, on the other hand, was defended by his lawyer, but he had to produce his own account and was unattended by the Spanish authorities for a very long period of time, probably with the hope that he would pay. The balance of power was nonetheless not completely on the side of the Spanish employer, for he was finally not paid and the authorities, in the end, took the side of the Amerindian, writing that he was suffering and that he should by then be free of changing employer. Juan Baltasar was, in a sense, detached from his obligations.

A similar case appeared in November 1621. Three Amerindians called Juan Mateo, Juan Martín, and Francisco Miguel petitioned the deputy mayor for their release from jail, stating that they were free Amerindians. In their opinion, they were not obliged

⁹⁸ “No hay ni ha parecido ninguna persona que le pida cosa alguna y el susodicho está padeciendo en la dicha prisión atento a lo cual mandaba y mando que el susodicho sea suelto libremente de la dicha prisión para que vaya a servir a quien le pareciere y más bien le pagare su servicio.” AHESLP, AM, 1627, caja 4, exp. 3, f. 6r.

to work for any Spaniards, as Julian Moreno and Fernando de Arce claimed. They had received advances on pay from these Spaniards, but they claimed to have already done their work.⁹⁹ The outcome in this case is unknown because the papers are missing. Taken together, however, both documents show that Amerindian workers in San Luis Potosí had some power in working relations and some support from the Spanish authorities.

Spaniards apparently spent large amounts of money on their Indian workers. Many sent recruiters south to Mesoamerica, mostly to Michoacán, and paid large sums to incite Amerindians to work for them in San Luis Potosí. In May 1599, Miguel Maldonado, the administrator of Pedro de Umendia's haciendas, said: "Indians from Michoacán for the said hacienda cost me many pesos to bring from their land."¹⁰⁰ This testimony appeared in a case of *sonsaque* (coaxing), another method to acquire indigenous labour that consisted in Spaniards attracting and contracting workers from other Spaniards. This practice was illegal, but widespread. During the events of May 1599, the Spaniard at fault, Juan de Sandoval, apparently tempted Umendia's workers. According to a witness presented by Maldonado, Sandoval offered the workers to pay all their debts and invited them to stay on his hacienda to drink wine.¹⁰¹ However, hiring in the town did not always mean taking workers from another Spaniard. As explained in chapter three, many Amerindians also arrived on site by themselves and searched for work then and there. In short, the Amerindians' experiences of getting hired were very different and their lives on work sites were equally so.

⁹⁹ AHESLP, AM, 1621, caja 5, exp. 32.

¹⁰⁰ "[...] indios de Michoacán para la dicha hacienda [...] me han costado muchos pesos traerlos de su tierra [...]" AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1599, caja 1, exp. 15, f. 1r.

¹⁰¹ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1599, caja 1, exp. 15, f.2r

Although Spaniards offered basic living conditions to their Amerindian workers, life on haciendas was not always to the taste of the labourers and, at times, some tried to change employer, as in the cases of *sonsaque*, or to move to another city altogether. In 1625, for example, a group of eight men and women left the *cuadrilla* (work team) of Antonio Arismendi Gogorrón – son of Pedro Arismendi Gogorrón. One of them, the Tarascan Pedro Socabón, was accused of being their leader and of having incited them to flee from the hacienda. According to the *mayordomo* who had participated in capturing Pedro Socabón, the man confessed to encouraging the other workers to go with him and work in Zacatecas for Juan de Oñate. Another witness testified that Pedro Socabón's motivation was that he was tired of working for Arismendi Gogorrón: “estaba cansado de trabajar en el dicho cerro.” Although Pedro Socabón was captured and put on trial, the other Amerindians were not taken and there were rumours that they had reached their goal.¹⁰² Amerindian workers thus had some opportunities to react to and change their situations.

The wealth Amerindians could gather through their labour, their dependence or independence towards their patron, their exclusion or inclusion in the dominant New-Hispanic economy and social system, and the socialisation framework in which they carried out their tasks all influenced their modes of identification.

Conclusion

The indigenous migrants and the Guachichils who established themselves in San Luis Potosí showed a high degree of agency in their settlement patterns and in the organisation of towns and work sites. They were responsible for the establishment of

¹⁰² AHESLP, AM, 1625, caja 1, exp. 23. The quote is from f. 3v.

fixed communities, they built their own houses and buildings, and they developed a dynamic commercial economy both within and outside of the towns. Indigenous labourers living on work sites show equal energy. Their trades and skills varied greatly from one individual to another. All of this agency and bustling action translated into elements of social differentiation within indigenous communities.

Women were also present everywhere in the valley. However, their roles were obscured by the Spanish notaries. For this reason, it is difficult to detail the indigenous men's understanding of their wives' and partners' roles in the valley, and even less so women's views of themselves. The information I gathered nevertheless shows that the gendered organisation of San Luis Potosí did not give the same roles to men and women. There was a strong gender hierarchy in the towns and on work sites. I will return to this situation in the chapters to come and try to understand how it was built and how it affected the modes of identification of indigenous peoples.

I have here identified the different elements that influenced Amerindians' modes of identification in San Luis Potosí. Ethnicity appears as an important component of identities, but it shared its influence with other factors, such as occupation, skills, wealth, dress, and gender. In the chapters to come, I will deepen the roles of these elements. In the next chapter, I will seek to show their influence on the daily relations and interactions between individual indigenous peoples in the valley.

Chapter 5: Daily Spaces of Sociability

San Luis Potosí has quintessentially been thought of as a place of work. By virtue of its nature as a Real de minas, most historians have ignored its living spaces. The towns and worksites of the valley, however, were places of vital social interactions that added to work relationships. It is worth looking much more closely at how indigenous peoples encountered each other and created bonds within these sites. In this chapter, I study the formation of communities of indigenous peoples, both in the pueblos and barrios de indios and on work sites. I show that social relationships were extremely diverse, and were forged in quotidian encounters. Petty trade, access to natural resources such as water, religious rituals such as baptism, work, and other activities served in creating the indigenous communities.

Reciprocity and corporatism were two essential structural elements to the organisation of community life. First, Mesoamerican migrants were polybians, that is, people who consecutively lived in different life spaces and everywhere showed a great propensity for adaptation. These Mesoamericans rebuilt webs of social relations that had unravelled in their homelands. According to Tamar Diana Wilson, the basis of this reconstruction was reciprocity, that is, the sharing between members of households and communities of “economic, social, and affective benefits.”¹ Second, the society of New Spain was corporatist, and indigenous communities acted as corporate bodies. Annick Lempérière defines corporations as any group of people (universities, guilds, hospitals, convents, towns and cities, etc.) recognized as a moral person by a superior authority, either officially or only in practice. Corporations were formed with the objective of

¹ Wilson, "The Culture," 411-415.

bringing justice and well-being to the collectivity.² In San Luis Potosí, the *pueblos de indios* were official corporations because they were formally recognized by the Spanish authorities. The act of foundation of San Miguel, described in chapter three, represents one such official recognition of an indigenous body and of its political representation. The Spanish authorities, in contrast, never formally acknowledged the existence of *cuadrillas* as communities of workers. In practice, however, labourers sought the benefits of a collectivity and formed informal corporate bodies, if only to defend their members against Spanish and external aggression. Reciprocity and corporatism as structuring elements of the indigenous society went hand in hand: the formation of corporations depended on the development of reciprocal social ties between individuals, and these ties were in turn guaranteed in the long term by the maintenance of corporations.

Historians of the urban areas emphasize the complexity of social relationships in the towns and cities of Spanish America and show the importance of both official and unofficial corporate bodies. Both the Indian towns and the work sites were valuable spaces of sociability and of identity construction. Felipe Castro Gutiérrez presents the Indian *pueblos* of New Spain as complex webs of communication, familial affiliation, friendship, and enmity. The *pueblos* and *barrios de indios* were lively places where daily social relations and interactions did not depend exclusively on official obligations or dictates. To a certain extent, the new Indian towns even reproduced the functional characteristics of pre-colonial forms of identification, such as the *calpulli* and *tecalli* of the Nahuas or the *cepa* of Michoacán. However, Castro Gutiérrez makes it clear that ties

² Annick Lempérière, *Entre Dieu et le Roi, la République; Mexico, XVI^e-XIX^e siècles* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2004), 11-22; Felipe Castro Gutiérrez, "El origen y conformación de los barrios de indios," in *Los indios y las ciudades de Nueva España*, ed. Felipe Castro Gutiérrez (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010), 107.

between Amerindians did not depend on the nobility as was the case with pre-colonial structures, but rather on implicit social contracts resembling the pre-colonial social institutions.³ Laura Matthew observed as well the central role of the Indian towns in the evolution of indigenous identities in Ciudad Vieja, Guatemala. Here, belonging to a *parcialidad* (Indian town) defined the individuals' affiliations to a "colonial alteptl" mixing Spanish and Mesoamerican concepts of identity. Nonetheless, the most important element in defining social affiliations was the shared experience as inhabitants of a same town, rather than blood affiliation and lineage as in the pre-colonial era. In consequence, writes Matthew, these affiliations had constantly to be maintained: they were not immutable.⁴

I start this chapter with a description of the spaces used by indigenous peoples in San Luis Potosí, but I move out from the realm of production to emphasize their characteristics as living places. In the second section, I show how people shaped these places to better take advantage of their social potential in creating friendship, families, and support networks. I then turn to the use of religious rituals, such as marriages, baptisms, and godparenthood, to show the high degree of relationship between space and community formation. Here, I understand rituals as mechanisms that facilitated the passage from daily relationships to cohesive communities. Finally, I analyse the role of ethnicity in the creation of social networks, and I counterbalance it with other factors of identification explained in chapter four, such as qualification, skills, and contacts with Spanish culture. On the whole, the indigenous migrants started to establish social

³ Castro Gutiérrez, "El origen y conformación," 106-114.

⁴Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*: 132-177.

networks rapidly in San Luis Potosí, but they became more cohesive and took the form of corporate bodies only by the 1610s and 1620s. This evolution is shown in each section.

Living Spaces

In general, researchers consider that pueblos and barrios de indios throughout New Spain were of a “nuclear urban-rural” type, meaning that their inhabitants lived around a structured centre and on extensive allotted and cultivatable lands. The centre was composed of religious buildings (the church) and civil buildings (the jail and the house of the community council). The church, the central plaza, and the civil buildings, structured the social and religious life, were usually built side by side.⁵ The population lived on the community lands surrounding that centre. Allotments to individual members of the community typically comprised a house and a large garden where people cultivated vegetables and raised small animals. These lots were often twice as large as those granted to Spaniards in the central town.⁶ Other informal spaces of sociability, such as markets, slaughter houses, rivers, taverns, and stores, were also significant in the organisation of community life.

The Catholic Church was a very important institution for Amerindians living in the Indian towns. First the Franciscans, then the Augustinians, and then other religious orders established churches and monasteries in the Spanish and Indian parishes. The church formed part of the centre of the towns and neighbourhoods. It was the place where individuals met every Sunday for mass, but also for social reunions on the square, to buy or sell food, and to take care of other business. Churches were also the home of the

⁵ Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 72-74.

⁶ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 125-126.

cofradías (confraternities) that gathered the funds to organise religious festivities and funerals for their members. There is very little known about these festivities and their impact on social life in the pueblos. Salazar González says that the patron of the town, Saint Luis, was celebrated every August 25 until 1602, when the costs to organise the festivities became too high. From that point on, the Spanish town council decided that only the confraternities' patrons would be celebrated, "with moderation and as it is allowed."⁷ In the documents from the *alcaldía mayor* there are very few references to these celebrations. I found no writings from the Indian councils or from the Indian confraternities. I noticed, however, that on Easter in the 1590s, the authorities of San Luis Potosí reported troubles with drunken Amerindians, sometimes even large brawls involving hundreds of individuals; still, I found no direct glimpses of the rituals or of their social meaning.

Some sources nonetheless reveal direct relations between religious institutions and Amerindian society. First, baptisms and marriages served to create inter and intra community ties. They will be discussed more extensively in chapter six, but here it is essential to point out that these rituals were important in the creation and reproduction of community bonds. Second, many Amerindians took refuge in the churches for protection against Spaniards, and the priest often helped them. This was the case, for example, of the Mexicano Juan Miguel who, in Tlaxcalilla in 1599, murdered a mulato slave to steal his horse and mounting equipment, and who, in fear of being discovered, found refuge and help from the Franciscan fray Diego in the church of Tlaxcalilla.⁸

⁷ "Con moderación y como es permitido." AGNM, General de Parte, vol.6, exp. 229, f. 90, quoted in Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 133.

⁸ Sego, *Un homicidio*: 18 and 28.

In addition, the Church, as one of the most powerful agents of colonial society, sought to influence relations of power inside the indigenous communities in favour of the colonial order. For example, in 1599, a Guachichil woman rebelled against the Spanish authority and the cultural power the Catholic Church exercised over indigenous peoples. She called upon all indigenous peoples of the area, but mostly upon other Guachichils, to rebel and kill all Spaniards, and she destroyed the interior of the churches of Tlaxcalilla and Santiago. According to the criminal record documenting the case and the analysis written by Ruth Behar, this specific event, which lasted only a day, expressed the relation between politics and religion. By breaking the Catholic symbols inside the churches, the woman sought to break indigenous ties with the Church, which would have facilitated a revolt by indigenous peoples. However, there was also an indigenous character opposed to her actions: Pedro de Torres, the captain of the Guachichils of San Miguel Mezquitic. The woman had sent someone to fetch Torres and invite him to revolt with her and lead his peoples. For Torres, however, rebellion meant the disturbance of social peace among the Guachichils settled in the area. To keep his power in relation to other Guachichils, Torres had to preserve the politico-religious order. He thus refused to rebel and instead collaborated with the Spanish authorities to condemn the woman. His relation to the Church was too important to risk losing his leading position.⁹

In the centre of the Indian towns, there were usually civil buildings for the jail, the administration, and the meeting of the council. The council was the local government. In the pueblos and barrios de indios, its composition changed according to the status of the locality and the size of the population, but its members were always chosen among the

⁹ The document is in AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1599, caja 1, exp. 22. See also Ruth Behar, "The Visions of a Guachichil Witch in 1599: A Window on the Subjugation of Mexico's Hunter-Gatherers," *Ethnohistory* 34, no. 2 (1987): 133-135; Behar, *Las visiones de una bruja*: 29-42.

principales, that is, among the notables of the town. The earliest trace of information available to study their composition unfortunately dates from 1697. In that year, the record of the election process for all pueblos and barrios de indios indicates that the cabildo of San Miguel was composed of an *alcalde* (ordinary mayor), an *alguacil* (sherriff), a *fiscal* (attorney), and an *alguacil y topil* (minor justice officer).¹⁰ Tlaxcalilla is not mentioned in that document, but we have already seen that its authorities also included a governor and an *alcalde mayor* (mayor of first instance). Since most documents that related to these institutions have been lost, the historian is left with only the very small window of criminal proceedings to understand their mechanics. In the course of the sixteenth century, the organisation of the cabildos changed everywhere in New Spain: council members arose more often from the economic elite rather than, as before, from the traditional lineages of rulers. With this change came the practice of elections held annually to rotate the people in positions of power. Historians know very little about this system in San Luis Potosí for the period under study. We know that the Tlaxcalans were accompanied by two members of the Tlaxcalan elite when they arrived in the valley, and most historians assume that these men kept their political function for many years. However, in a criminal proceeding of 1599, a man called Lucas Ambrosio declared “that he is native from the town of Xochimilco [south of Mexico City in the Nahua cultural area], and that he resides in the town of Tlaxcalilla, and that he was mayor of that town during the past year.”¹¹ Sego is doubtful that Lucas Ambrosio was a member of the council because he was not literate. However, there were very few Amerindians at the time who were. In addition, it is not clear that elections were always held. Lucas

¹⁰ AHESLP, AM, 1697, caja 1, exp. 1.

¹¹ “[...] que es natural del pueblo de Suchimilco (sic), y que reside en el pueblo de Tascalilla (sic), que fue alcalde del año pasado del dicho pueblo [...]” Quoted in Sego, *Un homicidio*: 19.

Ambrosio might have been appointed without regard for his specific ethnic origin. There is evidence for such unilateral appointment of the authorities of Tlaxcalilla by the Spaniards. In 1620, by mandate of the viceroy, the marquis of Guadalcazar reappointed without election Juan Vasquez as governor of Tlaxcalilla, that is to say, as the leading authority of the Indian republic of San Luis Potosí.¹² Otherwise, a handful of documents mention the names of certain members of the Indian elite of the area, but very little information is given on the system.

In addition to the *pueblos* and *barrios de indios*, indigenous peoples lived on *haciendas de beneficio*, *ranchos*, *carboneras*, workshops, and other work sites where they carried all the necessary tasks of daily life. As in any other settlement in New Spain, chapels served for social meetings and religious services, and there were markets, houses, workshops, and other labour buildings. A type of government existed, represented by the patron and the *mayordomo*, with their respective offices. Their authority was enforced by elements of social control such as jail cells and irons.¹³ An important difference with the *pueblos* was that Amerindians living on work sites were grouped in a *cuadrilla*, a labour team that worked together towards a specific end. The expressions *cuadrilla de indios* and *cuadrilla de vivienda de los indios* described a complex of houses hosting the indigenous labourers, which were of two types. The first was a group of small family houses with a corral or a small enclosed yard where wood could be stored or chickens raised. The second was a large building that single workers used as a dormitory.¹⁴ In San Luis Potosí, most *haciendas* had mixed *cuadrillas*, that is, they had both dormitories of single Amerindian workers and small houses of Amerindian families. Living conditions

¹² AGNM, IC, RA, *Indios*, vol. 7, exp. 451.

¹³ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 146-149.

¹⁴ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 126-127.

in these cuadrillas were generally decent, at least for the period, and Spaniards often provided their workers with rations of corn and meat.

As shown in table 4.1 (see chapter four), an average hacienda de beneficio required from twenty-three to thirty-one workers. Salazar González confirms that number and estimates the average total population of a normal cuadrilla to have been of eighty to one hundred individuals, including the workers' wives and children. This number, she considers, was quite large for the time and corresponded roughly to the population of a fortified post or small settlement.¹⁵ The situation, however, was not uniform. Also, because this study considers the beginnings of San Luis Potosí, the numbers of workers had not yet reached those presented by Salazar González, although some came close.

Table 5.1 shows the variations in size of some Spanish work sites in San Luis Potosí in 1603. The list of labourers on these units shows that there were at least 806 Amerindians working for Spaniards. Their distribution, however, was uneven and, while only two Amerindians lived on the rancho de Naranjo, the large cuadrillas working on the haciendas of Diego de Herrera and Juan de Zavala included sixty-one Amerindians. Between both extremes, the average number of workers was twenty-six. Over half of these were married, and the ratio of men to women was seven to three. It is worthwhile mentioning that the ratio between couples and single men living in these cuadrillas was similar in haciendas, which indicates that the presence of women was ubiquitous and essential to the cuadrillas' operations. As well, the great majority of women were married, which hints at a multiplicity of roles: wives, mothers, and workers.¹⁶

¹⁵ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 146-149.

¹⁶ AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1603, caja 2, exp. 13. Unfortunately, this list rarely mentions children, which makes it impossible to compile data on number of children on work sites.

Unfortunately, the list of labourers only reveals the identity of individuals in terms of official ethnic status as understood by the Spaniards. This is due to the fact that it was compiled by the alcalde mayor of San Luis Potosí, the curate of the Cerro de San Pedro, and a scribe, apparently for administrative purposes. Individuals are only described as Indians, mestizos, mulattos, or Spanish. It is thus impossible to develop an analysis of inter-indigenous relationships on the basis of this document. As well, the presence of non-Amerindians is insignificant: there were very few of them, and they lived scattered on different work sites. Though some Amerindian women and men married these mulattos and mestizos, these other castes do not figure significantly in our story. Meanwhile, table 5.1 mainly shows that work sites were settlements where indigenous peoples lived among themselves and where they had the opportunity to build social ties to various degrees, depending on the size of their cuadrilla.

Table 5.1: Repartition of Amerindians on Spanish Work sites, 1603

Work sites	Married Amerindians	Men (single or married to non-Amerindian)	Women (single or married to non-Amerindian)	Total
Pedro de Narvaez (carboneras)	26	25	1	52
Diego de Herrera (hacienda)	2	2	0	4
Naranjo (Francisco Gutiérrez; Rancho)	2	0	0	2
Diego Muñoz (Rancho)	2	2	0	4
Real del Monte	2	0	0	2
Unknown (hacienda)	10	7	0	17
Separate household on the same hacienda	4	0	1	5
Separate household on the same hacienda	4	0	0	4
Rancho del Monte	26	8	0	34
Juan Perez Almendral (Carboneras)	26	3	1	30
Separate household on the same carboneras	2	3	1	6
Martin de Lichea (Rancho)	24	7	0	31
Pedro Gogorrón (Cuadrilla)	18	33	0	51
Pedro de Umendía (Cuadrilla)	16	15	0	31
Alonso Suchil Bachiller (Cuadrilla)	12	8	0	20
Diego de Herrera (Cuadrilla)	34	27	0	61
Cuadrilla del Jurado	8	8	0	16
Unknown	10	5	0	15
Juan de Salazar (Cuadrilla)	0	5	1	6
Juan de Alzola (Cuadrilla)	12	11	0	23
Oviedo (Cuadrilla)	8	5	0	13
Jerónimo Tudón	2	2	1	5
Unknown	0	3	1	4
Don Antonio Maldonado (Cuadrilla)	18	12	2	32
Juan de Sandoval (Cuadrilla)	16	6	0	22
Hernando de Acevedo (Cuadrilla)	18	24	0	42
Capitán Gabriel Ortiz de Fuenmayor (Cuadrilla)	24	19	1	44
Guillermo Conde (Cuadrilla)	4	1	0	5
Cárdenas (Cuadrilla)	30	10	0	40
Alcalde Mayor (Juan Frias de Salazar; Cuadrilla)	8	3	1	12
Antonio Gómez Moxica (Cuadrilla)	6	3	0	9
Francisco de Rutiaga (Cuadrilla)	28	30	0	58
Diego Fernández de Fuenmayor (Cuadrilla)	20	23	2	45
Juan de Zavala (Cuadrilla)	30	30	1	61
Total (31 work sites)	452	340	14	806
Percentages	56 %	42 %	2 %	

Source: AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1603, caja 2, exp. 13. Some owners are unknown because of damages to the document.

Amerindians working and living on the haciendas met, discussed, fought, ate, and played together. The different buildings of the haciendas had a social role in the sense that they contributed to the formation of networks among the labourers. For example, after a brawl involving many Amerindians in October 1594, one of them, Juan Bautista from Zacualco who worked for Alonso Hernández Talavera, said that “he did not go in the said brawl of the said Indians, but hearing the noise while eating supper with other Indians he went out to see what it was.” This confirms that spaces such as dining halls were commons where Amerindians of a same work site met and might created ties among themselves.¹⁷ In some instances, the kitchen could serve multiple purposes, including that of a dormitory. When one of his criados was killed in the fall of 1595, the Spaniard Cristóbal de Herrera involved himself in the criminal process and declared that, at the time the murder took place, “all [of his workers] were asleep in the kitchen of my house as servants do.”¹⁸ The bedroom could also be a space of socialisation, especially in those where single men slept together. In February 1595, the *alcalde mayor* received three testimonies from indigenous men who worked together for Luis Tenorio. All of them described the scene as taking place in their room in Luis Tenorio’s house. They declared that late at night, just a little before midnight, they were talking while preparing for bed.¹⁹ In a similar way, Amerindian workers of Marcos Hertos ate and slept in the same large rooms. In 1594, an Amerindian witness in a court trial against an unmarried couple testified that she “knows and has seen how the said Indians Domingo and María have been publicly lovers in the house of her patron, sleeping and eating together [...] and as

¹⁷ “[...] no se halló en la dicha pendencia de los dichos indios más de que al ruido estando cenando con otros indios salió a ver lo que era.” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 31.

¹⁸ “[...] todos dormían en la cocina de my casa como criados [...]” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 20, f. 13. For the communal use of kitchens, see also Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 128.

¹⁹ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 2.

she said, she saw them sleeping together.”²⁰ This organization of social space was similar in many different work sites.

The Amerindian craftsmen, servants, and domestics living in the Spanish town participated in an active life beyond their working obligations. Sebastian, a native boy of eleven years old living with his parents in a Spaniard’s house, described one of his days in the Spanish town. His father Mateo had killed his mother, and Sebastian became an important witness in the investigation. The couple lived with three children in a room of the house of the Spaniard Pedro Gómez de Burtón, their employer. On Wednesday July 12, 1595, Sebastian accompanied both of his parents first to a store near the San Francisco convent where they drank wine, and then to the store of the Spaniard Juan del Rio. There, they drank another jar of wine and his father bought a butcher’s knife. Before they left, Mateo pawned his son to a Spaniard called Munita in exchange for another jar of wine and two yards of white fabric. Sebastian stayed at Juan del Rio’s place over night, and received notice early the next morning of his mother’s wounds. He went back to their rooms just in time to see her expire.²¹ Sebastian’s testimony indicates that nuclear families could live all together in the house of their Spanish employer. As well, it highlights the movements of indigenous peoples in the Spanish town, to taverns and shops, and the economic activities in which they took part.

²⁰ “[...] esta testigo sabe y ha visto como el dicho Domingo y María indios han estado amancebados públicamente en casa de su amo de esta testigo durmiendo y comiendo juntos [...] como tiene dicho los ha visto en la cama [...]” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 29, f. 2v.

²¹ AHESLP, legajo A-44, 1595, caja 2, exp. 2. The violent and gender components of this case will be analyzed in chapter six.

Making Spaces their Own

The range of living spaces offered many opportunities for indigenous peoples to form communities. However, this depended on the capacity of Amerindians to adapt to the new settlements, to appropriate, and indeed shape them. Indigenous peoples had to engage with their living spaces in order to develop deep and meaningful social relations. This they did by participating and interacting with each other during the activities of the markets, slaughter houses, rivers, and taverns. Inhabitants of the pueblos and barrios de indios received lots large enough to build their houses and cultivate some cereals and fruits. Cereal production was mostly intended for domestic consumption, but the production of fruits from local plants, such as the *biznaga*, the *garambullo*, and the *mesquite* was often oriented towards small-scale commercialization. The prickly pear was the fruit produced in the largest quantity. This private production was complemented by the communal lands where animals could be raised and fruits collected by all.²²

For the period of study, there is no mention in the documents of marketplaces per se, but there is information on vendors and cart drivers. This was the case for Juan Lucas from Querétaro who was a fruit vendor. His trade route is not well known, but when he was killed in 1620, one witness who had known him and considered him to be a friend, said that Juan Lucas had been selling fruits in San Miguel and in La Tenería, a tannery where many Amerindians worked. On the day he died, Juan Lucas had travelled with fruits from La Tenería to the Franciscan monastery and then to San Miguel. The witness said he had gone to mass in the church, but since he travelled with fruits, it is very possible that he sold some on the public place by the church. It is also possible that he

²² Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 159-180.

sold fruits on other work sites and that he knew people in all these places.²³ Juan Lucas cannot by himself represent the whole institution of the market, but his trading practices illustrate the social importance of the commercialisation of home-grown fruits and vegetables by Amerindians.

The slaughter-house was a fixed space of sociability where people moved to sell their production or buy meat. The *carnicería* of Tlaxcalilla appears often in the documents of the *alcaldía mayor* as a place where people met, discussed, fought, and even fell in love. One of them, the *carnicería vieja*, was recognized by all the authorities, Amerindian as well as Spanish, as the limit of Tlaxcalilla and is often mentioned as such in many documents. It was a place that all individuals appear to have known and that served as a landmark for many Amerindians.

Rivers also appear as important social spaces in the sense that they were the theatre of daily encounters. Women would wash clothes, men would come to discuss, and water would be collected. In the criminal proceeding against Pedro Alonso in 1594, the rivers are often mentioned as a place of frequent social interactions between Amerindians of various ethnic backgrounds.²⁴

The most often mentioned place of social interaction among Amerindians was the tavern, obviously because drinking often led to quarrels, fights, and, sometimes, murder. There were taverns owned by Spaniards right by the Franciscan monastery south-west of the Spanish town even before San Miguel was officially founded, and many Amerindians went there to drink wine from Castille. In Tlaxcalilla, there were at least two taverns mentioned and in operation for a long time. One was said to belong to the Tarascans and

²³ AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 6, exp. 1.

²⁴ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 18-20.

the other to the Mexicanos, but in both places, Amerindians of other cultural origins went to drink *pulque*.

According to William B. Taylor, drinking often accompanied rituals such as baptisms and marriages and, thus, the creation and perpetuation of social ties. It also accompanied many other forms of ritual, such as Catholic festivals.²⁵ On Easter, especially in the 1590s, Spanish authorities decried Amerindian drinking and drunkenness. Notwithstanding the important relation between rituals and drinking, taverns were also places for Amerindians to chat, make friends and enemies, exchange information, and the like. In the documents that involve drinking, witnesses and culprits often shared ties, either friendly or antagonistic, through their discussions and social relations in the taverns. In addition to their importance in maintaining community ties, taverns had a greater role in the creation of relationships between groups of workers and between communities. For that reason, they are the subject of a more in-depth analysis in chapter seven.

Living on work sites also involved substantial daily relations among Amerindians that led to the formation of community-like bonds. La Tenería (The Tannery), established by the Spaniard Francisco Ortiz in 1609 about half a league (2,1 km) west of San Luis Potosí, is a good example of this. Many Amerindians worked for Ortiz and one of their tasks was that of *curtidor* (tanner). With regards to ethnic relations on La Tenería, a criminal document from 1615, reproduced and published by Alfonso Martínez Rosales, shows that at least part of these Amerindians were Otomi or of otomian origins. Most of them came from Tula, Tulancingo, and Ocula (Ocuilan, south of Mexico City and close to Metepec). The only worker not Amerindian to appear in that document was Marcos

²⁵ Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 28-45.

Hernández, identified as a mulato, but the son of a woman from Tulancingo.²⁶ In addition, one of the witnesses' wives was called Ana Suchil. The use of that last name is very interesting here, mostly because it fits well with the presence of so many Otomis. In the parish records, almost all individuals called either Suchil or Xuchil were identified as Otomis or as immigrants from an Otomi village.²⁷ Finally, in another document from 1620, there is another man, Pablo Hernández, who is from Tula and who works as tanner on the Tannery.²⁸

A criminal court case for a double homicide in La Tenería in 1615 renders a vivid image of the daily interactions between indigenous peoples on work sites. On a Sunday evening, while inhabitants attended to diverse activities such as dining, bathing, or preparing to sleep, two women living in the same hut were murdered. As one of them shouted loudly, the quietness and dawdling activity on La Tenería turned into turmoil of inquiries to understand what was happening, a rush to help the two women, and a race to find the assassin. The ensuing testimonies of three witnesses help us to visualize the physical space of this work site, and to understand how Amerindian labourers had made it their own. The first witness was Marcos Hernández, identified as a *mulato libre* working for Francisco Ortiz, and the son of Mariana, one of the two murdered women. Among other things, he said that “while eating supper in the house of the said Francisco Ortiz his amo [employer], he heard loud voices and shouting coming from the hut of the said Mariana, which is a little apart from the said house out in the countryside.”²⁹ Then,

²⁶ Alfonso Martínez Rosales, *Documentos de la hacienda de La Tenería* (Mexico: Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí, 1991), 13-16.

²⁷ In Yolanda Lastra's book on the history and language of the Otomis, the glossary indicates that Súchil (Xúchil) is an Otomi word that means “flower.” Lastra, *Los Otomíes*: 500.

²⁸ AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 6, exp. 1.

²⁹ “[...] estando este testigo cenando en casa de dicho Francisco Ortiz su amo oyó grandes voces gritos en el jacal de la dicha Mariana que está un poco apartado de la dicha casa en el campo [...]”

another Amerindian from the Tannery called Juan said that “being in the house of the Tannery of his said patron, already at night and lying in bed with his wife Ana Suchil in the chamber of the kitchen which is in the said house, they stood up and went to a sweat-house right by the house and where they bathed and afterwards this witness went along with his wife to a small hut where the said Indians Luisa and Mariana were lying in bed and he called to them to ask them if they wanted to bathe and they answered no because they were already in bed.”³⁰ Finally, the last witness, Agustín Martínez, said that being “on the Tannery in a hut slightly aside from it along with his wife, at about nine at night this witness heard loud voices coming from the hut of the said Mariana and Luisa.”³¹

The Amerindians living in La Tenería had adapted the spaces of the work site to their daily life and social relationships. While some of them, namely Juan and his wife Ana, apparently lived and slept in the common space that was the kitchen, others lived in small detached houses, known as *jacales*, that were made of straw and other fragile material, and situated at some distance from the centre of the complex, although not so far as not to hear loud voices from one building to another. Apart from the kitchen, the *temascal* (sweat-house) was another space shared by the Amerindian workers. In addition, because of the need to light a fire and to raise the temperatures suitably high for a sweat-house, the inhabitants of the Tannery would let the others know when they started it. This shows very well that interpersonal relations on work sites were not

³⁰ “[...] estando este testigo en la casa de la Tenería del dicho su amo ya de noche este testigo acostado con Ana Cugil [Suchil] su mujer en el aposento de la cocina que está en las dichas casa se levantaron y se fueron a un temascal que allí estaba junto donde se bañaron y después que se hubieron bañado fue este testigo con la dicha su mujer a llamar a un jacalillo donde estaban acostadas la dichas Luisa y Mariana indias y las llamaron diciéndoles que si se querían bañar y respondieron que no porque ya estaban acostadas [...]”

³¹ “[...] estando este testigo domingo pasado en la noche que se contaron cinco de este presente mes en la dicha Tenería en un jacal desviado de ella con su mujer como a las nueve horas de la noche oyó este testigo grandes voces que se daban en el jacal de las dichas Mariana y Luisa [...]”

directly and uniquely related to work. Moreover, there are no signs, at the time of the event, of a Spanish presence in these daily spaces of sociability. Hence, the Otomi labourers of La Tenería seemed to be using the buildings and equipment as they saw fit: they apparently did not have to ask permission and they communicated among themselves to share the space. In other words, this work site formed their own communal space.

The indigenous peoples of San Luis Potosí did not only use the spaces available to them, but they also shaped them to make them their own. Churches, markets, taverns, and work sites were used according to their needs in their daily lives and in constituting social networks. Study of the formation of complex families in the next section will help further to describe how the organisation of living spaces was managed, at least partially, according to Amerindians' needs.

Familial Relationships

The important presence of couples on work sites, such as shown in table 5.1, points to the possibility that these places could have been a basis for the construction of new and diverse forms of families, a phenomenon observed by Dana Velasco Murillo and Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva in the Zacatecas' mining boom of the last decade of the seventeenth century.³² Some examples of nuclear families were gathered from the list of workers drawn in 1603. For example, the Indians Diego Martín and María Luisa lived with their son on Diego de Herrera's hacienda.³³ Nevertheless, as explained in chapter three, household and kinship groups were essential elements of pre-colonial

³² Velasco Murillo and Sierra Silva, "Mine Workers," 117-118.

³³ AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1603, caja 2, exp. 13, f. 2r.

Mesoamerican societies. Indeed, the nuclear family was not the basic social unit in pre-colonial Mesoamerica. According to studies by Pedro Carrasco, John K. Chance, Susan Kellogg, and James Lockhart, this was, rather, the household.³⁴

While the household appears as a significant component of Mesoamerican societies, Robert McCaa emphasizes the role of the *cemithualtin*, a Náhuatl word meaning complex family. McCaa defines the complex family as a group of people living together under the same roof, and under the authority of a family leader, generally the oldest married man of the house. The rules forming these complex families were flexible. Their members were not necessarily all tied through blood affiliation. Co-habitation could depend on political and ritual kinship. To explain the complexity of these families as well as the degree of lateral extension they could present, McCaa gives the example of a man who became the head in the house of his wife's family because he was the elder. Eleven persons lived under his authority, some of them belonging to the house only through political affiliation. The headman lived with his wife, their three children, and his wife's two siblings. His sister-in-law was widowed, but she had a married daughter who also lived in the house with her husband. This last person's siblings had also been invited to live in the house. One of these siblings was dead, but his widowed wife still lived in the house with her daughter. In other words, the headman of the household had under his authority the daughter of the deceased brother-in-law of the daughter of his sister-in-law, as well as many other individuals at all levels of kinship relation between both poles. In post-epidemic context, the complex family served as an important restructuring tool in

³⁴ See, for example, Pedro Carrasco, "The Joint Family in Ancient Mexico: The Case of Molotla," in *Essays on Mexican Kinship*, ed. Hugo G. Nutini, Pedro Carrasco, and James Taggart (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976); Lockhart, *The Nahuas after the Conquest*; Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*; John K. Chance, "The Noble House in Colonial Puebla, Mexico: Descent, Inheritance, and the Nahua Tradition," *American Anthropologist* 102, no. 3 (2000).

Mesoamerican societies. Finally, these complex families continuously changed as members died, others were born, and some married.³⁵

A few other similar studies point to the importance of the household and familial organisation among other indigenous societies of Mesoamerica. David Charles Wright Carr highlights the similarities in the meanings of socially descriptive language in Nahua and Otomi cultures.³⁶ On such linguistic grounds, and on the basis of the parallels drawn between the concepts of the Nahua *calpulli* (“casa grande”) and the Otomi *andangu etsofo* (“juntos en la casa del consejo”), it is possible to suggest that the complex family was also an important social institution among the Otomis. For the Tarascan culture, Claudia Espejel Carbajal highlights the importance of the *cepa* as a complex family linking individuals from the same direct family, lineage, neighbourhood, or cultivating location. Espejel Carbajal is not clear on the organisation of the household per se, but the *cepa* certainly had a significant role in the choice of a spouse and in the formation of households.³⁷ Overall, the idea of the complex family appears to have been pervasive across Mesoamerica and, as pointed out by McCaa, could be used to rebuild the social relationships among indigenous peoples in the wake of the crisis of the early colonial period.

The complex family is interesting to this study because it can be used to better explain some of the relationships on the work sites of northern New Spain. Indeed, if some work sites such as that of Marcos Hertos hosted their workers in large dormitories and thus reproduced a type of large household, others such as the Tannery appear to have

³⁵ McCaa, "Matrimonio infantil." The example of the extended family is from pages 40-41.

³⁶ David Charles Wright Carr, "Lengua, cultura e historia de los Otomíes," *Arqueología Mexicana* 13, no. 73 (2005).

³⁷ Espejel Carbajal, *La justicia y el fuego*, I: 216-222.

contained smaller houses with small groups of workers, couples, and nuclear families. In the dormitories, all inhabitants were not family, even by political or ritual kinship. In the more scattered organisation of buildings, the complex family could spread to different huts. Most importantly, in both situations Amerindian workers were not responsible for the physical disposition of the buildings. Spaniards organized this aspect of Amerindian society. Because the household, in its physical representation, was not the work of indigenous peoples, it is impossible to see an exact reproduction of this concept in the work sites of San Luis Potosí. It is possible, however, to observe a certain degree of reproduction of the complex family. In short, indigenous peoples used work sites to reproduce the essential functions of the Mesoamerican household and complex family because it was at the centre of the social relations and of the formation of nuclear and extended families.

In the parish records, I have observed a tendency through the years for people to marry others who worked for the same employer. Although only twenty-two such weddings were found in the Franciscan registers (between 1608 and 1629), the papers from the central parish show twenty-one between 1596 and 1604, and another twenty-five between 1609 and 1630. The total of marriages between spouses who lived on the same work site is thus of sixty-eight out of a total of 559 weddings between Amerindians, that is, a proportion of 12 %. Considering that most Amerindians worked for Spaniards, but that this information was most often not written by the celebrant, this proportion appears as a minimum figure for a phenomenon that was far from trivial.

In these marriages between indigenous peoples living on the same work site, the Spanish employer was an important figure replacing to a certain extent the original head

of the family. For example, Gerónimo de Guzmán and María Jiménez were married in 1614, and presented as their principal witness their employer Manuel de Guzmán, a carbonero. The man was from Hueychiapa and the woman from Alfaxayuca, two nearby communities in the Otomi cultural area. Both of them arrived at very young age in San Luis Potosí and lived most of their lives on Manuel de Guzmán's carbonera, with Gerónimo probably taking his last name from his patron. The interesting part is that Manuel de Guzmán testifies that Gerónimo had been married, but that his wife had died and that he had paid for and assisted at the funeral. The employer and two other Spanish witnesses to the marriage all testify to have known both groom and bride since they were children, which implies that they have lived a long time together on the work sites or close by.³⁸ In a similar way, Melchor and Magdalena were both born on Francisco Diez del Campo's hacienda and married in 1630.³⁹ Joseph Martín and Cecilia Hernández also worked for Francisco Diez del Campo when they married in 1630. What's more, in this marriage, the godparents were two Amerindians also working for Francisco Diez del Campo.⁴⁰

In addition to marriage, the mechanisms of interaction between Amerindians and the formation of complex families also relied on political and ritual kinship. Hugo G. Nutini and Betty Bell define ritual kinship or *compadrazgo* as “the relationship established between a pair of sponsors and an individual or individuals upon the occasion of contracting the main sacraments of the Catholic Church (baptism, marriage, and

³⁸ APT.ByM1594-1654 f.308, 27/07/1614.

³⁹ APS, caja 1, libro 1.2, f. 117r., 28/07/1630.

⁴⁰ APS, caja 1, libro 1.2, f. 117v, 04/07/1630.

confirmation).⁴¹ The creation of such social bonds, however, did not only exist because of the presence of the Catholic Church. Pre-colonial marriages involved the participation of a great many individuals connected to the extensive family of the groom and bride. These extensive family members scrutinised lineages of the future spouses. In addition, the marriage ceremony in itself, whether or not performed by a priest, served as an important mechanism of social interaction by formalizing the newly created bonds. As well, among the Nahuas, the belonging to specific groups of kin was ritualized through practices linked to pre-colonial institutions such as the *calpulli* and the *teccalli*. According to Connie Horstman and Donald V. Kurtz, the rite of baptism in particular was very similar in both pre-colonial Nahua and colonial Catholic societies as it involved “the use of water and the petitioning of a ‘higher’ being to look out for the welfare of its child.”⁴² As well, parents assigned godparents who would help the child later in life in functions already existing among indigenous peoples, such as midwives, shamans, and marriages brokers.⁴³ In a general sense, the *calpulli* functioned horizontally to establish ties internal to the community, while the *teccalli* functioned vertically to develop relationships with peoples of higher status.⁴⁴ By accepting both Amerindians and Spaniards as godparents to Amerindians in baptisms and marriages, the colonial Catholic Church reproduced both functions and helped in the creation of social bonds among the

⁴¹ Hugo G. Nutini and Betty Bell, *Ritual Kinship. The Structure and Historical Development of the Compadrazgo System in Rural Tlaxcala*, vol. I (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 4.

⁴² Horstman and Kurtz use the term baptism to describe the pre-colonial ceremony that served to welcome a child in this world. Connie Horstman and Donald V. Kurtz, "Compadrazgo and Adaptation in Sixteenth Century Central Mexico," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 35, no. 3 (1979): 367.

⁴³ Horstman and Kurtz, "Compadrazgo and Adaptation," 362-367.

⁴⁴ I am aware that there is no scholarly agreement and that there were regional variations in the meanings and uses of these institutions, but the purpose here is only to show a certain adaptation and the existence of a pre-colonial ritual kinship system.

communities, the tightening of corporate bodies, and the development of relationships between individuals of different racial status.

Most studies of ritual kinship present the institution with a functionalist interpretation, that is, as a system and a mechanism of interpersonal relations, which integrated newcomers and gave cohesion to communities. Significantly, these studies all show the importance of godparenthood in the reconstruction of Amerindian societies in the late sixteenth century.⁴⁵ This can readily be applied to the study of work sites in San Luis Potosí. For example, in the Franciscan parish records, there were six children from the Tannery of Francisco Ortiz who were baptized in the period of study: Pedro in 1611, Bartolomé in December 1611, Matias in March 1612, his sister María in March 1614, Joseph in 1615 and Andrés in December 1620.⁴⁶ Of course, the parents of the six children lived on the tannery. What is perhaps more striking still is that at least half of the godparents were also living on the Tannery. The celebrant did not record where the other ones lived, but Pedro's godparents were clearly Spaniards, while those of Joseph and Andrés were of unknown origin, though apparently Amerindian in name (Andrés and his wife Madalena for the first, and Juan Bautista and his wife María Gerónima for the second). In the cases in which the parents and godparents lived on the Tannery, it is impossible to know the origin of the relationship between them and the parents: they might have met in their source community, on the road to San Luis Potosí, or on the Tannery itself. The individuals appearing in the baptisms are different from those in the

⁴⁵ Horstman and Kurtz, "Compadrazgo and Adaptation."; Nutini and Bell, *Ritual Kinship*, I; John K. Chance, "The Barrios of Colonial Tecali: Patronage, Kinship, and Territorial Relations in a Central Mexican Community," *Ethnology* 35, no. 2 (1996); Martha Marivel Mendoza Ontiveros, "El compadrazgo desde la perspectiva antropológica," *Alteridades* 20, no. 40 (2010).

⁴⁶ Pedro was apparently baptized twice, in May and November of 1611, with the same godparents. For the six baptisms, see APT, libro de Bautizos y Matrimonios, 1594-1654, f. 95v-129v.

criminal case of 1615 – the double homicide discussed above. Nonetheless, the use of the space I have described and the proximity in which the indigenous labourers lived on La Tenería show a tightly knit community. Parents, godparents, and children lived together on a daily basis, shared the same spaces to work, cook, bathe, sleep, and attend to all other daily tasks. The ties created by *compadrazgo* further reinforced the Amerindian relationships by acknowledging them through a ritual and by giving religious tasks to the godparents to attend the children throughout their lives. *Compadrazgo* thus complemented work and space in the formation of cohesive social networks.

Ritual kinship helped integrate individuals of diverse ethnic backgrounds into a community. In January 1610, Diego Hernández, a Náhuatl-speaking indio from Taxco, was accused of attacking, along with two other Amerindians, Juan Martín, a resident of Tlaxcalilla. To defend himself, Diego Hernández presented his own witnesses, one of whom was Martina from Guadalajara, also a Náhuatl speaker. Diego Hernández and Martina were both around forty years old, had both been working for Francisco de Rutiaga for about six years, and they were tied through ritual kinship: Martina was godmother to Diego Hernández' daughter. The fact that both of them spoke Náhuatl is not surprising, but it is at least interesting that two individuals born in cities 600 kilometres apart in completely different settings and cultural backgrounds developed such strong ties in San Luis Potosí. The house of Francisco de Rutiaga played an important role in linking these individuals, and according to the testimony rendered by Martina, the ritual tie between them was long lasting.⁴⁷ The creation of kinship ties was thus not necessarily related to culture or origin, but to recent relationship construction, based on the work sites.

⁴⁷ AHESLP, AM, 1610, caja 1, exp. 19.

Notwithstanding its significance on work sites, the complex family did not necessarily correspond to the whole cuadrilla, especially on large work sites where dozens of individuals lived together. Groups of individuals and nuclear families developed affinities and formed a few independent clusters within the same labour team. From the data available in the parish record, I have reconstituted the web of relations on the hacienda of Francisco Dias in the 1620s. In total, twenty-seven indigenous peoples related to that hacienda baptized their children, got married, and acted as godparents or witnesses in these ceremonies. But for two men, all of them lived on Dias' hacienda. Eight couples married in these years, and most of them chose wedding godparents and witnesses who lived on the same work site. The configuration of the webs of relations indicates that the inhabitants of the hacienda formed one large group of eleven individuals and three small groups, two of four individuals and one of six individuals. The smaller groups were each the result of one wedding with the corresponding godparents and witnesses. The members of these small groups did not appear in other entries and it is impossible to know what kind of relationship they had with the other inhabitants of the hacienda. The individuals of the larger group, however, played different social roles. Couples who married also became godparents in marriages and baptisms of their ritual relatives. In this case, there is a clear formation of a complex family on a single worksite, but not all inhabitants of the hacienda were part of it. They formed different clusters or families.

Networks of indigenous labourers and complex families on work sites did not develop in isolation and could reach out to other spaces. I have described earlier in this chapter the connexions of the fruit vendor Juan Lucas with the Tannery, the Franciscan

monastery, and the town of San Miguel. The reconstitution of the social networks on Francisco Dias' hacienda show similar connexions between the work site and Indian towns. Andrés Hernández and Andrés Pérez, the two individuals who did not belong to the cuadrilla, lived in San Miguel. The two men might have been related to some of Dias' labourers, providers of products regularly used on the hacienda, or temporary workers. This demonstrates that complex families had ties outside their realm and into other parts of the conurbation, an issue I will explore in greater depth in chapter seven.

The Amerindians of San Luis Potosí built their social networks on the grounds of both the available structures and cultural frameworks acquired from indigenous and colonial societies. In chapter three, I argued that one of the motivations behind Mesoamerican migrations to the North was the attempt to start anew, to rebuild networks on new grounds and in new contexts. Here, I show the adaptation of indigenous peoples to the setting of an urban mining town. In other words, the Amerindian workers of Francisco Diez del Campo, Fransico Ortiz, Marcos Hertos, Juan de Oliva, Francisco Dias, and other Spaniards did not choose the colleagues with whom they would live on a daily basis. As well, they did not necessarily have pre-existing kinship, cultural, or linguistic ties with other individuals of their cuadrilla. However, the nature of the work sites as spaces of daily life enabled the indigenous inhabitants to get to know each other. There, they built tighter, closer relations that came to involve ritual affiliation, that is, marriage, godparenthood, and witnessing during baptisms and marriages. Instead of bringing relatives to their household as in their home communities, they made members of their household their kindred. This process was not always smooth and, as I will show below, involved tensions between individuals.

This adaptive process was mostly the reality of the first generation of migrants. Indeed, the children of migrants appear to have based their social networks on the grounds of those established by their parents. Thus, I found individuals staying in the same work sites as their parents and marrying other people from the same place. Others married outside that new type of household or outside their complex family, but used witnesses and godparents from these networks. There is also one indication that it was possible for grown-up children to marry and stay on the same work site for the service of the same Spaniard as their parents. In March 1623, the Spaniard Diego Alonzo Nuñez sold the service of his whole *cuadrilla de indios* – thus keeping internal relationships intact – to Joseph de Briones. A part of the list of the Amerindians read: “Francisco Juan married with the Indian Ana; Juan son of the aforementioned and married with the Indian María.”⁴⁸ Since Amerindian workers often lived in the same house or at least in a group of houses, this indicates that Juan kept close ties to his parents even after his wedding. These Amerindian labourers had established themselves on Nuñez’ hacienda and had appropriated its space as their own familial home.

Ethnicity

Though my central argument is that social relationships could transcend cultural affiliation and ethnicity, as demonstrated by the diverse forms employed by indigenous peoples to create webs of social relationships, these mechanisms of identification still played an important role in San Luis Potosí. In 1609, a Tarascan was asked by another one to testify of his absence from town on a specific period of time, because he was

⁴⁸ “[...] Francisco Juan casado con Ana india; Juan hijo de los dichos y casado con Maria india [...]” AHESLP, 1627, caja 4, exp. 12, f. 9r. The list is in a document of 1627 because it is part of a quarrel between Joseph de Briones and Antonio de Arismendi Gogorron over Amerindian workers.

accused of robbery. The witness, Miguel Hernández, said he had known the accused Francisco Antón for three years, probably as a result of their working together for the Spaniard Simón de Torcas, but he seemed especially friendly towards Francisco Antón because of their common origin from the town of Jacona in Michoacán. The proceedings report that “the witness saw the said Francisco Antón in night and day because he behaved towards him and communicated with him because they were from the same land.”⁴⁹

Another criminal case testifies to persistent relationships between Amerindians who came from the same source community or area. On December 14, 1609, the Coca Diego de Mendoza from Poncitlán went to the cuadrilla of Pedro Hidalgo and was in the house of the Amerindian Felipe when another man, Pedro Melchor from Sayula, came up to him and stabbed him three times with a knife.⁵⁰ In the proceedings that followed, Diego de Mendoza presented two men from his region of origin: Juan Diego from Poncitlán and Francisco Mateo from Amacueca, a village on the North shore of Lake Chapala close to Poncitlán. Unfortunately, the origin of Felipe is unknown, but it is interesting that at least two criados of Pedro Hidalgo were from the Coca cultural area and that they received the visit of another man from the same area. Indeed, Diego de Mendoza did not work for Pedro Hidalgo: he was an organist for Pedro Lázaro, the sacristan of the central parish. In addition, if Sayula is not in the same cultural area of Poncitlán, it is situated south of the Lake Chapala and it is possible that cultural conflicts

⁴⁹ “[...] este testigo vido [sic] al dicho Francisco Antón de noche y de día porque le trato y comunico por ser de su tierra [...]” AHESLP, AM, 1609, caja 5, exp. 21.

⁵⁰ It is not clear why Pedro Melchor stabbed Diego de Mendoza. Apparently, Pedro Melchor had just robbed a cape from another Amerindian, and it is possible that Diego de Mendoza tried to correct this wrong, although it is not clearly stated at any time in the criminal document. Pedro Melchor, on his part, typically claimed to have been drunk and to not have known what he was doing.

might have arisen between these men. Again, if work sites appear to have been essential spaces of bond creation and components of Amerindians' identifications to communities of San Luis Potosí, their cultural backgrounds were still present in their minds.⁵¹

Notwithstanding the continuity of some ethnic and cultural affinities and webs of relations on the work sites of San Luis Potosí, it appears from the documentation of the *alcaldía mayor* that most work sites regrouped Amerindians from different backgrounds. Viewed somewhat differently, Spaniards most probably did not consider the origins of their workers so much as the quality of their aptitudes and skills, or simply the availability of labour supply. Among the seven Amerindian workers of Juan de Oliva who appear in the criminal documents in 1594 and 1595 (see chapter four), one was from Zacualco west of lake Chapala, another was a Nahuatl from Texcoco, and two were Tarascans. The presence on a single workshop of individuals from different origins does not automatically signify the creation of intercultural ties, but this specific case shows the possibility of transcending cultural barriers. When Juan Felipe, a Tarascan employee of Oliva, was attacked and murdered on the plaza of San Luis Potosí on Easter 1594, his Nahuatl colleague Francisco Hernández, who witnessed the crime, brought the dying Tarascan to Oliva's house where he was attended by the Spanish surgeon Gonzalo García de Rojas. Then, Francisco Hernández quickly assembled a group of Oliva's workers to go after the murderer. The latter barely escaped and had to leave town for some months. This clearly shows that Amerindians working for Oliva had developed ties related to their life and organization in San Luis Potosí and in the house of their employer. The Nahuatl Francisco Hernández attempted to save the murdered Tarascan Juan Felipe and the affair prompted a strong reaction of other Amerindians working for Oliva. It is difficult to

⁵¹ AHESLP, AM, 1609, caja 6, exp. 19.

evaluate the strength of the ties between Nahuas and Tarascans in this case, but the rapid defensive response suggests that they appear to have been quite strong and that a type of *cuadrilla* solidarity existed.⁵²

The bigger the hacienda and the *cuadrilla*, the greater were the chances of a multicultural composition. With sixty-one Amerindian labourers in 1603, Juan de Zavala probably had a culturally diversified work force, as we can see through the following example. In October 1594, one of his Amerindian workers complained to the Spanish authorities that his wife had fled with two other labourers of Zavala, and he presented three witnesses. The plaintiff was generically identified as a Tarascan from Michoacán and so was his fleeing wife. The men who had presumably kidnapped his wife were Baltazar from the Real de Pánuco near Zacatecas and Miguel from Juchipila in the Cazcan cultural area. The three witnesses were Jacobo Zebian from Jacona in the Tarascan area, Juan Pedro from Acambaro on the North frontier mixing Tarascan and Otomi cultures, and Rafael Jorge from Poncitlán in the Coca area. The *cuadrilla* thus regrouped individuals from different source communities, linguistic backgrounds, and cultural areas, including some from the already complex area of the northern frontier. The three witnesses, however, testified that the extra matrimonial love affair between Ana and Baltazar had been known by everybody on the hacienda for about a year. “[...] it was public knowledge among the Indians who were on the hacienda of Juan de Zavala [...]”⁵³ they said, and they all noticed quickly when the three individuals went missing. In spite

⁵² AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 6a. See also A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 18-20 and A-44, 1597, caja 1, exp. 21. This case will be explained and discussed at greater length in chapter seven.

⁵³ “[...] era cosa muy pública entre los indios que están en la hacienda de Juan de Zavala [...]” AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1594, caja 2, exp. 17, f.2r.

of diverse ethnic origins, this cuadrilla, as it was the case of others, lived as a full community tied together by the Spanish employer.

Ethnicity did not work in isolation; rather it intertwined with other factors of identification such as qualifications, skills, and quality of relationships with the employer. Conflicts between indigenous peoples could erupt at the intersection of a variety of these factors. In October 1595, for example, an altercation between two Amerindians working on the *hacienda de fundición* of Fernando Buzeño was probably triggered by both a difference in ethnic origin and skills. Juan Pedro Mazapil from Acámbaro, in the Tarascan and Otomi area of the North frontier, tried to hit the “mexicano” Pablo with a spade hidden below his cloak. At first, the event appears to have started over a matter of working hierarchy. Juan Pedro Mazapil was a smelter and washer and he had been working for Buzeño for over a year. When he entered the installations and saw Pablo smelting in the ovens, he was shocked, supposedly because it was his job to do so. The manager told Juan Pedro that it was his decision and that Pablo had to smelt because none of the other labourers had arrived at the installations in time, including Juan Pedro. Apparently, the latter was offended by this decision, perhaps even jealous, and got a spade to hurt Pablo. The availability of work and the treatment by the employer thus seems to be an important component of the relationship between the two indigenous men. Later, when Juan Pedro was accused and had to make his deposition, he claimed that Pablo had given him the spade to hide it, probably attempting to hurt Pablo by legal means since it was prohibited for most Amerindians to carry such weapons. The testimony of another Spaniard who was on site, Diego Muñoz, gives hints that, if the principal reason for the attack had to do with working relations between Amerindians,

ethnic identifications and prejudices existed and might have exacerbated Juan Pedro's feelings towards his competitor. Indeed, Diego Muñoz reported that Juan Pedro had told Pablo that "he did not want any Indian from his [Pablo's] land to help him."⁵⁴ Hence, in this case, the variable of working skills and hierarchies between Amerindians appear to have been as important as the ethnicity.

Conclusion

In sum, the Amerindians living in San Luis Potosí were part of complex webs of social relations involving official institutions and unofficial spaces of sociability, as well as informal encounters. The way they acted with one another influenced the creation, development, reorganisation, and perpetuation of familial, social, and community networks. This was part of the process of identification, that is, the recognition of individuals as being or not members of specific groups and networks.

The indigenous inhabitants of San Luis Potosí were immigrants who had come individually or in small group to the mining town in order to find work, better living conditions, and to rebuild social networks. To reach that last objective, they had to show a particularly high degree of adaptation to the multicultural environment of the valley. In the Indian communities around the Spanish town, religious, administrative, and commercial spaces, as well as points of access to natural resources, all favoured these daily encounters. Most importantly, indigenous peoples organized these encounters and arranged them in extensive and long-lasting social networks through religious rituals such as marriage and baptism.

⁵⁴ "[...] no quería que le ayudase ningún indio de su tierra [...]" AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 2, exp. 15, f. 2v.

Because of the economic nature of San Luis Potosí, work sites were among the most important spaces of social network construction. People lived and worked with the same individuals daily and developed close relationships. Couples were formed, many parents chose co-workers as godparents to their children, and friendships were developed. As well, I show that the organisation of space on work sites may have taken the place of the complex family in Mesoamerica, linking all individuals into one extensive group of familiars. The new social environment in San Luis Potosí diminished, although did not completely eclipse, the importance of cultural and ethnic differentiation; it left room for new factors of sociability related to the organisation of religion, families, commerce, and work.

Chapter 6: Marriage and the Nuclear Family

In most of pre-colonial Mesoamerica, couples and nuclear families were not fundamental units in the structural organization of society. As explained in chapter five, individuals came together in complex multifamily households and identified with larger lineage, although exogamy was frequent. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, this organization of indigenous societies had been transformed and marital ties between a woman and a man were becoming more important.¹ Because of these transformations, and because most Amerindians had not migrated to San Luis Potosí in large kin groups, it is essential to pay attention to the heterosexual couple.² In this chapter, I will look at the formation of couples, at lives of men and women as members of these couples, and at the significance and meanings of couples for gender roles and social structures. Marriage, it turns out, would be a cornerstone of the construction of a plural indio society in San Luis Potosí.

According to James Taggart, kinship can be understood in terms of “being” and “doing.” In other words, both the biological affiliation of individuals and the social practices of bond creation, such as baptism, adoption, marriage, and godparenthood, are crucial to the formation of kin groups.³ In this chapter, I will put this idea to work, with a focus on the formation of couples, to understand how ethnic identity (based on origin and “being”) and marriages (as “doing”) influenced the creation of indigenous urban

¹ See Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 160-200.

² In the context of this dissertation, the couple is defined as the union between a man and a woman. Homosexual relationships could have been a very interesting theme to explore, but our documentation on the subject was very poor. The only document we found in the AHESLP that related to it was A-44, 1602, caja 1, exp. 4, in which an *indio* and a *negrillo* were accused of committing the *pecado nefando* (abominable sin) that is, sodomy.

³ James Taggart, "Nahuat Ethnicity in a Time of Agrarian Conflict," in *Ethnic Identity in Nahua Mesoamerica: The View from Archaeology, Art History, Ethnohistory, and Contemporary Ethnography*, ed. Frances F. Berdan *et al.* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2008), 186-188.

communities. In that sense, I interpret weddings as a ritual of social cohesion because it brought people together around a common ceremony.⁴ I will examine both the criteria for choosing a spouse and the consequences of that choice on the unfolding of community formation. Mesoamerican social norms of marriages, oriented towards endogamy and the preservation of kin groups, were present and important, but they did not prevent interethnic and intercultural relationships. In fact, couples united men and women who had similar cultural backgrounds, migration experiences, economic necessities, social standings, or who lived in proximity to one another in San Luis Potosí. Because of these various possibilities in the configuration of couples, it seems that marriages and casual unions contributed greatly to the formation of this new society. This mode of social organisation, however, was in constant transformation. While ethnicity appears to have been more important in the choice of a spouse in the 1590s and 1600s, the place where people lived in San Luis Potosí became more important in the following decades.

The strong presence of the colonial system in this mining town also contributed to transforming the roles within couples. Historians describe pre-Hispanic gender structures as being parallel and complementary. That is, indigenous men and women belonged to structures of power that ran side by side, each with different attributes. Among the Nahuas, for instance, men were in charge of waging wars and long-distance trade, while women controlled reproduction and local markets. This parallelism did not mean

⁴ Lara Mancuso puts forward a similar argument regarding the religious confraternities of Zacatecas. Through rituals and ceremonies, *cofradías* invited individuals to identify to the group and they contributed to the uniformization of cultural references. Unfortunately, in San Luis Potosí, I have not found documentation on the indigenous confraternities. Lara Mancuso, *Cofradías mineras: Religiosidad popular en México y Brasil, siglo XVIII* (Mexico: Centro de Estudios Históricos, El Colegio de México, 2007), 65, 92-94, and 159.

equality, but at least significant recognition, autonomy, and reciprocity.⁵ In the Andes, Irene Silverblatt demonstrates that the indigenous social structures went from gender parallelism in the *ayllus* (regional groups organized by kinship) to a hierarchized gender parallelism under the Incas, wherein men gained superiority on the grounds of the “conquest hierarchy.”⁶ After the conquest, Spaniards furthered this hierarchization by imposing their own ideological structures (based on patriarchy) through the market economy and the Catholic faith. As a consequence, the Spaniards shattered the gender parallelism of the Andean peoples.⁷

Spaniards instituted the same process in New Spain during the sixteenth century. The tasks associated with each sex had different value, and women lost power over the areas they had controlled such as in ritual, religious ceremonies, midwifery, or the administration of markets.⁸ Most of them suffered from exactions and abuses, including from their own people. Taylor, for example, writes that most crimes in the indigenous communities of Oaxaca were tied to violence from men against women.⁹ In response to this change, women had to find new, unofficial means to empower themselves, for example by entering the cities’ petty economies, by using witchcraft or, as I will show in

⁵ Inga Clendinnen, *Aztecs: An Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 153-209; Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 88-103; Louise M. Burkhart, “Mexica Women on the Home Front: Housework and Religion in Aztec Mexico,” in *Indian Women of Early Mexico*, ed. Susan Schroeder (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 25; Susan Schroeder, “Introduction,” in *Indian Women of Early Mexico*, ed. Susan Schroeder, Stephanie Wood, and Robert Haskett (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 14-15; Karen Vieira Powers, *Women in the Crucible of Conquest. The Gendered Genesis of Spanish American Society, 1500-1600* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 15-38.

⁶ Silverblatt defines the conquest hierarchy as “[...] a metaphor for ranking the various descent groups that made up a community.” Irene Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun, and Witches. Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 67.

⁷ Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun, and Witches*: xxviii-xxx, 20-124.

⁸ For patriarchy and the impact of Spanish colonialism on women, see Powers, *Women in the Crucible*: 40-67.

⁹ Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 85.

this chapter, by fleeing oppressive situations.¹⁰ The experience of indigenous women in San Luis Potosí was in line with these transformations. Whether in the communities or in couples, men relegated women to the lower social categories. As elsewhere, however, women showed agency in trying, and sometimes succeeding, to empower themselves.

Social Norms of Marriage

In order to understand the formation of couples in San Luis Potosí, it is necessary to devote some attention to the social norms surrounding marriage in pre-hispanic Mesoamerica, because the migrants came from there. These norms are only partially understood by ethnohistorians, and they appear to have been both complex and flexible. Most documents relating to the formation of couples and to marriage that have survived to this day deal with the nobility and with the Nahua region of Mesoamerica. It is nonetheless possible to reconstitute briefly and in a general manner the marriage patterns of Mesoamericans on the eve of the Conquest.

The most important idea about these social norms was that young men and women acted inside very strong social units that included extended family members and multiple generations.¹¹ In other words, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and others had their word to say in the choice of a spouse, although that of the father was the most important. Similar social elements in marriage choices were present in all Mesoamerican societies. There were differences between the various cultures, but generally speaking, they all refer to a house, either in figurative or physical sense. Scholars all show that the

¹⁰ For a study of women in the urban market economy, see Mangan, *Trading Roles*. For witchcraft, see Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun, and Witches*; Martha Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives: Gender, Religion, and the Politics of Power in Colonial Guatemala* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002).

¹¹ McCaa, "Matrimonio infantil."

norms of marriage were stricter for members of the elite because of the political implications of familial and kin affiliation, and because marriage served to cement alliances. These norms were more flexible for the commoners.

Among the Tarascan nobility, the *cepa* functioned as a house of relatives. The groom's parents were to ask the bride's father permission before the marriage could happen. In order to reach an agreement, the familial networks to which each of the future spouses belonged were carefully examined by both families. The groom and spouse had to be from the same lineage, to be inhabitants of the same neighbourhood, and to have land in the same area. This noble ceremonial was apparently also followed by all commoners, albeit without the official priests and decorum.¹²

Among the Nahuas, the marriage criteria are less clear, and they probably varied by region. The occidental Nahuas, including the Mexicas of Tenochtitlan, emphasized the role of the *calpulli*, or "big house," a large social unit defined by geographical features, ethnic affiliation, and its own god.¹³ Young men and women of the nobility encountered each other and courted during dance rehearsals in the House of Song. A similar practice of courting probably existed among the commoners at their local *calpulli* temple. Ultimately, parents and extended family members had the final word on their children's choice of spouse, but there was certain flexibility and young people had the opportunity to express their preference.¹⁴ Mexicas called the eastern Nahuas "tlatepotzca," or those who live on the other side of the mountains, because of cultural differences and political rivalries.¹⁵ These people lived in the Tlaxcala and Puebla area. Among them, the *teccalli*,

¹² Espejel Carbajal, *La justicia y el fuego*, I: 216-218. See also Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 173-174.

¹³ Lockhart, *The Nahuas after the Conquest*: 16-17.

¹⁴ Clendinnen, *Aztecs*: 156-162; Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 160-163 and 180.

¹⁵ Cosentino, "Genealogías pictóricas," 220.

or “noble house,” had greater significance than the *calpulli*. In other words, individuals belonged to a large unit that assembled members of different social status, including elite and commoners. Marriage practices among the eastern Nahuas are not clear, but belonging to a *teccalli* appears to have been much more important than kinship ties. As well, the irregular and interwoven geographic disposition of the *teccalli*’s lands suggests possible relationships and marriages between them.¹⁶

There is some debate on the endogamous or exogamous nature of marriage among the Nahuas. Inga Clendinnen emphasizes the role of the *calpulli* and writes that, even with the flexibility commoners experienced, the ceremony had to unite individuals of the same *calpulli*.¹⁷ However, Susan Kellogg argues that the Nahua system was neither entirely endogamous nor exogamous. In fact, many scholars of the area temper the role of kinship. Kellogg writes that Nahua marriage ceremonies celebrated the new kinship relation established by the ritual, rather than the original kin ties.¹⁸ James Lockhart says that Nahuas usually married inside the *calpulli*, but that exogamy was also significant. In fact, Lockhart stresses the idea that kinship, expressed through the *calli*, or “house,” related more to the act of living together than to the origin or lineage of the *calli*’s inhabitants.¹⁹ Finally, Delia Cosentino shows that, among the eastern Nahuas, the *teccalli* contained a great diversity of people, including non-kin.²⁰ In the end, endogamous practices were more common, but the integration of individuals from other groups or families through marriage existed. This tendency in the choice of spouses and the patterns

¹⁶ Chance, "The Noble House."; Cosentino, "Genealogías pictóricas."

¹⁷ Clendinnen, *Aztecs*: 162.

¹⁸ Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 160-163.

¹⁹ Lockhart, *The Nahuas after the Conquest*: 17 and 59-72.

²⁰ Cosentino, "Genealogías pictóricas," 224.

of integration of individuals foreign to the house or kin group proved significant in the marriage choices of Amerindians in San Luis Potosí.

According to David Charles Wright Carr, Otomi institutions clearly resembled those of the Nahuas, as they had the same social roles and even the same literal meaning. The Nahuatl *calpulli* translates in Otomi to *andangu etsofo*, which means “together in the council’s house.” In addition, on the basis of a semantic analysis of the Otomi and Nahuatl calendars, Wright Carr argues that the central Mexican cultures were relatively homogeneous and plurilingual (“translingüística”) by nature. Jacques Soustelle notices a similar phenomenon regarding place names. The invading Nahuas who expelled parts of the Otomi populations from central Mexico in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries kept the Otomi meanings given to places and only translated the names to Náhuatl. These observations perhaps allow one further to speculate that the Otomi’s kinship system and marriage practices might well have been similar, although not exactly identical, to those of the Nahuas.²¹

Franciscans in San Luis Potosí registered weddings in accordance with their own understanding of the nuclear family as the basic unit of social organization. For the Church, personal will in creating the marriage bond was of utmost importance.²² Thus, the Franciscans did not consider, or at least they did not record, the intervention of other kindred in the choice of a spouse. The celebrants’ view was pervasive of the whole Catholic Church in Spanish America, as the institution sanctified strictly the union of a man with a woman, and as priests compiled all data related to families with regards for

²¹ David Charles Wright Carr translates *andangu etsofo* in Spanish as “juntos en la casa del consejo.” Soustelle, *La famille Otomi-Pame*: 168; Wright Carr, “Lengua, cultura,” 26-29; David Charles Wright Carr, “El calendario mesoamericano en las lenguas otomí y náhuatl,” *Tlalocan* 16(2009): 217-253.

²² Patricia Seed, *To Love, Honor, and Obey in Colonial Mexico; Conflicts over Marriage Choice, 1574-1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 32-47.

the nuclear ones only.²³ In consequence, the existence of Mesoamerican marriage norms in the conurbation is excised from the documentation. It is nonetheless possible to establish to a certain extent the nature of the relation between the spouses based on their home communities, their places of residence, the presence of their parents, their relation with their witnesses, and their places of work.

There is some evidence that the Mesoamerican house was transposed in part to San Luis Potosí, and that a number of spouses may have respected indigenous matrimonial norms to a certain extent. Juan Bautista and Madalena Suchil, both from Querétaro, married in the Franciscan parish on July 12th, 1597. As witnesses to the wedding, Juan Bautista presented both his parents and another man from Querétaro, and Madalena presented her mother and another woman, also from Querétaro. The five individuals who approved a wedding between two of their peoples were from the same home community. It is impossible to know if the spouses pertained to the same lineage, or even if this marriage can be considered as endogamous in terms of Otomi kinship norms. Querétaro had been colonised earlier in the sixteenth century and encompassed a variety of indigenous peoples. The vast majority were of Otomi descent, but it is unclear whether kinship lineages were kept upon migration. However, the presence of the parents and of witnesses from the same origin suggests that, in the midst of all the migrations to the valley, this wedding was ethnically endogamous in comparison to other intercultural marriages.²⁴

In the first three decades of San Luis Potosí, newlyweds frequently came from the same home community. In fact, from 1597 through 1630, this type of marriages

²³ Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 209-210.

²⁴ APT.ByM 1594-1654, f. 266r, 12/07/1597.

represented 36.6 % of all registered weddings in the monastery of San Francisco (see table 6.1). Again, the lineage of these spouses was never registered by the Franciscans, and the witnesses were not always the relatives (the presence of parents was in fact relatively exceptional), the witnesses were not always from the same home community, and they could be of wholly different cultural origins. Nevertheless, the fact that, in a full third of the documented cases, spouses came from the same home community points towards the idea that common origin was important in the formation of couples. Notwithstanding the absence of information on kinship, these couples at least present many common points of cultural reference between them. They had grown up in the same town, they spoke the same language, and they might have been in contact for a long time prior to their migration.

Years	Number of weddings	Weddings with spouses from the same home community		Weddings with spouses from the same cultural region		Weddings with spouses from different cultural regions		Weddings with unknown cultural relation between spouses	
		Num.	%	Num.	%	Num.	%	Num.	%
1597-1600	128	41	32.0 %	36	28.1 %	25	19.5 %	26	20.3 %
1601-1610	203	116	57.1 %	20	9.9 %	28	13.8 %	39	19.2 %
1611-1620	88	22	25.0 %	7	8.0 %	9	10.2 %	50	56.8 %
1621-1630	94	7	7.4 %	5	5.3 %	23	24.5 %	59	62.8 %
Total	513	186	36.3 %	68	13.3 %	85	16.6 %	174	33.9 %

Even when they were not from the same home community, the bride and groom could have known each other a long time before their marriage and before their

migration. In their homeland, individuals did not remain enclosed in a specific community; rather, they could have contacts reaching beyond their locality. When moving to San Luis Potosí, Amerindians kept in touch with the members of these networks. The wedding of Nicolás and Catalina on January 25th, 1599, shows an example of such a situation. None of the persons appearing in the entry came from the same home community, but they were all from the North of the Tarascan area, all from the lowland basin around Lake Cuitzeo. The groom was an Indian widower from Ucareo. The bride was also an Indian widow, but she came from Taximaroa. The three Indian witnesses were Juan from Copandaro, Luis from Guaniqueo, and another Juan from Yurirapúndaro. These localities were situated in the southern part of the Bajío, an area of active economic exchanges and population movement in the sixteenth century.²⁵ It is possible, although not clearly stated in the document, that the groom, the bride, and the three witnesses were part of an extended network across this region.²⁶

Other grooms and brides may have come from the same cultural area, but forged their relation together after an initial migration or after their arrival in San Luis Potosí. This seems to have been the case for Miguel Chichic from Uruapan and Juana Quiranda from Cuitzeo. Both came from the Tarascan cultural area, but their source communities were far apart, almost on opposite sides of the region, over 150 km away from one another. Each of the spouses nonetheless presented witnesses from their respective communities. This meant that they kept ties to their lineage and that the members of their networks approved their wedding, even though it was probably exogamous by Tarascan standards. Notwithstanding such considerations of lineage, this example shows that a

²⁵ John Tutino points specifically to the role of Yurirapúndaro in this activity. Tutino, *Making a New World*: 71, 74, and 82.

²⁶ APT.ByM1594-1654, f. 270v, 25/01/1599.

common language and culture of origin may also have favoured the creation of relationships in San Luis Potosí, outside the scope of pre-existing networks.

The formation of couples between persons of different home communities but from the same cultural area was very frequent in the first years of registered weddings in San Luis Potosí. Over the whole period of study, they represented 13.3 % of all weddings (see table 6.1). For this category of matrimonial relationship I had, in some cases, to evaluate the possible ethnic relation between the spouses for each wedding. When both of their communities of origin were in the same large cultural area, for example in Michoacán, I automatically classified the couple in this category. However, when the two villages of origin were in two distinct cultural regions, but were situated on a cultural frontier – that is, when they were geographically close and possibly shared some linguistic and cultural elements – I considered the spouses as being from the same cultural area. It was the case of Gabriel García from Querétaro and Madalena Hernández from Apaseo. Although the two communities belonged to distinct regions, respectively the Otomi and the North frontier, both villages had significant Otomi populations (even though the second also counted Tarascan and Nahuatl inhabitants) and I thus identified the couple as a union between individuals from a similar cultural background.²⁷ Another couple represents a similar case as the bride was from Chamacuero, a congregation of Mesoamerican migrants, and the groom from San Miguel el Grande, a Spanish settlement with mixed Amerindian population.²⁸ In fact, because both weddings took place on the same day and because the four villages were fairly close – in a radius of less than 10 leagues (42 km) – it is possible that these four persons had known each other before their

²⁷ APT.ByM1594-1654, f.282v, 02/06/1602.

²⁸ APT.ByM1594-1654, f.283r, 02/06/1602.

arrival in San Luis, or at least that they shared similar life experiences, maybe even some cultural background.

Adding the couples that came from the same home community to those of the same cultural area constitutes 49.6 % of all Amerindian marriages in San Luis Potosí. It is thus fair to argue that encounters between spouses and the formation of couples often depended on pre-existing networks and contacts that were transposed, at least in part, to San Luis Potosí. This proximity in the cultural area of origin is important, first because it hints at possible previous interactions between these individuals and, second, because it provided the backbone of the new networks in the valley.

There were also, of course, couples formed by individuals from different cultural regions and who had no obvious proximate ties. Juan Lorenzo and Mariana, married on February 21st, 1599, came respectively from Zacualco in the Pinome area of Western Mesoamerica and from Santiago Tlatelolco, a neighborhood of Mexico City. The parish registers do not give any details on their encounter and their witnesses are only named, without any attributes. Hence it is impossible to know where and when they met – a few years earlier on the roads to San Luis Potosí or just a few weeks before in town – and even through what language they communicated. This case is interesting precisely because of all these unanswered questions. All that is certain is that they were not members of a common network when they undertook their migration North, but beyond that, a great many possibilities remain open.

During the period under study, at least 16.6 % of the Amerindian newlyweds did not share cultural references. This is significant because it breaks from the historical assumption presented in most studies of San Luis Potosí that Amerindians exclusively

formed closed ethnic communities.²⁹ Most importantly, it shows that ethnicity and cultural references were not always criteria in the choice of a spouse, and that other criteria were considered, such as casual encounters, love, economic opportunities, necessity, and others.

Another important element to consider in these weddings is the civil status of the newlyweds. Many Amerindian men and women who married in San Luis Potosí were widower and widow migrants. Between 1597 and 1630, there were a total of 91 weddings (that is 17.7 % of all weddings celebrated in the Indian parish during that period) in which at least one of the spouses was a widower or a widow. Since in 19 of these cases the widower or widow had lost his wife or her husband after their migration, there were a total of 72 weddings (14 %) that included a migrant widower or widow. Table 6.2 breaks these numbers down to the level of the individuals, rendering a clearer view of the situation of newlyweds.

²⁹ See chapter four for more details.

Table 6.2: Marrying immigrant widowers and widows, 1597-1630

Year	Number of Marrying Amerindians	Widower Grooms		Widow Brides		Total Marrying Widowers and Widows	
		Number	% of Grooms	Number	% of Brides	Number	% of Total
1597	34	4	23.5 %	4	23.5 %	8	23.5 %
1598	52	3	11.5 %	11	42.3 %	14	26.9 %
1599	118	23	39.0 %	34	57.6 %	57	48.3 %
1602	82	1	2.4 %	1	2.4 %	2	2.4 %
1603	62	0	0.0 %	1	3.2 %	1	1.6 %
1607	24	1	8.3 %	0	0.0 %	1	4.2 %
1608	42	0	0.0 %	1	4.2 %	1	2.4 %
1610	14	1	14.3 %	0	0.0 %	1	7.1 %
1612	18	1	11.1 %	1	11.1 %	2	11.1 %
1613	18	1	11.1 %	1	11.1 %	2	11.1 %
1614	20	1	10.0 %	0	0.0 %	1	5.0 %
1622	20	1	10.0 %	1	10.0 %	2	10.0 %
1623	22	1	9.1 %	1	9.1 %	2	9.1 %
1624	30	2	13.3 %	3	20.0 %	5	16.7 %
1625	24	1	8.3 %	3	25.0 %	4	16.7 %
1626	10	2	40.0 %	1	20.0 %	3	30.0 %
1627	18	1	11.1 %	1	11.1 %	2	11.1 %
1629	20	0	0.0	1	10.0 %	1	5.0 %
Total (all years)	1026	44	8.6 %	65	12.7 %	109	10.6 %

This table presents the minimal number and proportion of widowers and widows to have migrated to San Luis Potosí. Indeed, if the high numbers cannot be denied because the corresponding marriages were written down with this characteristic registered, it is highly possible that some priests did not consider this information as sufficiently important to be written. For example, it is strange that almost half of the Amerindians to marry in 1599 were widowers and widows, and that none were registered in the two following years. The whole decade of the 1610s, in fact, saw very few weddings that included at least one widower or widow. The only plausible hypothesis to explain this phenomenon would be that the first large wave of immigration took place in the 1590s and that all widowers and widows had found a new spouse by the end of the same decade, and that there were none left to marry later in the 1610s. We do not place, however, much confidence in this hypothesis.

Years that do not appear in the table had no widowers registered as spouse in a wedding.

The registers show clearly that at least a tenth of the migrants to San Luis were widowers or widows, with a slightly higher proportion of widows. Interestingly, this strengthens the argument I presented in chapter three that immigrants sought, among their

many objectives, to build new affective and social networks. As with weddings as a whole, widower weddings mostly took place between individuals of the same cultural region, in a proportion of 52.8 % (38 out of 72 weddings). Half of these (19 out of 72 or 26.4 %) took place between Amerindians from the same source community. Yet at the same time, 23.6 % of the weddings united persons from completely different cultural areas. Out of the total seventy-two weddings, seventeen took place between spouses for whom the ethnic relation could not be determined. After allocating these marriages among the other categories, I obtained proportions of 68.5 % of spouses from the same cultural area and of 31.5 % of spouses from different cultural areas. In short, just as was the case for all other weddings, the great majority of weddings took place between spouses of the same cultural area, but a still significant proportion took place between individuals of different cultural backgrounds. This suggests that the ethnic affiliation and the mother tongue were not always the first criteria in selecting one's spouse.

The Formation of an Indian San Luis Potosí

The ethnic criterion in the choice of a spouse evolved through the first four decades of San Luis Potosí. While marriages between spouses from the same source community and from the same cultural area were very important in the 1590s and 1600s, their proportion dropped significantly in the last two decades. Weddings between spouses of different ethnic origins were not consistent and fluctuated throughout the period. The decline in the first two categories in the 1610s was compensated for by a rise in the numbers of marriages between spouses of unknown ethnic origin. This change is in part due to the priests' selection of the information to be recorded. Beginning in the 1610s,

priests started to replace the home community with the locale of residence in San Luis Potosí or with the name of the spouses' employer. Since the spouses were increasingly described as natives from San Luis Potosí or one of its Indian towns, I believe that this transition in the information written in the parish records indicates a transition towards a new generation, from that of Amerindian immigrants to that of Amerindians born in the conurbation or at least brought there at a very young age. The Amerindian spouses who were from different cultural areas and those considered as natives from San Luis Potosí give strength to the idea, presented in previous chapters, that encounters and the creation of social networks in San Luis Potosí did not rely solely on ethnic and cultural origins.

The case of one short-lived couple illustrates many aspects of the life of Amerindians in San Luis Potosí, as well as the possibility of casual encounters that could lead to significant relationships. In early May 1594, Pedro Alonso and Francisca met and fell in love. Pedro Alonso was a young Amerindian of 16 to 18 years old from Zacualco, who worked for the Spaniard Juan de Oliva, perhaps as a shoemaker. Francisca was a Chichimec of 15 to 18 years old who had been raised by, and was still in the service of, Diego Alonso Larios and his wife. The couple most probably met close to Oliva's house, where there was a river used by indigenous women to launder, which was frequently visited by Francisca and other servants of Spaniards.³⁰ Pedro Alonso and Francisca became lovers. About a month into their intimacy, Francisca told Pedro that her amo did not treat her well and she asked him to take her away. On the night of the Sunday June 12th, just before dawn, Pedro Alonso broke the window of Francisca's room and brought her to the house of one of his friend out of town, near another river (most probably the

³⁰ The name of the river is not mentioned in the document, but since it was close to Oliva's house, it might have been a small tributary of the Ciénaga or of the Laguna.

Españita; see Map 4.2) in a place Larios would later call “el Monte” and the “arcabuco” (slope), probably in the eastern part of what would become Montecillo. The lovers spent four days in that place and then went back to the Spanish town and hid behind the houses and the foundry of Juan de Zavala. There, they met Alonso, an Amerindian native from El Saltillo working for Francisco García (Larios’ son-in-law), who was on his way to San Miguel. Both men spoke together for a while, but what was said is unclear. Larios claimed that Pedro Alonso told Alonso that they were on their way to Zacualco, but that is unsure. In the end, Alonso confessed to his employer that he had encountered a couple in flight; both men then attempted to stop the couple. Pedro Alonso fled and was not seen for another month. Francisca was taken and went back into Larios’ house.

This story shows a number of significant elements in the lives of indigenous men and women. First, it demonstrates the mobility of Amerindians: Pedro Alonso had a friend in Montecillo and knew where to hide for several days. As well, the witness Alonso was crossing the Spanish town on his way to the village of San Miguel. Second, it evidences that Amerindians could know each other even across linguistic and ethnic boundaries. Third, it indicates to a certain extent that Spaniards had a role to play in the relations between Amerindians, including in the formation of couples. Here, Diego Alonso Larios did not want his servant to be in an intimate relationship with another Indian, and possibly with anybody. Perhaps he did not want to lose her services or he used his paternal authority to exercise control over his criada. In any case, Larios strongly insisted on his perception of each of the lovers: while he commented that he and his wife took care of Francisca from an early age, taught her Spanish, and indoctrinated her into the Catholic faith, he portrayed Pedro Alonso as a dangerous delinquent who broke the

window of his house and “could enter to rob me or kill me.”³¹ The stress Larios puts on the honourable qualities of the woman and on the delinquency of the man testifies to the use of Spanish norms to prevent the couple from living together and ultimately from marrying. Conversely, the actions of Pedro Alonso and Francisca show a high degree of agency, independent of the Spaniard’s will.³²

Like Pedro Alonso and Francisca, many Amerindians entered into intimate relationships outside the Catholic sacrament of marriage. The relative flexibility of San Luis Potosí’s social organization (that I have discussed in chapters four and five), or perhaps the novelty of the Northern cities, favoured the formation of informal unions and consensual relationships, which the Spaniards called *amancebamientos*.³³ Under Spanish colonial rule, sexual relations outside of marriage were criminal and not to be tolerated.³⁴ These *amancebamientos* could sometimes be punished severely, even more so when the culprits were already married to another person. In December 1620, for example, Francisco Lucas and Marta Hernández, both Náhuatl-speaking Amerindians, were found together in bed and were arrested in San Miguel. Francisco Lucas claimed to have been drunk and that Marta Hernández was helping him, and she pointed out that both were fully dressed. The *alcalde mayor* nonetheless found that the testimonies of the accusers were strong and, because Marta Hernández was already married to another man, he condemned both of them to pay a *marco de plata*, a relatively high fine amounting to a

³¹ “[...] pudieron entrar a robarme o matarme [...]” Larios uses the plural because he thinks that Pedro Alonso had help breaking the window. AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 18, f. 1r.

³² AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 18-20.

³³ Page numbers. A man in this situation was called an *amancebado*, and a woman an *amancebada*. The English translation “informal unions” and “consensual relationships” were borrowed from Velasco Murillo and Sierra Silva, “Mine Workers,” 115. Radding also uses the expression “casual unions”: Radding, *Wandering Peoples*: 105.

³⁴ Powers, *Women in the Crucible*: 53.

few weeks' wages.³⁵ They were also ordered not to see or communicate with each other ever again.³⁶ These kinds of sentences were, however, less severe in comparison to those imposed on non-Indians. In a case of *amancebamiento* between a mestizo man and a Chichimec woman, the mestizo was found responsible for the situation (“Por la culpa del dicho Francisco mestizo le debo de condenar”), and he was severely sanctioned and threatened with expulsion (“destierro de este pueblo y su jurisdicción”) if he persisted in seeing his lover.³⁷

This difference in handling informal unions might come from the fact that, for Spaniards, Indians did not have from birth – and would never achieve – honour. In colonial Spanish America, honour included both precedence (status, rank, birth) and virtue (moral integrity by behaviour). From the Spanish point of view, even the most moral Indian could not achieve this because of the lack of precedence by birth.³⁸ Most sentences against Amerindian illegitimate couples were very light, and, although *amancebamientos* were considered a criminal fault, Spanish authorities were only partially concerned by them. In the case against Ana from Puebla and Francisco from Teocaltiche (see chapter three), the lawyer wrote: “[...] it is not possible to denounce Indians who are in informal unions, nor is your honour to accept such denunciations, and when it is admitted it must be to separate them to prevent them from committing sin in

³⁵ According to the dictionary of the Real Academia Española from 1737, a peso weighted one once. Since the *marco* corresponded to eight onces, it is presumable that in 1620, this *marco de plata* corresponded roughly to eight pesos, an amount of money that took a few weeks to gather for Amerindian workers. *Diccionario de Autoridades*. Tomo V (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1737). <http://web.frl.es/DA.html>.

³⁶ AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 8, exp. 24.

³⁷ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1602, caja 1, exp. 2.

³⁸ For a discussion on honour, see Seed, *To Love, Honor and Obey*: 30-34.

the service of God.”³⁹ Historians have shown that consensual relationships were frequent among Amerindians who lived in urban areas – there were high rates of illegitimate Indian babies who were baptized – but that unmarried parents were rarely punished. In comparison, in rural areas where communities were smaller, direct pressure from the clergy was stronger, and marriage was the norm.⁴⁰ In San Luis Potosí, if there were three lawsuits for amancebamiento in 1594, there was only one in 1595, and only four during the next twenty-five years.⁴¹

For Amerindians, honour had other meanings and did not necessarily prevent sexual intercourse prior to marriage. Indeed, a man and a woman could meet casually and enter into courtship, and even into a more intimate type of relation. Pre-marital frequentations and even sexual relations were accepted in some Mesoamerican cultures, albeit within disciplinary structures in accordance with the marital norms discussed above. The Tarascans, for example, permitted that young people enter into an intimate relationship and that they have sex prior to marriage. In that case, if the couple wanted to establish more formally, the young man had to ask the woman’s father, who would then decide of the legitimacy of the union mostly on the basis of lineage. If the father refused the marriage, the young man was punished and his loved one’s family would take all his

³⁹ “[...] de indios no se puede hacer denuncia ni vuestra merced admitirla por haber estado amancebado y cuando se admita ha de ser para que apartando los para evitar el pecado que cometen en el servicio de dios.” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 1, f. 3r.

⁴⁰ Only Karen Vieira Powers writes that honour and purity had more impact on elite and urban indigenous peoples than in rural areas. Manuel Josef de Ayala, *Diccionario de Gobierno y Legislación de Indias*, vol. I (Madrid: Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, 1988), 147-148; Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "La familia novohispana y la ruptura de los modelos," *Colonial Latin American Review* 9, no. 1 (2000): 11; Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 173; Powers, *Women in the Crucible*: 55-56.

⁴¹ The cases of amancebamiento are in the AHESLP, AM: A-43, 1594, caja 2, exp. 17; A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 29; A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 1; A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 6b; A-44, 1599, caja 1, exp. 8; A-44, 1602, caja 1, exp. 2; 1608, caja 4, exp. 25; 1620, caja 8, exp. 24.

material belonging away from him.⁴² Mexicas' prenuptial comportments were highly monitored and favoured chastity, though Inga Clendinnen demonstrates that some ceremonies were erotic, and sexual courtship in the specific setting of the community was not uncommon.⁴³ On the Nahuas, James Lockhart also points out that "many couples living together may have remained unmarried."⁴⁴ It becomes apparent that the honour of individuals rested more on the acceptance of the partner by the extended family members than on actions and comportments.

Notwithstanding these differences in understanding the legitimacy of the union of a man and a woman, one common advantage of consensual relationships for Amerindians in San Luis Potosí was a greater autonomy and liberty of action and choice. Indeed, this type of relation did not constrain the couple to strict social norms, to familial, kin, or communal duties, or to live and work at a specific location. In other words, informal unions favoured a greater mobility and more possibilities to react to unfavourable conditions. In this context, amancebamientos appear to have fulfilled contingent economic or personal needs, because they were fairly random and cut across social, ethnic, and cultural groups.

Table 6.3 presents some possibilities for the nature of the relations between spouses that will help in explaining this argument. The column titled "Number of weddings with spouses having the same employer" reckons the number of marital relationships in which a common employer or at least a common Spanish witness was registered. These marriages suggest that one possible place to create a marital relationship was the workplace. In chapter five, I have already discussed these marriages

⁴² Espejel Carbajal, *La justicia y el fuego*, I: 221-222.

⁴³ Clendinnen, *Aztecs*: 158-160.

⁴⁴ Lockhart, *The Nahuas after the Conquest*: 255.

between people from the same work sites and I have explained their importance in the construction of new social networks. Although they appear to be mostly present in the 1610s, in fact, these links through Spaniards between spouses had existed for a long time. In the beginning, they were registered in the central parish records (APS).⁴⁵ Indeed, twenty-one weddings between Amerindians were registered in the Spanish parish between 1596 and 1604, all of them with at least one Spaniard as witness and often with a common employer for both spouses. From 1609 to 1630, another twenty-five weddings between Amerindians were registered in the central parish, all of them with a direct link between the spouses and their amo. In the 1620s alone, when the second generation of Amerindians came to age to marry, there were twenty-two of these marriages linked to work sites. In addition to the arguments I presented in chapter five, this situation further demonstrates that the place of work was a good place to create contacts and networks.

⁴⁵ APS, in reference to the *Archivo Parroquial de El Sagrario*, where they are kept today. These registers are in box 1, book 1.2 (caja 1, libro 1.2).

Year	No. of weddings w/ spouses having the same employer	No. of weddings w/ spouses living in the same village or neighbourhood	No. of weddings w/ both spouses born in SLP	No. of integrative weddings (One spouse from SLP)
1608	1	2	0	0
1609	0	0	0	0
1610	1	1	0	0
1611	1	4	0	0
1612	0	1	0	0
1613	1	1	1	0
1614	1	0	0	0
1616	5	0	3	0
1617	5	0	0	0
1618	0	0	3	0
1619	1	1	1	0
1620	0	4	0	0
1621	0	2	2	2
1622	4	0	0	4
1623	0	1	1	5
1624	0	2	1	4
1625	0	2	2	2
1626	0	1	0	1
1627	0	5	0	3
1628	1	1	0	0
1629	1	3	0	0
1630	0	1	3	5
Total	22	32	17	26

Note that some weddings could be placed in more than one category, so proportions cannot be relevant. This is why only numbers were presented.

My argument is the same for the next two columns (“Number of weddings with spouses living in the same village or neighbourhood” and “Number of weddings with both spouses native to SLP”), in the sense that it is not possible to know exactly where and when the spouses met, but it is plausible, when they lived in the same village or neighbourhood, that they encountered each other there upon their arrival or in their

childhood. The place where an individual lived can thus be considered as a creative element for networking and for the formation of couples.

The “integrative weddings” were those that took place between an individual born in San Luis Potosí and another born outside of it, and that consecrated the arrival of the second individual into a new community. Integrative weddings, as I will show, were crucial to the formation of communities that were both multiethnic and capable of presenting a strong, unified political identity to Spaniards. In most cases, the witnesses registered give an important indication of this process. On April 8th, 1622, for example, Juan Andrés from Chilchota in Michoacán married Isabel Petrona who was born in Santiago del Río, and each of the spouses presented three witnesses, all of the six being registered as “vecinos de Santiago.”⁴⁶ Another example does not appear at first as such an integration wedding, because both spouses were born outside of San Luis: they were Juan Lázaro from Tlazazalca in Michoacán and María Isabel from Guadalajara. However, this couple appears in a criminal record just a few days after their wedding: they were jailed by the Spaniard Gerónimo de Vega because, a few years before, the women had fled from his service and returned to Guadalajara with her first husband. Most interestingly, the criminal pursuit was initiated by the authorities of the neighbourhood of Santiago del Río, jurisdiction of the village of Tlaxcalilla, because María Isabel’s second husband Juan Lázaro was considered “an Indian of our village.”⁴⁷ Thus, the woman gained juridical protection because of the community networks of her new husband. Moreover, the alguacil mayor (sheriff) of Santiago at that time was Juan Andrés from Chilchota, the very same man who had married a woman from Santiago del Río in 1622, surrounded by

⁴⁶ APT, ByM 1594-1654, f. 321v, 08/04/1622.

⁴⁷ AHESLP, AM, 1624, caja 4, exp. 2: “un indio de n[uest]ro pueblo”.

witnesses of the neighbourhood. In short, marriage was an excellent way of integrating a community and it could have valuable juridical, social, political, and economic consequences.

The apparently greater flexibility in marriage choices that emerged in the 1610s and 1620s did not mean that familial or communal interventions in the selection of a spouse came to an end. To the contrary, family members worked hard to preserve their networks and to place their children in good families. In February 1625, an Amerindian woman named Cristina visited her sister Helena Madalena in San Sebastian and left her daughter Ynes, identified only as an *india moza* (young Indian), under her protection. Two months later, in April 1625, Helena Madalena, filed a criminal complaint against the local alguacil Gerónimo Ortiz for kidnapping the young woman. Helena Madalena asked the Spanish alcalde mayor to intervene, to jail the alguacil, and to hand Ynes back. To enforce her claim, Helena Madalena presented three witnesses, all living in San Sebastian, who stressed that Cristina had put Ynes in Helena's custody and that Gerónimo Ortiz had no right to take Ynes away. One of these witnesses, Agustín Martín, emphasized the gravity of the situation, saying that Ynes was "doncella y trata de casarse." The word "doncella" could be translated as "maiden." Agustín Martín was thus stressing the protective role of the community in the process of marriage, which role implied the physical and moral integrity of the young woman, as well as the community's implication in the selection process for a husband. Thus, in comparison with the early years of settlement, Amerindians in the 1620s changed the focus of marriage choices from the place of origin to the living community in San Luis Potosí. In this particular case, all Amerindians lived in San Sebastian and insisted on having a close relationship

with Helena Madalena, but they never referred to their origin or to possible ethnic ties among them.⁴⁸

The unfolding of the history of marriages among Amerindians opens the way to understanding the evolution of networking and community formation in San Luis Potosí through the period of study. By the beginning of the 1610s, the first Amerindians born in the valley had reached the age of marriage, and were thus ready to take on the tasks associated with the formation and sustenance of a family.⁴⁹ Hence, the second generation of Amerindian inhabitants of San Luis – the children of the migrants – became economically active around that time. At first, the number of these Amerindians appears to be the same in both decades: eight weddings in the 1610s and nine in the 1620s. However, we must also consider those unions in which individuals born in San Luis Potosí wedded, and thus helped integrate, a newcomer. The number of Amerindians born in the conurbation and who married in the 1620s is forty-four individuals (nine weddings with both spouses from San Luis, plus twenty-six weddings with one spouse from San Luis). Forty-four out of the 198 marrying Amerindians were born in the conurbation. In other words, over a fifth (22.2 %) of the Amerindians who married in the 1620s were born in San Luis Potosí and had decided to form and base their familial unit in that same conurbation. This proportion shows that a significant part of the Amerindian population

⁴⁸ AHESLP, AM, 1625, caja 1, exp. 45.

⁴⁹ There is no consensus among historians on the age for marriage in the Amerindian societies. In our documents, the specific age of a spouse is only registered once, in APT, ByM 1594-1654, f. 331r, 04/06/1626, wherein the bride is said to have been born in San Luis Potosí and to be 14 years old. Castro Gutiérrez says that the Church pushed Tarascans of Michoacán to marry around the age of 12 to 14 years old. Through a statistical analysis, McCaa argues that Nahua women married mostly between 12 and 14 years old, but sometimes as young as 10 years old, and that Nahua men married between 17 and 19 years old. He mentions that other historians have estimated the age of marriage among Amerindians as between 15 and 25 years old, most saying at the end of adolescence. See Gibson, *The Aztecs*: 151; Gruzinski, *La colonisation de l'imaginaire*: 119; Clendinnen, *Aztecs*: 160; McCaa, "Matrimonio infantil," 10-31; Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 173.

was organizing itself in a more stable and permanent way, even as immigration and emigration continued.

Among the nineteen weddings that counted at least one widower or widow who had lost a wife or husband in San Luis Potosí, sixteen took place in the 1620s. As expected, fairly little information on the ethnic relation between these spouses was registered: only one wedding presented spouses from the same village of origin, another one between spouses of the same cultural area, and four between spouses from different cultural areas. The other ten weddings presented unknown ethnic origins. Interestingly, however, four of these marriages are good examples of integration to one of the Amerindian communities. The Indian town of Santiago del Río seems to have been a strongly integrative community.⁵⁰ I have already mentioned the wedding of Juan Andrés and Isabel Petrona in 1622, wherein Juan Andrés was integrated to the community of Santiago and later became alguacil mayor. Two of their witnesses, Diego de los Rios and Lázaro Joseph, were also witnesses for Francisco Miguel (born in Uruapan, Michoacán) when he married María Madalena (from Zacatecas) in 1625. Both witnesses were vecinos of Santiago. In this case, both husband and wife had been living in Santiago for some time and had been recently widowed. The presence of witnesses from Santiago shows that they were going through an integrative process into the networks of the community.⁵¹

Probably the most interesting aspect of these weddings is the tendency of widowers and widows to remarry in the same neighbourhood or village in San Luis Potosí. As I just showed, this was the case of Francisco Miguel and María Madalena who stayed and remarried in Santiago. Similarly, Mariana from Cholula married for the third

⁵⁰ See chapter eight for more details on Santiago del Río.

⁵¹ APT, ByM 1594-1654, f.329r, 08/03/1625.

time in the same area of the conurbation on September 22, 1629. When her first husband died in Santísima Trinidad, she remarried in San Francisco, both neighbourhoods being parts of the town of San Miguel. On that day of 1629, she remarried again in San Francisco, with Francisco Vázquez from Mexico, who had also lost his wife a year earlier in San Francisco.⁵²

While I argued that most migrants left their place of origin after great social crisis in their societies and that many were widowers and widows who sought to rebuild their families and their affective networks, the Amerindians who lost their spouses in the 1620s no longer had to flee. The society of San Luis was establishing itself and Amerindians, whether they had arrived a few years before or had been born in town, could find another life companion fairly easily without moving away. At times, local authorities witnessed these weddings, and on one occasion the alcalde of Santísima Trinidad did so.⁵³ I believe that the presence of the Indian authorities testifies to a profound integration to the communities of these marrying individuals, as well as of the existence of a mechanism to build solid, enduring, and hierarchical social networks.

The possibility of becoming a member of a community was an important factor in determining the difference between the floating population – more interested in the economic profits of the mining industry – and the final establishment of what would become the fixed Indian population of the town. In the 1620s, it seems that part of the population taking root during the economic boom of the early mining town stayed put even when economic conditions worsened, and when a large proportion of the workers left their Spanish employers to go work in other mines. Montoya notes that, at the turn of

⁵² APT, ByM 1594-1654, f.336r, 22/09/1629.

⁵³ APT, ByM 1594-1654, f.336r, 15/09/1629. The first name of this alcalde is Diego, but I had difficulties reading his last name, which appears to have been Muñera.

that decade, the registers of the San Francisco convent show a growing importance of the population born in or living in the pueblos and barrios de indios of San Luis Potosí. Immigration continued, but it became less important in relation to the established population.⁵⁴

According to Salazar González, the town was able to survive the economic downturn precisely because of the economic strength and interdependency of both the Spanish centre and the pueblos and barrios de indios that formed the conurbation.⁵⁵ This does not mean, however, that the Spanish work sites around town were depopulated and closed. Montoya clearly shows that hundreds of Amerindians were still working in these places.⁵⁶ My argument is that there was a tendency among the Amerindian population of the 1620s to organize and stabilize in and around the Indian towns. Indeed, the parish records of Tlaxcalilla present ties between spouses that related less to Spanish intermediaries and more to dynamics proper to Amerindian communities.

In the parish registers, there was a transition in the information recorded about spouses. For example, for the five weddings of 1620, the priests did not record the ethnic relation between the spouses, but wrote instead that four of these marriages united Amerindians living in the same neighbourhood. In 1630, the ethnic relation between the spouses is known only for four weddings out of fifteen. However, a third of the individuals marrying were born in the conurbation, and among the fifteen marriages, a third were integrative. In the end, the growing numbers of unknown ethnic relation between spouses seems to indicate that the Amerindian population of San Luis was

⁵⁴ Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 115-121.

⁵⁵ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 41.

⁵⁶ Montoya, "Población y sociedad," 125.

becoming literally “native from San Luis” and that it organized as such, within Indian communities.

In summary, the first generation of Amerindians marrying in San Luis Potosí appear to have followed patterns in choosing their spouse resembling those of pre-Colombian and early colonial Mesoamerican practices. In other words, they tended to marry individuals from the same home community or, at least, from the same cultural area. However, as elsewhere in New Spain, these practices underwent significant transformations some years later. Susan Kellogg has shown that in Mexico City, from the 1580s to the 1650s (a period corresponding roughly to the one I study), the ties between husband and wife grew more important than other kinship relations. As well, she demonstrates that the structures of the household became less complex and came to have the nuclear family at its centre. At the same time, neolocal marriages (wherein a new residence was established) became more frequent, although they were still the minority pattern of postmarital residence. By extension, the couple was taking on more importance in the social structure of the Mexicas, with signs of greater individualism and personality in the choice of a spouse.⁵⁷

It seems that Amerindians in San Luis Potosí were going through a process similar to those of Mexico City, and that, over time, kinship, ethnic, and cultural identifications grew less important, without disappearing completely. Daily interactions and personal contacts, in contrast, became more significant. Networks were not lineages that served to determine the choice of a spouse, but the consequences of marriage. Among other causes for such transformation of indigenous social structure in Mexico City, Kellogg points to the demographic upheaval. Indeed, the high degree of mortality

⁵⁷ Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 162-204.

shook down this organization, sources of authority disappeared, disputes over residence and land emerged, and other social problems arose.⁵⁸ A similar phenomenon might have struck San Luis Potosí, in the sense that the migrating individuals and groups, as discussed in chapter three, had to adapt to wholly new situations, often without any residence, land, networking, or traditional leading authorities to guide cultural practices. Because of this need for social reorganization, the couple became a significant element of social structures, and its formation depended on new factors, such as work relations, daily encounters, love and affective needs, or economic advantages. Along with these transformations, the internal dynamics of the couple, that is, the gendered relations between men and women, also took new forms.

Gender and Conflicts in Couples

Most historians agree that, if not equal, pre-Colombian Mesoamerican gender roles were at least complementary and that there were parallel structures of power and authority for men and women.⁵⁹ The deconstruction of the Amerindian societies, the imposition of the Spanish legal system, and the Catholic spiritual conquest transformed this state of things and hierarchized gender roles among Amerindians. Taking place throughout the sixteenth century, these transformations appear clearly in San Luis Potosí and strongly affected the relations between men and women, including inside couples.

Whether in the couple's household, on the haciendas and ranchos, or in Spanish houses of the town, women managed tasks related to domesticity such as cooking, washing clothes, and taking care of children, while men worked at transforming minerals,

⁵⁸ Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 204-205.

⁵⁹ Clendinnen, *Aztecs*: 153-209; Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 88-103; Burkhart, "Mexican Women," 25; Schroeder, "Introduction," 14-15; Powers, *Women in the Crucible*: 15-38.

making charcoal, as artisans, in agriculture, and raising stock.⁶⁰ According to the scarce fragments of information related to these gender roles, complementarity had mostly disappeared from Amerindians' gender mentality in San Luis Potosí. While preparing food might be considered "complementary" to a man's work in a hacienda de beneficio and thus to the production of silver and gold, the meaning of these tasks were very different and they were not recognized as equivalent. On the contrary, they became hierarchized, the men's work taking on more importance than that of women. The Spaniards were very clear on this: a woman's domestic work was worth only half of a man's work on a hacienda. For example, the sentence against Ana de Puebla and Francisco Jacobo (see chapter three) stated that for their work, she would receive only two pesos a month, while the men would receive four pesos.⁶¹

It is harder to grasp in detail how Amerindians understood the gender hierarchy in the context of the multicultural conurbation of San Luis Potosí. People in multiethnic couples and consensual relationships seem to have been less affected by Spanish understandings of gender roles than those in endogamous marriages. The document that relates the story of Ana de Puebla and Francisco Jacobo says that the moment the couple left Teocaltiche for Zacatecas in 1592, the lovers worked together on the *carretas* (carts) of Alvaro Carrello, apparently carrying out similar tasks.⁶² However, as I will show through other criminal lawsuits in the paragraphs to come, the relation between Francisco Jacobo and Ana was the exception rather than the rule. In San Luis Potosí, as elsewhere

⁶⁰ For more details on tasks performed by men and women, see chapter four.

⁶¹ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 1. For Spanish understanding of gender roles, see Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 104-119; Susan Migden Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 5-15; Powers, *Women in the Crucible*: 40-62.

⁶² AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 1. For a remainder of the story, see the chapter three of this dissertation.

in Spanish America, Amerindian men do seem to have internalized Spanish comprehension of gender roles and the associated hierarchy.

I have already discussed, in chapters four and five, the role of men and women in the familial and regional economies, as well within indigenous society. The lack of sources on indigenous women, not only in San Luis Potosí, but in most of Spanish America, has led historians to be cautious in their interpretation of gender roles among indigenous peoples. Dana Velasco Murillo points out that many couples worked as teams.⁶³ The inhabitants of Tlaxcalilla, Lucas Ambrosio and his wife (described at length in chapter four), for example, each had their tasks to ensure the well-being of their household, and the couple appears to have worked in complementarity. On work sites, however, the distribution of work was done by the administrators (mayordomos or owners) and it was oriented to benefit the enterprise, as opposed to the couple, in correspondence with individual qualities and skills. In addition, while there were many couples on work sites, over a third of the work force was comprised of single men (see table 5.1). In this context, women did not perform their tasks solely for the household, but for the whole cuadrilla of labourers. In addition to women's economic activities, I have also discussed their role as essential agents in the organisation of the indigenous society of San Luis Potosí, and I will show, in chapter seven, how they acted as social intermediaries.

In this chapter, I will examine how men and women perceived themselves and each other in the couple and, by extension, in the larger indigenous society of San Luis Potosí. The argument I present in this section is based on a corpus of criminal sources from the *alcaldía mayor* of San Luis Potosí (see chapter one for details on this archive).

⁶³ Velasco Murillo, "Laboring above the Ground," 11.

Because of their nature, these sources mostly give information about conflicts between men and women, but very little sense of more peaceful, well-functioning relationships. The resulting image is that the Spanish understanding of gender roles was adopted by indigenous men, and this often translated into control and violence of the man over his wife. It appears that communities, which were led by male authorities, supported this understanding of gendered roles, and most often supported their male members during criminal investigations. However, women remained important agents in negotiating their place in society, at times supporting the communities' decisions, but most often taking actions to reverse the effects of these decisions on their lives.

In October 1594, the Tarascan Pedro presented a criminal complaint to the alcalde mayor of San Luis Potosí against his wife Ana (also Tarascan), the indio Baltazar from the area of Zacatecas, and the indio Miguel from Juchipila. Pedro claimed that Baltazar had seduced and kidnapped his wife with the help of Miguel. The document appears to be incomplete – or maybe the authorities did not take the procedure further than what is conserved. It includes only the initial complaint followed by three testimonies and finishes with the order of arrest against the three individuals who had disappeared. It is nonetheless interesting because it gives hints of the Amerindians community's perception of conjugal violence, extramarital love relationships, and the possible use of migration and fleeing as means of resistance against the gendered order.

All the witnesses testified that Pedro and Ana were married and respected their marital duties, and also that Baltazar kidnapped the woman – not that she left willingly. However, they also stated that the extramarital relationship between Ana and Baltazar had been going on for a year, that it was very well known among all the Amerindians

living on the hacienda, and that Pedro had beaten his wife to “correct” (*reñir*) her. Hence, if they aimed primarily at helping Pedro in his claim – the witnesses were all presented to the Spanish authorities by Pedro himself – they also hint that Pedro was an abusive husband and that Ana might have chosen her own way in contracting a love affair and in fleeing with her lover. In fact, Pedro himself, by asking that action be taken not only against the kidnappers but also against his wife, indirectly gave her back some kind of agency, though always with the aim of re-establishing his control over her.⁶⁴

Such need to establish control over one’s wife by means of violence was not uncommon.⁶⁵ Felipe Castro Gutiérrez writes that many reports of abusive husbands were found in Michoacán for the colonial era and that, in fact, “[...] most criminal lawsuits in the indigenous society concerned women who had been hit or even killed by their husband.”⁶⁶ In his study of homicides in Central Mexico and the Mixteca Alta in the eighteenth century, William B. Taylor writes that “[...] an important proportion of the victims were wives, sex partners, and sex rivals.” The numbers he compiled show that 25 % of homicides in Central Mexico and 51 % of homicides in the Mixteca Alta were against a spouse, a sex partner, or a sex rival. He calculated similar and as significant percentages for assaults and batteries.⁶⁷

In handling the most serious and violent cases, the Spanish authorities did not attempt to hinder these actions, and even approved them in some instances. For example,

⁶⁴ AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1594, caja 2, exp. 17.

⁶⁵ Members of all social groups and of all statuses used violence against women to assert their gender superiority. There are many examples of Spanish men abusing indigenous women, and men of all classes beating their wives. See for example, Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun, and Witches*: 138-147; Steve J. Stern, *The Secret History of Gender; Women, Men, and Power in Late Colonial Mexico* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 70-111; Few, *Women Who Live*: 68-111; Powers, *Women in the Crucible*.

⁶⁶ “[...] el mayor número de las causas criminales en la sociedad indígena tenía que ver con mujeres golpeadas o incluso asesinadas por sus maridos.” Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 177.

⁶⁷ Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 85-87. The quote is from page 85.

a month after Pedro's claim to the *alcalde mayor*, another Amerindian man called Juan García attempted to murder his wife Cecilia, supposedly because she had been sleeping over night at her sister-in-law's without his consent.⁶⁸ In July 1595, Mateo murdered his wife Gerónima after they had a dispute.⁶⁹ In both cases, at some point, the men were not held responsible for their actions because they were said to have been drunk. In addition, Juan García's lawyer said that such conjugal violence was normal: "Juan García did not commit an offence by his actions that would lead him to punishment because his wife, as it happens sometimes between married peoples, made him do what he did."⁷⁰ In the lawsuit against Mateo, the investigation took a sharp turn when the authorities found that Mateo had been drunk at the time of his crime. Indeed, even though the wife was dead, they started looking for the Spaniard who had sold wine to Mateo. While the confessor was normally the person accused of the crime, in this lawsuit, the confessor was a Spanish tavern owner. Mateo's confession never appeared in the document, and the sentence went against the wine vendor.⁷¹

For Spaniards, indigenous peoples were perpetual minors – "niños con barbas", children with beards – and as such, Juan García's homicide attempt was neither meaningful, nor wholly intended. In drinking, he had proved his irresponsibility and lack of judgement, and, precisely because of that, his lawyer argued he could not be sentenced. At the same time, drinking transformed indigenous peoples, as they were

⁶⁸ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 2.

⁶⁹ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 2, exp. 2.

⁷⁰ "[...] Juan García no cometió delito en lo que hizo para que por él sea castigado porque como a su mujer por ocasiones que se ofrecen entre casados pudo si alguna cosa hizo hacer [...]" AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 2, f. 6r.

⁷¹ While Amerindians were allowed to produce and sell *pulque* (a pre-Hispanic alcoholic beverage made from the fermentation of the maguey juice) within a certain frame of control by Spanish authorities, the sale of Spanish wine to Indians was controlled by the Crown starting in 1572, and then wholly forbidden in 1594. Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 38.

considered (as a minor would also be) “docile, humble, and hardworking *except* when he is drinking.”⁷² The excuse of drinking alcohol was also frequently used to argue complete memory loss and temporary insanity. In the case of Juan García, the confession renders very poor details of the offender’s version of the events because “[...] he said that he does not remember because on the said day he was drunk.”⁷³ His lawyer, who was already present at the time the confession was taken and probably had briefed his client, added in a later petition that Juan García had been temporarily “out of his mind.”⁷⁴ Taylor observed a great number of similar expressions: *fuera de mis sentidos, sin sentido, sin juicio, or no supo lo que hizo*. Drinking was not in itself an excuse for the crime, and certainly not the motive, but it was often put forward in cases of homicide so that the crime would not be judged as premeditated. The sentences for unpremeditated crimes were indeed far lighter than the opposite. In fact, according to Taylor, “[...] peasants in Mesoamerica frequently drink before an assault [...] upon which they have already resolved [...] in order to take advantage of the reduced responsibility under law that is associated with alcohol.” That was called the “*excepción de ebriedad*,” the drinking exception.⁷⁵ Interestingly, the two main reasons invoked by Amerindians in homicides and assaults in Taylor’s study, sexual offence and alcohol, were also very present in San Luis Potosí and sometimes even paired together in a single lawsuit.⁷⁶

Drinking was not the only excuse men used in justifying violence against women: culture, or what might today be called racism, could also be used by the lawyer at times

⁷² On Spanish perception of indigeneous drinking and status as perpetual minors, see Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 41-43. Quote from page 43; italic already in the text.

⁷³ “[...] dijo que no se acuerda porque el dicho día estaba borracho.” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 2, f. 4r.

⁷⁴ “[...] al tiempo y cuando sucedió estaba muy borracho y fuera de sentido [...]” AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 2, exp. 2, f. 4r.

⁷⁵ Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 91-105. Quote from page 96.

⁷⁶ For additional examples, see AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 20.

as a justification for a crime. One such case happened on late May 1601, when the Chichimec Pedro killed the Chichimec Leonor, hitting her on the head with a stone. Pedro's lawyer wrote in his defence that "[...] in my party there is no such malice for he is a Chichimec Indian, of which kind it is notorious they are barbarous and simple, and he did not understand that by hitting the Indian woman with the stone it could cause her death [...]"⁷⁷ The lawyer goes on writing that Pedro had also been drunk, but, again, that it was a natural inclination for Chichimecs to make and drink an alcoholic mixture of mesquite seeds and tuna. Following this assertion about Chichimec peoples, the lawyer presented witnesses who repeated that Pedro was a barbarian Chichimec and thus did not understand what he had done to Leonor. Again, men had full authority over women, and when they lost their nerve and used violence to keep that gendered power, they could be excused for not being quite themselves or for responding to a normal impulse of the uncivilized.⁷⁸ The witnesses presented by Pedro's lawyer were all from the hacienda of Diego Ortiz de Fuenmayor, where Pedro worked. Even though these co-workers denigrated the accused, they were actually helping him out in his lawsuit. In a sense, the community to which he belonged in San Luis Potosí was backing him up.

Similar situations in which the community approved of abusive male authority appear to have been quite common in the indigenous society of San Luis Potosí. The lawsuit presented by the authorities of Tlaxcalilla to Captain Pedro Arismendi Gogorrón, the *justicia mayor* (chief judicial officer) of the Chichimec frontier of the village of

⁷⁷ "[...] en mi parte no cabe tanta malicia por ser indio chichimeco que como es notorio están bárbaro y simple que no entendió que por dar a la dicha india con la dicha piedra fuera esto parte para que de ello muriese [...]" AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1601, caja 1, exp. 16, f. 9r-v.

⁷⁸ Taylor presents a similar case in which the offender is excused of homicide against his wife because "he was a coarse individual, totally ignorant of his legal rights, whose actions in any case were mitigated by the circumstances." Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 87.

Tlaxcalilla, on May 18, 1620, is a strong case in point. The day before, the Indian governor and the elected authorities (*alcaldes*) of Tlaxcalilla had arrested and turned over an Amerindian called Juan de Santiago because he had taken the Tlaxcalan woman Ana away from her husband Diego, who subsequently died of grief looking for his wife. The community's party presented three witnesses and a petition by Felipe, Ana's son, and the accused presented his own confession and two witnesses. Apart from the fact that Juan de Santiago had taken Ana out of Tlaxcalilla, the stories related by the two parties were very different. On the Tlaxcalilla side, the official story was that Juan de Santiago had come to the community a year and a half earlier and that he had kidnapped Ana without her consent. The initial claim said that Juan de Santiago had a habit of kidnapping women: "In this village walks, comes, and goes a restless and rowdy indio ladino drawing out Indian women and bringing them to other places and taking advantage of them as he did by taking the Indian Ana who was married to the Indian Diego."⁷⁹ Juan de Santiago confessed that he had taken Ana away from Tlaxcalilla, but that it had happened not one and a half years earlier, but rather three years earlier. He had taken her to Agua del Venado and had lived in free union with her for a full year. Diego, Ana's husband, had found them and had insisted that Ana come back with him, which she did. However, according to Juan de Santiago, Diego beat his wife and some months later (the actual year and a half in the Tlaxcalilla claim), she had encountered Juan de Santiago in the meat market of the village and had called on him to take her away again. Thinking that their situation would again be too precarious, Juan de Santiago decided to take Ana to the monastery of Guadalajara, where she would be secure and hidden from her husband.

⁷⁹ "[...] anda en este dicho pueblo y entra y sale en él un indio ladino inquieto y alborotador sonsacando indias y llevándolas a otras partes aprovechándose de ellas como lo hizo en llevar Ana india casada con Diego indio [...]" AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 3, exp. 6, f. 1r.

There, she encountered one of the witnesses presented by Juan de Santiago, Diego Felipe from Guadalajara, who asserted that Ana feared her husband would kill her if he found her.

In the face of these contradictory narratives of the events, I cannot help but notice that the people from Tlaxcalilla acted as a strong and united community, using a vocabulary of family and kinship. First, the three witnesses were all tightly related to the community. They were María Magdalena born in Mexico City but living in Tlaxcalilla, Juan Bautista alguacil mayor of Tlaxcalilla, and Marcos Rodríguez born in Tlaxcalilla. Second, following the confession of Juan de Santiago, the community presented a petition showing unity and the affiliation of Ana to their kin group:

“Don Juan Fernández Vázquez governor of the village of Tlaxcalilla, Juan Miguel ordinary mayor, and the other members of authorities of the said town of the Tlaxcalan nation, and Felipe the legitimate son of the Tlaxcalan Indian Ana, all appear before your honour and we say all together [...] the said Indian Ana who is of our nation and of our kin group and the mother of the said Felipe [...]”⁸⁰

In other words, the whole family-like community stood behind Diego and Ana against Juan de Santiago.

Such lawsuits for kidnapping were common among Amerindians and they often give hints that the kidnapped women had decided by themselves to flee abusive husbands. In the case I just described, Juan de Santiago was condemned, but it is impossible to know the truth. However, the allegations of Juan de Santiago and his

⁸⁰ “Don Juan Frn[Fernández] Vázquez gobernador del pueblo de Tlaxcalilla Juan Miguel alcalde ordinario y los demás principales del dicho pueblo de la nación Tlaxcalteca y Felipe hijo legítimo de Ana india tlaxcalteca parecemos ante vmd [vuestra merced] y decimos todos [...] la dicha india Ana la cual es de nuestra nación y nuestra parienta y madre del dicho Felipe [...]” AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 3, exp. 6, f. 9r.

witnesses that Ana had been beaten and was in danger of death are not surprising. In addition, the community poorly backed its claim that Juan de Santiago was a repetitive kidnapper and abuser. Tlaxcalilla identified only one other kidnapped woman, but the allegation is dubious. The woman's husband, Pedro Fernández of Tlaxcalilla, petitioned the *justicia mayor* at the beginning of July because Juan de Santiago would have attempted to take his wife by way of force on the eve of his arrest. However, this petition was filed over a month after the events, by a member of the community who was well aware that his supposed attacker had been in jail the whole time, and after the accused had made his confession and his witnesses had testified. This looks like a last-minute attempt to convince the *justicia mayor* who had just sent the dossier of the lawsuit to Mexico City. In sum, the case suggests that the whole family-like community was in reality approving Diego's abusive authority over his wife, and that, from their point of view, Ana's actions were contesting social cohesion. This leaves room to believe that Ana might have taken part in her own kidnapping.⁸¹

In the face of such harsh superiority, of the violence used by some men, and of the silent approval of members of family and community, some women, like Ana from Tlaxcalilla, fled as a mean of resistance. While some probably decided to leave on their own – let us remember Ana from Puebla who crossed a great part of Mesoamerica by herself (see chapter 3) – most of these resisting women who left written traces of their actions, left those traces because they decided to escape with another man.

In some cases, the multiethnic and multicultural composition of San Luis Potosí appears to have been advantageous for women who wanted to flee. The lawsuit of October 1594, in which Pedro complained that his wife Ana had left with Baltazar, is a

⁸¹ AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 3, exp. 6.

good case in point. All Amerindians in this affair worked for the Spaniard Juan de Zavala. Pedro and Ana, as well as another witness, were all Tarascans. Baltazar was born in the Real of Pánuco (in the mines of Zacatecas), Miguel and another witness were respectively from Juchipila and Poncitlán (respectively in the Cazcan and Coca areas of Nueva Galicia), and the other witness was from Acambaro (Celaya) a highly ethnically mixed region. If Ana had first married a man with the same cultural background, in San Luis Potosí she chose a lover who came from another region where ethnic diversity was high. Miguel, who helped them flee, was probably of Cazcan origin.⁸²

Some authors have suggested that exogamy had important negative consequences on women because they lost their own webs of relations and came to rely only on their husbands' loyalties and kin.⁸³ Others have suggested that physical abuses were considered normal in the new Spanish society and that only excess, a relative concept, could bring denunciations, even from the woman's parents.⁸⁴ In addition, Kellogg has shown that in Mexico City, patrilocal marriages (when the newlyweds went to live in the husband's household) were not the norm: they were similar in numbers to matrilocal marriages in the early sixteenth century and their proportion diminished in the course of the next hundred years. Couples also often moved from the man's community to that of the woman, suggesting the maintenance of networks for both spouses.⁸⁵ In short, the relation between exogamy, conjugal violence, and the reaction of kin was not direct and automatic. In this particular case of the Tarascan Ana, it appears that ethnicity did not matter in building her social relationships and in choosing a new, informal partner. In

⁸² AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1594, caja 2, exp. 17.

⁸³ Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 107-108; Powers, *Women in the Crucible*: 61-62.

⁸⁴ Steve Stern also details a lawsuit in similar terms. Stern, *The Secret History*: 5-6; Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 178-181.

⁸⁵ Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 180-204.

fact, it is possible that such a relation with a man from a different ethnic origin helped Ana to flee from her previous networks, which knew and approved by means of silence the violence of Pedro against his wife. By entering a love relationship with a man from a different ethnic origin who had different networks, Ana put herself in a situation where fleeing and escaping was easier and where searches by her husband and her original networks were more difficult. An interethnic personal relationship could work in favour of a woman, as in this case.⁸⁶

Spanish amos could also be so harsh that their women female criadas sought to escape. There are some lawsuits in the criminal records of San Luis Potosí wherein indigenous men kidnapped indigenous women from Spaniards. This was the case, for instance, of the Chichimec Francisca who, in June 1594, asked her lover Pedro Alonso to take her away from her employer because he treated her badly.⁸⁷ In September 1614, a similar lawsuit was launched against the Tlaxcalan Juan Alonzo who had worked for Antonio Álvarez, but was then in the service of Ambrosio de León. Juan Alonzo had taken an indigenous woman called Ynes and an indigenous girl of eight to nine years old from the house of Antonio Álvarez, who was also the employer of both women. Ynes was apparently already married, but her husband is nowhere in the documents. The motivations of each individual are not well established, but Juan Alonzo had had an affair that lasted over two months with Ynes when he was working for Antonio Álvarez, and he said he had the intention of marrying her. No allegations of violence were made, either against the husband or against the Spanish employer, and it appears that Juan Alonzo might only have tried to live with the woman he loved, and that he had no other strong

⁸⁶ AHESLP, AM, A-43, 1594, caja 2, exp. 17.

⁸⁷ See above in this chapter for details on this case. AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 18-20.

motivations. And all those who testified in this lawsuit, even Antonio Álvarez, agreed that Juan Alonzo used force only to breach the house's wall, but that he did not force the women to leave; they had done so at their will.⁸⁸ This strengthens the argument that supposedly kidnapped women sometimes took part actively in their departure. In other words, they willingly sought to flee for mistreatment or at least to achieve some goal they could not reach in their current situation.⁸⁹

Sometimes, husbands eventually found their wives who had fled or had allegedly been kidnapped. This was the case of Lucas, an indigenous man from Tlaxcala who had married Mariana (also from Tlaxcala) in Puebla. Mariana fled her marriage in 1599, but Lucas had also been on the move and found her in San Luis Potosí ten years later. After he regained legal authority over her, she had to live with him in the house of their employer, the Spanish merchant Pedro López. On Sunday November 29th, 1609, Lucas got drunk and killed her. In Lucas' confession, it is reported that he said “[...] after he had married with the said Indian woman Mariana, she escaped from him and absented herself from his company and she was absent for ten years and he understands that he then had to accord her that offence [...]”⁹⁰ The use of the word *agravio* (offence) by the murderer husband suggests that he had internalized the notion that honour was displayed by behaviour. As a man, he had the right to expect certain behaviour from his wife. According to his understanding of gender roles, he could punish her for abandoning him.

⁸⁸ AHESLP, AM, 1614, caja 6, exp. 5.

⁸⁹ Other lawsuits for kidnapping, which present less details and not discussed in this chapter, can be found in AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 3, exp. 14; and 1623, caja 4, exp. 13.

⁹⁰ “[...] después que se casó con la dicha Mariana india se le huyo y ausento de su compañía y estuvo ausente diez año y entiende que entonces se le debió de acordar este agravio [...]” AHESLP, AM, 1609, caja 6, exp. 14, f. 4v-5r.

In this situation, even if the couple were ordered to work as a team, the man had control over his female partner.

Conclusion

As shown in the first section of this chapter, ethnically and culturally endogamous marriages remained the norm in San Luis Potosí for the period under study. However, in the 1620s, these types of marriages tended to yield significance to the new kin relationships in the Amerindian communities around the Spanish town. These kinship ties were based on a new generation of individuals born in the communities. Although ethnic ties appear to have contracted slowly during that period, community influences on the gendered structure of the Indian world remained strong.

The consolidation of multi-cultural communities appears also to have influenced the internalization by community members of Spanish understandings of gendered hierarchies. As such, relations within couples changed in nature and significance. From different but complementary in parallel structures of power, they became more hierarchized on a single vertical line of power. As Susan Kellogg observed among the Nahuas of Mexico City at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century, the tie between husband and wife became more important than other kinship relations, and the conjugal couple – as well as the nuclear family – became the central social nucleus. In other words, and regarding our observations in San Luis Potosí, the couple became a central component of social relations, linking different ethnic and cultural groups, forming wholly new communities and webs of relations, and representing the basis of gender interactions.

Kellogg identified four factors that help explain this process of transformation, which went from a social structure oriented towards the community to one organized around couples and nuclear families: the demographic upheaval; the imposition of tribute payments; the introduction of the Spanish legal system; and the introduction of Catholicism.⁹¹ For San Luis Potosí, tribute must be discarded as an important factor as Spaniards did not ask most Amerindians to pay it. Nonetheless, since Kellogg explains that the causal relationship between tribute payment and dismantlement of social networks lay in economic grievances and competition (tied to the need to pay tribute) between indigenous peoples, I argue that the organization of work replaces tribute in this context. The influences of the Catholic Church and of the Spanish legal system were however indisputable.

On mining and ore-processing sites, in the Indian towns, and in other places of economic production such as carboneras and the Tannery, the organization of work depended on the individual – as opposed to the community – and gave different and specific tasks to men and women. According to Velasco Murillo, “Husband and wife teams were fairly common.”⁹² In addition, the description of the tasks performed by each sex I gave in chapter four testifies to a hierarchy in the value of labour. If the couple represented an important entity of economic production, the tasks of men related directly to that production and to making profits, while the tasks of women bore more hidden and discreet characteristics. Both roles were essential, but the Spanish and indigenous men gave greater weight to their own labour and undervalued that of their partners. The scarce

⁹¹ Powers also points similar factors that would have transformed gender roles from complementary to unbalanced during the first century of colonization: evangelization, epidemics, high mortality, and social disruption. Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 201-210; Powers, *Women in the Crucible*: 42.

⁹² Velasco Murillo, "Laboring above the Ground," 11.

presence of women in the written sources testifies to this gender hierarchy in labour organization.⁹³ Until recently, historians themselves have perpetuated this marginalization through their silence on this topic.

In San Luis Potosí, the Franciscans, as well as the Augustinians and other orders, were a highly active and daily presence in the communities' life. There was a church in the center of Tlaxcalilla since its foundation, and the three neighbourhoods of San Miguel were established by the side of the Franciscan monastery of San Luis Potosí. San Sebastián was officially established as a consequence of the Augustinians' arrival in town. Spanish amos had the obligation to give a Christian education to their workers and sometimes sponsored the marriages of their criados. There are no records kept of cultural practices by Amerindians in San Luis Potosí, and it is hard to understand to what degree they did integrate Catholic practices to their lives. Books from Amerindian confraternities (*cofradías*) would have been most useful as this institution was nearly the only location where women could rightfully be proactive in their religious practices, but they do not exist in San Luis Potosí for the period under study.⁹⁴ There are some hints, however, that Catholic holy days were meaningful, although not necessarily in the way the Church intended. For example, it happened frequently that there was great turmoil among Amerindians on Easter.⁹⁵ However, these fights among Amerindians involved very few women and tell little of gender roles. Notwithstanding these documentary silences, there

⁹³ For a short overview on the place of women in the historiography on mining towns and in sources, see Velasco Murillo, "Laboring above the Ground," 6-8.

⁹⁴ Powers, *Women in the Crucible*: 47-52.

⁹⁵ See the section "Quarrels, Brawls, and Other Violent Encounters" of chapter 7 in this dissertation for more details. Taylor has also observed great numbers of homicides and assaults during Christian times of feasting, with Easter and Christmas being the most violent. Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 77-80.

is no doubt that the Church contributed to propagating its own understanding of the couple and of gendered roles among the Amerindians of San Luis Potosí.

A similar process took place regarding the Spanish legal system. In theory, the Indian republic was to handle its own affairs, which it probably did on numerous occasions, even if no record remains of this. However, more serious or complex affairs, such as the kidnapping of wives and conjugal violence, were frequently turned over to the Spanish authorities. From there, the Spanish understanding of couples, gender, and other social norms were imposed on Amerindians by way of judgements and sentences. The Spanish mentality was internalized and used by individuals, at least in front of the authorities, but also most probably inside such organized and hierarchized communities as Tlaxcalilla.

In the end, the demographic upheaval was, in my opinion, the most important factor in the transformation of the gendered social structure in San Luis Potosí, because it led to multiethnicity and multiculturalism. It seems that the possibilities of interethnic and intercultural unions and marriages, even if less common than endogamy, favoured the creation of new social norms regarding marriage. If, for Amerindians, honour had been based on lineage rather than on behaviour, the union of peoples from different cultural areas who did not share any kin ties favoured the abandonment of this understanding of honour. Communities and families still played important roles in the formation of couples, but these were themselves becoming multicultural. In a sense, ethnic belonging was redesigned by the new communities. Indeed, ethnicity relates not only to culture, but also to location, social ties, and kinship.⁹⁶ In other words, from the

⁹⁶ For a definition of ethnicity, see chapter one of this dissertation, as well as Stark and Chance, "Diachronic and Multidisciplinary Perspectives," 1-12.

formation of multiethnic and multicultural couples emerged new ethnic affiliations to new communities. Cultural norms were transformed, keeping some aspects of pre-colonial Amerindian norms such as community and family implication in marriage choice and in conjugal life, but also taking on new understandings of the couple's structure inflected by Spanish notions of gender.

Chapter 7: Mobility and Violence Across the Conurbation

Pueblos and barrios de indios, as well as work sites, were interdependent pieces of a greater whole. As immigrants arrived in San Luis Potosí, as the population grew, as Spaniards set up haciendas, carboneras, and ranchos, and as Amerindians established themselves in new locations and formed new towns, the whole valley came to be settled by clusters of living and work spaces. The principal nucleus was the Spanish centre, or the traza as it was called. The neighbourhoods that formed the town of San Miguel and the town of San Sebastian, all of which were only about three hundred meters away from the Spanish centre, expanded very quickly and physically merged with it. The centre also extended towards the east, where there was access to water and to the roads to San Pedro, and it collided with Montecillo. Work sites filled the interstices between the Spanish town and the pueblos de indios, leaving little free space in the valley. The whole area looked like a mosaic of population nuclei, with decent adobe houses in the centre and more basic straw and mud houses on the periphery, industrial-like infrastructures, mounds of mineral waste, cultivated plots, and small animal pastures. All of this was in a setting of concentrated access to water in the middle of the desert.

In chapters four to six, I described the construction of indigenous communities as pueblos and barrios de indios, as labour teams, and as complex families. I also discussed the importance of nuclear families and of couples in the organization of the indigenous society of San Luis Potosí. In this chapter, I will examine the relationships between these groups of people. I argue that the process of identification was not only based on belonging to a specific community, but also on the relationships between members of different groups. This can be seen as another layer of connections binding the emerging

society of San Luis Potosí together, wherein interactions between communities and their members were extremely active. In addition, this chapter will show the ability of indigenous peoples to use all resources available, as opposed to those only available to their respective communities, displaying another important component of their agency.

Guadalupe Salazar González calls San Luis Potosí a conurbation, that is, a tight network of distinct yet interdependent communities. She argues that internal commerce allowed for the establishment of a symbiosis between the mines, the work sites, the Spanish town, and the pueblos and barrios de indios. Tlaxcalilla and Santiago specialized in livestock-raising and agriculture; San Miguelito produced wood and charcoal; San Sebastian engaged in masonry and fruit and corn production.¹ Many Amerindians also worked and lived on the Spanish-owned work sites situated everywhere in and around town. Mine workers also had to process their pepena (ore-share) or sell it to individuals who had the means to process it. Other Amerindians worked as carriers of supplies and products. All of these wage workers entered the market economy as consumers of all kinds of goods. All in all, the interdependence of these economic activities created a thoroughly integrated conurbation in which all the Amerindian immigrants participated and made contacts with one another.

In his study of the northern frontier of New Spain, James Brooks shows the contradictory effects of interdependence on identities. On the one hand, interdependence strengthened the bonds within the collectivity to better defend common interests against external communities in the exchange networks. On the other hand, the relationships that developed with external communities blurred internal bonds because they forced individual accommodation, made cultural boundaries more flexible, and triggered

¹ Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 39-45.

linguistic changes.² In consequence, interdependence shaped collective identity by making it both concrete and malleable. As I will discuss in chapter eight, by the end of the 1610s the pueblos and barrios de indios started to develop strong political identities using a discourse related to ethnicity. Tlaxcalilla, for example, carved its historical memory out of the Tlaxcalan migration and presented its community members as descendants of the Tlaxcalans. However, throughout the years under study, the community integrated non-Tlaxcalans and thus remained opened and flexible. In fact, I will demonstrate in this chapter that indigenous peoples could create affiliations to more than one group in the conurbation, which made for blurred identifications with complex, multi-layered expressions. As Cooper and Brubaker write, this process “does not presuppose that such identifying will necessarily result in the internal sameness, the distinctiveness, the bounded groupness that political entrepreneurs may seek to achieve.”³ In other words, identification is an action, not a state. In the documentation, these affiliations to diverse communities did not translate into a discourse about identity, but they can be seen through the actions of individuals and communities, and they show the construction of social categories and hierarchies among the indigenous population.

Economy and the Catholic Church were two essential components to the creation of identifications. According to Annick Lempérière, under the Spanish colonial regime, economic affiliation was achieved primarily through corporate institutions. As I discussed in the introduction to chapter five, producers and workers, indigenous and others alike, formed corporate groups for their “common good” and to elaborate trading rules and moral economies. In urban settings, these corporations, either official or

² James F. Brooks, *Captives & Cousins. Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 31-40.

³ Cooper and Brubaker, "Identity," 71.

informal, mostly formed themselves around the spaces furnished by the Church, in rented premises and on the front squares of churches. The front squares were excellent places of sociability and could accommodate political gatherings.⁴ Along similar lines, Laura Matthew shows the importance of the Church and of the confraternities as religious institutions in the construction of Mexicano identity in Ciudad Vieja, Guatemala. She points out that affiliation to such institutions and groups was not self-conscious, but rather that it developed through “habitus,” that is, through “a set of guiding principles for acting in the world.”⁵

Jane Mangan has shown the importance of commercial spaces in cultural negotiations and in the construction of identities in the colonial urban setting of Potosí, in the Andes.⁶ These spaces allowed not only for the creation of economic relationships, but also for the construction of social networks across the city. Family and kin ties were crucial to the maintenance of the urban trade and to the formation of social relations, both in the pre-colonial and colonial settings. Secondly, commercial spaces were also places of encounters between different ethnic groups and castes. Finally, the engagement of indigenous peoples in trade produced distinct economic statuses and social differentiation between individuals, families, and groups. Trade was thus a crucial factor in the creation of social networks and in the construction of identities.

In San Luis Potosí, economic and Catholic institutions were only nascent in the period I study. However, indigenous peoples grouped together and exchanged with one another at the level of the conurbation by attending churches on Sundays, working in multiple haciendas and other work sites, and selling their wares in public places. Here, I

⁴ Lempérière, *Entre Dieu et le Roi*: 62 and 112.

⁵ Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*: 179.

⁶ Mangan, *Trading Roles*: 1-20.

will discuss the creation of indigenous networks across the conurbation in two themes. First, I will examine the movements of indigenous peoples across the conurbation of San Luis Potosí and their results as widespread social and economic networks. Second, I will study violent encounters and the act of drinking as creators of relationships, positive and negative, between corporate groups. The resulting image is of an extremely complex society that displayed different modes of identification. The pueblos and barrios de indios, as well as the labour teams, always remained important poles of identification, but they were not the only ones.

Mobility

Indigenous peoples were remarkably mobile within San Luis Potosí. They constantly walked around and throughout the conurbation. There are numerous examples of Spanish employers sending their labourers to run errands, to help another Spanish entrepreneur, or to fetch missing labourers. Amerindians sold fruits, vegetables, textiles, and other products on the public places, on the church squares, and in public markets. Indigenous muleteers drove minerals and other goods throughout the valley. Through these different activities, indigenous peoples met one another and entered into relationships outside of their living spaces. These contacts linked individuals, labour teams, nuclear and extended families, and inhabitants of the pueblos and barrios de indios. Trade, as Mangan writes about Potosí, was governed by “an unwritten code, a set of behaviours and guidelines.”⁷ Loose and at times temporary, the bonds created by mobility were shaped mainly by daily encounters. Their organisation and articulation in

⁷ Mangan, *Trading Roles*: 13.

San Luis Potosí were not explicit and never gave rise to a discourse on identity. The mobility of indigenous peoples across the conurbation gave rise to informal affiliations.

Most of the actors I present here are men. However, the creation of networks across the conurbation was not solely a masculine matter. Women developed extensive networks as well, although they appear much less frequently in the documentation. The fact that they apparently most often carried out domestic tasks did not confine them to work sites and Indian towns. To the contrary, they had to get out of their living space, for example, to wash clothes in the rivers, to get the foodstuffs necessary to prepare the meals, or to buy the equipment necessary to their occupations. Even though my sources do not specifically mention that women participated in urban trade, other studies of Spanish American urban areas testify to the important involvement of women in market activities and in the operations of silver production.⁸ It is possible that women carried out these tasks in San Luis Potosí as well. As I explain the construction of the indigenous networks across the conurbation, I will point those few cases where women took part in this process and appeared in the documentation.

As a general trend, languages, trade, work, and social interactions were the most significant mechanisms in the development of informal affiliations. There are various examples of these mechanisms at play in the criminal records, but one case best exemplifies the complexity of informal affiliations and displays all their forms, which can also be seen in some of the other examples fleshed out in less detail.

⁸ See, for example, Mangan, *Trading Roles*; Mangan, "A Market of Identities."; Velasco Murillo, "Laboring above the Ground."

In June 1609, the Spanish merchant Francisco Gascón accused Lázaro Diego, Francisco Antón, and Nicolás Zacarías of robbing textiles from his shop on the traza.⁹ The three men, all from Jacona in Michoacán, were apprehended in the garden of the Spaniard Juan de España with some textiles. Each of the accused, however, presented strong alibis and two witnesses to corroborate, which led the alcalde mayor to absolve and free them.

The significance of the case is that the nine Tarascans involved – three accused and six witnesses – collectively convey a story of constant movement and interaction throughout the area, in communities and on work sites. They linked Tlaxcalilla, San Miguel, San Sebastian, the haciendas of the Cerro de San Pedro, and Bledos. These individuals appear to have been constantly moving, meeting new individuals, and creating new ties. All of them were over thirty years old, and most had known each other for years, even decades. Since they were not all from Jacona, not even from the same area of Michoacán, it can be inferred that most of them had come to San Luis Potosí a few years earlier, that they were well established in the valley, and that they had developed various contacts with other Amerindians.

While the nature of the relationship between the three accused, Nicolás Zacarías, Diego Lázaro, and Francisco Antón, is unsure, the case displays numerous forms of social ties between each of the accused and their witnesses. The three men were found together in the garden of Juan de España on the traza and they were arrested together by the assistant-sheriff Francisco Lopez. It appears without a doubt that, even if they were not responsible for the robbery, the three men knew each other. Apart from this scene in the Spanish centre, the connections across the conurbation between the characters of this

⁹ AHESLP, AM, 1609, caja 5, exp. 21.

case are both extensive and blurred. With the exception of the accused Francisco Antón and his witness Miguel Hernández, whom I will present shortly, there were no references in the trial to any specific group: that is, the accused and witnesses did not pertain to any same work site or *pueblo de indios*. The nature of these connections is not obvious and they seem to be based on all elements of identity construction to varying degrees. Ethnicity and language, economic status and wealth, trading networks, occupation and skills, and belonging to a labour team or a *pueblo de indios* can all be glimpsed just beneath the surface of this story.

The accused Nicolás Zacarías, *criado* of the *beneficiado* (priest of low status) Bernabé Asturiano, claimed to have been sick at the time of the crime, and to have been in San Miguel in the house of another Amerindian (called Pedro but otherwise unidentified). He presented as witnesses Juan Felipe from Tacambaro who worked for Juan de Andrada, and Juan de la Cruz from Michoacán who worked for the Augustinians in San Sebastian. Juan Felipe said that he had frequently been in San Miguel in the previous two months – even though his employer’s hacienda was in San Pedro – and confirmed that Nicolás Zacarías had been sick in San Miguel the whole time. It is impossible to know exactly how Nicolás Zacarías and Juan Felipe met. Jacona was situated to the north-west of the Michoacán and Tacambaro was towards the south-east of the area and of the Patzcuaro Lake. A distance of roughly two hundred kilometres separated the two towns. However, both men’s employers had established their enterprises in San Pedro, and both men appeared to have been in San Miguel frequently. It seems that, over the years, they developed contacts and affinities that led them to know each other well enough to be aware of their respective whereabouts. The second witness,

Juan de la Cruz, appears to have been more a man of the town, since he was working in San Sebastian. However, he was constantly moving in the southern part of the conurbation and he made contacts out of these movements. As he testified, “he was continually in the pueblo of San Miguel.”¹⁰ Juan de la Cruz and Nicolás Zacarías were not explicit about the nature of their relationship. It is fascinating to read that they had known each other for over ten years, but that, apart from their shared Tarascans origin, nothing seemed to link these two individuals. I can only infer that they had met each other while going about town for their respective obligations and that their cultural affinities might have favoured their relationship.

The other accused, Diego Lázaro, might have known Nicolás Zacarías because they were both from Jacona, or also because they both worked for Bernabe Asturiano. In fact, Diego Lázaro was criado of the carbonero Diego de Alarcon, but at the time of the robbery, he had been lent to Asturiano and was in San Pedro. The document does not mention whether both men worked together in Asturiano’s hacienda or if Diego Lázaro only replaced Nicolás Zacarías for some time. Nonetheless, Diego Lázaro did create ties with other workers of Asturiano. María Salome, a Tarascan criada of Asturiano, testified that Diego Lázaro had been in the hacienda of her employer in San Pedro around the period of the crime and that she had spoken with him day and night. The substance of their conversations is unknown, but this testimony demonstrates again that work sites were important places of encounter among Amerindians of San Luis Potosí. Perhaps even more interesting was the testimony of Diego Lázaro’s second witness, Pedro Lázaro from Periban in Michoacán. Pedro Lázaro had known Diego Lázaro only for about six months at the time of the crime, but in early June 1609, he saw and talked with him daily in San

¹⁰ “[...] fue a la continua al pueblo de San Miguel [...]” AHESLP, AM, 1609, caja 5, exp. 21, f. 15r.

Pedro. The interesting part is that Pedro Lázaro lived in Tlaxcalilla, thus tying this important neighbourhood of San Luis Potosí to the mines and haciendas of the Cerro de San Pedro.

The last accused, Francisco Antón, was the one who carried the textile the three men had allegedly robbed: a piece of green baize and some silk.¹¹ He and his two witnesses encountered each other on a hacienda where they worked only temporarily and, whether or not they already knew each other, conversed on site and then kept friendly relationships back in town. Francisco Antón was an employee of Simón de Torcas, but at the time of the crime he was working in Bledos on the hacienda of Juan de Sandoval.¹² He claimed that he had obtained the silk from this last Spaniard as part of his pay. He said he had bought the baize from another Amerindian called Miguel and criado of Pedro Botello, a Spaniard I was not able to identify. The exchange of textiles is a significant element in this narrative and I will develop this theme below. Francisco Antón presented a witness called Miguel Hernández, who came from the same source community (Jacona in Michoacán), worked for the same Spaniard (Simón de Torcas), and had also been lent to the Spaniard Juan de Sandoval in Bledos. The two men had a long-lasting and solid relationship and Miguel Hernández claimed to have been in constant contact with Francisco Antón at the time of the robbery. The other witness was Pedro Matias from Michoacán who lived in San Miguel. In June 1609, Pedro Matias was also working in Bledos for Juan de Sandoval and claimed to have talked regularly with Francisco Antón. In addition, when he was back in San Miguel and before the three accused men were

¹¹ The description of the textile comes into pieces throughout the document. As a whole, it was described as “un pedazo de una vara y media de bayeta verde de la tierra y un poco de seda azul.”

¹² I had great difficulties to identify Simón de Torcas and I could never define precisely if his last name was Torcas, Torces, or Tonces. I did not find any similar patronymic in the books on the history of San Luis Potosí.

arrested, he met again with Francisco Antón. The two men had a friendly discussion and Francisco Antón told Pedro Matias he had bought the piece of cloth from another Amerindian for one and a half pesos, a statement that coincided exactly with Francisco Antón's confession. In sum, Francisco Antón and Miguel Hernández were both from Jacona and worked for the same amo. They connected with another Tarascan who lived in a different part of town and kept in good enough terms to continue speaking to one another when they met and, even more significant, for Pedro Matias to help Francisco Antón in his case against the Spanish merchant. It is significant that such ties could be created not only in specific neighbourhoods or work sites, but also between them and even out of town.

The nine indigenous characters of this case were all from Michoacán and spoke Tarascan, but almost none of them referred to their common origin as a connection between them. All of them spoke Náhuatl throughout the trial. Why did they all decide to use Náhuatl? Could the use of this language have been determined by the court officials? The royal notary (*escribano real*) Simón Pasqua stated in every confession and testimony that the interrogated person spoke “in the Mexican language which I, the notary, give faith I understand and speak well.”¹³ However, according to Kathryn Burns, notaries rarely took confessions and testimonies themselves. They most often sent their apprentices to do the core of the work and only signed the final copies.¹⁴ Why, then, not send an apprentice who knew the Tarascan language or use an interpreter? In many other instances, notaries used these intermediaries in taking confessions and testimonies. Simón

¹³ “[...] en lengua mexicana que yo el escribano doy fe entiendo y hablo bien [...]”

¹⁴ Burns, *Into the Archive*: 68-87.

Pasqua himself needed an interpreter of Otomi in 1620.¹⁵ As well, in 1608 (only a year before the case under study), Luis Gómez de Álvaro translated from Tarascan to Spanish in two court cases, one of which was registered by Simón Pasqua.¹⁶ Numerous other examples of interpreters exist in the archives of San Luis Potosí, and it is clear that Amerindians, including the nine characters of the case under study, had the opportunity to express themselves in the language of their choice. This points to the direction I have discussed earlier that indigenous peoples were open to other cultures, and that bilingualism, and even multilingualism, was widespread among the Amerindian population of San Luis Potosí. In addition, the fact that all nine Tarascans spoke Náhuatl well enough to give their confessions and testimonies in that language indicates that all of them, whether in the Indian towns or on the work sites, had developed ties with Nahuas that were strong enough for them to learn and use that language. Among all the testimonies, there was one explicit reference to ethnic bonds between two persons. In his testimony, Miguel Hernández, Francisco Antón's witness, said that "he treated and communicated with him [Francisco Antón] because he was from the same land."¹⁷

Another important tool of identification and marker of social differentiation was the use of textiles and clothes by indigenous peoples. Writing on the later context of French colonial Louisiana, Sophie White argues that dress is a "repository of meaning" for individuals. On the one hand, the practice of changing clothes, or what White calls "cultural cross-dressing," evidences the mutable nature of identity. On the other hand, the use of specific dress exhibits an attempt at building a strict social belonging in a specific

¹⁵ AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 6, exp. 1.

¹⁶ AHESLP, AM, 1608, caja 6, exp. 19 and exp. 22.

¹⁷ "[...] le trató y comunicó por ser de su tierra [...]" AHESLP, AM, 1609, caja 5, exp. 21, f. 19r.

context.¹⁸ In Andean Potosí, Jane Mangan describes the difficulty of understanding the social status and exact belonging of the “mestiza en hábitos de indias” (mestizas in Indian habit). Clothing was the most important element of these Indian habits, but they also included language, food, occupation, and place of residence. Mangan asserts that these women were genuinely indigenous in their habits, ways of life, and identity. Even though they were of mixed ancestry (Spanish and Indian), these women were usually raised in their mother’s indigenous cultures and acted as such. Mangan remarks that these mestizas benefited economically from their Indian status by not paying taxes on the sale of native food products; they took advantage of such benefits to buy indigenous clothing made of fine or European textiles such as silk. Mangan states that a woman’s clothing “was a strategic choice that allowed her to access important economic and social elements of Potosí’s urban society.”¹⁹

In the case at hand, the two textiles mentioned in the trial had different connotations. “Bayeta de la tierra” (baize of the land) was a textile made in Spanish America and of lower quality, or worn by “common” people, in contrast to “bayeta de Castilla” (baize of Castile), which was more prized and costly.²⁰ Silk, however, appears to have been new to the Americas and a fine textile.²¹ To dress in silk sent quite a

¹⁸ Sophie White, *Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians: Material Culture and Race in Colonial Louisiana* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 1-20.

¹⁹ Mangan, "A Market of Identities," 71-76; quote from 75-76.

²⁰ For the difference between both type of baize, see Jean-Jacques Decoster, "Identidad étnica y manipulación cultural: La indumentaria inca en la época colonial," *Estudios Atacameños*, no. 29 (2005): 166; Encalada Oswaldo, "Geosemántica popular," *Cultura Popular*, no. 59 (2012): 57.

²¹ Mangan writes “Interestingly, some of her clothing reflected the colonial mutations of indigenous dress [...] One chumbe, for instance, was made of purple silk.” This suggests that silk was a European product recently arrived in the Americas and not yet fully integrated to indigenous clothing. Manuel Miño Grijalva studied the textile factories (*obrajes*) of Mexico City and Puebla in 1597 and reports the fabrication of *paños*, *bayetas*, and *sayales*, both fine and common, but there is no indication in his study that silk was produced at that time in that area. Mangan, "A Market of Identities," 75; Manuel Miño Grijalva, "Las dimensiones productivas de los obrajes de Puebla y México en 1597," *Relaciones. Estudios de historia y sociedad* XXXIV, no. 134 (2013).

different social signal from dressing in bayeta de la tierra. At the same time, the presence of these textiles, their place in the conurbation, and the possible ways they were exchanged point to the complexity of the social stratification. As with dress itself, textile transactions also had social significance. The Spaniard Francisco Gascón claimed to have both types of textile in his shop on the Spanish traza. The fact that he sold silk, most probably to other Spaniards, is not surprising. However, the baize suggests that he sold clothes to people of other social categories: to employers who sought to equip their labourers, to poor Spaniards, or to indigenous peoples living in the Spanish centre. The defence of Francisco Antón indicates that baize could also be obtained through informal channels. In his confession, he said he had obtained that piece of cloth through another Amerindian, called Miguel, in what looks like a casual commercial exchange. The documents do not give much detail, but it is clear that Francisco Antón bought the baize through unofficial channels, not from authorized Spanish merchants. According to his confession, Francisco Antón had thus received a prized piece of textile in the form of silk, but was still looking to buy and most probably wear garments made of more common cloth.

The presence of silk in indigenous hands is not entirely unusual, but does connote a degree of wealth. When Mangan writes that some indigenous clothing incorporated this new textile, she gives the example of a successful business woman.²² In addition, in the present San Luis Potosí case, the fact that Francisco Antón possessed silk was not treated as suspicious: the authorities did not contest his claim to have obtained silk as part of his earnings from a Spaniard, and he was absolved from the accusation of robbery. The authorities' attitude suggests that this practice might have been common. As for

²² Mangan, "A Market of Identities," 75.

Francisco Antón's possession of silk, it hints at purchasing power gained either through long hours of work or the high wages of a specialized worker. The silk evokes a possible distinction in wealth for Francisco Antón.

The buying and selling of textiles in this case, combined with other proceedings in which indigenous peoples reported trading among themselves, indicates the existence of a large and informal commercial exchange network among Amerindians. Here, Francisco Antón reports that he bought the baize from another indigenous man called Miguel, who worked for Pedro Botello. No other details of the deal are mentioned. However, Francisco Antón's capacity to identify the seller suggests that either the two men already knew each other or that they talked sufficiently to exchange "credentials," that is, their respective affiliations in the conurbation. The idea that Francisco Antón was paid in kind with silk is also suggestive of trading possibilities for indigenous peoples. It was not rare for Amerindians to receive payments in kind and they could sell this material to other Amerindians.²³ In another case from 1608, the Amerindian Juan Bautista living in San Miguel was asked by workers of Diego de Sandoval to help them butcher a cow. He was paid with tallow and quickly resold it to Silvestre, another Amerindian living in San Miguel.²⁴ Inhabitants of the pueblos and barrios de indios and indigenous labourers alike could insert themselves in these exchange networks, either producing their own foodstuff or buying and reselling goods. For example, the Otomi Juan Lucas, who worked on the Tannery, brought fruit with him when he attended mass in the Franciscan monastery on Sundays, and sold them in San Miguel. He probably positioned himself publicly in front of the church or on the public plaza, even if the documents give no details regarding the

²³ See also Radding, *Wandering Peoples*: 16.

²⁴ AHESLP, AM, 1608, caja 1, exp. 10.

persons to whom he sold the fruit.²⁵ Similarly, the Indian bakers Juan and Francisco, working for two different Spaniards, regularly sold their bread on the public plaza of San Luis Potosí.²⁶

These exchanges gave the opportunity to indigenous craftsmen and merchants to develop solid networks across the conurbation. The Indian shoemaker Diego Martín seemed to be such a well connected person among the Amerindian communities in San Luis Potosí. In 1621, the Spanish alguacil searched his house and found large quantities of *pulque amarillo* (an alcoholic beverage made of honey) and of *plomo rico* (lead rich in silver). Diego Martín claimed that he had only a small quantity of pulque and that it served to cure another Amerindian whom he was temporarily hosting. He argued that the lead was in fact poor in silver and that it belonged to another Amerindian, Francisco Miguel, whom he also hosted and who later stated he had just bought the lead on behalf of his Spanish patron to make ammunition. In the end, Diego Martín was set free, had to pay a fine of three pesos, and was warned not to make or sell pulque in his house. Whichever version of the story was true, that of the alguacil or that of Diego Martín, the case clearly shows a very active person. First, Diego Martín's house was in San Miguel, right behind the Franciscan monastery, one of the most important places in the whole conurbation for Amerindians. As discussed in chapter four, many Spaniards established their haciendas in that area and a substantial work force lived there; individuals of various origins established taverns and shops behind the monastery; and the church itself was a space of encounter and sociability for the population. Second, Diego Martín's trade as a shoemaker put him into constant contact with numerous Amerindians and other

²⁵ AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 6, exp. 1.

²⁶ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1599, caja 1, exp. 12.

individuals who bought his products. Third, he himself participated in the local commerce by buying and selling products. Whether he made or bought the pulque, he was involved in that commerce. Finally, his relationships extended to sheltering some people, here, his sick friend and Francisco Miguel. Diego Martín was a well established urban Indian with extensive contacts across the valley.

The intersection of extensive social networks and of commercial activities made wealth an important criterion of belonging that extended beyond the community, to different sectors of the urban society. Jacques Poloni-Simard observed similar situations among the indigenous peoples of Cuenca, Ecuador, who used their economic mobility, albeit limited and precarious, as leverage for social mobility among other urban Amerindians. Indigenous craftsmen, for example, engaged in side economic activities, such as trading (just like Diego Martín in San Luis Potosí) and money lending. Many of them also created extensive economic networks with both Amerindians and Spaniards, showing their ability to move in different social spheres of Cuenca. The most prominent indigenous craftsmen accumulated fairly large amounts of wealth, traditional clothing made of finer fabric, and jewelry, which marked their social ascension.²⁷ In light of the extensive trading networks across the conurbation, the brief commercial exchange of green baize between Francisco Antón and Miguel in 1609 appears to be part of a frequent and essential traffic between indigenous peoples in San Luis Potosí. Trade connected indigenous peoples of various origins, of different economic status, and living in distinct areas of the valley. These networks shaped the identification of indigenous peoples in different ways from the communities and labour teams, emphasizing place less and economic possibilities more.

²⁷ Poloni-Simard, *La mosaïque indienne*: 90-110.

Labour mobility was another important element in the creation of networks between indigenous peoples across the conurbation, and this is clearly evidenced in the criminal proceeding for robbery of 1609. I have already discussed above the ties created between the accused Francisco Antón and the witnesses Miguel Hernández and Pedro Matias because they worked on the same hacienda in Bledos. There, the Spaniard Juan de Sandoval employed all three men temporarily. In addition to this situation, the accused Diego Lázaro was a criado of Diego de Alarcon, but at the time of the proceeding, he was working in San Pedro for the beneficiado Bernabe Asturiano. Interestingly, the first witness he brought forward in his defence was María Salome, an indigenous woman working for Asturiano. Unfortunately, the notary did not transcribe the details surrounding the relationship between Diego Lázaro and María Salome. The only activity mentioned is that they saw and spoke to each other day and night. Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the source, this relationship reveals connections between men and women across the conurbation. Male labourers who, like Diego Lázaro, worked temporarily for Spaniards, created ties with the regular staff of the work sites, men and women alike.

The practice of sharing indigenous labourers was widespread among the Spanish employers of San Luis Potosí. In 1593, for example, Juan Bautista, identified by the scribe as a Tarascan employee of Juan de Zavala, was “afinando una cendrada” (giving the final touches to a mix of ashes to be used in smelting) in the furnaces of Francisco Rodrigo. Juan Bautista was working with another indigenous man called Antonio from Patzcuaro in Michoacán, and they were later joined by another, Francisco, also from Patzcuaro. The three of them appeared in a criminal proceeding that Francisco filed

against Juan Bautista for assault. The two men had fought over a cloak and Francisco ended up with a bleeding eye. The document is brief because Francisco's wound healed rapidly and he retracted the charges. This case shows, however, that criados could work, or be sent to work, on sites different from that of their amo, and that relationships could arise from these encounters.²⁸

A similar criminal proceeding shows that labour mobility could link criados of different Spaniards as they worked together on one site. In April 1595, in the middle of the night, two of Juan de Oliva's workers were at work on Gerónimo Paez' furnaces scrapping off the lead that coated the inside of the furnaces after smelting ("desgratar una acendrada"), while the criado of Cristóbal Gómez de Rojas, Pedro Diego, was sleeping in the nearby house of Gerónimo Paez. All of a sudden, another Amerindian burst in the dormitory and then in the smelter and attacked the labourers to rob some clothing from them. The workers identified their assailant as Juan, *indio mozo sin barba* (a young Indian boy without beard) working as lavador (ore-washer) for Juan de Valle. In short, these Amerindians labourers, criados of different Spaniards, all knew each other, and the three victims were able to identify very clearly their attacker, even though he was from a work site on the other side of town. Movements of staff between work sites contributed to meeting between indigenous peoples of different social categories.²⁹

In the previous two cases, labour relationships displayed tensions. However, the meeting between indigenous workers could also develop into positive contacts and lead to the creation of extended and organized networks encompassing both work sites and Indian towns. A case from 1610 shows deep ties between workers of Francisco de

²⁸ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1593, caja 1, exp. 2.

²⁹ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 7 and A-44, 1597, caja 1, exp. 21.

Rutiaga and inhabitants of Tlaxcalilla. In late 1609, the Amerindian Juan Martín of Tlaxcalilla was attacked and robbed by other indigenous men. It appears that Juan Martín was an important figure of Tlaxcalilla because he was transporting an estimated seventy-five pesos worth of material and money, mounted a horse with saddle and bridle, and could sign his declaration.³⁰ Juan Martín identified his attackers as: Diego Hernández, a forty-year-old man from Taxco; Diego de Morales, a thirty-year-old man from Perijamo in Michoacán; and Pablo, who was not arrested and for whom I have little information. The three men were all criados of Francisco de Rutiaga and, prior to robbing Juan Martín, had been drinking together in an unknown shop in the Spanish town. As the proceeding unfolds, it becomes clear to the historian that Diego Hernández and Diego de Morales had significant ties to both the hacienda of Francisco de Rutiaga and to Tlaxcalilla. In his defence, Diego Hernández presented two witnesses who worked with him for Rutiaga. The first was Martina, a forty-year-old woman from Guadalajara. She had known Diego Hernández for six years, probably because she was also a criada of Rutiaga. The ties between both of them were strong: Martina was the godmother of one of Diego Hernández' daughters. Interestingly, she claimed to know the plaintiff Juan Martín. Although she does not give details on the nature of their relation, this information at least shows that Martina may have had some connections to Tlaxcalilla. Diego Hernández' second witness was Alonso Martín, a man from Teocaltiche (in the Cazcan area in western Mexico) who also worked for Rutiaga. Unfortunately, this witness gave little information on the nature of his relations with the other persons involved in the case, but

³⁰ Mounting a horse was a privilege usually reserved to Spaniards and that was exceptionally granted to the authorities of the Tlaxcalans for their help colonizing the area of San Luis Potosí at the end of the Chichimec War. See the "Capitulaciones del virrey Velasco con la ciudad de Tlaxcala para el envío de cuatrocientas familias a poblar en tierra de chichimecas," reproduced in Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 177-183.

it is interesting to mention that he spoke Náhuatl, just as all the other actors of the case, and was thus able to communicate with them, even though Náhuatl was not the primary language of Teocaltiche. The other accused, Diego de Morales, presented three witnesses who were all from Michoacán and who all lived in Tlaxcalilla. One of them, Pedro Miguel, was his brother-in-law. The other two, Juan Miguel and Nicolás Antonio, had known him for fifteen years. They all claimed that Diego de Morales had been exceptionally drunk, and that he could not have been responsible for the robbery because he did not bring anything back with him to his house in Tlaxcalilla. In fact, the plaintiff Juan Martín first presented as his own witness a woman called María Magdalena, Diego de Morales' wife. She was from Guanajuato, spoke Náhuatl, and stated clearly that she lived in Tlaxcalilla with her husband.³¹

This case is important because it shows strong, deep connections between Amerindians living and working in two separate spaces of the conurbation. These indigenous peoples were of various origins, but they all spoke Náhuatl. Two of them, Diego de Morales and Martina, had contacts in both the hacienda of Francisco de Rutiaga and in Tlaxcalilla. The connections, however, do not correspond to a whole group of people. On the one hand, Diego de Morales' witnesses lived in Tlaxcalilla, but they stated that they did not know the plaintiff and they never mentioned connections to the *criados* of Rutiaga. On the other hand, Diego Hernández' witnesses worked for Rutiaga, but only Martina has a connection to Tlaxcalilla. This link, however, was with the plaintiff, not with Diego de Morales' witnesses. In addition to this criminal case, I have found another example of ties between *criados* of Rutiaga and Tlaxcalilla in the parish records. In April

³¹ AHESLP, AM, 1610, caja 1, exp. 19. A similar case, also involving *criados* of Rutiaga, but presenting less details, can be found in AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1603, caja 1, exp. 12.

1604, Juan and Ynes, who lived in Tlaxcalilla, chose Juan and Mariana, two criados of Rutiaga, as godparents to their child.³² In short, members of urban and working communities were part of overlapping groups tied to each other by individuals.

Noteworthy in the last criminal proceeding is the presence of two women who appear as hubs of social relations. First, Martina had contacts with both Diego Hernández and Juan Martín. In other words, because she knew people in Tlaxcalilla and she worked for Rutiaga, she served as a link between both groups. Furthermore, María Madalena, Diego de Morales' wife, might have served as a contact point between different groups of Tlaxcalilla's inhabitants. Indeed, her husband's witnesses lived in Tlaxcalilla, but did not know Juan Martín. She, on the other hand, knew all of them. Even though women appear much less frequently than men in the documentation, their role as social brokers between the different groups in San Luis Potosí must have been significant.

Work was thus an important creator of relationships between groups or group members in the Amerindian communities. In the case for robbery in 1609, all nine Amerindians declared that they lived and worked in the valley of San Luis Potosí. On January 15, 1610, they made depositions before the *alcalde mayor* and argued that they knew each other and had contacts among them. These people did not form among themselves a group to which they could claim affiliation. However, they display the mechanisms of interaction that could lead to a strong sense of affiliation. This informal identification found its expressions, among other means, in brawls and drinking.

³² APT, libro de Bautizos y Matrimonios 1594-1654, f. 52r., April 28th, 1604.

Brawls, Drinking, and Other Violent Encounters

Violence between Amerindians often expressed tensions related to the ties they built with one another. Indeed, as the chapters on migrations and the settlement of San Luis Potosí have demonstrated (chapters three and four), the conurbation was a completely new setting with few pre-existing social relations, with the exception of small groups of kin, and of the Tlaxcalans and Guahichiles. Taking part in large-scale brawls pushed individuals to take sides with one group or another and to define their belonging in this new setting. Amerindians most often sided with the people with whom they lived, worked, or talked on a daily basis. Castro Gutiérrez has noted that large-scale fighting was frequent among Mesoamerican migrants in the northern mining districts and put forward the hypothesis that these brawls served to perpetuate ethnic and cultural identification in this highly mixed setting.³³ Velasco Murillo has analysed these fights, called *saçemis*, in Zacatecas. She argues that they had pre-colonial and ethnic components to them, but also that they served to release tensions and enmities against rival ethnic, occupational, and neighborhood groups.³⁴ In San Luis Potosí, these large-scale brawls happened as well, although apparently far less frequently than in Zacatecas. The traces of these events left in the documentation do not allow for an analysis of ethnic affiliation of the participants, but they do suggest that they served to express rivalries between groups of neighbourhoods and of workers. In other words, by brawling in groups, Amerindians included themselves in informal groups of common interests and excluded others.

³³ Castro Gutiérrez, *Los Tarascos*: 49.

³⁴ Dana Velasco Murillo, personal communication. Similar ethnic rivalries and brawls have been studied in the Andes, for example, by Carolyn S. Dean, "Ethnic Conflict and Corpus Christi in Colonial Cuzco," *Colonial Latin American Review* 2, no. 1-2 (1993): 93-120.

According to the available documentation in San Luis Potosí, the greatest tensions and the fiercest brawls happened during the first few years after the official foundation of the settlement. Through a series of criminal proceedings and investigations dating from 1594 and 1595, I was able to reconstitute a narrative of the violence between indigenous peoples. The core of the events was an enormous brawl involving hundreds of Amerindians from various work sites that took place on Easter Monday 1595. The case describes how indigenous peoples fought in an extensive area around the town and demonstrates how they were knowledgeable of the geography, of the people, and of the general setting of the valley. Individuals taking part in the brawl had affiliations to many groups on different grounds: work, commerce, language, source community, and cultural and historical background.

Late on the night of Easter 1595, around ten or eleven o'clock, the Spanish sheriff and his lieutenants were doing rounds in town, when they heard loud cries and sounds of fighting coming from the northern foundries on the outskirts of town. Numerous witnesses estimated that they had seen between 200 and 250 – one even gave the number of 400 – Amerindians fighting with rocks, knives, bows and arrows, in groups roaming in the fields, from one side to another. Officially, the authorities counted two deaths and many injured Amerindians. Many witnesses reported that the Amerindians acted as if they were drunk.³⁵

Apparently, the fight started between the haciendas of Hernando Broceño and Alonso Diaz.³⁶ According to witnesses, this fighting site was close to an old

³⁵ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 5.

³⁶ I am not sure of the spelling of Hernando Broceño's name; it might be Fernando Brozeño.

slaughterhouse.³⁷ The Amerindians then moved towards town and reached the hacienda of Pedro Calderón, close to Tlaxcalilla. There, four Spaniards who were sleeping together in one house awoke frightened by the noise and shot a harquebus three times. The shooter, who was the *mayordomo* (administrator) of the hacienda, said that he shot without bullets and that his objective had only been to scare off the attackers. He was nonetheless accused of killing one of the fighting Amerindians. The whole group then moved back away from town and resumed fighting for some time, until the crowd apparently dispersed by itself. It was during that “retreat” that a second Amerindian lost his life.

Among all these fighting Amerindians, two characters in particular present interesting features. The first, Miguel Bartolomé, was a Tarascan born in Jacona, Michoacán. He was in his early twenties and he had been working since 1593 as *afinador de sacar plata* (refiner) for the Spaniard Alonso Diaz, whose hacienda was situated a little ways out of town.³⁸ The second was Francisco Hernández, an “indio mexicano” (Nahua) born in Texcoco. He was over twenty-six years old and had been working in San Luis Potosí for Juan de Oliva as *oficial de albañil* (bricklayer craftsman) since 1592. As such, he was living in the centre of the Spanish town.³⁹

A year before the brawl, on Easter 1594, Miguel Bartolomé had been drinking pulque in a house of “Mexicanos” in Tlaxcalilla. Drunk, he went back home to the hacienda of Alonso Diaz, asked his wife to prepare him a meal, and, while waiting,

³⁷ The terms used in the documentation were “matadero viejo” and “carnicería antigua.” This old slaughterhouse was approximately one league (4 km) away from San Luis Potosí, at the limit of Tlaxcalilla. See Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 218; Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 42.

³⁸ The information on Miguel Bartolomé was gathered from AHESLP, AM, A-35, 1593, caja 1, exp. 2; A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 5 and 6a.

³⁹ The information on Francisco Hernández was gathered from AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 5 and 6a; and A-44, 1595, caja 2, exp. 19.

decided to go back to town, although it was about a league and a half away (about 6 km).⁴⁰ When he reached the central church (the *iglesia mayor*) he met Juan Felipe, an Amerindian of unknown origin working as *tapiador* (mud brick wall builder) for Juan de Oliva, who was playing guitar. Apparently still drunk, Miguel Bartolomé invited Juan Felipe to dance with him, and when the later refused, he tried to take away his guitar. The men started fighting with knives, Juan Felipe was hit, and Miguel Bartolomé fled. This is when Francisco Hernández came into play. At the very moment Miguel Bartolomé wounded Juan Felipe, Francisco Hernández arrived on the plaza. He was coming out of the nearby house of Juan de Zavala, passing by that of Gabriel Ortiz de Fuenmayor, and on his way to that of Juan de Oliva. He witnessed the entire event and tried to save Juan Felipe with the help of another Tarascan, also called Juan Felipe. They took the victim home to Juan de Oliva where the barber and surgeon Gonzalo García de Rojas took care of him, but to no avail. Juan Felipe died five to six days later.

Francisco Hernández was a colleague of the wounded man. As soon as the surgeon came to attend Juan Felipe, Francisco Hernández assembled a group of fellow *criados* of Juan de Oliva and they all chased after Miguel Bartolomé. The latter reached the hacienda of his employer Alonso Diaz, and the mestizo Sebastian García saw him running, falling down and getting back up. Very shortly after, the mestizo saw the mob from Juan de Oliva's *cuadrilla* coming at him; he decided to tell them he did not know Miguel Bartolomé. Hearing this, Oliva's *criados* went back to town, thinking they had lost the trace of Miguel Bartolomé. Two other Amerindian workers of Alonso Diaz, Juan

⁴⁰ In August 1593, Alonso Diaz petitioned the *alcalde mayor* of San Luis Potosí to receive the titles of the lands he occupied with his Amerindian workers and described their location as follows: “[...] tengo necesidad de sitio y monte para carboneras y casas de indios los cuales señalo legua y media de este pueblo de San Luis poco más o menos junto a una sierra alta que se parece de este dicho pueblo hacia el poniente las cuales ha días que las tengo pobladas [...]” AHESLP, AM, A-35, 1593, caja 1, exp. 2.

Jacobo from Jalisco and Juan García from Sayula, later said that, out of fear of revenge, the murderer left San Luis Potosí for his native village for a few months.⁴¹

This event of 1594 and the large brawl of 1595 became one criminal case during the investigation following Easter 1595. When the Spanish authorities took actions to try and calm things down, and as they started their investigation right away in the middle of the night, they found Miguel Bartolomé hiding in a furnace. Since he had been wounded in the face, the alguaciles assumed he had been taking part in the fighting and arrested him. In his testimony, the Tarascan assured that he had seen many of his co-workers go out to the fields and that he “went out to see what was going on and that while looking he had received a rock in the face.”⁴² Otherwise, he claimed not to know anything else, whether about the harquebus shots or about the two deaths. The alcalde mayor, however, seemed not to believe his testimony, and he ordered that Miguel Bartolomé be taken to the public jail.

The same day, the alcalde mayor opened another criminal proceeding against Miguel Bartolomé for the murder of Juan Felipe on Easter 1594. Miguel Bartolomé first said he did not know anything about the case and that he had never heard of Francisco Hernández. However the alcalde mayor replied that he knew about his attempts to deter Francisco Hernández from talking and even at his attempts at killing him. Indeed, back in 1594, Juan Felipe was buried in the cemetery by the Franciscan church a few days after the events. While attending the ceremony, Francisco Hernández heard a public rumour saying Miguel Bartolomé wanted to kill him because he had been a witness of his crime. The murderer finally fled, but he came back to his employer some months later. By

⁴¹ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 6a.

⁴² “[...] salió a ver lo que pasaba y estando mirando le dieron una pedrada en el rostro [...]” AHESLP, AM, A-44 1595, caja 1, exp. 5, f. 5v.

February 1595, he encountered Francisco Hernández in town, in front of the Spaniard Juan del Rio's house (which was a tavern where Amerindians went to drink and to buy other things), and threatened him with a knife or stick (depending on the witness).⁴³ He was apparently trying to deter him from speaking. On Easter 1595, Miguel Bartolomé tried to use the brawl as it moved by Calderón's hacienda to attract Francisco Hernández and kill him in the middle of the battle.

Francisco Hernández was an Amerindian who was close to many Spaniards: he worked for Juan de Oliva, was often in the house of Juan de Zavala, knew other Spaniards in town, and seemed to work and live all the time in the Spanish centre – at least, in the documents, he always appears there. In addition, some of the Spaniards he mentioned, such as Juan de Zavala and Gabriel Ortiz de Fuenmayor, were important. While Miguel Bartolomé's amo, Alonso Diaz, does not appear in any other document, Ortiz de Fuenmayor became lieutenant-captain-general of the Chichimec frontier and alcalde mayor of San Luis Potosí, and Juan de Zavala rose to become one of the economically prominent persons of the area.⁴⁴ This shows that Amerindians' relations with Spaniards may have been an important element of social status among Amerindians themselves. Those with the best contacts had more resources and could be more powerful politically and socially. These benefits could be shared by groups of Amerindians criados of Spaniards who were friendly to one another or in good economic relations. In short, Francisco Hernández was well protected against Miguel Bartolomé. This might be why the latter was sentenced to death.

⁴³ On Juan del Rio's house, see AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 2, exp. 2.

⁴⁴ Juan de Zavala was probably the first to establish a *hacienda de beneficio* in the area of San Luis Potosí, and he quickly became a "rico mercader y minero de San Luis, diputado de república y alguacil mayor de la ciudad de México." For both Spaniards, see Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 58-59, 79 and 140.

The description of these events of 1594 and 1595 highlights the strength of the ties as well as the tensions between groups of Amerindian labourers in early San Luis Potosí. They indicate a number of mechanisms through which groups integrated and rejected other Amerindians. Among the most significant mechanisms, I will discuss the influence of Spaniards, activities such as drinking, and collegial solidarity.

All these people appear to be moving frequently and relatively quickly around town. Miguel Bartolomé himself walked and ran a total of approximately twenty-four kilometres during the day of Easter 1594. He knew not only the hacienda where he lived and worked, but also Tlaxcalilla and the central parish in the Spanish town. Francisco Hernández was working for Juan de Oliva, but also frequented the house of Juan de Zavala and knew that of Gabriel Ortiz de Fuenmayor, all of which were situated in the north-east section of the town. Apparently, at least from what he said in his testimony, he walked knowingly about town.

The numerous other testimonies indigenous peoples gave following the brawl indicate similar knowledge of different areas of the conurbation, as well as important positive and negative contacts between workers of different work sites. An example of positive contacts between indigenous labourers working for different Spaniards is that of Marcos and Gabriel, who were arrested together towards the end of the brawl. They were working for different Spaniards – Marcos for Melchor Rodríguez and Gabriel for Alonzo Díaz – but they knew and supported each other. When the *alcalde mayor* accused them of participating in the brawl, Marcos claimed that both of them had been sent together to help another Amerindian rounding up the horses and mules of his employer Melchor Rodríguez. Furthermore, whether or not the two men fought in self-defence, they fought

together against their attackers. In short, indigenous peoples fought in groups affiliated to specific work sites and conglomerates of work sites.

I am inclined to think that these ties between workers of different Spaniards were influenced by the relationship between the employers themselves. In October 1594, the *alcalde mayor* reported that labourers of Pedro de Medina and Alonso Hernández Talavera had taken part in a very large brawl against other Indians on the outskirts of the town. A *criado* of Talavera, Juan Bautista, was accused of killing another Amerindian, but claimed that no workers of Talavera had participated in the brawl, that they had come on site only after hearing the sound of the fight. His lawyer claimed that labourers of Juan de Oliva could witness to this fact. However, in an unusual manner, the notary went himself to find two workers of Oliva and Oliva himself, and reported that all three men knew nothing of the case. Nonetheless, only a few months later, in February and April 1595, witnesses in other criminal cases reported that workers of Juan de Oliva had been drinking along with workers of Talavera in the house of Cristóbal de Rojas. As well, the witnesses reported that the workers of Oliva and Talavera worked together in the hacienda of Gerónimo Paez, which was close by those of Rojas and Talavera. Taken together, the three cases (October 1594, February 1595, and April 1595) show that most of the indigenous workers of Cristóbal Gómez de Rojas, Gerónimo Paez and Alonso Hernández Talavera developed close ties with one another, probably because of the proximity between their work sites, but also because the Spaniards shared staff. Juan de Oliva was not a miner and hacienda owner, but a mason who had his house and workshop in another part of the town. At least some of his *criados* worked on the hacienda of

Gerónimo Paez and developed ties with the criados of all three Spaniards, but the links between them appear to have been weaker.⁴⁵

The small brawl of February 1595 illustrates with more precision the mechanism of affiliation between labour teams. It involved workers of Diego Machón Urrutia on one side, and criados of Alonso Hernández Talavera and Juan de Oliva on the other side. The tensions between both groups on that night related to a Chichimec woman called Luisa. The three workers of Urrutia stated that they were not only working together, but living on a daily basis together, sleeping in the same room, and helping each other. The three other Amerindians of Talavera and Oliva had been drinking together in the house of Cristóbal de Rojas, and then decided of common accord to go look for Luisa, who also worked for Talavera. Meanwhile, Luisa had decided to go to the house of Urrutia and to sleep there for the night. Her reasons for doing so are unknown. Interestingly, the men of Urrutia claimed they did not like the Chichimec woman and that they had tried to dismiss her, but that she was so drunk that she had fallen asleep on the floor, so they had to leave her there. The three criados of Talavera and Oliva then arrived and attacked Urrutia's labourers, who were, by that time, sound asleep. The document does not mention where Luisa had been drinking, but it is plausible that she had been in the house of Rojas drinking with her colleagues. Notwithstanding this uncertainty, it is clear from the tension transpiring from the document that the labour teams around Talavera and Urrutia could not tolerate each other. They protected their own members and rejected those of the other group.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 31; A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 2; A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 7; A-44, 1597, caja 1, exp. 21.

⁴⁶ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 2.

While the overseeing relationships between Spaniards clearly had a role in the relations between labour teams, the actions of Amerindians are of greater significance in explaining the process of inclusion and exclusion from the different groups at play in these documents. The fact that criados of Oliva, Paez, Talavera, and Rojas often worked together indicates at least that they knew each other and, in fact, in the documents they identify each other easily. In addition, these workers gathered together to drink in the house of Rojas and possibly fought together against other Amerindians.

Taverns, such as that of Rojas, represented an important place for socialisation and encounters between Amerindians of San Luis Potosí. On Easter 1594, during the events I narrated above, Miguel Bartolomé reported that, before going to the central plaza and fighting with Juan Felipe, he had gone to drink pulque in Tlaxcalilla. Interestingly, this Tarascan man drank in a house of “Mexicanos”, that is, Nahuas who were not Tlaxcalans, in a village established by Tlaxcalans. Taverns appeared frequently in criminal proceeding because Spaniards attempted to curtail Amerindian drinking and because Amerindians often used drinking as an excuse for their crimes.⁴⁷

It is possible to distinguish between two modes of alcohol consumption. First, imbibing European drinks in taverns was a daily habit of some indigenous peoples. It involved economic exploitation from Spaniards, and often led to violence between individuals. Second, group drinking of *pulque* (a traditional indigenous alcoholic beverage) was related to social gathering or feasting. It did not involve Spanish merchants, and often led to group violence.⁴⁸ Accordingly, the *pulquerías* (where peoples made and drank pulque) were more important in the construction of relationships and

⁴⁷ For an explanation of drinking as an excuse to commit crimes, see chapter six.

⁴⁸ On the differences between the drinking wine and pulque, see Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 34-45.

affiliations between groups of Amerindians. Notwithstanding this sharp distinction, it also happened that Amerindians drank both pulque and wine on the same occasions and in the same building. If it mattered *what* people drank, *where* and with *whom* mattered even more.

References to pulque were very scarce in the first years of San Luis Potosí, perhaps because authorities sought primarily to prevent Spanish merchants from selling alcohol to Amerindians and did not pay as much attention to indigenous alcoholic beverages.⁴⁹ As a result, the documentation shows mostly small cases of isolated violence linked to alcohol consumption. For example, in January 1594, Andrés Cubina obtained wine from a man called Francisco Alfonso and then sought to drink more and went to the store of the Spaniard Francisco de Rutiaga where he resumed drinking. Under the influence of alcohol, Andrés Cubina went to find another Amerindian called Juan in the house of the Spaniard Juan Diez de Cabrera and wounded him.⁵⁰ I must also recall the case of July 1595, discussed in chapter six, in which the Amerindians Mateo and Geronima entered the tavern of Juan de Salazar with their child and started to drink. They drank so much that Mateo pawned his son for more wine. When the couple returned home, they fought, and Mateo ended up killing his wife.⁵¹ Finally, in April 1596, the Amerindian Pedro drank some brandy in the shop of a Spaniard on the traza and then got into a fight with another Amerindian whom he met on the street and killed him.⁵² In all three cases, drinking seems to have been an individual action, not a social event. Such violence, involving only one aggressor, one victim, and apparently few if any witnesses –

⁴⁹ On the Spanish Crown's attempts to control the selling of wine and brandy to indigenous peoples, see Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 38.

⁵⁰ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1594, caja 1, exp. 5.

⁵¹ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 2, exp. 2.

⁵² AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1596, caja 1, exp. 13.

if the court documents faithfully record the presence of actors – seems tenuously connected to the construction of group identities among Amerindians.

Historians know of a few Amerindian taverns that existed in Tlaxcalilla where group consumption was habitual. These were apparently recognized by all Amerindians of San Luis as being affiliated to specific cultural groups, mostly the “Mexicanos” (Nahuas) and the Tarascans. Nonetheless, they were frequented by individuals from a diversity of cultural origins, which confirms our sense that the formation of corporate identities did not necessarily or exclusively depend on ethnic or cultural affiliation.⁵³ By the 1620s – probably before, but the sources do not show it – Amerindians had places to drink pulque in San Miguel and San Sebastian, the latter being also frequented by Amerindians who lived in Tlaxcalilla.⁵⁴

Drinking of pulque was more tightly tied to rituals and community feasting. Many of the criminal documents in which alcohol consumption was involved suggest that group violence was the result of this type of drinking, as opposed to individual drinking. Pulque can be linked to the creation and enforcement of informal communities in San Luis Potosí. Indeed, drinkers were Amerindians of all social strata, not only elites, and seem to have grouped along the lines of emerging identities. Work sites represent a good example of the link that can be made between drinking, violence, and identity construction. On some of them, Amerindians would prepare the pulque and sell it to their co-workers and to other Amerindians from neighbouring work sites. The rancho of Miguel de Guzmán appears to be one of these places where Indians made pulque. In 1618, an Amerindian died in this rancho, apparently in the middle of the night after drinking much pulque. The

⁵³ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 5.

⁵⁴ AHESLP, AM, 1620, caja 3, exp. 29 and 1621, caja 6, exp. 15.

investigation resulted in a long proceeding, which presented the testimonies of many Amerindians who worked on three different work sites close to that of Guzmán and who came from various cultural areas. All of them said that it was of public knowledge that Amerindians of Guzmán made and sold pulque, although they all claimed not to know who had instigated this trade.⁵⁵

This production and consumption of pulque on work sites can be linked to the creation of ties between workers of different employers. Indeed, if indigenous labourers worked on different haciendas and met other Amerindians in these places, they could also sit down and have a drink with their colleagues who worked for other Spaniards. The production and consumption of alcoholic and traditional beverages on work sites thus may have contributed to the formation of group identities that stretched between a few or more work sites. It is very possible that Spanish producers and entrepreneurs knew about this practice and let it go or even encouraged it, maybe because it helped keep the workers on site.

In the end, alcohol consumption on work sites and in the indigenous taverns played a unifying role, pulling together Amerindians from a variety of origins and from different places in San Luis Potosí. In addition to the mobility of the labour force across the conurbation, alcohol consumption generated another means of affiliation, rejection, and community formation in San Luis Potosí. Drinking thus added to other mechanisms of identity formation such as ethnicity, labour, and gender.

While my discussion so far mostly highlights the drinking habits of men, it is interesting to point out that two women are quickly mentioned in the documentation as drinkers. In February 1595, the Chichimec Luisa arrived drunk on Diego Machón

⁵⁵ AHESLP, AM, 1618, caja 2, exp. 2.

Urrutia's hacienda, and in July 1595, Geronima went with her husband to the tavern of Juan de Salazar.⁵⁶ Although drinking for women does not appear frequently in my documentation, Taylor writes that reports of women, and even children, drinking existed in Oaxaca in the sixteenth century. He links this to an increasing habit among the indigenous population and writes that drinking by women was among the chronic problems of indigenous peoples after the Conquest. If nothing else, the role of women in vending pulque seemed indisputable by the seventeenth century.⁵⁷ In San Luis Potosí, women may have drunk alcohol more than the documents report. Women participated in this social activity, and they had, just as men, an important impact on the development of affiliations and identities through drinking.

Another important mechanism of group formation among indigenous peoples was the solidarity I observed between co-workers. This is shown particularly well in the criminal proceedings involving Miguel Bartolomé and Francisco Hernández. On Easter 1594, when Miguel Bartolomé hurt Juan Felipe, Francisco Hernández acted quickly to support his wounded colleague. He took him back to their lodging and called upon the surgeon. Then, he assembled a group of his colleagues to capture Miguel Bartolomé. They did not succeed, but such quick and strong reaction shows clear solidarity among the criados of Juan de Oliva. A similar phenomenon happened when the *alcalde mayor* formally accused Miguel Bartolomé of Juan Felipe's murder and sentenced him to death in April 1595. Shortly after hearing the sentence, two co-workers of Miguel Bartolomé tried to help him out and testified that he was one of the best smelters in the area and that his life had to be spared for that reason. Interestingly, these two work mates had no ties

⁵⁶ AHESLP, AM, A-44, 1595, caja 1, exp. 2 and A-44, 1595, caja 2, exp. 2.

⁵⁷ Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion*: 35, 38, 45, and 53.

with Miguel Bartolomé before their encounter on Alonso Diaz' hacienda. The first, Juan Jacobo, was from Jalisco and had known the defendant only for two years. The second, Juan García, was from Sayula and had met the accused one year earlier. The encounter of the three men and the solidarity they showed was the product of working together.

Such solidarity between colleagues is palpable in the testimony of Bartolomé Silvestre, an indigenous labourer of Domingo González who was from Cuitzeo. On the night of the large brawl in 1595, the lieutenant-sheriffs Alonso de Rivera and Pedro Bravo encountered five Amerindians from the hacienda of Domingo González by the Franciscan monastery and tried to arrest them because they carried rocks. They only succeeded in getting their hands on Bartolomé Silvestre, but his testimony shows that all five workers of González acted together. He claimed that he and his colleagues did not want to participate in the brawl. They had been drinking together in a shop by the house of Juan de Valle and were on their way back to their hacienda. Bartolomé Silvestre claimed that they were suddenly attacked by other indigenous peoples who worked for Miguel Caldera. He and his colleagues decided to pick up rocks in order to defend themselves. By the time the lieutenant-sheriffs arrived, the men of Miguel Calderas had gone. However, another Spaniard, Pedro Gómez, later testified that he had seen Calderas' criados participate in the brawl. In short, this small section of the proceeding shows a group of colleagues tightening their friendship drinking together and then defending themselves in a group against an attack from another labour team. The solidarity was here experienced through both a leisure activity and a violent defence, displaying both the possible friendship and the tensions between indigenous labourers.

Conclusion

Throughout the conurbation, indigenous peoples belonging to different communities and labour teams entered into relations with one another. They did not manifest such affiliations in clear sets of claims, political objectives, or historical memories. The relationships built between indigenous peoples and communities were at time fortuitous, often informal, and did not take the form of corporations. They were nonetheless significant in the development of the indigenous society of San Luis Potosí because they opened social and economic opportunities to the most active individuals. The objective of these affiliations was to take advantage of economic opportunities, which took the form of trading networks, pools of consumers for craftsmen, and possibilities of employment. When successful, indigenous peoples could enter large networks and ascend in the society of San Luis Potosí. The nature, characteristics, and objectives of these networks of unofficial affiliations led to tensions between individuals and factions. Individuals, labour teams, and community members had to take sides in brawls and other violent encounters. This reinforced the ties between specific groups and gave rise to clusters and nuclei of labour teams, craftsmen, and merchants. The act of drinking had a similar effect because it took place in few locations and favoured encounters between groups. In sum, the organisation of indigenous peoples in San Luis Potosí was not only based on the pueblos and barrios de indios, and on labour teams. It also depended on the construction of relationships between these poles. The identification of indigenous peoples was thus extremely complex, relied on different affiliations, and resembled the image of a mosaic, rather than that of closed corporate communities.

While social relationships based on mobility, trade, and labour continued for the whole period under study, large brawls tended to diminish over time. They mostly appear in the documentation in the earliest years of San Luis Potosí. I am inclined to think that this is due to the growing strength of more formal identities in the pueblos and barrios de indios. Indeed, by the 1610s and even more so in the 1620s, these indigenous communities started to use the law to affirm their identity and their power. Using their legal nature as indios, they began to appeal to the Spanish authorities to resolve conflicts. These indigenous groups used more rigid identities with references to cultural practices, to specific historical memories, and to figures of authorities. These identities will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 8: The Construction of Formal Identities

In 1628, the authorities of Tlaxcalilla filed a land litigation suit. They presented themselves as “Don Juan Ventura, Juan Lucas, and Diego Ignacio, governor and mayors of the town of Tlaxcalilla, in voice and name of all other noble Indians of the said town.”¹ This came at the end of the period under study, when the infrastructures of the conurbation were built and the second generation of migrants was well established. The strength of indigenous authorities became significant and they could speak in the name of their people before the law. Starting at the end of the 1610s, a series of civil law suits initiated by indigenous elites of the Indian towns around San Luis Potosí inform the historian about the construction of formal community identities, about the political struggles of indigenous peoples, and about their use of the law.

The three themes of identity, politics, and law are intimately connected to one another and cannot be isolated. The *pueblos* and *barrios de indios* were diversified entities that grouped individuals of different ethnic origins, economic and social statuses, working skills, and occupations. The webs of relationships of these peoples, as we have shown throughout this dissertation, also varied greatly and relied on economic, familial, political, cultural, and daily life connections. As a consequence, the formal, corporate identity of each *pueblo* and *barrio de indios* could not be built to correspond to the individual identities of all of its members. From a political point of view, however, the adoption of such a corporate identity was a necessity for the indigenous peoples by the late 1610s, because these communities started to experience pressure from other parts of

¹ “Don Juan Ventura y Juan Lucas y Diego Ignacio, gobernador y alcaldes del pueblo de Tlaxcalilla, en voz y nombre de los demás indios principales del dicho pueblo [...]” BNAH, microfilms, serie San Luis Potosí, rollo 5, 1628, published in Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 71.

the conurbation. Spanish possessions were expanding and some, such as those of Juan de España and Pedro de Salazar, intruded in Tlaxcalilla's territory.² The multiple ranchos established between the community and the Cerro de San Pedro also augmented the extent of land they covered and started to pose a threat to Tlaxcalilla.³ To protect themselves from encroachment, the political authorities of Tlaxcalilla had to react and make a political statement about their rights to use their lands as sovereigns. These rights had been guaranteed to them by the Capitulaciones of 1591, a treaty signed between the viceroyalty and Tlaxcala in which the latter had to send Tlaxcalan colonists north to help settle the Chichimecs in exchange for guarantees of power and relative autonomy upon settlement. Among other things, the Capitulaciones stated that "They [the Tlaxcalan colonists] shall not be compelled to settle with Spaniards, but will be allowed to live apart from them and have their own communities. No Spaniard will be allowed to take or buy residential property therein."⁴ In the wake of this treaty, the authorities of Tlaxcalilla relied heavily on their community's identity as heirs of the "Tlaxcalan colonists" to achieve their political goals: they invoked it in legal actions, and performed it in front of Spanish authorities. However, as I've shown throughout this dissertation, not all inhabitants of Tlaxcalilla were Tlaxcalans. Hence, the community did not present its members only as Tlaxcalans, but also as "indios," that is, as members of the *republica de indios*, a separate category of the Crown's subjects. The identity Tlaxcalilla presented to the Spanish authorities was a mix of both the *indio* category and the *Tlaxcalan* ethnic

² In this chapter, I will study a lawsuit launched by Tlaxcalilla against Juan de Vega and Pedro Galarza in 1628, in which a number of other Spanish land possessions are mentioned as colliding, but not encroaching on Tlaxcalilla's lands. Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 69-126.

³ I have already discussed the importance of the ranchos, mostly ranchos de arrieros, in this area of the conurbation in chapter four. See also Salazar González, *Las haciendas*: 225-233.

⁴ Sego, "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies," 273.

identity. As I will develop in the second section of this chapter, they became “indio-Tlaxcalans,” that is, a separate kind of indios.

Indigenous peoples across New Spain used the Spanish juridical system extensively, and they made it their own.⁵ According to Yanna Yannakakis, “the legal system facilitated the negotiation of colonial rule” and “provided an arena for cultural encounter in which Spanish and native forms of law and knowledge were circulated and constructed.”⁶ The engagement of indigenous peoples with Spanish law generated a conversation between the different actors of the colonial society, triggered the emergence of various interpretations of the law, and helped develop legal meaning to frame indigenous struggles.⁷ Accordingly, the use of the legal system by the authorities of Tlaxcalilla shaped the understanding of the law by native peoples, their relationships with the Spaniards, and their knowledge of legal tools. Since colonial law was based on both public knowledge and written documentation, the peoples of Tlaxcalilla grounded their claims on both. Through the use of the law, they built their historical memory and historical identity in a formal and political language. The development of Tlaxcalilla as a corporate body was based on these elements of law and historical identity. Even though members of the community originated from different cultural realms, they found themselves becoming “Tlaxcalans,” that is, peoples inhabiting Tlaxcalilla and endorsing the Tlaxcalan memory. Through the study of the Tlaxcalan’s use of the legal system, I observe the development of a formal, political identity.

⁵ Brian P. Owensby, *Empire of Law and Indian Justice in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 1-3.

⁶ Yannakakis, “Indigenous Peoples and Legal Culture,” 931.

⁷ Owensby, *Empire of Law*: 7-8.

Politics and law are deeply intertwined. Even though modern understanding of the “rule of law” implies an apolitical, rigid perspective on law, its interpretations reveal an active engagement by various agents and the involvement of their political views. According to Owensby, the influence of politics on law was even greater under seventeenth century Spanish colonialism.⁸ The documents I gathered likewise shed light on the relationship between indigenous’ political struggles and search for power on the one hand, and state-centred law, on the other. Indeed, Tlaxcalans used the Spanish legal system to make their claims and gain justice, and they designed their requests with the help of a *defensor de indios*, what Yannakakis calls a “jurisdictional jockey,” that is, the Spanish lawyer assigned to defend indigenous peoples.⁹ The use of the juridical system by Tlaxcalan authorities can shed light on indigenous peoples’ understandings of politics, as well as on the cultural changes that the system triggered within ethnic groups, between them, and in relation with the Spaniards. Finally, it can contribute to a better understanding of the complex and plural Indian identities emerging in the wake of the establishment of San Luis Potosí.

Historians understand the law as a conversation between social actors.¹⁰ Law served in negotiations, dialogues, and cultural accommodations, as well as in reshaping the different forms of belonging and identity. Susan Kellogg argues that law functioned “as an arena of cultural conflict and accommodation and as a catalyst of cultural change and adaptation.”¹¹ The change from pre-colonial indigenous to colonial authority was nonetheless not linear. In Tlaxcalilla, the transition process was already under way at the

⁸ Owensby, *Empire of Law*: 6-7.

⁹ For “jurisdictional jockey,” see Yannakakis, “Indigenous Peoples and Legal Culture,” 931-932.

¹⁰ Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: xx; Owensby, *Empire of Law*: 1-8; Ruiz Medrano, *Mexico’s Indigenous Communities*: 1-3; Yannakakis, “Indigenous Peoples and Legal Culture,” 932.

¹¹ Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: xxii.

time of the Tlaxcalans' establishment at the end of the sixteenth century, and it continued in a twofold manner. First, it allowed for the merging of distinct native cultures, for the cooperation of a diversity of individuals (in the documentation, Guachichils, Nahuas, and Tlaxcalans), and for the formation of a corporate body as a strong unit that used the legal system against Spaniards who had encroached on their land. Second, the Tlaxcalan upper authorities remained the same as during the migration. They were individuals who had relatively important social standing in Tlaxcala and to whom the Spaniards had given power over all other migrants. Unfortunately, the lack of documentation, in any language, regarding the internal justice system of Tlaxcalilla does not allow for a more detailed analysis of legal practices and of the transition of power inside the corporate body, but only in relation to the Spanish authorities. In short, the evidence demonstrates that natives' engagement with the Spanish legal system generated a dual process of continuity and change. The identity of Tlaxcalilla was based on this dual process. While keeping a strong memory of the Tlaxcalan past, the community opened itself to other indigenous peoples, and came to structure its sense of belonging in term of inhabiting place.

Indigenous communities also used the law to defend their inhabitants. I will present here one such case, in which Santiago del Río attempted to set free a man and a woman who had been jailed, then forced to work for a Spaniard. The defence clearly referred to the community identity and to the rights of its inhabitants to live free of Spanish labour demands. The construction of political identities and the use of the law had the objective of protecting the community, but also its individual members.

The Community's Integrity and the Search for a Balance of Power

The options available to Tlaxcalilla to defend its lands from Spanish encroachment changed in the very beginning of the seventeenth century. According to José Antonio Rivera Villanueva, in the first years after their arrival in San Luis Potosí, the Tlaxcalans frequently called upon the authorities of Tlaxcala, in their homeland, to intervene with the vice-regal authorities in land claims against Spaniards. The latter apparently did not respect the Tlaxcalans' privilege of living separately from the Spanish, as written in the *Capitulaciones*, and attempted to build houses or to send their animals to pasture on their land. By the early seventeenth century, Rivera Villanuava noticed that the strength of the institutions in Tlaxcalilla allowed its inhabitants to make claims to local Spanish authorities on their own and win. In fact, the people of Tlaxcalilla were the most successful in matters of land claims in the area, even more than Guachichils, Spaniards, and the Church.¹² I interpret this finding by Rivera Villanueva as a sign of gradual disconnection of the Tlaxcalans who had immigrated to San Luis Potosí from their home community. The connections between Tlaxcala and Tlaxcalilla were going dim. The apparent consolidation of the political power in Tlaxcalilla, as expressed by Rivera Villanueva, might also be a reflexion of a transformation in the legal discourse of Tlaxcala itself. Indeed, Jovita Baber argues that, starting at the end of the sixteenth century, Tlaxcala changed the form of its complaints to the viceroy from one appealing to the principle of *buen gobierno* (good government) to one emphasizing misery and suffering.¹³ This type of discourse was little used in Tlaxcalilla, and when it was, it

¹² Rivera Villanueva, *Los Tlaxcaltecas*: 7-8.

¹³ R. Jovita Baber, "Law, Land, and Legal Rhetoric in Colonial New Spain. A Look at the Changing Rhetoric of Indigenous Americans in the Sixteenth Century," in *Native Claims: Indigenous Law against Empire, 1500-1920*, ed. Saliha Belmessous (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

essentially aimed at reinforcing a legal argument. The contexts of the home community and of its far-away satellites were changing in different directions, their respective objectives parted from one another, and their language slowly took opposite forms.

The fact that the authorities of Tlaxcalilla started to present their land litigation to the local Spanish magistrates results for historians in rich sources. Through them, I study Tlaxcalilla's use of the law, its political stances, and the relations of power between the *republica de indios* and the Spanish authorities in San Luis Potosí. These sources were written in the late 1610s and in the 1620s. The core of my corpus is composed of repeated pleas from Tlaxcalilla to have Spaniards, mestizos, and mulatos expelled from their lands. The authorities of Tlaxcalilla were particularly concerned about the presence of two Spanish men, Juan de la Vega, who had established his house and a tile factory on Tlaxcala's land, and Pedro de Galarza, whose business is unknown.¹⁴ Between 1617 and 1629, Tlaxcalilla repeatedly petitioned the lieutenant-captain generals of the Chichimec frontiers and *alcaldes mayores* to expel the two Spaniards and to renew the land grant to the pueblo.¹⁵

The formal political identity Tlaxcalilla displayed in the documents and that I analyze here is frankly different from the informal identities and social relationships I have been presenting in the rest of this dissertation. The authorities of Tlaxcalilla initiated

¹⁴ “[...] una casa de morada y tierras y hornos para hacer ladrillos [...]” Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 77-79.

¹⁵ The lieutenant-captain general of the Chichimec frontiers and *alcalde mayor* (*teniente de capitán general de las fronteras de chichimecos de esta Nueva España y alcalde mayor de este pueblo de San Luis Minas del Potosí*) was one title assigned to a single person, but there were various appointees between 1617 and 1629. This title emerged during the Chichimec War and was kept and coupled with that of *alcalde mayor* at the end of the war because San Luis Potosí remained a military frontier; not all Chichimecs had agreed to settle peacefully and skirmishes still happened north of the area. The whole case, from 1617 to 1629, is in the BNAH, microfilms, serie San Luis Potosí, rollo 5, 1628. I use the published edition by Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 69-126. Primo Feliciano Velázquez also published parts of these papers: Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 211-225.

the court litigation, and the resulting documents rarely contain words from other members of the community. The perspective on identity the leaders presented is thus their own vision of their community, and is entangled with political claims and internal relations of power. Here, communities appear as wholes, as tight-knit corporate bodies, in which individual members were well integrated. As such, the authorities present other members of the community either as *indios* or as Tlaxcalans. Their individual specificities, such as their ethnic background, work, wealth, and civil status, were never mentioned by the indigenous authorities. The only particularities mentioned in the documents came during the testimonies given by witnesses and were the result of the Spanish magistrates' questions in the preliminaries of the hearings. Hence, because of this information and because of the results presented in earlier chapters, the historian is aware of the particularities of community members, but these are not part of the official corporate identity as displayed by the authorities of Tlaxcalilla.

The initial land claim of 1617 clearly shows that the political identity of the peoples of Tlaxcalilla was grounded in the history and traditions of the community members: as descendants of the Tlaxcalan migrants, they were entitled to protections and guarantees by virtue of the *Capitulaciones* of 1591. In their lawsuit, the indigenous authorities stated that “the grants, favours, and privileges that his majesty and his royal audiences in his name and the lords viceroys of this New Spain have given to our fathers, grandfathers, and ancestors when, leaving their towns, lands, and houses in the service of his majesty, came to settle these lands, and to us their descendants [...]”¹⁶ What is not

¹⁶ “[...] las mercedes, favores y privilegios que su majestad y sus real audiencia en su nombre y los señores virreyes de esta Nueva España hicieron a nuestros padres y abuelos y antepasados cuando dejando sus pueblos, tierras y casas en servicio de su majestad vinieron a poblar estas tierras y a nosotros sus descendientes [...]” Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 218.

mentioned by these descendants is that most of the migrant Tlaxcalans were indebted people, criminals, or of low social standing in their homeland. In addition, many had been pushed out of Tlaxcala by their very own people under the sharp insistence of the Franciscans and of the vice-royalty.¹⁷ Notwithstanding these facts, in the same lawsuit, the authorities of Tlaxcala continued to insist on the great loyalty of their ancestors by stating that these people had first settled at the heart of the valley of San Luis Potosí, and then had purposely left the place to Spaniards in 1592. Indeed, upon the discovery of precious metals and with the need to establish haciendas de beneficio near sources of water, the Spaniards had convinced indigenous authorities to move their pueblos, those of Santiago del Río and of Tlaxcalilla, which had been given to them to administer as indios subjects of the Crown.

The definition of the limits of Tlaxcalilla's lands was inscribed on paper and by performance, that is, by walking the limits of the territory. "Spatial practices," or the strategies used by indigenous elites to shape territorial politics, expose the local relationships of power and the political context of the area. The enactment of space through boundary walking demonstrates a reconstruction of this space, and the use of witnesses and land-related documents in later lawsuits show the political and discursive practices of the indigenous elites.¹⁸

The inscription of the lands' limits on paper and in performance started as soon as the Tlaxcalan migrants arrived in the valley in 1591. In order to be valid, the ceremony had to include both the indigenous and the Spanish authorities. As representative of the latter, viceroy Velasco sent the Tlaxcalan historian Diego Muñoz Camargo as

¹⁷ Martínez Baracs, "Colonizaciones tlaxcaltecas," 218.

¹⁸ Yanna Yannakakis, "Witnesses, Spatial Practices, and a Land Dispute in Colonial Oaxaca," *The Americas* 65, no. 2 (2008): 161-164.

“provehedor y repartidor de tierras” to perform the distribution of the land and the founding of the Guachichil and Tlaxcalan settlements.¹⁹ Captain Miguel Caldera appears to have been present, but to have had no particular role in this ceremony. Guachichils were represented by one of their leaders, Juan Tenso, who had had a positive relationship with Miguel Caldera over the previous years. The Tlaxcalans were represented by Francisco Vázquez Coronado and Joaquín de Paredes. The document relating this event of November 2, 1591, illustrates the dynamics of power between the three groups of actors.²⁰ Diego Muñoz Camargo started the ceremony by taking the official orders of the viceroy in his hands, kissing the document, putting it on his head, and swearing to comply with them. Speeches from Muñoz, the Guachichils, and the Tlaxcalans followed, in which each declared its role and the responsibilities and expectations they had for the others. The Guachichils gave full authority over all their lands to King Felipe, and they gave half of their lands to the Tlaxcalans. The final agreement was written on paper. Then, Muñoz and parts of the Guachichils and Tlaxcalans moved to a valley, close to a creek – the place recognized to be where the Spaniards would found San Luis Potosí a year later. Muñoz granted half of that valley to each group, taking them by the hand and putting them on their respective share of the land. Guachichils and Tlaxcalans accepted the allotment and seized the land by pulling up plants and throwing rocks. The ceremony and the official papers were approved by the viceroy Luis de Velasco on January 18, 1592. This initial ceremony and the production of the corresponding documents illustrated in performance the political relationships between the three groups, their place

¹⁹ Charles Gibson, "The Identity of Diego Muñoz Camargo," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 30, no. 2 (1950): 204; Segó, "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies," 60-63.

²⁰ The events are described in a copy of the document presented in the lawsuit of 1628 and published by Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*. For a short summary, see Segó, "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies," 62.

of belonging both physically and legally, and reinforced both indigenous and Spanish understanding of legal possession of the land.

Legal problems regarding land possession arose for Tlaxcalilla because its location in the 1591 document was vague, and because both Tlaxcalan and Guachichil communities had to move upon the discovery of the mines and the subsequent establishment of Spaniards in the area in 1592. Indeed, Spaniards wished to establish themselves close to the same creek, and in order not to mix the territory of the Indian and Spanish republics, they asked both Tlaxcalilla's and Santiago's elite to move their towns a little ways to the north, by the Santiago River. There is no surviving documentation about this displacement of Tlaxcalilla and Santiago, which suggests that the negotiations with Spaniards were verbal discussions, perhaps performed, but that they were never inscribed on paper in a legal form. Such documents may have been lost, but, if they ever existed, they were lost shortly after the events. Indeed, when Tlaxcalilla's elites filed their land litigation on September 20, 1628, they provided documents from 1617 in which Pedro Arismendi Gogorrón – lieutenant-captain general of the Chichimec frontiers and alcalde mayor of San Luis Potosí – was ordered by the Viceroy to officially legitimize and protect the grant of lands to Tlaxcalilla. This legitimization required Gogorrón to circumambulate on the limits of Tlaxcalilla's territory and to physically acknowledge them, as it was common everywhere in New Spain.²¹ This requirement for a performance of land attribution was understood as a reaffirmation of an act already performed a few years earlier. Notwithstanding this act and the accompanying papers, the Spanish authorities in 1628 requested more proof and Tlaxcalilla had to find earlier documentation. The only papers they were able to provide were those of the foundation

²¹ Yannakakis, "Witnesses, Spatial Practices, and a Land Dispute in Colonial Oaxaca."

of San Miguel Mezquitic, which they claimed encompassed the territory of both Tlaxcalilla and Santiago del Río. However, no act of the final foundation of these two pueblos was ever produced.²²

In the land litigation of 1617, Tlaxcalilla's elite mostly relied on their memory to assert the limits of their territory. They wrote that "among the lands they had been assigned at the time of their settlement and congregation were those that went from the hospital they have there, to the surroundings of the slaughterhouse."²³ Although they presented no official written documentation, the viceroy ordered Gogorrón to reaffirm their rights upon these lands. It is unclear if Gogorrón immediately complied with his orders, but confronting the insistence of Tlaxcalilla, he went to the limits of the pueblo in 1619 and, standing by the slaughterhouse, he officially recognized all the lands claimed by Tlaxcalilla. This performance was coupled with a written document recording the Spanish lieutenant-captain general and alcalde mayor's acts.

A decade later, the authorities of Tlaxcalilla decided to assert more fully their right to use the Spanish judicial system and to take advantage of all its components. When Tlaxcalilla launched the land claim on September 20, 1628, its authorities presented the document written by Gogorrón to the new lieutenant-captain general of the Chichimec frontiers and alcalde mayor, don Martín del Pozo y Aguiar. Their petition accompanying the document stated the rights they had gained from 1617 to 1619 and claimed that Spaniards living on their land still represented a problem. In addition, Tlaxcalilla used the services of the lawyer assigned to Indians (*defensor de indios*),

²² Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 69-126.

²³ "[...] entre las tierras que se les señalaron al tiempo de su asiento y congregación fueron las que van desde el hospital que allí tienen, hasta las cercas de la carnicería [...]" Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 69.

Lorenzo Velázquez. This intermediary was extremely important in shaping the pueblo's claim in accordance with the Spanish law. In fact, indigenous peoples frequently used such legal advisors across New Spain. In Central Mexico, litigants relied on *procuradores*, who were trained in understanding the law, but not as well as qualified lawyers and with less experience.²⁴ The defensor general, on the other hand, was usually an experienced lawyer appointed by the Crown. He knew how to craft petitions and responses in accordance with the Spanish law. Even though, by the seventeenth century, indigenous peoples had gone through the transitional phase of understanding the Spanish legal system, the defensor could modify and shape his clients' litigation in forms different from the original words in order to fit better the Spanish understanding of law. In the case under study, the defensor Lorenzo Velázquez claimed that the two Spanish men who had settled on Tlaxcalilla's lands did not present sufficient written documentation to prove their titles and that Spanish officials had never performed the boundary walk for these Spanish lands. On behalf of Tlaxcalilla, he presented not only the papers from 1617 and 1619, but also the papers of the foundation of San Miguel Mezquitic and of the establishment of the Tlaxcalans in the valley. As well, he arranged for four witnesses to testify to the limits of Tlaxcalilla. All of these elements – the written documentation, the performance of taking possession of the lands, and the intervention of witnesses – were essential elements under Spanish law to gain the case.

By 1628, the narrative of Tlaxcalilla's land grant had changed in comparison to the events of 1591. The original distribution of lands, as stated above, was done by the Tlaxcalan historian Diego Muñoz Camargo. By 1628, the four witnesses, who all claimed to have been present at the 1591 ceremony, said that Miguel Caldera had given the land

²⁴ Kellogg, *Law and the Transformation*: 13-14.

to Tlaxcalilla.²⁵ This change illustrates the significance of historical symbols in the lawsuit. The historian Tlaxcalan Diego Muñoz Camargo had been an important figure in Tlaxcala. The mestizo son of a Spanish conquistador, he was a literate and wealthy entrepreneur who acted on multiple occasions as interpreter for the Spaniards, legal advisor and attorney for Tlaxcala, and who became *procurador* of Tlaxcala in 1586, a position he held until his death around 1599.²⁶ Notwithstanding these great feats, Muñoz Camargo did not stay in San Luis Potosí and he returned to his affairs in Tlaxcalilla after his service to the Tlaxcalan migrants in 1591. On the contrary, before his death in 1597, Miguel Caldera acquired great wealth, prestige, and respect among the Spanish population of the valley. He represented the figure of an important, wealthy man, remembered as the pacifier of the Chichimecs. As well, the mestizo son of a Chichimec mother, he represented the acculturation of these peoples. It is possible that the authorities of Tlaxcalilla thought this local symbol more appealing to the Spanish officials of San Luis, and accordingly thought also that it gave them better chances to win the case. As well, this corroborates the idea, as presented by Rivera Villanueva, that Tlaxcalilla was taking distance from Tlaxcala and that an argumentation based on a Tlaxcalan figure was no longer relevant.

In addition, the granted territory, as described by the four witnesses in 1628, does not correspond to that granted by Muñoz Camargo in 1591. The four men changed the narrative of the history of Tlaxcalilla to fit better the geographic organization of the land

²⁵ “[...] el capitán Miguel Caldera les señaló tierra y distrito que había de coger el dicho pueblo, que fue desde el río para este pueblo hasta el camino real que iba al cerro de las minas [...]” This is the first testimony, but the differences between the four of them are insignificant. Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 86-87.

²⁶ The *procurador* and attorney are generally equivalent, but in this case, Muñoz Camargo was also the administrator of the Tlaxcalan treasury. Gibson, "The Identity," 201-204.

as it was at the time of the lawsuit. In 1591, Muñoz Camargo had granted a territory that had a creek as its focal point and that went up the valley for a league (4.18km). By 1628, the witnesses declare that Tlaxcalilla's territory had always encompassed everything between the Santiago River and the Camino Real going from San Luis Potosí to the mines of San Pedro. (See Map 4.2 for the geographic details.) In short, the witnesses did not acknowledge the displacement of Tlaxcalilla in 1592 and they overlooked the fact that the mines of San Pedro did not yet exist in 1591, and thus that no road set out from San Luis Potosí to them. In 1628, the narrative was adjusted so that both the Tlaxcalan elites and the Spanish officials understood where the limits of the pueblo currently were. Tlaxcalilla's authorities were conscious of these changes, and I believe that it is one of the reasons they insisted that the Spanish officials renew their land grant and perform the boundary walking in 1617 and 1628. They knew the situation had changed, they knew Spaniards had no right to settle within their territory, but they needed a formal acknowledgement of the transformation of the land, of its limits, and of their territory.

Following these testimonies, and in the absence of a response from the Spanish officials, Juan Ventura Vázquez, the governor of Tlaxcalilla, directly petitioned the lieutenant-captain general using a mix of historical memory and legal language. He started by clearly identifying himself as Tlaxcalan ("indio tlaxcalteca") and stated that the Crown ("su Majestad y su Real Audiencia") had given the lands to his peoples' "fathers, grandfathers, and ancestors" ("nuestros padres y abuelos y antepasados"). He then emphasized the significance of the Tlaxcalans' role in the pacification of the Chichimecs, saying that these ancestors "had left their towns, lands, and houses in the service of his

Majesty to settle on the said lands.”²⁷ He then used the narrative of the establishment of Tlaxcalilla to emphasize the good will of the Tlaxcalans, stating that they had left the first site at the centre of the valley to leave it to the Spaniards. Interestingly, at this point in the lawsuit, the governor had received the 1591 document – which he presented to Martín del Pozo a few days later – and presented a narrative slightly different from the four earlier witnesses, mentioning the role of Muñoz Camargo instead of Miguel Caldera. However, he still talked about the southern boundary as being the slaughterhouse. In his narrative, he discusses the law only by using the terms “goods, favours, and privileges” (*Mercedes, favores, y privilegios*) that the Crown had granted to the Tlaxcalans in 1591. By using these words, Juan Ventura Vázquez clearly referred to the *Capitulaciones* and to their legal value, even if he never directly mentioned them. This shows that the part of his argumentation based on the *Capitulaciones* was selective. On the one hand, he emphasized on the elements that were still relevant to Tlaxcalilla’s needs, such as their rights live apart from the Spaniards. On the other hand, he omitted other elements, such as the territorial boundaries, preferring to rely on historical memory for that part of his argumentation. Overall, Ventura Vázquez acknowledged the Crown’s supreme authority in the land litigation and understood the importance of legal documents signed by the Tlaxcalan and Spanish elites. However, his narrative of the events in his petition mostly relied on memory and on a discourse adapted to the matters and context of 1628.

The case was finally settled when the lieutenant-captain general of the Chichimec frontiers and *alcalde mayor* Martín del Pozo visited the contested lands on January 8, 1629. He planned his visit and his ruling on the basis of the previous decision made by

²⁷ “[...] dejando sus pueblos, tierras y casas, en servicio de su majestad vinieron a poblar dichas tierras [...]” Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 99-101.

Gogorrón in 1619. This was a tacit acknowledgement by del Pozo that the initial settlement of Tlaxcalilla relied on no legal documentation, but that the decision rendered by the viceroy and Gogorrón represented a written legal proof of an agreement between the Crown and Tlaxcalilla on the limits of its land. Along with the papers, the fact that Gogorrón had performed a walk on the borders to show that he protected the land of Tlaxcalilla was significant to del Pozo. When he set out towards Tlaxcalilla, the notary who accompanied him titled the document “Visual account of the limits and protected area defined by Captain Pedro de Arizmendi Gogorrón.”²⁸ Not only was the documentation important, but the physical action taken to set out the limits of the territory had to be re-enacted. Del Pozo called for trustworthy elders (*personas antiguas y de satisfacción*) and two Spanish miners to accompany him to the borders of Tlaxcalilla, along with “many other people” (*otras muchas personas*).²⁹ Although it is not clearly stated, the elders were most probably indigenous elites. The delegation went to the slaughterhouse and, there, del Pozo had Gogorrón’s ruling read and asked both Spanish miners to point out where the slaughterhouse was situated. The two men took del Pozo with them and walked to the exact site and “they made him stand on the outer limit,”³⁰ from where del Pozo evaluated that Juan de la Vega’s and Pedro Galarza’s properties were well into Tlaxcalilla’s territory, almost colliding with its houses, parting from them only by “diez varas” (approximately nine metres.) According to Yannakakis, indigenous elites in Central Mexico and Oaxaca were usually the persons acting as witnesses to the lands’ limits during these procedures, and they took the heads of delegations to show the

²⁸ “Vista de ojos a la mojonera y amparo que hizo el capitán Pedro de Arizmendi Gogorrón.” Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 111.

²⁹ “[...] otras muchas personas [...]” Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 111.

³⁰ “[...] le pusieron de pies en el remate de la dicha cerca [...]” Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 113.

limits to the Spanish authorities.³¹ Here, it seems that the elders played a secondary role. The most important actors in the protection performance were the two Spanish miners who showed the location of the slaughterhouse. Notwithstanding this difference in the active role played by the indigenous elites, Tlaxcalilla ultimately won its case. Four days after visiting the limits of Tlaxcalilla, del Pozo officially ruled in favour of Tlaxcalilla. It turned out that Juan de la Vega had bought the property of Galarza in July of the previous year, and the Spanish authorities only had to evict him. Juan de la Vega most probably left his house and tile factory because Tlaxcalilla officially paid him a compensation of one hundred and ten pesos of common gold.

From a political standpoint, Tlaxcalilla used the lawsuit of 1629 to legitimize the power of its elites in the colonial context, while acknowledging the superior authority of Spanish officials. On the one hand, Tlaxcalilla reaffirmed its rights to rule over the Indian republic as an autonomous body, especially with regards to internal affairs. The litigation was about their own land and, by succeeding in evicting a non-indio, they confirmed the limits of their territory and their power over it. In addition, the outcome of the lawsuit recognized the oral tradition about the migration and founding of the town (through the acceptance of oral testimonies) and it validated the written documentation and performances from 1591 and 1617-1619. On the other hand, Tlaxcalilla's elite recognized the Spanish law by appealing to it and by using its earlier decisions. Indeed, in the ultimate struggle of 1628-1629, Tlaxcalilla's elites presented a series of documents they had kept in a safe (*recaudo*), documents that had been written and signed by Spanish officials at various times. The indigenous elites also recognized the Spanish decision of 1629 and paid the indemnity to Juan de la Vega. Unfortunately, the document does not

³¹ Yannakakis, "Witnesses, Spatial Practices, and a Land Dispute in Colonial Oaxaca," 162-163.

mention why Tlaxcalilla had to pay an indemnity to Juan de la Vega. It can only be assumed that this payment came as part of the power negotiations between Tlaxcalilla and the Spaniards, the latter seeking to recognize the rights of the indigenous community, while enforcing their own superiority in the colonial hierarchy. In addition, the use of the *defensor de indios* by Tlaxcalilla both reinforced the community's political power and represented the acceptance of the tools the colonial administration offered. On the whole, this lawsuit demonstrates the search and relative achievement of a balance of power between Tlaxcalilla and the Spaniards.

The Basis of a Complex Identity

In the light of the land litigation, how are we to consider or label the indigenous inhabitants of Tlaxcalilla? Were they Tlaxcalans, Chichimecs, or something else? Arguably, a new identity had emerged, one that was neither ethnic, nor entirely Indian. It was specific to the village because it served political, legal, and social purposes. It enabled the indigenous authorities to cite concessions granted specifically to Tlaxcalans and to use them for all members of the community without distinction of ethnic, linguistic, or cultural origin. The only condition to benefit from this legal and political identity was to be recognized as an Indian member of the community.

The basis of the Spanish legal system in the America was grounded on the system of the two republics, that of the Spaniards and that of the *indios*. Under that system, *indios* had relative autonomy and elected governors, *alcaldes*, and other authorities, although they ultimately always remained minors and under the higher authority of a Spanish magistrate. In consequence, in their legal claims, the peoples of Tlaxcalilla did

not present themselves directly as Tlaxcalans, but rather as indios living in the town of Tlaxcalilla. This identity, however, was not Indian in essence and it did not bridge all native peoples. In other words, the term Indian did not refer to a cultural or racial identity, but to a distinct legal category of the Crown's subjects.³² In addition, Tlaxcalilla had its own particular history and legal privileges and it was distinct from the other Indian towns of San Luis Potosí. It slowly built a formal corporate group organized around a Mesoamerican memory and remnants of pre-colonial social organization, as well as around Spanish law and institutions. The land litigation from 1617 to 1629 was an important expression of the growing strength of this identity, as well as a contest of power between them and lower status Spaniards.

Laura Matthew poses similar questions in her study of Ciudad Vieja in Guatemala. There, Nahuas, Mixtecs, Zapotecs, and a few other groups conquered the Mayas in the sixteenth century and established themselves in separate neighbourhoods. She finds that “the originally heterogeneous allies became an increasingly homogeneous, local, and *Guatemalan* group of colonial-era Indians.” In this process, “history and place were key.”³³ In short, the memory of the Conquest, based on the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*, came to be shared by diverse peoples co-habiting in multiethnic *parcialidades* (neighbourhoods). Through time, each *parcialidad* came to be associated with specific social positions – for instance, the elite lived in one particular neighbourhood – rather than with ethnic affiliation. The participation of individuals in the Catholic Church, in the colonial economy, and their integration into neighbourhoods became more meaningful to their identity than their origins. Hence, the differentiation

³² Yannakakis, *The Art of Being*: 14.

³³ Emphasis already in the text. Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*: 133 and 135.

between groups of indigenous peoples became grounded in the appropriation of the past and in the living place, rather than on ethnicity and origin.³⁴

Similarly, in San Luis Potosí, the history of the Tlaxcalans remained in their cultural memory and shaped their view of themselves as being “indios conquistadores.”³⁵ Historians must be careful with the use of these elements and memories. Indeed, if some see the Tlaxcalans as a continuous closed corporate political group, others have shown that this political unit and identity evolved through time. For example, Rivera Villanueva employs the continuous appeals of Tlaxcalilla to the Spanish authorities to keep its privileges and the constant use of a Tlaxcalan identity in these appeals to show that the community was formed of a continuous and lineal descent from the late sixteenth through the twentieth centuries. On the contrary, for Andrea Martínez Baracs, Tlaxcalans presented the paradox of inter-ethnic mixing while maintaining symbolic references to an imagined original identity.³⁶ This is the perspective I endorse: the Tlaxcalans did form a strong political group, but its composition, purposes, roles, memory, and strategies changed over time. The use of the term “Tlaxcalan” and the reference to the Capitulaciones of 1591 did not have the same value and meaning in 1592, in 1630, and later in the eighteenth century.

Tlaxcalans represented a very important group of migrants and formed the core population of Tlaxcalilla in 1591, but they soon attracted numerous individuals who came from diverse cultural areas of Mesoamerica to cohabit with them. In fact, in the lawsuit of 1628, the governor of Tlaxcalilla, Juan Ventura Vázquez, was the only person to clearly

³⁴ Matthew, *Memories of Conquest*: 132-177.

³⁵ Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 25-27.

³⁶ Andrea Martínez Baracs, *Un gobierno de indios: Tlaxcala, 1519-1750* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, Tlaxcala: Fideicomiso Colegio de Historia de Tlaxcala, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 2008), 230; Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 25-29.

identify himself as Tlaxcalan. The specific composition of the town is impossible to determine. The data I presented in chapter two, however, gives a very good idea of the degree of cultural diversity at the level of the whole conurbation. The sources indicate that this diversity was the same for Tlaxcalilla, and that other Nahuas, Tarascans, Otomies, and other indigenous peoples inhabited the pueblo quickly after its foundation. When marrying in 1597, a man named Pedro Miguel said he came from Zacualco and that he had been living in Tlaxcalilla for four years, that is, since 1593. In 1599, a man from Xochimilco – south of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, where the majority of the people spoke Náhuatl – claimed to have been *alcalde* of the community and he employed a Mexicano who lived in his house in Tlaxcalilla.³⁷

The presence of indigenous peoples of different origins enabled the slow creation of multiethnic bonds inside the community. As discussed in chapters five and six, ties of godparenthood and marriage contributed to the integration of individuals into the community networks. On January 15, 1597, for example, a Tlaxcalan girl named Melchora had godparents from Tlaltenango, in the Cazcan cultural area. On August 10, 1604, the Tlaxcalan girl Madalena had godparents from Tula, in the Otomi area. On October 7, 1601, the parents of Francisco who were from Ixmiquilpan in the Otomi cultural area asked the Tlaxcalans Juan Bautista and Isabel to be the godparents of their child. On December 7, 1615, the girl Luisa whose parents were from Otumba in the Nahua cultural area (admittedly close to Tlaxcala) had the Tlaxcalan Bernabe Sanchez and Angelina María as godparents.³⁸ As for marriages, as early as 1599, a man from Tlaxcala called Lucas married a woman called María who was from Ixmiquilpan, in the

³⁷ Segó, *Un homicidio*.

³⁸ APT, ByM 1594-1654, f. 5r, 53r, 39r, 111r. (Folios are in the order of presentation in the text.)

Otomi cultural area. Then, on June 28, 1604, a couple of Tlaxcalans presented as godparents to their marriage a couple from Zacualco, east of Lake Chapala.³⁹ These few examples show that the Tlaxcalan community was not formed exclusively of Tlaxcalans, and that it was not perfectly closed upon itself.⁴⁰ Baptisms and marriage created significant ties between individuals of different backgrounds and served in integrating a variety of people to the community. These ties were not thin links between communities of migrants. They involved deep, familial integration of various individuals into one, single community, which came to formally adopt one identity.

Taken together, this process of inter-ethnic mixing and the need to defend the political power of the community favoured the crystallization of an indio-Tlaxcalan identity. In other words, the community adopted a political identity based on the Tlaxcalan power and memory, as well as on the legal category of “indio” in order to integrate non-Tlaxcalans as legitimate members of the community and claimants in the lawsuits. Tlaxcalilla developed a discourse that rested on historical memory and on living place. As discussed above, in 1617, Tlaxcalilla relied on the Tlaxcalan memory of the pueblo, but its authorities also focused on the living place. They argued that no one could live in the village “against the will of the governor, mayors, and other natural *indios* of the said town of Tlaxcalilla.”⁴¹ The allusion to “indios naturales,” that is, to indigenous peoples born in the pueblo was a significant recognition that all indigenous individuals living in the community had been integrated, without consideration for their cultural

³⁹ APT, ByM 1594-1654, f. 275r and 289r.

⁴⁰ Because of the approximate data presented in the APT, it is difficult to give overall figures regarding the importance of these indigenous peoples integrating the Tlaxcalan network. See chapter two for a critical analysis of the parish records.

⁴¹ “[...] contra la voluntad del gobernador y alcaldes y demás indios naturales del dicho pueblo de Tlaxcalilla.” Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 213.

origins. In reality, indigenous peoples did not have to be born in the pueblo to become members of the community, as they could be integrated through marriage (see chapter six) or, as I will show later, they could be considered “vecinos,” that is citizens, if they had been living there for a long time.

Non-Tlaxcalan indigenous peoples were important to the community. They did not remain secondary-class members of the corporate body because of their distinct origins. The four witnesses presented in the 1628 land litigation against the Spaniard Juan de la Vega are particularly interesting in this respect. They were men over forty years of age who could testify about the land the Spanish Crown had granted to Tlaxcalilla in 1591 and of the repeated recognition of this grant. Notwithstanding their importance as witnesses of the communities’ memory, they were not Tlaxcalans. Two of them were Chichimecs and two were born in Mexico City. Interestingly, their origin was not mentioned by the authorities of Tlaxcalilla, but rather by the Spaniards as part of the preamble to the men’s testimonies. The authorities of Tlaxcalilla were presenting members of their community, not outsiders. In their discourse, the four men identified themselves as members of the community of Tlaxcalilla. The place where they lived was more important than the place of their origin. The witness Domingo Martín mentioned that he was born in Mexico City, but claimed that it had been “more or less forty years that this witness is a citizen of the town of Tlaxcalilla.”⁴² They talked about how the town received its lands, how it was essential in the pacification of the Chichimecs, but they did not detach themselves from this narrative; they wove themselves into it. The two Chichimec men acknowledged their origin saying that they had welcomed the Tlaxcalans

⁴² “[...] cuarenta años más o menos que este testigo es vecino del pueblo de Tlaxcalilla [...]” Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 90.

upon their arrival. Yet, they present themselves as complete members of the community, stating that they had lived there for many years and that they had witnessed both the granting of the lands by Miguel Caldera in 1591 and the reaffirmation of its limits by the captain of the frontier and *alcalde mayor* Pedro de Arismendi Gogorrón. Furthermore, they included themselves in the refusal from Tlaxcalilla to allow Spaniards on their lands. One of them said that the two Spaniards who had encroached on their lands “treated them badly with words, calling them dogs and drunks, and that they seek to beat them up.”⁴³ In short, the inhabitants of Tlaxcalilla remembered the community’s past and its varied origins, but they identified themselves, at least in front of the Spanish authorities, as citizens of Tlaxcalilla and as full and legitimate members of the community.

Notwithstanding this integration of a diverse population into the community, the exhibition of a strong political identity of Tlaxcalilla in front of the Spanish officials did not necessarily translate into harmonious internal relationships. The elite of Tlaxcalilla was composed of “*principales*,” that is, members of higher status who could vote for the authorities (governor, mayor, sheriff, and their assistants) of the *pueblo* every year. Unfortunately, I found no records from these internal institutions; there are no records of councils, election processes and results, or internal disputes. As well, I found no documents in native languages. There is only one exception: a demand from the governor of Tlaxcalilla, Juan Ventura Vázquez, to suspend the elections for his position in 1620. I could not find the direct petition, but I can use the response from the assistant of the viceroy, the Marquis of Guadalcazar, who summarized the appeal, described briefly the situation and his point of view, and finally agreed to suspend the elections and to

⁴³ “[...] les tratan mal de palabra diciéndoles perros, borrachos y queriendo les aporrean [...]” Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 86-87.

reappoint the governor in his position.⁴⁴ In short, Juan Ventura Vázquez feared to lose his position, from which I can infer that his authority was contested. By 1629, he was still governor of Tlaxcalilla. In 1642, however, a man named Marcos de Villa – about whom I have found no other information – was the governor and challenged Vázquez, to the extent that the latter, again, had to appeal to the viceroy for protection.⁴⁵ If Tlaxcalilla presented a united front to the Spanish authorities, internal conflicts over power clearly existed at the time and certainly involved individuals of different backgrounds.

The importance of the living place in the development of the Tlaxcalan-indio identity did not sever the community's ties to other pueblos de indios in San Luis Potosí. To the contrary, individuals came in and out of the community and developed relationships with other areas of the conurbation. For example, the Tlaxcalan María, when she married on June 24, 1629, lived in the village of San Miguel, and she was accompanied on that day by a least one Spaniard, one mestizo, and one mulata.⁴⁶ This means that Tlaxcalans could move and affiliate themselves with other corporate bodies of San Luis Potosí and that they maintained relations with other sectors of society. The creation of a formal identity expressed in lawsuits does not invalidate the informal relationships discussed in earlier chapters of this dissertation. Both processes go hand in hand in the construction of complex indigenous identities and affiliations.

In summary, the Tlaxcalan-indio identity displayed by Tlaxcalilla was based on malleable versions of memory and space. First, the memory presented is strictly that of the Tlaxcalan migrants, while the community was in reality multi-ethnic. This version of memory seems to have been adopted by all members of influence of Tlaxcalilla, for they

⁴⁴ AGN, IC, RA, Indios, vol. 7, exp. 451.

⁴⁵ AGN, IC, RA, Indios, vol. 14, exp. 22.

⁴⁶ APT, ByM 1594-1654, f. 335r.

do not display openly any form of dissent, even though we know dissent existed. Second, the fact of inhabiting the pueblo became more important than any other factor in being affiliated to the community.

The importance of the living place, or of space, is tied to another important component of identity: the sacred.⁴⁷ In the context of San Luis Potosí, the sacred was represented by the relationship between the community and God, via the Franciscans as teaching intermediaries. Franciscans acted as protectors of the community's religious purity against what they judged to be as negative Spanish influence. This protection took the form of preaching, but also of defending the community's territorial integrity, for the missionaries thought the Spanish influence negative. In the land claim of 1629, the community created a link to the religious and to the sacred when Juan Ventura Vázquez presented three influential members of the Franciscan order as witnesses. When introducing the testimonials, Vázquez insisted on the long-lasting ties that united his people to the Franciscans. These testimonies clearly show that the Franciscans sponsored and protected Tlaxcalilla in their struggles against Spaniards, mostly with the objectives of preventing the negative and perverse influence of the Spanish. For the head of the Franciscan convent, Juan Larios, the presence of Spaniards on Tlaxcalilla's land had impeded the service of God. Furthermore, Spaniards gave bad counsel and negative examples to the Indians that were utterly harmful to them and to their republic. According to all three Franciscans, this phenomenon was exacerbated by the presence of the two Spanish men on Tlaxcalilla's territory. They insisted that their houses were situated at only fifteen to twenty steps from the last Indian house of the town, insinuating that the threat against indigenous spirituality was close and direct. Overall, the three

⁴⁷ Yannakakis, "Witnesses, Spatial Practices, and a Land Dispute in Colonial Oaxaca," 161-164.

Franciscans exposed a situation in which the Juan de Vega and Pedro Garza weakened the relation between the people of Tlaxcalilla and God and that the protection of the pueblo's territory was absolutely necessary to reverse this process.

The Spanish authorities also integrated parts of the Tlaxcalan discourse in their responses to the pueblo, which shows a certain process of negotiation over law and identity. Tlaxcalilla succeeded in making the law work for them, while the vice-royalty accepted the indio-tlaxcalan identity to avoid this case becoming jurisprudence. In 1622, the Conde de Priego, the viceroy's lieutenant, accepted another demand from Tlaxcalilla that Spaniards be expelled from their territory. In theory, Spanish law prohibited any non-indio from living in indio territory. Priego nonetheless did not mention the law and rather mentioned the Tlaxcalans' migration. He grounded his argumentation on the historical narrative that Tlaxcalans had been of great service to the Crown by migrating from Tlaxcala to San Luis Potosí and that they had successfully "reduced" the Chichimecs of the area. He added that, if Tlaxcalilla was to further lose lands and be invaded by grazing animals, its population would not be able to survive and would have to leave, which could trigger a revolt of the Chichimecs.⁴⁸ By using this specific Tlaxcalan narrative, Priego acknowledged the right of Tlaxcalilla to its sovereignty on its territory, but he impeded other communities in New Spain from using systematically the same argumentation about indigenous land rights. Taken together, all the documents dealing with land issues in Tlaxcalilla testify to a tacit agreement on both sides (Tlaxcalilla and Spanish) that the people inhabiting the town were indios, but with a particular historical background that made them different from other indios. They had been and still were willing and necessary to help the Crown in its colonial enterprise.

⁴⁸ AGN, IC, RA, Indios, vol. 9, exp. 365.

In sum, the Tlaxcalan migrants retained strong kinship ties among themselves, but this did not exclude the integration of individuals from other ethnic and cultural origins into their networks of social relations. This integration of new-comers, the evolution of the memory about the Tlaxcalan establishment in San Luis Potosí, the growing reference to living space, and the spiritual tie to the Catholic Church through the Franciscans, all led to the creation of a strong corporate and political identity. A similar process of identity construction existed in most of the communities around San Luis Potosí. For example, the authorities of San Miguel fought against the presence of negros, mulatos, mestizos, and Spaniards in 1604 and 1609, grounding their claims on the original 1597 document signed by Saavedra.⁴⁹ This indio-Tlaxcalan identity was nonetheless not rigid and definitive. While most historians have shown the disappearance of the Guachichils in the first half of the seventeenth century, probably by assimilation to the Tlaxcalans and other Amerindians, Guachichil identity resurfaced over a century later, in the midst of a juridical battle about lands between Tlaxcalilla and Santiago del Río. In four documents between 1745 and 1761, each town disclosed a specific ethnic identity: Tlaxcalilla held on to a Tlaxcalan identity and Santiago to a Chichimec Guachichil identity. This collision between two political understandings of their communities, which culminated in an overnight brawl, testifies to the fleeting nature of political identities and of the continuous need to adjust rhetoric in accordance with the current debates and juridical system.⁵⁰ The reliance on place and memory, however, always remained an important aspect of this identity creation.

⁴⁹ Velázquez, *Colección de documentos*, I: 332-345; Galván Arellano, *Arquitectura y urbanismo*: 162.

⁵⁰ AHESLP, AM, 1745, caja 2, exp. 8; Rivera Villanueva, *Documentos inéditos*: 221-239 and 255-352.

Identity and the Protection of Community Members

Corporate bodies were important to indigenous peoples of San Luis Potosí because, as shown in the previous section, they served to defend the *pueblos de indios*, their lands, and their rights. Communities also used the strength of their corporations to defend individuals affiliated to them. When they faced the colonial justice or when they were victims of exactions from their employer or any other Spaniard, indigenous peoples could ask the help of the indigenous authorities to defend themselves, or at least to intercede in their favour. In this section, I analyze a court case in which the authorities of Santiago del Río interceded in favour of a couple they regarded as members of their community against a Spanish employer.⁵¹

The agency of Amerindians in this case is very clear. On May 29, 1624, the mayor, the sheriff, and another man from the village of Santiago petitioned the lieutenant-captain general of the Chichimec frontier and *alcalde mayor* of San Luis Potosí, Juan Cerezo Salamanca, and placed a criminal complaint against the Spaniard Gerónimo de Vega.⁵² They stated that he had kidnapped from the public place of the *barrio* two members of their community, María Isabel and Juan Lázaro. The two persons, who had just married, were held in jail for the whole month of May. The authorities of Santiago wrote that it was “a serious offense and that according to the laws of the kingdom and of his majesty he [Gerónimo de Vega] must be punished with all rigor.”⁵³

This sentence was one of the formulas typically used at the time in matter of criminal

⁵¹ AHESLP, AM, 1624, caja 4, exp. 2.

⁵² Because Gerónimo de Vega had the same last name as Juan de la Vega, and because Santiago del Río was included in the land litigation opposing Tlaxcalilla to the later Spaniard (Santiago being a section of Tlaxcalilla), it would be interesting to know if both the land litigation and this case were related. However, I have found no information to link without a doubt both Spanish men.

⁵³ “delito grave y que según las leyes del reino y de su majestad debe ser casti[gado con todo] rigor [...]” AHESLP, AM, 1624, caja 4, exp. 2, f. 3r.

complaints, but the three men writing the petition were authority figures who, typically, knew how to read and write, and in this precise case all three signed the letter. It is thus clear that they put all their weight into the petition so that the couple would be freed and the culprit punished. The authorities in this case did not passively suffer the violence of the Spaniard on their community, nor did they react violently outside the legal framework. On the contrary, they used the Spanish legal system to react and tried to take advantage of it for their own benefit.

The two imprisoned characters in this event also showed a high degree of agency, even though at first sight they appear only to be victims. Both individuals were migrants. María Isabel was born in the neighbourhood of Mexicapan in Guadalajara, which fact, combined with her use of Náhuatl in the document, indicates that she might have been a descendant of the Nahuatl conquerors of Nueva Galicia.⁵⁴ She first moved to San Luis Potosí with a man she had married in her home town. After some years, they went back to Guadalajara where her husband died. María Isabel then moved again to San Luis with her two children. Juan Lázaro had migrated from Tlazazalca in Michoacán to San Luis Potosí with his family while he was in his mid-teens and worked for many Spaniards. In his case, he took action in creating and maintaining ties with the Tarascans of Santiago del Río, many of which were also from Tlazazalca. This network would prove extremely useful in the complaint against Gerónimo de Vega.

The construction of interpersonal relations took many forms. First, the work sites outside of the community contributed to link individuals. María Isabel and Juan Lázaro

⁵⁴ The Conquest of western Mesoamerica, which became Nueva Galicia under the colonial administration, involved thousands of Nahuas, Otomies, and Tarascans, many of which established in the area after the war. See Matthew and Oudijk, *Indian Conquistadors*; Álvarez, "Conquista y encomienda."; Altman, *The War for Mexico's*.

met while they were working for the Spaniard Simón Luis in Monte Caldera. Their web of relations was then reinforced by their marriage in the monastery of San Francisco, celebrated by fray Juan Larios – the same who later helped the Tlaxcalans in their land litigation against Juan de la Vega in 1628. The document does not tell of a special connection between the couple and the Church, but the fact that the marriage was not celebrated in the parish of Santiago where they had their contacts, but rather in the chief location of the Franciscans in the central town suggests a closer relation with the order. Both groom and bride presented witnesses whom they had known for over a decade. Juan Lázaro asked two men who came from the same area of Michoacán as he did. María Isabel presented two persons who had known her late husband, one of them being from Guadalajara. The ties they had with the people of Santiago appear to have been strong enough to ask for help. Before kidnapping the husband and wife, Gerónimo de Vega first found María Isabel earlier in 1624 and forced her to go back working for him. Juan Lázaro was too sick to take action, but found shelter in Santiago. María Isabel, seeking to find Juan Lázaro asked the help of relatives who lived in the neighbourhood and, having found Juan Lázaro, she rejoined him with her children. The reconstituted family did not live long in Santiago before being kidnapped. Until then, they surely frequented public spaces and met many people of the community because Gerónimo de Vega captured them on the public place of Santiago, in front of many members of the community.

The construction of the community is also illustrated in the person of the alguacil mayor (chief sheriff), Juan Andrés, who filed the complaint with the alcalde of Santiago. Juan Andrés was, too, an immigrant from the Tarascan village of Chilchota. Two years earlier, he had married Isabel Petrona, who was a native from the neighbourhood. The six

witnesses at their wedding were all *vecinos*, that is, citizens, of Santiago. And more importantly, Juan Andrés' first witness was Simón Cristóbal, the *alcalde* of the community. Entering this network, Juan Andrés gathered support for other members of the community and rose to the position of chief sheriff. By 1624, he was able to support Juan Lázaro. With the approval of other members of the community, such as the *alcalde* and another man call Petuche Constantino, he presented the petition against the Spaniard Gerónimo de Vega to the Spanish authorities.⁵⁵

In the initial claim by the authorities of Santiago, the defence of the community is very strong. As such, they wrote “[...] an indio of our village named Juan Lázaro married her [María Isabel] and brought her to live in our village; and while they were calm and cohabiting as husband and wife, the said Gerónimo de Vega seized them on the plaza of this town and with violence and force took them to his hacienda.”⁵⁶ The long construction of social relations in Santiago over the years, first undertaken by Juan Lázaro and then also by María Isabel, turned the process of social affiliation into an identity incorporated around the circles of civil and religious power in the community. Perhaps more interesting is that the Santiago identity did not serve only communal interests as shown with the case of Tlaxcalilla, but also the interests and rights of individual members of the *barrio* through legal protection.

In the end, the Spaniard de Vega had better legal resources and was able to keep María Isabel in his service because she had a debt she could not pay in money. Juan

⁵⁵ The marriage of Juan Lázaro and María Isabel is registered in the APT, ByM 1594-1654, f. 326v, April 24, 1624. The marriage of Juan Andrés and Isabel Petrona is in the same book, f. 321v, April 8, 1622.

⁵⁶ “[...] un indio de nuestro pueblo llamado Juan Lázaro se caso con ella y trajo al dicho nuestro pueblo a vivir; y estando quietos y cohabitando como marido y mujer, el dicho Gerónimo de Vega los cogió en la plaza de este pueblo y con violencia y por fuerza los llevo a su hacienda [...]” AHESLP, AM, 1624, caja 4, exp. 2, f. 3.

Lázaro decided to follow suit and went working for de Vega with María Isabel and her two children. He does not explain his renunciation of his affiliation with Santiago. It is possible that, having to choose between community life without his wife and hacienda life with her, he chose the second option. In any case, the links tying the couple to Santiago and the petition from the indigenous elite of the barrio leave no doubt that they were members of the corporate body and that they, or any other member of the community, could receive legal support for the community.

Conclusion

The agency of indigenous peoples in the organisation and development of San Luis Potosí was very important. The overarching structures, including law and the organisation of the society in corporate bodies, were Spanish in origin. Nonetheless, indigenous peoples internalized, reproduced, and modified the components of these structures. They developed social networks in spaces of sociability, and then sought to protect the members of these networks. To do so, they built corporate identities that could be used in legal claims. Corporate identities based on the pueblos and barrios appeared to be related to ethnic affiliation, but the development of such formal identities contrasted with the informal and multi-ethnic networks.

Individuals came to benefit from belonging to a community, in particular when involved in litigations and civil prosecutions. These identities rested on a rhetoric of memory, place, and justice, so that members of communities could acquire more privileges, protect their land rights, and defend their kin. In short, over the two generations under study, I see the passage from a high number of diverse individuals to a

limited number of communities each defining its own identity with political and juridical objectives. The result was a plurality of indio formal identities based on the Indian towns around San Luis Potosí.

Conclusion

Mobility was an essential component of the construction of indigenous peoples' identifications and identities in San Luis Potosí. With the exception of the local Guachichils, all indigenous peoples were migrants who came from hundreds of kilometres away. They were Tarascans, Nahuas, Otomies, Cocas, Tecuexes, Cazcans, and a few other cultural groups. Contacts between these peoples were constant in the pre-colonial era, and were exacerbated during the conquests of Mesoamerica and throughout the sixteenth century. In many areas where Spaniards brought with them indigenous allies, these contacts became part of daily life, and the necessity to communicate made indigenous peoples learn the languages of their new neighbours. When they arrived in San Luis Potosí, the daily encounters, the presence of different languages, and the mobility remained significant in the organisation of their lives.

The example of María Isabel and Juan Lázaro that I narrated in the introduction and analysed in chapter eight is a case in point. María Isabel may have been a descendant of the Nahua conquerors and settlers of Nueva Galicia. She first arrived in San Luis Potosí with her husband and children, went back to Guadalajara, and moved again to San Luis when her husband died. There, she worked for different employers and made contacts between the Cerro de San Pedro and Santiago del Río. She also remained in touch with peoples from Guadalajara, as one of her witnesses in the criminal proceedings was a woman from that city. Her great mobility across New Spain and within the conurbation evolved into complex affiliations with various groups of people. She could claim to be from the specific neighbourhood of Guadalajara called Mexicapan. She could also identify with the labour team in which she established her second consensual

relationship and family. Finally, she was clearly identified by the authorities of Santiago del Río as a member of that community, which offered her legal support. Similarly, Juan Lázaro came from Michoacan, worked for different Spaniards, and developed strong ties with the Santiago del Río community. Since the dominant language of Michoacan was Tarascan and since many of his contacts in Santiago were Tarascan peoples, he must have spoken that language and have relied on this Tarascan identification to build his social life in San Luis Potosí. In addition, Juan Lázaro spoke Náhuatl and probably used that language when talking with María Isabel and with other co-workers on the Cerro de San Pedro. The mobility of this couple thus translated in different affiliations to language groups, the family unit, work sites, and urban communities. These different identifications did not contradict each other; they complemented each other and opened new opportunities to María Isabel and Juan Lázaro. They could get support from peoples of their home communities, from their community of adoption in San Luis Potosí, from their co-workers, and from family members.

The construction of such a complex conurbation, with many poles to which indigenous peoples could affiliate themselves, took place throughout the period under study, from the arrival of the Tlaxcalans in 1591 to 1630. In fact, this process started with the migrations, sometimes even before 1591. Indigenous migrants left communities in complete transformation, destructured and sometimes destroyed by the conquests and by colonialism. Epidemics, forced resettlements, coerced labour, and land dispossession pushed numerous indigenous peoples out of their home towns in search of better opportunities. The northern mines, among which was San Luis Potosí, offered free wage labour and other commercial possibilities, which were attractive to the migrants.

Recruiters for Spanish mine owners particularly aimed at attracting Tarascans who had developed good skills in the mining and smelting industries in Michoacan. The Otomies, for their part, had undertaken a slow migration north starting in the 1520s. They then became aides to the Spanish during the Chichimec war and traders in the second half of the sixteenth century. The Cazcans were as well important carriers of merchandise between the mining cities of northern New Spain and Mexico City.

The migration experiences contributed in making the indigenous population able to adapt to the circumstances of the urban setting. The majority of indigenous peoples lived this migration experience as individuals or as small groups of families and friends. Only the Tlaxcalans, whom the Crown mandated to help settle the Chichimecs, moved in a large, organised fashion. From the information I found in the criminal documents, moreover, most migrants did not go straight from their community of origin to San Luis Potosí. Their journeys were at times round-trips or consisted of small hops from one town to another. On the road, they encountered different cultural groups, faced a variety of landscapes, made contacts in foreign villages and towns, and sometimes learned new languages. Some encountered love and friendship on the way, formed new families and groups of friends, and took those with them to San Luis Potosí. This capacity for adaptation, already found in the home communities, but further developed en route, was an essential component in the organisation of the mining town's society.

The indigenous peoples of San Luis Potosí structured their society in two phases, roughly corresponding to the generation of the first migrants and then to that of their children. Migrations to and out of the conurbation never stopped, but a core population took root in the area and contributed to the development of its physical and social

structures. The development of communities, either as pueblos and barrios de indios or as labour teams, was at the heart of this structuring process.

The first phase, from 1591 to the early 1610s, was marked by the arrival of indigenous peoples, the formation of the pueblos and barrios de indios, the establishment of Amerindians on work sites such as haciendas de beneficio, carboneras, ranchos, and workshops, by improvisation rather than efficient planning, and by the presence of more violent conflicts in comparison to the next phase. As I have shown in chapter four, indigenous peoples actively participated in the formation of San Luis Potosí and they appropriated their living space. Most historians of the mining town describe this society as organized according to ethnic group. I have demonstrated, however, that other factors, such as labour, skills, trade, and proximity to the Spanish society, had also a significant impact on the development of indigenous communities in the form of pueblos and barrios de indios, as well as in the form of labour teams. In addition, the nature of San Luis Potosí as an economic hub gave rise to a social differentiation among the indigenous population that came to rest on their capacity to produce and to accumulate wealth. As such, smelters and craftsmen were paid better and their work had higher value both among the Spanish and Amerindians. Indigenous craftsmen in particular developed closer relationships with the Spanish society, in part because many of them lived among Spaniards in the centre of town and because, at least as apprentices, their masters provided them with the same equipment and garments as all other craftsmen, regardless of their race.

Indigenous use and shaping of spaces, as well as daily encounters were the most significant elements in this process of structuring the Amerindian society. Ore-processing

facilities, charcoal-making operations, farms, and workshops were not only places where indigenous peoples laboured. They were also living spaces that Amerindians appropriated and shaped to their needs and daily lives. There, they cooked, ate, slept, and chatted together, creating enmities, friendships, and love relationships that became the basis of communities of labourers. These loose ties became institutionalised by the Catholic sacraments of marriages and baptisms. Friends became witnesses in marriages or godparents of children. The multiplication of such bonds created tightly knit communities that resembled the Mesoamerican complex family, although in a setting overseen by Spaniards. Overtime, the seemingly chaotic nature of San Luis Potosí's development gave rise to well organized communities in the pueblos and barrios de indios as well as on work sites. Social structures were based on spaces, nuclear and extended families, and Catholic rituals.

The decade of the 1610s represents a turn in the organization of indigenous San Luis Potosí because of the crystallization of the structures of society. The children of the immigrants came to adult life, married, and started working. Throughout the years, they became always more prominent in the regional population. They formed new couples according to the local context, to their living and working place, and to the familial-like bounds their parents had built upon their arrival. Their ethnic origin became less important in their social relations than their living community. At the same time, the immigrants who kept entering the valley did not face the previous chaos-like, loose society of early San Luis. They arrived in well organized Indian towns and work sites. Those who married in San Luis Potosí often benefited from their spouse's contacts, and marriage itself became an act of social integration of the new-comers. By the late 1620s,

when the economic downturn had started, a core permanent indigenous population had taken roots in the communities of San Luis Potosí.

The greatest expression of this crystallization of indigenous social structures was the development of official identities in the pueblos and barrios de indios. Despite being heterogeneous, indigenous communities developed their corporate discourse in such a way that, before Spanish authorities, they might appear as one, united, and homogeneous. A strong incentive to the development of such identities was the growing land pressure in the valley and on indigenous communities. Indeed, these political identities were mostly expressed in juridical conflicts concerning land between indigenous communities and Spaniards. The case of Tlaxcalilla was particularly important. From 1617 to 1629, the community built its identity on the legal category of *indios* and on the historical privileges obtained by the Tlaxcalans who had migrated to San Luis Potosí in 1591. The combination of both allowed the authorities of Tlaxcalilla to rest their claims on the advantageous Capitulaciones they had signed with the Crown, while continuing to integrate non-Tlaxcalan indigenous peoples to the community. Indeed, if the social structures crystallized, mobility, however, did not stop. Indigenous peoples from all over Mesoamerica kept coming in, and members of the community continued to emigrate further north to other mining sites. In addition, the corporate community identity built by Tlaxcalilla and other Indian towns was based on the act of walking on the communities' borders. This was the ultimate action in putting identities in motion.

The construction of strong political identities also enabled communities to protect their members from the exploitation of some Spanish employers. Santiago del Río provided one such example in 1624 in defending a couple that had been abducted by their

previous employer. The authorities of the community appear to have been the only people able to speak and give notice to the *alcalde mayor*. The community was ultimately unsuccessful, but the two affected members received relatively fair treatment, in the sense that the *alcalde mayor* carried out an investigation and interrogated all parties in the process.

The communities that indigenous peoples built in San Luis Potosí did not develop in total isolation. On the contrary, the symbiosis between the various social nuclei was such that it is possible to call San Luis Potosí a conurbation. It was a conglomerate of suburbs, neighbourhoods, and working communities arrayed around an urban centre. These parts developed in such an interdependent way that, together, they formed an overarching society above the communities. Individuals and communities developed ties among themselves and made identification with the community just one of the possible options. Mobility was also key in the development of this interdependent conurbation. Indigenous workers moved between haciendas, those living in the *pueblos* and *barrios de indios* sold their agricultural products on the public plazas, craftsmen lived in the centre of Spanish town and could work in the Indian towns. Through this mobility, indigenous peoples learned new languages and met other indigenous cultures; they extended their familial contacts out of their community and to other parts of the conurbation; they built economic ties and exposed their relative wealth, for example in the form of better clothing, to others. This had two consequences. On the one hand, it contributed to building the social hierarchy in economic terms. These interactions throughout the conurbation exacerbated the difference between individuals in their skill levels, possibilities to make a better pay, to acquire more valuable possessions, and to display

one's economic wealth. On the other hand, it blurred the process of community identity creation. Indeed, individuals could live in the pueblos and barrios de indios, be employed by one Spaniard, go work for another one, and create economic and familial contacts in all of these places. In the end, the formal political identity of communities became stronger and adopted a discourse of homogeneity. However, community members could identify to many areas of town, and their affiliations were various, blurred, and malleable. Such was the identification of Juan Lázaro. The authorities of Santiago del Río identified him as a community member. Bartolomé Bocado identified him as his criado. Simón Luis said he had worked for him. Then, Gerónimo de Vega also identified him as a criado. Finally, he was the husband of María Isabel. In short, the construction of formal identities for the communities did not translate into one, homogeneous, stable identity for individuals. Rather, individual identifications were a mosaic of affiliations.

Among the markers of identity, three main concepts stand out in this dissertation: gender, economy, and ethnicity. The place of men and women in society appears to have been under transition in the formative years of San Luis Potosí. For one thing, numerous criminal proceedings indicate that men were integrating the principles of Spanish patriarchy in their relation to their spouse. Abuses perpetrated by husbands on their wives appear to have been fairly common. The communities seemed to support their male members in their need to correct the wrongs allegedly done by their female members. And women tried to evade these abuses, notably by fleeing. In parallel to this situation, however, indigenous women participated actively in the economic and social life of San Luis Potosí. On work sites and in communities, they grew, prepared, and cooked the food, they cleaned the laundry, and took care of the children. More importantly, they also

contributed to the economic well-being of their family by attending to guests who rented a room in their house, sold a part of their production on the public places of town, and sometimes represented their husbands in courts. Finally, they often acted as social brokers, tying families, workers, and other individuals who would otherwise have little to connect them. Overall, the status of indigenous women in San Luis Potosí appears to have been lower than that of men, but their significance in the construction of this society is undeniable.

The economy served in creating a social hierarchy based on the individuals' abilities and possibilities to acquire and display wealth. Most indigenous peoples worked as menial staff on haciendas de beneficio. Indeed, most positions in these work sites required few skills, though a few positions necessitated some knowledge; only the work of the smelter was recognized as a qualified and valued job. Indigenous peoples in haciendas began to differentiate themselves on the basis of these skills. In addition, these skills could translate into greater wealth and markers of higher social status, such as through clothing. The capacity of certain individuals to acquire clothing of higher quality strongly differentiated their social standing from that of other indigenous peoples. This situation extended to other work sites and to the whole conurbation. The act of walking around town wearing or of trading such clothes signified the individuals' position not only to its community, but to all inhabitants of San Luis Potosí. Such a situation appears to have been particularly the case of craftsmen, who, as apprentices, enjoyed similar treatment and economic conditions as apprentices of all other castes. Once their apprenticeships were over, they became skilled and demanded craftsmen. In addition, they lived in proximity to the Spanish world, were culturally better integrated into it, and

often benefited from better legal protection because of this proximity. In comparison to other indigenous peoples of San Luis Potosí, indigenous craftsmen were among the better placed in the economic and social hierarchy.

Throughout this dissertation, I have tried to nuance the role of ethnicity in the organization of indigenous societies. Historians have emphasized the role of this marker or identity to the extent that many sketch San Luis Potosí as a group of ethnically segregated clusters. Some agree that there were interactions between ethnic groups, but still present the communities as constructed around the ethnic background of its members. Ethnicity was indeed an important factor in structuring indigenous San Luis Potosí. Tlaxcalilla was founded by Tlaxcalans and the presence of these peoples in that pueblo de indios remained significant. Santiago del Río was founded by Guachichiles, but by the 1620s, most of its members appear to have been Tarascans. The study of marriages has shown that most of them united men and women who came from the same home community or, at least, from the same cultural area. Ethnicity also played a role in facilitating social relationships; speaking the same language and having the same cultural referents eased discussions and contacts.

However, there are many indications that ethnicity was counter-balanced in many ways. First, I have shown that many indigenous peoples were multilingual and spoke different native languages. As well, the migrations and contacts prior to the immigration in San Luis Potosí facilitated inter-ethnic social relationships in the mining town. Finally, it appears that Spanish employers paid little attention to ethnicity when they hired workers. To save on costs, they often sent their recruiters in specific areas, mostly in Michoacan. This, however, did not translate into homogeneous labour teams. Most work

sites were composed of individuals of various origins. In addition, the pueblos and barrios de indios were also ethnically diverse. Numerous Tarascans and Mexicanos – that is non-Tlaxcalan Nahuas – lived in Tlaxcalilla, Nahuas, Tarascans, and Otomies lived in San Miguel, and many indigenous peoples from Nueva Galicia settled everywhere in the conurbation. In all these places, inter-ethnic marriages tempered the role of ethnicity in structuring indigenous San Luis Potosí. Even more important was the emergence of corporate identities, which were based on the work sites and Indian towns, that is on the living space, rather than on origin. People made friends and family with others living in the same community of labourers or with their neighbours, as well as with the people they met in their daily interactions across town. In short, if origin and cultural background facilitated social relationships, it was not the primal marker of identity, nor was it the most important factor in structuring the indigenous society of San Luis Potosí.

Notwithstanding these factors of social differentiation, I have made clear throughout this dissertation that the indigenous peoples living in San Luis Potosí contributed significantly in the development of this mining town. They participated in the construction of houses, haciendas de beneficios, carboneras, workshops, churches, plazas, and other buildings. They worked in the mines, in the ore-processing facilities, in the fields, in the markets, and on the roads. They participated in the development of a well integrated and flourishing economy that stayed very lively even when the silver production and exportation fell. They made the places where they worked and where they lived their own spaces. There, they built their homes, families, and groups of friends.

One of the greatest contributions of the indigenous peoples of San Luis Potosí was their use of the juridical system and of law to negotiate their place and political power in

the colonial society. For Tlaxcalilla, by 1629, this use of the law translated in the official recognition of the lands the Crown had given to the community upon the arrival of the Tlaxcalans almost four decades earlier. Through their juridical actions, the authorities of Tlaxcalilla consolidated their power in the valley, even against some Spaniards. Indigenous peoples did not stop using the law in 1629. As the colonial period advanced, political institutions became more institutionalized. By the end of the seventeenth century, historians can even consult the election results of the pueblos and barrios de indios for some years. While they took part in a more fully institutionalized system, indigenous authorities also increasingly used the law to redress some wrongs they had suffered, to assert their power inside their communities, or to legally fight against outsiders. In this sense, a study of indigenous peoples' use of the juridical system in San Luis Potosí over the *longue durée* would shed more light on the construction of this complex and active society.

Appendix 1

Rural source communities in the Nahua, Otomi, and Tarascan regions, and some of their characteristics

Locality	First indigenous language	Other minor indigenous languages	Epidemics ¹	Congregations ²	Encomiendas ³	Encroachment ⁴
34. Acámbaro	Tarascan	Otomi, Náhuatl	X	X	X	X
35. Aguanuato V	Tarascan		X	X		
36. Apatzingán T	Tarascan	Nahua		X		
37. Aranza V	Tarascan		X	X		
38. Capacuaro V	Tarascan		X	X		
39. Charapa Xi	Tarascan		X	X		X
40. Chilchota (Cirapo)	Tarascan	Guamares, Guachichils, and Tecuexes		X		X
41. Chocandiro V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
42. Comanja V	Tarascan		X		X	
43. Congoripo	Tarascan	Matlatzincan and Apaneca	X	X		
44. Copandaro	Tarascan	Pame		X		
45. Cuiseo	Tarascan	Pame		X		
46. Guango V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
47. Guaniqueo (Huaniqueo) V	Tarascan		X	X		
48. Indaparapeo V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
49. Jacona (Xacona) Xa	Tarascan	five native languages counted in 1573 ⁵		X		X

¹ The community faced over 50 % lost of population in the late sixteenth century epidemics, mostly in 1576-1581. The double X indicates high lost in population in the epidemic of 1595-1597 or 1604-1607.

² The community went through at least one congregation between 1593 and 1605.

³ There was an enduring *encomienda*, at least into the 1590s.

⁴ There were Spanish encroachments on the lands of indigenous peoples in the 1590s and 1600s.

⁵ Gerhard attributes these numerous native languages to the numerous indigenous troops passing by Jacona during and after the Mixton War. Gerhard, *A Guide*: 399-400.

Locality	First indigenous language	Other minor indigenous languages	Epidemics ¹	Congregations ²	Encomiendas ³	Encroachment ⁴
50. Maravatio Ma	Tarascan	Mazahuan	X	X		X
51. Numarán V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
52. Pamacorán (Punguacuarán) V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
53. Parangaricutiro V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
54. Patzcuaro V.	Tarascan		X	X		
55. Periban Xi	Tarascan		X	X	X	X
56. Pichátaro V	Tarascan		X	X		
57. Puruándiro V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
58. Sabiñan (Sevina) V	Tarascan		X	X		
59. Sayula	Tarascan	Nahua (Sayultecan)	XX	X	X	X
60. Tacámbaro V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
61. Tancitaro T	Tarascan	Nahua		X	X	
62. Tangancicuaro Xa	Tarascan	Nahua		X		X
63. Tapalpa	Tarascan		XX	X	X	
64. Tarímbaro V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
65. Taximaroa Ma	Tarascan	Otomi	X	X	X	
66. Terecuato Xi	Tarascan		X	X	X	X
67. Teremendo V	Tarascan		X	X		
68. Tingambato V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
69. Tiripitio V	Tarascan		X	X		
70. Tlazazalca (Uralca)	Tarascan	Guamares, Guachichils, and Tecuexes; Náhuatl		X		X
71. Tonila	Tarascan	Xilotlantzinca (Nahua)	X	X		
72. Tzintzuntzan V	Tarascan		X	X		
73. Ucareo	Tarascan	Mazahuan (Otomi)	X	X		
74. Urapa V	Tarascan		X			
75. Uruapán V	Tarascan		X	X	X	

Locality	First indigenous language	Other minor indigenous languages	Epidemics ¹	Congregations ²	Encomiendas ³	Encroachment ⁴
76. Xirosto V	Tarascan		X	X	X	
77. Zacapo V	Tarascan		X	X		
78. Zacualco	Tarascan	Nahua (Pinome)	XX	X	X	
79. Zapotlán	Tarascan	Nahua	X	X		
80. Zinapécuaro	Tarascan	Mazahuan (Otomi)	X	X		
Total Tarascan			39/47	45/47	21/47	10/47
81. Chiconautlan	Náhuatl	Otomi	X	X		
82. Cholula						
83. Culhuacan						
84. Cuyoacán	Náhuatl	Otomi		X	X	X
85. Guautitlan	Náhuatl		X	X		
86. Ytzocan	Náhuatl		X	X		
87. México						
88. Otumba	Náhuatl (elite)	Otomi (important)	X	X	X	
89. Puebla						
90. Tacuba	Náhuatl	Matlatzinca (Otomi)	X	X	X	
91. Tacubaya						
92. Teocaltzinco	Náhuatl			X	X	
93. Tepeaca						
94. Tepeapulco	Náhuatl	Otomi and Pame	X	X		
95. Tepoztlan						
96. Tequila	Náhuatl		X	X		
97. Texcoco						
98. Tlalnepantla	Náhuatl	Otomi	X	X		
99. Toluca	Náhuatl (elite)	Matlazincas, Otomi, and Mazahuan	X	X		X
100. Tultitlan	Náhuatl	Otomi	X	X	X	
101. Xalapa	Náhuatl (elite)	Totonac		X		
Total Náhuatl			10/13	13/13	5/13	2/13
102. Actopan	Otomi	Pame	X	X	X	
103. Alfaxayuc	Otomi	Pame and Náhuatl	XX	X		X

Locality	First indigenous language	Other minor indigenous languages	Epidemics ¹	Congregations ²	Encomiendas ³	Encroachment ⁴
a						
104. Cempoala	Otomi	Pame and Náhuatl		X		X
105. Charo (Matlatcingo)	Otomi (Matlatzinca)	Tarascan		X	X	X
106. Cimapan	Otomi	Pame and Náhuatl		X		X
107. Guachiapa (Hueychiapan)	Otomi	Pame	XX	X	X	X
108. Ixmiquilpan	Otomi	Pame	XX	X		
109. Metepec	Otomi	Matlatzinca, Mazahuan, Náhuatl	XX	X	X	X
110. Pachuca	Otomi	Náhuatl and Pame	X		X	X
111. Querétaro	Otomi	Pame (original pop.)		X	X	X
112. San Juan del Río	Otomi	Pame (original pop.)		X	X	X
113. Sichú (Xichu)	Otomi	Pame (original pol.), Náhuatl, and Tarascan				X
114. Tapaxco	Otomi	Mazahuan and Náhuatl	XX	X	X	
115. Tlalpuxagua	Otomi (Mazahuan)	Tarascan (elite), Pame, Náhuatl	X	X		X
116. Tula	Otomi	Náhuatl	XX	X		X
117. Tulancingo	Otomi	Náhuatl	XX	X	X	X
118. Xilotepec	Otomi	Mazahuan and Náhuatl	XX	X	X	X
119. Yrapeo	Otomi (Matlatzinca)	Tarascan		X		
120. Zapotlan	Otomi	Náhuatl and Pame	X	X		X

Locality	First indigenous language	Other minor indigenous languages	Epidemics ¹	Congregations ²	Encomiendas ³	Encroachment ⁴
Total Otomi			12/19	17/19	10/19	15/19
Total			61/79 (77 %)	75/79 (95 %)	36/79 (49 %)	27/79 (34 %)

Urban source communities in the Nahua, Otomi, and Tarascan regions, and some of their characteristics

Locality	First indigenous language	Other minor indigenous languages	Epidemics ⁶	Congregations ⁷	Encomiendas ⁸	Encroachment ⁹
Texcoco (Acolhuaque)	Náhuatl	Otomi	X			
Cholula	Náhuatl					X
México	Náhuatl	Otomi and others				
Puebla	Náhuatl	Otomi	X		X	X
Tepeaca	Náhuatl	Otomi and Popolocan	X	X		X
Guayangareo (Valladolid) V	Tarascan (elite)	Matlatzinca (Otomi)				X

Michoacán: Some migrants to SLP indicate that they were from Michoacán. Because this could refer to the whole region, we did not consider this place as a specific community, nor gave details. The persons who said they were from Michoacán were considered as Tarascan speakers.

⁶ The community faced over 50 % lost of population in the late sixteenth century epidemics, mostly in 1576-1581.

⁷ The community went through at least one congregation between 1593 and 1605.

⁸ The community was an enduring *encomienda*, at least into the 1590s.

⁹ There were known Spanish encroachments on the lands of indigenous peoples in the 1590s and 1600s.

Abbreviations for Sources

The sources used in this dissertation are described at length in chapter one. Here are the abbreviations used in the footnotes.

AGN, IC: Archivo General de la Nación (Mexico), Instituciones Coloniales

- **RA:** Fondo Real Audiencia
- **RPI:** Fondo Regio Patronato Indiano

AHESLP, AM: Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí, Alcaldía Mayor

APT, ByM: Archivo Parroquial de Tlaxcalilla, libro de Bautizos y Matrimonios, 1594-1654

APS: Archivo Parroquial de El Sagrario

BNM: Biblioteca Nacional de México

Bibliography

- Acuña, René. *Relaciones geográficas del siglo XVI: Michoacán*. Vol. 9. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1987.
- . *Relaciones geográficas del siglo XVI: Nueva Galicia*. Vol. 10. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1988.
- Alcántara Gallegos, Alejandro. "Los barrios de Tenochtitlan. Topografía, organización interna y tipología de sus predios." In *Historia de la vida cotidiana en México. Mesoamérica y los ámbitos indígenas de la Nueva España*. Vol. 1, edited by Pablo Escalante Gonzalbo, 167-198. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica and El Colegio de México, 2004.
- Altman, Ida. *The War for Mexico's West: Indians and Spaniards in New Galicia, 1524-1550*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010.
- Álvarez, Salvador. "Conquista y encomienda en la Nueva Galicia durante la primera mitad del siglo XVI: "Bárbaros" y "civilizados" en las fronteras americanas." *Relaciones* 29, no. 116 (2008): 135-188.
- Andrien, Kennet J. *Andean Worlds; Indigenous History, Culture, and Consciousness under Spanish Rule, 1532-1825*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001.
- Ares Queija, Berta and Serge Gruzinski, eds. *Entre dos mundos. Fronteras culturales y agentes mediadores*. Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1997.
- Arriola Díaz Viruell, Luis Alberto. "Danna Levin y Federico Navarrete (coords.), *Indios, mestizos y españoles. Interculturalidad e historiografía en la Nueva España*, México, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Azcapotzalco, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, «Humanidades, Serie Estudios, Biblioteca de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades», 2007, 290 pp. ISBN 978-970-31-0856-5." *Historia Mexicana* 232 LVIII, no. 4 (2009): 1489-1497.
- Asselbergs, Florine. *Conquered Conquistadors. The Lienzo de Quauhquechollan: A Nahua Vision of the Conquest of Guatemala*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2008.
- Austin Alchon, Suzanne. *A Pest in the Land. New World Epidemics in a Global Perspective*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003.
- Ayala, Manuel Josef de. *Diccionario de Gobierno y Legislación de Indias*. Vol. I. Madrid: Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, 1988.

- Baber, R. Jovita. "Empire, Indians, and the Negotiation for the Status of City in Tlaxcala, 1521-1550." In *Negotiation within Domination: New Spain's Indian Pueblos Confront the Spanish State*, edited by Ethelia Ruiz Medrano and Susan Kellogg, 19-44. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2010.
- . "Law, Land, and Legal Rhetoric in Colonial New Spain. A Look at the Changing Rhetoric of Indigenous Americans in the Sixteenth Century." In *Native Claims: Indigenous Law against Empire, 1500-1920*, edited by Saliha Belmessous, 41-62. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Bakewell, Peter. *Silver Mining and Society in Colonial Mexico, Zacatecas, 1546-1700*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.
- Behar, Ruth. *Las visiones de una bruja Guachichil en 1599: Hacia una perspectiva indígena sobre la conquista de San Luis Potosí*. San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis, 1995.
- . "The Visions of a Guachichil Witch in 1599: A Window on the Subjugation of Mexico's Hunter-Gatherers." *Ethnohistory* 34, no. 2 (1987): 115-138.
- Beltran, Ulises. "Tarascan State and Society in Prehispanic Times; An Ethnohistorical Inquiry." PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1982.
- Bénat Tachot, Louise and Serge Gruzinski, eds. *Passeurs culturels; Mécanismes de métissage*. Paris: Presses universitaires de Marne-la-Vallée et Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme Paris, 2001.
- Berenzon Gorn, Boris. "El Péndulo de la memoria: metáfora de la historiografía del siglo XX." In *Historiografía crítica del siglo xx*, edited by Boris Berenzon Gorn, 9-24. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2004.
- Bernard, Carmen and Serge Gruzinski. *Histoire du nouveau monde. Les métissages (1550-1640)*. Paris: Fayard, 1991.
- Boccaro, Guillaume. *Guerre et ethnogenèse Mapuche dans le Chili colonial; L'invention du soi*. Paris et Montréal: L'Harmattan, 1998.
- . "Rethinking the Margins/Thinking from the Margins: Culture, Power, and Place on the Frontiers of the New World." *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 10, no. 1 (2003): 59-81.
- Boyer, Richard. "Mexico in the Seventeenth Century: Transition of a Colonial Society." In *Readings in Latin American History*. Vol. 1, *The Formative Centuries*, edited by Peter J. Bakewell, John J. Johnson and Meredith D. Dodge, 87-104. Durham: Duke University Press, 1985.

- Brading, David A. *Miners & Merchants in Bourbon Mexico, 1763-1810*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.
- Braniff C., Beatriz. "Introducción." In *La Gran Chichimeca; El lugar de las rocas secas*, edited by Beatriz Braniff C., 7-12. Mexico and Milan: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes and Editoriale Jaca Book Spa, 2001.
- , ed. *La Gran Chichimeca: el lugar de las rocas secas*. Mexico and Milan: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes y Dirección General de Publicaciones, 2001.
- Brooks, James F. *Captives & Cousins. Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
- Burkhart, Louise M. "Mexica Women on the Home Front: Housework and Religion in Aztec Mexico." In *Indian Women of Early Mexico*, edited by Susan Schroeder, 25-54. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997.
- Burns, Kathryn. *Into the Archive. Writing and Power in Colonial Peru*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Butterworth, Douglas and John K. Chance. *Latin American Urbanization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Caillavet, Chantal and Martin Minchom. "Le Métis imaginaire: idéaux classificatoires et stratégies socio-raciales en Amérique latine (XVI^e-XX^e siècle)." *L'Homme* 32, no. 122 (1992): 115-132.
- Carmagnani, Marcello. *El regreso de los dioses; El proceso de reconstitución de la identidad étnica en Oaxaca, siglos XVII y XVIII*. Mexico: Fondo de cultura económica, 1988.
- Carrasco, Pedro. "The Joint Family in Ancient Mexico: The Case of Molotla." In *Essays on Mexican Kinship*, edited by Hugo G. Nutini, Pedro Carrasco and James Taggart, 45-64. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976.
- Carrillo Cázares, Alberto. *El debate sobre la Guerra Chichimeca, 1531-1585; Derecho y política en la Nueva España*. Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán y El Colegio de San Luis, 2000.
- . *Michoacán en el otoño del siglo XVII*. Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán; Gobierno del Estado de Michoacán, 1993.
- Castillo Palma, Norma Angélica. "Deux lectures des métissages mexicains: Le rapport mariages mixtes, illégitimité et phénotypes identités, Cholula, 1649-1796." In *Histoire des métissages hors d'Europe: Nouveaux mondes? Nouveaux peuples?*,

- edited by Bernard Grunberg and Monique Lakroum, 107-123. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999.
- Castro Gutiérrez, Felipe. "El origen y conformación de los barrios de indios." In *Los indios y las ciudades de Nueva España*, edited by Felipe Castro Gutiérrez, 105-122. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010.
- . "Los indios y la ciudad. Panorama y perspectivas de investigación." In *Los indios y las ciudades de Nueva España*, edited by Felipe Castro Gutiérrez, 9-33. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 2010.
- , ed. *Los indios y las ciudades de Nueva España*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 2010.
- . *Los Tarascos y el imperio español, 1600-1740*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, 2004.
- Chance, John K. "The Barrios of Colonial Tecali: Patronage, Kinship, and Territorial Relations in a Central Mexican Community." *Ethnology* 35, no. 2 (1996): 107-139.
- . "Introduction." In *City Indians in Spain's American Empire; Urban Indigenous Society in Colonial Mesoamerica and Andean South America*, edited by Dana Velasco Murillo, Mark Lentz and Margarita R. Ochoa, 1-7. Brighton, Portland, and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, 2012.
- . "The Noble House in Colonial Puebla, Mexico: Descent, Inheritance, and the Nahua Tradition." *American Anthropologist* 102, no. 3 (2000): 485-502.
- . *Race and Class in Colonial Oaxaca*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978.
- . "The Urban Indian in Colonial Oaxaca." *American Ethnologist* 3, no. 4 (1976): 603-632.
- Clendinnen, Inga. *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517-1570*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. 1987.
- . *Aztecs: An Interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- "Congregaciones (031)." *Guía general de los fondos, secciones y series que resguarda el Archivo General de la Nación de México*. <http://www.agn.gob.mx/guiageneral/> (accessed September 15, 2011).

- Cook, Nobel David. *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492-1650*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Cook, Sherburne F. and Woodrow Borah. *The Aboriginal Population of Central Mexico on the Eve of the Spanish Conquest*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963.
- . *Essays in Population History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971-1979.
- . *The Indian Population of Central Mexico, 1531-1610*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960.
- Cooper, Frederick and Rogers Brubaker. "Identity." In *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*, edited by Frederick Cooper, 59-90. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2005.
- Cope, R. Douglas. *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1994.
- Cordero de Burgos, Carmen. "Un episodio en la colonización del norte." In *Girones de Historia*, edited by Tomás Calvillo Unna, 53-57. Mexico: Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí, 1991.
- Cosentino, Delia. "Genealogías pictóricas en Tlaxcala colonial: nobles afirmaciones del orden social." *Relaciones 105 XXVII* (2006): 205-236.
- Covarrubias Orozco, Sebastián de. *Tesoro de la lengua castellana, o española*. Madrid: Luis Sanchez, impressor del Rey N.S., 1611. <http://fondosdigitales.us.es/fondos/libros/765/16/tesoro-de-la-lengua-castellana-o-espanola/>.
- Cramaussel, Chantal. "Peupler la frontière. La province de Santa Barbara (Mexique) aux XVI^{ème} et XVII^{ème} siècles." PhD dissertation, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1997.
- Dean, Carolyn S. "Ethnic Conflict and Corpus Christi in Colonial Cuzco." *Colonial Latin American Review* 2, no. 1-2 (1993): 93-120.
- Decoster, Jean-Jacques. "Identidad étnica y manipulación cultural: La indumentaria inca en la época colonial." *Estudios Atacameños*, no. 29 (2005): 163-170.
- del Río, Ignacio. "Sobre la aparición y desarrollo del trabajo libre asalariado en el Norte de Nueva España, siglos XVI y XVII." In *Estudios históricos sobre la formación del Norte de México*, edited by Ignacio del Río, 27-46. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2009.

- Diccionario de Autoridades*. Tomo V. Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1737. <http://web.frl.es/DA.html>.
- Diccionario de Autoridades*. Tomo IV. Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1734. <http://web.frl.es/DA.html>.
- Diccionario de la lengua española*. Madrid: Real Academia Española and Editorial Espasa Calpe, 2001. <http://lema.rae.es/drae/>.
- Escalante Gonzalbo, Pablo. "El México Antiguo." In *Nueva historia mínima de México*, edited by Pablo Escalante Gonzalbo *et al.*, 11-57. Mexico: El Colegio de México, 2004. Reprint, 2008.
- España. *Recopilación de las leyes de los reynos de las indias*. Madrid: Iulian de Paredes, 1681. <http://fondosdigitales.us.es/fondos/libros/752/14/recopilacion-de-leyes-de-los-reynos-de-las-indias/?desplegar=8191&desplegar=8190&desplegar=8193>.
- Espejel Carbajal, Claudia. *La justicia y el fuego. Dos claves para leer la Relación de Michoacán*. Vol. I. Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán, 2008.
- Farriss, Nancy M. *Maya Society under Colonial Rule; The Collective Enterprise of Survival*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Fenn, Elizabeth. *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2001.
- Few, Martha. *Women Who Live Evil Lives: Gender, Religion, and the Politics of Power in Colonial Guatemala*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002.
- Frye, David. *Indians into Mexicans; History and Identity in a Mexican Town*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996.
- Galván Arellano, Alejandro. *Arquitectura y urbanismo de la ciudad de San Luis Potosí en el siglo XVII*. San Luis Potosí: Facultad del Hábitat, Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, 2006. 1999.
- García Castro, René. *Indios, territorio y poder en la provincia Matlatzinca. La negociación del espacio político de los pueblos otomianos, siglos XV-XVII*. Zinacantepec: El Colegio Mexiquense, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1999.
- Gerhard, Peter. *A Guide to the Historical Geography of New Spain*. Rev. ed. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993. First published 1972 by Cambridge University Press.

- . *The North Frontier of New Spain*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982.
- Gibson, Charles. *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964.
- . "The Identity of Diego Muñoz Camargo." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 30, no. 2 (1950): 195-208.
- . *Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952.
- Gonzalbo Aizpuru, Pilar. "La familia novohispana y la ruptura de los modelos." *Colonial Latin American Review* 9, no. 1 (2000): 7-19.
- . "Los límites de las mentalidades." In *Memorias del simposio de historiografía mexicanista*, 475-486. México: Comité Mexicano de Ciencias Históricas; Gobierno del Estado de Morelos; Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, UNAM, 1990.
- Greer, Allan. "Commons and Enclosure in the Colonization of North America." *American Historical Review* 117, no. 2 (2012): 365-386.
- Grijalva, Manuel Miño. "Las dimensiones productivas de los obrajes de Puebla y México en 1597." *Relaciones. Estudios de historia y sociedad* XXXIV, no. 134 (2013): 195-208.
- Gruzinski, Serge. *La colonisation de l'imaginaire; sociétés indigènes et occidentalisation dans le Mexique espagnol, XVI^e-XVIII^e siècle*. Paris: Gallimard, 1988.
- . *La pensée métisse*. Paris: Fayard, 1999.
- Guerra, Francisco. "Origen y efectos demográficos del tifo en el México colonial." *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 8, no. 3 (1999): 273-319.
- Hardoy, Jorge E. "La forma de las ciudades coloniales en la América Española." In *Estudios sobre la ciudad iberoamericana*, edited by Francisco de Solano, 315-344. Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas, Instituto "Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo", 1983.
- Haskett, Robert S. "'Our Suffering with the Taxco Tribute': Involuntary Mine Labor and Indigenous Society in Central New Spain." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 71, no. 3 (1991): 447-475.
- Hernández López, Conrado. "Introducción: tendencias y corrientes de la historiografía mexicana del siglo xx." In *Tendencias y corrientes de la historiografía mexicana el siglo xx*, edited by Conrado Hernández López, 11-32. Zamora: El Colegio de

- Michoacán, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 2003.
- Herrejón Peredo, Carlos. *Los orígenes de Morelia: Guayangareo-Valladolid*. 2nd ed. Mexico and Zamora: Frente de Afirmación Hispanista and El Colegio de Michoacán, 2000. First published 1991 by El Colegio de Michoacán.
- Horstman, Connie and Donald V. Kurtz. "Compadrazgo and Adaptation in Sixteenth Century Central Mexico." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 35, no. 3 (1979): 361-372.
- Hosler, Dorothy. *The Sounds and Colors of Power: The Sacred Metallurgical Technology of Ancient West Mexico*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994.
- Hosler, Dorothy, Heather Lechtman, and Olaf Holm. *Axe-Monies and their Relatives*. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1990.
- Jalpa Flores, Tomás. "Migrantes y extravagantes. Indios de la periferia en la ciudad de México durante los siglos XVI-XVII." In *Los Indios y las ciudades de Nueva España*, edited by Felipe Castro Gutiérrez, 79-104. Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010.
- Jones, David. "Virgin Soils Revisited." *William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (2003): 703-742.
- Kellogg, Susan. *Law and the Transformation of Aztec Culture, 1500-1700*. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995.
- Kicza, John E. "Migration to Major Metropoles in Colonial Mexico." In *Migration in Colonial Spanish America*, edited by David J. Robinson, 193-211. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Kinsbruner, Jay. *The Colonial Spanish American City; Urban Life in the Age of Atlantic Capitalism*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005.
- Klarén, Peter F. and Thomas J. Bossert, eds. *Promise of Development; Theories of Change in Latin America*. Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1986.
- Lastra, Yolanda. *Los Otomíes: su lengua y su historia*. Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2006.
- Lavallé, Bernard. *L'Amérique espagnole de Colomb à Bolivar*. Paris: Belin, 2004.
- , ed. *Transgression et stratégies du métissage en Amérique coloniale*. Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1999.

- Lempérière, Annick. *Entre Dieu et le Roi, la République; Mexico, XVI^e-XIX^e siècles*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2004.
- Leon-Portilla, Miguel. *The Broken Spears; The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* [Visión de los Vencidos]. Translated by Lysander Kemp. Boston: Beacon Press, 1962. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1959.
- Levaggi, Abelardo. "Répubblica de Indios y república de Españoles en los Reinos de Indias." *Revista de Estudios Histórico-Jurídicos*, no. 23 (2001): 419-428.
- Lockhart, James. *The Nahuas after the Conquest: A Social and Cultural History of the Indians of Central Mexico, Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992.
- López Austin, Alfredo and Leonardo López Luján. *El pasado indígena*. 2nd ed. México: El Colegio de México, Fideicomiso Historia de las Américas, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001. 1996.
- López Mora, Rebeca. "Entre dos mundos: Los indios de los barrios de la ciudad de México." In *Los indios y las ciudades de Nueva España*, edited by Felipe Castro Gutiérrez, 57-77. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010.
- Los siete barrios de San Luis Potosí*. San Luis Potosí: H. Ayuntamiento de San Luis Potosí, Dirección de desarrollo cultural departamento de turismo municipal, 2003.
- MacLeod, Murdo J. "Mesoamerica since the Spanish Invasion: An Overview." In *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*. Vol. II, *Mesoamerica*, Part 2, edited by Richard E. W. Adams and Murdo J. MacLeod. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Mallon, Florencia. "The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History." *American Historical Review* 99, no. 5 (1994): 1491-1515.
- Mancuso, Lara. *Cofradías mineras: Religiosidad popular en México y Brasil, siglo XVIII*. Mexico: Centro de Estudios Históricos, El Colegio de México, 2007.
- Mangan, Jane E. "A Market of Identities: Women, Trade, and Ethnic Labels in Colonial Potosí." In *Imperial Subjects: Race and Identity in Colonial Latin America*, edited by Andrew B. Fisher and Matthew D. O'Hara, 61-80. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009.
- . *Trading Roles: Gender, Ethnicity, and the Urban Economy in Colonial Potosí*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.

- Márquez Joaquín, Pedro, ed. *¿Tarascos o Purépecha?: voces sobre antiguas y nuevas discusiones en torno al gentilicio michoacano*. Morelia: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo; El Colegio de Michoacán; Gobierno del Estado de Michoacán; Universidad Intercultural Indígena de Michoacán; Grupo Kw'anísduyarhani de Estudiosos del Pueblo Purépecha; Fondo Editorial Morevallado, 2007.
- Martínez Baracs, Andrea. "Colonizaciones tlaxcaltecas." *Historia Mexicana* 43, no. 2 (1993): 195-250.
- . *Un gobierno de indios: Tlaxcala, 1519-1750*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, Tlaxcala: Fideicomiso Colegio de Historia de Tlaxcala, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 2008.
- Martínez Rosales, Alfonso. *Documentos de la hacienda de La Tenería*. Mexico: Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí, 1991.
- Martínez Saldaña, Tomás. *La diáspora tlaxcalteca; Colonización agrícola del norte mexicano*. Tlaxcala: Tlaxcallan, Ediciones del Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala, 1998.
- Matthew, Laura E. *Memories of Conquest. Becoming Mexicano in Colonial Guatemala*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012.
- Matthew, Laura E. and Michel R. Oudijk, eds. *Indian Conquistadors; Indigenous Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007.
- Matthew, Laura E. and Sergio F. Romero. "Nahuatl and Pipil in Colonial Guatemala: A Central American Counterpoint." *Ethnohistory* 59, no. 4 (2012): 765-783.
- McCaa, Robert. "Matrimonio infantil, 'cemithualtin' (familias complejas) y el antiguo pueblo nahua." *Historia Mexicana* 46, no. 1 (1996): 3-70.
- Meade, Joaquín and Rafael Almanza. *Los Agustinos en San Luis Potosí*. San Luis Potosí: Archivo Histórico del Estado de San Luis Potosí, 1989.
- Melville, Elinor G. K. *A Plague of Sheep: Environmental Consequences of the Conquest of Mexico*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Mendoza Ontiveros, Martha Marivel. "El compadrazgo desde la perspectiva antropológica." *Alteridades* 20, no. 40 (2010): 141-147.
- Monroy Castillo, Isabel and Tomás Calvillo Unna. *Historia regional de San Luis Potosí*. México: SEP, CONALEP, Limusa, 2000.

- Monroy, María Isabel and Tomás Calvillo Unna. *Breve historia de San Luis Potosí*. Mexico: El Colegio de México, Fideicomiso Historia de la Américas, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1997.
- Montejano y Aguiñaga, Rafael. "La evolución de los Tlaxcaltecas en San Luis Potosí." In *Constructores de la nación. La migración tlaxcalteca en el norte de la Nueva España*, edited by María Isabel Monroy Castillo, 79-87. San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis y Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala, 1999.
- Montoya, Alejandro. "Población y sociedad en un real de minas de la frontera norte Novohispana: San Luis Potosí, de finales del siglo XVI a 1810." PhD diss., Université de Montréal, 2004.
- Navarrete, Federico. *Las relaciones interétnicas en México*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2004.
- Nutini, Hugo G. and Betty Bell. *Ritual Kinship. The Structure and Historical Development of the Compadrazgo System in Rural Tlaxcala*. Vol. I. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.
- Nutini, Hugo G. and Barry L. Isaac. *Social Stratification in Central Mexico, 1500-2000*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009.
- Oswaldo, Encalada. "Geosemántica popular." *Cultura Popular*, no. 59 (2012): 47-68.
- Oudijk, Michel R. "Nahua and Zapotec Colonial Experiences." Review of *The Conquest all Over Again: Nahuas and Zapotecs Thinking, Writing, and Painting Spanish Colonialism*, edited by Susan Schroeder. *A Contra corriente* 8, no. 2 (2011): 383-391.
- Oudijk, Michel R. and Matthew Restall. "Mesoamerican Conquistadors in the Sixteenth Century." In *Indian Conquistadors; Indigenous Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica*, edited by Laura E. Matthew and Michel R. Oudijk, 28-63. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007.
- Owensby, Brian P. *Empire of Law and Indian Justice in Colonial Mexico*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.
- Paredes Martínez, Carlos. "Grupos étnicos y conflictividad social en Guayangareo-Valladolid, al inicio de la época colonial." In *Lengua y etnohistoria purépecha; Homenaje a Benedict Warren*, edited by Carlos Paredes Martínez, 315-332. Morelia: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo; Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 1997.

- . "Los barrios indígenas de la ciudad de Valladolid de Michoacán en la época colonial." In *Urbi indiano. La larga marcha a la ciudad diversa*, edited by Virginia Molina and Oscar González, 103-127. Mexico: Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México, 2005.
- Pollard, Helen Perlstein. *Tariácuri's Legacy; The Prehispanic Tarascan State*. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993.
- Poloni-Simard, Jacques. *La mosaïque indienne; Mobilité, stratification sociale et métissage dans le corregimiento de Cuenca (Équateur) du XVI^e au XVII^e siècle*. Paris: École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2000.
- Powell, Philip Wayne. "The Forty-Niners of Sixteenth-Century Mexico." *Pacific Historical Review* 19, no. 3 (1950): 235-249.
- . *Mexico's Miguel Caldera; The Taming of America's First Frontier, 1548-1597*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1977.
- . *Soldiers, Indians, and Silver; The Northward Advance of New Spain, 1550-1600*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969. 1952.
- Powers, Karen Vieira. *Women in the Crucible of Conquest. The Gendered Genesis of Spanish American Society, 1500-1600*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005.
- Radding, Cynthia. *Wandering Peoples. Colonialism, Ethnic Spaces, and Ecological Frontiers in Northwestern Mexico, 1700-1850*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Restall, Matthew. *Maya Conquistador*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1998.
- . *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Restall, Matthew and Florine Asselbergs. *Invading Guatemala; Spanish, Nahua, and Maya Accounts of the Conquest Wars*. University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007.
- Revel, Jacques. "Micro-analyse et construction du social." In *Jeux d'échelles; La micro-analyse à l'expérience*, edited by Jacques Revel, 15-36: Gallimard and Le Seuil, 1996.
- . "Présentation." In *Jeux d'échelles; La micro-analyse à l'expérience*, edited by Jacques Revel, 7-14: Gallimard; Le Seuil, 1996.

- Reyman, Jonathan E., ed. *The Gran Chichimeca: Essays on the Archaeology and Ethnohistory of Northern Mesoamerica*. Aldershot, Brokfield, Hong Kong, Singapore, Sydney: Avebury, 1995.
- Rivera Villanueva, José Antonio. *Documentos inéditos para el estudio de los tlaxcaltecas en San Luis Potosí, siglos XVI-XVIII*. Tlaxcala: Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala and Fideicomiso Colegio de Historia de Tlaxcala, 2009.
- . "La influencia tlaxcalteca en la vida política de los pueblos indios de San Luis Potosí (1590-1620)." In *Constructores de la nación. La migración tlaxcalteca en el norte de la Nueva España*, edited by María Isabel Monroy Castillo, 89-102. San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis y Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala, 1999.
- . *Los Tlaxcaltecas: pobladores de San Luis Potosí*. San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis, 1999.
- Robinson, David J. "Introduction: Towards a Typology of Migration in Colonial Spanish America." In *Migration in Colonial Spanish America*, edited by David J. Robinson, 1-17. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Rodriguez Loubet, François. *Les Chichimèques: Archéologie et ethnohistoire des chasseurs-collecteurs du San Luis Potosí, Mexique*. Mexico: Centre d'études mexicaines et centraméricaines, 1985.
- Ruiz Medrano, Ethelia. *Mexico's Indigenous Communities. Their Lands and Histories, 1500-2010*. Translated by Russ Davidson. Bolder: University Press of Colorado, 2010.
- Salazar González, Guadalupe. *Las haciendas en el siglo XVII en la región minera de San Luis Potosí; Su espacio, forma, función, material, significado y estructuración regional*. San Luis Potosí: Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, 2000.
- Schroeder, Susan. "Introduction." In *Indian Women of Early Mexico*, edited by Susan Schroeder, Stephanie Wood and Robert Haskett, 3-22. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997.
- Schwartz, Stuart B. and Frank Salomon. "New Peoples and New Kinds of People: Adaptation, Readjustment, and Ethnogenesis in South American Indigenous Societies (Colonial Era)." In *The Cambridge history of the native peoples of the Americas. Volume III: South America. Part 2*, edited by Stuart B. Schwartz and Frank Salomon, 443-501. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Seed, Patricia. *To Love, Honor, and Obey in Colonial Mexico; Conflicts over Marriage Choice, 1574-1821*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988.

- Sego, Eugene. *Aliados y adversarios: Los colonos tlaxcaltecas en la frontera septentrional de Nueva España*. Mexico: El Colegio de San Luis, Gobierno del estado de Tlaxcala, Centro de Investigaciones Históricas de San Luis Potosí, 1998.
- . "Six Tlaxcalan Colonies on New Spain's Northern Frontier: a comparison of success and failure." PhD diss., University of Indiana, 1990.
- . *Tlaxcalilla. Otra mirada a su historia*. San Luis Potosí: Centro de Investigaciones Históricas de San Luis Potosí, 1995.
- . *Un homicidio del siglo XVI en Tlaxcalilla: el caso de Pascualillo*. San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis, 1997.
- Silverblatt, Irene. *Moon, Sun, and Witches. Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- Socolow, Susan Migden. *The Women of Colonial Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Solano, Francisco de. *Ciudades hispanoamericanas y pueblos de indios*. Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas, 1990.
- . "Urbanización y municipalización de la población indígena." In *Estudios sobre la ciudad iberoamericana*, edited by Francisco de Solano, 241-268. Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas, Instituto "Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo", 1983.
- Soustelle, Jacques. *La famille Otomi-Pame du Mexique central*. Paris: Institut d'ethnologie, 1937.
- Spalding, Karen. *Huarochirí: An Andean Society under Inca and Spanish Rule*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984.
- Stark, Barbara L. and John K. Chance. "Diachronic and Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Mesoamerican Ethnicity." In *Ethnic Identity in Nahua Mesoamerica: The View from Archaeology, Art History, Ethnohistory, and Contemporary Ethnography*, edited by Frances F. Berdan *et al.*, 1-37. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2008.
- Stern, Steve. "Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System in the Perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean: 'Ever More Solitary'." *The American Historical Review* 93, no. 4 (1988): 886-897.

- Stern, Steve J. "Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System in the Perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean." *The American Historical Review* 93, no. 4 (1988): 829-872.
- . *Peru's Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest. Huamanga to 1640*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1982.
- . *The Secret History of Gender; Women, Men, and Power in Late Colonial Mexico*. Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995.
- Swann, Michael M. *Migrants in the Mexican North; Mobility, Economy, and Society in a Colonial World*. Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1989.
- . "Migration, Mobility, and the Mining Towns of Colonial Northern Mexico." In *Migration in Colonial Spanish America*, edited by David J. Robinson, 143-181. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Taggart, James. "Nahuat Ethnicity in a Time of Agrarian Conflict." In *Ethnic Identity in Nahua Mesoamerica: The View from Archaeology, Art History, Ethnohistory, and Contemporary Ethnography*, edited by Frances F. Berdan *et al.*, 183-203. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2008.
- Taylor, William B. *Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979.
- Townsend, Camilla. "Burying the White Gods: New Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico." *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 3 (2003): 1-27.
- Tutino, John. *Making a New World: Founding Capitalism in the Bajío and Spanish North America*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011.
- Valenzuela-Márquez, Jaime. "Une société dépersonnalisée? Ordre colonial et référents identitaires à Santiago du Chili au XVII^e siècle." In *Transgression et stratégies du métissage en Amérique coloniale*, edited by Bernard Lavallé, 193-163. Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1999.
- Van Young, Eric. "The Indigenous Peoples of Western Mexico from the Spanish Invasion to the Present." In *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*. Vol. II: *Mesoamerica*, part 2, edited by Richard E. W. Adams and Murdo J. MacLeod. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Vázquez Chamorro, Germán. "Introduction." In *Historia de la nación chichimeca*, edited by Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl. Madrid: Historia 16, 1985.

- Velasco Murillo, Dana. "Laboring above Ground: Indigenous Women in New Spain's Silver Mining District, Zacatecas, Mexico, 1620—1770." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 93, no. 1 (2013): 3-32.
- . "Urban Indians in a Silver City, Zacatecas, Mexico, 1546-1806." PhD Diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2009.
- Velasco Murillo, Dana, Mark Lentz, and Margarita R. Ochoa, eds. *City Indians in Spain's American Empire; Urban Indigenous Society in Colonial Mesoamerica and Andean South America*. Brighton, Portland, and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, 2012.
- Velasco Murillo, Dana and Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva. "Mine Workers and Weavers. Afro-Indigenous Labor Arrangements and Interactions in Puebla and Zacatecas, 1600-1700." In *City Indians in Spain's American Empire; Urban Indigenous Society in Colonial Mesoamerica and Andean South America*, edited by Dana Velasco Murillo, Mark Lentz and Margarita R. Ochoa, 104-127. Brighton, Portland, and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press, 2012.
- Velázquez, Primo Feliciano. *Colección de documentos para la historia de San Luis Potosí*. Vol. I. San Luis Potosí: Imprenta del Editor, 1897.
- . *Historia de San Luis Potosí*. Vol. 2. Mexico: Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística, 1947.
- . *Historia de San Luis Potosí*. Vol. I: *De los tiempos nebulosos a la fundación del pueblo de San Luis Potosí*. Mexico: Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística, 1946.
- Viqueira, Juan Pedro. *Encrucijadas Chiapanecas; Economía, religión e identidades*. Mexico: Centro de Estudios Históricos, El Colegio de México; Tusquets Editores México, 2002.
- Wachtel, Nathan. *La vision des vaincus; Les Indiens du Pérou devant la Conquête espagnole, 1530-1570*. Paris: Gallimard, 1971.
- . *Le retour des ancêtres: Les Indiens Urus de Bolivie XX^e-XVI^e siècle; Essai d'histoire régressive*. Paris: Gallimard, 1990.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel. "Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System in the Perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean: Comments on Stern's Critical Tests." *The American Historical Review* 93, no. 4 (1988): 873-855.
- Warren, J. Benedict. *The Conquest of Michoacán: The Spanish Domination of the Tarascan Kingdom in Western Mexico, 1521-1530*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985.

- White, Sophie. *Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians: Material Culture and Race in Colonial Louisiana*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.
- Wightman, Ann M. *Indigenous Migration and Social Change; The Forasteros of Cuzco, 1570-1720*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990.
- Wilson, Tamar Diana. "The Culture of Mexican Migration." *Critique of Anthropology* 30, no. 4 (2010): 399-420.
- Wright Carr, David Charles. "El calendario mesoamericano en las lenguas otomí y náhuatl." *Tlalocan* 16 (2009): 217-253.
- . "Lengua, cultura e historia de los Otomíes." *Arqueología Mexicana* 13, no. 73 (2005): 26-29.
- . *Querétaro en el siglo XVI: Fuentes documentales primarias*. Querétaro: Dirección de Patrimonio Cultural, Secretaría de Cultura y Bienestar Social, Gobierno del Estado de Querétaro, 1993.
- Yannakakis, Yanna. *The Art of Being In-between; Native Intermediaries, Indian Identity, and Local Rule in Colonial Oaxaca*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008.
- . "Indigenous Peoples and Legal Culture in Spanish America." *History Compass* 11, no. 11 (2013): 931-947.
- . "Introduction: How Did They Talk to One Another? Language Use and Communication in Multilingual New Spain." *Ethnohistory* 59, no. 4 (2012): 667-674.
- . "Witnesses, Spatial Practices, and a Land Dispute in Colonial Oaxaca." *The Americas* 65, no. 2 (2008): 161-192.
- Zermeño Padilla, Guillermo. "La historia. ¿Una ciencia en crisis? Teoría e historia en Mexico, 1968-1988: Una primera aproximación." In *Memorias del simposio de historiografía mexicanista*, 26-32. México: Comité Mexicano de Ciencias Históricas; Gobierno del Estado de Morelos; Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, UNAM, 1990.