¡PALENQUE!: CROSS CULTURAL EXCHANGE AMONG INDIGENOUS AND AFRICAN PEOPLES IN 17th CENTURY VERACRUZ, MEXICO

By

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Chicano/Latino Studies – Doctor of Philosophy
Sociology – Dual Major

2021

ABSTRACT

¡PALENQUE!: CROSS CULTURAL EXCHANGE AMONG INDIGENOUS AND AFRICAN PEOPLES IN 17th CENTURY VERACRUZ, MEXICO

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With the arrival of 16th century Spanish migrants to the Americas came new geopolitical identities, racial and cultural hierarchies, and the transformation of social relationships between and among Indigenous communities in Mesoamerica. The Spanish were accompanied by both free and enslaved Africans who transformed the social, cultural, and racial structures of what would later become New Spain. In the context of this historical reality, this dissertation will explore two Afro-Indigenous *palenques*, or self-liberated settlements, by the names of *San Lorenzo de los Negros* (Yanga) and *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Amapa* (Mandinga), using a case study approach that combines analysis of primary archival data and secondary literary sources. By exploring self-liberated communities, I will reconstruct a narrative about Afro-Indigenous alliances and their multiple forms of collective resistance against their colonial conditions. The goal is to historicize the African presence as they coalesced with the Indigenous world in New Spain. Additionally, my goal is to demonstrate how European modernity was a key operating ideology in the assignment of their racial/ethnic identities.

This dissertation examines the following: 1) investigates and trace the historical processes that made colonial Veracruz a location of cross-cultural exchange; 2) to examines how two distinct colonized groups adapted themselves to their new social relations initiated by Spanish colonialism in order to form their respective *palenques*; 3) explore how the Spanish racialization project reorganized the racial/ethnic identities of its' subjects for colonial stability. Overall, this dissertation addresses the literary gap in Sociology and Chicano/Latino Studies concerning the social processes that created the need for *palenques* during the colonial Mexican era.

Dedicated to Max Monroy-Miller

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are an innumerable set of people that helped me finish this project. The first of which are my ancestral family members in Zacatecas and Coahuila, Mexico. My gratitude extends to those I was unable to meet and those whose relations were cut off or limited by the U.S.-Mexico border. They were/are cultivators of farmlands and families. My parents, Yolanda Ramirez Vazquez and Valentin Ramirez Zavala, come from this legacy and provided grounds for my intellectual curiosity at an early age. *Echale ganas* was a daily mantra.

I wrote parts of this dissertation on the occupied ancestral, and contemporary Lands of the Anishinaabeg – Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples. The final two chapters were written on Karankawa ancestral lands, what is now known as South Texas. In both cases, settler colonialism forcibly removed Indigenous peoples from their homelands. I offer this land acknowledgement as a first step towards Indigenous sovereignty across Turtle Island and recognizing the importance of kinship.

Professionally, I would like to thank my committee members. Dr. Brendan Mullan and Dr. Steve Gold for providing the necessary institutional knowledge to navigate the Dual Ph.D. process. Dr. Eric Juenke and Dr. Isabel Ayala, your friendship and advocacy helped me believe in myself and the importance of my scholarship. Dr. Yomaira Figueroa, I took your advice to read fiction and it change me completely. Your dedication to theory and the human inspired me throughout my academic journey. Dr. Sheila Contreras, thank you for trusting in me and bringing me into the CLS program. Dr. Delia Fernandez, your friendship and historical perspective was instrumental in the completion of chapter two and three. Dr. Jualynne Dodson, your early mentorship exposed me to the importance of the Trans-Atlantic history of Mexico. Last, Dr. Miguel Cabañas it was wonderful working with you interpreting 17th and 18th century documents. Each one of you played a significant role in my success.

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CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

In 2017 Spanish journalist David Marcial Pérez (2017) interviewed director Nicolas Segovia on his movie titled, "Costa Chica." The film is based on the cultural experiences of African descendants along the Southwest Pacific coast of Mexico. In the interview Segovia states, "The forced migration of Africans to Mexico has not yet been discussed. I want to make this issue visible through their cultural contributions" (Marcial Pérez, 2017). In this same article an unnamed man who is described by Pérez as having a flat nose, dark skin, and a foamy mustache describes himself as an Indian yet at the same time Black. The unnamed man makes the distinction that they are not institutionally recognized like the Indigenous communities that appear in history books and maps. In this short article published in the Spanish newspaper El País we can begin to uncover the complexity of Afro-Mexican history, historical erasure and reclamation, racism and racial ideology, and cross-cultural identities.

The phenotypical features that Pérez decides to describe as relevant markers of Afro-Mexican citizens is language embedded in at least four centuries of racial classifications created by the Spanish (Martinez, 2008). In a sense, Pérez is following a long historical racist tradition of ascribing racial meaning onto Black bodies in Latin America. The significance of this article is its geographical location of production, Spain, and its global Spanish speaking audience. On the other hand, it contributes to a growing dialogue on issues relating to African descendants in Mexico. There is also the quote by the unnamed man simultaneously identifying as both "Indio y Negro," or Indian and Black. What historical processes led to this Mexican citizen to self-identify, in the contemporary sense, as both Indigenous and Black? How did Veracruz, Mexico become a location of cross-cultural exchange among the two seemingly distinct racial groups? How did the Spanish racialization project reorganize the racial/ethnic identities of its' subjects for colonial stability? This dissertation seeks to understand

these questions at the onset of sustained colonial encounters between Spanish colonialist, free and enslaved Africans, and Amerindians on the eastern gulf coast of Veracruz and its hinterlands.

The goal of this dissertation is to reconstruct a narrative about Afro-Indigenous palenques in the Veracruz coast during the 17th and 18th centuries. Palenques, or runaway settlements, were created by self-liberated Africans and their descendants. Together, both Indigenous and African women and men formed alliances to produce a collective resistance against their colonial conditions in these social spaces (Carroll, 2001; Restall, 2005; Bennett, 2009, Vinson III & Restall, 2009; Bryant, O'Toole., & Vinson III, 2012). The objective is to historicize the African presence in Mexico as they coalesced with the Indigenous world in the coastal mountain regions of Córdoba and Orizaba. This region is significant because of the numerous sugar and tobacco plantations that used the institution of slavery for the production of these two major economic industries (Böttcher, Hausberger, & Ibarra, 2011). Colonial administrators and land holders were also highly aware of the neighboring palenques in the region. Two runaway settlements by the names of *San Lorenzo de los Negros* (Yanga) and *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Ampa* (Mandinga) gained their freedom from the Spanish colonial crown in the 17th and 18th century. Though this dissertation is highly localized to these two relatively small towns, the social relations that emerge from the two palenques provide important implications at the regional, national, and transnational levels of analysis. This study situates Veracruz in a transnational and hemispheric context.

Similar to Segovia's directorial vison for his film on the Costa Chica, I also seek to make the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Mexico a visible institution that shaped colonial life and social relations in what would become New Spain. The development of Latinx Studies has garnered a wealth of scholarly ground on the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and enslavement as a socio-political institution in Latin America. However, the same cannot be said in the maturity of Chicanx Studies or the discipline of Sociology. As historian Irene Vasquez (2010) puts it, the African diaspora is still largely insufficiently

recognized in Chicanx histories. Additionally, one area of research that has been largely ignored by American sociologists has been the conquest of the Americas and its role in the advancement of Western modernity. Regrettably, the discipline of sociology has failed to account for the early colonial period as a foundational ground for conceptualizing migration, identity, and cultural contact and exchange of the multiple ethnicities that constitute the Mexican/Chicanx population in the United States. Palenques address these gaps in the literature. Palenques as a conceptual tool help us grapple with questions of resistance against colonialism and assist our understanding of the space between freedom and enslavement for both Indigenous and African peoples. Engaging palenques as a conceptual framework contributes to the established historical literature on the topic of Afro-Mexicans. Let's begins to make this intellectual inroad within the disciplines of Chicano Studies and Sociology.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

While most secondary sources on Afro-Mexicans are well established in the field of History and Anthropology I regularly traverse the fields of Ethnic and Cultural Studies, Chicanx and Latinx Studies, Black Studies and Sociology to build my theoretical propositions and arguments. As an interdisciplinary scholar, I begin with the act of escape and flight. Rebellions against enslavement were regular occurrences throughout Latin America. Carroll (1977) adds that maroonage, or the act of flight from ones enslaved status, was a hemispheric trend that served as an effective form of resistance. Marronage has a much more profound meaning. It is the intentionality and epistemic home for so many individuals who chose at one point to distance themselves from the institution and condition of enslavement. It also holds an ontological question of how an individual or group see's themselves in the world. It is a declaration of existence and claiming of one's own humanity.

I engage the work of Neil Roberts' (2015) conceptual framing of marronage for investigating how the enslaved themselves enacted their freedom. He argues that freedom is the process of flight

and denounces the notion that freedom is a static condition which subjects either do or do not possess. This idea of marronage is particularly helpful towards understanding how people of African descent and Indigenous communities adapted themselves to their new social relations initiated and often forced through Spanish colonial institutions. I build on his theoretical propositions by proposing that palenques, like marronage, are also "liminal and transitional social spaces between enslavement and freedom" (Roberts, 2015, p.4) Unlike flight, however, palenques served as physical barriers in which the land fortified the community from Spanish military attacks. Africans were not alone in this endeavor. Indigenous peoples also participated in the creation of palenque communities (Beltran, 1946). The central idea here is that both communities were capable of thinking about freedom and enacted their agency to create a space outside of colonial domination. Palenques subvert colonial occupation by seizing territories, creating multi-cultural borderlands, and asserting control over mountainous regions.

Palenques were also in many ways racialized geographies at odds with colonial rule. I use the work of Maria Josefina Saldaña-Portillo (2016) and her theory of racial geography to explore how the Spanish racialization project reorganized the racial/ethnic identities of its' subjects for colonial stability. Racial geography is a theory of spatial production. The author points out that "colonialism produced new spaces and modes of apprehending landscapes" (Saldaña-Portillo, 2016, p. 18). Racial geographies are both material and perceptual scenes of social worlds. One example is the racializing of space through the figure of the Indian and subsequently the Black body. These phenotypes were ascribed differential legal rights for different purposes within the same geographic space; a topic that is further explored in Chapter three and four. Racial geographies enable us to see how generic categories such as Indios, Africans, and their multi-ethnic and multi-racial descendants are reiteratively deployed for the purpose of producing colonial spaces. Afro-Indigenous peoples disrupt and create their own spatial practices within their palenques. This dissertation explores the modes in which Afro-

Indigenous marronage disrupts colonial spatial practices as they create their palenques or zones of refuge (Roberts, 2015).

The omission of cross-cultural exchange that fostered relationships capable of creating self-liberated communities has been critically overlooked by the disciplines of Sociology and Chicano Studies. This dissertation contributes to an emerging corpus of literature on Afro-Mexicans not only by historicizing the epistemological and ontological efforts to escape enslavement in colonial New Spain but also by using palenques as a theoretical tool. Furthermore, throughout chapters two and three I refer to Indigenous concepts centered on the ideas of Nepantla/space (Anzaldua, 2015; Lilomaiaua-Doktor, 2009; Scott and Tuana, 2017), Teotl/movement (Maffie, 2014), and Queztalcoatl/transformation (Contreras, 2008; Rodriguez, 2014). The forthcoming chapters explore these concepts to provide the theoretical modalities exhibited by members of the two palenques, Yanga and Mandinga.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been a wide range of scholarly investigations attempting to document and conceptualize the African presence in Mexico and their long-lasting social implications. It is well documented that the height of the slave trade to Mexico was from 1580-1640 and was home to the second largest slave population and the largest free population of African descent in the Americas (Proctor III, 2012). It is calculated that around 250,000 people of African descent were displaced from their homelands and forcibly brought to New Spain between the 16th and early 17th century, of which about 80,000 were women (Velásquez, 2006). The first wave of scholarship on this topic provided descriptive demographic information on Mexico's black population. Led by anthropologist Gonzalo Aguirre Beltran (1944) and Joaquin Roncal (1944) early scholarship highlights the "mixed blood" of *Mexicanos* as part of the Spanish *Sistema de Castas* [Racial Caste System]. Together they articulate and provide evidence of multiple sites wherein the African population had intermarried, cohabitated, and

reproduced with local Indigenous peoples. David Davidson (1966), and later Edgar Love (1970), discuss the various acts of resistance that enslaved Africans committed in order to attain their freedom. Those who were enslaved were allowed to gain their freedom by marrying into the free Indian population, at least until 1537. These scholars also paid attention to the process of Hispanization of both Indigenous and African peoples through religious institutions. Spain hoped to increase slave control through various legal restrictions that prohibited Afro-Indigenous relations, however, many of the local policies were unsuccessful in cutting off both cultural and social relationships between the two groups.

A second wave of Afro-Mexican scholars wrote revisions of Beltran's work (Colin Palmer, 1976) but what may have been a more significant development was the regional shift in research. While early work in this arena centered on the Costa Chica region off the Pacific coast of Oaxaca and central Mexico, Patrick Carroll (1977) provided insight to the Eastern Gulf Coast state of Veracruz. His work affirmed a need to emphasize the meaning of race and ethnicity in relation to regional development. Ben Vinson III (2001), Herman Bennett (2009), and Mathew Restall's (2005) more recent studies confirm Davidson and Love's assertion of resistance while also providing a relational shift emphasizing Afro-Indigenous relations and their participation in Spain's early colonial society. These relationships are significance because, "Alliances threatened white control over all aspects of New Spain's emerging socio-Political life" as Carroll (2004) phrases it.

Within the field of Chicana/o Studies perhaps the most prominent scholar that engages the subject of racial construction is Martha Menchaca. Her attention to marital laws that institutionalized racial mixing unearths the variety of West African ethnicities that intermarried with local Indigenous peoples. She couples these findings with a set of legal colonial documents that give evidence to the enslavement and selling of Indigenous men, women, and children (Menchaca, 2001). In recovering historical memory via archives, Menchaca reconstructs a narrative of shared experiences by African

and Amerindian displacement from their ancestral homes. My work is an answer to her call for additional research on the pre-histories of Chicana/os and their ancient past in Europe and Africa as much as it is about addressing the colonial period in question. Latino Studies scholars have also interrogated this theme from a diasporic intellectual tradition. The work of María Rosario Jackson (2010), Lisa Hoppenjans and Ted Richardson (2010), most notably, situate Afro-Mexicans to a U.S. transnational experience. Moving forward, chapters two and three provide a literature review of *San Lorenzo* and *Amapas* historical moment and their geographical specificities. The following section outlines the methodology of the dissertation and outlines the chapters that ensue.

METHODS

Writing colonial histories presents particular obstacles. In reconstructing a narrative on the development of two Afro-Indigenous palenques there is a lack of colonial documents written from the sole perspective of African descendants and their Indigenous counterparts. Much of the colonial documents that are available in the archival reservoirs of Mexico and Spain are written by intermediaries usually those of Spanish descent associated with the clergy or some Spanish colonial administered. As such, Africans and Indigenous peoples are often the "object" of historical study, even when they are supposedly appearing as subjects (Bryant, Vinson III, & O'Toole, 2012). The effort to represent a history that simultaneously recovers omitted perspectives and centers the experiences of enslaved individuals is difficult but necessary. Herman Bennett (2009) rightfully exposes the prevailing scholarly perspectives that assume that social mobility, that is exiting the institution of slavery, took priority over community formation. By investigating the formation of the Yanga and Mandiga palenques this study seeks to center the perspective of the enslaved and colonized ethnic groups of Western Veracruz and give historical context to the development of a community whose needs were met through the rejection of their colonized experiences.

Historical comparisons rely heavily on the notion of time as context. Causal explanation that emerge from comparatists emphasize contextual time, and like individualist, also highlight structural constrains and opportunities (Skocpol, T. and Somers, M. 1980; Stryker, 1996; Ragin, 1987). Some of the earliest writings on the Mandinga palenque, for example, focus extensively on the baptismal records of the Cordoba-Orizaba region and highlight structural conditions that lead to the foundation of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Ampa. William Taylor (1970) traces events leading to the 1769 foundation of this newly incorporated town and outlines Spanish motives that lead to the manumission of African descendants. Using an ecclesiastical archival source Taylor translates an 1800 document to unfold a historical account of the colonial ambitions that lead to negotiations between palenque leaders and various colonial administrators. Other studies provide the evolution of the Mandinga palenque over the course of 84 years (Carroll, 1977). Patrick Carrolls study points to the shifting demographics and changing needs of the Mandinga palenque along with and the agency they employed in their understanding of the structural conditions of the Spanish crown. While both articles are helpful in contextualizing the regions contentious history among Hacienda land owners, colonial administrators, and self-liberated Africans it does little to provide the perspective of African descendants. They also provide almost no evidence or mention of the Indigenous Mazateca people that live in the region.

Anthropologist María Elisa Velázquez (2017) calls for more comprehensive ethnographic studies to analyze the material conditions of the sugar mill production sites in lesser studies regions such as the Cordoba-Orizaba province, the relations with other groups, in particular African and Indigenous groups. A historical sociological approach is well suited for investigating the relational characteristics among cultural communities and through a comparative historical analysis framework. Lange (2013) asserts that this type of analysis takes a structural view and explores meso- and macro-level processes, that is, processes involving multiple individuals or groups and producing patterns of

social relations. From this perspective, structural and institutional environments shape individual actions, and in the case of Yanga and Mandinga, the actions of large numbers of people. In other words, "even when analyzing individual level processes, comparative historical research retains a structural focus and consider the interrelations between individuals, groups, and structures" (Lange, 2013, p. 6). Sugar production, the Church, the Imperial state, and the various racialized casta groups all form a complex layer of social interactions that produced the conditions for rebellious actions to unfold in colonial Veracruz.

Scholars have provided inroads to comparative/relational scholarship in colonial central Mexico, the Yucatan peninsula, and the Northern territories of the Spanish empire. A significant contribution has been made through the work of Matthew Restall (2005) whose edited volume includes essays that focus on African-Native relations in colonial Latin America. The essays include historiographies on conflict and cohabitation patterns of Afro-Mexicans and Nahuas in central Mexico (Castillo-Palma and Kellog, 2005), the Black-Maya relations in the Yucatan (Lutz and Restall, 2005), and labor relations of Afro-Indigenous people in silver mine production. More recent, Dana Velasco Murillo (2016) and Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva (2018) have explored the lives of African and Indigenous mine workers and labor arrangements in the Puebla and Zacatecas regions of Mexico. The relational framework by the aforementioned scholars demonstrate the way archival sources are used to (re)construct narratives of individuals and their agency and the structural conditions that shaped the lives of African and Indigenous peoples. The social interactions among groups tell a vivid picture of the economic structures that influenced varying degrees of cultural exchange in the colonial era. Taking note of the comparative historical methodological approach used in the case studies above, this dissertation uses *testimonios* (testimonies), ordinances, and colonial maps to historicize the African presence in Veracruz.

It is important to keep in mind that the racial, ethnic, and cultural histories of Afro-Mexicans are not a monolith. Tracing the pre-colonial histories of Indigenous, African, and Iberian peoples is a first step in disaggregating the multiple ethnicities that would eventually become racialized bodies in colonial New Spain. The racial project of New Spain produced new identities for Africans, Indigenous peoples, and their progeny. These identities were not stagnant and have regional distinctions. The process of racialization in Veracruz was on-going, situational, and at times linked to occupation. Tracing the historical trajectory of race will demonstrate how European modernity was a key operating ideology in the assignment of their racial/ethnic identities. The Spanish racialization project reorganized the racial/ethnic identities of its' subjects for colonial stability in the context of an expanding empire.

The methodologies employed in Chicana/o Studies is, as Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano (2007) reminds us, both a methodology of practice and a political project. This dissertation will necessitate multiple theoretical and methodological approaches to capture the significance of palenques as sites of resistance. Unfolding the history of two exploited cultural groups presents the possibility to use archival sites for data collection. Colonial documents, often written by colonial chroniclers, set the stage for historical context. However, these are not firsthand accounts written by those enslaved. Chicanx methodologies consider the process of colonization as an ongoing project and apply this historical reality to open up theoretical considerations of the ontological gaps that remain to be represented in traditional disciplines. As a racialy mixed people, Chicanx histories and identities engender the need for an interdisciplinary analysis of self and community.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS, HYPOTHESIS, and CHAPTER OUTLINE

The overarching questions in this dissertation involve an investigation of the historical processes that made colonial Veracruz a location of cross-cultural exchange. Primary and secondary sources are used to examine how two distinct colonized groups throughout the 17th and well into the 18th century

adapted themselves to their new social relations initiated by Spanish colonialism in order to form their respective palenques. The racialization project of the Spanish evolved alongside the development of rebel acts by African and Indigenous peoples. I explore their resistance to the institution of slavery and draw relationships to the way's Afro-Indigenous peoples responded to the Spanish racialization project.

The following three hypothesis are each dedicated their own chapter and will follow a chronological order of historical events. Chapter two gives attention to the early 17th century palenque known as Yanga. During this particular point in time African born individuals fled, revolted, and created self-sustaining communities in the mountainous regions of Veracruz. I hypothesize that palenques were sites of resistance formed through the meanings Africans constructed alongside their Indigenous counterparts. Palenques were a necessary insurance towards freedom for newly arrived Africans. This chapter will specify the structural and environmental conditions that shaped their formal request to Spanish administrators to become the fully recognized town of *San Lorenzo de los Negros*.

Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Ampa (Mandinga), established in 1769, is the site of the chapter three. By the mid 18th century most people of African descent had intermixed with the Indigenous and Spanish population. However, sugar production remained highly dependent on the institution of slavery in the Cordoba-Orizaba region (Proctor III, 2009). A person's *casta* status was a key marker of distinguishing social positions in Spanish society (Martinez, 2008; Katzew, 2004). I hypothesize that Mandinga citizens were informed by their understanding of the Spanish racial order and institutional needs of the crown and used this knowledge to reject their ascribed status. I argue that palenque residents drew upon decolonial praxis to form their community and eventually transition to the status of a "free town." I also propose that they recognized the amenability of their *casta* status. They were consciously familiar with the necessary Hispanicized cultural norms and used this

knowledge to challenge the Spanish colonial institutions of slavery. An analysis of corresponding letters between colonial administrators is used to base my evidence.

In my fourth chapter I ask; how did two palenques, separated by more than a century, successfully attain their permanent status as free towns. What similarities can be drawn amidst the temporal difference? How did Spanish racial ideologies change over time and reorganize racial/ethnic identities and relations of its' subjects? I hypothesize that the Spanish crown, with their growing awareness of slave uprisings and rebellions, sought less aggressive military means to control palenque residents and instead opted for passive options to placate violent revolts. A review of colonial ordinances for each century are examined to suggest that this is the case. Juxtaposing the two sites promotes a comparative element that has yet to be interrogated in the field of sociology and the discipline of Chicanx studies. The fifth chapter bridges these colonial histories with contemporary needs of Afro-Mexicans. Additionally, it discusses how such histories complicate, enrich, and give further sophistication to fields of Chicanx/Latinx Studies and sociology.

Chapter five expands the conversation of palenques to contemporary forms of "living in-between" social spaces. This discussion will focus on the forms of displacement, exploitation, family separation, and undocumented legal status for Latinxs in the United States. Palenques, as a conceptual tool, demonstrates a long history and legacy of colonial ideologies that continue to create institutional rules for a multi-tiered social order wherein African, Indigenous, and Mestizo identities are arranged at the bottom of the social strata. Last, a discussion on anti-Blackness concludes this chapter.

The section that follows will introduce the history of pre-colonial Mexico, specifically the significance of the relationships between the Indigenous Mexica and neighboring Huasteca and Totonac peoples of the Veracruz coast and interior mountainous regions. This relationship is a key historical moment towards understanding the context of the Spanish conquest and the later development of the Orizaba-Cordoba region. The historical development in the Americas runs parallel

to significant political developments in the Iberian Peninsula and West Africa. Significant to this section is the imperial rise of Iberian monarchs, the mixed ethnic heritage of the Spanish, and their political interactions with the various kingdoms of Western Africa. The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade becomes one of the most pivotal processes that leads to the 16th century colonial encounters between groups which concludes this introductory chapter.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Pre-colonial Veracruz

Mexico's colonial period begins in the contemporary city and state of Veracruz with the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores in 1519. Veracruz is situated on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, on the east coast of Mexico. There were at least four cultural groups of indigenous communities who inhabited the region, including the Totonac, Huaxteca, Nahuatlano, and Popoloca (De Mendizabal, 1937). The sustenance these groups depended on were the cultivation of corn on large tracts of land with the recognition that the maize was fundamental to their physical survival as well as to their ontological sense of self. One group, the Totonac, dominated the eastern gulf coast of Veracruz and are thought to be the descendants of the Toltecs or the Aztecs or from a mixture of both (Baker, 1887). Archaeologist Ellen Spinden (1933) has estimated that the Totonac have inhabited this region for over a thousand years, built the temple/pyramid 'Tajin' and created a complex system of religious beliefs.

Records also indicate that "in the 14th and 15th century the neighboring Chichimec and Aztec groups made several intrusions into Totonac territory which resulted in localized loss of independence with shifting and shrinking, but not a general displacement of population" (Spinden, 1933 p. 225-226). These groups often grappled for social space and agricultural resources prior to the arrival of the Spanish and were at times also dependent on the extensive trade routes that they established from central Mexico to the eastern gulf coast. The Totonac peoples, however, were the first Mexican

Indigenous groups to have a sustained and consistent interactions with the Spanish Conquistador Hernan Cortez and his army in the city of Cempoala pictured below.

Figure 1: Templo de las Chimeneas. Cempoala Archaeological Zone, August 6, 2019

Aztec and Totonac relations in the early 16th century had been marked by a history of violence as the Aztecs pursued the expansion of their empire to the northeast. The significance of this historic reality is that the social relations between the two indigenous groups were at a critical point of contestation. This tension in the social relationship between the two Amerindian groups, and any others, allowed Cortez to attain additional warriors who were familiar with the routes leading to the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan. The participation of Totonac warriors alongside Cortez was key to the over throw of the Aztecs and Indigenous system of knowledge, language and cultural practices. Mexico's process of "modernization" was underway and accelerated rapidly thereafter. The epistemological, cultural and economic clash between the West and Amerindian groups was perceived as an apocalyptic phase for most Indigenous peoples in Mexico (Beaucage, 1988). Their perception of the 'end of their world' is significant because it was at this historical moment in the early 16th century

that Indigenous groups in Mexico were forced to adopt and adapt themselves to news modes of language and culture under the institutions of the Spanish crown.

The demographics of Mexico's indigenous population experienced a startling decline in less than a century after the defeat of the Aztec empire. Studies suggest that indigenous populations in central Mexico were estimated as high as 25,000,000 in 1519 and decreased to 1,075,000 by 1605 (Davidson, 1966 p. 236). The sharp decline of Amerindians set in motion the need for imported labor. By the 16th century the Spanish had established themselves as one of the primary imperial importers of enslaved Africans to the Americas. Veracruz served as the principal port where many, if not most, Africans first came into contact with Mexico's Indigenous population. Enslaved Africans also experienced modernity's brutality and adjusted their epistemologies and understanding of self to their new reality. The presence of Atlantic Africans in Mexico brought forth complex processes of self-crafting into new sociocultural realities (Bryant, Vinson III & O'Toole, 2012). By the end of the 16th century colonial Mexico experienced a new social reorganization of its population along distinct European ideological racial categories. Colonization and slavery, as social institutions, are situated at the center of the reorganization and displacement of both African and Indigenous peoples of Veracruz.

Southern Iberian Andalusia

The 15th century was an extraordinary time for maritime voyages. The Portuguese took lead and initiated overseas explorations that brought about remarkable transformation in the balance of power. The world's major theater of commercial activity was rapidly transferred from the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean (Gonzalez, 2019). The primary beneficiary of this change was not Portugal but rather its larger and more powerful neighbor, Spain. The southern region of Spain, Andalusia, would become pivotal in commercial over sea campaigns.

Geographically, Andalusia is the southernmost province in Spain bordered by Portugal on the West. The Alboran sea divides the province from Morocco to the South. Andalusia is divided into the eight provinces of Jaén, Granada, Málaga and Almería in the east, Cordoba, Seville, Huelva and Cadiz in the west (Epton, 1968). Historically this land space was home to a number of different ethnic groups. The very name Andalusia is a derivative of its' previous Islamic name Al-Andalus, meaning 'land of the Vandals.' Nina Epton (1968) notes that Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, and Romans inhabited the Iberian Peninsula between the 8th and 15th century. By the 16th century North and West Africans were part and parcel of contemporary society in the province Seville (Githiora, 2008). The map in figure 2 gives a visual representation of how Spanish cartographers envisioned their province.

Figure 2: Archivo General de Indies (AGI); Map of Andalusia. 1778. Estado, MPD.81

Merchants and colonists initiated their voyages from Andalusia as it possessed accessible channels of rivers that fed into port cities, such as Seville, and out into the Atlantic. Historical accounts often reduce, simplify, and generalize colonial Spanish migrants on these voyages as conquistadors. However, their ethnic identities are, in many cases, obscured by their status as professional warriors. Spaniards who came to America were the result of a brutal mestizaje that included Celtics, Iberians, Visigoths, Jews and Arabs in addition to the previously mentioned cultural groups (Morales, 2008).

Andalusians were no exception to this process. Spanish mestizaje was one of the most intense processes that Europe had experienced. This process was further complicated by the political marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castilla in 1469. Their marriage was political because it marked the early creation of a unified national dynastic state and from this point forward the Iberian Peninsula would be the launching pad for early voyages of exploration (Gonzalez, 2019). It is particularly noteworthy because it set in motion a distinct migration of new royal subjects and transformed, yet again, the cultural and social make up of Spain's southern territories.

Afro-Iberians

Under these social conditions, Spanish expeditions to the western coast of Africa initiated cultural contact and exchange between Southern Andalusians and West African Angolans. Voyages from this point forward were in the context of Empire building. Historian Leo J. Garofalo (2012) reminds us that history of empire or slavery in the Americas under colonial rule cannot be fully understood without considering the enslaved and free Africans in Spain before and during European colonization of the Americas.

While slavery did not exist in Western Europe on a large scale during the centuries preceding European colonization, Iberia inherited a social hierarchy from the broader Mediterranean world that included enslaved Turks and Moors (Wise & Wheat, 2014). By the mid-15th century Southern Andalusia became significant because of its' high concentration of enslaved Sub-Saharan Africans roughly making up one-tenth of the population (Wise & Wheat, 2014; Garofalo, 2012). Afro-Iberians at that time became a part of urban southern Iberian society and served the Spanish Crown as sailors and soldiers migrating between the Americas and Africa (Garofalo, 2008).

Throughout the colonial period Afro-Iberians would become essential to commercial Trans-Atlantic voyages. This is a salient social distinction because it notes that not all Africans in New Spain were enslaved but actively participated in both the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and colonization of the

Americas. Afro-Iberians, the descendants of those traded from Africa to Iberia beginning in the 1440's, were conquistadors, passengers, and laborers in the conquest campaigns (Bryant, O'Toole, & Vinson III, 2012, pg.13). Sherwin K. Bryant et. al (2012) affirm that Afro-Iberians brought Europeans to the Americas, fought alongside them, carried their goods to colonial sites, and became powerful intermediaries who were as essential to empire as the Amerindian intermediaries of Totonacapan.

The most commonly cited places of origin of New Spain's African population were Angola, Guinea, Sâo Tomé, and Congo; however, enslaved Africans underwent a renaming process and were given names according to their alleged origins: Bafara, Jolof, Matamba, Mandinga and Yoruba, Zape, Cazanga, Angola, Congo, etc. (Githiora, 2008) Population maps of Western Africa indicate that Angola was culturally Bantu, the likely ethnic group of rebel leader Gaspar Yanga (Thornton, 1992). This reality is further complicated by Colin Palmer's (1995) assertion that the appellation Angolan is not an ethnic designation but instead referred to the Kimbundu-speaking peoples who lived in an imprecise area lying to the north and south of the Zaire River, from which many slaves were taken during the period.

He contends that Angola was also home to such Kimbundu-speaking subgroups as the Libolo and the Mbundu. These "enslaved groups", he continues, "were frequently victims of the wars between the kingdom of Ndongo and the Portuguese as well as of the local conflicts in the Kimbundu-speaking region" (Palmer, 1995, p. 232). With the knowledge of Spanish mestizaje, Afro-Iberians, and Kimbundu-speaking people in mind, the following section gives attention to the modes in which these cultural groups transformed and consequently influenced the process of mestizaje in New Spain.

Colonial Encounters

Between the 1500's and 1780's more than 1.5 million Europeans immigrated to the Americas (Elliott, 2009). Spain led the first wave of migration to the Americas including the land space that would later become the Viceroyalty of New Spain (Tienda & Sanchez, 2012). Davidson (1966)

estimates the Indigenous populations, in what is now the central valley of Mexico, numbered as high as 25,000,000 in 1519 and decreased to 1,075,000 by 1605. This sharp decline set in motion the need for imported labor. By the 16th century the Spanish had established themselves as one of the primary imperial importers of enslaved Africans to the Americas. Totonacapan served as the principal port where many, if not most, Africans first came into contact with indigenous Amerindian population at the beginning of the 16th century.

The various cultural groups from Africa also experienced modernity's brutality and adjusted their epistemologies and understanding of self to their new reality. The presence of Atlantic Africans in New Spain brought forth complex processes of self-crafting into new sociocultural realities (Bryant, Vinson III & O'Toole, 2012). The first enslaved and free Africans arrived with Hernando Cortes during the military invasion and in 1544 he gave the first order for 500 Africans to provide labor for his first sugar plantation and processing factory (Palmer, 1995; Githiora, 2008). The height of the slave trade to Mexico was from 1580-1640 and was home to the second largest slave population and the largest free population of African descent in the Americas (Proctor III, 2012). The initial contact with Spanish imperial commerce and exploitation truly entangled Indigenous and enslaved Africans in modernity's unfinished project and forced a number of Indigenous cultural groups to leave their otherwise established homelands.

"Not only did their knowledge, cultural expression/production and land become colonized", explains Mignolo, "but perhaps more important was the colonization of their history and conception of time and space" (Mignolo, 2011, p.3). Modernity set in motion how these populations would come to understand their sense of self and place in the modern world. The epistemological, cultural and political clash between Spanish, Amerindian and Africans is significant because it was at this historical moment in the early 16th century that Amerindian and Africans were forced to adopt and adapt themselves to new modes of language and culture.

From the 16th century on Spanish descendants in the Americas created a "Latin American culture according to the criteria of modern European episteme" (Morales, 2008, p. 491). Moreover, traditional knowledge, world-views and cultural systems were devalued by Enlightenment rationality. Agricultural crops such as cacao, cotton and corn were transformed into commodity items for European consumption. Modernity thus separated colonized and enslaved people from the physical materials necessary for their ontological sustenance and transformed those materials into commercial items. With these social realities in mind, New Spain experienced a social reorganization of its population along new ideological racial categories.

It is within this context that Amerindian and African populations and their descendants were refashioned into a new political economy that greatly advanced the industrial developments of Europe that continues to have long lasting social consequences. The following chapter expands on this history. In 17th century Veracruz, a young man by the name of Gaspar Yanga escaped from his enslaved condition and established his own community of self-liberated men, women, and children. The success of his community is one that is hardly mentioned in history classes. Yet, it holds a powerful narrative of freedom and sustained livelihoods at the far margins of colonial control.

CHAPTER TWO:
YANGA

In the small town of Yanga, Veracruz stands a proud homage to the liberator, Gaspar Yanga. With his arm raised, clinching a machete, shackles still clasped to his ankles and wrist, this brass statue is a center piece in the towns' *zocalo* or town square. It expresses pride, Black consciousness, and a historical marker of colonial resistance. At the base of the statue a plaque reads,

> "On January 26, 1609 a military expedition organized and led by Pedro González de Herrera was set to protect the Royal Road between Mexico City and the port of Veracruz. The expedition was meant to apprehend the rebel leader Gaspar Yanga and his followers as they were skillful in the raiding of wagons loaded with goods and wealth that the Spaniards had looted from Indigenous villages and territories throughout the region." (Decenio Internacional de las Personas Afrodescendientes, Yanga, Veracruz. Plaque. 2017)

It continues on to tell a narrative of a military campaign that took place on February 21, 1609 marking the first assault on the palenque where Yanga lived. It describes the palanque as being located somewhere between the Zongólica mountains and near the bank of the Rio Blanco. This was the site where Yanga gave orders to a "young Angloan man" by the name of Francisco de la Matosa to send a message to the encroaching Spanish soilders. The message read, "that they had retired to that place [the palenque] to free themselves from the cruelty and of the perfidy of the Spaniards, that without some right, they pretended to be owners of their freedom" (Decenio Internacional de las Personas Afrodescendientes). For the next six months Yanga and his army would be engaged in a military and epistemological battle with the wealthiest Empire in the Americas.

This chapter explores the early formation of the 17th century palenque named after its intellectual architect, Yanga. The early to mid 17th century was an era of exodus from enslavement for African born individuals and their descendants. It was a time of fleeing, revolting, and a time of creation. Through their knowledge of mountainous landscapes, maroons, created self-sustaining

communities throughout Veracruz. I hypothesize that palenques were sites of resistance formed through the meanings Africans constructed alongside their Indigenous counterparts. Secondly, I contend that palenque were a type of assurance or declaration towards freedom. This chapter will specify the structural and environmental conditions that shaped their engagement with the Spanish empire and their administrators which ultimately led to a formal recognition of their freedom. Through these acts, Yanga was successful in claiming land for his people in the context of a century of land grabbing by the Spanish on Indigenous territories. In essence, they reclaimed land that was illegitimately taken from the original inhabitants of the Veracruz region. Some background on Afro-Veracruz will be reviewed next.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE YANGA PALENQUE

In an issue of Callaloo, a journal of African Diaspora Arts and Letters, founding editor Charles Henry Rowell directs scholars towards a conclusion of Mexican research focused on the African presence in Veracruz. Bridging together the work of historians, anthropologist, and archeologist Rowell (2008) presents the legacy of Yanga as an example of "Mexico's gesture of both remembering and deliberately forgetting within a collective state of denial". This sentiment of remembering while forgetting sets a foundation that complicates the issue of anti-Blackness in Mexico. The purpose of this literature review is to draw out how authors have engaged Mexico's racial complexity as it relates to the palenque of Yanaga and its' leader, Gaspar. While the literature on Yanga is limited the body of work on Afro-Mexican Veracruz encompasses a broad range of historical realities that frames the development of the palenque in question. This section will outline the cornerstone text on Afro-Veracruz, the cultural continuity of Africans in colonial Mexico, and finally the seminal literatures on Yanga.

Irene A. Vasquez (2010) and Debra Green (2010) trace the range of cross discourses between African Diasporic Studies scholars and a host of various social historians of Mexico. In their attempt to account for the persistence of African cultural practices and Black consciousness in Mexico some

important themes that arise include cultural reproduction, intergroup relations, and challenging conceptions of Mexico's mestizo society. Their work centered on Diasporic history is what Vasquez mentions, as a call to uncover Black consciousness and aspects of commonality in a hemispheric sense. Similar to her hemispheric approach, Indigenous scholars Castellanos, Gutierrez Najera, and Aldama (2012), also see the value in extending comparative research beyond nation-state borders and instead focus on weaving historical narratives from the perspective of the enslaved. They make the case that though there are regional differences in the experiences of diasporic communities and those who became enslaved there remains a continuum of resistance towards that condition. Whether those efforts are truly connected as a singular Black consciousness is a debate that continues.

This hemispheric approach by Indigenous and Black scholars differs from earlier work by Pierre L. Van Den Berghe (1976) whose scholarship was dedicated to the differing levels of acculturation by members of the African diaspora in Mexico, Brazil, and the U.S. He argues that people of African descent maintained their unique cultural identities through the process of cultural plurality in spaces such as Brazil but not in Mexico or the U.S. For Van Den Berghe, African culture in the latter was obliterated and became unrecognizable. This could not be further from the truth. African cultural influence is deeply embedded in every cultural Mexican institution. Sagrario Cruz-Carratero (2005) challenges the notion that African culture has been eliminated through his example of cultural continuity and points to the cultural festivals known as Carnival celebrated each August in the town of Yanga. The contemporary memory of Yanga is relived and retold through this yearly festival. It is an essential cornerstone of Black memory for the town of Yanga as educators put together workshops, art instillations, and invite academic speakers to contextualize the historical connections of the past and present.

Stepping beyond the theme of cultural continuity, Frank "Trey" Proctor (2009) thrusts the conversation of the states' willingness to interject itself into disputes between masters and enslaved

individual to the forefront of the literature on slave rebellions in Veracruz. His chapter in the seminal text Black Mexico (Vinson III & Restall, 2009) disentangles some of the complexities of the intersections of civil, state, and private interest in the context of empire building. Specifically, Proctor directs historians to question the benevolent inclusion of all castas in their access to ecclesiastical and inquisitorial courts. He argues that the Spanish defused dissent, weakening the ability of colonial subjects to mount collective rebellions to the colonial structure if given the opportunity to participate in the legal institutions of the colony. In the case of Yanga, this would influence the Spanish decision to negotiate with the palenque leaders as military force yielded little to no success in their subjugation.

Chege Githiora (2008) and Thornton (1998), both invested in discourses of race and place making in the Americas by people of African descent, highlight an important distinction in the establishment of Yanga. They emphasize Yanga's royal lineage. This contribution clarifies the ethnic heritage of Yanga and identifies him as a prince from among the Bari-Logo community of West Africa. Status aside, it is imperative that we consider that Yanga was an African born individual. Together, these scholars provide information on Yanga's linguistic, cultural, and geographical background necessary to distinguish key differences between his palenque and the Mandiga palenque featured in the following chapter. The limited literature on Yanga provides, what I see as, an opportunity to deepen our understanding of one of Mexico's leading authors of freedom. Space and geography are incredibly important in understanding Yanga's activities. The section that follows gives attention to the region of Orizaba and development of Spanish institutions, and the commencement of Veracruz's sugar production.

ORIZABA – AHUILIZAPAN

Various communities called Orizaba home. Archeological data suggest a multi-ethnic occupation of this region and cultural influences from diverse areas in Mesoamerica (Almazán and Bravo, 2015). As mentioned in the introduction the Huasteca and Totonac peoples of the Veracruz coast frequented

the interior mountainous regions establishing tight commercial and familial networks. Even in precolonial times, this region was a transient space that connected the Mexica empire to the coastal territories of what would eventually become the state of Veracruz. The precolonial name of Orizaba, a tributary city-state to the Mexica empire, is Ahuilizapan or place of pleasing water (Smith and Berdan, 1996). Ahuilizapan was conquered by the Mexica in 1457 or 62 years before contact with Europeans (Berdan and Anawalt, 1992). The temporal proximity between Mexica-Indigenous political control and European contact sets the foundation for the alliances that would eventually assist Hernan Cortez in his settler-colonial invasion of Mexico.

This valley included the ecological conditions essential for the cultivation of cotton plants. According to Almazán and Bravo (2015) tribute to the Mexica included 3,600 bales of cotton every eighty days from four different provinces. Ahulizapan was one of the cities within the larger Cuauhtochco province that contributed close to 1,600 bales of cotton. Other primary materials from the region includes silk, linen, and wool often combined with yuca, palms, maguey fibers, feathers, and rabbit hair. These were valuable commodities used not only for practical uses such as clothing and housing but also had spiritual connections between earth, humans, and the animal world. These materials and their meanings are cultural traces of the Nahuatl influence in the Orizaba region.

Cortez arrives in the context of this unequal power relationship between the coastal Indigenous peoples and their ethnic political rivals in the interior regions of Mexico. All the while, the Spanish noted the fertile soil and variety of cultivation. Their attention eventually violently established cotton and cacao fields in these generative landscapes throughout Veracruz. After the political takeover of Tenochitlan the Spanish distribution of land dramatically shifted power dynamics among Indigenous, Spanish, and Africans throughout the colony. The following sub-section gives attention to the structural conditions that would lead to the cultural exchange among Indigenous and African descendant peoples in Veracruz. Consider the practice of *reducciónes* or reductions. This practice

captures the essence of a larger project of socialization and an attempt to assimilate Indigenous peoples from the onset of the colonial relationship between Spain and Mexico.

Reduciones, Encomiendas, and Haciendas

Spanish missionaries and their accompanying militia forcibly relocated Indigenous communities from their villages into settlements that were modeled on towns and villages in Spain. From a social perspective reducciónes were a common Spanish colonial "civilizing" practice that was both a process designed to transform Indigenous groups into colonial subjects with an embodied Christian and urban way of life (Salas, 2017). From a spatial point of view, the land also needed to be tamed, altered, and transformed into something new and more recognizable to the Spanish culture. Economically, the concentration of relocated Indigenous peoples facilitated the Spaniards' access to their labor and the collection of taxes and tribute (Mumford, 2012). In the sixteenth century Indigenous labor was conceded to particular individuals through the *Encomienda* system.

Encomiendas were colonial land grants and were considered to hold a monopoly on the labor of Indigenous peoples who were held in perpetuity by the grant holder,called the *encomendario* and his descendants (Lockhart & Schwartz, 1983). The large tracts of land held the economic prominence for the cultivation of what would become the leading agricultural crops in Veracruz. The land, however, was only managed by the *encomendarios* yet owned by the crown. Through earnings gained in the management of the crowns' land, many encomendarios acquired enough capital to establish their own estates known as *haciendas*.

Some haciendas were plantations. Others were mines or factories. Haciendas were developed as profit-making economic enterprises linked to regional and international market-based economies aimed at the cultivation of sugar, cacao, and cotton (Lockhart, 1969). Although the 17th century haciendas were not always directly linked to Indigenous labor they are nonetheless interconnected by the social networks and ties made by land grantees and the development of their enterprises where

they had access to forced labor (Lockhart & Schwartz, 1983). One of the leading agricultural industries in the region was by far sugar. The following subsection specifies the nature of the sugar industry in 17th century New Spain while providing background of the arrival of Africans. The displacement of Africans from their homelands to Veracruz is important to chart considering that many of these individuals would go on to forcibly work alongside Indigenous peoples in the sugar fields and sugar mills.

Africans arrive in mass, first entering through the port of Veracruz through the fort San Juan de Ulúa (Figure 1). The construction of this building, beginning in 1565, used African labor to extract the coral stone known as *múcar* which was then burned along with shells to make lime. This was the mortar that would bind the large coral stones to one another. Africans and their Indigenous counterparts would dive into the gulf to extract the coral stones, dry them in the sun, and sawed them into blocks to build the foundations and walls (Múcara Stone, 2019). This was a highly dangerous and often fatal task forced upon the lower casta groups. The picture below captures two of the thirty-two bronze rings used to tie ships that crossed the Atlantic and arrived to unload their merchandise at fort San Juan de Ulúa (Wall of Rings, 2019). The fort itself serves as a reminder of African and Indigenous heritage seeped into the very walls of one of the most important ports of entry for people of African descent into the colony. It is likely that this was a what a young Gaspar Yanga and his fellow maroons would have first encountered and seen as they arrived in Veracruz.

These two communities were crucial in the cultivation of one of the empire's leading industries, sugar. A second site of cultural exchange developed just a few miles west of the San Juan de Ulúa. The villa de Córdoba's foundation initiated the sugar industry in colonial Veracruz and by the end of the 17th century the majority of the region's plantations were in operation and relied almost exclusively on the enslavement of Black labor (Nevada, 1987). African and Indigenous proximity to one another, both physically and culturally, varied in rural and urban spaces. However, sugar fields

were one social space in which language, ideas, and cultures would meet for the first time amongst the two groups. This is the context in which Gaspar Yanga would come to understand his prescribed status as an enslaved person in the New Spain.

Figure 3: Fuerte de San Juan de Ulúa, Veracruz, Mexico, August 7, 2019

We must consider that in order to take advantage of the ideal growing conditions of sugar cane, the building of mills to process the sugar cane had an essential role in its' production. It is the construction of the sugar mills known as *Trapiches* that made sugar the top revenue generating crop by the end of the 18th century (Traverse, 2016). Trapiches were turning mills powered by three vertical cylinders in a triangle shape. The Rollers were constructed out of iron or metal wrapped wood. The sugar cane was fed into the rollers and crushed and was driven by either animal or man (Galloway, 1989). The image bellow is a replica of a 17th century trapiche commonly used in the Córdona Orizaba region.

Figure 4: Replica Molino de Madera. Museo Regional Palmillas. Palmillas, Veracruz, Mexico

Often, African and Indigenous labor as a contribution to empire is overemphasized. While laboring in both the hacienda and plantation settings are critically important historical notes, the minds of those who labor are also deserving of equal or greater importance. It is through their worldviews that we might begin to understand the epistemological underpinnings of palenques. Through their distinct epistemologies we will better comprehend how they were successful in their efforts in establishing San Lorenzo de los Negros in the early years of the 17th century.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter takes into consideration both epistemological traditions by Black and Chicanx scholarship. The choice to do this is to bridge worldviews that ultimately challenge existing modalities and locations of knowledge from a Western core to one that is shared among and between African and Indigenous forms of knowing. At their center, palenques were a response to the Western idea

that neither Natives or Black communities could possibly possess civilization. Yanga is an epistemological historical moment as much as it is a spatial location on a map and is rooted in Black radical traditions. Black radicalism, as put by Cedric J. Robison (2015), is a response to an oppression emergent from the immediate detriments of European development in the modern era and framed by orders of human exploitation woven into the interstices of European social life from the inception of Western civilization. Additionally, Robinson reminds us that, "The transport of African labor to the mines and plantations of the Americas meant the transfer of African ontological and cosmological systems; African presumptions of the organization and significance of social structure; African codes embodying historical consciousness and social structure; African ideological and behavioral constructions for the resolution of the inevitable conflict between the actual and the normative" (Robinson, 2015, pg. 122). Palenques were the ultimate result of African manifestations of freedom and a response to the oppressor. The theoretical framework presented in this chapter build off of this premise.

Taking from Fanon's idea of zones of being and non-being, Neil Roberts introduces zones of refuge. For Roberts (2015), cimarrones take flight from the zone of nonbeing to zones of refuge resulting in keeping states at a distance. Palenques are thus non-state spaces as well as zones of refuge. From this stance, non-state spaces leave open the possibility to create a social world not totally aligned with colonial structures, laws, western epistemologies, organizations, and social relations. Palenque residents can consequently "enact local [Indigenous] forms of lawmaking, agriculture, epistemologies and other mechanisms to avoid approaching dynamics of state power" (Roberts, 2015, p. 157). Such possibilities cannot be considered without an examination of two additional social dynamics and concepts, creolization and mestizaje.

Both concepts have been often times reduces to the mixing of various peoples, cultures, language, and social communities. Edouard Glissant (2001), however, goes beyond the limits of

synthesis or hybridity whereby creolized communities acknowledge difference, inclusion, and multiple visions of the political. For Glissant, and I share this sentiment with the term mestizaje, creolization does not produce direct synthesis, but resultants: Something else, another way. It is ongoing, never fixed, and ever changing. For example, maroons held their homeland with them as expressed by the agricultural farming system that reflected African farming in unison with the Conuco agricultural system of Amerindian peoples in the Americas (Craton, 1978). Historian Michael Craton (1978) observes that African roots predisposed all enslaved people to regard plantation agriculture as being unnatural as the institution that sustained it. Indigenous communities shared this predisposition with their African counterparts. Their relationship to land was and continues to be an ongoing acknowledgment that humans do not dominate nor own the land.

One way in which cimarrón communities in colonial Veracruz may have acknowledged difference and the multiple visions of the political as proposed by Glisant is embedded in the Nahuatl cosmological deity Queztalcoatl. This deity is often referred to as the feathered serpent, one who is reputed to have brought civilization, writing, time, art, and culture to the people of central Mesoamerica (Rodriguez, 2014). In addition to an identification with creation Chicana theorist Sheila Contreras (2008) reminds us that Queztalcoatl depicts both self-destruction and self-origination suggesting an unending cycle of energy transference and perpetual motion. My theoretical proposition is that Yanga and his followers may have been following a long tradition held by Indigenous communities far before the arrival of the Spanish. It was a Queztalcoatl tradition of creation and destruction.

The suggestion here is that the act of taking flight from ones' bondage was an act of self-destruction. It destroyed ones' enslaved self. Thinking about one's self as free, as non-enslaved is a negation of a position of powerlessness. From that shell of self-destruction comes self-origination or the birth of a new being into what Fanon (2008) would depict as the zone of being. At the collective

level Palenques fit within the creation of civilization from a Nahuatl perspective. After all, palenque residents grew their own food, established routes to and from local plantations and surrounding urban centers, and socialized new incoming maroons to the organizational structures of their community. A new world. These efforts were in essence the continuous labor of building their own civilization outside of colonial social structures. Additionally, because Queztalcoatl is in perpetual motion so too do maroon communities exist, thrive, and become indestructible by military means. This continual movement is one parallel to Glissant's understanding of crealization and Neil Robert's (2015) central idea that freedom as a process of flight which is not a static condition but rather one that is constant motion.

The combination of this Indigenous epistemology of creation merges the situational conditions of African descendants in Veracruz to a cosmology of new beginnings. Roberto Cintli Rodriguez (2014), a Chicano scholar whose work focuses on maíz cultures, notes that these stories of a people's birth create coherence stretching from mythic ancient times into historical times and into the present and future. Palenques, while historically situated in the 17th and 18th century, will be used as a conceptual plain from which Chicanx scholars can (re)imagine the multiple liminal spaces inhabited by Afro-Latinx, Chicanxs, and their descendants in the present and future. Consider this dissertation a new theoretical beginning for Chicanx Studies and sociological studies to probe the multiple social conditions, situations, expressions, and articulations of the self through the concept of palenques. The section that follows provides details of the material documents that provide evidence of maroon agency throughout the 17th century.

DATA AND METHODS

A comparative historical approach lends in strengths for a study of this kind. Data for this chapter include primary sources collected from the Archivos General de Indies located in Seville, Spain wherein thousands if not millions of narratives on colonial Latin America live. I use the word live

explicitly. As Baidik Bhattacharya rightly puts it, "the archive is full of mobile and circulating text, ideas, and people that range across disciplinary boundaries and colonial geographies…to sit through them is to sit through traces of empire" (Bhattacharya, 2016, pg. 682). It is important here to juxtapose the movement associated with marronage with the archive itself. The stories of bandits, fugitives, and other criminalizing descriptors traversed across the Atlantic serving the basic function of assuring that such acts of rebellion justified the utmost violence against maroons and their kin. In short, narratives matter. The archival narrative of Yanga, now removed 400 years from their origin in 1619, demands a space for reimagination from the perspective of the Chicano scholar responsible for this study.

The data includes letters to and from the Viceroy from as early as 1526. However, the bulk of the primary sources range from the years 1611 to 1630. In addition to archival letters and documents written by Spanish colonial authorities I also traveled to the port of Veracruz, Cordoba, and eventually found myself traveling to the town of Yanga. In doing so I discovered why cultural geographer Jake Hodder states that, "if archives are spaces of a society's collective memory, so too are they sites of loss, effacement, and forgetting, where some voices are silent or silenced" (Hodder, 2017, pg. 452). The voices of the enslaved where reduced to testimonies on behalf of their request and not directly from their point of view. However, a well thought out methods sections that keeps this archival silencing in mind can show us the cracks, fissures, and gaps that need to be filled in order for us to more fully see the historical construction of Yanga (L'Eplattenier, 2009). The limits of the archives, I believe, were expanded by walking the colonial streets of Veracruz and observing all that was typically considered "Mexican" by tourist standards and instead imagining the complexity and richness of a society that tucks their Black roots into a historical amnesia.

First consider the inception and central concern of classical historical sociology. Shmuel Eisenstadt points out that, "the main concern [of classical historical sociology] was to understand the peculiar qualitative descriptive characteristics of pre-modern European and non-European societies

in relation to and especially in contrast with self-proclaimed modern societies" (Eisenstadt, 1974, pg. 225). With Europe as the central operating focus much of what we have come to learn about colonial Mexico is layered in a thick coat of European modernity. Gurminder K. Bhambra states, "The starting point of what Weber regarded as 'European Exceptionalism' led him to examine the specific circumstances associated with Europe, as well as social and economic processes in other parts of the world in terms of their difference from Europe and as obstacles to the development of capitalist modernity" (Bhambra, 2016, pg. 336). The creations of "us" and "them" is thus inherit to comparative historical sociology. With an origin that displaces the epistemologies of Indigenous and African communities, whom were both needed for the development of a modern Europe, it is important to note that postcolonial and decolonial scholarship has strived to challenge insular historiographies.

I turn to the methodologies of Indigenous and Chicanx scholars here to address the historically violent silencing found in the archives and comparative historical sociology. Indigenous methodologies, as described by Evans et. al (2014), are proactive processes through which Indigenous people create their own images and stories and in practice create knowledge directly rather than as a disputation to other knowledge systems. Indigenous knowledge production, and in turn the methods that stem from them, are self-constituting processes that understands Indigenous people as thinkers, intellects, inventers, builders, land cultivators, and participants in the arts of civilization; a sentiment that has been denied to past relatives on the basis of contrived social theories like polygenesis and social Darwinism (McConnochi, Hillinsworth, & Pettman, 1988; Smith, 1999). Put succinctly, Indigenous methodologies are defined as the unique way researchers use Indigenous positionality and perspective to perform research with and within Indigenous communities (Windchief, Polacek, Ulrich, Cummins, 2018). Chicanxs, as Indigenous people to the Americas, have a particular worldview, history, and methodologies.

Methodologies from my community come by way of *cuentos* or storytelling. These stories are often mythical, cosmological, fantastic, and at other times historically based. Piecing together the scattered archival documents in Latin America, the U.S., and Spain I chose to write about Yanga as a case-study for the field of sociology with a Chicano Studies approach that honors the tradition of *cuentos*. I did this with an understanding that in the traditional operations of case-studies the "politics of recognition," as put by George Hartly (2012) in his discourse on Chicanx Indigeneity, serves as an apparatus of the state, be it the imperial or nation-state, in which Indigenous nations are subordinate to the interest of colonial powers. What this means for research methods in particular is that data extraction, whether from archives or other qualitative methods, often serves the state in reinforcing hegemonic narratives. Who benefits from this knowledge? This question lingers as I contemplate the research questions that frame this chapter. Telling the *cuento*/story of Yanga from a Sociological and Chicanx studies perspective generates the interdisciplinary merging of multiple intellectual traditions generating new worlds. These methods are not exclusively about palenques but are palenques in themselves, zones of refuge.

Before continuing to the analysis of colonial documents and Yanga's narrative a discourse on race in Veracruz will bring light to the social dynamics of being Indigenous and African in the early 17th century. What follows is an exploration of Spanish racial ideologies and their ordering principles. Racial ideologies were embedded into legal ordinances and, as we will find out, in the geography of the land. The racial imagination of empire is one of contradictions yet help powerful institutions together in colonial Veracruz.

RACE AND RACIALIZATION IN COLONIAL VERACRUZ

For clarity, race can be understood as a categorization system for human beings linked to the colonization of the New World by Europeans. It is based on innate genetic characteristics and used to justify capitalist-based exploitation of certain groups in form of chattel slavery and other abuses of

humanity (Golash-Boza & Darity, 2008; Golash-Boza, 2016). Omi and Winant (1986) describe race as a conceptual idea that signifies and symbolizes sociopolitical conflicts and interest in reference to different types of human bodies. Others (Roth, 2012; Cornell & Hartman, 1998), view race as having less to do with a biological classification and suggest that the process of racial categorization is a social construction linked to a community's cultural traits. Still others, such as Ian Haney López (2000), claim that racial differences are about social power and class more than about race itself. Power dislikes irregularity and disorder, and the Spanish elites exercised their power by classifying, making uniform laws and regulations, and seeking to reform America in the image of Spain (Taylor, 2009). Race is thus an important category that was central to the organization of social life in colonial Veracruz.

Contemporarily, Mexico's primary identity as a nation is one centered on mestizaje and Indigeneity. What is omitted in the national narrative is the historical trajectory of Africans in the making of Mexico' multicultural state and the evolving modes of their social exclusion. Irene Vasquez (2010), Martha Menchaca (2001), and Juliet Hooker (2005) use a myriad of archival resources to trace African people's historical trajectory in an evolving New World society. Their analysis accounts for the persistence of African cultural practices and Black consciousness in the various contact zones of Mexico. It is also worth mentioning that within this land space "Africaness" is comprised of the maintenance of African historical, social, and cultural consciousness and connections, while Blackness emerged and operated within European imposed colonial processes of racialization" (Vasquez, 2010, pg. 186). This brings to mind the preoccupation by Spanish elites to "whiten" the empire's ethnically mixed people throughout the the 17th and 18th centuries and beyond.

Vasquez (2010) explores this preoccupation through the systematic development of hierarchical racial categories by way of the "*Sistema de Castas*" or caste system of colonial Mexico. Mestizos, Mulattoes, Coyotes, Landinos, Lobos and some other seventy pseudoscientific terms were created to prescribe attributions of specific social and behavioral characteristics to designate

populations. These assumed attributions served to legitimate the promotion of white supremacy and to subjugate African and non-acculturated Indians to work on plantations and mines. Race as a social structure and as a social construct demand order.

Spanish colonial race ideology emphasized three main ordering principles and included: 1.) The notion that reproduction between castas would produce new castas. A Spanish peninsular and Indigenous person would reproduce a mestizo for example. 2.) The black blood was more damaging to Spanish lineage than native blood. 3.) *Limpieza de Sangre* (cleansing of blood) could be achieved if a native continued to reproduce with Spaniards. Blood lineage was thought to be a vehicle of moral and spiritual qualities that could be accelerated through this process (Martinez, 2008, pg.32). One important feature of the casta system and its logic was to eradicate the native using a less direct and deadly force. The erasure of the native would be accomplished through time and miscegenation according to this Spanish colonial racial project. While the focus thus far has been on the ideological components of race there is also the legal institutionalization of racial ideologies.

A series of laws provided the structural determinants of the casta system including the 1537 "Victoria's Natural Laws" that forbade the legal enslavement of Indians (Menchaca, 2001). At the heart of the debate that lead to the passing of this law was the human value of indigenous people as potential tax paying subjects and catholic converts. The value of their subjectivity did not extend to colonial subjects with proven or suspected African ancestry. It is also worth noting that if an Indian subject resisted colonization hey were not given any legal rights and thus could return to a state of enslavement. The significance in the passing of the Victoria Natural Law established new social relationships allowing Indigenous people the opportunity to own land, participate more freely in the emerging merchant economy, and the right to marry Spanish individuals. It also gave them access to initiate the process of "limpieza de sangre" giving them further social status and opportunities for upward social mobility.

By 1575, around the time Yanga would have reached the Veracruz coast, a series of Spanish laws further instituted the formation of a racial order where race and nativity became the basis of ascribing and denying social and economic privileges (Menchaca, 2001). Low ranking Spanish soldiers and government officials were ordered to marry their Indian concubines or face serious penalties that would jeopardize their land being taken away from them. Yet, those with high social standing were legally restricted from marring Indians, mulattos, or mestizos. This ensured a racial hierarchy that benefited lighter skinned Spanish born "peninsulares" from the growing American born Spanish descendants or "criollos." However, as Martinez (2011) makes clear racial classification was not as systemic as perceived. The casta system became more unstable as it "crystalized" in official records. This instability was largely the result of the dramatic surge in the population of mixed ancestry and the expansion of mercantile capitalism (Bonilla-Silva and Deitrich, 2008). While one's descendants were generally the basis from which individuals could claim institutional rights many times the burden of claiming those rights was written onto the very skin tone of colonial subjects.

In her study of race in Veracruz sociologist Christina A. Sue (2013) highlights the importance of one's color as an important indicator of how individuals were treated within the classification scheme of the Spanish colonial casta system. Phenotypical features such as skin color, hair texture, facial features and even surnames were all potential markers of one's place in the hierarchy. Extending the idea of color and race, Ruth Simms Hamilton (2007) points to the idea of collective identities within the African diaspora that are negotiated, conflictual, and dynamic. She states, "the significance and meaning of group membership are both ongoing and transient, relational to others and therefore comparative" (Hamilton, 2007, p. 8). Together, race and color absolutely mattered in the everyday lives of colonial actors. It gave meaning to social status and through these concepts we can better understand the context in which Yanga began and concluded his demands for freedom. The collective identities of enslaved individuals were tightly knitted with their perceived racial distinctions.

While sociologist and anthropologist have focused on the structural and cultural characteristics of race others have emphasized the relationship between race, space, and geographies. Amelia Flood (2017) notes that in borderland contact zones "Indians" hold sway in colonial imaginations and the mythologies of empire. That is to say that the image and representation of the Indian created new perspectives of the landscape and its people (Escalante, 2017). Maria Saldaña Portillo (2016) argues that Mexico's geographies have been produced, materially and representationally, through historical, social, and racial relations with Indigenous subjects. She continues to state, "The image of a wild Indian or Indio barbaro spawned a racial imaginary of a savage Indigeneity at once inside and outside of the empire" (Saldaña-Portillo, 2016, p. 109). Much like the idea of a savage Indian the land was also seen and understood by colonist as brutal, violent, and savage. In their worldview the Indian could be tamed. Relationally, so could the land. Challenging this racialized notion is Anzaldua's famous quote, "Wild tongues can't be tamed, they can only be cut out" (Anzaldua, 1984, p.34). While she was referring to the process of linguistic violence that replaced Spanish as the lingua franca of the empire, her point can be extended to reference Indigenous people and their land. There is no taming of a people but rather they are instead cut out of the social and political power structures in their own homeland. Race, space, and geographies necessitate attention as palenques coexisted with multiple colonial structures aimed at repressing their efforts to exist.

As I began to examine colonial documents it became clear that race was at the forefront of the colonial administrators ambitions of conquest. The following sections demonstrates royal decrees that outlined racial classification and the appropriate behaviors expected by each social group. The development of Yanga's palenque pushed back on the very racialized expectations prescribed onto them by a foreign state. Highlighted in the subsequent section is a set of eleven demands by Yanga and his community directed at Spanish colonial authorities and the Spanish crown. These demands

will also be followed up through the rest of the chapter as they demonstrate how Indigenous and Africans developed language of defiance in their state of fugitivity.

BEYOND COLONIAL FRONTIERS

On May 11, 1526 a royal decree declared the prohibition "of passage to the Indies of Ladino blacks of rebellious temperament" (AGI, Indiferente, 422, L.15, F. 105V-107R). Almost a century before the establishment of Yanga, Spanish officials demonstrated their suspicion of rebellious Black individuals. This decree, a legal document, also revealed the penalties for those who violated this prohibition. Perhaps more importantly it exposes the attitude towards mix-raced people, Ladinos in this case, represented Hispanicized Spanish speaking Black individuals born in the Iberian Peninsula. This attitude sets the stage for the structural and social relationship between the Spanish and non-Spanish communities of Veracruz. What follows is a narrative of Gaspar Yanga, an African born freedom fighter, his flight from enslavement, and establishment of the palenque named after him.

There is a common story etched together by historians (Beltran, 1946; Davidson, 1966; Proctor III, 2008; Githiora, 2008; Carroll, 2001; Landers, 2006) that outlines the historical development of Yanga's palenque. These secondary sources provide the foundations for social scientist to further engage their own research questions on Afro-Mexico. The story of Yanga's quest towards freedom begins in 1570. Yanga and a sizeable number of enslaved black individuals escaped from the sugar cane fields near the city of Veracruz and fled west some 80 miles away into the mountainous region of Orizaba known as the Sierra de Zóngolica to form a viable self-sustaining community of cimarrones (Githiora, 2008). They lived undisturbed for thirty years in an organized and developed palenque that included a few persons of mestizo and Indigenous ancestry (Beltran, 1946). White land owners of nearby haciendas viewed the rebel group as a threat to their own investments in chattel slavery. These owners where particularly alarmed at the rumors of alleged

attacks on individuals transporting goods on the Camino Real or Royal Road between Mexico City and the port of Veracruz.

Land owners petitions to the crown for military assistance in protecting their accumulated wealth against what they perceived as piracy. In 1609 the Spanish crown responded by sending Captain Pedro Gonzalez de Herrera and a well-armed militia, along with Padre Juan Laurencio, to destroy Yanga's palenque (Rowell, 2008). Laurencio, a Jesuit priest, wrote a detailed account of the assault on the runaway settlement. The account can be found in a digitized archive in the Archivo General de las Indies (AGI) authored by Adres Pérez de Ribas who recounts the history of the attack on Yanga's settlement in 1896. In it, Perez de Ribas (1896) recounts that in October of 1609 Yanga learns of the Spanish presence in the surrounding region. Yanga then dispatches a reconnaissance parties to scout the militias activities. During one of the missions a group of palenque warriors capture two Spaniards and some Indian women on a livestock ranch. Refusing to speak and give details on their compatriots one of the two Spaniards is killed by palenque warriors. The surviving Spaniard and six Indigenous women were taken to the palenque as prisoners. Later that year a letter was drafted by Yanga to Captain Gonzalez taunting his inability to subdue the palenque settlement and was delivered by the surviving Spaniard (Proctor III, 2008). According to Mexican Historian Andres Maceda Martinez (2008) the letter to Gonzalez stated that the cimarrones had retreated to the hillsides to free themselves from the cruelty of the Spaniards who without any right pretended to own their freedom. This is a particularly powerful statement. It stipulates that the Spanish had created an ideological narrative where they placed themselves at the top of a societal hierarchy imagining themselves as the "owners of freedom."

With knowledge of the palenques location, the surviving Spaniard notified his captain of Yaga's hideout thus setting in motion an assault on the palenque in 1610. Yanga delegated military command to Francisco de la Matiza, an Angolan runaway (Rowell, 2008). Matiza's men fled without

waiting for the attack and prepared their available weapons accumulating rocks, tree trunks, and huge boulders to overwhelm their assailants as they rolled them down hill (Maceda Martinez, 2008). Yanga and his community were neither apprehended nor killed on this occasion. The Spanish militia instead destroyed the physical structure of the palenque which was abandoned by the time Spanish soldiers had arrived.

Discovered at the site, importantly, were cultivated fields with "cotton, sweet potatoes, chile, tobacco, squash, corn, beans, sugar cane, and other vegetables…in the middle of the village was a small rustic church which reflected the Christian education the Africans had gone through" (Githiora, 2008, p. 28). In the homes the Spaniards found a wide variety of clothing, swords, hatchets, some salt and money. Yanga's larger house was located in the center of the town and was filled with benches which led the Spanish to assume that his home also served as a town meeting place (Landers, 2006). Palenques were sophisticated sites and often not bound to one permanent location. The mobility of the cimarron group was key to survival and to their eventual success in bringing the Spanish to negotiations.

Unable to accept defeat the Spanish sent an additional excursion into the Palenque territory this time sending Padre Alonso de Benavides and Captain Manuel Carrillo to establish a truce with Yanga (AGN, Tierras, Vol. 2959, exp. 66, fol.1). Yanga, with the upper hand, dictated the terms of this peace settlement. Captain Carrillo later delivered a set of demands from Yanga to Viceroy Don Luis de Velasco stipulating the conditions under which he and his followers would stop raiding and lay down their arms (Proctor III, 2009). Jane Landers (2006) in her book *Slaves, Subjects, and Subversives: Blacks in Colonial Latin America*, provides a translation of the eleven demands by Yanga. They state:

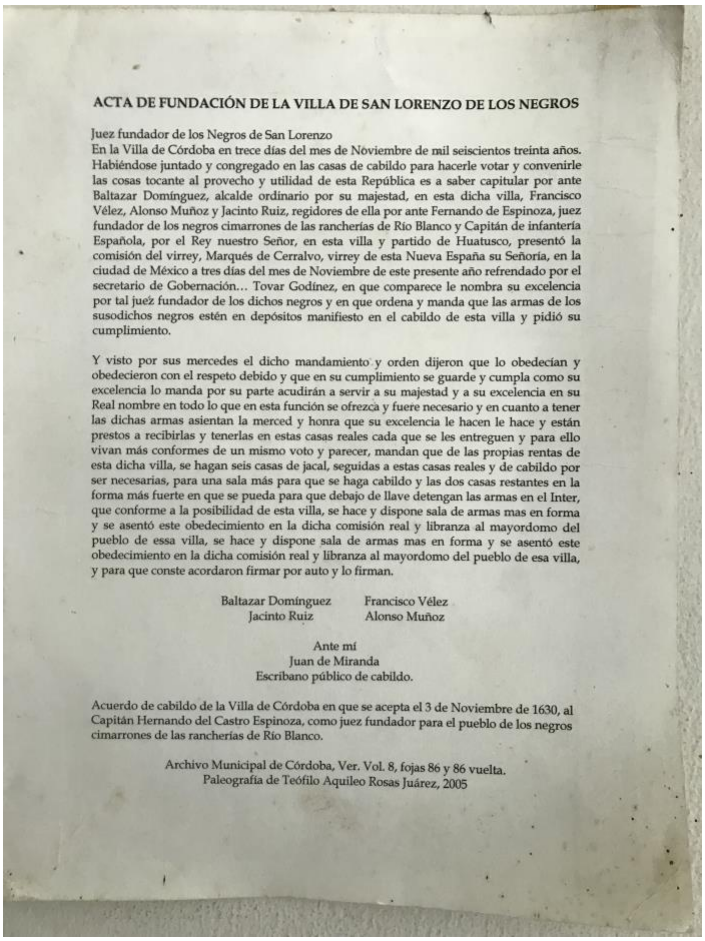
1. The conditions that the black maroons of this region ask for: That all those who fled before last September (1608) will be free and those who flee after that will be returned to their owner.

2. That they must have a chief judge who shall not be a mestizo nor criollo nor a *letrado* [person of letters] but rather be a warrior.
3. That no Spaniard will have a house in or stay within the town except during the markets they will have in their town on Mondays and Thursdays.
4. That they must have councilmen and a town council.
5. That the Captain Ñanga, who is their leader, must be governor and after him his sons and descendants.
6. That they obligate themselves to return to their owners the black who flee to them from the ports, and for their work the blacks who track and return the runaways will be paid twelve pesos, until they return the runaways they will provide the owners with others of their own who will serve them, and if they do not return them they will pay the owners their value.
7. And within a year and a half they must be given a charter confirmed by Your Majesty and if not, they will return to their original state.
8. That their town must be founded between the Rio Blanco and the estates of Ribadeneira where they indicate.
9. That they will pay tribute to Your Majesty like all the rest of the free blacks and mulattos of the Indies.
10. The last condition they request is that Franciscan friars and no others minister to them and that the cost of ornaments for the church be paid for by Your Majesty.
11. They will present themselves with their arms every time Your Majesty has need of them to defend the land.

The demands listed above are deserving of close examination and analysis. They will be further explored in the following subsection. Nevertheless, the demands sent out by Yanga in 1609 initiated

two decades of negotiations that entailed access to land, racial/ethnic politics, economic relations, religious affiliation, and military duties among others. It wasn't until November 13, 1630 when Viceroy Marques de Cerralavo accepted the conditions that Yanga had offered and was presented with a confirmation letter of the foundation of Yanga's palenque now named, San Lorenzo de los Negros (AMC, Ver. Vol.8, F.86 and 87). The new township was relocated just 10 miles south east of Córdoba, Veracruz and far more accessible to the roads leading to major metropolitan areas (Maceda Martinez, A., Rowell, C.H, Jones, M., & Marinez, A, 2008).

The *Acta de Fundacion* or Foundation Act of San Lorenzo de Los Negros contains a collection of village official names and its endorsers. The first person mentioned is Baltazar Dominguez, the mayor of San Lorenzo. The three names that follow are those of the town Aldermen, Francisco Velez, Alonso Muñoz and Jacinto Ruiz. And finally, perhaps the most important of the five is the "founding judge of the black Maroons" Fernando de Espinoza who is also described as a Captain of a Spanish infantry. The thrust of this letter is not the freedom of the group nor any particular amount of tribute per se, but rather the concerns with their access to arms. It states, "he [viceroy Cerralavo] orders and mandates that the weapons of the aforementioned blacks be in manifest deposits in the town hall of this town [Córdoba] and called for compliance…a fit weapons room is made and arranged. This obedience is settled in the said Royal commission." This founding document makes it clear that any former maroon with access to weapons was a threat and was met with suspicion. These sentiments would come to dictate 18th century ordinances against Black and Indigenous communities a century later as discussed in Chapter 3.



ACTA DE FUNDACIÓN DE LA VILLA DE SAN LORENZO DE LOS NEGROS

Juez fundador de los Negros de San Lorenzo
En la Villa de Córdoba en trece días del mes de Noviembre de mil seiscientos treinta años. Habiéndose juntado y congregado en las casas de cabildo para hacerle votar y convenirle las cosas tocante al provecho y utilidad de esta República es a saber capitular por ante Baltazar Domínguez, alcalde ordinario por su majestad, en esta dicha villa, Francisco Vélez, Alonso Muñoz y Jacinto Ruiz, regidores de ella por ante Fernando de Espinoza, juez fundador de los negros cimarrones de las rancherías de Río Blanco y Capitán de infantería Española, por el Rey nuestro Señor, en esta villa y partido de Huatusco, presentó la comisión del virrey, Marqués de Cerralvo, virrey de esta Nueva España su Señoría, en la ciudad de México a tres días del mes de Noviembre de este presente año refrendado por el secretario de Gobernación... Tovar Godínez, en que comparece le nombra su excelencia por tal juez fundador de los dichos negros y en que ordena y manda que las armas de los susodichos negros estén en depósitos manifiesto en el cabildo de esta villa y pidió su cumplimiento.

Y visto por sus mercedes el dicho mandamiento y orden dijeron que lo obedecían y obedecieron con el respeto debido y que en su cumplimiento se guarde y cumpla como su excelencia lo manda por su parte acudirán a servir a su majestad y a su excelencia en su Real nombre en todo lo que en esta función se ofrezca y fuere necesario y en cuanto a tener las dichas armas asientan la merced y honra que su excelencia le hacen le hace y están prestos a recibirlas y tenerlas en estas casas reales cada que se les entreguen y para ello vivan más conformes de un mismo voto y parecer, mandan que de las propias rentas de esta dicha villa, se hagan seis casas de jacal, seguidas a estas casas reales y de cabildo por ser necesarias, para una sala más para que se haga cabildo y las dos casas restantes en la forma más fuerte en que se pueda para que debajo de llave detengan las armas en el Inter, que conforme a la posibilidad de esta villa, se hace y dispone sala de armas mas en forma y se asentó este obedecimiento en la dicha comisión real y libranza al mayordomo del pueblo de essa villa, se hace y dispone sala de armas mas en forma y se asentó este obedecimiento en la dicha comisión real y libranza al mayordomo del pueblo de esa villa, y para que conste acordaron firmar por auto y lo firman.

Baltazar Domínguez Francisco Vélez
Jacinto Ruiz Alonso Muñoz

Ante mí
Juan de Miranda
Escribano público de cabildo.

Acuerdo de cabildo de la Villa de Córdoba en que se acepta el 3 de Noviembre de 1630, al Capitán Hernando del Castro Espinoza, como juez fundador para el pueblo de los negros cimarrones de las rancherías de Río Blanco.

Archivo Municipal de Córdoba, Ver. Vol. 8, fojas 86 y 86 vuelta.
Paleografía de Teófilo Aquileo Rosas Juárez, 2005

Figure 5: AMC, Ver. Vol.8, F.86 and 87, Founding Document of San Lorenzo de Los Negros

We can infer that all five men were of African descent. The second demand required that the judge not be from a mestizo or creole background not a man of letters, usually a person who had access to such a position would come from these two communities. Interestingly, Yanga's name was not on the Act itself. It is also unclear if one, or any, of these men were his direct descendants. What then had become of Yanga who by this time would have been an elder in the community. To this day, historians have yet to find a clear answer as to how Yanga's life ended. John Thornton (1998) maintains that Yanga was at one point captured in his later life and found by Spanish soldiers in his chapel saying prayers. His intellectual project, however, brought to fruition freedom for his community and the first free town by formerly enslaved peoples in the western hemisphere.

Lastly, it is important to note that the establishment of the city of Córdoba became of central significance in the efforts to always have a military option against maroon communities. Over a decade before the founding of San Lorenzo, Spanish authorities had a sense that negotiations where not going in their favor and in 1618, the villa de Córdoba was founded as a frontier against Black maroons' who were accused of killing and robbing passengers and transients (Proctor III, 2008). While today the principle settler-colonial narrative of Córdoba is centered on the many coffee and sugar producing mills scattered throughout the city, what is omitted is the legacy of the city's foundation based on the policing of maroon activity in the region. This historical amnesia is demonstrative of how Mexico as a nation state does not own its' own role in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and the institution of slavery. The following sub-section disrupts this amnesia by linking Yanga's eleven demands as their assertion of their humanity but also as an epistemological map of the meaning Africans constructed in their efforts to free themselves.

Las Once Demandas/The 11 Demands

To date, there is not any given literature deconstructing the demands formulated by Yanga and his cimarron group. The list of demands give insight to temporal, racial/ethnic, political, spatial, economic, and religious aspects of colonial life for palenque residents. They outline the needs of the community, certainly, while also negotiating what they were willing to give up in exchange for their freedom. In this way, the list of demands demonstrates the complexity of what it meant to be a free person of African and Indigenous descent in 17th century Veracruz.

The first demand on the list secured freedom from enslavement for all current community members who had fled before September of 1608. In return, Yanga promised to return anyone who fled in the future. The proposal to the Spanish to return maroons may have been used as leverage due to the inability of the crowns' efforts to successfully reduce runaway activity in the region themselves. This was perhaps an attempt to create trust with colonial authorities. However, it is not confirmed

that Yanga residents systematically returned any runaways. The newly formed town of San Lorenzo de Los Negros could very well have served as what I call a "semi-palenque" where maroons could find temporary or long-term refuge. What could make this a possibility? The towns racial distinction as a "*pueblo negro*" remained a feature of the town that was distinct from other Indigenous, Mestizo, or Spanish majority villages. Ultimately, the first demand proposed loyalty by Yanga to the Spanish may have been a rhetorical tool used at the beginning of negotiations while securing life outside of bondage.

The second demand secured a political position that now legally fixed San Lorenzo to the rest of the empire. This demand provides a sense of Yanga's awareness of the racial practices and racialized politics of New Spain. Their demand to assign a "chief judge" was critical as this position oversaw birth records, baptismal records, criminal matters, and as noted in the previous section signed off on the founding documents of San Lorenzo. What is particularly interesting about the role of chief judge is that Yanga explicitly excluded a "letrado" or someone holding an academic/legal rank. Yanga's preference was to appoint a warrior instead and disqualify all others. Strategically, this makes sense as people of African descent were institutionally and systematically excluded from attaining formal training in the legal field. Who then would become chief judge if not a Spaniard or in some cases a Mestizo with royal lineage that had secured their social position at the higher rungs of the social strata? With this in mind, Mestizos and Criollos were made distinct categories as to who would be excluded from this position.

Racial identity in the 17th century was intimately entangled with spatial relations (Saldaña-Portillo, 2016). It was regular practice for Indigenous communities to exist in the marginal territories outside of denser metropolitan regions (Carroll, 1991). The third demand adopted a practice from Indigenous villages that disallowed Spaniards from residing or owning a house in the community. Spaniards were only allowed to visit on market days, Mondays and Thursdays. Perhaps still distrustful, and rightfully so, of Spanish intentions Yanga residents placed the safety of the community at the

forefront of their efforts to remain free. If San Lorenzo served as a "semi-palenque," as I suggested earlier, the permanent presence of Spanish families could have jeopardized the freedom of future and current residents. Following this Indigenous model to limit Spanish families to settle in San Lorenzo is yet another legal strategy used by African descendants as acts of care for their community.

While the fourth demand mandated their own town councilmen, Yanga himself would take helm as the inaugural governor. Yanga, an elder and the intellectual architect of the freedom project, sought to secure a lineage of power reflective of his royal roots (Githiora, 2008). The fifth demand, closely aligned with the political tone of the fourth, declared that his sons and descendants would take up this political post after him. These inaugural years were crucial for San Lorenzo to maintain their remaining autonomy from the crown. Positioning chosen warriors, family members, and himself into political positions created institutional security for Yanga and his leadership.

The sixth demand pivots from governmental arrangements to the direct cost of returning self-liberated individuals. The demand mentions a proposition to the crown to pay each bounty twelve pesos for their efforts to contain maroonage specifically in the port of Veracruz. It is clear that flight continued to take place in urban centers such as Veracruz as indicated in demand six. Yanga also proposed that the bounties would provide the Spanish land owners "with others of their own who will serve them" as a kind of collateral should the bounties fail in their attempt to capture said fugitive. It is unclear who was selected to serve in place of the missing fugitive, for how long, or their specific duties. What we can take away is that bounty work was now beginning to take shape as paid labor rather than a quid pro quo arrangement. The next demand is one that sees to it that San Lorenzo remain within the legal boundaries in the present and future tense. This temporal element is an example of the vision Yanga residents had for a sustainable presence in what is now their homeland, Veracruz.

In attempts to maintain their new legal positions Yanga directs the crown to confirm a charter for San Lorenzo in the seventh demand. A charter, in Castillian and later Spanish law, assigned privileges to certain communities or groups such as exemptions from paying taxes or other rights requested by said community (McAlister, 1984). There aren't any details regarding the direct benefit of claiming chartership in this case. There is although a threat that if this demand isn't met Yanga and his community are willing and ready to return to their original state. Returning to their status as a palenque is an option. It is an option that Yanga is using to threaten the crown knowing full well that their armies have proven to be incapable of fully destroying their way of life in the palenques.

Spatially, Yanga's request for their community to be settled along the Rio Blanco was granted. Their choice in territory was the result of the eighth demand. Lands along the Rio Blanco where more fertile than their previous mountainous area. It is possible that Yanga knew well the qualities of tlalli, the Indigenous word for earth or soil. Indigenous communities used tlalli as the base for describing gravelly soil (tetlalli), sandy soil (xalalli), top soil (teuhtlalli), upland soil (tepetlalli), pasty soil (tlaltzacuitli) and so on (Williams, 1975). Shared knowledge from Indigenous community members within the palenque may have served as the bases for understanding the most strategic sites to demand specific sites of land. Additionally, fertile lands would then open up the possibilities to participate in local and regional economies in ways that they hadn't formally done in the past.

Economically, the palenque community agreed to pay tribute like their fellow free people of African descent in the colony as part of the ninth demand. While this may not seem, at first, like an act of resistance there is an ontological element worth exploring in this proposition to pay taxes. The message sent back to the crown is that they are indeed royal subjects and part of colonial society. In the context of 17th century New Spain royal subjects possessed humanity in a legal and social sense. In their previous lives, as enslaved individuals, they were labeled as property and likely had a tax imposed onto their being and bodies. In their new social situation as royal subjects, their status as

residents of San Lorenzo their once taxed bodies became tax payers. They were now royal subjects with civic rights and obligations rather than a "product" of the empire. This form of resistance is subversive and could have been seen as passive by the colonial state. Nonetheless, Yanga ceases to be seen as an enslaved individual and aligns his community with the rest of the free Black and mulatto communities of the Indies.

The final demands end with notable references to two of the most important social institutions of the empire at the time, religion and the military. While Yanga and his followers maintained that their principle religion was Catholicism they specifically demanded that Franciscan friars minister the community. As mentioned earlier, Jesuits often accompanied soldiers during warfare against the palenque and other military excursions. It is likely that Jesuit messengers and chroniclers did not have a positive reputation among the San Lorenzo leadership thus a preference for Franciscan friars in their community. The eleventh and final demand promoted the participation in the armed forces in times of defense against rival empires. Consequently, black militiamen ascended in status while redefining the boundaries of their color rather than merely escaping those boundaries (Vinson III, 1995).

Historian Ben Vinson III writes, "these soldiers joined an institution that was segregated and defined by race," and in the process "mobility through the militia involved maintaining and structuring relationships with one's racial peers." (Vinson III, pg.172). In other words, while it is tempting to say that upward social mobility was accessed through the military it is likely that new social relations were established more so with peers of color. Segregated units, after all, affirmed belonging to an assigned racial category as either white or non-white. Vinson (1995) concludes by stating that in some cities, such as Veracruz, soldiers were required to wear special items of clothing to indicate their rank and color. Black soldiers in Veracruz often wore red ribbons in their hats advertising their status when dressed in their civilian clothes. Thus, race and phenotype along the Veracruz coast and interior were constant indicators of social status.

In the aftermath of warfare, negotiations, and restructuring the institutions of their new home, Yanga and his followers were faced with a new reality altogether. They now had to "become" royal colonial subjects. What did that mean exactly for the newly incorporated town of San Lorenzo de los Negros? How did their successful negotiations open the possibility for other cimmarones in similar social conditions? While their legal status changed from fugitives to "free" royal citizens the racial infrastructure and norms of colonial society remained as a barrier to equal status with higher ranking casta members. The chapter that follows examines a case study of the Mandiga palenque. It's members also established a successful palenque a century after Yanga.

CONCLUSION

In the centuries that followed, San Lorenzo de los Negros was renamed twice. In 1630 Viceroy Rodrigo Pacheco y Osorio Marques de Cerralvo named the town after himself (Rowell, 2008). Three hundred year later, in 1932, a decree was established to once again rename the town. This time the name was changed simply to Yanga. What this change speaks to is the community's historical consciousness of their cultural and racial heritage. If you visit the town of Yanga today the town square not only displays a large statue dedicated to Yanga but also a mural portraying the story of the cimmarones who established the first legally recognized free town in the Americas by Africans and their descendants. We must not forget that before the colonial naming and renaming of this land space the original name of the region was and will eternally be Ahuilizapan, the place of waters.

While the story of Yanga has yet to be included into the state's educational curriculum in a significant way the community of Yanga continues to develop cultural projects to educate its residents of their genesis. Figure 4 is a section of a large mural measuring approximately twenty-five yards. It displays, in chronological order and reading from left to right, the arrival of the Spanish on the Veracruz coast. Highlighted throughout the mural is the various forms of agency exhibited by Africans and their efforts to confront their captors including the raiding of transient vehicles and

raiding of regional haciendas. Mounted on horseback, Yanga is prominently displayed in the middle of the mural no longer wearing chains, a stark difference from his bronze statue displayed a few feet away.

Figure 6: Community Mural, the Story of Yanga. Yanga, Veracruz, Mexico

This chapter explored the historical development of the Cordoba Orizaba region and centered people of African and Indigenous descent as necessary historical actors in the development of the region, the hemisphere, and the Spanish colonial economy. Some, as in the case of the Yanga community, were able to take flight and refuge outside of the haciendas and plantations that enslaved their kin group. In their palenques they reshaped their landscape to produce the necessary agricultural products to feed their community. While we do not have any data on how many of Yanga's residents where born in the Americas or African born we do know that the land in which they created their new

home was and continues to be native land. All that provided for the palenque was gifted through Indigenous land. The hills and thick jungle like brush provided protection from military invasion. The water systems in and around Orizaba a source for fisheries. Beans, squash, cacao, and corn all native to central and coastal Mexico fed the nearly 500-person community.

African and Indigenous proximity in the labor-intensive sugar fields and sugar mills revealed the social spaces were both cultures were intimately introduced to one another. At the core of this chapter is the idea that palenques were a response to the Western idea that neither Natives or Black communities could possess civilization. These zones of refuge, as Niel Roberts (2015) reminds us, created distance from state violence. Non-state spaces were created out of necessity, survival, and the right to be and live free. Plantation agriculture, for members of African and Indigenous communities throughout Veracruz, was unnatural and at odds with their worldview and relation with land (Canton, 1979). Although land was not viewed as something that should be owned, their demands for land was central to their requirements to put down their arms. The eleven demands are a small insight to the value system of the group.

Palenques were sites of resistance. Indigenous and African epistemologies had no other route but to merge together in the context of a colonial society that produced racialized ideas onto their bodies. Palenques ensured a type of freedom that was ontological. The multisite palenque, predicated on movement, became a way of being that the Spanish had not anticipated. They had not imagined that Black and Indigenous people could think of themselves as fully human and thus fully capable of creating their own civilization or liberation in the post-conquest world. Yanga demonstrates that in the face of structural racism it was possible to demand freedom and demand self-determination from themselves.

The maroon's vocation is to be permanently opposed to everything down below, the plain and people enslaved to it, and thus to find the strength to survive (Glissant, 2001; Roberts, 2015). Maroons

are not fixed to the 17th century alone. This chapter is a necessary continuation of literature following in the footsteps of Black liberation, Indigenous autonomy, and the merging of those movements for Chicanxs in the 21st century. Extending our historical lens to the early 17th century demonstrates that these cultural worlds have merged before and will continue to merge as they demand liberation in the same ancestral spirit of Yanga.

CHAPTER THREE:
FOUNDATIONS AND LIBERATION OF MANDINGA

This chapter addresses the historiographical gap and sociological limitations on self-liberated communities of Afro-Indigenous descendants in 18th century Veracruz, Mexico. A case-study approach is used to report results from the foundation of the Mandinga palenque and their transition towards the legally recognized establishment of *Nuestra Señora de los Morenos de Amapa*. The results indicate that Fernando Manuel, a man of African descent, was a key figure in negotiating the founding of this town. I argue that he and other palenque residents, some who were of mixed Indigenous ancestry, did not passively accept their racialized status as enslaved individuals but instead formed a self-sustaining community and recognized the institutional needs of the Spanish crown in order to gain their freedom. In short, they rejected their ascribed status in the Spanish colony.

Two themes emerge from a series of primary sources written by Adres de Otañes, the mayor of a neighboring village of Soyaltepec, to the viceroy on behalf of Fernando Manuel. First, the letter of demands to legally recognize Mandinga as a free town is de-radicalized and passive. It does, however, provide insight to the social conditions and daily life within the Cordoba-Orizaba region from which palenque maroons had escaped. It also gives context to the strategies and language employed in negotiations with Spanish imperial authorities. While these documents are not direct testaments by Fernando Manuel a great deal can be drawn on the persuasive means used by palenque residents to gain their liberation from the institution of slavery. A census of the Mandinga palenque was also obtained with names of the escaped individuals, their marital status, name of their partner, number of children, plantation site from which they escaped, and the family name of the plantation owners. This document suggests that palenques served as a site to reunite families with one another as they were separated in different work sites.

There are, however, additional social factors that must be addressed throughout this chapter such as the racial-legal codes of the mid 18th century. This includes a series of colonial ordinances that

intended to limit social interactions between Black and Indigenous peoples. Ordinances provide context to both the daily lives and policing of Black and Indigenous bodies; they also leave historical clues of institutionalized racism that may have informed the need for negotiating specific needs for Nuestra Señora. The criminalization of both groups opens up further dialogue on the ways that colonization, race, and space interact and intersect to shape the social world in the Cordoba-Orizaba region. As sociologist Victor Rios (2011) puts it, crime is a socially constructed phenomenon where by an individual's social place should be examined in relation to the power structures in which they are embedded. I argue that the purpose of the ordinances sought to criminalize and punish individuals of lower casta status. They were contradictory to the economic needs of the region and the commercial exchange among multiple racial/ethnic communities. Palenque resident intelligently understood the larger political elements of the ordinances and the impossibility of keeping Indigenous and Black peoples separated.

The final section of this chapter engages maroon activities as decolonial praxes of movement. This concept focuses on the act of exiting enslavement. Conceptual considerations include a migratory path, not in a restricted spatial sense, to distance one's self from enslavement. A decolonial praxis of movement is informed by Indigenous ways of "being" on the move. I conclude by proposing a Chicanx approach to understanding migration by way of palenque resident's experiences of displacement. Their rebellious acts left lessons for current and future scholarship to explore as epistemological and ontological sites of freedom, movement, and migration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review seeks to demonstrate the fundamental literature on the historical processes that led to the establishment of Nuestra Señora de los Morenos de Amapa. Looking at this literature through a Chicano/Latino Studies and sociological lens offers an interdisciplinary focus that has yet to be applied in understanding the social relationships among and between palenque residents and

their surrounding communities. The review offers insight to the strengths and weaknesses in the current historiography while maintaining a focus on how the narrative of the Mandinga palenque has developed over the last four decades. Legal ordinances and restrictions also shaped the interactions between palenque residents, free Black citizens, Indigenous communities, colonial administrators, and local elites. The legality of their interactions is contextualized and considered a necessary sub-theme for this chapter. Ultimately the literature review concludes that the literature on the Mandinga palenque, while scarce, provides a sufficient base from which to develop new inquiries that have yet to be resolved. This suggests a nuanced investigation invested in Afro-Indigenous agency and acts of living outside the bounds of colonial law. These themes have been lackluster in the context of colonial Mexico but became of interest to scholars in the early 1970's.

One example is that of William B. Taylor whose historical article uses a colonial record written by a parish priest in 1800, detailing the foundation of Nuestra Señora de los Morenos de Amapa. Taylor argues that colonial Spanish America demonstrated efforts to "reduce racial discrimination" against enslaved peoples as compared to the North American experience (Taylor, 1970). This argument is based on notarial records of manumission and the thirteenth-century legal code as evidence of the Spaniards supposed belief in equality among men. Missing from this analysis is any comparative examples of North American cases making it difficult to assess the level of racial discrimination towards Black and Indigenous communities in Spanish and Anglo-America. The principle motives of the Spanish in their negotiations with palenque leaders included their desire to form "reducciónes" or reductions. The intentions of the reducciónes facilitated access to Indigenous labor, the declaration of a Christianized space, and the taxation of its' residents (Mumford, 2012). Additionally, the reduction of Indigenous peoples was intended to break ethnic and kinship ties and detribalize the residents to create a more generic Indian population (Stern, 1993). Taylor and Stern

demonstrate the colonial need to control the increasing instability in the Orizaba-Cordoba region among its members of the lower-casta.

This chapter works to extend and complicate the work of historian Patrick Carroll who writes on the foundation of Amapa and traces the social changes that occur before, during, and after their formal establishment as a free town. Carroll begins by placing the Mandinga palenque alongside 12 other rebellions throughout Latin America. He argues that there was a hemispheric trend of maroonage that served as an effective form of resistance (Carroll, 1977). Perhaps his most persuasive point is the use of demographic changes that occur between 1743 and 1827 (Figure, 1). As demonstrated in the graph below, demographic stability in the female to male ratio was "replacing recruitment as the most important factor of social unification" (Carroll, 1977, pg. 501). This provides a hypothesis in social stability that had yet to be argued by previous scholars. Still, missing from these 20th century historiographies is an emphasis group agency and a fundamental question of palenque resident's resistance against their racialized status.

TABLE 1
Population Breakdowns of Mandinga-Amapa: 1743, 1769, 1827

DATE	1743	1769	1827
Male-Female Ratio	4:1	3:1	1:1
Married Couples of Childbearing Age	1	11	23
Percentage of Adult Population Married	30	51	82
Children Under Twelve Years of Age	0	17	92
Total Population	23	52	148

Sources: Archivo General de la Nación de México, Ramo de Tierras, exp. 1, fol. 7–7v, 67v–69v; José María Murguía y Galardi, "Extracto general que abraza la estadística toda en su 1ª y 2ª parte del estado de Guaxaca (Oaxaca), 1827," G428 of Genaro García Collection, University of Texas Latin American Collection, exp. 2, fol. 1.

Table 1: Mandinga population years 1743-1827. Patrick Carroll, 1977

Almost three decades later interest in the Mandinga palenque emerges by way of historian Frank "Trey" Proctor. He uses a series of case studies to develop a narrative on the motivations for African descendants to take up arms and demand their freedom in public administrative space in Mexico City. Proctor links two uprisings in the *zocalo*, or town center, with the establishment of San Lorenzo de los Negros and the township of Amapa. Both uprisings, separated by more than a century and a half, provide evidence of the social instability of colonial Mexico's central and coastal regions between the 17th and 18th century. While the text is driven by a question seeking to understand the motivation to run away, Proctor concludes that given the nature of archival evidence focusing on initial motivations may not always be possible (Proctor, 2005). Instead, he urges historians and other scholars to question our assumption that a general and universal desire for liberty among enslaved peoples was necessarily the case throughout Latin America.

Additionally, scholars from outside of the field of history have made clear that maroonage, as well as palenques, have been academically constructed from colonial notions of spatial geographies. Amaral (2017), for example, reconsiders the social category of maroon beyond its rural implications in her study of Mandinga. She asserts that maroons occupied multiple geopolitical spaces in the Córdoba-Orizaba region. As the name implies, maroons are not static individuals but rather a community of complex networks within and outside of colonial spaces. Similarly, the Mandinga palenque was not a fixed space. They too were as mobile as the maroons themselves. Amaral reminds us that palenques held larger geopolitical landscapes which at times included haciendas, metropolitan cities, and *parajes* or small intermediary camp grounds between two locations (Amaral, 2017). These propositions complicate our understanding of the temporal, conceptual, and spacial limitations within the literature on palenques.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To be held in an enslaved status one must be rendered non-human by the institutions of the colony, a condition shared by both Indigenous and African peoples in colonial Mexico. Although the New Law of 1547 prohibited the enslavement of Indigenous peoples the practice continued for centuries (Solodkow, 2014). This was especially the case for non-Christian/non-assimilated Indigenous individuals. The conflictive entanglement between the catholic church and the law in discourse that legitimated such ideologies and institutions sought to produce colonial subjects in unequal social conditions of existence (Arias & Marrero-Fente, 2014). The theoretical framework of this chapter considers maroons as taking flight from both physical and epistemological/ontological bondage as proposed by Neil Roberts (2015).

This section considers the historical actors who formed the Mandinga palenque as agents of radical change, resistance, and rebellion against their racialized colonial status. Maroons affirmed their humanity. They reconstituted their physical surroundings and racial geographies to create a new world according to their demands. In the words of borderland theorist Gloria Anzaldua, "*Esos movimientos de rebeldia que temenos en la sangre nosotros los mexicanos surgen como rios desbocandos en mis venas. Y como mi raza que cada en cuando deja caer esa esclavitud de obedecer, de callarse y aceptar, en mi esta la rebeldia encimita de mi carne.*" [Those movements of rebellion that we Mexicans possess in our blood emerge as runaway rivers in my veins. And like my race, that every now and then drops their slavery to obey, to shut up and accept, in me this rebelliousness sits atop my flesh.] (Anzaldua, 1987, p.15). In the context of being less human in the eyes of Spanish colonialists, Amerindian and African peoples subverted the logics of modernity and created multiple-sites of resistance.

On Humanity/Modernity/Racial Geographies

The European imaginary of the "Other" in Mexico socially constructed Indigenous worldviews, cultures, and persons as objects. As Mignolo (2005) puts it, Indigenous and African people's

detachment from Christianity ensured their detachment from humanity. This erasure of subjectivity also erased their place as equals on an epistemological level. It was not only a matter of physically conquering the land space of coastal Veracruz in an external relationship; but rather a colonization of the imagination of the conquered, over the modes of knowing, of producing perspective, images, symbols, and modes of signification (Quijano, 2007). From the perspective of the Spanish, only those who were of European descent and of Christian heritage were considered human. These worldviews are held together and validated through the lens of European modernity.

The sociological understanding of modernity typically rests on ideas of the modern world emerging almost exclusively out of the processes of economic and political revolutions located in Europe and underpinned by the cultural changes brought about by the Renaissance, Reformation, and Scientific Revolution (Bhambra, 2011; Steinmetz, 2005). The rest of the world was external to these world-historical processes leaving colonial connections and processes as insignificant to their development. Modernity is thus assumed to be the apex of civilization and humanity. To be modern is to presume enlightenment, a rational being, in short, human (Ramirez, 2019; Arias & Marrero-Fente, 2014). Racial categories and their social distinctions were born from the logics of modernity and created a complex set of qualifications for who was considered human and who was not. The humanity of African and Indigenous peoples in central and coastal Veracruz were in constant fluidity depending on time, space, occupation, religious affiliation, familial lineage, and other social factors. Spatial geographies are key towards understanding the role of race.

The conquest of Indigenous geographies was one based on the exploitation of land and space. The process of establish Spanish towns came at the cost of displacing Indigneous communities from their original homelands. It was a displacement from their spatial geographies. In the 18th century Indigenous towns continued to be periphery spaces outside of Spanish living areas. Whereas European occupied towns were seen as "civilized," Indians and their descendants were seen as "barbarous"

occupying a physical and social status outside of civility (Saldaña-Portillo, 2016). Palenques, however, were unlike Indian towns or Spanish villages. They were something much more complex in terms of geographical space for the residents who called Mandiga home.

Racial geographies are predicated on colonial imaginaries with particular attention the image of the "Indian" through a colonial lens. In the context of Veracruz palenques the image of the Indian was invisibalized. This erasure extends itself to the archives as Indigenous peoples were seldomly if at all considered as part of the maroon population that help create as sustain the multiple palenques in the Cordoba-Orizaba region. Scholars have followed suit in the contemporary literature on palenques and maroonage. Indigenous representation has become invisible.

We must look beyond the archive and seek the spaces in between colonial documents to capture the social dynamics Africans had with Indigenous peoples, land, and cultural practice. Daniel Hernandez (2019) states, Indigeneity is premised on movement. African descendants in movement shared this cultural experience of rebeldia [rebellion] expressed by Anzaldua. Maroonage as a cultural practice, in response to displacement, connects both colonized groups to one another. The act of flight provided what Betina Ng'Weno (2012) refers to as a space of autonomy and for control over community and territory. For Ng'Weno, Indigeneity provides these same elements of communal and spatial autonomy.

The Mandinga palenqe existed in a third space between freedom and enslavement, between rural and metropolitan spaces, outside of the Spanish and Indian dichotomy. It was a borderland. For colonialists, it was unclear where the palenque began and ended. In part, the inability for colonial authorities to locate the Mandiga palenque played a critical role in their capability to become autonomous and negotiate their freedom in 1767. Subverting colonial space became a mechanism towards their efforts of liberation. What colonialist did not understand was that palenques were not static, isolated, geographically bound communities. They were instead multi-geographical sites,

expansive, and encompassed various physical and social terrains (Amaral, 2017). Theoretically, using palenques as a framework derives from the modes of existence of African and Indigenous peoples and centers their perspectives. As a frame of analysis, it also drives scholars to engage how colonized groups responded to the violence of European modernity and the institutions of slavery.

DATA AND METHODS

Data for this chapter includes primary sources collected over the course of a month at the Archivos General de La Nacion (AGN) located in Mexico City, Mexico. This archival site contains a number of documents associated with the establishment of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Amapa. During my visit to the AGN I was able to collect a series of letters written by the mayor of Soyaltepec Andres Otañes advocating on behalf of the Mandinga palenque to formally establish their town. Additionally, the archives provide an insight to the colonial world in the Córdoba-Orizaba region through 18th century maps, a collection or racial ordinances, and images of Black militia units. These primary sources provide fragments to a narrative that have been left incomplete by secondary sources.

One obstacle after attaining the mid-18th century letters was translating from Spanish to English. The Spanish language as it is used today, and as I am familiar with, was largely standardized between the years 1726-1739 by the Spanish Royal Academy (Lapesa, 1981). Ironically enough this was the same period of time of massive slave revolts in central Mexico. While the documents I recovered were written some twenty-five years after the linguistic standardization of the language key words were spelled differently. One example is the word "indio" spelled "yndio." I came to find a pattern in the use of the letter "R" which was often written in the form of the cursive "X." Figure seven is an example of a 1767 letter written on behalf of the Mandinga group by Don Andres Ferndando de Otañez. As I became more familiar with the authors handwriting, writing style, and tone the text became an accessible living document from which I was later able to analyze.

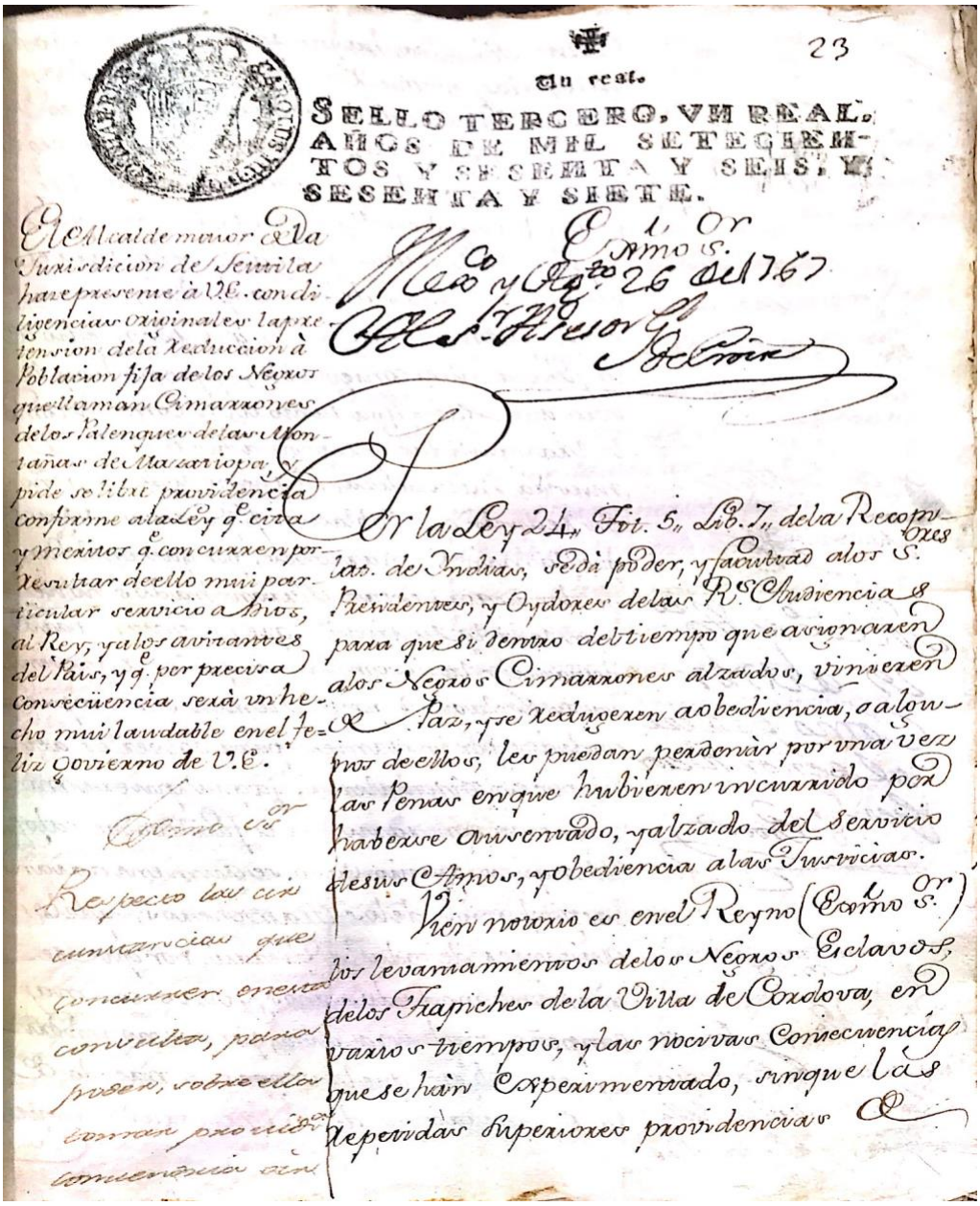


Figure 7: Archivo General de la Nacion (AGN) Tierras, Volume 3543, Expediente 1. Tierras Geographicas del Pais: Fundacion de Pueblos 1769-1776.

Sources are inherently problematic because none contain testimonies from the enslaved themselves. We are left to piece together their specific reasons for fleeing or in this case their initial reasons for negotiating with colonial administrators. The causes for flight and rebellion can only be inferred from elite descriptions of such movements (Proctor, 2009). "Archiving" is a relationship with

the past and not just pulling out things out of boxes (Johnson, 2019). It is up to the researcher to reconstruct the colonial world and to contextualize the conditions enslaved individuals may have experienced in order to comprehend the struggle and motivations for resistance. Letters written by colonialist in this chapter reveal the interest of the empire entangled with the needs of palenque residents. So, while self-liberated perspectives may not be explicitly written, what we do have are insights to the motivations of the crown to cease violent measures to subdue maroon settlements and instead choose to negotiate with them.

Comparative-historical analysis, as a field of research characterized by the use of systematic comparisons and the analysis of processes over time to explain large-scale outcomes such as mass revolts, is used a strategic method of inquiry (Mahoney, 2004). The analysis of this chapter is juxtaposed with the outcomes of the previous chapter on the establishment of San Lorenzo de los Negros a century before in the subsequent chapter. Contrast are typically drawn from individual cases. Themes and questions serve as frameworks for pointing out differences. The most important issue from this logic is that the historical integrity of each case as a whole is carefully respected (Skopal and Somer, 1980). In both instances, for example, maroons engage the state to press their demands for citizenship and freedom. It is my responsibility to demonstrate the changing nature or continuity of their efforts amidst an evolving racialized colonial state.

Other documents that emerged from the AGN include maps labeled as "*intenciones*" or intentions. These maps are important for mapping out how colonial elites envisioned space and intended to use land. They may also give insight to the spaces maroons frequently visited to recruit and free other enslaved individuals. Last of all are a series of 19 racially motivated ordinances attempting to police Black lives. Together, these primary documents provide contextual clues to support maroon's rejection of their enslaved status and instead give evidence of their assertation for their humanity.

ROUTES TOWARDS FREEDOM 18th CENTURY REBELLIONS AND UPRISINGS

This section takes its' base from the Archivo General de la Nacion (AGN) folder using the collection titled, "Tierras (Lands), volume 3543, expediente (file) 1." This file contains information regarding the foundations of towns in the Córdoba and Orizaba region between 1769 and 1776. It includes narratives that give context to the foundation of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Amapa. From the analysis we gain insight to the names of various historical actors whose actions changed the social dynamics between African, Spanish, and Indigenous communities in colonial Veracruz. The succeeding sub-section articulates the context that gave rise to the autonomous community of Mandinga.

The mid 1730s was a decade of slave rebellions in central Mexico. In this decade alone, there were nine village riots and uprisings; an increase from the previous decade that saw six Indigenous and Black rebellions (Taylor 1970, Sobrerón Mora 1979, Galván & Gonzalez Obregon, 1952). Insurgences during this decade crippled the sugar and tobacco production in the area and caused mass fear among local planters. Plantation revolts, like the ones experienced in Córdoba and Orizaba, were reformist in nature as they were directed towards ending an abuse or improving some aspect of social life without directly challenging the oppressive system itself (Coatsworth, 1988). However, as Frank Trey Proctor (2013) puts it, black rebellion represented the greatest threat to colonial stability. This was certainly the case for the sugar, tobacco, and textile industries in Córdoba-Orizaba.

Perhaps what generated further unrest was a rumor that spread in February of 1735 that the King had feed all enslaved people in New Spain. Local planters blamed the rumor on the cimmarones, or runaways. By June some 500 enslaved persons gathered in San Juan de la Punta near Córdoba and demanded that local authorities obey the kings rumored wishes (Proctor, 2009). In July the Spanish responded by sending out 600 militiamen to the region to defeat the rebel groups. While this rebellion was diminished by force the efforts by the Spanish were largely unsuccessful when attempting to

destroy local palenques. A written statement by a former knight of the military order of Calatarva mentions "I have put everything into reducing the fugitive population of Black cimarrones…force has not been effective…owners of large mills in the area have lost large profits" in a tone of defeat. Historians have debated whether these rumors were created by the maroons themselves. What we can assert is that their ability to organize over 500 enslaved persons based off of those rumors in four months demonstrates agency and the networks they created to form such a large urban demonstration.

This same year coincides with the first recorded petition by the residents of the Mandiga palenque to legally recognize the creation of their town, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Amapa. At that time, Palenque residents numbered no more than 23 residents (Carroll, 1977). However small this palenque may have been colonial authorities saw it as a threat to colonial life and authority. Colonial authorities paid little attention to such request as the town of Amapa was established over thirty years after the first petition was submitted. In 1762 a group of cimmarones once again petitioned for legal recognition of their freedom. This was in response to the viceroy call for men to assist in defending the Gulf Coast against the English navy approaching from Cuba. Without a doubt, the threat of competing imperial armies advancing onto the Veracruz coast opened up negotiating strategies for the palenque residents (Proctor, 2009). Palenque residents understood these larger socio-historic moments as opportunities to further advance their needs.

By the mid 1760's the Mandiga palenque had doubled and gave refuge to some 52 residents. With this growth came a complex struggle for power and direction. The internal conflict developed between the elder cimarrones and new comers. The older cimarrones favored a truce with Spanish authorities while new members resisted peace negotiations. This resulted in an armed conflict between the Seargeant of the palenque named Fernando Manuel and his followers and the more radical group of palenque residents led by a cimarron named Macute. The following sub-section is a set of letters written on behalf of Fernando Manuel that generated the internal conflict between him and Macute.

Here, we are also made aware of other colonists who had attempted to negotiate with the maroon community some years prior to the establishment of their township.

Demanding Freedom: Letters from Mandinga

In 1767 two letters were drafted in the town of San Miguel de Soyaltepec. Andres de Urioste authored the first testimony on May 12th, 1767 describing the reasons cimarrones ran away and their intentions for their own township. This letter was addressed to the Mayor of Teutila, Don Andres Fernandez de Otañez. Uriste wrote on behalf of two cimarron representatives Fernando Manuel and Pablo de Los Reyes who at the time were arrested and imprisoned at the Brebeloncina Palace. The second testimonial document, a lengthy eleven-page petition was drafted a few weeks later and signed on June 6th, 1767. This document was written by Otañez, mayor of Soyaltepec, Veracruz, was addressing further concerns by the group of maroons to the Viceroy. Both letters make the case for allowing Mandinga residents the rights to citizenship under the Spanish crown. Yet, each document uses different justifiable language to make their claim for freedom.

The assumption that enslaved individuals escaped from their mistreatment is confirmed within the first paragraph of the letter by Urioste. Additionally, we are made aware of an alternative name for the Mandinga palenque that has yet to be recorded in the historical literature. Urioste writes, "…having deserted the trapiches in Córdoba, from where we were slaves, because of the rigor with which were treated, we sheltered ourselves in the highest hills of the Mazathiopam [mountain], forming the palenques that are called Del Rosario…which we have inhabited over 40 years." Del Rosario may have been the name used to self-describe the palenque rather than the ethnic identifying name, Mandinga.

In this testimony we also learn that in 1758 palenque residents were solicited by Dr. Don Apolinar de Cossio the colonial administrator of the Estanzuela hacienda. He offered the group his protection and their liberty. This land was in their words, "what we really wanted" because of its abundant fertile soil. Don Fernando Carlos de Riva de Neyra also implored the cimarrones a similar

offer. Efforts to fully negotiate with these private landowning individuals was prevented by the cimarron known as Macute. He was described Macute as a military captain that governed the entrances and exits to the palenques or the "captain of the roads." He advised the group of cimarrones attempting to make a deal with Cossio and Riva de Neyra to return to the mountains. Threats were made against the group if they did not obey Macute. This was the principle motivation that lead to the intragroup conflict between Fernando Manuel and Macute. Eventually, the two groups engage in an armed conflict. After defeating Macute's soldiers Fernando takes the cimarron captain and 17 prisoners to Córdoba where they are returned to their masters. Turning in their so-called compatriots during negotiations demonstrates that compromises some cimarrones accepted as part of their own road towards freedom. At times, it came at the high cost of other runaways.

For Macute, freedom was complete separation from Spanish institutions. While Fernando Manuel attempted to integrate the group into the dominant society. This sentiment can be felt in his statement, "no somos tan malos, tan malos como la voz general ha querido vernos." Translated this means "we are not so bad, as bad as the general voice wants to see us." I include the Spanish quote here because although the translation to English is correct, the infliction that is carried in the Spanish language holds a power that cannot be translated in a linguistic format. It is a claim to humanity. It is a claim that they are not a threat to society but are aware of the way that they are perceived within the colony.

The testimonial documents end with a mnemonical message that they had already served in defending the coast of Veracruz against the British in 1762. An act that signified their allegiance to the crown. Furthermore, Mandinga residents had previously put into practice the act of turning in runaways. The letter notes that they had turned over individuals belonging to Don Diego de Bringas, owner of the Toluquilla Trapiche and also to Don Juan Segura and Don Gaspar Mexia. In demanding their freedom, palenque residents became themselves agents of colonialism.

Other important details outlined on May 12th include a testament that nine members of the palenque had been asked to "cease the relentless perjury that so far have been experienced because of the palenque." In the context of the demands, palenque leaders are making it clear that past negotiations to halt raids on Spanish properties had been met. In a way, this was an opportunity for the Spanish to trust the word of cimarron leaders. Moreover, although the petition is written by Urioste and represented by Fernando Manuel and Pablo de Los Reyes it is being sent to the mayor on behalf of all fifty-two members of the palenque. This very intentional language signals the unity of the palenque community in the wake of negotiations. It is a statement of solidarity across its' members.

Under the Following Conditions

The Mandinga community in all actuality knew that they had already claimed an extension of freedom by way of their successful adaptation to the Mazathiopam mountains. Yet, they remained aware that institutionalizing their freedom would allow for generational access to land, citizenship, and a more peaceful living condition. In their letter to Otañez on May 12th, Mandinga residents promised to discontinue raids along the Royal Road "under the following conditions":

1. To be granted fertile land with access to the mountains; in order to better arrest runaways.
2. Access to workers and a license to establish a church; in order to serve god and continue along his path.
3. Request to live peacefully among their neighboring communities without threat of violence against them.

The letter signed on June 6th followed up on these conditions albeit with additional references to colonial law. In this letter palenque leaders identified Law 24 in Book 7 in the Collection of Indians as a means to justify their demands for land. This set of laws largely regulated social, political, religious, and economic life in the Spanish empire but most notably included the legal-spatial configurations of new towns. Law 24 was in reference to Mandinga residents "particular service to God, to the King,

and fellow countrymen." Exercising their Christian claim in a legal sense was a further step towards securing both their freedom and land along the Amapa riverfront. Additional demands included that all members of Mandiga be "pardoned for running away from their duties and masters" and for the offenses during the "uprisings in the Kingdom of Cordoba." Fernando Manuel made sure that Otañez emphasized their Christian qualities as this was a theme that tied both letters together.

Otañez writes,"they [Cimarrones] have decided to name their town in the name of their protector and patron 'Our Lady of Guadalupe'." It is unknown whether palenque residents in Mandinga officially practiced Christianity. However, these statements are mentioned throughout the document in order to accentuate their affiliation and dedication to the dominant societies' religious order. They recognized that even the institution of slavery could bend if presented against the potential for evangelization of current and future residents. Six witnesses were present during the drafting of this message, five elders and one person of middle-age. This is the first mention of any palenque resident as eyewitnesses during dialogues with Otañez.

Eventually, the land that was granted to form Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe came at the expense of Indigenous peoples living in San Miguel de Soyaltepec. Otañez continues as to add lib, "For although it is prized land belonging to the Indians of Soyaltepec the design is molded after the Hacienda Estanzuela. They [the Indians] do not need them…they will be required to be neighbors." The removal of Indigenous peoples from their land sheds light on the way geographies are perceived, imagined, lived, and mapped out by Spanish colonial authorities. In this way, Soyaltepec and the rest of the Spanish empire is a supremely racial spaces that should be understood within the colonial modes of governmentality imposed on Indigenous peoples (Saldaña-Portillo, 2016). The map bellow entitled "Intendencia de Veracruz" or "Municipality of Veracruz" visually articulates how colonist envisioned land, borders, spatial distribution, and order.

Figure 8: AGN. Intendencia De Veracruz. Colección Mapas Planos e. Illustraciones. MAPILU

The Cost of Freedom

The crown's interest in negotiating with maroons was ultimately to pacify black rebellion and diminish the raids that occurred along the road between Mexico City and the Port of Veracruz. In return for their freedom, the Viceroy set conditions that were to be met by all 52 palenque residents in their newly established town. Both Black and Indigenous peoples were thought to have no means of govern themselves according to the Spanish. King Charles III was given political authority over the new municipality's governing body. In the letter dated June 6, 1767 it states that, "The King will be empowered to appoint mayors, aldermen, and other public officials for economic governance. Because without this they [Black and Indigenous peoples] cannot be kept in due obedience." One of the initial appointments was that of a priest who was "assigned from Soyaltepec accompanied by 17

nuns." This action ensured the continuous evangelization of the formerly enslaved while also asserting the organization of civic life in Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

From this point forward freedom also meant allegiance to the Spanish King and a pledge to serve in the colonial militia. The correspondence by Otañez indicated that all males would be "punctual in serving in the Corps of Lamenos…some have been assigned as sergeants." Their duties also included a continued effort to capture runaways in the Córdoba region and return them to their masters, a duty "only these blacks from the mountains can facilitate." The crown increasingly recognized that efforts to prevent the act of maroonage was less and less effective by soldiers that did not regularly accessed the jungle like terrain. Figure nine represents one of the various racialized battalions in the colonial militia identified as the Pardos Batallion of Mexico. The darker tint in his skin tone and name Pardo points to a group of soldiers who are of African and Indigenous descent. This would have likely been the squadron that member of Mandinga would have joined after their arrangement with the Spanish crown.

Figure 9: AGN, Batallon de Partdos de México. Colección Mapas Planos e. Illustraciones. MAPILU

As a final pledged, Fernando Manuel and his group promised to "reduce themselves to a fixed population" as to no longer take in any additional runaways. Lastly, former palenque residents would have to pay tribute to the crown. Perhaps the most important statement in either document was the following. "The royal law that precedes this representation forgives the penalties that would have been incurred…declaring them free of slavery so they can form their population (community)." With this decree the lives of 52 palenque residents would be transformed for generations. Not only had maroons in Western Veracruz succeeded in breaking away from their trapiches but they were effective in sustaining their palenques for over 40 years before articulating their freedom to the largest global colonial empire of the 18th century. The following sub-section is supported by the original census of the Mandinga settlement and provides contextual information that is critical for understanding

maroonage in Córdoba and Orizaba. Central to the analysis of this document is the various social relationships and networks that existed between the different trapiches and the cultural exchange in the midst of escape.

The Census Reveals

Archival document must be approached cautiously and imaginatively. Mandinga has yet to be engaged as a mixed-status community. The following document provides insight to this dimension of maroon communities in colonial Mexico and complicates the idea of palenques as a homogenous community of escaped self-liberated individuals. On May 12th, 1767 Fernando Manuel and nine witnesses provide Andres Otañez with information regarding the names, marital status, and the number of children per family of those resided in Mandinga. Other data reported in this primary document were the name of the plantation and the slave master's family names. One particular point of interest is the number of plantations from which Mandiga residents escaped from. This document confirms at least thirteen different trapiches. Two of the most frequently mentioned were the "trapiche de San Antonio" whose enslaved pertained to Don Diego Bringar and the "trapiche de San Miguel" who mention Don Lopes de Rivas as the proprietor.

One of the key negotiators along with Fernando Manuel was Pablo de Los Reyes who escaped from the plantation in San Antonio. His familial history brings forth questions regarding the nature of his family's separation and reunification at the Mandiga palenque. Pablos wife, Maria del Carmen, escaped from the San Miguel plantation alongside their two adult daughters Lorena Joseph and Maria Nicolas. At what point, then, did Pablo become separated from his wife and daughters? What threat did the unity of his family represent? Under the climate of mass slave revolts in the 1730's the threat of organized rebellions may have caused plantation owners to separate kin. Family was, and continues to be, one of the most important social institutions for human beings and their survival. With limited

material resources family and familial ties was significantly important for collective organization, communication, and execution of maroonage.

An additional contextual clue to these questions is Pablo's status as a corporal within, what we can assume is, the palenque militia. Pablo's frequent mention in negotiation letters alongside the Sergeant Fernando Manuel indicates an active participatory role in a move towards liberation. Resistance to his enslaved position may have been perceived as transmissible to other enslaved individuals in the San Miguel plantation. It's quite possible that the heads of San Miguel had picked up on his intelligible traits and forcibly removed him from his family.

Interestingly, and perhaps complicating this story, his daughter Maria Nicolas was married to a free black man by the name of Joseph Ignacio who would eventually also leave in refuge to the Mandinga palenque. This indicates that not all residents of Mandinga were of an enslaved status and could have leveraged certain social interactions with the colonial world. At least two other documented people of free status were members of Mandinga. Maria Carvajal a woman of free status was married to Francisco de la Cruz both previously residing in the trapiche in San Miguel. Maria Josepha was also a free person and was married to Mateo Joseph of the trapiche in San Antonio. It is unknown if either of the Maria's were born free or attained their freedom later in life. It is clear that Joseph Ignacio, Maria Carvajal, and Maria Josepha were married and perhaps used the institution of marriage as a way to potentially liberate their spouse and children.

Free individuals could safely enter and exit potentially dangerous spaces in the city, haciendas, and local Indigenous villages. The implications of this reality direct historical sociologist to think about how palenque residents deployed citizenship as a mechanism of engaging freedom for the collective group and not only as individual freedom. Maria Josepha's freedom, for example, was mobile and could directly impact the livelihood of her spouse and through colonial law could petition for his freedom. Likewise, their child who is also mentioned in this document was born into freedom by way

of his mother. From this perspective freedom was far from a static condition from which subjects either do or do not possess, rather, freedom is a concept focused on the capacity for action or the moment when enslaved individuals realize that they can resist and contemplate doing so (Roberts, 2015; Hooker, 2017). In this case Maria Josepha and Joseph Ignacio both married enslaved individuals and at one point decided to flee and reside in Mandinga. Their personal freedom did not depend on their decision to runaway yet their decisions to do so tell a different narrative of how one's personal liberty could extend to others. Regardless of who the colonial documents claim was a "free person", marronage in itself was an act of liberation claimed by previously enslaved individuals.

From an epistemological perspective maroons did not wait for their freedom to be granted from an authoritative individual or state power but rather took it upon themselves to escape from their haciendas or trapiches and declared themselves to be free. They first had to imagine their freedom. This is a radical moment that is difficult to trace in any census document. It is not radical, though, to think of people attempting to reunite with family members via marronage. At least three different married couples were documented as escaping from different plantations.

Andres de los Santos, for example, had escaped from the San Antonio trapiche while his wife Margarita Getrudis had abandoned the trapiche in Cacaguatal. Juan Joseph de Mata who had freed himself from the trapiche de Joseph was married to Maria Augustina who herself had ran away from the trapiche de la Punta de Joseph de Mesa. The census also tells us of an individual who was described as a mulata woman by the name of Isabel de la Ascension who had escaped from the Hacienda in Estanzuela married to Rafael Christomo who had turned to marronage from the San Miguel plantation. Isabel was the only racial/ethnic differentiation coded in the census. The lack of ethnic racial identifiers for residents is a prominent feature of this census. Secondary sources are helpful in disentangling the racialized communities that created autonomous spaces of liberty. The following

section will follow up on the colonial practices of restricting ethnic and racial interactions, ordinances of social control, and the way palenque residents disobeyed and rejected such legal ordinances.

ORDINANCES AND DISOBEDIENCE

The analysis for this section is centered on data collected from the Archivo General de la Nacion (AGN) from the collection titled "Ordenanzas (Ordinances), volume 1, expediente (file) 164." The content of this file contains information of various racialized ordinances directed at the direct control over the lives of Indigenous, Black, and mixed castas. Attention is also given to the policing of Afro-Indigenous relations and economic forms of segregating racial groups in the Córdoba Orizaba region.

Racialized laws and Legal Ordinances

The legacy of European colonial law in the Americas promoted a project of assimilation, exclusion, and sought to produce colonial subjects in unequal social conditions of existence (Arias & Marrero-Fente, 2014). As Arias & Marrero-Fente (2014) remind us, both territorial expansion and subjugation of Indigenous and Black bodies was justified through legal means as an instrument to define and reinforce difference amongst the various ethnic communities in the Americas. They lay out a macro-level view of the modern roots of domination, specifically examining the set of legal codes known as the *Requrimiento*. While this set of laws facilitated early Spanish colonial conquest in the 16th century it also set the foundation for how colonial administrators imagined social interactions amongst their so called "subjects."

Racial ideologies were deeply embedded into various legal ordinances throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. The term maroon, for example, was both a social and legal category in the 18th century and carried a varying degree of legal implications. Legal ordinances sought to control the collective action of the African and Indigenous peoples living in the Córdoba Orizaba region especially during the mid 1700's as a number of revolts created insecurities for hacienda elites. In an attempt to reduce the social interaction between African and Indigenous communities' Spanish officials created a series

of local ordinances as requested by regional elites. Edgar Love (1970) notes that legal restrictions on Afro-Indigenous relations was intended to prevent acculturation between the two groups in colonial Mexico. Among the ordinances outlined in his essay are those laws expelling Black individuals from Indigenous villages, prohibitions on commercial intercourse between the two groups, and cultural laws restricting Black peoples from wearing Indigenous clothing. These legal measures were created in response to Spanish colonial officials' concerns with security. Indigenous and African peoples outnumbered the Spanish who were especially fearful of Black rebellions and the possibility that together they might join in a common cause against the colonial power (Love, 1970). Social distance thus became a colonial tool during a time of frequent insurrections by both colonized groups.

Policing Afro-Indigenous relations may have been a way of preventing cultural understandings and methods of acquiring not only one's own freedom but land. Margarita Ochoa (2012) points to the way Indigenous peoples used cultural elements to legally claim land possession and transmission. Her chapter outlines property litigations brought to the General Indian Court (GIC) in central Mexico between 1592-1829. Individuals of Indigenous descent often submitted bills of sale, last wills, or testaments to the GIC in lieu of land titles. This practice, she argues, is a cultural distinction from their Spanish counterparts. This may be one such cultural practice shared between Indigenous and Maroon groups.

Policing Afro-Indigenous Relations

In both urban and rural geographies African descendant communities were policed in their day to day interactions with Indigenous peoples. Outlined in this section are the means by which the Spanish crown and governing bodies created a series of ordinances attempting to segregate the two cultural groups. The data set used for this section includes a sample size of 19 different ordinances that range from policing the Afro-Indigenous cohabitation, selling and purchasing items, curfews, possession of arms, and dress codes. Each of these ordinances were explicitly written for Black, Mulato, and Indian

peoples. They serve as evidence of the structural and cultural structures from which palenque residents, as well as other people of Indigenous and African descent, where policed. Policing these interactions was a difficult task to uphold but yielded heavy consequences if one was found to be guilty. One of the difficulties in patrolling Afro-Indigenous relations was the demographic reality that did not favor Spanish descendants from central Mexico to the Veracruz coast.

By the midpoint of the seventeenth century, the majority of Afro-Mexicans had been either born in New Spain or originated from the circum-Caribbean world, but by the end of the century the number from Africa declined significantly (Gonzalez, 2016). While Mandiga was tucked into the rural hills it's residents often found themselves interacting with institutions and individuals in urban spaces. By 1646, the number of Afro-descendants in urban spaces stood around 116,529 and 35,089 recent African arrivals. African descended populations thus comprised 8.8 percent, compared to Spaniards and their descendants, who comprised 0.8 percent in 1646 (Gonzalez, 2016). By the middle of the 18th century Africans and Indigenous peoples remained the numerical majority yet structurally continued to be at the bottom of the casta social structure. This demographic reality not only disrupts the long-held narrative of Mestizaje that dominates Mexico's historical memory, but it complicates the perception that palenque residents only lived in isolated jungle and mountainous regions. Many palenque residents had extended kinship with Indigenous communities throughout the colony.

African descendants and their racially mixed children, according to Carroll (2004), settled in nearly all of the Indigenous villages of Central Mexico as they provided a potential escape from the limits of enslavement. Maroon men sought refuge with their wives' native families. Palenque communities were intimately linked to Indigenous villages via familial ties. African descendants who settled in Indigenous towns were racially identified as "naturales" and adopted an Indigenous lifestyle while "landinos" or "Hispanicized acculturated peoples of mixed African descent" (Carroll, 2004). Spanish instituted stern measures designed to impede the process of African acculturation to and with

the Indigenous world while ensuring their exclusion from most positions of power, including the offices charged with maintaining legal and religious institutions (Arias & Marrero-Fente, 2014; Love, 1970).

As early as 1527 King Phlip II declared as official policy that "in so far as possible Black men should marry Black women. Some three decades later, in 1563, he declared that Blacks and Mulatos must be barred from living in Indian Villages except for those who were married to a person of Indigenous descent (Love 1970). The anxiety of the state may have centered on the similarities in the world views of both groups that coalesced upon their sustained cultural and social interactions. Aguirre Beltran notes, "For Blacks and Indians, man and nature, human and cosmic events, facts and symbols, constituted an indubitable coalescence. There did not appear a clear separation between the metaphysical and physical, between the divine and human, between life and death, on the contrary, a continuum and the mutual dependence and reciprocal among man and the phenomenal world, both determining psychic forces which produce a causality of magical disposition and concept of time, space, life, and the world of mystic nature." (Beltran, 1958, p. 8). Criminalizing the social interactions between the castas at the bottom of the social strata was part of daily life in colonial Veracruz. The similarities, however, between Afro-Mexicans and Natives extended beyond their colonized experiences. Both subaltern groups were connected in an epistemological and ontological sense; this connection intimidated those in elite positions of power.

To know the law in the context of mid 18th century colonial Mexico was one form of human agency that hasn't been fully considered in sociological writings on racialized experiences. According to *Las Siete Partidas* or the Seven-Part Code, "When a slave marries a free woman, and his master is aware of it and offers no opposition, the slave becomes free." As mentioned in the previous section, marriage was one-way people of African descent often used their agency to circumvent class stratification in colonial society. In recognizing the ambiguity of race, both Indigenous and people of

African descent found opportunities to evade racialized colonial laws. The section that follows provides evidence of the economic and cultural restrictions Black and Indigenous people faced using both primary and secondary sources.

Economic Forms of Segregation

As this section will show, economic segregation took the form of restricting specific racial categories from exchanging goods throughout Orizaba-Cordoba. The Camino Real or Royal Road ran through this region along the banks of the Rio Amapa making it a sight of both commercial and cultural exchange among various cultural communities. This road was often traversed by colonial soldiers leaving the colonial port of Veracruz to the interior of the colony. As such, their expeditions were often long and required frequent stops. Cimarrones from the area were keenly aware of the activity along the royal road and took advantage of the opportunity sell corn to colonial militiamen. Corn was and continues to be a staple food in Mexico that yields numerous uses thus making it a profitable commodity.

Residents of Mandinga grew their own agricultural goods such as squash, beans, and corn in fields on the margins the Rio Amapa. At times these fields were on the outskirts of large farms owned by their previous owners (Amaral, 2017). Colonial documents reveal an ordinance instructing soldiers to "not stop of veer off course" at the "edges of the Rio Amapa" to either eat, rest, or buy food. The order advised the nearby town of Mata de la Agua to "conserve their maize and sell to passengers and army men." It encouraged those traveling through this region to buy corn "at good prices from the Mayor." A different ordinance declared that "no Spaniard, Mestizo, or Mulato could purchase corn from an Indian home."

Corn was not the only commodity with legal racialized restrictions. Salt from the Veracruz coast was also policed as one colonist writes, "I command that no Black or Mulatto can buy salt from the Indians, even if their masters send them to buy a dozen." The racial language used in this same

decree mentions "los Negros Indios" or "Black Indians." Another stated "I command that no one can eat nor buy any cattle if it were not from the same line of another person in power" and "the Indians cannot sell gum, if it were not in markets." Penalties for violating the latter two orders varied according to one's racial category. For example, for Spanish individuals a fee of fifty pesos was given. They were required to "walk a hundred kilometers" as a public walk of shame. A second violation doubled the penalty. Upon a third violation Spanish offenders were branded. A different set of penalties were applied to Mestizos, Indians, Black, Mulato, and Moriscos who were "given one hundred lashings for the first offense and two hundred lashings for the second offense." Their ears were cut off on the second offense. There was no mention of a third opportunity to commit this supposed crime for the bottom castas.

The selling of chickens, hens, and roosters also came with special instructions. In a letter to Don Martin Enriquez it states, "it will be commanded that the Indians in their towns can freely sell hens at the prices they asked for…they are not to be sold at a price more than three pesos for hens and four [pesos] for a rooster." The language in this ordinance provides evidence that Indigenous groups had successfully demanded and set fair prices for their chickens. It did not stipulate, however, who they could and could not sell to. It is easy to imagine that maroons in the area were able to access these open markets to buy poultry from Indigenous communities.

Finally, there was an order to prevent "Black, Mulatos, and Indians from possessing knives and swords" and from the "selling of arms" to these groups. The decrees were applied to both free and enslaved status groups. It is worth noting here that in colonial documents, Indigenous and Africans were often seen as constituting a homogenous group rather than as people with different ethnicities, identities, and loyalties (Palmer, 2005). In one sense ordinances were written with some racial ambiguity to blanket the majority of the lower laboring casta groups. In another sense the vague language allowed Black and Indigenous colonial subjects the social-flexibility to sell corn, salt, cows,

gum, and arms to each other under the guise of their mixed heritage. The following section describes the cultural restrictions that were imposed on both cultural communities and their progeny.

Cultural Restrictions

This section defines cultural restrictions as legal ordinances that sought to discourage inter-casta cultural exchange. The multitude of restrictions range from restricting styles of dress, curfews, methods of raising livestock, and with whom one could walk next to. Similar to residential and economic segregation efforts, cultural colonial laws provide insight to the law's Afro-Mexicans needed to be conscious of as they moved through the world. The example below points out how clothing was used by Afro-Mexicans to evade possible authorities.

Love (1970) identifies a law that prohibits Black individuals from wearing silk clothes and mantillas adorned with gold or silver as this style of dress was reserved for "gente de razon" or "people of reason." This category was a social distinction that existed alongside the racial categories of the casta system. Indigenous communities who maintained their culture practices and mixed-race people were generally not considered to be "gente de razon." (Alonso, 1995; Cope, 1994; Miranda, 1988). While this ordinance created social distance between the upper and lower casta groups, other legal restrictions barred cultural resemblance between Indigenous and African peoples. One legal document reads that on "July 31st, 1582 Black, Mulato, and Mestizo women, except those married to Indians, were not permitted to wear Indian clothing." Nearly two centuries later a similar legal order appears to have been reintroduced to the Orizaba-Cordoba region.

The ban against dressing in Indigenous garments was partially designed to cope with vagrancy. One account by King Phillip II states, "It has been reported to me that there are a large number of mestizos and mulatos who are sons of Indian women. As soon as they commit a crime they dress up as Indians and hideout with their mothers' relatives and cannot be found." (Icazbalceta, 1858, p. 436-437). By the mid 18th century as is the case for Mandinga residents, Afro-Mexicans could, in certain

circumstances and context, claim the heritage of their Indigenous parent as a means to avoid persecution by colonial authorities. Avoiding authorities via clothing styles was key to remaining outside of the confines of haciendas, plantations, and in this case obrajes. In colonial Mexico obrajes were single enterprises that incorporated most, if not all, of the processes of wool cloth manufacture: dyeing, carding, spinning, weaving, fulling, and finishing garments (Greenleaf, 1967). Spanish obraje owners "succeeded in obtaining licenses to apprehend Mestizos, Indians, and Mulatos on charges of vagabondage and having them sentenced to labor in their workshops."

With legal licenses to enforce colonial laws obraje owners in Orizaba-Cordoba resembled a citizen militia. Mandinga residents as well as other maroons from neighboring palenques had to keep this in mind as they frequently visited nearby obrajes and ranches to take livestock and other goods. Much of this activity took place at night and set in motion the prohibition of public gatherings of three or more people of African descent and a strict night curfew (Davidson, 1966). Ordinances against gatherings and curfews had been in effect since 1548 and continued throughout the decades in which Mandinga residents were demanding their liberty two centuries later. Civil militias were also established in the colony to cope with slave uprisings that same year. Similar to the obrajeros, ranchers were also frustrated from the raiding of their livestock. One ordinance mentions a political groups of sheep ranchers known as "mestas" and their annoyance with Indigenous peoples taking their goats (ordinance prohibiting dress) while another document named the Chichimeca Indians as responsible for the killing of their cattle. In this way both African and Indigenous people found themselves to be criminalized by similar accusations of theft.

These activities were not limited to central Mexico. Davidson (1966) points out that fugitive slaves from the mines of the northern provinces were intimidating the regions as far north as Guadalajara to Zacatecas, allying with Chichimec Indians and raiding ranches. In one case, maroons from the mines of Guanajuato joined with Chichimecas in a brutal war with the settlers. Local

descriptions revealed that the uprisings were spreading east, and that much of the area between Mexico City, Zacatecas, and Veracruz faced similar insurrections by both African and Indigenous groups. Enforcing dress codes and curfews intended to reduce maroon activity in the region and was yet another aspect of colonial life for all castas from central Mexico to coastal Veracruz.

Some ordinances went so far as to limit who could and could not walk together in public spaces. An ordinance by Don Lorenzo Suarez demanded that Mulatas and Black women should not walk alongside Indian women except those who were married to Indian men. It continues by stating that "no mulato or black mestiza should walk dressed in Indian women's clothes." Consequences for violating this law was imprisonment and "burning one's body out of shape." These severe penalties provide context to the extent to which Afro-Mexicans needed to be consciously aware of their immediate social surroundings as one could easily be accused of disobeying colonial laws. It also demonstrates the danger in which mixed-casta families with differing phenotypes could face should they be seen conversing, walking with one another, or dressing alike.

DECOLONIAL PRAXIS OF MOVEMENT

For Afro-Mexicans freedom was produced through rebellions, formal demands, marital relationships, and maroonage. These activities were formulated through their own understanding of colonial institutions and what freedom meant to them. This section links and identifies these activities as decolonial praxes of movement. I use this term to conceptualize the process in which Afro-Mexicans exited, or migrated out of, the social and legal category of enslavement. From this perspective, migration is not limited to its spatial characteristics of moving from place to place. Rather, a decolonial praxes of movement works to extend our sociological concept of migration to include movement as an Indigenous way of being. Indigenous knowledge informed maroon's epistemological and ontological selves. In this way, I engage with historian Herman L. Bennett when he writes:

> "In the New World, freedom did not emerge as an abstraction. In the wake of the Spanish conquests and the slave trade, freedom was above all a lived experience. Freedom was a social practice, something people learned in and through their relationships with others long before early modern theologians and modern philosophers upheld it as an abstraction and ideal. Enslaved Africans and creoles made it abundantly clear that the freedom they experienced cannot be equated with the ideologies of liberty formulated during the Age of Revolutions. New Spain's Black population conceived of freedom in and through the encumbrance of slave status." (Bennett, 2009, p. 162)

Bennett's postulation is directed at Latin American historians writing on the experiences of Afro-Mexicans in the mid 1970's. I find Chicano Studies based scholarship to also necessitate a "re-thinking" of Chicanx history that includes the experiences of African descendant peoples. Throughout the following sub-sections I will rely on the work of Chicana, Indigenous, and Black scholars to demonstrate how decolonial perspectives contribute to a nuanced approach towards understanding movement as a praxis towards liberation for Afro-Mexicans in the mid 18th century.

Flight as Social Practice: Migrating into Being

Flight has different forms wherein the physical modes, organized around space and place, are the ones that allow for external ascription (Roberts, 2015). Making the decision to take flight must first take place in the mind as cognitive life is also a distinctly social space (Medina, 2013). It is a decision to exit a state of unfreedom and zone of non-being to re-humanize oneself and extended kin. Flight was a response to generational displacement from homelands in both Africa and Latin America. Migration in the context of marronage meant there was an epistemic understanding of power, social order, and opportunities to escape living in a condition of unfreedom. Knowing that one's being is not limited to domestication and labor is telling of how Afro-Mexican maroons saw themselves. Their actions as a community affirm their humanity.

Colonial domination requires both the colonizer and colonized to accept a whole way of thinking and being, a discourse in which everything that is advanced, good, civilized is defined and measured in European terms (Kelly, 2000). This colonial logic informs the social order of New Spain. The Mandinga palenque is an example of what it means to subvert colonial logics. Mandinga was so advanced in its multiple locations that it was impossible to dominate militarily. Their constant movement from urban to rural spaces made it difficult for auxiliary military forces to destroy. Their advanced knowledge of farming fed their community for decades. They carved out new social spaces to create a new world in the so called "New World."

Marronage left no epistemic room for accepting what Aimé Césaire identifies as the principle lie of colonization. This lie is based on a campaign to civilize barbarism. In his systemic defense of the societies destroyed by imperialism Césaire (1955) recognizes that the colonized "did not pretend to be the idea" of freedom, they were the fact. They kept hope intact. Palenques, as a social space, facilitated that hope to exist through the agency of its members. They did not need to be civilized through European mean or institutions yet understood the power of what it meant to demand a Church as part of the establishment of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe along the Amapa river. This tactical request signaled to Spanish authorities that Mandinga residents were Christian and in the eyes of the church this meant a step closer to humanity and civilization. The formally enslaved did not need a church to affirm their humanity but rather used this powerful governmental/religious institution to protect themselves from future military attacks.

The very social act of movement is intimately tied to Indigeneity. In her seminal text Borderlands La Frontera, feminist Chicana scholar Gloria Anzaldua states "We [Chicanos as an Indigenous peoples] have a tradition of long walks" (Anzaldua, 1987, pg. 11). In this statement she is referring to the long-distance walks between what is today the U.S. South West towards current day Mexico City. These walks date back to 1000 B.C. as the decedents of the Cochise peoples of the

Southwest. Colonial encounters with the Spanish disrupted these ancient migratory walks. However, migratory stories of origin connected different bands of Indigenous peoples to one another in the post-conquest world. It is these oratory stories that survived and are embedded in an Indigenous way of being and moving through the world. Migrating is freedom as was marronage.

American Indian scholar Dylan Miner (2014), similar to Anzaldua, also expresses the unique modalities of Indigenous peoples associated with slow movement. Miner underscores the long walks as a metaphor that informs Indigenous peoples to slow down, reflect, and respond to one's social condition. Those who were in flight did not make this decision hastily or impulsively. Marronage was tactical, planned out, and not always successful. For the maroons of Mandiga their Indigeneity informed their pace towards freedom which took a century if not more.

There are two Indigenous concepts central to understanding movement that I want to expand on. The Mexica concept of teotl is a fundamental concept for native peoples in central Mexico that extends beyond the nahuatl speaking Mexica. Teotl, from a western perspective, is commonly understood as nature, the heavens, rain, humans, trees, rocks, animals – an all-encompassing life force all generated by teotl (Maffie, 2002). While this pre-colonial concept is tied to all things living and non-living it is also a verb that denotes process, movement, and becoming. The second concept, nepantla, is linked to both physical and social space. Nepantla represents what Anzaldua points out "a state of in-between, that uncertain terrain one crosses when moving from one place to another…when traveling from the present identity [status] to another." (Anzaldúa, 1993, p. 39). These epistemological and conceptual understandings of self, place, and movement were not eliminated through religious or political colonization. Rather they remained embedded in the fabric of Indigenous lifeways that are reflected in the migratory paths' Afro-Mexican maroons took to free themselves.

Palenques were the physical representations of the "in-betweeness" of nepantla. They existed both within an imperial ruling state and outside of its bureaucracy. Physically Mandinga was not

territorially bound by one singular location and was in itself a mobile site of rural and urban engagement. Amaral (2017) prompts us to recall that Mandinga residents were frequently in the port city of Veracruz traversing back and forth from their semi-permanent camps. Nepantla also recognizes that nothing is fixed or static and is a space of transformation. Palenques are a continuation of this Indigenous concept providing the necessary space for maroons to collectively reflect on their social conditions, imagine better circumstances for themselves, and act upon the best interest of its residents. In short, palenques are sites of agency founded on Indigenous principles of slow transformation.

Teotl, in relation to nepantla, provided maroons with the conceptual vision for what could be and what should be. Teotl provides an epistemological assertion of movement towards becoming. Because it is essentially processive and dynamic teotl is properly characterized neither by being nor not-being, in the Fanonian fashion, but by becoming (Maffie, 2002). It is unclear through archival means how Afro-Mexican maroons in the middle of the 18th century inherited such philosophies. However, as this chapter has shown people of African descent had co-existed, co-habitated, and worked side by side with Indigenous peoples for over 200 years by the time the Maniga palenque had secured legal recognition. It is not impossible to imagine that fundamental orientations of self and being were left out of important conversations of freedom in the maroon communities of Veracruz.

Transformation also entails healing. Both concepts were essential towards healing and worked to create a more balanced life. From this point of view both nepantla and teotl were elements used to restore balance to their human condition. Their wounds as formerly enslaved individuals became bridges that allowed for what philosophers Charles Scott and Nancy Tuana (2017) claim as changes in attitude, increased alertness to the many dimensions of their social situation, and their inclinations towards conciliation. Social wounds offer new sensibilities to our surroundings. They offer a rebirth into something new. For healing to occur, according to Anzaldúa, "we must first be dismembered, pulled apart" (Anzaldúa, 2015, p.29). From the onset of colonial encounters both Indigenous and

African peoples were dismembered in order to fulfill the labor needs of the Spanish empire. The pathway towards a regaining of their humanity was a revolutionary shift that took decades of pain, patience, dialogue, reflection, and action. Palenques were the crucial glue that bound both communities together and gave new life to maroons in Veracruz and beyond. It signaled that there was an alternative path outside the confines of slavery.

Indigenous concepts of movement have yet to be fully engaged as ways of responding to colonial conditions in the past or present. Similarly, contemporary literature on migration have followed a similar path of neglect. Napantla is similar to the Indigenous Samoan concept of Vā or between and within space and place arrayed in opposition to each other (Lilomaiaua-Doktor, 2009). Across oceans Indigenous communities share epistemological versions of what it means to move in and with the world. The self-determination of runaways embodies these epistemologies after two centuries of cultural exchange. These concepts will be revisited in the analytical chapter drawing comparisons between Mandinga and its older palenque cousin, Yanga.

CONCLUSION

This chapter addressed the relational histories between two Africana and Indigenous peoples and their descendants in colonial Veracruz, Mexico. U.S. based historians have generated the majority of Afro-Mexican literature (Palmer, 2005; Vinson III, 2009; Proctor III 2009; Bennett, 2009) laying a robust foundation for understanding the colonial world from the perspective of African peoples. Others have taken these fundamental projects to include the relational development between African and Indigenous cultural groups (Restall, 2005; Castillo-Palma and Kellogg, 2005; Patrick Carroll, 2004). Thematically, this field of inquiry is at the beginning stages of development in the discipline of Chicano studies. In 2019, Dr. Doris Careaga Colman recently presented her research on Afro-Mexican gastronomy at the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS) conference. Her panelist also contributed to the conversation of the role of Afro-Mexicanos in Chicano Studies. This

was the first time I had witnessed an entire panel on the subject of Afro-Mexicans in the last decade of my involvement at NACCS. This signaled to me a new dialogue that has been in the making since the beginning of the 21st century within the discipline. I cannot confidentially say the same for the discipline of Sociology.

However, this chapter brings forth a sociologically based case-study that illuminates the ways in which maroons rejected their enslaved status. Despite colonial efforts to completely subjugate African and Indigenous peoples, land, culture, and knowledge maroon communities in Veracruz moved beyond the colonial ideological confines imposed onto them to create their own ways of living. In their letters and demands to colonial administrators it is clear that Mandinga leaders recognized the socio-political needs of the Spanish crown and used those needs as a bases for their negotiations. They used the institution of Christianity in their favor and leveraged their demands by proposing the building of a Church and naming their newly found town in reference to the Virgen de Guadalupe.

The letters also provided insight to the life in the Córdoba-Orizaba region for the formerly enslaved. With knowledge of the land and extended kin networks in the local plantations and trapiches Mandinga negotiators agreed to actively entrap and return future runaways. In this way, the cost of freedom came at the expense of other individuals pursuing their own freedom from enslavement. Other negotiating factors included becoming incorporated into the Spanish militia as a social and political indication of loyalty to the Spanish crown.

Racial legal codes and ordinances show the extent to which local and regional laws specifically targeted Black, Indigenous, and mixed racial status individuals. Policing Afro-Indigenous relations was ultimately ineffective and difficult to regulate, however, mixed-casta families and communities remained in a legally inferior position as their interactions with one another could be costly to their livelihood. This case study indicates the need to defuse further social development between African

and Indigenous peoples as both had patterns of rebellion and resistance against their so-called colonial masters.

Amaral, however, provides an alternative view point of maroons in colonial Veracruz as not simply rebels. Instead, "maroon groups were self-constructing architects of a colonial built environment, as people constructing their histories within a world of power they did not completely control, but whose limits they nonetheless partially integrated" (Amaral, 2017, pg. 220). As the creators of Palenques, maroons constructed sites of reunification for family members and as a social space to create networks of extended kin through their shared social conditions. In constructing new realities for themselves and others, Mandinga residents engineered social spaces of freedom before their legal recognition from the Spanish crown.

Their decolonial praxis was informed through epistemologies of resistance and movement garnered through their Indigeneity. Anishinaabe scholar Dylan Miner (2014) asserts that Indigeneity is not a stagnant cultural category, rather it represents the enduring right of Indigenous peoples to self-determine how they govern themselves. In the context of maroonage and the development of palenque social spaces, Indigeneity reflects the lived realities and outcomes of the Mandinga community. These histories of resistance, rebellion, self-determination, and creation of autonomous communities will necessitate further exploration in the fields of Chicano Studies and Sociology.

CHAPTER FOUR:
RACE, MODERNITY, AND MESTIZAJE

Racial categories were instrumental in maintaining social order in colonial Latin America. Black and Indigenous communities had to struggle constantly to define themselves as people and preserve the integrity of their cultural heritage in a society that placed a premium on whiteness (Palmer, 1993). Thus far, two case studies of cimarron settlements have shown the degree to which maroons were able to reimagine their own social order in which they were free. Freedom, for this social group, was part of their cultural heritage. This chapter will focus on racial ideologies and how they manifested in colonial New Spain. Colonist utilized race as a conceptual tool to reorganize the ethnic identities of its' subjects for colonial stability. How did the Yanga and Mandinga palenques, separated by more than a century, successfully attain their permanent status as free towns despite a racist social order? What similarities and differences can be drawn amidst their temporal differences? To answer these questions, I examine the historical trajectory of race as an extension and instrument of Western European modernity.

Racial ethnic identities used to describe colonial groups are inherently modern identities. The racial terms found in archival data, such as "*yndio*" (Indio) or "*negro*" among others, were born out of the conquest of the Americas. These were assigned identities. Aníbal Quijano states, "The specific colonial structure of power produced the social discrimination which later were codified as 'racial,' 'ethnic,' 'anthropological,' or 'national,' according to the times, agents, and populations involved" (Quijano, 2007, p.168). Thus, the temporal element and racial distinctions in the time between the Yanga and Mandinga palenque are significant towards understanding the development of their freedom. Reading race in colonial Veracruz is shifty, unstable, and highly dependent on region. Because of this, I use secondary sources to trace the substance of racial ideologies along the *Camino Real* or Royal Road. After all, the Royal Road was not only a source of social interaction and contact

among palenque residents and other colonial agents throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, it was simultaneously a project of modernity.

Mestizaje, as a concept and process, will be emphasized within this chapter as well. While there it is common knowledge that mestizo refers to a person of mixed racial identity, this chapter will think through the term as a verb. Mestizaje as a process lends for a complex understanding of how race is deployed in conquest. I look to Indigenous anthropologist and historian Jack Forbes as a means to engage mestizaje with Chicanx scholars as this term has a long and complex history in the Chicanx community. Additionally, the work of Ben Vinson III provides a historical approach to comprehending the social production of racial casta identities specific to colonial Mexico. Both authors provide a starting point towards comprehending the colonial world in which Yanga and Mandinga were produced.

Race, modernity, and mestizaje are thus conceptual vehicles towards understanding the developmental differences between Yanga and Mandinga. Palenque residents are in continuous crossroads with the empires' racial projects in colonial Mexico. At times there are outright rejections by palenque residents of the casta system and their status within it. At other points there are negotiations made to anchor their freedom. Examining the archival evidence provided in chapters two and three give a foundation for teasing out the differences in their approach to securing intergenerational freedom. Beginning from the onset of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Mexico, the following section provokes us to think through the logic of race at the onset of the 17th century giving special attention to the various identities created through the casta system.

ARRANGING RACE: MESTIZAJE, LIMPIEZA DE SANGRE, Y CASTAS

A comparative analysis of two distinct palenques requires an articulation of racial arrangements, their social meanings, and the role race played in their Latin American development. The racial concepts used for human categorization originated in Europe. We must turn to the Iberian Peninsula to grasp

the complexity of race and its' eventual transplantation to the Americas. As mentioned in chapter one, Spaniards are the descendants of a number of distinct cultural-ethnic communities. The Spanish language is a borrowed Italo-Latin mixed with many thousands of Arabic words (Forbes, 2020). Culturally, North Africans, Greeks, Gitanos (Gypsys) have left their influences. Carthaginians, Vandals, Visagoths, Arab, Moors, Barbers, and Jewish communities can be traced as part of the racial heritage of the peninsula (Forbes, 2020). In this way, the Spaniard is overwhelmingly "mestizo." That is, if we are to take their own understanding of the term. We can likely go nation to nation within modern Europe and find similar patterns of intermixing gene pools and cultural synthesis. Yet, the European is seldom, if ever, referred to as mestizo.

Similarly, in the 16th century enslaved Africans came primarily from the Senegambia and present-day Guinea Bissau, with the Bran, the Gelofe, and Biafara ethnic groups representing most. Yanga was of Bran descent and would be included in this grouping of peoples. In the 17th century West Central Africans, who embarked mainly at Luanda and other Angolan ports including Lobito and Benguela, made up three quarters of the enslaved brought to Mexico (Curtin, 1972). Slave traders had a bad habit of defining ethnic groups together, such as "Angolan," when in fact they were Mbundu, Ovimbundu, Imbangala, Pende, Kongo, and Tyo (Teke) groups (Miller, 1988). Again, mestizaje among ethnic tribes, while a likely biological process, was not conceptually used by Africans to self-identify prior to their arrival in the Americas. The New World produced amalgamations of African populations that had never been seen before. According to Heywood and Thornton (2007), Africans may have actually defined the meaning of their ethnicities in transit as they interacted with other Africans.

Also, it was likely that the real meaning of those names was realized mainly through the interpersonal interactions of Africans at their destinations (Heywood & Thornton, 2007; Hall, 2005). One important note to consider is the sustained conversion to the Roman Catholic faith, especially in

the Kingdom of Kongo and later in Angola, played a large role in Atlantic Creole culture (Hall, 2005). This early exposure and acculturation to Spanish cultural norms may have facilitated African descendants understanding of colonial life in New Spain.

Returning to Europe, scholar Barbara Fuchs (2009) makes the point that after 1492 Spain's culture retained and even celebrated Jewish and Muslim culture even after their socio-political war banishing both non-Christian groups from the peninsula. It was impossible to separate what had become by that point a hybridized people (Fuchs, 2009). Christianity was an important criterion for who was viewed as true Spanish citizens within this culturally and religious mestizo community. The antiquity of one's Christianity was of great significe. Old Christians were given a higher status than more recent converts. The further back one could trace their Christian heritage the purer they were considered. The concept of *limpieza de sangre*, is key towards understanding the genealogical fiction(s) of mestizaje.

The term literally means "purity of blood" but more specifically is defined as the absence of Jewish and heretical antecedents in the middle of the 15th century (Martinez, 2008). *Limpieza de sangre* classified Jews and Muslims under the denomination of "bad races," which escalated the concerns of Old Christians about reproducing with "stained" impure people (Dueñas-Vargas, 2009). Historian Maria Elena Martinez writes, "The statutes of purity of blood began to spread in earnest in the last decades of the 15th century and in the first half of the 16th," about the time of Spanish Trans-Atlantic crossings, "garnered increasing royal and papal support." (Martinez, 2008, p.42). The pressure to hide any ancestral linkages with Jews, Muslims, or Moriscos (Muslim converts) contributed to the ongoing definition of a collective Spanish identity (Dueñas-Vargas, 2009). By 1609 Spain repeatedly attempted to come to terms with its own Moorishness (Fuchs, 2009). The discourse of *Lipieza de Sangre* traveled with Spanish conquistadores, friars, and servants to the Americas. In this new geography the idea would meet a new set of complexities. Indigenous people where neither Muslim nor Jewish. They

certainly weren't Christians either. By the middle of the 16th century Spaniards construed themselves as Old Christians and viewed the Indigenous people as unsullied souls capable of becoming Christian souls while Black ancestry became the main source of impurity (Dueñas-Vargas, 2009). These were the cultural and social markers that both Yanga and Mandinga groups would have to navigate.

Accompanied with the idea of inheritors of Old Christian ancestry the Spanish designated themselves as *gente de razón*, or people of reason, uniquely capable of making rational decisions (Vinson III, 2018). Whiteness, in the context of 16th century New Spain, was linked to the capability to think for ones-self, a quality disassociated with Indianness and Blackness. Those who could "think" possessed humanity. At least that is the assumption within Western modernity. To be modern is to be enlightened, rational, and human (Ramirez, 2020). This rationale is important to state here because genealogically, mestizos where both White and Indigenous. To what degree where mestizos able to access whiteness? This depended on whether or not the White father of a mestizo child chose to claim them. If deemed illegitimate the child would be socialized as an Indigenous member of the community. If they were indeed claimed the child was socialized with white cultural norms. Race was, in this instance, linked to a hereditary claim and less so associated with phenotype.

In just two decades after the conquest a new attitude towards racial mixture began to emerge between 1540 and 1570. It was at this time that the term mestizo began to appear with more frequency in the Americas becoming synonymous with illegitimacy (Vinson III, 2018). This change in attitude was perpetuated by land owning Peninsulares (Spanish born in Spain) and Criollos (Spanish born in the Americas). From their point of view, a new class of mestizos were gaining access to the privileges once afforded only to direct descendants of Spain. By the middle of the 16th century New Spain was deeply invested in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. The growing population of African peoples in New Spain may have contributed to the growing popularity of the mestizo category (Vinson III, 2018). Mestizos, in theory, provided a sort of buffer between Africans and Spanish elites at the top of the

social hierarchy. Mestizos, however, were not the only group of racially mixed people to occupy a social position designed to safeguard whiteness. A system of multi-racial identities began to take shape as described in the following section.

Social Arrangement of Castas

Limpieza de Sangre sets the stage for what would then become the social order known as the *sistema de castas*, or caste system, ranking human beings by way of their familial lineage. The three core racial identities in the Americas were *Español* (white), *Indio* (Indigenous), and *Negro* (African/Black). In an almost mathematical way, fractions of each identity created a new racial category. For example, a child of White and Black parents was commonly known as *mulato*, Black and Indians produces *pardos* or *zambos*, while a White and Mestizo produced the *castizo* class (Vinson III, 2018). Bozalez were individuals of African descent who had become Hispanicized in Mexico (Palmer, 1993). Figure 1 demonstrates the complexity of the racial mixture in New Spain. Some identities were ascribed dehumanizing animal names such as *coyote* (Indigenous and mestiza) or *lobo* (Indigenous and Black) meaning coyote and wolf. Others were assigned phrases such as *saltatrás* literally meaning 'to jump backwards' and *no te entiendo* meaning 'I don't understand you.' This last identity is telling of the racial and social ambiguity certain individuals must have possessed.

Images of the racially mixed people of New Spain began to take form of large Victorian like painting at the beginning of the 18th century. These images, known as the Casta paintings, would be circulated throughout Spain. Ilona Katzew's (2004) seminal text Casta Paintings: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico convincingly demonstrates the wide circulation of these paintings participated in the construction of identity in New Spain. It also contributed to the transmission of racial discourses of power within the Spanish empire beyond Mexico and into the Caribbean and South America (Katzew, 2004). These paintings were a chance to show European audiences the "exotic" nature of New Spain and reified a White identity amongst Iberian Peninsula residents.

Furthermore, historian Susan Deans-Smith (2005) argues that for some patrons in New Spain, representations of the local in the Casta Paintings may also be read as proud renditions of empire, which convey as much about Spain's colonial resources as they do about race.

LAS CASTAS

Casta	Cruce de:
1. Ahí o hay te estás (*sic*)	No te entiendo con india
2. Albarasado	Tente en el aire con mulata
3. Albino	Español con morisca
4. Barzino	Albarasado con india
5. Cambujo	Chino con india
6. Campa mulato o calpamulato	Barzino con india
7. Castizo	Mestizo con blanca
8. Castizo cuatralvo	Blanco con mestiza
9. Coyote	Indio con mestiza
10. Coyote mestizo	Chamizo con mestiza
11. Cuarterón	Blanco con tercerona
12. Cuarterón de chino	Blanco con china
13. Cuarterón de mestizo o español	Blanco con mestiza
14. Cuarterón de mulata	Mulata con blanco
15. Chamizo	Coyota con indio
16. Chino	Lobo con negra
17. Cholo	Mestizo con india
18. Español o españolo	Castiza con blanco
19. Genízaro	Barzino con sambaiga
20. Galfarro	Negro con mulata
21. Gente blanca	Blanco con requinterona de mulato
22. Gíbaro	Lobo con china
23. Grifo o tente en el aire	Indio con loba
24. Harnizo	Blanco con coyote
25. Jarocho	Negro con india
26. Limpios	Blanco con gente blanca
27. Lobo	Indio con negra
28. Lunajero	(?)
29. Mequimixtos	(?)
30. Mestindio	Indio con mestiza
31. Mestizo	Blanco con india
32. Morisco	Blanco con mulata
33. Mulato	Blanco con negra
34. Mulato obscuro	Indio con mulata
35. No te entiendo	Tente en el aire con mulata
36. Octavón u ochavón	Blanco con cuatralva
37. Puchuela	Blanco con octavón indio
38. Puchuela de negro	Blanco con octavón negro
39. Quinterón	Blanco con tercerón negro
40. Quinterón de mestizo	Blanco con cuarterona de mestizo
41. Quinterón de mulato	Blanco con cuarterón de mulato
42. Requinterón de mestizo o español	Quinterón de mestizo con requinterona de mestizo
43. Requinterón de mulata	Quinterón de mulato con requinterona de mulato
44. Rayados	(?)
45. Sambayo o sambahigo o sambaigo	Cambujo con india
46. Saltatrás	Blanco con albina
47. Saltatrás cuarterón	Negro con tercerona
48. Saltatrás quinterón	Negro con cuarterona
49. Tente en el aire	Cambujo con india
50. Tercerón o cuarterón cuatralvo	Blanco con mulata
51. Tresalvo	Indio con mestiza
52. Zambo	Indio con negra
53. Zambo prieto	Negro con zamba

Figure 10: List of Caste. Front Matter. (1990). *Artes De México,* (8), nueva epoca. p. 79

Casta Paintings depict more than just "biological outcomes." They assign class through clothing. They assign power through gender dynamics. They also express environments of lush foliage that are now politically controlled by the empire. Moreover, the paintings are secular in nature without the traditional religious content and purpose of most colonial Mexican paintings (Taylor, 2009). Figure 2, for example, depict two families. On the left a male identified as Español (White) and a Castiza (White and Mestiza) walk with their child, and Español. On the right side of the painting a Mulata (Black and White) holds her Lobo (Indigenous and Black) child. The father is an Indigenous man identified as an *Yndio*, the common spelling found in archival sources. The White family is dressed in

European fashion. A white shall drapes over the mother's dress while the gentleman swaggers in his red stockings and tailored coat. Their presumed child also walks a pet of sorts. The family on the right wears far more casual clothing and give a kind of gesture that suggest their pause as the European family walks towards their direction. Racial imageries, such as the one below, circulated around the time that Mandinga became a palenque in the middle of the 18th century.

Figure 11: Pintura de Castas, unknown artist, XVIII century, 104X245 cm, Collection Particular, MX

Interestingly, Casta identities were not fixed. Identities in the colonial world were more or less fluid and dependent on occupation, language, marital relations, religious affiliation and other indicators of Spanish socialization. Some individuals who otherwise would be classifies as mestizos, mulatos, and castizos "passed" as Spaniards or Indian and appeared in legal records with several different racial designations (Taylor, 2009). In this manner, racial markers functioned in ethnic ways as cultural traits

of an individual were considered important indicators of a person's racial position within the Casta system. William Taylor states, "The mixing of races [in the casta paintings] imagines a whitening process in which the Indian side of the family tree recedes. (Taylor, 2009, p.x-xi). Through generational miscegenation with Spaniards and Castizos, Indigenous people could essentially create upward social mobility for their family lineage. There were other strategies for upward socio-racial mobility deployed by people of African descent in New Spain.

For example, racial fluidity is explicitly expressed in the Spanish concept of *gracias al sacar*. Perceived defects in an individual's ancestry such as illegitimacy or skin color could occasionally be "erased" through the dispensation of the Spanish Monarch's privilege of *gracias al sacar* or the taking away of supposed defects (Katzew & Deans-Smith, 2009). In this way, Whiteness was quite literally purchased. Highlighting the goal of generational transformation, historian Ann Twinam (2009) asserts that Whiteness was understood as occupational and civic parity and well as equality in intimacy that could be inherited and officially recorded in colonial administrative documents. *Pardo* women, for example, whitened through relations with White men while *Pardo* men married women with the greatest number of White relation (Twinam, 2009). Both used these strategies to petition and purchase White social mobility. Twinam concludes that African men did not rely on precedent but instead had to invent their own application process (O'Toole, 2018). In short, Indigenous and Black descendants used a variety of tactics to navigate the grey areas of social stratification in colonial New Spain.

In the Orizaba region a person's *calidad* or quality carried social weight, racial meaning, and could serve as a tool for social mobility. *Calidad* is similar to a person's "social-race" and could be improved by accumulating actions associated with Whiteness (Castleman, 2001). In his study of social mobility in Orizaba, Bruce Castleman states, "Calidad was fundamentally a social construction, and so if a person claimed to be *español* [in official records], conformed to the norms of *español* society, and was accepted as *español* by that society, then that person was *espeñol* no matter how many *indio* ancestors

he or she may have had…The same system operated much for African ancestry. The administrative escape hatch that could promote a *mestizo* had no parallel for them." (Castleman, 2001, p.236). With predictability, wedding a *castiza* or *espanol* was a sure way of moving up in *calidad*.

By the middle of the 17th century New Spain hosted one of the largest Black and Mulatto group of peoples in the Americas (Lewis, 2012). Terms like "Black" and "mulatto" tell us how individuals were perceived and how they were defined juridically. Afro-Mexicans "had certain opportunities based on understandings of what 'Blacks' and 'Mulattoes' were supposed to do and what they were capable of doing, and they had to work within these definitions." (Bristol, 2007, p. 15).

A century later, about the same decades in which the Mandinga group entered negotiations, the *Sistema de Castas* became more and more unstable. This largely resulted from a dramatic surge in the population of mixed ancestry and greater social mobility due to mercantile capitalism especially towards the end of the 18th century (Martinez, 2009). It became overwhelming to keep pace with the socio-economic shifts occurring in the mid to late 18th century. In the case of African descendants, racial markers were much more than skin deep. Gwendolyn Hall (2005) suggests that a business such as slavery would never have operated without an exact and meaningful human classification scheme. The term Indios, for example, was invented in part for administrative convenience. It functioned to fuse various Indigenous "New World" people with distinct languages, customs, and cosmologies into a manageable category as did many of the socially constructed *casta* identities of the mid to late colonial era (Vinson III, 2018). With this understanding of *castas*, the following section emphasizes modernity's relationship to the renaming of people and their geographies.

MODERNITY FROM THE BOTTOM-UP

"Modernity is an age of artificial order and of grand societal design, the era of planners, visionaries, and-more generally- 'gardeners' who treat society as a virgin plot of land to be expertly designed and then cultivated and doctored to keep to the designed form." Zygmunt Bauman (Bauman, 2012, p. 529).

In 'The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity' Jürgen Habermas (1985) argues that modernity possesses a 'normative content'. 'Normality' was systematically rearranged for colonized and enslaved groups in 16th century colonial Mexico. When Europeans encountered non-European groups, "European norms were understood to be normative for *all* human kind" (Long, 2005, p. 9,295). Zygmunt Bauman, a contemporary of Habermas, characterizes modernity as a drive toward order, design, management, naming and segregating (Zaretsky, 1992). Others, such as Immanuel Wallerstein (2004) note that the idea that anything new is necessarily good and desirable is fundamental to the ideology of modernity. These scholars converge in their critique of how modernity, as a developed ideological paradigm, has utilized "rational" cultural systems to control and shape societal formations throughout the globe. Bauman and Habermas have critiqued the "rational organization" of social relations and can assist our thinking in underscoring the origin-processes of modernity that evolved within the Spanish colonization of Mexico.

The opening quote in this section references Bauman's idea of modern civilization as a 'garden society.' Instrumental-rationality, according to Bauman, serves as a tool for the gardener to design the garden in their most desirable image. Modernity, in its quest for expansion and order, calls for the separation or extermination of 'weeds' that are characterized as undesirable in the 'garden society' (Bauman, 2012, pg. 516). The project of modernity, accelerated by the traditionalist philosophers of Europe, utilized instrumental-rationality and universalistic foundations of morality and law to encourage the rational organization of social relations in the 'New World' (Habermas, 2012). One example can be observed in the dual republics of New Spain.

Almost immediately after the conquest of Tenochitlan the Spanish government set out to create a dual republic segregating White and Indigenous communities. The Republic of Spaniards and the Republic of Indians was a new spatial arrangement segregating residential areas according to one's racial identity. Historian Ben Vinson III writes, "Based loosely on the social principles of late medieval

Spain where society was organized into an estate system according to hereditary landlord/serf relationships, and borrowing the social stratification underlying the corporate arrangement of Spanish cities, the dual republic was the Spanish attempt to transplant the hierarchies of the Old World onto the racial landscape of the Americas." (Vinson III, 2018, p.3). This sort of spatial/racial arrangement describes early 16th century life in cities like Veracruz, Orizaba, and Mexico City. For the most part, social advancement of non-Spaniards revolved around gaining access to small circles of Spanish, Native elites and Mesitzos, where informal establishment of these changing status were closely monitored by Spaniards (Althouse, 2005). In theory, a person with biological ties to Indigenous heritage could access the Republic of Spaniards depending on his or her proximity to White cultural norms, clergy status, military service or other forms of "proof" that in fact they "played the part" of a European. What made these types of spatial arrangements possible?

While Habermas and Bauman make sense of modernity, their Latin American counterparts have proposed a significant constellation of scholarship aimed at answering the question posed above. Walter Mignolo writes, "Latin America was one of the consquences of the remapping of the modern colonial world prompted by the interrelated processes of colonization in the Americas and emancipation in Europe [i.e. the French Revolution]." (Mignolo, 2005, p.59). Argentinian philosopher Enrique Dussel (1995) urges sociologist to come to terms with the conquest of the Americas as proposed by Mignolo and Wallerstein stating that the conquest of the Americas was an event that inaugurated modernity giving Europe an economic and epistemological advantage over the Muslim, Indian, and Chinese worlds. Both Latin American scholars see Latin America as an *invention* and an *idea* born out of Western European Modernity.

Dussel directly confronts Kant's 1784 proposition that the "Enlightenment is the exit of humanity by itself from state of culpable immaturity…Laziness and cowardliness are the causes which bind the great part of humanity in the frivolous state of immaturity." Dussel responds, "Out one to

consider an African in Africa or a slave in the United States in the 18th century to be culpably immature? What about an Indigenous person in Mexico or a Latin American mestizo at a later period?" (Dussel, 1995, p. 20). The idea of culpable immaturity proposed by Kant is imbued into the logic of the *systema de castas* in so far as the path to maturity, for the colonized, was to wed or procreate with Criollos and Spaniard descendants. Black and Indigenous peoples were associated with antiquity an antithesis to the modern. Palenque residents did not see themselves as backward or pre-modern. This is an important distinction to make. Both palenques did not bend to these logics.

Dussel also takes issue with Hegel statement on the direction of history and what this inevitably means for colonized groups. Hegel writes, "Universal history goes from East to West. Europe is absolutely the end of universal history…Universal history is the discipline of the indomitable natural will directed toward universality and subjective liberty." (Hegel, 1975, p. 197). "This alleged East-West movement," writes Dussel, "clearly precludes Latin America and Africa from world history and characterizes Asia as essentially confined to a state of immaturity and childhood." (Dussel, 1995, p. 20). The concept of development from a Western modality as an unfolding linear dialectic. The old world engulfed by the new world. A disappeared Other in the folds of modernity.

Were it not for Latin American scholars we might assume the Indian would be fully erased by mestizaje. Mario Roberto Morales disrupts this logic in his analysis. Mestizaje, from a bottom up perspective this time, "assimilated innumerable factors from the Indians all of which seem apparent in many forms of [cultural] expression." (Morales, 2008, p.494). This includes the rhythmic, phonetic, and semantic variations of the Spanish language to the cultural customs, world-views, superstitions, diets, and religious notions. These differences are noticeably distinct from their peninsular roots. Morales continues to state, in the case of Latin American mestizaje, "innumerable variants, emphasis and possibilities of combination make the specific individual impossible to be named with any specificity and only prone to being characterized as multiple and differentiated by the most general of

factors." (Morales, 2008, p.494). In other words, colonial subjects were at once difficult to "pin down" to a singular and permanent racial category and capable of possessing multiple ontologies in the colonial system. Navigating colonial society required ontological movement from multiple identities embodied in the colonial subject. Yanga, Mandinga, and their communities knew that these multiple movements were necessary for their temporary and later permanent freedoms.

Returning to Dussel, precolonial forms of being presented a barrier to modernity. "For modernity, the barbarian is at fault for opposing the civilizing process, and modernity, ostensibly innocent, seems to be emancipating the fault of its own victims." (Dussel, 1995, p. 137). For the conqueror, writes Jean Franco (2013), the practice of human sacrifice had been the obstacle that divided civilization from barbarism, modernity and antiquity. Ironically, the conquest required mass genocide. Human sacrifice in a different form. The idea of Latin America, and surely New Spain, is one of elites celebrating their dreams of becoming modern while sliding deeper into the logic of coloniality (Mignlo, 2005). It makes sense that palenque were viewed as major barriers to the development of colony especially as both Yanga and Mandinga were physically situated in the middle territory between the political capital, Mexico City, and the import/export port of Veracruz. Palenque were both physical barriers disrupting the flow of goods and epistemological obstructions to colonial logic. Modernity collides with palenque forms of resistance and multiple rebellions.

Palenque residents were conscious of what Morales calls, "Eurocentric modern values" that "permeated the consciousness of all colonial groups and subjects, making identitarian dislocation a common feature" (Morales, 2008, p. 496). The idea of the self as free was a feature of both palenques. I hesitate to agree that palenque residents were dislocated from their identities in either the 17th or 18th centuries. A deep understanding of self and commitment to flight presumes that community members invested in palenque life had held onto "pre-modern" values while simultaneously possessing "modern" values. They existed, as mentioned in chapters two and three, in a third-space. José Rabasa

writes, "this third-space, where grief and ambivalence dismantle authority, involves going beyond the colonizer-colonized dichotomy." (Rabasa, 2008, p. 44). In the years before their permanent status as formal towns, palenques did not neatly fit into the segregated Republic of Spaniards or the Republic of Indians.

Racial hierarchies, in the Spanish sense, were not a feature of the palenques. Survival preceded universality. Flight required a conjuring of African and Indigenous knowledge. These intercultural epistemologies created paths and routes to and from haciendas and the coastline. They were necessary in the maintenance of agricultural plots, the building of structural homes and the socializing of the young. Modernity created new and violent social conditions for both African and Indigenous peoples in Veracruz. Yet the response to modernity by palenque leaders and residents was to simply create their own modern way of being. A new life. A free life. The following subsection examines racial ideologies along the Royal Road as a continuous space of contestation for Yanga and Mandinga that became well known to the governments of New Spain and in the Spanish Peninsula.

Race, Modernity, and the Royal Road

Extending from the interior of New Spain to the coastal port of Veracruz the Royal Road allowed communication, trade, and the movement of people between the 16th and 19th century (Santos Salinas Ramos, 2016). In "Soldiers, Indians, and Silver," Phillip Powell (1952) establishes a relationship between the *Camino Real* and the *Ruta de Plata*, or the Silver Road, leading to the northbound territory of Zacatecas. The interconnectedness of mining zones, agricultural fields, livestock, deserts, plains and mountains were utilized by diverse communities. These included Spanish missionaries, soldiers, Mestizo merchants, Indigenous Chichimecas, Otomies, and Tlaxcaltecas to name a few (Santos Salinas Ramos, 2016). The *Camino Real* was based on pre-colonial routes often taking travelers between two and three months of travel between Mexico City and the port of Veracruz (Berrojálbiz & Areti-Hers, 2019). It remained in operation for three centuries after the conquest until the middle of the 19th

century with the construction of the railroad taking its place as the main transporter of goods (Cramaussel, 2006).

What stands out in the Silver Road studies is the methods of pacification used by the Spanish towards Indigenous groups. It draws similarities to the methods of pacification experienced by maroon communities in the Orizaba region. The Chichimecas, a northern nomadic Indigenous community, did not passively accept colonial expansion to the north. The Chichimeca wars of the mid 16th century lasted four decades and came to an end through a series of Spanish treaties (Powell, 1977). In part, these treaties promised land for permanent settlement. Land was used by Spanish authorities as a means to pacify resistance in the north as early as the 1550s and in the Orizaba region in the following two centuries. Simultaneously, forts were built in-between major cities and isolated terrains where Indian raids were common (Moorhead, 1958). Forts where close enough to police possible rebellions.

Chantal Cramaussel (2006) makes the point that both the *Camino Real* and the *Ruta de Plata*, among other routes, were projects aimed to populate "empty" lands. In thinking through one of the major ideas of modernity, these routes were a civilizing project as much as they were routes to transport goods. It is within this framework that Yanga and Mandinga establish their respective free towns. Understanding the pattern of empire Yanga and Mandinga both understood the limitations of the Spanish when faced with expensive and relentless warfare and raiding. Cramaussel (2006) also notes that excess down pours during the rainy season limited transportation directly to Mexico City. Weather had to be accounted for during travel. I imagine sudden or unexpected down pours as opportune for raids. One thing is for certain, race was an important part of traversing this road.

The Limits and Fluidity of Colonial Racial Codes

Race, as in any colonial contact zone, is dependent on physical and social spaces. In New Spain, occupation and accumulated capital also determined one's racial location. Take for example the case

of Mauricia Josepha de Apelo who was called to the Inquisition on two separate proceedings between 1768 and 1773 accused of heathen beliefs (Carrera, 1998). Despite her confirmed *Castizo* and *Español* parentage she was sometimes labeled as mestiza. Mauricia was a servant, illiterate, and an unmarried woman living in Mexico City. According to Magali Carrera (1998) it is likely that court proceedings considered Mauricia's intellectual, economic, and social status as markers of her racial designation more readily than her fair skinned physical characteristics. Categorizing people by race was a process of knowing the boundaries of language usage and listening to how non-native speakers manipulated the limits of usage in certain public context (Carrera, 1998).

A century before Mauricia's Inquisition, Felipe Monsón y Mojica, a man of African descent, and his wife Juana Maria de la Cruz ascend to a position of prominence through commerce in Indigenous agricultural products. Juana is legally labeled as *india* yet maintains close social and economic networks with her mestizo father. Together, this Afro-Indigenous couple facilitated access to greater credit, commercial networks, and social status (Sierra Silva, 2015). Monsón's will, written in the late 1680's, suggests that the de la Cruz family possed significant capital and stressed that his houshold's rise to prominence was to do his wife's personal help and work. Additionally, he mentions de la Cruz contributed no less than twelve thousand pesos to his cause (Sierra Silva, 2015). Apart from being a successful chili vendor, Monsón actively participated in the Santa Expiración "*mulato*" confraternity and was enlisted in the colonial militia. Together with his wife they also owned a popular steam house, known as a *temazcal*, which served as a communal site for mixed race people to relace, cleanse, and socialize (Sierra Silva, 2015). To say that their reputations as leaders in their community is an understatement considering the limitations imposed on Afro-Indigenous socialization in the late 17th century.

Importantly, their social markers pushed against their racial status in the caste system. Monsón and de la Cruz identifies as Catholics. They were married and creditors to other businesses. They were

chili vendors, free people, and citizens. A Black man and Indigenous women were not supposed to acquire the success and freedoms that they did. Their marriage, and Mauricia's racial misrepresentation in Inquisition documents, attests to the discontinuity between racial theory and lived social reality in New Spain (Carrera, 1998). These two narratives are not representative cases but remain important micro-histories of the types of racially ambiguous elements that existed between Mexico City and Veracruz.

Race was also dependent on cultural markers much like ethnicity is today. The *Bozal* Black identity, for instance, assumed that they did not speak Spanish or comprehend Catholicism. For the Spanish, *Bozalez* lacked the knowledge of Hispanic society, its moral codes, and laws (Seijas & Sierra Silva, 2016). Once African captives acquired Hispanic norms they became *Ladinos* – cultural and linguistic fluent members of colonial society. Those who were enslaved and sold within a few months after arrival in New Spain were labeled *entre bozal y ladino* (in-between the two). According to Tatiana Seijas and Pablo M. Sierra Silva (2016) slave owners valued *bozalez* over ladinos and paid premiums for culturally "uprooted" individuals over men and women born into colonial society. It is likely that Yanga's palenque was made up of African born *negros* and *bozalez* as well as *bozalez* and *ladinos*. These identities reflect the demographic history of central and coastal colonial Mexico during Yanga's initial flight and later establishment of the palenque community.

On the other hand, the Mandinga palenque, situated in the middle of the 18th century, reveals imperial changes over the course of the late 17th century into the 18th century. By the late 1680's, slave owners increasingly turned to American born creole-Africans as coerced labor as they overwhelmingly outnumbered African born peoples (Seijas & Sierra Silva, 2016). The demographic shift, yet stable institution of slavery, suggest that Mandinga palenque residents were for the most part socialized into the Spanish colonial culture. The names on the Mandinga census give evidence that they were either given Christian names or chose Christian names for themselves. Fernando Manuel, Andres de Los

Santos, Isabel de Ascension, Margarita Getrudis all Christian names and citizens of Mandinga. While birth certificates for these individuals do not exist, we can assume that the majority of Mandinga *cimarrones* had spent a significant part of their lives in the Americas by way of their names and the era in which they lived their lives.

For purposes of domination, both palenque were simply identified as *negro* or *mulato* communities from the perspective of the colonizers. It was in the interest of their subjugation that cultural distinctions, place of birth, religious affiliation, and language were dismissed. They both were interfering with colonial projects. Racial assignment in colonial documents were often reduced to a singular state of defiance, their Blackness. Monsón and de la Cruz, through commercial, military, and confraternity affiliations, shifted their ascribed colonial status. Palenque residents also shifted their status albeit through fugitive flight. Both, however, defied the standards for which their racial categories were supposed to mean. As Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva (2015) puts it, former enslaved men and common Indigenous women were not supposed to serve as creditors for Spanish clergymen, benefactors for prominent religious confraternities, and demanding patrons from master artisans but Monsón and de la Cruz did. Both Yanga and Mandinga were not supposed to acquire land and generational freedom. Yet they did so through demands and legal channels. Each party maneuvered through fluid racial codes to live more freely in an anti-Black/anti-Indigenous colonial society.

Last, I look to three receipts of sale by slave trafficker Fernando Rodriguez. The descriptions used to identify enslaved individuals demonstrate the conflation of race, casta status, and nation as forms of identity unique to African descendants in 17th century Mexico. Using inquisition documents, Ovando and Torres (2015) find that Fernando Rodriguez had established commercial networks in Orizaba and Mexico City. Veracruz was his principle residence where he lived with his wife and seven children beginning in 1604. The following paragraphs are receipts of sale that I interpreted from

Spanish to English. The original documents can be found within the Archivo General de la Nación (AGN), Real Fisco de la Inquisición 18, folder 97, volume 18 written in 1644:

"Let it be known to those who see this letter, I Captain Fernando Rodriguez... grant and sell to Juan Manuel de Acuña's account a Black named Sebastián, from the Angola nation, *Bozal*, a recently sold 18-year-old. I sell him as a slave to Fray Antonio de Trujillo, eager for a fair title, free from pawn, mortgage...and without ensuring any blemish, defect, or disease...for the price of 300 pesos of common gold. Veracruz on June 3, 1639."

"Let everyone see this letter, I Captain Fernando Rodriquez grant and sell to Lorenzo Rodriguez a Black woman named Isabel, from Angolan land, 18 years of age, more or less, who is four or five months pregnant, as a captive slave, held by just title, subject to servitude...with the assurance of no [honest] blemish, vice, defect, or public or secret disease...for the price of 350 gold pesos...Done in Nueva Veracruz on April 16, 1641."

"Let it be known to those who see this letter, I Captain Fernando Rodriguez grant and acknowledge that I am selling Melchora de Torres, a single woman, a Black slave named Catalina, Angolan caste, who will be 17 years old...between *Ladina* and vozal [*Bozal*]; which is for the account of Juan Manuel de Acuña, as a slave held with just title, subject to servitude...without any old or new public or secret disease...at 320 pesos...in the new city of Veracruz on May 2, 1641."

Each one of the enslaved individuals noted above are described by nationality, by cast status, and racial identities. Catalina is the only one described as having some cultural knowledge of Spanish colonial life. Her caste is conflated as being Angolan but also "between Ladina and Bozal." All the while, her Blackness is also documented. While Isabel isn't given a cultural identity she too is from Angola. Is then Angola part of her caste status like Catalina or is she closer to Sebastián's status as a *bozal*? Perhaps this is a question beyond the fractured information at our disposal in this document.

In any case, perceived racial identities fluctuate between cultural markers, place of origin, and presumably phenotype.

It is difficult to know for certain how these identities played out in their everyday lives or whether these three individuals were in anyway linked to palenque communities that existed around them. Their narratives are somewhat fixed between the establishment of San Lorenzo de los Negros and 1730 rebellions that would lead to the first petitions by the Mandinga palenque. The following section seeks to address two key questions. What did Yanga's successful negotiations mean for the Mandinga group of Veracruz? In what ways, if any, did Yanga open the possibility for other Cimarron groups in similar social conditions at the end of the 17th century leading into the 18th century? These questions will bridge the two groups in their interwoven history and social relations.

YANGA/MANDINGA AND THE POLITICS OF BEING

In addressing these two questions I am careful not to make the case that there was an explicit or direct learned behavior between the two palenques. Recently, Annae Marcovich and Terry Shinn's (2020) study on research regimes as architectures of knowledge prioritize long-term historical structures to draw out historical trends and patterns. Likewise, juxtaposing the Yanga and Mandinga palenques requires this structure. However, it is not simply about giving an oral account but a very powerful need to give testimony to and restore a spirit as mentioned by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012). The convergence of the two palenques and their histories is an effort to, "bring back into existence a world fragmented and dying." (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 72) Exploring the differences and continuity from one century to the next requires this orientation.

One significant difference that I did not anticipate as a sociologist was the dearth of original colonial documents for Yanga. It was almost an obvious issue after discussing my research questions with the archivists at the AGN and AGI. The further back I attempted to trace Yanga's origins the scarcer documents became. Alas, as a novice in the archives I was overwhelmed by the abundance of

colonial documents on Mandinga. This difference, while at first presenting itself as a problem, eventually gave fruit to a number of comparative elements between the two palenques. There are two points of difference that should be highlighted here. The first is the issue of land and land reclamation.

Following Sean Robertson's (2017) position on Indigenous sovereignty, there is a rejection of Hobbesian models by palenque residents under the sign of either secession from or self-government within the state. During their fugitive years of flight, land reclamation for African, Indigenous, and Afro-Indigenous palenque residents meant refusing state recognition and legal compensation as necessary predicate to Indigenous land reclamation (Ventura Trujillo, 2017). This refusal lead to two decades of negotiations for the establishment of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Negros. On November 13, 1630, Yanga is chartered by ceding territory from haciendas on the outskirts of Córdoba. This fact is absolutely critical in understanding the significance of Yanga's demands. What was ceded was in fact privately owned land and not state property. Palenque residents essentially used the state and its' institutional power to undermine private land owners who often participated in the enslavement of African diasporic peoples.

With over five hundred residents, Yanga was by far more populous than Mandinga, numbering roughly 53 members at the time of their founding. Its' rather large populace could have played a role in the extent to which they could apply pressure to demand plots of private owned land. Mandinga, on the other hand, was parceled land from the Indigenous village of Soyaltepec in 1767. After 1769 Soyaltepec did not always enjoy amicable relationships with the former maroon group. Friction between the freedmen and local Indigenous communities had built up so much that they accused Amapa residents of raiding and destroying the Soyaltepec church along with sixty homes (Carroll, 1977). Simply put, Soyaltepec residents found themselves displaced by state projects that framed a contentious relationship with the former maroon group. Interestingly, the displaced Indigenous community of Soyaltepec continued to raid and live a cimarrón lifestyle as a result (Chavez-Hitla,

2001). Land reclamation in the Mandinga context is thus tangled with the colonial project of Indigenous removal a century after Yanga. However, in those decades of flight and negotiations, both palenque groups maintained local control over areas of interest which is key to maintaining a cultural and political identity (Robertson, 2017). Maintaining these forms of identity are essential epistemic and ontological tools for Indigenous sovereignty.

The second issue taken up is the issue of political presence and power of governance. According to the list of demands, Gaspar Yanga and his direct descendants retained institutional influence on their new township via the positions of governor (Landers, 2006). Similarly, but not limited to Gaspar's direct descendants, the position of chief judge was to be a person of military experience that had fought against the Spanish militia. These two important seats of governance gave some insurance of control over their new-found sovereignty. This was certainly not the case for Fernando Manuel and his group a century later in Mandinga.

Instead, authority over Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe was handed to King Charles III. Subsequently, King Charles was empowered to select and appoint his own public officials for economic governance such as mayors, aldermen, and clergy. During his reign, he expelled the Jesuits from the Spanish empire (Mörner, 1966). It makes sense that Charles did not give direct control to the recently emancipated group. King Charles was, after all, excluding Criollos from high civil ecclesiastical offices and also eliminating many of their privileges of clergy (Kuethe, 1996). The former maroons of Mandiga were far less likely to experience the same governing structures as Gaspar and his group. Gaspar secured institutional security through legacy political appointments from the onset of San Lorenzo. Both palenques remained within the legal boundaries of the Spanish crown allowing for a future that guaranteed citizenship rights, privileges, and obligations.

Furthermore, the issue of assimilation is one worth exploring. According to findings by Mexican scholar Adriana Naveda Chavez-Hitla, "*Nunca asimilaron a los de San Lorenzo*," or "They

never assimilated those from San Lorenzo [Yanga]." (Chavez-Hitla, 2001, p. 165). I believe this was something unforeseeable by Spanish colonist at the time of negotiations. Their principle interest was to decrease or eliminate maroon raids. The challenge was to find institutional solutions to reduce maroon insurrection broadly that was less costly to their local economy. The idea that Yanga and his group where never fully assimilated speaks to one constant across time and space within the Orizaba-Córdoba region, maroonage. The act of flight continued to take place from the introduction of Africans in the various ports throughout New Spain up until the Mexican war of independence at the beginning of the 19th century. Maroonage is by nature a project that pushes away from an assimilationist position.

This does not mean that palenque residents failed to create meaningful social relations with those who lived around them. As time passed, former palenque residents developed relationships with different commercial groups in the region (Chavez-Hitla, 2001). Distinct from Yanga, Mandinga leaders demanded access to workers in their 1762 petition. Mandinga residents maintained an intricate relationship with their surrounding communities. For example, Prudente de Arellano a blacksmith from the neighboring town on Teutila, testified that he had been dealing with the Mandinga group for years. Francisco Vargas was a mestizo carpenter from Soyaltepec and he too was very familiar with members of the maroon group, as were Joseph Ruíz, a mulatto muleteer, and Joseph Badilla, a mestizo farmer (Carroll, 1977). This is one way in which a century of rebellion, and strategic negotiations, may have shifted the dynamics of compromise for the Mandinga group.

The request for workers was thus not a random demand. The social relations between maroon members and local townships allowed for Mandinga officials to formally request a workforce. Mandinga leadership held tightly to these socio-economic relationships. We must recall that in 1758 private interest attempted to enter into negotiations with the Mandinga group albeit with little to show for at the end of the decade. On their long road to becoming fully incorporated in the colony, Yanga

and Mandinga were parallel in their demands for access. Access to fertile lands, to license a Catholic church, and finally access to self-govern their new municipality.

Another key issue brought to light by Chavez-Hitla that pushes against assimilationist propositions is the uprisings that took place in the middle of the 18th century. Large scale uprisings in 1725, 1735, 1748, and 1750 were led by two men of African descent named José Perez and José Carpintero who were also accompanied by a mulatto man named Miguel de Salamanca. This group took over the hacienda of *Omealca* and quickly attracted great numbers of recruits as more and more former enslaved individuals fled their captivity to join the rebel group (Marshal Rodriguez, 1979). These uprisings were never fully controlled and thus presents the question of the degree to which cimarrones were an assimilated group (Chavez-Hitla, 2001). Marronage comes from the principles of resistance and is said to lead to the principle of separation (Thomas, 2016). Much like Perez, Carpintero and de Salamanca, the Mandinga and Yanga palenque groups did not wait for their freedom to be granted but declared themselves to be free.

Yanga's successful negotiations meant the Spanish colonial administration and private interest understood the high cost of military excursions. They recognized the limited effects of sending clergy to pacify rebels. The very institution of slavery itself was decaying and impacted the possibility for Mandinga to become the second free-town of formerly enslaved citizens in New Spain. In the 1770's free trade was opened virtually to all ports in the Americas. The crown even instituted the *comercio libre de negros* or the Black free trade market though it did not meet with the type of success as anticipated (Schmidt-Nowara, 2011). The institution and trade of enslaved people of African descent was on the decline in Mexico and Peru by the late 18th century.

The main employer of slave labor, the plantations, left parts of Latin America dependent on the shifts in Atlantic and global markets because they were oriented towards the export of sugar, tobacco, and coffee. When demands for these commodities dwindled, so did the local economy

(Schmidt-Nowara, 2011). The Mandinga group won their freedom at the cusp of the decline of the slave trade in New Spain. However, as examined earlier, the cultural meaning of being Black or Indio had long lasting consequences beyond the eventual dismemberment of slavery in Latin America.

CONCLUSION

Despite a racist social order both palenques executed an acute understanding of the empire in which they lived. Spanish slave owners freely discussed problems of the empire in front of enslaved individuals (Chavez-Hitla, 2001). Spanish landowners may have dismissed their presence during conversations underestimating their capabilities to organize around newly intercepted information. They surely underestimated the degree to which free people of multiple ethnic backgrounds had formented relationships with maroon communities. The racial ideologies manifested in New Spain, while determined to restrict social mobility for lower-castas, held enough contradictions for Black and Indigenous communities to create momentary and long-lasting freedom.

Mestizaje and the discourse of *limpiesa de sangre*, both Trans-Atlantic ideas born in the Iberian Peninsula, contributed to the conquest of Anahuac. In many ways, these ideas continue to have mental real estate in the minds of many Mexicans and Chicanos on both sides of the border. We are reminded by Jack Forbes (2020) that the Spanish peninsula was home to one of the most diverse set of cultural and biological mixtures prior to 1492. Yet the meaning of mestizaje and labeling of a mestizo people came to define African and Indigenous progeny according to their "*calidad*." This was especially the case in Orizaba. Part of marronage in the region was in large part the capabilities of being able to act and present one's self as a master of Spanish norms. Race was thus intimately linked to social markers such as occupation, religious affiliation, marital status and language. Both Yanga and Mandinga groups were privy to the racial flexibility and fluidity of the empire.

Both palenques were perceived as major barriers to the development of the colony. This was especially true at the epistemic level. The example of a true liberated experience was greater than any

threat or fear any *haciendero* could produce (Chavez-Hitla, 2001). Yanga and Mandinga were another way of living and being. They refused state recognition for much of their formidable years and chose to execute a form of self-governance that speaks to a form Indigenous sovereignty (Robertson, 2017). This epistemic rebellion opposed the civilizing process of modernity (Dussel, 1995).

These epistemic rebels understood that racial geographies are what Saldaña Portillo (2016) calls, techologies of power. It is a way of envisioning, of mapping, and of accounting for representing space as Indian given (Saldaña Portillo, 2016). Rebels produced these radical mappings on Indigenous land, engaged with Indigenous peoples, and Indigenous concepts of sovereignty. Yanga and Mandinga allow us as researchers to recognize the possibilities for changing existing power structures and to see how Black and Indigenous colonial actors engaged in these resistance activities (Neely & Samura, 2009). Negotiations do not come to fruition without thinking through the racial geographies of colonial New Spain and its changing dynamics from the 17th to the 18th century.

The relationship between race, mestizaje, and modernity not only shaped imperial projects they were challenged by formidable groups of maroons in colonial Veracruz. The lessons left behind by Yanga and Mandinga inform contemporary forms of migrant displacement, family separation, and undocumented legal status for Latinx peoples in the United States. The following chapter expands the conversation of palenques to contemporary forms of *nepantla* or living in-between. The historical rebellions and list of demands by Yanga and Mandinga are juxtaposed with similar demands presented to the U.S. government by radical groups of the mid-to-late 1960's and early 1970's. The bridge between the 17th century and the 21st exists in the continued struggle for epistemic and structural decoloniality. Chapter five grapples with this bridge and offers the field of sociology and Chicano/Latino Studies recommendations for future research in the field of Afro-Mexican literature.

CHAPTER FIVE:
LESSONS FROM THE PALENQUES

"You never tell all the secrets when you're trying to get fee." – Imani Perry

Palenques, as a noun or verb, have yet to make inroads into the everyday lexicon of the U.S. In this way, Imani Perry's (2020) quote reflects the hidden nature of palenques and its characteristic of being tucked away even when in plain sight. Amaral (2017) reminds us that haciendas cloaked maroons more than the dense vegetation of mountains. The point she makes is that natural and built landscapes were actively recreated by maroons and other groups through perception, experience, and inexperience in the 18th century. In this final chapter, colonial histories are bridged with the contemporary world. How do contemporary communities create their own liberatory landscapes through their perceptions, agency, and historical memory? Palenques, as a noun and verb, will guide in answering this question and frame the contemporary (in)visibility of Afro-Mexicans and their civic rights in Mexico. Palenques are often right in front of us cloaked in migratory paths, migrant settlements, uprisings, and collective revolutionary demands for social equity. This chapter presents examples of how and where palenques exist in our contemporary world.

This chapter expands the conversation of palenques to contemporary forms of "living in-between" social spaces. The focus is centered on forms of displacement, exploitation, family separation, and undocumented legal status for Latinxs in the United States. The Indigenous concept of nepantla returns to explain an essential palenque characteristic of liminality. For undocumented families, nepantla is a constant state of being. Caught in this nepantla are Black undocumented families who are often overlooked and left out of this conversation. This subsection engages these experiences of sociological neglect. Pivoting from citizenship issues, the historical rebellions and list of demands by Yanga are juxtaposed with similar demands presented to the U.S. government by radical groups of the mid to late 1960's. Themes are drawn out between the racialized groups and bridged with Yanga's own vision of liberation.

Anti-Blackness, while worldwide, is further explored in this chapter as it prevails within the Latinx community. The idea of whiteness as a marker of civility and humanity continues to have cultural value globally. Latinx are not exempt from this logic and in many instances benefit from white supremacy and perpetuate it within their own families. Anti-Blackness is also ongoing in Mexico as the 2020 census, for the first time in Mexico's history, will provide an option for people of African descent. The final subsection of this chapter explores the efforts by Mexico to recognize its' African past and present. Members of the African diaspora are diligently fighting for their rights.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of how Afro-Mexican histories complicate, enrich, and give further sophistication to fields of Chicanx/Latinx Studies and sociology. I conclude with some recommendation for future research as the field of Afro-Mexican literature continues to expand beyond the discipline of History. Opening up space within both fields is vital during a time in which Black Lives Matter echoes through metropoles, rural areas, and emancipatory spaces hidden in the palenques of today. It is my hope, that palenques become common knowledge for future generation and serve as guides to a more just world.

INHERITING PATHS OF RESISTANCE

Undocumented in Liminality

The migration from Latin America to the U.S. by Latinxs are neither random acts nor adventurous getaways as some popular Hollywood representations have made it out to be (Saldivar III, 2019). It has also become popular to state that Latinxs come to the United States "for a better life." This narrative has been internalized a believed by many Latinxs themselves. I want to complicate what it means to seek a better life by making the point that communities from Latin America have been exploited to the point where they are seeking a safer life. Life as an undocumented person in the United States can be described as living in a liminal space (Menjívar, 2006). Palenques, while historically situated in the 17th and 18th century, is a conceptual instrument by which Chicanx scholars

can (re)imagine the multiple liminal spaces inhabited by the multi-racial and multi-ethnic communities that make up the U.S. undocumented community.

In chapters two and three I linked palenques with the Indigenous concepts of Nepantla, Quetzalcoatl, and Teotl. These concepts are revisited here to reflect the borderland/in-between spaces of undocumented members of the Latinx community and African diaspora in the U.S. The goal is to show a relationship of colonial structures and cultural ideologies that have informed our current social world in the 21st century but are constantly confronted by Indigenous conceptions of movement, rebirth, and "third spaces" (Anzaldua, 1984). Yanga and Mandinga demonstrate ancestral knowledge systems and strategies that remain relevant today and can inform contemporary issues in the undocumented community. The histories and concepts formed by maroons are, in part, inherited paths of resistance.

Think through the term liminality. Some scholars have focused on the experiences of undocumented communities and individuals through a "legal limbo" (Menjívar, 2006). In other words, this group is caught between two nation-state legal structures and straddle realms of legality and illegality. Torres and Wicks-Asbun (2014) expand the legal liminality frame by Menjívar and propose that undocumented peoples inhibit liminal citizenship. Their claim is that the presentation of citizenship is scaled down to local context extending beyond official legal membership in the nation-state. The presentation of citizenship is the ability to perform the cultural practices of the dominant society such as language proficiency, institutional knowledge (school system), or recognizing popular contemporary culture (Abrego, 2008). Liminal citizenship is thus knowing how to access certain cultural elements in the society yet excluded to citizenship rights at the structural and legal level. Both terms are helpful in articulating modes of existing within the nation-state that renders undocumented individuals invisible in plain sight.

Black undocumented immigrants experience this state of liminality. Their experiences, however, have yet to gain the national attention. As legal scholar Breaanne J. Palmer (2017) puts it, Black immigrants are excluded from the national discussion about immigration reform, which has falsely been painted as a Latinx-only issue. In this way, Afro-Latinx are removed from the Latinx-centered immigration narrative under the assumption that Latinx are one group and people of African descent are "Other." As of 2015 about 575,000 unauthorized immigrants are of African descent with roughly 20% immigration from Haiti and Nigeria (Raff, 2017). Black immigrants may be disproportionately vulnerable to deportation, says law professor Cesar Cuahtemoc Garcia Hernandez (2019), as the criminal-justice system acts like a funnel into the immigration system. According to a report by the Washington Post, arrest for immigrants with no criminal records more than doubled to 5,441during the first week of now President Trump's inauguration (Sacchetti, 2017). Although only 7 percent of non-citizens in the U.S. are Black, they make up 20 percent of those facing deportation on criminal grounds. (Raff, 2017).

While many of the stories of Black immigrants do not make national headlines, activist Denea Joseph has been at the forefront of a growing intersectional movement to center Black stories into the larger immigration narrative. Denea writes, "I am one of approximately 619,000 undocumented, Black immigrants living in the United States. My immigration story began at seven years old, when I came to the United States from Belize without my mother, father, or siblings. The latter is a common narrative for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) recipients like me. But the former challenges a popular misconception: that immigration is solely a Latinx issue. I introduce myself this way to tell you that Black immigrants do exist." (Joseph, 2020). The liminal space of Black immigrant communities is thus situated somewhere in-between the social experiences of African Americans, within the Latinxs experience, and within the larger immigrant experience of the African diaspora in

the United States. Denea's proclamation of "Black immigrants do exist" echoes a movement, a teotl, of a myriad of Black immigrant voices.

The UndocuBlack Network, for example, is a multigenerational network of currently and formerly undocumented Black people that fosters community, facilitates access to resources, and contributes to the realities of the Black (un)documented immigrant community. I first came across their platform via social media. Social movements in the second decade of the 21st century have used social media platforms to share resources and expand social networks across the country and globe. Perhaps one of the most important aspects of social media for this generation is sharing narratives that have otherwise been neglected or ignored. Undocumented Black immigrants, Afro-Mexicanos, Afro-Latinxs, have not only become visible to a growing audience but the younger generations born into a world of ipads, laptops, and smartphones are being exposed to these identities and social movements. It is stories like Denea Joseph's that are providing a humanizing insight into the nepantla of the African diaspora in the United States.

Still, there are Black and Indigenous individuals who are stateless and forced into liminality from birth. Kristy A. Belton (2017), for example, point to the more than 10 million people worldwide who are statelessness or "displaced in place." She mentions that the stateless are born and reside within the country that denies them citizenship (Belton, 2017). This is a shift from the migratory narrative of displaced groups and instead focuses on nation-states, such as the Dominican Republic, where citizenship isn't always guaranteed to individuals born within its' national borders. In an interview with Ed Kennedy (2020) Belton states, "Statelessness is not something that only happens to people who live in crisis or in [military] conflict situations. They are everywhere: Caribbean, Africa, South East Asia, Europe." The state of liminality is neither a homogenous experience nor exclusively experienced in the United States in the 21st century. Let us be reminded that palenques were established by their

creators as non-state spaces. Liminality, in its stateless socio-legal form, are especially represented along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Existing in a borderland region that is culturally distinct from both the United States and Mexico produces a particular type of violence for Black and Brown bodies. It should be pointed out here that the border is a colonial structure that has been politicized and militarized in such a way that it does not reflect the level of militarization in the interior regions of the U.S. empire. Scholars such as Roberto Hernandez, for instance, centers coloniality as the paroxysm of racialized forms of state-sanctioned violence in the borderlands (Mendoza, 2019). Hernandez explicates the underpinning and spatiotemporal logic of coloniality/modernity which subjugates border(ed) communities epistemically and physically (Ağkaya, 2019). On the one hand, border residents are separated epistemologically from their native culture, language, political system, and ultimately their cosmology. In some cases, they are asked to choose to be either or, American or Mexican. A subtle surrender would be the term Mexican-American. A border wedged in hyphen form. Most importantly, however, Hernandez asks who is served and who is oppressed by borders? By whom is this violence perpetuated and normalized (Vargas, 2020)? Liminality is thus weaponized and produces lethal outcomes in gendered and racialized ways (Hernandez, 2018).

Whereas borders have been socially and politically created as weapons of mass separation, liminal spaces of nepantla have a distinct orientation rooted in an Indigenous world of multiplicity that informs decision making. In nepantla we undergo the anguish of changing our perspectives and crossing a series of crossroads (Keating, 2009). Decisions must be assessed and made when crossing into the U.S. For Keating (2009), this process of confronting junctures and crossroads is the process she calls *conocimiento* or consciousness. Nepantla is thus an epistemology that affords cognitive space for multiple modes of knowledge to function simultaneously. The informal economy along the border, for example, provides an economic base for undocumented peoples to sustain themselves. The

network, strategies, and negotiations in the informal economy, while operating within the larger U.S. economic structures, have their own cultural norms that may not reflect formal market cultures (Richardson & Pisani, 2012). Navigating both informal and formal economies is complex, yet through a nepantla consciousness undocumented citizens pieces together information from multiple cultural sources essential to their overall well-being.

In (Un)natural bridges, (Un)safe spaces Keating (2009) states, living in this liminal zone of nepantla means being in a constant state of movement and even displacement. Indigeneity is premised on movement (Hernandez, 2012). Even when displaced by force there is an Indigenous ontology rooted in migrating people traversing geo-political land spaces. In this way nepantla is coupled, linked, and related to the Indigenous concept of Teotl. Teotl provides a specific assertion of movement. It is a movement towards becoming. To be clearer, Gerardo Aldana (2011) interprets teotl as having three key characteristics: to heal, to poison, and to nurture. Felicia Lopez (2017) interprets teotl as the ability to think, choose, act, and affect the world around them and interact with other teteoh (the plural form of teotl). I find these interpretations as underpinning philosophies that inform the decision to take flight. Much like the maroon communities of the 17th and 18th centuries in Veracruz, unauthorized decisions to cross a border is a choice to heal one's social condition. While many sociologists correctly assess the reasons for migrant decision making (Durrand & Massey, 2004; Castles, 2010; Portes, 2019) what I am proposing is a deeper thoughtful process that is informed by ontologies that have survived generations and centuries of colonization.

As someone who was undocumented in this country I too have experienced this deep understanding of liminality, of nepantla. There is a force, that was unknown to me, that urged me not to completely assimilate but rather accommodate aspects of survival (language/culture). As Fannon (2008) poignantly puts it, from self-reflection comes self-origination. The birth of a new being. For undocumented communities every day is a constant rebirth. It is a permanent nepantla. This state of

in-betweenness is not limited to undocumented communities. Within the U.S., radical social movements have sought to address the inequities that exist in the fissures of our racialized communities.

The subsequent subsection shifts our attention from the legality of citizenship and turns U.S. born movements and their demands for fundamental civic rights. The goal is to link the demands put forth by the Black Panther Party and other groups with Yanga's own list of demands. Illuminated in the section is the ability to remain in liminality despite being a legal citizen. Palenques are helpful foundations to begin to understand revolutionary efforts between the 17th, 20th, and 21st centuries. Palenques speak through the various conditions of people of color by paying attention to space, race, and rebellions from the perspective of the oppressed.

Charting Linked Demands

> "After years away from the plantation, after taking a wife and starting a family, they [maroons] had convinced themselves they were free. As if owners forgot about property." – Colson Whitehead

Roberto Rodriguez (2017) writes that when Europeans first "learned" Indigenous languages they often times misunderstood and mistranslated key concepts essential to their ways of being. I tread through my own understandings of palenques carefully to determine intentionality of maroon activities as to not interpret collective behavior through a European lens. In this section I offer a linked experience between the 17th and 20thcenturies of Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) demanding equity from their imperial overseers. Palenques, through the lens of Chicanx/Latinx perspective, can be chartered as a response to liminal-border(ed) violence. Palenques existed both within an imperial ruling state and outside of its bureaucracy as spaces of refuge. So, the question then is, what do contemporary palenques look like? Who are its embodied residents? What autonomy do these embodied members possess to self-actualize their emancipation? As a historical sociologist I am reminded of the 20th century freedom fighters, namely the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, members of the American Indian Movement (A.I.M.), the Puerto Rican Young Lords, and the various

coalitions involved in carrying out the Chicano movement. Like Yanga, each group presented a set of demands to the empire and operated with a spirit of self-autonomy.

The list of demands by each social organization and social movement varied yet there are interrelated objectives between them. Before linking 20th century radical objectives with the 17th and 18th century maroon demands for legal emancipation I'd like to discuss at least five themes that connect Black, Indigenous, Chicanx, and Puerto Rican efforts towards liberation. These five themes include demands for: 1. Freedom & autonomy; 2. Economic control of their communities; 3. Land and control of their institutions; 4. Culturally relevant education; 5. Immunity for political prisoners. Other relevant themes include access to free healthcare, armed self-defense, an end to wars of aggression and an opposition to individual military participation. The latter themes, while important, will not be discussed in further detail but should be thought of as significant aspects towards a healthier relationship with existing institutions in the United States.

To begin, the ten-point program by the Black Panther Party will be used as a starting point to examine and connect the demands from their 17th century compatriots. Instead of juxtaposing Yanga's eleven demands here, I will instead reference the appropriate demands as they associate with the list below. The ten-point program was created in 1966 by the founders of the party, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale and put in place by members of the party (Seale, 1991). It states:

1. We want freedom. We want Power to determine the destiny of our Black and oppressed communities.
2. We want full employment for our people.
3. We want an end to the robbery by the capitalists of our black and oppressed communities.
4. We want decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings.
5. We want decent education for our people the exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.
6. We want completely free health care for all Black and oppressed people.
7. We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of Black people inside the United States.
8. We want an immediate end to all wars of aggression.

9. We want freedom for all Black and oppressed people now held in U.S. federal, state, county, city and military prisons and jails. We want trials by a jury of peers for all persons charged with so-called crimes under the law of this country.
10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, peace and people's community control of modern technology.

What is striking about both Yanga and the demands by the Black Panther Party is how they demarcate the conditions of their community as a specific experienced reality. Take the ninth demand above requesting freedom for incarcerated individuals and representation by a jury of their, presumed, ethnic-racial peers. Likewise, in Yanga's second demand he is requesting that the "chief judge shall not be a mestizo nor criollo nor a *letrado* [person of letters]" (Landers, 2006). In both instances there is a recognition that the judicial system under which they live do not represent the communities under their jurisdiction. This shared condition is also observable in the demands set by the Young Lords. The tenth point in their thirteen-point program states the following: "We want freedom for all political prisoners and prisoners of war: No Puerto Rican should be in jail or prison, first because we are a nation, and amerikkka has no claims on us; second, because we have been tied by our won people (peers). We also want all freedom fighters out of jail, since they are prisoners of war for liberation." (Young Lords Party, 1970, p. 22). Not only are these three groups describing their community's relationship to a powerful judicial institution, they are also attempting to shape the conditions for a new social relationship.

Economic autonomy is another example of the overlapping experiences between the 17th and 20th century. Take for example Yanga's decision to only allow Spaniards to reside in San Lorenzo on Mondays and Thursdays, or designated market days. Disallowing Spaniards to make permanent residence allowed for some economic autonomy for African and Indigenous residents of San Lorenzo. Similarly, within the Chicano movement MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanos de Aztlan) makes a parallel assertation. Their pro-Indigenous manifesto, called El Plan Espiritual de Aztlan (The Spiritual Plan of Aztlan), advocated for Chicano nationalism and self-determination. In it, they called

for "economic control of our lives and our communities by driving the exploiter out of our communities." (National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference, 1969). Economic exploitation is also explicated in the Black Panther's demands for "full employment of our people" and their request for an end "to the robbery by the capitalists of our Black and oppressed communities" (Seal, 1991). In each instance, Black and Brown communities make the decision to limit social proximity with the dominant ruling economic class. Creating this distance between oppressor and oppressed is one key element towards creating an autonomous community where a non-exploitative economy can begin for form.

The need for land is prioritized among all four ethnic social movements of the mid 20th century. For some Chicanos, writes Roberto Rodriguez (1996), building Aztlan literally meant fighting for a sovereign nation. The late 1960 espoused a sense of belonging to a community among Chicanos. Despite being socially viewed as foreigners they saw themselves as a community Indigenous to the Southwest (Rodriguez, 1996). They viewed themselves as Raza. Chicano efforts are echoed by the Young Lords. In their own call for self-determination they write, "The Chicano people built the Southwest, and we support their right to control their lives and their land. The people of Santo Domingo (Puerto Rico) continue to fight against gringo domination and its puppet generals" (Enck-Wanzer, 2010). In their call for Puerto Rican control of their institutions the Young Lords state, "land belongs to all the people!" (Enck-Wanzer, 2010). The Black Panthers reiterate these requests for land with specific projected outcomes. "We want decent housing," they write, "housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people in our communities, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for the people" (Seal, 1996). No other organization, however, demanded land reform and restoration within the United States mainland to the extent of the American Indian Movement.

Yanga demanded a parcel of land between the Rio Blanco and a regional estate. The amount of land requested is unknow but sizable enough to be deemed a township. For American Indians, land restorations came with specificities. Written in October of 1972, the Trail of Broken Treaties outlined a 20-point proposal. The tenth point demanded a one-hundred and ten-million acres of land restoration for Native peoples. The proposal states: "The next congress and administration should commit themselves and effect a national commitment implemented by statues or executive and administrative actions, to restore a permanent non-diminishing Native American land base of not less that 110-million acres by July 4, 1976. This land base and its separate parts should be vested with recognized rights and conditions of being perpetually non-taxable except by autonomous and sovereign Indian authority and should never again be permitted to be alienated from Native American or Indian ownership and control" (American Indian Movement, 1972). Perhaps the largest land restoration demand came from the calls for a Puerto Rico Libre! For Puerto Ricans on the island this meant a restoration of more than three million acres. The entire island was and continues to be an invasion by the United States government. Land rights is thus a connecting theme for Black, Brown, and Native movements across four centuries.

Above all else, the call for self-determination and freedom was the ultimate goal for each group. "We want freedom. We want power to determine our destiny of our Black and oppressed communities writes Bobby Seal (1996). The Young Lords and MEChA members signal in their own words, "We want self-determination for Puerto Ricans; liberation on the island and inside the United States" (Enck-Wanzer, 2010, p. 11). Chicanos demand from their own community to unite and commit "to the liberation of La Raza" (National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference, 19690. "That all those who fled," writes Yanga, "will be free" (Landers, 2006). The message to colonial powers in the 17th century and 20th century has remained an interconnected call for sovereignty at the individual and structural level. In the 21st century the Black Lives Matter movement, while focused on police

brutality, also makes a call for self-determination. Indigenous communities continue to demand control of sacred spaces where proposed pipelines continue to destroy eco-water systems in the Dakotas, Midwest, and Gulf Coast region. Latinx communities continue to fight against the separation of families in detention centers. The conditions of racialized groups continue to take flight, seek refuge, and create new worlds in their epistemological palenques.

In the case of 17th and 18th century palenques, autonomy may have been experienced while in flight, in the moments of escape, and building of their self-sustaining community. Freedom was also quite literally realized through negotiations. Control over clergy, commerce, spatial location and land, and control of their local governing body all resulted from their initial maroonage. Contemporary movements reflect a maroonage from simply accepting the status quo and moving towards a global effort to break from asymmetrical social relations with the remaining empires of the world. Nepantla is a sort of meeting ground for current social movements where the lessons of palenques and Yanga can be applied to the present world.

CONTEMPORARY AFRO-MEXICAN REPRESENTATION

Racial discrimination was largely denied in many Latin American countries on accounts that mestizaje prevailed as a socio-biological characteristic of racial democracy. African diasporic communities were an "invisible group" within international law, with no specific norms or mechanisms responding to their particular rights claims until the twenty first century writes Pastor Murillo and Esther Ojulari (2017). This history of erasure is changing. The 2020 census marks the first time the country is counting its Afro-Mexican community (Agren, 2020). According to a 2015 survey by the *Instituto Nacional de Estadisticas y Geografia* (INEGI), Mexico's statistic institute, Afro-Mexicans number 1.3 million with the majority residing in the states of Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Veracruz (INEGI, 2015). This preliminary count can be attributed to activist who have long fought for statistical and cultural representation.

Abel Villanueva Hernandez, an activist for Mexico Negro, or Black Mexico, a civic association that has been at the forefront of Afro-Mexican visibility since 1991, recalls seeing minimal representation of Black Mexicans in textbooks (Custodio, 2019). Unlike the U.S., where the Trans-Atlantic slave trade is introduced to students with all of its flaws, Mexico's historical amnesia of its' legacy of African communities is concerning. This is one of the reasons for the establishment of Mexico Negro. Their mission is the following: 1) To seek constitutional recognition of the Black population of Mexico; 2) to promote the development of Afro-descendant communities in the Costa Chica area of Guerrero and Oaxaca and all states of the country where there is a Black population; 3) to rescue, promote and disseminate our cultural traditions; 4) to fight against all forms of discrimination; and 5) to work with the government to eliminate the social invisibility of Blacks in Mexico. (Mendez Tello, 2020). Through workshops, academic conferences, and community events Mexico Negro has preserved African traditions throughout Mexico.

Others, like photographer Hugo Arellanes has focused his efforts on increasing visibility for Afro-descendants as a way to combat negative stereotypes associated with Blackness. The photographer notes that traits like aggressiveness, lack of intelligence, and poor work ethic are associated with Afro-Mexican men, as well as, exotic and fiery traits to Afro-Mexican women (Custodio, 2019). Arellanes works with the organization Huella Negra, or Black Footprint established in 2013. Together with Mexico Negro, both organizations are credited with the applying the necessary preliminary surveys and data that initiated the formal 2015 INEGI survey. The Census count is only the beginning. It is through his avenue that data can finally be collected on Afro-Mexicans for an accurate reflection of the needs of the community associated with education, housing, economic needs, and more.

In the small town of Coyolillo, Veracruz twenty-two-year-old, Daniela Lopez Carreto established a non-profit group called Casa Coyolillo. In the town of nearly 4,000 Carreto and her

childhood friends teach dance class in preparation for Carnaval and are in the process of forming an anti-racist club with specific focus on hair (Custodio, 2019). Hair texture and non-Indian or mestizo phenotypes are often seen as suspicious by governmental authorities and lead to harassment of Afro-Mexicans. This reality has been captured in the 2018 film, *La Negrada*. The official trailer begins with a Mexican immigration official asking on of the story's protagonist about her nationality, solely based on her skin color (Aguilar, 2018). This is an experience Carreto is familiar with. While attending University outside of her hometown in the larger city of Xalapa, Veracruz Carreto was confronted with racist comments by her peers. These experiences are what led her to establish Casa Coyolillo.

While young activists continue to create empowering spaces in their communities, the *Museo Regional de Palmillas*, or Regional Museum of Palmillas, provides pre-colonial and colonial archeological artifacts linking the regional Indigenous world and the African Diaspora. In the summer of 2019 I arrived to Palmillas, Veracruz almost by accident. In my attempt to arrive in the town of Yanga my taxi driver dropped me off in the neighboring town of Palmillas. Here I was able to take a short walk to the regional museum pictured below.

Figure 12: Road leading to Museo Regional Palmillas, Veracruz. August 2019

Figure 13: Museo Regional Palmillas, Veracruz. August 2019

Upon entering two murals by Jose Maximino Contreras Rivas welcomes guest (Figure 13). Storytelling via murals is an Indigenous practice dating back to the pre-colonial era. Reading the mural from left to right it depicts a light skin Spaniard holding a fire arm pointing it in the direction of captives. Below this image is a map linking Guinea, Sierra Leone, Caraball, Congo, and Angola to New Spain along with a ship outlining the transportation of African peoples as cargo. The mural transitions to show the brutality of the Spaniards as Africans work the sugar agricultural fields. The tan complexion and wavy hair of this "Spaniard" may indicate a mestizo overseer. His attire indicates a person of middle to high rank as he is fully dressed in layers of clothing and armed with whip and sword while enslaved workers are shirtless only wearing minimal clothing. The mural ends with a fiery and smokie atmospheric scene. Pictured is presumably Yanga, raising his arms and unshackled. The chains of slavery are broken as he looks up to a sun with the Indigenous symbol for movement, Olin. Perhaps this last detail was added with a conscious effort to show that maroon activity was based on movement.

The last detail of the mural is a quote written in the nepantla space between the scene of brutality and freedom. It reads, "*Que la esclavitud se proscriba para siempre y lo mismo la distincion de castas. Quedando todos iguales y solo distinguira a un Americano de otro el vicio y la virtud.*" The translation is, "That slavery be banned forever and the same for the caste distinction. All being equal and only distinguish Americas by vice and virtue from another." The author of this quote is credited to Jose Maria Morelos, a leader of Mexico's independence from Spain. Interestingly, Morelos is said to have been a dark-skinned man and according to archival evidence his mother was a free woman that is either a Negra or Mulata (Guzman, 1967). The museum and civic organizations mentioned above can be credited for educating the public where there has been an absence of curriculum engaging the African diaspora in Mexico. Educating the public that Afro-Mexicans exist is only a beginning step. There are still many structural issues that prevent access to resources in Afro-Mexican communities. The following sub-section gives light to this issue.

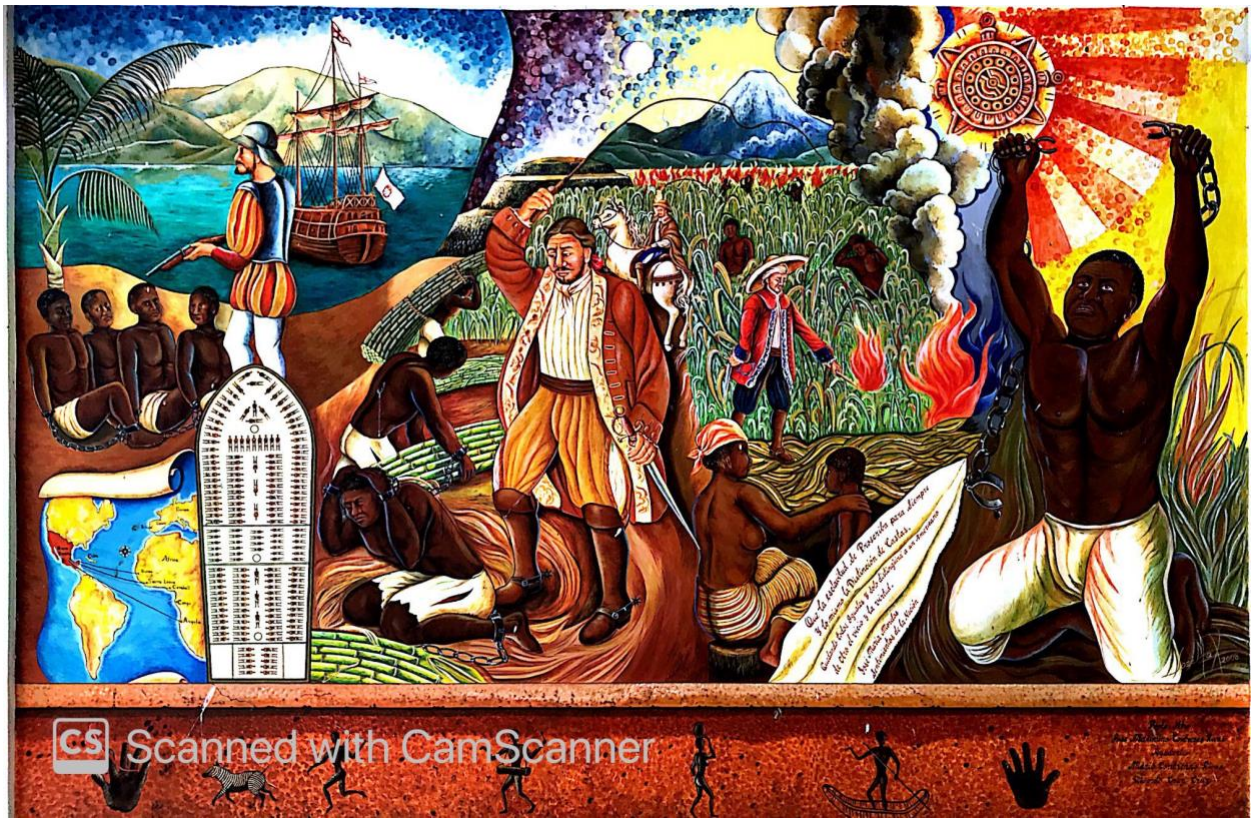


Figure 14: Afro-Mexican mural. Jose Maximino Contreras Rivas. Museo de Palmillas, 2008

Contemporary Needs of Afro-Mexican Communities

In 2013 a national survey on discrimination conducted by the National Council of Population (*Consejo Nacional de Población*, 2016) declared Afro-Mexicans as a vulnerable population facing exclusion, discrimination, and lacked equal access to resources and opportunities. While Indigenous communities experience some of the same social and living conditions, data is readily collected in their communities to assess the needs of said community. This has not been the case for Afro-Mexicans. Kimberly Medina writes, "It is known that Afro-Mexicans often live without stable plumbing and flooring in overcrowded conditions, for example, but there were no data points that captured the magnitude of the problem" (Medina, 2017, p.19). Efforts by activist have put pressure on the Mexican government for research and data interventions to produce representation of Afro-Mexicans.

The National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) followed up with a survey of their own and found the following. 6.6% of Afro-descendant children do not have their births registered and 18% of Afro-descendant children are not affiliated with any health system or service. The average highest schooling among adults is 8.7 years and 9.2 years, for women and men. In addition, 40% of Afro-descendants in the workforce do not have legal labor benefits, 55.8% of men and 48.9% of women do not have paid leave or disabilities and 48.3% of men and 43.2% of women are not provided medical insurance by their employers. In terms of household information that measures 'poverty,' 41.7% cook with wood or coal, almost 40% still have roofs constructed with waste material or sheets and 15% lack running water. Put simply, these numbers are only beginning to document the socio-structural needs of Afro-Mexicans.

Much of the haziness around true representative numbers can be associated with the surveys themselves. The terms Afro-Mexican and Afro-descendant are more common among researchers and academics. The lack of historical context within the Mexican educational system and popular culture have rendered these academic terms irrelevant in the everyday language of Mexican citizens. If one is

unfamiliar with such terms it is difficult then to be counted in the numerous surveys attempting to collect data. However, among those who do identify as Afro-Mexican about 65% also identify as Indigenous (INEGI, 2015). Additionally, the INEGI also reports that 9.3% of Afro-Mexicans speak an Indigenous language. This speaks to the regions in which the majority of people of African descent continue to live, primarily in the highly Indigenous concentrated states of Oaxaca, Guerrero, and the interior of Veracruz. As the general Mexican population becomes familiar with the history of the African diaspora in Mexico, perhaps we will begin to see a better representation in the data.

Archival data, however, can often lead to happy accidents. As I was searching for 18th century data on Mandinga I stumbled upon a correspondence by a woman named Amalia Elena Garcia Brañas. In 2003 Brañas wrote to then President Vicente Fox soliciting support for the introduction of electricity to the expanding housing projects in Mandiga. I have translated her letter bellow as it indicates the relationship between Mandinga residents and the Mexican government today: "Currently there are no public or residential lighting services or facilities in this area and there are already many neighbors who need it. To have the service, one must buy cable, socket, muffle and tube, to install them on the nearest pole or buy poles so that the installation reaches our home." She then calculated the expenses at approximately $2,135 pesos. Unable to come up with the full amount Mrs. Brañas asked a neighbor if she would be able to use their light pole to install an electric box in order to reduce the total cost.

The letter continues, "On September 19, I went to the corresponding CFE [Electric] offices to request my contract. The next day two CFE employees arrived, observed the installation, asked about the location of my house and since it is approximately 200 meters from the pole they communicated by radio with the chief of measurement. They informed him of the distance from the base and he order that the electric service not be given. The only thing they left me was a notice indicating that in order for me to receive [electric] service, *I* must correct the details indicated. My

response was that in order for me to correct the 'details' I will have to purchase the poles and more cables. I do not have money to pay these expenses. I do not consider it to be fair to have to pay the contract, the charge of service, and not receive appropriate installations by the CFE." As I read the letter I thought about the resourcefulness of rural Mexican communities and in this instance the attempt by Mrs. Brañas to install electricity in her home, a basic necessity. Despite the ingenuity to install her own electricity services were rejected on technicalities. How many other Afro-Mexican municipalities experience similar situations with access to clean running water, roads, medical facilities, women's health resources, and safe housing. Finding this letter was accidental but provided some insight into the continued relationship between Afro-Mexican municipalities and their governments.

There is also a lacking documentation of the social needs of Afro-Mexicans within the United States. Nevertheless, there are organizations linking Afro-descendant communities in Mexico with the United States. The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Task Force Incorporated is one organization that links the shared experiences of the African diaspora between Michigan and Guerrero, Mexico. This organization primarily focuses on telling the story of African-American maroons escaping the South to freedom in Mexico through their exhibit titled, "Pathways to Freedom in the Americas." It also details the migration of Mexicans to Michigan and the culture it has manifested in Southwest Detroit. The exhibition was inspired by the meeting of two women who became fast friends, Patricia Ann Talley from Michigan and Candelaria Donaji Mendez Tello of Guerrero, Michigan. Both women are of African descent and through their discussions learned about the parallel histories of their ancestors who were brought to the Americas against their will (mlktaskforcemi, 2020). Efforts such as the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Task Force demonstrate the impassioned labor to connect hemispheric histories. This may be a first step in proposing demographic, cultural, and social projects to help improve the representation of Afro-Mexicans in the United States. Latinx have, for too long, held onto anti-Black ideologies. The section bellow addresses this cultural issue.

ON ANTI-BLACKNESS IN THE LATINX COMMUNITY

Anti-Blackness in the Latinx community is all too common, historically, contemporarily, and if unchecked will continue to be a norm within Latinx culture. Personally, growing up in a Latinx community and a Mexican immigrant family there were/are instances where whiteness is praised and admired. It wasn't uncommon to hear phrases like, "Mira salio bien bonita con ojos azules." Translated this means "Look she came out pretty with blue eyes." Other times I would hear community members instructing their kids to not stay out in the sun so much in order to not become darker than they already were. Aura Bogado (2014) recollects, "When we begin dating, some of us are told that we have a duty as Latinos to 'mejorar la raza' which means, 'to improve the race.' This was sometimes directly told to us but also inscribed in comments about other couples." These examples are a haunting reminder of Maria Elena Martinez's (2008) scholarship on Spanish racial genealogical projects. Specifically, she addresses the ideology of "limpeza de sangre" or the cleansing of the blood through which Indigenous and Black families could generationally improve their social status if they married and procreated with European descendants. Anti-blackness in colonial Latin America continues to be rooted in U.S. Latinx culture.

Omar Hernandez (2019) asks, "¿Porque muchas de las personas Mexicanas o Latinx marrones que conozco albergan tales pensamientos antinegros?" He is asking, "Why do so many brown Mexican and Latinxs that I know harbor such anti-Black thoughts?" This is a question many younger Latinxs are asking of the older generation and among each other. One possible answer, to be clear there are many answers to this question, can be engaged in the history of the inception of modern Latin America beginning with the colonial encounters between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Medalaine C. Cahuas (2019) posits that there is a persistent refusal to interconnect Blackness with Latinidad which shapes Latinx societies in both Latin America and the diaspora in the United States. She points to the absence of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, as a key economic and social institution, in the dialogue

among Chicano studies. More specifically, she challenges Anzaldua (1984) seminal work *Borderlands/La Frontera*, an all too habitually referenced piece of literature in Chicano Studies, as not adequately accounting for the experiences of Black Latinx, Black Mestizas, or Afro-Latinxs. This means that invisibility of our Black relatives persists even in intellectual Chicanx circles. It is no wonder our abuelitas, tios, tias, primos, primas, brothers, and sisters struggle to see a linked history between the African diasporic communities and themselves.

For non-Black Latinxs, Bogado (2014) states, the anxiety over having difficult conversations is rooted in the contradiction that we can simultaneously be oppressed and be the oppressors. Some of the anti-Black bias among non-Black Latinxs is driven by the misconception that Black people do not support the immigrant rights movement. This quid pro quo deficit thinking contributes to anti-Blackness. It assumes that Black Latinx do not exist or participate in immigrant rights movements. Hernandez (2019) makes an important point when he states, "No hay Latinidad sin negrura en primer lugar," or "There is no Latinidad without Blackness in the first place." This statement is unquestionable considering the multiple social contributions of the African diaspora in the making of Latin America and Latinidad.

Some of these feelings may be in part informed by an extension of white privilege that Latinx and Mexicans have been afforded and even fought for in the early to mid 20th century. For example, in 1929 the Mexican American organization known as the League of the United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) was formed in my hometown of Corpus Christi, Texas (Dowling, 2014). According to Sociologist Julie Dowling (2014) their main efforts were to get "Mexican" removed from the 1930 census and replaced as White. In an interview with NPR Dowling states, "It worked against them in some ways, because they claimed segregation and discrimination, the parties being accused of discrimination could say, 'Well, non, you're white.' So, this history of claiming whiteness has been a strategy that Mexican Americans and other Latino groups have used to try to lobby for acceptance –

claiming Americanness, claiming whiteness." (Demby, 2016). In an attempt to reduce their own experiences of racial violence by claiming whiteness they simultaneously distanced themselves from Indianness, from their mixed ancestry, and from Blackness. Rarely are these histories interrogated outside of university settings or ethnic studies course work.

Latinxs and Chicanxs must do the difficult work to unlearn their racial biases, their historical privileges, and proximity to whiteness in order to confront anti-Blackness within the community. Diana Lugo-Martinez (2017) makes the point that calling out anti-Blackness in the Latinx community means acknowledging white privilege, calling out the internalized racism, prejudice, bigotry, hate and violence that we perpetuate. She continues to state, that the Latinx community has consciously and subconsciously played into the colonizer's plan to stand as far apart from Blackness and Brownness as possible (Lugo-Martinez, 2017). Honoring the history and legacy of Yanga and Mandiga is a step in asserting a linked history of Black and Native histories, a shared social struggle, and co-ethnic rebellions against white supremacy. Knowing these histories enables Chicanxs to articulate the complexities of being both oppressed and the oppressor. It gives tangible evidence that our communities have had successful forms of resistance in their physical and epistemological constructions of palenques.

The existence of Afro-Latinos and the discrimination they face in the United States can be mystifying for many people in part because U.S. Blackness is primarily conceived of as embodied solely by English-speaking African Americans, writes Tanya Kateri Hernandez (2020). Her scholarship indicates that Latinxs who identify themselves as "Black" have lower incomes, higher unemployment rates, higher rates of poverty, less education, fewer opportunities and are more likely to reside in segregated neighborhoods than those who identify themselves as "White" or "other" (Kateri, 2020). Latinidad is thus not a static or monolithic experience structurally or at the individual level. No one is immune to these realities and as told by Sociologist and race scholar Eduardo Bonilla-Silva.

In an essay written in the Afro-Latin@ Reader, Eduardo recollects his own experiences with his family and how those social interactions were shaped by race. Eduardo, a Black Puerto Rican, recollects the many instances his lighter skin family would talk bad about the "Black" side of the family. He makes the point that his light skin family members were also of African descent but markers of whiteness, such as lighter eye color and skin tone, created a false sense of superiority. He writes, "As a child struggling for affection and identity, I remember how much I loved visiting my Black side of our family. They always welcomed me with open arms whereas my White family members treated me in a more formal, distant manner. As I matured and recognized the racial roots of some of these family dynamics, I raised hell with my immediate family." (Bonilla-Silva, 2010, pp. 445). The internalization of racial ideologies creeps into even the most educated families and should not be simply and arbitrarily thrown at "ignorant" people.

Bonilla-Silva concludes his essay speaking directly to Afro-Latinxs who have migrated to the new racial landscape of the United States. He warns that there will be moments of shock and realization that in the U.S. you may be considered Black first and Latinx second. "Be prepared," he states, "Afro-Latinxs must resist the temptation to participate in the game of racial innocence that their families play. That is, we must learn our histories and not repeat the nonsense we hear in our communities, such as the idea that racism is just a U.S. problem and that we do not have racial problems back home" (Bonilla-Silva, 2010, pp.447). Our families are often the first social institutions where anti-Black values are learned and passed down. It is also a place where many of us can begin to undo centuries of learned behavior that devalues Black lives. Educating our kin on the racism that exists within our own families may not have an immediate result, but it begins to dig out some of the roots of misinformation about our Black relatives in the Americas and beyond.

In Mexico, archetypes, whether they are photographic theatrical, or multimedia, emphasize selected features of Afro-descendants (González, Jackson, Pellicer, & Vinson III, 2010). The infamous

Latin American, and more specifically Mexican, cartoon Memín Pinguín (Figure 15) merge the creator's perspective of the subject in ways that are not realistic but do reflect the author's perspective on the subject (González, Jackson, Pellicer, & Vinson III, 2010). Paloma Fernandez Sánchez (2015) reflects on the racial ideology mestizaje and its whitening discourse in the Memín Pinguín comic series. She notes that Black characters-exclusively represented by Memín and his mother Eufrosina-are portrayed as physically and intellectually inferior with no agency. Their actions are measured and directed against their racially white compatriots and authority figures. Those authority figures judge the two Black character's actions as mostly illogical or incorrect (Sánchez, 2015). First published in the 1940's these characters were a source of entertainment for an entire generation, perhaps two, in 20th century Mexico. It is Mexico's version of Black face in comic form. The damaging and inaccurate images of Memí Pinguí are yet another example of anti-Blackness in the Latinx culture.

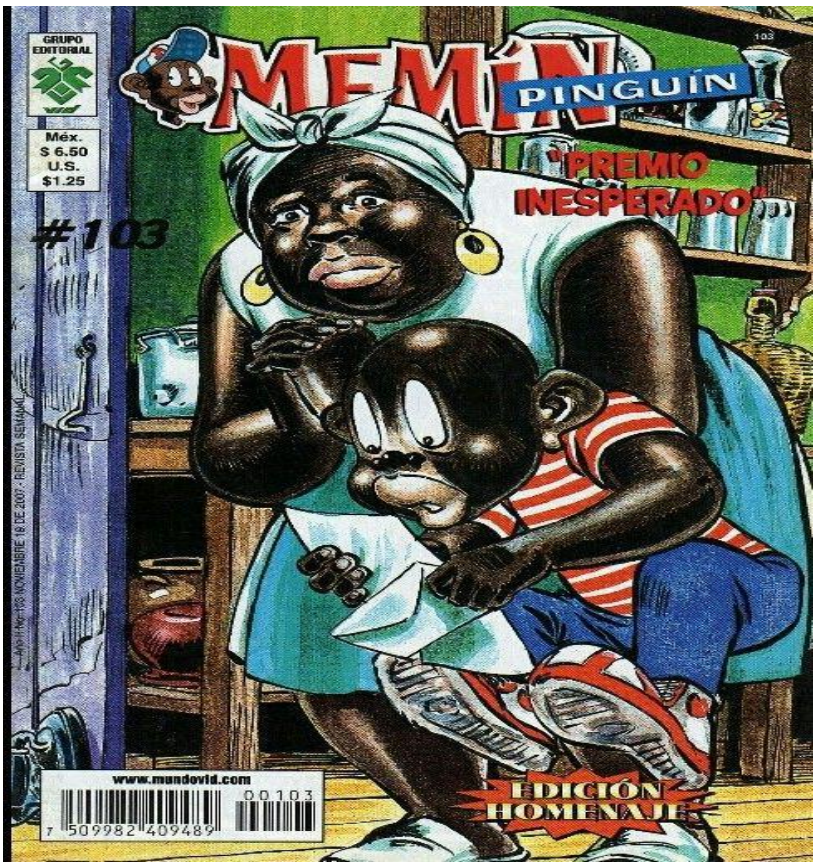


Figure 15: Historieta No 103. Memín Pinguín. Google.

There is, however, a historical shift occurring in the second decade of the 21st century and perhaps a turning point of consciousness against anti-Blackness in the Latinx community. The murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police, captured through a cell phone video recording, generated an uprising of rebellions throughout the United States (Boone, 2020). These rebellions, oftentimes misjudged as riots, demanded an end to state sanctioned violence against the Black community. Protest reached as far down as the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, a predominantly Mexican and Latinx community living in a mixed developing-urban and agricultural region on the U.S.-Mexico border. With an estimated 90% of its residents identifying as Latinx the Black Lives Matter protest looked more racially homogenous than some of the larger metropolitan cities across the country. A young energized generation stood in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement on June 6th, 2020 in Edinburg, Texas (Lopez, 2020). Attendees and organizers alike gave context that despite the demographics in the Rio Grande Valley we must all value Black lives on the border.

Figure 16: Black Lives Matter protest in Edinburg, TX. June 2020

This region is at the cross roads of hemispheric efforts to upend anti-Blackness in the Latinx community. Misael Ramirez, founder of the activist group Craft Cultura, hosted a community dialogue on Black Lives on the border. He states, "We have a history of violence here on the border. We know what is to suffer at the hands of white supremacy. Police brutality. These aren't riots going on, these are conscious rebellions" (Wilson, 2020). The conversation amongst the 60 attendees centered on the idea that we all have a role to play in education our families and communities that have internalized the idea that Blackness does not exist in Mexican and Latinx culture. When it is acknowledged it is often viewed through a lens filtered with negative stereotypes. Both the protest and community dialogue on the border serve as examples of a new generation of thinkers, community members, activist, professionals, elders and students working to create a new more just way of being on the border. Hemespherically, the borderlands are a sight where colonial violence has produced the dispossession of land (Orozco, 2010), the separation of children from their families (Teicher, 2018), and lynchings of Mexicans and Chicanxs (Carrigan & Webb, 2003; Wills, 2019). Yet, new leaders along the border are linking their historic struggles with the Black liberation movements across the U.S. Cultural exchange between Chicanxs and Black diasporic peoples continues to occur through a shared struggle and experience with and against white supremacy. It is effort such as the ones being formulated in the Rio Grande Valley that give hope to an anti-racist culture within the Latinx community.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FIELD

From the inception and early stages of this dissertation I was captivated by acts of rebellion. Before 2012 I was not aware of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade in Mexico, let alone the term palenque. I had an understanding that Indigenous communities who survived genocidal waves of Spanish invasion preserved their language, customs, and culture as best they could under colonial conditions. I did not have the historical understanding that African and Indigenous peoples would come to interact in the

complex ways that makes Mexican society what it is today. This dissertation was thus born from a sociological curiosity to comprehend the history of rebellious modalities expressed in my ancestral home. This study suggests a great potential for studying and complementing the history of African diasporic communities and their relationship to and with Indigenous peoples and Indigenous land. A great deal has already been written through the lens of historians (Colin Palmer 1976; Castilla Palma & Kellogg, 2005; Vinson III & Restall, 2009; Bennett, 2010) and anthropologists (Beltran, 1946; Martinez Montiel, 2004; Diaz Casas & Velazquez, 2017) yet, somehow, Sociologist and Chicano Studies scholars have yet to develop a substantive literary base on Afro-Mexican social relations.

To better see the trajectory of Afro-Mexican literature in Sociology and Chicano Studies it is important to trace its' thematic trends in the broader world of academia. The subfield of Afro-Mexican Studies within Latin American history is almost a century in the making. Gonzalo Aguirre Beltran's book titled, "*La población negra de Mexico, 1519-1819: Estudio etnohistórico*" ushered in the contemporary literature on Afro-Mexico in 1946. This inaugural anthropological study set a thematic genesis and question for future academics to grapple with. How does Blackness fit into the discourse of mestizaje? In making use of the literature on transculturation, and in conversation Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, this scholarship showed the spaces in which African cultures survived and transformed their respective social spaces (Vinson III, 2005). This was indeed the beginning of the internationalization of the subfield and a theme that continues to be engaged by scholars today.

Meanwhile, in the late 1950s and early 1960s a new generation of scholars began to think about the impact of class differences in the colonial period and whether this aspect of colonial life outweighed the power of race/caste structures (Vinson III, 2005). They too laid out multiple regional case studies and macro/micro-histories. The second theme that emerged in the latter half of the 20th century attempted to understand the process of slavery, freedom, and Blackness within a

global context. The nation-state and Blackness within it' hierarchies also became a third theme of interests in the second part of the last century. This dissertation contributes to the two earliest themes within what we can now call Afro-Mexican Studies. The vision and accomplishment of this study was to decenter the European gaze. Instead, through a Chicanx Studies worldview coupled with critical sociology, an interdisciplinary case study of Afro-Indigenous palenque arose.

In offering recommendations to the field of Chicanx Studies I look to the largest organization that in some ways encapsulates trends and directions in scholarship. I have been a participant in The National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS) since 2012. Since then, case studies on Chicanx and Black cultural coalescence have been limited to a handful of roundtable presentations focused on policing Black and Brown communities, shared experiences in the school to prison pipeline, and the social relations that emerge through musical genres such as Hip Hop and *Son Jarocho*. However, there was a turning point at the 2019 NACCS in Albuquerque, New Mexico. For the first time, there was a complete panel focused exclusively on Afro-Mexico. The panel entitled, "Afro-Mexican people, culture and history in the making of the U.S. Southwest and Chicanx/Latinx Studies" caught my attention as well as that of at least fifty others in attendance. For the first time, words such as African diaspora and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade were front and center in dialogue with Chicanx identity. The round table was almost exclusively represented by University of New Mexico professors. Drs. Dora E. Careaga Coleman, Irene Vasquez, and Finnie Coleman drew from U.S. southwest histories. Dr. Maria Elisa Velazquez Gutierrez from the *Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia* provided a global lens extending our vision towards Mexico.

Together, this scholarly cast provided a call to extend the question of Blackness within Chicanx identity and culture. From this moment on there is a need to continue the dialogue initiated by our New Mexican colleagues. In my attempt to seek out data on U.S. born Afro-Mexicans there is limited data reporting only homogenous categories. A Pew Research Center survey of Latino adults, for

example, shows that a quarter of all U.S. Latinos self-identify as Afro-Latino, Afro-Caribbean or of African descent with roots in Latin America (Lopez and Gonzalez-Barrera, 2016). These terms capture broader regions, such as the Caribbean and Latin America, and subgroups within the term Latino. It is difficult then to assess the demographic reality for U.S. born Afro-Mexicans or Afro-Mexican migrants. When asked directly about their race, only 18% of Afro-Latinos identified their race or one of their races as Black. In fact, higher shares of Afro-Latinos identified as white alone or white in combination with another race (39%) or volunteered that their race or one of their races was Hispanic (24%). Only 9% identified as mixed race (Lopez and Gonzalez-Barrera, 2016). These are categorical challenges that will need to be addressed by demographers and social scientists who generate knowledge through quantitative methods.

While we do not have clear statistical information on the Afro-Mexican community in the U.S. the fact remains that within the Chicanx community we have Black relatives. Their narrative and histories matter. As discussed in the previous section anti-Blackness within the Latinx and Chicanx community is both internalized and deeply rooted in colonial logic. Chicanx Studies thus has a political obligation to upend internalized racism in our own academic community. Structurally, committing to a curriculum that reflects and interrogates Afro-Mexican history is a starting point. Contributions by African descendants to the creation of Mexico can be debriefed in multiple arenas of study. Afro-Mexicans played significant social roles at every stage in the development of the nation-state, including the creation of the Borderlands. Thematically, there is potential for a rich discourse in Afro-Mexican food-ways, Afro-Indigenous epistemologies of liberation and self-autonomy, Afro-Mexican poetry and literary prose.

A commitment in the academy by Chicanx Studies departments to host plenaries, conferences, and workshops on these themes is timely and necessary. The need to do so must come with brave intentionality. Forging strong relations with African American Studies departments at the University

level opens the possibility to share our interrelated histories bound by a hemispherical experience of displacement and enslavement. Shared curriculums between both departmental units across universities offers students the opportunity of think across imposed racial distinctions to better contend with the complex identities, and identity politics, of the 21st century. The 2019 NACCS panel on Afro-Mexico was a needed starting point and example of diverse forms of knowledge production. The discipline of sociology should take note on these efforts in their own lack of representation of Afro-Mexican literature.

To begin, a National Science Foundation's (NSF) survey of earned doctorates degrees demonstrates the overrepresentation of whites in the field (Table 2). The survey shows data from 1974-2016. In 42 years, the lowest percentage of Latinx earning a Ph.D. in sociology was in 1976 (0.9%) and reaching its apex in 2012 (11.1%). While this may appear on the surface as progress their white counterparts hover just over 68% over the last two, almost three, decade. The modes of knowledge production, particularly in classical theory courses, are situated primarily in European thought. White theories and white bodies dominate the classroom. It is almost impossible to learn about Latinx and Black theorist, or palenques, under the current structure of sociology departments.

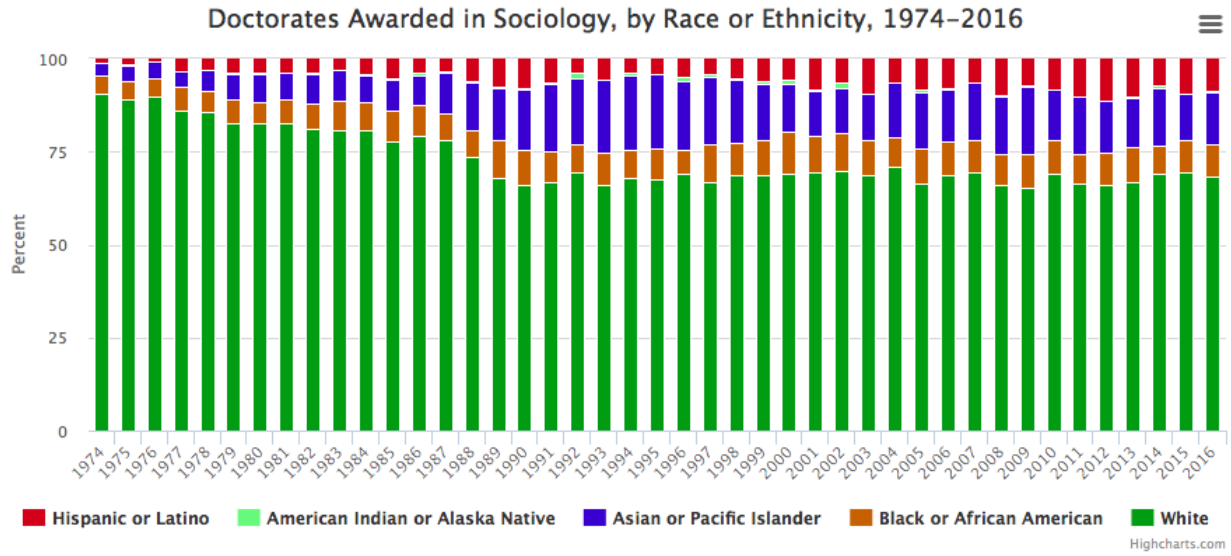


Table 2: NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED)/Doctorate Records File.

The current racial structures of sociology departments limit the ability of the discipline to address issues of race, coloniality, modernity, and the intersections between them (Bhambram, Shilliam, and Orrells, 2014). Grosfoguel (2013), for example defends the idea of that the Western universities protect, at all costs, its' epistemic genesis based in the collective work of German, French, and British sociological "fathers." This paternalistic relationship is disciplined into sociological pupils. Palenques, as a theoretical base for understanding the social relationships between displaced communities and empires, wedges itself in the nepantla spaces of the discipline. Palenques will find a home in sociological literature. Much like its' physical embodiment, palenques epistemologies are built by scholars engaging in critical and decolonial sociologies (Quijano and Ennis, 2000; Bhambra, 2007; Grosfoguel, 2013; Bloom, 2015; Demir, 2017). In their work lies a network of diverse epistemologies that urges sociologists to rethink modernity and the sociological imagination. Borderland thinking (Anzaldua, 1984) while outside of sociologies domain serves a general purpose in theory building should the discipline be serious in its' efforts to distinguish itself as a modern science of human behavior and social relationships.

The conquest of the Americas, particularly its genocidal episodes, have also remained at the teetering ends of sociological literature. Left in its present state, how can we fully engage the darker side of modernity (Mignolo, 2011). Accounting for colonial encounters, their asymmetrical relationships in the realms of knowledge production and Indigenous knowledge suppression, will only strengthen sociologies accuracy to describe the various modes of human group behavior. Black and Indigenous communities have been present in every major "development" of continental progress. Not only as laborers, who supported the agricultural and industrial sectors of the United States and Mexico, but as abolitionists and free-thinkers. Like Yanga, there remains unknown names and histories of other freedom architects building their own palenques across Latin and Anglo America. Case

studies such as this are a capable beginning to document the narrative that have yet to find their authors.

The possibilities of case studies of the Jewish diaspora, Kurdish and Central American refugees, gender identity and sexualities, and more can utilize and improve palenque theories. Each time complicating what it means to be marooned and "othered" by a dominant group. Structures of political power can be interrogated by a palenque framework. Forced, coerced, and voluntary migration are complicated through a palenque worldview. The discipline of sociology can be a place of imagination and creative spirit. Yanga and Mandinga residents were capable of imagining their own social worlds and social institutions. I believe sociologists today can carry on in this tradition in their projects, analysis, and dissemination of knowledge.

CONCLUSION

Rebellion, revolts, uprisings. In the wake of the spring of 2020 it seems as though the themes of this dissertation have not left the present moment. The social relations that emerged from *San Lorenzo de los Negros* and *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Ama*pa provide important implications at the regional, national, and transnational levels of analysis. This study situates Veracruz as a nexus for transnational histories and hemispheric relations between the Americas, Africa, and Europe. Similar to the act of maroonage, palenques were liminal and transitional social spaces between enslavement and freedom (Roberts, 2015). Palenques disrupted colonial spatial practices enforced through violent military and ecclesiastical methods by Spanish conquistadors and priests (Saldaña-Portillo, 2016). Racial geographies are as much about spatial production in the material sense (land ownership) as they are in the perception of the human body. This dissertation gave historical explications to the subversion of this colonial logic and centered Afro-Indigenous peoples as creators of non-state spaces (Roberts, 2015). They created both physical barriers that afforded their community autonomy and merged Indigenous epistemologies into their ontologies.

Patrick Carroll (1977), in his long-held research on Afro-Mexican Veracruz, reminds us that maroonage in the Gulf Coast of New Spain was a hemispheric trend. Thus, Yanga and Mandinga join a mosaic of multiple maroonage activities throughout Latin America and British, Portuguese, French, and Dutch colonized territories in the Americas. We learn, in chapter two, that Yanga's eleven demands asserts the humanity of his rebel group. With bravado, Yanga accused the Spanish of believing that they were the "owners of our freedom" (Decenio Internacional de las Personas Afrodescendientes, Yanga, Veracruz. Plaque. 2017). Not only were his words an affirmation of their humanity but the palenque as a whole was a response to the Western idea that declared Amerindian and African communities void of civilization. The eleven demands serve as an epistemological cartography of the meaning Africans constructed in their successful efforts to free themselves from the institution of slavery.

Yanga embodies Neil Roberts' (2015) idea of maroons creating zones of refuge. The non-state spaces left open the possibility to create new social worlds that did not necessarily align with the colonial structures, laws, western epistemologies, organizations or social relations. Palenque residents were free to enact their own forms of agriculture, knowledge systems, and communal rules. In doing so, they avoided military suppression and any approaching dynamics of state power that followed total conquest. The processes of survival always situated within an Indigenous setting. The land protected and provided for the group. The multisite fortress became a way of being that was foreign to the Spanish. Yanga demonstrated that even in the face of a structurally and institutionally racist society, demands for freedom and self-determination was possible.

Fernando Manuel, rebel leader of the Mandinga palenque, found similar results in his fight to establish *Nuestra Señora de los Morenos de Amapa* almost a century after Yanga. By the middle of the 18th century there were a number of ordinances in place criminalize social interactions between African descendant peoples and Indigenous people. As we learned these ordinances proved difficult to enforce

as many individuals were both Black and Indigenous. Racial legal codes sought to divide African descendant peoples through economic segregation, cultural restrictions, and put limits on spatial proximity between the two groups. Many had familial ties to one another and thus their very interactions with members of their own families were considered illegal.

Despite the multiple means to separate communities from one another the census of the Mandinga palenque revealed quite a turn of events. Palenques served as sites to reunite family member with one another. Not only are palenques fortresses of protection from physical harm they are also a source of emotional harm reduction. It was a space to potentially reunite with a spouse, a mother, a father, or other kin. The Mandinga case study provides evidence that its residents did not refer to themselves as Mandinga but instead named their palenque Del Rosario. This is a trace of what it means to claim one's own identity as a collective. While I used the term Mandinga throughout this dissertation any future articles or book chapters will refer to the palenque by the name of its originators, Del Rosario. Importantly, it is unknown if the palenque residents were collectively catholic. They did make this claim as they exercised their legal rights according to Law 24 in the Collection of Indians. Indeed, their knowledge of the Spanish judicial system gave legal authority to justify their claim to be granted land. In turn, the establishment of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Morenos de Amapa* came into existence through acts of flight, rebellion, community reunification, and legal means.

Both Yanga and Mandiga clarify that Afro-Mexicans and Afro-Mexican communities are not a monolith. Comparative historical research retains a structural focus and consider the interrelations between individual historical actors, social groups, and the structures that shape their lived experiences (Lange, 2013). There is not a singular colonial experience. In fact, the historical trajectory of race itself demonstrates how European modernity renames geographies and its inhabitants. The very terms used in this dissertation, Black and Indigenous, are born out of modern racial projects. These assigned racial/ethnic identities are important in so far as how we disentangle their origin and purpose. Colonial

stability, in colonial New Spain, depended on the malleability of these terms as they became more and more complex in the 18th century. It is up to sociologists to grapple with the complexity of the colonial origins of race. In doing so, sociologists can join ethnic studies scholars in critical expressions against anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity.

Where Do Palenques Lead?

This dissertation was written with urgency. Anti-Blackness is global. Anti-Indigeneity the same. There is little time to debate whether or not Black Lives Matter. They do. This historical case study of two palenques situated in the mountains of Veracruz, Mexico is proof that even the mightiest of empires have limits. Frank Proctor (2003) writes, "Slaves, masters, and society at large, agreed that there were limits on the authority and power of masters. Once those limits had been transgressed, slaves did express their discontent." Throughout this dissertation I have argued against statements like this. It is difficult to envision enslaved persons postponing rebellious acts, however small, until the threshold of cruelty reached an insurmountable peak. Yanga and Mandinga express far more than discontent. They express what Sylvia Wynter (2003) describes as the possibility of our fully realized autonomy of feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. That is, palenques are a decision to live in liberation beyond colonial boundaries. Palenques are ontological decisions.

Françoise Vergès (2019) delineates from Proctor's claim when she points to maroons who carved out spaces of freedom in a world organized around Black unfreedom. She continues to say, "…a world that proclaimed that there was no alternative to the enslavement of Black women and men and that this was as natural as day and night. Marooning, whether it be for hours, for some days, or for decades, tore apart this naturalization and affirmed that there was an alternative." This is the driving argument throughout this text. Yanga, Mandinga, and all other palenques in the Americas proved that there are alternative ways of being/existing outside of colonial logics and social structures. Their campaigns for freedom are a blueprint for this millennium, within and outside of academia. The

halls of ethnic studies have felt very much like a palenque. There are alternative and multiple ways of knowing in ethnic studies. These epistemologies interact, clash, and build new fertile theoretical soil that are simply absent in traditional Euro-origin disciplines.

Palenque archival sources, maintained in secluded fortresses, will eventually find their way out. This dissertation is an example of escape. Yanga and Mandinga were yet again in flight, their narratives producing new inquiries. While we may never get the opportunity to read or hear first-hand maroon experiences through archival sources, we do get to imagine how they were able to produce disruptions in and to the colonial world. So where do palenques lead us now? Palenques are a rebellious imagination. Palenques are impossible endeavors realized. Palenques lead to necessary refuge. Palenques lead to reunification of kin. Palenques lead us to liberation.

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