Becoming Citizens: Afro-Mexicans, Identity, and Historical Memory in Guadalajara, 17th to 19th Centuries

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To my Teachers

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Introduction

During the past three decades or so both national and international scholars have placed a great deal of attention on the history and lived experiences of peoples of African descent in Mexico. Researchers initially showed themselves intrigued about the absence of black or African-derived identities in modern Mexico, despite the well-documented presence of these population groups since colonial times.[1] Following scholars, organizations, and individuals' efforts to spark an Afro-Mexican identity, this context has gradually changed. Despite these efforts, however, it is still common to hear in interactions with non-specialists statements such as "there are no blacks in Mexico" or even "there were no blacks in Mexico."[2] Under this light it is worth asking: how did we get to this situation? How did people who during the colonial period used social classifications such as *negro*, *mulato*, *morisco*, or *lobo* stopped using such designations? How did African peoples and their descendants, who had their own forms of identification, become negros, mulatos, moriscos and lobos in the first place? Did they experience individual or collective identities structured around these classifications? How and why did people, who used these ascriptions for centuries, abandon them and substitute them for a homogenous label of "citizens" at the end of the colonial period? And what was the relationship between this process and the elision of Afro-Mexicans from the historical imaginary of the nation over time?

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[1] Pioneer studies on the subject are Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*; Martínez Montiel ed., *Presencia Africana*; Vinson III and Vaughn, *Afroméxico*.

[2] For how Mexicans distance themselves from blackness or ignore the historical presence of Afro-descendants in the country see for example Gates Jr. *Black in Latin America*; Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*; Lewis, *Chocolate and Corn Flour*; Vaughn, "Mexico Negro"; Cunin and Hoffman eds. *Blackness and Mestizaje*; Cunin ed. *Mestizaje, diferencia y nación*; Cunin, "Negros y negritos en Yucatán"; Velázquez and Iturralde, *Afrodescendientes en México*; and Espinoza and De la Serna eds. *Raíces y Actualidad*.

Using the case of Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, *Becoming Citizens* offers an extended answer to these questions. This study places Afro-descendants at the center of the processes of construction, transformation, and disappearance of the categories of difference that served to assign them a place in the social hierarchy. It demonstrates that Afro-Mexicans strategically appropriated Spanish terminology about human difference, used it in creative ways to carve a social space for themselves, and ultimately dismissed it before independence in the midst of emerging political opportunities.

Europeans interacted with Africans for centuries prior to coming to the Americas. As a result from the extended contact between peoples of different backgrounds (ethnic, religious or otherwise), peoples of the Iberian Peninsula, and from the Mediterranean basin more broadly, created sophisticated vocabularies about human difference based on perceptions of physical appearance, cultural practices, socio-economic disparities, and status of nobility.[3] All of these ideas and preconceptions about human differences coalesced in Spanish America into the overarching idea of *calidad* (literally quality but probably better understood as rank or status). This notion offered a holistic evaluation of a person's character and value, and theoretically served imperial authorities to assign privileges to people as well as to base exclusionary policies.[4] In practice, however, people on the ground appropriated the language of calidad and used it to negotiate their place in the social hierarchy.

Afro-descendants from Guadalajara, and from all across the Spanish empire, created communities and social networks around people bearing the same social ascriptions. They

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[3] On these Iberian precedents see for example Schwaller, *Géneros de Gente*, chapter 1; Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*, chapter 1; Bethencourt, *Racisms*; and Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans*.
[4] A lengthy discussion of this concept is presented in chapter 2.

made conscious choices of marriage partners, godparents for their children, and marriage sponsors.[5] Afro-descendants also created or joined religious associations variously called confraternities, sodalities, brotherhoods, or cabildos. Within these, they constructed and expressed complex identities that drew from Europeans' vocabularies of difference, but imbued with new meanings.[6] Afro-descendants' actions turned what should have been, from Europeans' point of view, a neatly ordered society into a fluid hierarchy with opportunities of social mobility, albeit limited, for people on the bottom of the pyramid. Afro-descendants all over Spanish America, thus, performed crafts, wore clothing, owned properties, and held offices that legally they should not have.[7]

With these antecedents, under increasing pressure from oppressive legislation directed toward them, targets of long-lasting discrimination and prejudice, by the time the Spanish empire began to crumble at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Afro-descendants contributed to its collapse in various ways. Significantly for this study, Afro-descendants manipulated to their advantage, and ultimately dismissed at the end of the colonial period, the terminology of difference that served to marginalize them and to assign them a subordinated place in the social hierarchy. By doing so, Afro-descendants undermined one of the crucial underpinnings of Spanish rule in the Americas. In forfeiting the social categories that served to subjugate them, however, Afro-Mexicans, inadvertently and unintentionally, contributed to the silencing of their heritage and to their invisibility before the eyes of the modern Mexican nation.

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[5] For example Bennet, *Africans in Colonial Mexico* and *Colonial Blackness*; and Proctor, "African Diasporic Ethnicity."
[6] For Mexico see Von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers*; for a more extensive bibliography see chapter 1 of this work.
[7] See for example Walker, *Exquisite Slaves*; and Earle, "Race, Clothing and Identity."

Once Mexico became independent, the first governments abolished both slavery and the use of calidad classifications in official records. While this was happening, Mexican intellectuals (for lack of a better term) began to create historical narratives that downplayed the importance of slavery for Mexican history. At the same time, they portrayed Afro-Mexicans as examples of assimilation and integration, and as indicators of the alleged success of Mexican liberal, republican values. Afro-Mexicans, thus, although often portrayed as a vanishing population, never fully disappeared from historical narratives. People kept referring to them in various media, even if just to solidify their political agendas.[8]

At the core of this study, thus, lie issues of identity formation, social classification, as well as the question of how Afro-Mexicans became invisible for modern Mexican society. The key concepts of calidad and identity provide the structure for this study. The notion of calidad has already been mentioned previously and will be treated at length in chapter two, but the concept of identity deserves further discussion. I have found Andrew Fisher's and Matthew O'Hara's suggestions on the subject particularly useful. The authors see identity as the set of external categorizations and self-perceptions of a collectivity or individual, as well as the processes by which these views are created and transformed. In this regard, the meaning of the term is threefold, and entails how a group or individual perceives itself, how it is viewed by others, and how these perceptions are created and recreated over time. Identity, in this sense, is constructed, and not inherent or essential. Although, it is not necessarily consciously constructed, and it can comprise unconscious, private, aspects. Identity is also "multi-nodal." It is the product of the interaction of multiple variables (age, gender, religion, etc.), and the nexus that articulates these simultaneously. Ultimately, in

[8] For example, the phenomenon of the "negrito poeta" in the nineteenth century. See Beezley, *Mexican National Identity*.

order to examining identity in its entirety, the authors suggest focusing on people's interactions with institutions "at the moment when social categories are articulated, publicized, internalized, contested, and sometimes altered."[9] *Becoming Citizens* builds upon these insights and pays close attention to the social categories that appear in the historical sources, it constantly asks who did the labeling, under what circumstances, and what might we interpret from these classifications. It is important to note that the concept of calidad does not substitute that of identity, as some recent studies pretend, nor the two of them are interchangeable.[10] People expressed or articulated their identities through the language of calidad, but people's calidad was just a component, a very important one though, of their identities.

Scholars have shown interest in the character of social differentiation practices and vocabularies in Spanish America (and Latin America more broadly) since at least the middle of the twentieth century. A first generation of historians used the concept of race as a biological category and focused on the ways in which it served to assign people a place within the social hierarchy. These authors stressed the importance of physical appearance for social differentiation, but they also considered class and cultural factors as relevant in determining people's role in society. Further, they cemented the idea of a systematic classification of peoples for governing purposes, known as "caste system."[11] Using quantitative methods typical of classic social history, researchers in the 1970s and 1980s debated about whether race (by then mostly understood as a social construct, rather than as a biological reality) or

[9] Fisher and O'Hara, "Introduction," the quote is from 22. For a similar notion of identity see Wade, *Race and Ethnicity*, 81-82.
[10] For example Gharala, *Taxing Blackness*.
[11] Classic works from this period are Morner, *Race Mixture*; Harris, *Patterns of Race*; Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen*; Boxer, *Race relations*; and Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*.

class were the main organizational principles of colonial Latin American societies. In very broad terms, a set of authors has argued that New Spain, in particular, transitioned from a society organized around race during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to a society structured along class lines in the eighteenth century. Another set of scholars have seen an increasingly more rigid racial hierarchy over the course of the colonial period.[12]

Far from being settled, this debate gave way to other discussions and opened up new possibilities of inquiry. In the 1990s scholars shifted their attention from quantitative studies to cultural concerns about the meanings, uses, and overall implications for people's everyday lives of the multiple vocabularies about difference across Latin America. A seminal work in this regard is Douglas Cope's *The Limits of Racial Domination*. In this book the author argued that "plebeians" did not try to change their social classifications (a phenomenon previous scholarship called "racial drift") because they identified with people with similar social labels and built networks around these categorizations. What structured social relations, however, was not race per se, but patron-client relations.[13] Cope's work successfully shifted the discussion from quantitative analyses about the character of social labeling to the significance of labeling for people's social lives and their interactions with institutions. This has led more recent studies to stress the situational and contextual character of social classification and its political uses.[14]

The most recent historiography on the subject has moved along two parallel lines. First, during the last years historians have tried to recover and to understand the historical

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[12] The scholarship on this discussion is enormous, fortunately there are several historiographical surveys synthesizing the different stages of the debate, see for example Seed and Rust, "Estate and Class in Colonial Oaxaca Revisited"; Frederick, "Without impediment: Crossing Racial Boundaries"; Garofalo and O'toole, "Introduction"; and Carroll, "El debate académico."

[13] Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*.

[14] Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors*; O'Toole, *Bound Lives*; Boyer, *Lives of the Bigamists* and "Negotiating Calidad"; Althouse, "Contested Mestizos"; Bonil Gómez, *Gobierno y calidad*; and Vinson, *Before Mestizaje*.

terminology of difference used in Spanish America, rather than imposing anachronistic concepts such as race onto the past.[15] At the same time, a few authors have tried to destabilize the idea of a *sistema de castas*. Scholars have rightly pointed out that different types of sources, such as sacramental and judicial records, indicate that there was no systematic classification of people.[16] Joanne Rappaport, for instance, suggests seeing social categories in Spanish America as speech acts emerging from specific interactions among people, rather than as a coherent system of classification.[17]

Becoming Citizens enters into conversation with this scholarship and engages it critically. It should be needless to say that, although I am critical with the literature I cite throughout this study, this work is heavily in debt to it, and all these intellectual debts are apparent in each of the chapters of this book. This work, then, stresses probably more than any other study the necessity to examine processes of social differentiation in Spanish America in its own terms. Most scholars working on colonial Latin America today would say that the construction of difference in that context was a complex process involving distinct social dynamics. Yet, in trying to convey their message to a specific audience, landmark works used "race" and other notions such as "whiteness" and "blackness" as shorthands to analyze social difference in Spanish American societies. Despite their many strengths, works based on these concepts resulted in imbuing historical analyses of Spanish America with

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[15] McCaa, "Calidad, Clase and Marriage"; Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors*; Restall, *The Black Middle*; Rappaport, *The Disappearing Mestizo*; Gonzalbo, "La trampa de las castas"; Earle, "The Pleasures of Taxonomy"; Vinson, *Before Mestizaje*; and Gharala, *Taxing Blackness*; on how to use the concept of race in a more historical manner see Burns, "Unfixing Race."

[16] For example Restall, *The Black Middle*; Rappaport, *The Disappearing Mestizo*; and Gonzalbo, "La trampa de las castas"; Mexican historiography has contributed to this debate mostly through quantitative studies that analyze how the classification of individuals or families varied over time, see for example Carbajal López, *La población de Bolaños* and *Familias pluriétnicas*; also Becerra Jiménez, "¿Familias pluriétnicas?"; Castillo Palma, "Calidad socio racial"; and González Flores, *Mestizaje de papel*. Scholars have also shown a fascination with casta paintings and whether they reflect actual social dynamics, see for example Katzew, *Casta Painting*; and Carrera, *Imagining Identity*.

[17] Rappaport, *The Disappearing Mestizo*, 4.

North American notions of difference. This, in turn, obscures historical processes and social dynamics specific to Spanish American history rather than explaining them. The strategy of projecting foreign notions into colonial Spanish America has perpetuated questionable academic practices, such as arbitrarily substituting the category of español for that of white, which in turn leads to more confusions. It has also reproduced the problematic argument that during the eighteenth century Spanish notions of difference shifted away from concerns regarding religion, to differentiation based on ideas closely resembling race.[18] It is also important to note that while US scholars were trying to understand issues of social hierarchies and classifications through notions of race, Mexican and Latin American researchers more broadly were not paying much attention to these themes, and those who were, were trained in US universities.

On might deem unnecessary to stress the importance of recuperating historical concepts to study colonial Spanish America, particularly considering the latest developments in the historiography of the subject. However, some studies trying to recover colonial Spanish vocabularies about difference (despite their commendable goal) have introduced more confusion to these concepts than illuminated differentiation processes in the Spanish empire. Consider a very recent example. In a study about tributary practices directed toward Afro-Mexicans in the eighteenth century the author presents cryptic understandings about the concept of calidad. While the book explicitly states that it will use McCaa's classic definition of the concept, the reader is instead offered ambiguous notions of calidad. For example, when analyzing petitions for tribute exemption the author mentions that people made arguments

[18] Recent iterations of this argument are Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors*, chapter 7; Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*; Böttcher et al., *El peso de la sangre*; Hering Torres et al., *Race and Blood*; Schwaller, *Géneros de Gente*, 13; and Schwartz, *Blood and Boundaries*, 9-10.

based “on lineage and reputation, rather than *calidad* and caste alone,” or about a similar case: “the attention to ‘appearance’ rather than *calidad* predates this case,” likewise “for these families, some combination of blood, reputation, honor, *calidad*, and upbringing defined tributary status.” All of these ambiguous statements make one wonder what is really meant by calidad. Ultimately, the author equates calidad with reputation understood in a narrow sense.[19] It is of course not the intention of this study to scold an otherwise notable piece of scholarship, but these assertions are problematic and ought to be discussed.

Across this work, thus, runs a critique of the categories we have used to study the past. To move forward in scholarly debates about difference in colonial Spanish America, and overcome misunderstandings created by an anachronistic use of the concept of race and other similar notions, this book proposes that we borrow from the Spanish historical vocabulary of difference, as we have on previous occasions with concepts that do not have an exact English translation, or whose translation evokes social dynamics or historical processes that do not quite correspond with those of Spanish America (for example cacique, caudillo, or mestizaje). Throughout this study, therefore, I have decided to keep the social categories of difference as they appear in historical records. I try to understand their meaning, how they were used, and how they changed over time, in particular those pertaining to peoples of African descent. The point, however, is not just to substitute English words with Spanish ones. Indeed, it is one contention of this study that the vocabularies about difference used in Spanish America and notions of race projected onto the past are different concepts that should remain analytically distinct. These various understandings of human difference, in turn, gave rise to diverse discriminatory practices. In advancing this argument and in

[19] Gharala, *Taxing Blackness*, 85, 90, 96, and 177, respectively.

stressing the differences between the United States and Latin America, this work also contributes to a long-lasting debate about the distinct character and historical development of Latin American and US societies.[20] Using historical categories, then, this work sheds new light on the processes of construction of difference and complicates the narrative that the scholarship has presented about late-colonial Spanish America.[21] Ultimately, In critiquing the imposition of the abovementioned categories onto colonial Spanish America I am not arguing against the usefulness of *all* modern concepts to illuminate certain historical aspects. It would be for other studies to decide the applicability of specific modern constructs for historical inquiry.

A focus on calidad, thus, illuminates Afro-Mexicans' identities as well as processes of identity formation in the Spanish empire in their full complexity. Calidad highlights aspects of "blackness," "mulato-ness," etc. that a focus on race or class tend to leave aside. The study of Afro-Mexicans dates back to the first half of the twentieth century with the pioneer research of Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán. Apart from Colin Palmer's subsequent work, the systematic study of these populations did not start to expand until the 1990s.[22] The first works penned by Mexican scholars on the subject tried to insert the histories of Afro-Mexicans within the grand narrative of mestizaje and considered Afro-descendants as the "third root" of the Mexican nation, along indigenous and Spaniards. Also in this period, Afro-

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[20] The debate is very well known and too extended to reiterate it here, key classic works are Tannenbaum, *Slave and Citizen*; Klein, *Slavery in the Americas*; Elkins, *Slavery: A Problem*; Harris, *Patterns of Race*; Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba*; and Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*; more recent contributions are Landers, *Slave Society*; Mckinley, *Fractional Freedoms*; and De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Free, Becoming Black*; two useful historiographic reviews of the debate are De la Fuente and Gross, "Comparative Studies of Law"; and Helg, *Slave no More*, Introduction.

[21] Contestation of this narrative has begun for the early colonial period too. See for example Ireton, "'They Are Blacks of the Caste of Black Christians,'" however, Ireton cannot escape from instilling North American notions of whiteness into her study.

[22] Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*; *Medicina y magia*; and *Cuijla*; Palmer, *Slaves of the White God*.

Mexicans' histories were part of larger oeuvres of regional or local history.[23] As Mexico transitioned into a multicultural nation, the narrative about mestizaje has begun to fade and scholars have started to tell the histories of Afro-Mexicans for their own sake.

Numerous historians in Mexico and the US have increased our knowledge about Afro-Mexicans' history. Together, scholars like Luz María Martínez Montiel, María Elisa Velázquez, Juan Manuel de la Serna, Adriana Naveda, María Guadalupe Chávez, Cristina Masferrer, and Rafael Castañeda in Mexico,[24] as well as Ben Vinson III, Herman Bennett, Patrick Carroll, Nicole von Germeten, Joan Bristol, Frank Proctor, and Pablo Sierra in the US, just to name a few, have expanded the themes and questions we ask about the history of Afro-Mexicans.[25] Thanks to these studies now we know more about the extent of the slave trade to Mexico; that Afro-descendants actively participated in the "conquest," and some achieved relative social mobility because of it; that Europeans introduced enslaved Africans virtually in every place they settled; that these subjects engaged in almost every imaginable economic activity; and that they were able to negotiate their place within the social hierarchy in diverse ways. Scholars from different institutional backgrounds tend to agree that Afro-descendants, whether free or enslaved, occupied middle positions within colonial society, and that they acted as cultural brokers between españoles and indios. Researchers have also

[23] For example, Martínez Montiel, *Presencia africana*; Martínez Montiel and Reyes eds., *III Encuentro nacional*; Chávez Carbajal, *El rostro colectivo*; for the case of Guadalajara the works by Thomas Calvo who inserts the histories of Afro-Mexicans into the larger history of the city, *Guadalajara y su región*; and *Poder, religión y Sociedad*.

[24] Martínez Montiel, *Afro-América*; Velázquez, *Mujeres de origen africano*; Serna, "Disolución de la esclavitud"; *Pautas de convivencia*; *De la libertad y la abolición*; *Negros y morenos en Iberoamérica*; Naveda, *Esclavos negros*; Chávez Carbajal, *Propietarios y esclavos*; Masferrer, *Muleke, negritas y mulatillos*; and Castañeda and Ruiz, *Africanos y afrodescendientes*. In Mexico there are also numerous dissertations and theses on the subject that remain unpublished, see the massive bibliography from the last fifteen years gathered in Castañeda and Ruiz, "La interminable búsqueda," as well as the equally extensive bibliography collected previously by Vinson, "La historia del estudio."

[25] Vinson, *Bearing Arms*; and *Before Mestizaje*; Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico*; and *Colonial Blackness*; Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz*; Von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers*; Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*; Proctor, *Damned Notions of Liberty*; and Sierra, *Urban Slavery*.

demonstrated that Afro-descendants constructed complex identities in different contexts during the colonial period. *Becoming Citizens* joins the growing historiography on the subject and offers one of the first longue durée studies centered on Afro-Mexicans. Indeed, most of the studies focusing on this population center their attention either on the seventeenth century, the peak period of the transatlantic slave trade, or on the eighteenth century. In examining the history of Afro-Mexicans from the arrival of the first enslaved people into the city up to the abolition of slavery, calidad designations, and beyond, this work offers a fresh perspective on the place of Afro-Mexicans within the city's and country's history.

This work also weighs into one of the most recent developments in the historiography about Afro-Mexicans, that is, what happened to this population during the last years of the colonial period and first years after independence. Since Aguirre Beltrán scholars noticed the seeming plummeting of populations of African descent across the viceroyalty. Informed by the political ideas of his time, Aguirre Beltrán explained this phenomenon through the ideology of mestizaje. It has been until recently, however, that scholars have tackled this problem more systematically. During the last two decades scholars have expanded the questions we ask about Afro-descendants in this crucial period and presented various hypotheses as to why they became socially invisible. These, range from an emphasis on the early stages of nation-state building as crucial for the social invisibility of Afro-Mexicans, to stressing the pervasive influence of the ideology of mestizaje in preventing the emergence of black identities.[26]

[26] Carroll, "Los mexicanos negros"; Hernández Cuevas, *African Mexicans*; Gerardo, "Writing Africans Out"; Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*; Cohen, *Finding Afro-Mexico* 27 and chapter 1; Díaz Casas, "¿De esclavos a ciudadanos?" Ballesteros Páez, "Los 'otros' mexicanos"; López Chávez, "Haciendo visible lo invisible"; Gates Jr., *Black in Latin America*, 78; and Guardino, "La identidad nacional y los Afromexicanos." A more detailed discussion of these debates can be found in chapter 5.

Yet, despite all of this progress, the history of Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara remains largely unexplored. *Becoming Citizens* offers the first book-length study about the history of Afro-Mexicans in colonial Guadalajara written in English, as well as the first quantitative analysis of the so-called disappearance of this population.[27] Indeed, despite that several studies have shown interest in answering what happened to Afro-descendants at the end of the colonial period and first years after independence, few of them, if any, has presented empirical evidence to support their claims. Guadalajara presents and incomparable opportunity to analyze this phenomenon. One of the largest interior cities of the hemisphere, eighteenth-century Guadalajara housed a sizeable community of free Afro-descendants. The presence and activities of this population can be studied through large series of documents that have survived the pass of time fairly intact. Guadalajara counts with baptismal and marriage records, as well as with a considerable number of censuses not available for other Spanish American cities. Taking advantage of these fascinating sources, this study tracks thousands of individuals through different records in order to uncover how they manipulated calidad categories in a time of political turmoil.

In focusing on an understudied place like Guadalajara, thus, *Becoming Citizens* join a growing group of studies that have called us to center our attention on smaller cities and away from the large capitals like Mexico City, Lima, Buenos Aires, or Rio de Janeiro. Indeed, this study joins this scholarship in arguing that the latter cases might be the exceptions rather

[27] To my knowledge there is just one book published in Spanish about Afro-descendants in colonial Guadalajara: Martínez Castellanos, *Esclavos rebeldes*; there are, however, several articles and book chapters dealing with the history of this group, see for example the corresponding chapters in Calvo, *Guadalajara y su región*; *Poder, religion y sociedad*; also Chávez Hayhoe, "La esclavitud"; Lavrin, "Perfil histórico"; Jiménez Pelayo, "Una vision sobre la esclavitud"; and Fernández, "Esclavos de ascendencia negra"; there are also unpublished dissertations and theses in both Spanish and English, see Gaitors, "The Afro-Mexican Presence"; Urrutia, "La esclavitud en Guadalajara"; De la Selva, "Esclavos y libertos"; Delgadillo, "Rompiendo las cadenas" and "De la devoción a la blasfemia."

than the norm and that cities like Guadalajara might be more representative in capturing the wide array of experiences of Afro-descendants in Latin America.[28]

This work, then, is as much a social history, as a cultural history of Afro-descendants from Guadalajara between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. It draws from the methods used in classical social history and uses large series of documents such as bills of sale, baptisms, and marriages in order to uncover patterns relative to the Afro-Mexican population of Guadalajara. It also relies on methods from cultural history to interpret or extract meaning from the specific events and behaviors that the sources describe. We are not anymore in the times when historians deemed large series of data as pure facts, that reflected what had happened in the past. Neither are we in the period when scholars considered that there were just interpretations and narratives, and that there were no historical facts at all. We understand now that archives themselves are the product of historical processes and that sources reflect specific points of view at the same time that they silence others.[29] Aware of these developments coming from cultural history, this study returns to the sources and methods of social history but with a more critical eye. The reader will find throughout these pages, thus, discussions about the character of the sources used, about who created them, for what purposes, under what circumstances, and how accurately they represent the past.

This study starts from the idea that the language we use to study the past is of paramount importance for properly understanding it and contextualizing it. It is informed by the so-called New Philology school in the sense that it pays close attention to the actual language used in the sources.[30] It recovers Spanish terminology about human difference and

[28] See for example Sierra, *Urban Slavery*; and Edwards, *Hiding in Plain Sight*.
[29] On the character of historical archives and how to read sources critically see for example Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*; Burns, *Into the Archive*; and Premo, *The Enlightenment on Trial*, chapter 1.
[30] Restall, "A History of the New Philology"; and Schwaller, *Géneros de Gente*, Introduction.

explains how people used words like casta, calidad, español, indio, mulato, etc., and it shows how the content of these terms persisted or changed over time. It also brings this analysis to another level by contrasting these uses with actual social dynamics and interactions. This, in turn, is crucial to comprehend how people deemed as negros, mulatos, moriscos and lobos during centuries ceased to be so considered during the first years after Mexico's independence.

Critically, this works also relies on modern constructs that can help to better understand individual or collective behaviors and social dynamics from the past. First, throughout this study I have chosen to use the terms Afro-descendants or Afro-Mexicans as glosses when collectively referring to people deemed of African ancestry or heritage. This follows conventions used in modern Mexican censuses and documents, but I only use these terms when I allude to the actions or interactions between negros, mulatos, moriscos, and lobos, taken as a whole, with other groups. For the most part, I try to be precise about the distinct experiences of people bearing these different social labels and I refer to them with the historical categories used in my sources. In using this terms in no sense I pretend to equate their experiences nor to imply that they comprised a homogenous group.

Secondly, throughout this study I stress Afro-descendants agency. This term is just intended to mean here people's capacity to exert some degree of control over the set of social relations in which they are enmeshed and transform them.[31] I also refer to Afro-Mexicans variously as agents, actors, or subjects. In this regard I build upon Michel-Rolph Trouillot's insights on the subject. The author understands agents as "occupants of structural positions," such as class, status, etc., and "the roles associated with these." By actors Trouillot means

[31] For this definition of agency see Sewell Jr., *Logics of History*, 143.

"the bundle of capacities that are specific in time and space in ways that both their existence and their understanding rest fundamentally on historical particulars," in other words as people in constant interaction with a specific context. Then, subjects are "voices aware of their vocality," that "define the very terms under which some situations can be described."[32]

Lastly, across this work I also refer to Afro-Mexicans as a community. This concept is understood here as a "collection of individuals and families who share a common and identifiable network of sociocultural communications that have their origin in either a particular geographic area and period of time or a unique system of beliefs and rationalization." This concept, however, does not imply conscious affinities, and members of a community may have not so viewed themselves. Further, people could be part of different communities at the same time. Afro-Mexicans, for example, could have been part of a larger Christian or Catholic community comprised of people of different calidad, while at the same time being part of a community of Afro-descendants.[33]

Equipped with these theoretical tools, this work is divided in seven chapters. These are structured thematically and chronologically, with an overall focus on change over time. While mostly focused on Guadalajara, the study keeps an interest in making connections with the Atlantic world at large, in drawing parallels, and contrasting the case under examination with other locales. In this sense, this work is a contribution to Atlantic history as much as a local history. Chapters one and two follow a thematic structure, rather than a chronological one. Chapter one situates Guadalajara within the black urban Atlantic, and as part of the

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[32] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 23-24.

[33] I have found Michael A. Gomez's insights on the subject particularly useful, see *Exchanging our Country Marks*, 20-21. I am aware that other authors might see communities differently, Matthew Restall, for instance, defines a community as "a body of people consciously bound together by the sense of having something in common," *The Black Middle*, 204. Nonetheless, I have found Gomez's definition more ad hoc to convey what my sources suggest.

Atlantic world more broadly. It takes a comparative approach and presents the history of the city, from its original foundation up to the end of the colonial period, as part of the larger history of European colonialism of the Americas. Moreover, it stresses the presence, experiences, and contributions of Afro-descendants to the history of the city and draws parallels with similar towns and cities across the Atlantic.

Chapter two proffers a longue durée history of social differentiation practices and vocabularies in the Spanish empire. It presents an extended discussion of the concepts of casta, calidad, clase, and género; notions that historians have widely used to study social difference in colonial Spanish America. The chapter presents a multitude of examples of how the concept of calidad worked during the colonial period and across the empire. This section serves as a framework to understand future chapters, and particularly to answer how did Afro-Mexicans stopped identifying as such in official records at the end of the colonial period. Ultimately, it presents a critique of those studies that arbitrarily substitute the concept of español for that of white and argues why that creates further problems to understand Spanish American societies, and specifically the long history of Afro-Mexicans' social invisibility.

After stablishing the bases for the study in the previous two chapters, the subsequent sections follow a chronological order. Chapter three delves into the introduction of the first enslaved Africans to Guadalajara and the development of African-derived identities in the city up to 1700. It pays close attention to how Africans and their descendants were categorized in different instances and how they identified themselves in other documents. Specifically, the chapter contrasts how enslaved Afro-descendants were classified in bills of sale in opposition to how they identified in notarial documents where they acted as free people. Importantly, building upon the discussion of calidad from chapter two, this chapter

examines how Afro-descendants collectively articulated notions of calidad within Catholic brotherhoods to negotiate their place in the social hierarchy.

Chapter four picks up where chapter three left off and scrutinizes the continuities and changes of the social categories related to African ancestry in late-colonial Guadalajara. Using notarial, confraternity, and sacramental records, the chapter follows a similar procedure to that of chapter three and contrasts the ascriptions that Afro-descendants used, or were assigned, in different documents. Critically, this section traces the development of an Afro-Mexican community formed by multi-generational families bearing the label of mulato and of a wide social-network of Afro-descendants who were godparents or sponsors of other Afro-descendants.

Chapters five and six answer how and why did Afro-Mexicans stop identifying themselves as such in official records before independence. Contrasting thousands of baptismal and marriage records with censuses created during the first years after independence, chapter five traces thousands of individuals of African descent across different documents to show how they changed their social ascriptions at the end of the colonial period. It tries to give some logic to these changes and to uncover the patterns behind them. Chapter six, for its part, presents a plausible hypothesis as to why Afro-Mexicans abandoned calidad categories during this time. It places the phenomenon analyzed in chapter five within larger Atlantic processes and situates it as part of the spectrum of Afro-descendants' political actions during the age of revolutions. The chapter argues for seeing Afro-Mexicans' abandonment of calidad categories as part of construction processes of Mexican citizenship and equality.

Chapter seven asks how did people remember the histories of slavery and Afro-Mexicans once independence was achieved, slavery abolished, and calidad classifications

prohibited by law. Through an examination of the Mexican press between 1821 and 1860, this chapter traces the creation of historical narratives that downplayed the importance of slavery for Mexican history, while at the same time used the figure of Afro-Mexicans to cement different political projects. The work ends in 1860, before ideologies of mestizaje started to take shape. This is significant because the ideology of mestizaje has been one of the most recurrent explanations that scholars use to approach Afro-Mexicans' social invisibility.

Ultimately, the conclusion reflects on how this work changes the narrative about Afro-Mexicans that previous scholarship has presented. *Becoming Citizens*, thus, contributes to the history of Afro-Mexicans by drawing attention to a mostly understudied place, and away from the overstudied, and unrepresentative, case of Mexico City. It also adds to our understanding of social differentiation practices and ideologies. Finally, by keeping a comparative eye throughout, it hopes to contribute to Atlantic history at large.

Chapter 1

Guadalajara and the Black Urban Atlantic

Although Guadalajara did not reach its position as Mexico's "second city" until the late nineteenth century, since its definitive settlement in 1542 Guadalajara has been a political, economic, and cultural center of importance in western Mexico. Despite its relevance, there are just a handful of studies focusing on the colonial history of the city or its region written in the English language.[1] Indeed, in spite of having the second high court, the second merchants' guild, the second university, and the second mint in the viceroyalty of New Spain, Guadalajara has not received the same attention as many other cities or regions like Oaxaca, Michoacán, Yucatán, or the Bajío, not to mention Mexico City, by far the most studied place by historians of Mexico.[2] Moreover, Guadalajara has hardly been situated within the broader Atlantic world, and rarely has been considered as part of what Jorge Cañizares Esguerra, Matt Childs, and James Sidbury term the black urban Atlantic.[3] In this sense, the purpose of this chapter is twofold. On the one hand, it pretends to introduce readers to the history of the city during the colonial period. On the other hand, it establishes Guadalajara as part of the black urban Atlantic and the Atlantic world more generally.

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[1] Parry, *The Audiencia of New* Galicia; Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*; Lindley, *Haciendas and Economic Development*; Greenow, *Credit and Socioeconomic Change*; Taylor, *Magistrates of the Sacred*, that is just partially focused on the Guadalajara region; Hardin, *Household and Mobility*; Connaughton, *Clerical Ideology*; Altman *The War for Mexico's West*; Robinson, *The Mark of Rebels*; and on the northern part of New Spain in general Gerhard, *The North Frontier*.

[2] For studies focusing on Oaxaca see among others Chance, *Race and Classs*; Taylor, *Landlord and Peasant*; Terraciano, *The Mixtecs of Oaxaca*; Tavárez, *The Invisible War*; Guardino, *The Time of Liberty*; for Michoacán, Warren, *The Conquest of Michoacán*; Krippner-Martínez, *Rereading the Conquest*; Brading, *Church and State*; for Yucatán, Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests*; Patch, *Maya and Spaniard in Yucatán*; Farriss, *Maya Society*; and Restall, *The Black Middle*; for the Bajío, Brading, *Miners and Merchants*; *Haciendas and Ranchos*; and Tutino, *Making a New World*; a formidable review of the literature on colonial Mexico con be found in Van Young, *Writing Mexican History*, chapters 2 and 3.

[3] Cañizares Esguerra, Childs, and Sidbury, eds. *The Black Urban Atlantic.*

According to historian Allison Games the concept of an Atlantic World is a modern construct (since people from the past did not think in these terms) that helps scholars to study human populations across a large portion of the globe. Atlantic history focuses on the societies that resulted from the contact between Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans after 1492, as well as on the transformation of those societies that preceded this contact. Atlantic history seeks to explain the transformations, experiences, and events of a specific locale in terms of its place within a larger, interconnected world. Put another way, Atlantic history tries to illuminate macro-historical processes through micro-historical analyses. Societies under scrutiny do not have to be necessarily located on the Atlantic coast, however, but connected somehow to the historical processes originating from the Atlantic basin. Atlantic history, thus, has proven to be a very useful framework to analyze the creation, destruction, and recreation of societies originating from the circulation of peoples, goods, and cultures around the Atlantic.[4] Under this light, it is possible to speak of Guadalajara as an Atlantic city.

Guadalajara was established as part of the process of European exploration and conquest of the Americas and more concretely in the midst of the Spanish westward expansion into what would be known as the kingdom of Nueva Galicia.[5] After the fall of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, the capital of the Aztec empire, in 1521, Spaniards, with the help of

[4] Games, "What is Atlantic History"; Elliot, "Afterword. Atlantic History: A Circumnavigation"; an early work about the Atlantic is Hanke ed. *Do the Americas Have a Common History?*; on the Spanish and Iberian Atlantic see also: Adelman, *Sovereignty and Revolution*; Bassi, "Beyond Compartmentalized Atlantics"; Cañizarez Esguerra and Breen, "Hybrid Atlantics"; and Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance."

[5] For studies of European settlement patterns on the Atlantic world generally see Elliot, *Empires of the Atlantic*; and Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours*. The classic accounts of the conquest of Nueva Galicia and the early history of the region are Tello, *Crónica Miscelánea*; Mota y Escobar, *Descripción Geográfica*; Arregui, *Descripción de la Nueva Galicia*; Mota Padilla, *Historia de la conquista*; and Pérez Verdía, *Historia particular de Jalisco*; a collection gathering the most important documents for the history of the early period of the region is Razo Zaragoza, *Crónicas de la Conquista*. In this section however, I closely follow Ida Altman's interpretation of these accounts. Other studies about the conquest of the region are Muriá, *Jalisco. Historia breve*; and Calvo and Regalado, eds. *Historia del Reino.*

their Native allies, quickly organized expeditions to reconnoiter and conquest the vast territories of Mexico and Central America. In 1522 Hernán Cortés sent Cristóbal de Olid to explore and conquer Michoacán. Cortés himself moved north into Pánuco and later south into Honduras. Pedro de Alvarado headed off to the conquest of Guatemala in 1524, and Francisco de Montejo organized his first expedition to Yucatán in 1527.[6] It was in the middle of these enterprises that in 1524 Hernán Cortés sent his kinsman (their precise relationship is unclear) Francisco Cortés to explore what are now the state of Colima and portions of the states of Jalisco and Nayarit (see figures 1.1 and 1.2).

Figure 1.1 Nova Hispania et Nova Galicia

Map by Willem Janszoon Blaeu, Amsterdam, 1636

[6] Altman, *The War for Mexico's West*, 3.

Figure 1.2 Map of Nueva Galicia in 1550

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Source: AGI, Mapas y Planos, México, 560, available online:
http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/21517

Francisco Cortés's expedition lasted from 1524 to 1525 and left contrasting results. On the one hand, it established permanent contact with the indigenous communities of Amula, Autlán, Tepic, and Xalisco, among others. Francisco Cortés became the first alcalde mayor of Colima (that Gonzalo de Sandoval had conquered the previous year of 1523) and moved its seat to its current location. The group also reached the bay that would become the Puerto de la Navidad on the Pacific coast, from where the Spanish expedition that colonized the Philippines would depart decades later. On the other hand, Francisco Cortés's advance into the west did not result in the establishment of any permanent settlement and left a trail of destruction. It decimated several small villages along its route, altered the lives and

cultures of the indigenous peoples of the region, and conditioned the relation between these communities and later Spanish expeditions.[7]

After an initial period in which Hernán Cortés dominated the political arena of the recently conquered territories, the Spanish Crown decided to set counterbalances to his power by organizing the new territories into provinces and governorships, by creating institutions, and by appointing new authorities. In this context, the Crown named Nuño Beltrán de Guzmán as governor of the province of Pánuco in 1525, and three years later, in 1528, he became the first president of the newly erected high court of Mexico City.[8] Guzmán's aspirations to make a name for himself in the Americas, to get a title of nobility, and his rivalry with Cortés led him to undertake the conquest of the west. In 1529 Guzmán sought, and got, approval from the high court to command an expedition to conquer and colonize the west. Guzmán gathered, through conscription and other questionable methods, about 300 Spanish men and between 10,000 to 15,000 indigenous men of different backgrounds. The group began its journey in late 1529 and the enterprise lasted until 1531.[9]

Guzmán and his forces departed Mexico City in December 1529, they closely followed the Lerma River and reached Toluca and then Tzintzunzan, the capital of the Purépecha empire of Michoacán. There, Guzmán tortured the Purépecha ruler thinking that he was hiding a treasure and took him with his expedition, just to kill him shortly after. Once the Spanish forces left Tzintzuntzan, they headed north and fought their first considerable battle near Lake Chapala in Cuiseo. From there, Spaniards contacted and subjugated the indigenous communities of Tototlán, Zapotlanejo, Acatic, Ocotlán, and Tlajomulco, finally

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[7] Altman, *The War for Mexico's West*, 6-19; and Pérez Verdía, *Historia particular de Jalisco* vol. 1, part I, chapter III.
[8] Altman, *The War for Mexico's West*, 21.
[9] Altman, *The War for Mexico's West*, 28.

reaching the community of Tonalá, probably the largest indigenous settlement west of Michoacán, in March 1530. Now part of the metropolitan area of Guadalajara to the southeast of the city, Tonalá was governed by a woman named Cihualpilli and belonged to the Tecuexe people. The native ruler received Guzmán and his men with gifts and peacefully, something that a section of the community opposed and fought the Europeans, who eventually defeated them. Once they subdued Tonalá, the Spaniards continued further north, crossing the Santiago River, until they reached the territory of the Cazcanes. There, they encountered the communities of Nochistlán, Jalpa, Apozol, and Teul, and left a path of destruction. Subsequently, Guzmán and his men passed through some of the villages that Francisco Cortés's expedition had encountered before, Etzatlán, Ahuacatlán, and Xalisco. In July 1530, the expedition reached Aztatlán, on the Pacific coast in what is now the state of Nayarit, and remained there until September of the same year, when a hurricane caused heavy losses to the expedition. After that, the group followed the pacific coast toward the north but found a sparsely populated territory, by the end of 1530 they reached Chiametla, where they spent Christmas. Finally, after passing several small villages, Guzmán's forces conquered Culiacán in March of 1531, concluding the expedition.[10]

Unlike Francisco Cortés's voyage, Guzmán's definitely established the Spanish presence in the region. Pursuing his ambitions to create a governorship for himself, that he pretended to name the Greater Spain (or la Mayor España), Guzmán decided to erect four Spanish settlements with their institutions and authorities, which would legitimize his political aspirations. During that year of 1531 he created the towns of Villa de la Purificación to the south close to the Pacific coast, Santo Espíritu de Compostela, Guadalajara in what it

[10] For a detailed account of Guzman's expedition see Altman, *The War for Mexico's West*, 34-56; and Pérez Verdía, *Historia particular de Jalisco* vol. 1, part I, chapters IV-VI.

was the Cazcán community of Nochistlán, and San Miguel de Culiacán farther north. The establishment of these four towns confirmed the creation of the kingdom of Nueva Galicia, as the conquered territory was named (and not the Greater Spain as Guzmán wanted), and the Crown appointed Guzmán as its first governor, an office he held until 1536.[11]

Spaniards considered towns and cities as institutions, once the place where Guadalajara would lie was decided and the first officials were named, the city began to exist formally; the actual population would not have it that easy, however. In 1533, as arising conflicts with the nearby indigenous communities emerged, and because the residents considered that the town did not have the resources to prosper, they asked Nuño de Guzmán to move it somewhere else, a permission he granted. During that year, then, following a common Spanish pattern of colonization in the Americas, residents moved the seat of Guadalajara to the indigenous community of Tonalá. The city, nonetheless, lasted only 18 months in Tonalá. When Guzmán (who was in Pánuco when he gave permission for the first moving) found out that Guadalajara was moved to Tonalá, he ordered its immediate relocation. Guzmán had the ambition to get a nobility title, such as the one Hernán Cortés previously got, or at least to get an encomienda in Tonalá, that would take advantage of the native population already living there. A Spanish settlement in Tonalá, he considered, would seriously hinder his ambitions. On early 1535, thus, Guadalajara moved to its third location on the northern margin of the Santiago River, to a place named Tlacotán. The third Guadalajara would last six years there. In 1541, as a result of Spanish abuses toward the native population of the region, the conflict now known as the Mixton war erupted. In September of that year indigenous forces put Guadalajara under siege, forcing its residents

[11] Altman, *The War for Mexico's West*, 60-68; and Pérez Verdía, *Historia particular de Jalisco* vol. 1, part I, chapter VII.

to abandon it and the viceroy Antonio de Mendoza (appointed in 1535) to intervene the region with a force of thousands of indigenous allies from central Mexico. Finally, in early 1542 Spaniards established Guadalajara in its current site, south of the Santiago River, on the western margin of one of its tributaries, the San Juan de Dios River.[12] The establishment of two *pueblos de indios* accompanied this last foundation. To the south of the Spanish settlement, also on the western margin of the san Juan de Dios River, indigenous peoples from central Mexico created the town of Mexicaltzingo, that would become one of the city's neighborhoods later during the colonial period. Also south from the city, but on the eastern margin of the river, indigenous of various ethnicities from the region established the town of Analco, that the city formally absorbed during the seventeenth century. Both of these towns had close links with Guadalajara since the beginning and will be mentioned throughout this study.

African-descended peoples have been an integral part of the history of the Americas since European explorers established permanent contact with the continent. They participated in the processes of conquest and colonization of the continent outlined above. From the earliest voyages in the fifteenth century Europeans brought with them enslaved Africans or Afro-descendants. The number of these individuals grew from a few in the first expeditions to hundreds in the conquests of the sixteenth century.[13] We know that at least six men of African descent accompanied Hernán Cortés in the conquest of Tenochtitlan. Further, Afro-descendants played a key role in the conquest and colonization of Perú and Ecuador, as well

[12] For the different foundations of Guadalajara see Muriá, *Jalisco. Historia breve*, 34-38; Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*, 18-19; and Pérez Verdía, *Historia particular de Jalisco* vol. 1, part I, chapters VII-XIII; on the Mixton war see Altman, *The War for Mexico's West*, chapters 5 and 6.
[13] Restall and Fernández-Armesto, *Conquistadors*, 59.

as in the civil war that ensued to the conquest of those territories.[14] Don Pedro de Mendoza, for his part, introduced 200 negros in the first settlement of Buenos Aires as early as 1536.[15] Ultimately, we also know that Afro-descendants were present and played a key role in the early colonization of the Spanish Caribbean.[16]

We count with scarce but important details about the lives of a handful of these Afro-descendants who were present in the processes of conquest and colonization of the Americas. For example, Juan Garrido. He was born in Africa and was enslaved by the Portuguese when he was young. Garrido was then sold to a Spanish men and earned his freedom participating in the conquests of Puerto Rico, Cuba, and other Caribbean islands. He took part in the conquest of Mexico as a free servant or an auxiliary, as well as in later expeditions, including Hernán Cortés's to Baja California. After writing an account of his merits and services to the Spanish Crown (*probanza*, or *relación de méritos* in Spanish), Garrido received a plot of land in Mexico City, where he worked as a guard and town crier. He was able to raise a family there and he claimed to be the first person to grow wheat in Mexico.[17] Another case is that of Sebastián Toral. He arrived to Mexico as a teenage slave with his master, a Spanish conqueror who participated in a failed expedition into Yucatán in the 1530s. A decade later, perhaps already as a free man, fought in the ongoing attempts to conquer the Yucatán peninsula. Once a colony was established there in the 1540s, Toral established himself there, raised a family and worked as a guard. He also obtained a tribute exemption from the king.[18] Finally, Esteban or "Estvanico" was a Moroccan-born slave who was part of Alvar Núñez

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[14] Bryant, *Rivers of Gold, Lives of Bondage*, chapter 1.
[15] Bernand, *Negros esclavos y libres*, 16-17.
[16] Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*,
[17] Restall and Fernández-Armesto, *Conquistadors*, 59; Restall, "Black Conquistadors," 177; Gerhard, "A Black Conquistador"; and Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 19.
[18] Restall and Fernández-Armesto, *Conquistadors*, 60; and Restall, "Black Conquistadors," 181.

Cabeza de Vaca's voyage to Florida between 1528-1536. The expedition landed on the west coast of present-day Florida. As a result of inclement weather, conflicts with the native population and among the explorers, the expedition was reduced to just four survivors, Cabeza de Vaca, Alonso del Castillo, Andrés Dorantes, and Esteban who was Dorantes's slave. The survivor ended as castaways along the shores of what are now northern Mexico and Texas. They lived for years as slaves of the native populations of the region and eventually made for themselves a reputation as healers. This reputation allowed them to survive and later they ventured into a westward journey. In 1536 they encountered a Spanish expedition and quickly returned to Mexico and some of them to Spain. From there, Esteban served as an advanced scout in the northward expedition that Francisco Vázquez Coronado commanded. In startling contrast with Juan Garrido and Sebastián Toral, Esteban met his end under obscure circumstances in the midst of Vázquez Coronado's voyage.[19]

The participation of Afro-descendants in the processes of conquest and colonization of the Americas, and whether we should assign these historical subjects any agency in this case is a contentious matter; their presence in the Americas since the earliest moments of European colonization should not go unnoticed, however. Enslaved and free Afro-descendants fought in the conquest of the Americas, helped to build and develop the first European settlements, and were among the first non-native inhabitants of the continent. The first Afro-descendants in the continent experienced a set of different circumstances than future generations of Africans would endure, especially in plantation societies. Individuals like Juan Garrido and Sebastián Toral were able to reach imperial institutions to make their voices be heard, and obtain certain, albeit minor, privileges from the Crown.

[19] Restall, "Black Conquistadors," 182; and Schmidt-Nowara, *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition*, 48-51.

Guadalajara was not the exception to this trend. African-descended peoples were an integral part of the history of the city since its very beginning. We know that Afro-descendants participated in the 1541 battle of Mixtón, against resisting indigenous peoples of what it was then the northern frontier of New Spain. This battle, as we have seen, paved the way for the definitive settlement of Guadalajara in its current location in 1542. Unfortunately, these Afro-descendants remain anonymous, basically omitted from the sources. More than three decades later, in 1577, the city's *regidores* petitioned Felipe II to import 500 African slaves to Guadalajara. Moreover, late-sixteenth-century inventories and last wills or testaments reference a handful of enslaved Africans with ethnonyms such as Bran, Biafara, or Terranova.[20] By the beginning of the seventeenth century, bishop Alonso de la Mota y Escobar mentioned in his general description of Nueva Galicia that Guadalajara's inhabitants employed as servants "mulato and negro slaves, that to this day amount to more than five hundred, without counting others from this lineage who are free."[21]

Returning to the history of the city, the multiple foundations of Guadalajara were part of the larger process of Spanish urbanization of the Americas. Indeed, between the beginning of the colonization and 1620 Spaniards founded 191 urban centers, either on pre-existing native settlements, or in new places, the majority of these occurred during the decades of 1530-1540, like Guadalajara, and between 1550-1560. By 1600 all major Spanish American cities, except for Montevideo, had been established.[22]

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[20] For the early presence of Afro-descendants in Guadalajara and the city council's petition to import African slaves see Calvo, *Guadalajara en el siglo XVII*, 144; for late-sixteenth-century inventories and last wills mentioning Africans Chávez Hayhoe, "La esclavitud," 16; for an excellent study about the meanings and origins of some of these ethnonyms Wheat, *Atlantic Africa.*

[21] Cited in Chávez Hayhoe, "La esclavitud," 15.

[22] Socolow and Johnson, "Urbanization in Colonial Latin America," 31; and Hardoy, "Antiguas y nuevas capitales."

From its definitive foundation Guadalajara gradually grew in importance and population. Although Compostela was originally intended to be the capital of Nueva Galicia, when the Crown decided to create a high court and a bishopric for the new kingdom in 1548, neither civil, nor religious authorities deemed Compostela a good place to settle down. They thought that Compostela was too distant from Mexico City and considered its weather to be unpleasant, thus they decided to remain in Guadalajara. In this sense, after that date Guadalajara became the de facto capital of the kingdom. The Crown officially moved those institutions to Guadalajara until 1560.[23] Since very early Guadalajara was a commercial and administrative hub for the west and northwest of the viceroyalty of New Spain. Descriptions from the early period of the city tell us that about half of the city's inhabitants were officials of some kind, judicial, fiscal, administrative or religious, and that the city had an abundance of merchants.[24]

It is difficult to precisely calculate the city's population for the colonial period. Population counts for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Spanish America, for the most part, were stated in terms of vecinos, or heads of household, making difficult to reach an accurate number of total inhabitants. We also do not know if Afro-descendants were included in this category of vecino during this early period, which makes very difficult, if not impossible to estimate their number. Despite these caveats, existent estimates place Guadalajara during the sixteenth century within the range of small to middle-size cities, that counted with between 150 to 200 vecinos in 1580.[25] These calculations situate Guadalajara

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[23] On the creation of the bishopric of Nueva Galicia see Dávila Garibi, *Apuntes para la historia*, vol. 1, 391-400; and González Escoto, *Historia breve de la Iglesia*, 137-147; on the creation of the high court see Pérez Verdía, *Historia particular de Jalisco*, vol. 1, part I, chapter XIV.
[24] Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*, 23.
[25] In order to get an approximate number of a city's inhabitants demographic historians multiply the number of vecinos by distinct conversion factors, depending on the period, place, and population under study. For a

in the group of cities like San Juan de Puerto Rico, Veracruz, La Paz, Tunja, Santiago del Estero, León (presently in Nicaragua), Concepción (in Chile) and San Salvador. In Comparison, during that same year the five largest Spanish American cities were Mexico City with 3,000 vecinos, Lima with 2,000, Cuzco with 800, and Bogotá and Guanajuato both with 600 vecinos (see table 1.1).[26]

Table 1.1 Guadalajara Compared to other Spanish American Cities in 1580

City	Population (in vecinos)	City	Population (in vecinos)
Mexico City	3,000	Veracruz	200
Lima	2,000	Guadalajara	150
Cuzco	800	La Paz	150
Bogotá	600	San Juan	150
Guanajuato	600	San Salvador	150

Source: created based on data from Hardoy and Aranovich, "Cuadro comparativo."

By 1630, the same study found that the population of Guadalajara increased fourfold during the previous five decades, reaching 600 vecinos and placing it within the range of middle to large-size Spanish American cities. By this time, with the discovery of gold and silver mines in North and South America, and with the opening of new seaports, larger urban centers emerged. During this year at least ten Spanish American cities surpassed the mark of 1,000 vecinos. Again the two largest cities were Mexico City with 15,000 vecinos and Lima with 9,500. By then Potosí followed with 4,000 vecinos, then Cuzco with 3,500 and Puebla and Quito with 3,000 vecinos each. Guadalajara compared more closely in size with cities like Asunción in Paraguay, Santo Domingo, Panamá, and Santiago de Chile (see table 1.2).[27]

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detailed discussion of these conversion factors see Cook and Borah, *Ensayos sobre historia*, vol. 1, chapters III and IV; also Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*, Appendix 1; and De la Fuente, "Población y crecimiento."

[26] Hardoy and Aranovich, "Cuadro comparativo," 353-354.

[27] Hardoy and Aranovich, "Cuadro comparativo," 353-354; other sources for the study of the demographic history of colonial Spanish America are Sánchez Albornoz, *Historia minima de la población*; Hoberman and Socolow, *Ciudades y Sociedad*; Hardoy, "Antiguas y nuevas capitales,"; and Hardoy and Aranovich, "Urban Scales and Functions."

City	Population (in vecinos)	City	Population (in vecinos)
Mexico City	15,000	Asunción	650
Lima	9,500	Guadalajara	600
Potosí	4,000	Santo Domingo	600
Cuzco	3,500	Tunja	600
Puebla	3,000	Santiago de Chile	500
Quito	3,000	Panamá	500

Table 1.2 Guadalajara Compared to other Spanish American Cities in 1630

Source: created based on data from Hardoy and Aranovich, "Cuadro comparativo."

More recent estimates about the population of Guadalajara during the seventeenth century also present a picture of gradual growth. French historian Thomas Calvo has extensively examined the history of the city's population during this period. According to this author by 1600 Guadalajara and the nearby *pueblos de indios* had about 3,000 inhabitants. From these, 60% were indios, 20% españoles, and 20% African-descended. By 1621 this population increased to probably 3,500 people, and by 1650 to a maximum of 5,000.[28] By 1700 the city and the surrounding towns counted between 9,000 and 10,000 people. During the seventeenth century Guadalajara was truly a global city but on a small scale. It brought together indios of various ethnicities and españoles coming from different regions of the peninsula. Furthermore, Portuguese traders as well as Japanese merchants, such as Luis de Encio and Juan de Paez established themselves in the city, leaving a trail of their economic activities during in the local archives. Enslaved people of Asian origin, who later in the century became free by law, also inhabited the city and the western region of New Spain. African-descended peoples completed the diversity of Guadalajara's inhabitants during the seventeenth century.[29]

[28] On these different estimates see Calvo, *Guadalajara y su región*, 47-52; *Poder, religion y sociedad*, 331; and "Aspectos demográficos," 19-30.

[29] On the Portuguese presence in Guadalajara and New Spain in general see Hordes, "The crypto-jewish community"; Studnicki-Gizbert, *A Nation Upon the Ocean*; Vizcarra and Jiménez Vizcarra, "Noticias biográficas"; on the Japanese merchants see Calvo, "Japoneses en Guadalajara"; and Falck and Palacios, *El Japonés que conquistó Guadalajara*; on Asian slaves in New Spain, Seijas, *Asian Slaves*; and Oropeza, *La migración asiática*.

Guadalajara, then, became part of what historians have termed as the black urban Atlantic. This concept has served to emphasize the distinct features that Afro-descendants' experience exhibited in urban centers all across the Atlantic world. Although slavery also existed in cities (albeit in a much lesser scale than in plantation societies), it had different characteristics. Small property of enslaved people was the norm, and, because of the domestic character of slave labor, Afro-descendants were not segregated but in close contact with other social groups. In cities, peoples of African descent were able to shape the context in which they lived in ways that was not possible for their counterparts in rural areas and plantation societies. Free and enslaved Afro-descendants in cities had a more readily access to local and imperial institutions to protect what their considered to be their rights. They also had more room to negotiate labor arrangements. In cities, Afro-descendants were able to work in skilled or semi-skilled crafts, and in many places they comprised the bulk of the artisan class. Free and enslaved Afro-descendants living in urban contexts also had more opportunities to create groups, associations, or communities that fostered collective identities, provided mutual aid, and sometimes served to collectively oppose and fight oppression. Lastly, in cities Afro-descendants were able to obtain their freedom in higher rates than in rural or plantation contexts.[30]

In contrast with rural or plantation contexts, where it was more common to find masters possessing higher numbers of enslaved individuals, in cities small property holders were the norm. A study of late-seventeenth-century Guadalajara found that slave owners

[30] For these characteristics of urban slavery and the black urban Atlantic in general see Cañizares Esguerra, Childs, and Sidbury, eds. *The Black Urban Atlantic*, "Introduction"; Montiel, "Esclavitud y sociedad"; Dantas, *Black Townsmen*; Garrison-Marks, *Black Freedom*; Bernand, *Negros esclavos y libres*; on manumission rates in urban centers Helg, *Slave No More*, chapters 3 and 9; Klein and Vidal, *Slavery in Brazil*, chapter 9; Proctor, "Gender and the Manumission"; a classic study on urban slavery is Bowser, *The African Slave*.

during the 1670s had on average 1.54 slaves, this figure would later decrease to 1.45 by the end of the century.[31] Slaveholders owning more than ten slaves indeed existed in Guadalajara, but they were the exception. This is the case of presbyter Francisco de Villalobos, who declared 27 slaves in hist testament written in 1648.[32] Also, an ecclesiastical census of 1679 reported at least 28 negros and mulatos, either free or enslaved, as part of Agustín de Gamboa's household, who was probably the wealthiest person in seventeenth-century Guadalajara.[33] These figures are consistent with larger trends across the Atlantic world. For example, in nineteenth-century Lima just 3% of slaveholders had 20 slaves or more; the majority of owners possessed just one or two slaves. In contemporary Buenos Aires small property holders with one or two slaves owned more than half of the total enslaved population of the city. Further, about 20% of masters had just three slaves.[34] A similar pattern is observable in Sabará, Brazil, and Baltimore, cities in which the size of slave property varied according to the economic activity of masters. In the latter city slave ownership was widespread and almost 43% of households owned slaves in 1800. In Sabará, masters invested in mining or farming activities on average owned more slaves than masters who employed their slaves in domestic activities.[35]

Although the economic activities that free and enslaved Afro-descendants performed in urban centers varied depending on context, whether they lived in a seaport, a commercial hub or a mining center, in cities Afro-descendants were able to undertake specialized trades and settle labor arrangements that were conducive to their socio-economic advancement or

[31] Calvo, *Poder, religión y sociedad*, 335. It should be noted that it is unclear how the author got to these figures.
[32] AIPJ, Escribanos, Hernando Enríquez del Castillo, 1, 30-33.
[33] AAG, Padrones, "Padrón donde se asientan las personas que confiesan y comulgan en esta Santa Iglesia Catedral de este año de mil y seiscientos y setenta y nueve desde la calle de San Agustín hasta la Compañía de Jesús que divide media ciudad," 4v.
[34] Bernand, *Negros esclavos y libres*, 75.
[35] For slave-owning patterns in these two cities see Dantas, *Black Townsmen*, 77-82.

freedom. Notarial records such as slaves' bills of sale, dowries, inventories, and last wills allow us to get a sense of the different activities that Afro-Mexicans carried on in colonial Guadalajara. For example, in 1640 Francisco González and his wife Inés de Saavedra sold to Ana de Zúñiga, all of them vecinos of Guadalajara, a 35-year-old negro slave named Manuel who was a carpenter for 500 pesos. Then, in 1650, Pedro Fernández de Baeza, president of the high court of Guadalajara, sold to ingenio owner Alonso Fernández, Domingo a negro originally from Puebla, 20 years of age, who was a blacksmith official for 450 pesos. In 1666 Diego de Robles, vecino of Guadalajara, sold to Pedro de Zurita, miner from Sombrerete, a negro criollo named Fabián, 20 years of age and originally from Guadalajara, who was a tailor official, for 400 pesos. Ultimately, in 1702 don Fernando Benavente y Maldonado, presbyter of Guadalajara, sold don Miguel de Núñez captain and vecino of Mexico City, a mulato cocho named Domingo de Urquizo, who was a coachman, for 350 pesos.[36]

Afro-descendants were also involved in other types of activities. For example, at the beginning of 1629 the city council of Guadalajara complained that there was no town crier or drummer. Subsequently, they bought with the city's funds Juan de Santiago, negro ladino, from Ana de Ojeda, who already was in charge of supervising the city's corn supply, and whom the city's officials considered "intelligent and apt for these tasks."[37] Decades later, in 1653, as part of the Corpus Christi observances, the city council hired Simón, mulato and dance teacher and agreed with him to showcase "curious dances with brilliant dresses and

[36] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego Pérez de Rivera, 2, 127v; Diego Pérez de Rivera, 4, 55v-56r; Diego Pérez de Rivera, 13, 192; and Diego de la Sierra, 4, unnumbered, respectively.

[37] AMG, Actas de Cabildo, 1607-1680, 130v. The original document reads: es apropósito e inteligente en estos ministerios.

outfits."[38] Further, in his 1648-last will presbyter Francisco de Villalobos declared among his slaves a mulato named Domingo, who was an organist and was married to an india.[39]

Enslaved Afro-Mexicans' role in society, thus, allowed them to get more autonomy in terms of the types of work they performed, in terms of spatial mobility, and in other aspects. For instance, in 1615 Juan Marín a slave belonging to bishop fray Juan de Valle, and tenor of the cathedral's choir, asked him to be able to have properties. The bishop then penned a notarized document allowing Juan Marín to own property "as if he were a free person." He, however, was not supposed to sell or rent that property without the Church's permission.[40] Also, in 1675, Francisco de la Cueva, vecino of Mexico City and resident of Guadalajara declared to owe Francisca de san José, enslaved mulata of Pedro de Enciso Zorrilla, vecino of Guadalajara, 175 pesos that he borrowed from her, from Enciso's store that Francisca administered.[41] What is important to highlight from this document is that de la Cueva specifically referred to owing money to Francisca, and not to her master, and that she ran her owner's store.

Another particularity of the black urban Atlantic was the fact that enslaved Afro-descendants could hired themselves out and even live in separate houses from their masters. For example, in 1694, Luisa Banegas gave letter of freedom to Clemente Marcos Román, mulato blanco and her slave, for his loyalty and services. In return, he would have to keep

[38] AMG, Actas de Cabildo, 1607-1680, 165r and 232v-233. The original reads: y concertaron con él por el dicho día de Corpus algunas danzas curiosas con mucho lucimiento de vestidos y trajes.
[39] AIPJ, Escribanos, Hernando Enríquez del Castillo, 1, 30.
[40] AIPJ, Escribanos, Andrés Venegas, 1, 169. The original document reads: Entre sus esclavos, uno llamado Juan Marín, que le sirve de tiple, nos haya pedido le diéremos licencia y permiso para que por los días de su vida pueda haber y poseer… y nos, acudiendo con piedad a sus ruegos y peticiones, le tuvimos por bien y le damos la presente para que pueda haber y poseer cualquier cosa y no pueda venderla o enajenarla sin nuestra voluntad, dando noticia al cabildo de esta nuestra iglesia… le damos licencia para que pueda otorgar cualesquiera escritura pública, de obligación no a la persona sino a los bienes… como si en esta parte fueran hechas y otorgadas como persona libre. Y para que conste dimos la presente.
[41] AIPJ, Escribanos, Tomás de Ascoide, 1, 3v.

supporting her financially, as he had been doing, and give her four reales a month for the rest of her life. Similarly, in his petition to the city council for a plot of land in the town of Analco, mulato libre Gregorio Martín mentioned that the lot he requested was located across the street from Pascual's house, who was an enslaved mulato property of Gabriela Fernández. Implying that Pascual, though a slave, had his own house.[42] All across the black urban Atlantic world enslaved Afro-descendants made different types of work arrangements. Slaves who hired themselves out, or whose masters employed them in other people's workshops, ingenios, or obrajes were referred to as *esclavos de guardar* and *jornaleros* in Spanish, or *jornaleiros* and *escravos de ganho* in Portuguese.[43] In Cartagena, for instance, mistresses sent their enslaved women to sell tobacco, candy, and other foodstuff on the streets, and then return with their earnings.[44] We know that something similar happened in seventeenth-century Guadalajara, where enslaved women sold hot chocolate and foodstuff on the streets.[45] The activities these slaves performed varied regionally. In Minas Gerais a number of slaves worked in mining for specific wages. In Rio de Janeiro African or Afro-descendant barbers and bleeders gained social acceptance during the first half of the nineteenth century, which led to relative social advancement. In the English-speaking Atlantic, enslaved ship pilots used their knowledge about the seas to obtain reputation and privileges, that on occasions led to their freedom.[46]

Whether enslaved or free, Afro-descendants experienced different forms of sociability all across the black urban Atlantic world. In cities, peoples of African descent were able to create and sustain various types of associations, often times religious in

[42] AIPJ, Escribanos, Nicolás del Castillo, 2, 303-v-305r; and AMG, Actas de cabildo, 1680-1699, 124r, respectively; for more examples see Delgadillo, "De la devoción," chapter 6.
[43] Dantas, *Black Townsmen*, 85-95; Bernand, *Negros esclavos y libres*, 23, 78-81.
[44] Bernand, *Negros esclavos y libres*, 78.
[45] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 339, expediente 84, 567v and 572.
[46] Carvalho Soares, "African Barbeiros"; and Dawson, "The Cultural Geography."

character, although not exclusively. In the Iberian world these groups took different forms and were known as confraternities, brotherhoods, sodalities, or cabildos de nación, and have been well studied by scholars. Religious brotherhoods for Afro-descendants originated in the Iberian Peninsula during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They initially served the purpose to incorporate the growing African population of some cities into religious life. They were supposed to facilitate the Christianization of Africans and introduce them to Catholic culture.[47]

In the Americas, Europeans intended to use confraternities for the same purposes and to reinforce social hierarchies. Africans and their descendants, however, re-shaped them and gave them new meanings and uses. Brotherhoods and cabildos de nación all over the Atlantic helped to preserve some features of African collective identities, to create new diasporic identities, or to transition from African ethnicities to identities based on European terminologies of difference (such as negro, moreno, or mulato). Sodalities were also mutual aid societies that provided financing for burials, dowries, or manumissions. Ultimately, Afro-descendants sometimes used confraternities to organize a united front against the oppression and injustice of slavery. These corporations, thus, bore cultural, political, and economic implications for Afro-descendants' experiences in the Atlantic world.[48]

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[47] For Spanish confraternities see Ortega Sagrista, "La cofradía de los negros"; Armenteros Martínez, "De hermandades y procesiones"; and Moreno, *La antigua hermandad*.

[48] The literature on the subject is vast, for Argentina see Cruz, "Esclavos, españoles, indios y negros; for Panama, Mena García, "Religión, etnia y sociedad"; for Quito, Verdi Webster, "Ethnicity, Gender, and Visual Culture"; for Peru see Graubart, "'So Color de una Cofradía'"; and Corilla Melchor, "Cofradías en la ciudad de Lima"; for Cuba see See for example Childs, *The 1812 Aponte Rebellion*, chapter 3; and Hevia Lanier, *Prácticas religiosas*; for Brazil Carvalho Soares, *People of Faith*; Kiddy, *Blacks of the Rosary*; Mulvey, "Slave Confraternities in Brazil"; Nishida, "From Ethnicity to Race"; and Russell-Wood, "Black and Mulatto Brotherhoods"; for Uruguay Borucki, *From Shipmates to Soldiers*, chapter 3; for Mexico Roselló, "La cofradía de San Benito"; Von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers*; Masferrer León, "Por las ánimas de los negros"; Luna, "Espacios de convivencia y conflicto"; Ruiz, "La dominación subvertida"; Quiñones Flores, "La cofradía de mulatos"; Sierra Silva, "Culto, color y convivencia"; Rojas, "Esclavos de obraje: consuelo en la devoción"; Castañeda, "Santos negros, devotos de color"; Valerio, "The Failed Suppression"; and Mancuso, *Cofradías mineras*.

Although confraternities did not exist in the English speaking world, Afro-descendants were able to create associations that worked as mutual aid societies and gave them social recognition within the African-American community. In colonial New York, for example, Africans and their descendants participated in the holiday of Pinkster, or the feast of Pentecost. Afro-descendants played drums, fiddles, and rattles in those celebrations. In later epochs, they also selected a man from their community to be "governor" for one day. This festival, and the election of a symbolical leader echoes ceremonies held across Latin America in which Afro-descendants chose kings and queens.[49] In Charleston, Afro-descendants established and supported at least six associations between 1790 and 1850. These served as mutual aid societies that provided members and their families with financial support, they also kept private burial plots, and gave "bourgeois respectability" to people of African descent. Further, somewhat similar to what happened in Latin America, these organizations were divided along color lines, between those considered blacks and those deemed as mulattos.[50]

We know that in Guadalajara Afro-descendants participated in confraternities since the sixteenth century, and that the sodalities they founded kept existing well into the nineteenth century. Contrary to what happened in Charleston and with the cabildos de nación, but similarly to other Latin American cities, brotherhoods in Guadalajara for the most part accepted peoples of different backgrounds. Afro-descendants, thus, negotiated their place in these associations and within the social hierarchy in general. As a result, like many of their

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[49] Harris, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, 40-41; Mello e Souza, *Reis negros*; Fromont ed. *Afro-Catholic Festivals*; and Walker, "The Queen of los Congos."
[50] Garrison Marks, *Black Freedom*, 119-140.

Latin American counterparts, confraternities in Guadalajara were divided in groups comprising those born in Africa and the native-born.[51]

Thus far we have seen some of the most salient features of Afro-descendants' experiences in the black urban Atlantic, and how they also experienced many of these in Guadalajara. While in general terms it is accurate to say that Afro-descendants living in cities did not endured the same hardships as their peers in plantation or rural societies, the urban context imposed its own constraints over this population. Afro-descendants living in cities were subjected to different types of surveillance. Also, although able to reach imperial institutions more easily, they were sometimes helpless against their masters' abuse of power. In urban settings, Afro-descendants also saw themselves trapped in the middle of larger political conflicts unrelated to them. It would be worthwhile to exemplify these types of experiences with a few vignettes from seventeenth-century Guadalajara.

At eight o'clock on Saturday night, 21 august 1621, Isabel Dávila Zepeda *parda*, 19 years of age, came before Juan Martínez de Çugastimendia, *comisario* of the Inquisition and canon of the Cathedral of Guadalajara to ask for protection from her master. In her denunciation, Isabel claimed that two and a half years earlier, when she was doña Mariana de Vera's slave in Guadalajara, Pedro Dávila Zepeda priest of Tequila, and also Isabel's paternal uncle, bought her for 500 pesos with the intention to free her, but instead brought her to Tequila with him. Upon a few months at his service, Pedro Dávila began to molest Isabel, and abused her several times in the course of a year.[52] The same night of Isabel's

[51] For a detailed analysis of the origins, structure, and workings of confraternities in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Guadalajara see chapters 3 and 4 of this study.

[52] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 339, expediente 82, f. 596. Beatriz de Cuevas, mulata and Isabel's mother, later confirmed this statement, f. 598. The historiography on slave litigants in Latin America is vast, see for example Mckinley, *Fractional Freedoms*; Bryant, *Rivers of Gold, Lives of Bondage*; Premo, *The Enlightenment on Trial*; and Cowling, *Conceiving Freedom*.

declaration, Juan Martínez ordered to keep her safe in Hernando de Mujica's house, who was accountant of the Royal Treasury in Guadalajara. A few days later, Pedro Dávila, who was well connected in Guadalajara, knew about Isabel's case, arrived in the city, and declared to Juan Martínez that Isabel's accusations were "false and sinister", and that the Inquisition had neither the right of taking Isabel from him, nor to judge this case.[53] From this point, Pedro Dávila mobilized his social networks to get Isabel back as soon as possible. On 1 September, Diego Rodríguez, Isabel's husband, sent a letter to Juan Martínez telling him that Pedro Dávila and Bartolomé de Arbides, *juez provisor* of the bishopric of Guadalajara, put him in jail and would keep him there until Isabel retracted her accusation. On 9 September, Hernando de Mujica asked Juan Martínez to release him from safeguarding Isabel, because Bartolomé de Arbides had threaten him with excommunicating him if he did not give him Isabel back.[54] On 14 September, Juan Martínez sent a letter to the Tribunal of the Inquisition in Mexico City to ask about how to proceed with the case, and in the interim moved Isabel to another house. The tribunal's response arrived several months later, and on 23 December 1621, Juan Martínez informed Isabel Dávila that she should bring her case before the civil authorities, that he could not do anything more for her.[55]

Isabel's case in the Inquisition records ended there. However, 17 years later, on 3 December 1638, Pedro Dávila appointed Manuel Xara, vecino of Guadalajara, a power of attorney to bring back a slave that had run away from him "many years ago." In this document, Pedro Dávila declared that he had news that Isabel lived in Acapulco and had four children, all of them his "legitimate slaves." The priest asked Xara to bring Isabel and her

[53] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 339, expediente 82, ff. 592-593.
[54] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 339, expediente 82, ff. 587-588 y 591.
[55] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 339, expediente 82, ff. 600-602v.

children to Guadalajara, or to collect from them a "just price" for their freedom.[56] Whether Isabel and her children were captured, paid for their freedom, or ran away again, I do not know.

Then we have the case of Alonso de Games. He was a mulato, accused of robbing some Lázaro de Aguirre in a place called La quemada. He was trialed and found guilty of robbery. Subsequently, he was sentenced to death by hanging. The sentence was to be executed on 7 February 1667. When the executioner was putting Alonso on the gallows and pulling the rope to carry out the sentence, suddenly the rope broke, and Alonso's body fell to the floor. Then, the clergy who was on the plaza witnessing the execution took him "with violence" and brought him with them inside the cathedral. According to the laws of the Indies, churches and religious building were considered places of sanctuary, wherein people could go and seek asylum, however, in this case Alonso could not do that for himself and the application of the law did not seem to apply for him.[57] Two judges from the royal court and other civic authorities quickly entered into the cathedral and forced with the clergy over Alonso's body (later in the case it was known that Alonso was dead). One of the religious men took the Holy Sacrament and placed it in front of Alonso to protect him, to which the authorities responded that "there was no need of such a demonstration for such a small thing." After some more fighting (according to some testimonies both parties might have had knives and swords), the clergy gave Alonso's body back to the authorities and they placed it on the gallows so people could see him and make an example of him. The matter, however, did not

[56] AIPJ, Escribanos, Francisco de Orendáin, 7, 112.
[57] *Recopilación*, book I, title V.

end there. A quarrel between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of the city ensued, and the people who entered the cathedral were excommunicated.[58]

Thirdly, we have the case of Bartola de san Juan. Bartola was a mulata slave. Her mistress was the nun Magdalena del Espíritu Santo of the convent of Santa María de Gracia. On 17 April 1681 Bartola came before the comisario Baltazar de la Peña y Medina to declare that during the first week of Lent "with despair, rancor, and anger said with all her heart that she renounced God, the saints, and that she was not Christian, neither she wanted to believe in the law of God." She also said that she decided to confess after talking with other nuns and conscious about what she had done. This case in itself did not spark the attention of the inquisition, at least not at that moment. A year and a half later, on 7 November 1682, Bartola declared that in her previous confession she omitted that on a feast day when communing she took the Host out of her moth with anger, and resentment of God, and threw it away whishing that God destroyed her soul. This time, Bartola's confession initiated an inquisitorial process that lasted for four years and ended with the reinsertion of Bartola into the Christian community. During the case, it was known that Bartola's mistress was mistreating her and that that caused Bartola's behavior, something common in blasphemy cases.[59] After some inquiries that lasted over a year, the authorities declared that Bartola was not apt to receive communion or to observe the sacraments, and that therefore she should remain in the convent without talking to anyone about this. After two pleas written by Bartola herself, where she declared about the social pressures of not communing or observing the sacraments, on 11 January 1684, authorities condemned Bartola to minor penance and to confess every two

[58] The whole case can be found on ARAG, Ramo Criminal, caja 73, expediente 13.
[59] I have treated the subject of blasphemy elsewhere Delgadillo, "Las caras de la resistencia"; on blasphemy in colonial Mexico see for example Villa-Flores "To Lose One's Soul"; and Castañeda, "De reniegos e improperios."

weeks until she was ready to commune and to observe the sacraments again. Magdalena del Espíritu Santo, Bartola's mistress, was barely mentioned during the case and did not receive even an admonition.[60]

Lastly, we have Francisco de Paula's story. On 2 April 1692 Pedro Henríquez de la Selva, judge of the royal court of Guadalajara, declared before that institution that he had found his mulato slave and coachman Francisco de Paula lying on the kitchen's floor shackled and with a wound on the neck. Therefore, the judge asked, to start inquiring on the causes of this event. The first to testify was the surgeon who was taking care of Francisco de Paula; Herníquez de la Selvas' other servants and slaves followed. All of them declared that Francisco had inflicted that wound to himself after having been lashed for losing a blanket that his master gave him. The court, then decided to wait until Francisco de Paula's recovery to question him, in the meantime, it summoned more witnesses to confirm what the rest had testified. In his testimony, Francisco de Paula not only confirmed that he was lashed for losing a blanket but that his master mistreated him constantly and did not feed him well. Further, a day after he was lashed heard that his master wanted to do it again and decided to take his own life. The investigation then, turn to corroborate Francisco's statement. The case, however, took a dramatic turn after this. The court questioned Henríquez de la Selva's slaves again asking about the treatment he gave them and about Francisco. While they did not deny that Francisco was lashed, they contradict him regarding the rest of his statement. They said that they were all well-fed and treated. More importantly, they contended that Francisco was planning to kill his master, but when his plans failed he decided to take his own life. Whether one version or the other is true or not we do not know, and is perhaps irrelevant. What we do

[60] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 643, expediente 1. A complete English translation, as well as a Spanish transcription of Bartola's letter to the Holy Office can be found in Appendix 1, document 1.

know is that Francisco was sentenced to another hundred lashes and to be exiled from the city for four years.[61]

Although in many aspects extreme, these cases represent the complex situation of many slaves across colonial Spanish America; at once able to access institutions to make their voices heard, but uncertain if their (uneven) power of negotiation would suffice to better their condition. It also shows the specific social pressures and constraints that Afro-descendants endured in urban contexts. In Alonso de Games' case, it also exemplifies how, even if they did not want it to, Afro-descendants were in the middle of larger political forces.

Moving forward in time, the eighteenth century was a period of economic and demographic growth, as well as time of expanding political influence for Guadalajara. Indeed, one might argue that the late eighteenth century was the apogee of colonial Guadalajara. Regarding population, from starting the century with about 10,000 inhabitants, the city grew to 15,000 by 1738. By 1770 this figure increased to 22,394, then it slightly decreased to 21,163, or 19,192 according to different estimates, in 1777. By 1793 the city had between 24,249 and 28,250 inhabitants. Subsequently in 1803, Guadalajara counted with 34,697 people. Finally, it closed the colonial period with 38,021 inhabitants in 1821-1822. Throughout most of this period Afro-descendants remained a considerable population group, amounting up to 35% of the city's inhabitants for most of the eighteenth century.[62]

Demographic historians find that Guadalajara was the city with the second highest growth rate in New Spain during the eighteenth century, only surpassed by Guanajuato. At

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[61] ARAG, Criminal, caja 73, expediente 20. This case has been treated elsewhere, Calvo, "Une drame personnel."
[62] For these different figures see Calvo, *Guadalajara y su región*, 52; Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*, 29-36; Rabel, *Oaxaca en el siglo XVIII*, 53; Castañeda and Gómez, "La población de Guadalajara"; and Hardin, *Household Mobility*, 35-41. How large the different sources considered to be the jurisdiction of the city explain the varying population estimates. For a more detailed analysis of the Afro-descendant population of Guadalajara during this period see chapter 5.

the beginning of the nineteenth century it also was the fourth largest city in the viceroyalty and one of the largest interior cities in the whole hemisphere. Guadalajara compared closely with cities like Buenos Aires that had about 38,000 people in 1800, Caracas with 31,000, or Santiago de Chile with 30,000 on the same date. Mexican cities similar in size to Guadalajara during this period were Guanajuato that counted with 32,098 people in 1793 and 41,000 in 1803, or Querétaro that had 25,581 inhabitants in 1777 and 31,641 in 1804. In contrast, the largest cities in the hemisphere were still Mexico City with 137,000 people in 1803 and Puebla also in Mexico with 67,800 people in 1803. Lima had lagged somewhat behind compared to Mexican cities and it had 52,627 inhabitants in 1791 and then 64,628 in 1820. The largest Brazilian cities during this period were Salvador with 51,000 people in 1807, Rio de Janeiro with 46,944 in 1803, and Sao Paulo with 24,311 on that same year. The largest cities in the United States in 1800 were New York with 60,515 people, Philadelphia with 41,220, and Baltimore with 26,514. In the Caribbean, Kingston, Jamaica, for example, had 26,748 people in 1788, making it the third largest town in the contemporary English-speaking Americas. In contrast, Havana, the largest city in the region had 51,000 people in 1792 (see table 1.3).[63] In all of these cases Afro-descendants were a significant proportion of the population. For example, free people of color amounted to 19% of the population of Havana in 1790. This figure further increased to 25.4% in 1820. In Kingston, enslaved Afro-descendants were 62.9% of the population in 1788 and free people of color were 12.4% of the city's population on the same date.[64]

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[63] For the population of Mexican cities in the eighteenth century and their growth rates see Rabel, *Oaxaca en el siglo XVIII*, 53-54; for the other Spanish American cities see Borah, "Latin American Cities," 9-10; for Brazilian cities Alden, "Late Colonial Brazil," 605; for US cities see www.census.gov; for Kingston Burnard, "Kingston, Jamaica," 126-127.
[64] De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Free, Becoming Black*, 156; and Burnard, "Kingston, Jamaica," 126-127.

Table 1.3 Guadalajara Compared to Other Atlantic Cities ca. 1800

City	Population	City	Population
Mexico City	137,000	Guanajuato	41,000
Puebla	67,800	Buenos Aires	38,000
New York	60,515	Guadalajara	34,697
Lima	52,627	Querétaro	31,641
Havana	51,000	Caracas	31,000
Salvador	51,000	Santiago de Chile	30,000
Rio de Janeiro	46,944	Kingston	26,748
Philadelphia	41,220	Baltimore	26,514

Sources: For the population of Mexican cities see Rabel, *Oaxaca en el siglo XVIII*, 53-54; for the other Spanish American cities Borah, "Latin American Cities," 9-10; for Brazilian cities Alden, "Late Colonial Brazil," 605; for US cities see www.census.gov; for Kingston Burnard, "Kingston, Jamaica," 126-127.

The demographic growth of Latin American urban centers happened in the midst of a larger context of political reform and economic expansion. In the Portuguese empire the Pombaline reforms and in Spanish America the Bourbon reforms pretended to strengthen the Crown's control over territories, resources, and peoples living under these empires. These transformations consisted in the reorganization of the Brazilian and Spanish American territories, the diversification of economic activities or the expansion of existing ones, as well as the opening of new zones of resource-extraction and seaports. These changes let to the creation of new urban centers in regions previously peripheral for these empires, and to the growth of older cities. In concrete, in Brazil, the development of cotton agriculture, the discovery of gold and diamond mines, and the expansion of the coffee and cacao industries were accompanied by demographic growth. In Spanish America, the opening of new ports like Buenos Aires, the implementation of policies that favored trade, the economic expansion to new areas like Venezuela, the rising of the sugar industry in Cuba, and the peaking of silver mining in New Spain, all favored the process of urbanization described before.[65]

[65] On the Bourbon reforms see among many others Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, part I; *The First America*, chapter 21; Stein and Stein, *Apogee of Empire*; Kuethe and Blaisdell, "French Influence"; Pearce, *The Origins of Bourbon Reform*; studies in Spanish are Pietschmann, *Las reformas borbónicas*; Vázquez ed. *Interpretaciones del siglo XVIII*; García ed. *Las reformas borbónicas*; and Pérez Herrero et al., *Las reformas borbónicas*; on reforms in Brazil see Maxwell, *Pombal, Paradox of the Enlightenment*; and Paquette, *Imperial*

Guadalajara and the western region of New Spain were also part of these larger historical processes. The population growth of Guadalajara can be explained by a multiplicity of factors. First, historians have unearthed a process of migration from overpopulated rural areas to the city during the better part of the eighteenth century and as a result of the wars for independence during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Second, during this period Guadalajara was an important market for an array of products like fruits, sugar, cattle, as well as raw materials for the textile and leather industries. The opening of the Pacific port of San Blas in 1774 and the discovery of silver mines in Bolaños to the north, in the 1760s, also attracted both capital and people to the city and its region.[66]

As mentioned before, the eighteenth century, and particularly the second half, was a period of prosperity for colonial Guadalajara as well as of expansion in terms of political, economic, and cultural influence. The bishopric of Nueva Galicia, or Guadalajara, reached all the way to California and Texas during the first half of the eighteenth century. This would later change with the creation of the bishoprics of Linares in 1777 and of Sonora in 1779, that took most of the northern territories from Guadalajara's jurisdiction. Guadalajara, in contrast, would absorb from the bishopric of Michoacán in 1789 the parishes of La Barca, Atotonilco, Ocotlán, Zapotlán, and Colima.[67] The high court, however, would keep its influence over the western and northern regions of the viceroyalty for the whole colonial period.

Portugal; for the process of urbanization in Spanish America Morse, "The Urban Development"; for Brazil Alden, "Late Colonial Brazil."

[66] On these processes see Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*, chapters 2 and 8 in general; Hardin, *Household Mobility*, 37-41; and Lindley, *Haciendas and Economic Development*, 22-31.

[67] For the history of the bishopric during the eighteenth century see Taylor, *Magistrates of the Sacred*, chapter 2 in general; and González Escoto, *Historia breve de la Iglesia*, 233-235.

Since the foundation of the city and beginning with Nuño Beltrán de Guzmán, regional elites shared the common interest of being as independent from Mexico City as possible. In this sense, following a long negotiation with metropolitan authorities, often times obstructed by Mexico City's elites, authorities from Guadalajara got approval to establish the University of Guadalajara in 1791, that began its functions the following year. The university further attracted people from all over the western and northern regions of the viceroyalty into the city and educated some of the men who would participate in the cortes of Cadiz and in the Mexican process of independence.[68]

Two projects under the auspices of the Catholic Church further expanded the city's area of influence and favored its population growth. In 1794 authorities finalized the construction of new building for the royal hospital of San Miguel de Belén to the northwest of the city. With this work, Guadalajara counted with the only public hospital west of Guanajuato. The hospital also brought people to the city from all across the region, as the extant lists of patients attest.[69] Almost at the end of the colonial period bishop Juan Cruz Ruiz de Cabañas ordered the construction of an *hospicio y casa de misericordia* to help the growing impoverished population of the city and promote Christian charity. When it was finished, the building became one of the largest constructions of colonial Spanish America and is now one of the landmarks of the city.[70]

If the creation of a university in the city consolidated and expanded the cultural influence of Guadalajara, local elites extended further their economic reach over the region

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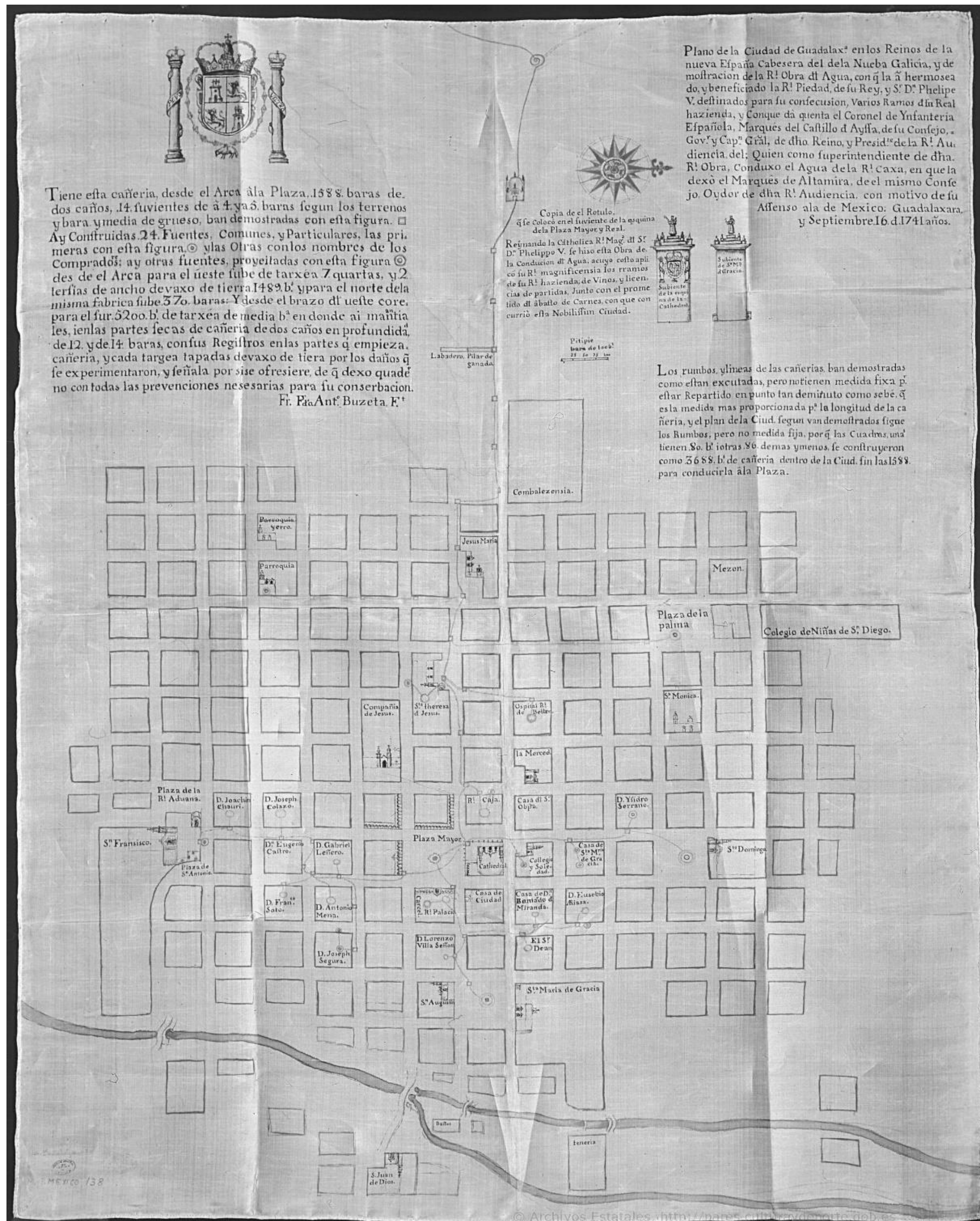
[68] See for example Castañeda, *La educación en Guadalajara*.
[69] On the history of the hospital see Oliver, *El Hospital Real*; *Los Betlemitas y la construcción*; and Salas, "Entre la insurgencia y las enfermedades"; on the history of hospitals in the viceroyalty Muriel, *Hospitales de la Nueva España*.
[70] On the history of this building see for example Rosas et al., *Hospicio Cabañas*; and González Escoto, *Historia breve de la Iglesia*, 285-289.

with the creation of a Royal merchants' guild (*Real consulado de comercio*) in 1795, and a Royal mint in 1811. The creation of these two institutions responded to the local elites' preoccupation to break with Mexico City's monopoly on trade and on the control of silver. These institutions allowed Guadalajara's elites to defend their privileges, expand their economic interests to a larger area, and use the taxes collected from trade in construction works for the city.[71]

In this regard, the city suffered a series of transformations during the eighteenth century but driven more by necessity than by the local elites' agenda. In 1731 the high court got permission from the king to bring to the city architect fray Pedro Buzeta to design and implement a project to alleviate the city's long-lasting problems with water supply. Indeed, despite being just south from the Santiago River, and on the margins of one of its tributaries, the San Juan de Dios River, the city suffered almost from its foundation from a lack of water. The San Juan de Dios river's stream was so small that quickly became the place in which most of the city's waste was disposed. Water from the Santiago River, for its part, was practically inaccessible because of the massive gorges that follow the river's path. Buzeta analyzed the terrain and created a plan to provide the city with water from other nearby sources. It consisted in making a series of wells, ditches, and aqueducts on strategic places (se figure 1.3). The project was completed in 1741 and was so efficient that local authorities did not have to make subsequent works until the end of the nineteenth century.[72]

[71] Mexican scholar Antonio Ibarra has written extensively on these subjects, see for example *Mercado e institución*; *La organización regional*, and "Redes de circulación"; studies about Guadalajara's elites are Olveda, *La oligarquía*; Castañeda ed., *Círculos de poder*; "La formación de la élite"; on the history of merchants' guilds in New Spain Valle Pavón ed., *Mercaderes, comercio y consulados*.
[72] On this subject see Recio, "El acueducto de Guadalajara"; and Torres, "Infraestructura hidráulica."

Figure 1.3 Guadalajara in 1741



Source: AGI, Mapas y Planos, México, 138
Available online: http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedad20/catalogo/show/20970

As part of the reforming spirit of the period authorities also implemented a series of changes to organize Guadalajara and its inhabitants in order to create a more modern city. As a result of the rapid population growth of the late eighteenth century previously described

and the expansion of the city to new areas, authorities saw the need to better organize the territory. Between 1790 and 1809 authorities decided to standardize a naming system for the city's streets, which they also paved, official also numbered each of the city's blocks and houses, and recorded the inns, workshops, stores, and other businesses operating in Guadalajara. More importantly, perhaps, authorities implemented a system that divided the city into wards or *cuarteles*, each of which counted with and official in charge of promoting peace, work, and hygiene among the population, these officials also had to combat vagrancy, idleness, vices, and crime within their jurisdiction. This division also pretended to improve taxation, and other record keeping practices. The organization of Guadalajara in wards, however, varied over time. In 1790 authorities divided the city in 14 districts. The next year, officials thought to be more efficient to have just four wards. Ultimately, in 1809 new authorities decided to organize the city into 24 cuarteles. This organization is important, and it will be recurrently mentioned in subsequent chapters.[73]

By the end of the colonial period, then, Guadalajara was a city with a population of almost 40,000 people. It boasted many religious and civil buildings, most of them constructed in the late-colonial period. It had a cathedral, three neighborhood churches (Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, Nuestra Señora del Pilar, and Aranzazú), five parishes (Sagrario, Mexicaltzingo, Analco, Santuario de Guadalupe, and Jesús), seven monasteries (San Francisco, San Agustín, Santo Domingo, San Juan de Dios, La Merced, El Carmen, and San Felipe Neri), as well as seven convents (Santa María de Gracia, Santa Mónica, Jesús María, Santa Teresa, Capuchinas, Agustina, and Carmelitas). Guadalajara also had two schools for girls or young women (San Diego and Santa Clara), and three for boys or young men

[73] On the organization of the city in wards see Delgadillo Guerrero, "La división de Guadalajara"; on the works for paving the city streets between 1791 and 1798 Pérez Verdía, "Guadalajara a principios."

(Seminario Clerical, Seminario Tridentino, and Seminario de San Juan Bautista). It was the seat of a high court, a bishopric, a Royal merchants' guild, a Royal mint, and university. Therefore, by this time Guadalajara was the political, economic, religious, and cultural center for the western and northern regions of the viceroyalty. In many ways it was truly a cosmopolitan place. It had a growing textile industry (the economic sector that employed the most people in the city), and Spanish, South American and British merchants operated in Guadalajara, flooding it with their capital and connecting it with the economic and political processes of the Atlantic world.[74]

In late-colonial Guadalajara Afro-descendants participated in nearly every economic sector, taking part of all the processes described before. Further, whether enslaved or free, Afro-descendants across the black urban Atlantic represented a considerable percentage of the artisan labor force. By far the clothing and textile sector of the economy (that as we have seen grew in importance in the late eighteenth century) employed the largest percentage of Afro-Mexicans. Most of these individual worked as tailors and weavers. Other important occupation employing Afro-descendants in Guadalajara were shoemaker, blacksmith, carpenter, and hat maker.[75] In eighteenth-century Mexico City, 37% of free-colored militiamen were employed in the clothing and textile sectors, 20% in the leatherwork sector, and 10% in metalwork. In eighteenth century Puebla, similarly, 40% of free Afro-descendants were employed in the clothing and textile sector, while 22% were in transport and services. Lastly, in contemporary Valladolid, now Morelia, 56% of free-colored

[74] On the different works of architecture in the city see Hardin, *Household Mobility*, 39-41; and González Escoto, *Historia breve de la Iglesia*, 290-313; on the British, Panamanian, Ecuadorian, and Spanish merchants in late-colonial Guadalajara see Lindley, *Haciendas and Economic Development*, chapter 4.

[75] For a detailed analysis of occupational patterns of Afro-Mexicans in late-colonial Guadalajara see chapter 5 of this study.

militiamen worked in the clothing and textiles, 10% in transport and services, and 10% in leatherwork.[76]

Other Atlantic cities presented somewhat similar occupational patterns to those of colonial Mexico. In Cartagena, for example, a list of artisans from 1780 reported that in the neighborhood of Santo Toribio 90% of all artisans were of African descent. This percentage further increases if one takes into account only the five most common crafts: tailor, shoemaker, carpenter, barber and mason. In this case, 94% of artisans in these trades were either pardos or negros. In the neighborhood of Las Mercedes about 95% of all artisans were Afro-descendants. In that part of the city the most common occupations were tailor, carpenter, barber, scribe, and tobacconist. Pardos dominated in all of these trades. Lastly, in the neighborhood of Santa Catalina Afro-descendants made 77% of all artisans. Considering just the five most common trades (tailor, carpenter, shoemaker, barber, and mason), pardos and negros totaled 93% of artisans. Significantly, similar to what happened in eighteenth-century New Spain, in Cartagena there was a militia membership and artisan status. In Cartagena as a whole, 67% of artisans were enlisted in the militia. Afro-descendants in particular represented 48% of all individuals who were both artisans and militia members.[77] These trends are echoed in other Spanish American societies like Cuba.[78]

In the English-speaking Atlantic world, the presence of African-descended peoples in the artisan labor force, although considerable, was not as numerous as in the case of Cartagena. In Charleston, for instance, a city census of 1848 reported that free and enslaved

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[76] For these figures see Vinson, *Bearing Arms*, 105-115.

[77] For the figures of artisans by neighborhood in Cartagena see Garrison Marks, *Black Freedom*, 98-100; for the link between artisan status and militia membership see Solano and Flores, "Artilleros pardos y morenos artistas."

[78] For a study of artisans in Havana see Reid-Vazquez, *Year of the Lash*.

Afro-descendants amounted to 56% of all workers in the four most common artisan occupations in the city, that is barber, carpenter, shoemaker, and tailor. Also in contrast to Guadalajara and Cartagena, the majority of these Afro-descendants were enslaved. It is worth noting, nonetheless, that despite totaling only 6% of the Charleston's population, free Afro-descendants were about 78% of all barbers, 48% of shoemakers, and 30% of tailors.[79] In other US cities, like eighteenth-century Baltimore, enslaved Afro-descendants were employed in high numbers in the shipbuilding industry.[80]

That enslaved Afro-descendants had more opportunities to negotiate labor arrangements, to hire themselves out, and access to a wide array of crafts in cities, resulted in relatively higher manumission rates all across the black urban Atlantic in comparison with plantation societies and rural settings. The manumission of slaves is one of the most studied aspects of the history of this population. Despite that there were some regional differences regarding how slaves got their freedom and which slaves tended to be liberated more often, scholars have signaled various trends that for the most part hold true for the black urban Atlantic in general. All over the Atlantic world women tended to get their freedom in higher numbers than men through legal means. Age-wise, children and young adults about the age of 20 obtained their freedom more often. In contrast, the elderly are notoriously underrepresented among freed slaves. Another important pattern to note is that native-born slaves were more likely to get their freedom than African-born slaves. Further, enslaved Afro-descendants were more likely to get their freedom by purchasing it, rather than to get it

[79] Garrison Marks, *Black Freedom*, 91-97.
[80] Dantas, *Black Townsmen*, chapter 3.

voluntarily from their masters. Ultimately, manumission rates were higher in Iberian societies in comparison with the French or English-speaking Atlantic world.[81]

Manumission patterns in seventeenth-century Guadalajara align neatly with general Atlantic trends. The only study about manumission in seventeenth-century Guadalajara reported that 58.5% of slaves manumitted between 1630 and 1699 were women. Age-wise, 38.5% of all manumitted slaves were 25 years of age or younger. Lastly 55.7 of the slaves paid for their freedom. While there is no study about manumission in eighteenth-century Guadalajara, extant research shows that enslaved Afro-descendants appealed to courts more often than in any other time to fight for different causes. This in itself, is also an Atlantic pattern seen elsewhere.[82]

To conclude this chapter, then, we saw that Guadalajara was part of larger Atlantic processes since its very beginning. We also saw that Afro-descendants were present in the city since it foundation and played important roles in society. This chapter has stressed that Afro-descendants' experiences were different in many aspects to those living in rural and plantation contexts, and that many of these experiences in the urban context can be observable all across the Atlantic. What we have not considered with many detail is how Europeans arrived already with preconceptions and ideas about Afro-descendants and based

[81] For Brazil see for example Klein, *Slavery in Brazil*, chapter 9; Schwartz, "The Manumission of Slaves"; Nishida, "Manumission and Ethnicity"; Sweet, "Manumission in Rio"; for Peru see Bowser, *The African Slave*, chapter 10; Aguirre, "Agentes de su propia emancipación"; Hunefeldt, *Paying the Price*, chapter 1; McKinley, *Fractional Freedoms*, chapter 4; for Colombia for example Mejía and Córdoba, "La manumisión de esclavos"; Pita Pico, "La manumisión en Santander"; Cano, "Reclamos y manumisión" and Pérez Morales, "Manumission on the Land"; for Argentina, Johnson, "Manumission in Colonial Buenos Aires"; Valenzuela, "De esclavizados a libres"; and Edwards, *Hiding in Plain Sight*; for Mexico Naveda, "Mecanismos para la compra"; Guevara, "El proceso de liberación"; Proctor, "Gender and the Manumission"; some comparative studies are De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Free, Becoming Black*; Branashute and Sparks, *Paths to Freedom*; Helg, *Slave No More*, chapters 3 and 9; Dantas, *Black Townsmen*, chapter 4; and Garrison Marks, *Black Freedom*, chapter 1.

[82] For manumission in seventeenth-century Guadalajara Calvo, *Poder, religion y Sociedad*, 339; for enslaved Afro-descendants bringing their causes to justice in eighteenth-century Guadalajara, Martínez Castellanos, *Esclavos rebeldes*; for how this was also an Atlantic trend see Premo, *The Enlightenment on Trial*; De la Fuente, "Slaves and the creation of Legal Rights"; and Proctor, "Slave Versus Master Litigation."

on this tried to fit them into a social hierarchy. How Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara negotiated and even shaped this hierarchy is the subject of subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2

The Workings of *Calidad*

On January 23, 1809, José Francisco Osorio, second corporal of the *Costa Sur* (South coast) militia of New Spain, petitioned before lieutenant Don Juan Antonio Brizuela to be transferred from the fifth company of infantry to the second company of cavalry. In his petition, Osorio explained that the fifth company was comprised of *pardos*, that he was a Spaniard of "pure blood, commonly known and deemed as such," thus he asked for his transfer because he feared to be reputed as pardo from then on.[1] This case elicits several questions, why would a Spaniard be afraid of being reputed as a pardo? What led Spanish authorities to assign a Spaniard to a pardo unit in the first place? And how did social differentiation work in the Spanish empire so that cases like this could be possible? Jose Francisco Osorio's case is far from being unique, for between December 1808 and February 1809, fifty other soldiers asked being released from their duties or being transferred from pardo units to Spanish ones.[2]

The 51 petitions are a rich source of information about the construction of difference in the late colonial period. They also provide valuable evidence about the lives of Spanish soldiers and their allegiance to the empire. More importantly, Osorio's example offers us a starting point to analyze the "disappearance" of Afro-descendants from Guadalajara during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a

[1] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, f. 16. The Spanish word pardo literally means "brown". It was used to refer to people of mixed African and European or African and Indigenous ancestry.

[2] In these cases, the soldiers used pardo and mulato interchangeably, so I use the terms in the same way. For classic studies on the Spanish army see McAlister, *The Fuero Militar*; Archer, *The Army in Bourbon Mexico*; and Vinson III, *Bearing Arms*; for a more recent study see Borucki, *From Shipmates to Soldiers*.

framework from which to analyze the construction of identities in Guadalajara, and more broadly in colonial Spanish America. In order to show the workings of social differentiation this chapter draws from a wide array of sources. It relies on different judicial cases from the Archivo de la Real Audiencia de Guadalajara (the Archive of the High Court of Guadalajara) and the Archivo Municipal de Guadalajara (the Municipal Archive of Guadalajara). It also draws from printed primary sources and secondary literature from other Spanish dominions to illuminate the imperial character of the construction of difference.

The most recent studies of the construction of difference and social hierarchies in Spanish America have called into question the idea of the *sistema de castas* (caste system) by uncovering the lack of systematization in social labeling.[3] This has led them to stress the situational and contextual character of social classification and its political uses. At the same time, these studies have highlighted the significance of labeling for people's social lives and their interactions with institutions.[4] Using the case of Afro-descendants in colonial Mexico, several authors have emphasized the various ways in which this population could negotiate their place within their hierarchy.[5] Scholars have also begun to analyze not only how Afro-descendants' engagement with legal processes at the ground level shaped notions of social difference and slavery, but also how the "legal regimes" framed the actions of these subjects.[6] This work joins this growing scholarship and proposes that a focus on the historical terms that people on the ground used as distinctions markers is paramount to understanding not only the construction of difference in the Spanish Empire, but also to situating the legal

[3] Carbajal López, *La población de Bolaños*; "Introducción," 7-15; Becerra Jiménez, "¿Familias pluriétnicas o procesos de mestizaje?" 83-114; Castillo Palma, "Calidad socio racial," 173-210.
[4] Restall, *The Black Middle*; Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "La trampa de las castas"; and Rappaport, *The Disappearing Mestizo*.
[5] For scholarship on Afro Mexicans see Vinson III, "Afro-Mexican History"; Velázquez Gutiérrez and Correa Duró, coords., *Poblaciones y culturas de origen africano en México*.
[6] See for example Gross and de la Fuente, "Slaves, Free Blacks, and Race."

processes of differentiation as central to imperial formation. More importantly, throughout this chapter, and this work in general, runs a critique of the incessant application of the concept of race across historical periods and geographical contexts.

If we are to understand how Afro-descendants from the Guadalajara region stopped using the social categories associated with African ancestry and began to use those of español, indio, mestizo or simply that of citizen at the end of the colonial period, we ought to grasp the concept of calidad. Throughout the colonial period, the Spanish crown based its control over the population of the New World on inequality. It built a legal apparatus that distributed privileges and obligations to people according to their calidad. This system was mutable, constructed through time, and even had specific legislation for particular regions, or groups of people. Moreover, the classifications used in Spain varied from those used in its domains, or between viceroyalties.[7] However, from the north of New Spain to the south of Río de la Plata, calidad -in its abstract sense- was at the center of governance. A person's calidad determined whether the person would be taxed or not, and how. It determined if one could hold offices or have access to certain crafts. It also defined if one was subject to slavery or not. Calidad, thus was a tool of governance with many political uses.[8]

When Iberians arrived to the Americas they already counted with sophisticated vocabularies about difference. These vocabularies were based on a set of beliefs,

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[7] See for example the correspondence between the High Court of Guadalajara and the Royal Council of the Indies during the late seventeenth century, in which the Council asked the Court not to label the offspring of Spaniards and mulatos as *moriscos*. Archivo General de Indias (AGI), Audiencia de Guadalajara, 232, Libro 8, f. 68, and Libro 9, f. 10, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. I, 61-62, and 81-82. For the variety of terminology about difference used in New Granada see for example Solano, "Repensando la configuración"; for Perú, Cahill, "Color by Numbers."

[8] In arguing this I build upon Bryant insights on what he calls "race governance" or governing through slavery, see *Rivers of Gold, Lives of Bondage*. It must be said that the author's insistence on imposing an anachronistic term such as race onto colonial Spanish American history leads him to stretch that notion far beyond its more common modern usage; therefore rendering it useless.

preconceptions, and understandings about human difference developed during centuries of contact between various peoples of the Mediterranean and beyond. Most of the labeling and differentiation practices that Spaniards applied in the Americas were already observable in fifteenth-century Europe. These would be later altered and transformed as colonial societies developed, and as African slavery became by far the most common form of coerced labor.

By the late fifteenth century Iberians had developed a multifaceted and overlapping set of categories of difference based on socioeconomic status, ethnic or religious background, and geographic origin.[9] These classifications, in turn, were the direct antecedent of notions of calidad in Spanish America. Together, they provided a holistic assessment of people's character that allowed authorities to place them within a hierarchy. In the case of Afro-descendants, the terms *negro*, *mulato*, and *morisco* arose from the centuries-long contact between Muslims, Christians from the Iberian Peninsula, and Africans. Initially, Iberians used terms such as *moro* and *sarraceno* to describe peoples, and slaves in particular, from North Africa or the Middle East, and of Muslim background. As Iberians encountered peoples from sub-Saharan Africa, they began to use the term negro to describe them.[10] As early as the thirteenth century, Iberians described slaves from the Mediterranean trade based on skin color in addition to their geographic origin or ethnic background, such that they used terms like sarraceno blanco, sarraceno negro, or sarraceno loro, to name a few.[11] With time, similarly to what happened with socioeconomic differences, Iberians began to construe a strong association between somatic differences and moral or cultural ones.[12]

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[9] Schwaller, *Géneros de gente*, 24-29; for Spanish precedents see also Bryant, *Rivers of Gold*, 11-13; Schwartz, *Blood and Boundaries*; and Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions.*
[10] Schwaller, *Géneros de gente*, 34-37; and Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans*, 26-27 and 75.
[11] Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans*, 26-27.
[12] Schwaller, *Géneros de gente*, 25 and 35; and Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*, 27-36.

Scholarship on the subject has emphasized the deeply rooted prejudices against black skin color in the Iberian world.[13] While this is an undeniable and well-documented reality, a focus on this aspect has obscured more complex debates about the nature of human difference in general, and darker skin colors in particular, taking place throughout the early modern period. Indeed, since the times of Aristotle, Europeans and other peoples saw Africans or darker peoples as inferior, be that in terms of culture, beauty, or morality, and naturally prone to slavery.[14] However, at the same time that Europeans discussed ideas about the origins and character of blackness such as the climate theory, the curse of Ham, or notions of natural slavery, Afro-descendants in the Iberian world were able to claim *vecindad*, legitimacy of birth, and old Christian lineage. Similarly, notions of black sanctity that broke with conventional constructions of blackness and whiteness existed since very early. After all, as Ruth Hill has reminded us, "Spanish opinions about the origins of blackness manifest a pre-racial whiteness that is irreducible to the race, class, or ethnic-based formulations of whiteness that anchor critical whiteness studies in Great Britain and the USA."[15] These ambivalent conceptions about human difference, in addition to the multifaceted character of social classification in the Hispanic world resulted in the ambiguous places that Afro-descendants occupied across Spanish-American societies.

In general terms, then, Iberians' encounters with Africans and their descendants, be that in Europe or the Americas, began with slavery. Iberians fit Afro-descendants into their

[13] For example Sweet, "The Iberian Roots"; Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*; Schwaller, *Géneros de gente*, 34-37; and Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*, 27-36.
[14] Sweet, "The Iberian Roots"; Schwaller, *Géneros de gente*, 34-37; Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*, 27-36; Rowe, "Blackness, Whiteness, and Sanctity," 733-735; and Bethencourt, *Racisms*, 26-31.
[15] The quote is from Hill, "Categories and Crossings," 3; for Afro-descendants claiming legitimacy and old Christian lineage see Ireton, "Old Christian Black Blood"; and Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 138; for notions of black sanctity in the early modern period see among others Rowe, "Blackness, Whiteness, and Sanctity"; Brewer-García, "Hierarchy and Holiness" and "Negro, pero blanco de alma"; Van Deusen, *The Souls of Purgatory*; and Cussen, *Black Saint of the Americas*.

evolving schemes of social differentiation and labeled them negros, moros, mulatos, etc. These ascriptions, the same as that of *indio* "obliterated and flattened a multitude of cultures, languages, histories, and experiences" into legally defined, socially constituted categories.[16] In the Americas, Spaniards tried to assign indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants distinct sets of legislation, work regimes, and geographical spaces to mark blackness, mulato-ness, and Indian-ness as categories of difference.[17] In practice, social differentiation was an ever-changing process in which local and imperial authorities, as well as people on the ground all played a part.[18] Afro-descendants, and other subjects of the Spanish crown, had to use calidad labels if they wanted at least a modicum of recognition. The content and meaning assigned to calidad ascriptions, however, rarely, if ever, corresponded with elites desires or views about society, because people on the ground imbued with meaning categories like negro, mulato, or morisco, with their everyday interactions and social practices. Taking the previous discussions into account, the remainder of the chapter analyses how the concept of calidad emerged from these conceptions and worked across colonial Spanish America.

Calidad is a historical concept used in the Spanish world to assign people a place in the social hierarchy for the distribution of privileges and obligations. The term translates directly as quality, but some historians prefer to translate it as rank or status. The calidad of a person was expressed in phenotypical or ethnic terms, such as español, negro, or indio, etc., but it overflowed these classifications, combining multiple perceptions of difference. Calidad

[16] The quote is from De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Free, Becoming Black*, 15; for the category of indio see Bonfil, "El concepto de indio."
[17] See for example, O'toole, *Bound Lives*.
[18] Schwaller, *Géneros de Gente*, chapter 2; and Masters, "A Thousand Invisible Architects." For early depictions of blackness in colonial Mexico see FitzPatrick, "Mexican Manuscripts"; Also, let us remember here the case mentioned in the previous chapter in which the Royal Council of the Indies directed the High Court of Guadalajara not to label the offspring of Spaniards and mulatos as moriscos, something that of course never happened, because the term remained in use throughout the colonial period.

encompassed various aspects of people's lived experience, such as allegedly inner qualities, as well as mutable things that could be gained or lost throughout one's life, like virtue and merit. It was also related to kinship and reputation, and it was linked to (and sometimes used interchangeably with) other notions of difference such as *condición*, *casta*, and *clase*. Some authors also argued that calidad had a class component.[19] In short, one might say that calidad brought together what we now call race, class, ethnicity, and gender into a single concept. More importantly, the use of this concept is widespread across the Spanish Empire and throughout the colonial period, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century.

Before delving further into the concept of calidad, it would be worthwhile to say a few things about other terms from colonial Mexico's vocabulary of difference. While previous scholarship has tended to use the word casta to refer to the categories español, indio, mestizo etc., that word is rarely found in the documentary record of Guadalajara, where the term used to refer to these groupings was calidad.[20] Studies from central Mexico, and Mexico City in particular, surmise that because of the increasing importation of enslaved Africans, and the growing population of people of mixed ancestry, the Spanish Crown "imposed" the sistema de castas in the middle of the seventeenth century.[21] This assumption, however is based on the varying record-keeping practices from the parishes of central Mexico and other regions. In those areas, parish priests kept two or three books to record the sacraments, one for españoles, one for indios, and one for castas (meaning people of mixed ancestry). Sometimes indios and castas were recorded in the same book. The existence of such record-

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[19] For the notion of calidad I build upon: Restall, *The Black Middle*, 92; McCaa, "Calidad, Clase, and Marriage"; Rappaport, *The Disappearing Mestizo*, 204, 235-236; Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "La trampa de las castas" 403.
[20] Laura Lewis has already traced the origins and different uses of this word. See "Between 'casta' and 'raza.'" 99-123.
[21] Proctor, *Damned Notions of Liberty*, 40.

keeping system, and the fact that was introduced in the seventeenth century, has led historians to refer to people of mixed ancestry as "castas," to privilege the use of this term, and to speak about a "sistema de castas."[22] These assertions, nonetheless, are problematic. Most of the terminology about difference (español, indio, mestizo, mulato) predates the introduction of such record-keeping practices.[23] Further, in Guadalajara, as well as in other Spanish American cities, priests kept just one book for each sacrament, where they included all people regardless of their calidad. Moreover, recent scholarship has moved away from this idea of a coherent sistema de castas.[24] Regardless, some evidence suggests that the concepts of calidad and casta were used interchangeably on some occasions. Despite this overlap, the term casta was also a synonym for lineage, whereas calidad was not.

Regarding the term condición, it referred to people's free or enslaved status. In rare occasions the word calidad was also used in this specific narrower sense as in *calidad de libre* or *calidad de esclavo*. Similarly, as it will be apparent later in this chapter, beginning in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, the word *clase* became interchangeable with calidad, as in clase pardo, or clase mulato, instead of calidad pardo or mulato. The same usage can be found in late-nineteenth-century Cuba, where a list of semi-emancipated slaves, or *patrocinados*, referred to the categories of negro and mulato as clases instead of calidades.[25] Moreover, in nineteenth-century Colombia, the expression "*guerra de clases*" bore the same meaning as "race war," or "*guerra de castas*," a common expression in

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[22] Historian Pilar Gonzalbo, however, has argued that even in Mexico City the most used term was calidad and not casta, "La trampa."
[23] See for example Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans*.
[24] Restall, *The Black Middle*; Rappaport, *The Disappearing Mestizo*; and Gonzalbo, "La trampa."
[25] Vanderbilt Special Collections and University Archive, manuscript 850, "Registro de los patrocinados escistentes en este término e inscriptos en el padrón general, según certificaciones de la junta central de libertos, presentadas por los patronos," Cuba: Término municipal de Cárdenas, 1883.

nineteenth-century Mexico.[26] It is very important not to conflate the Spanish term clase with economic class. Even though this word translates directly into English as class, it is more precise to think of it as "sort," "kind," or "type" of something, in this case of human beings. The fact that most of this vocabulary about difference survived well into the nineteenth century speaks to the existence of competing conceptions about social and human difference in general. It also exposes the teleology (either implicit or explicit) in the assertion that casta and calidad gave way or were supplanted by the concept of race at the end of the colonial period. More so, when this was not what happened, and when it was not apparent for historical subjects of this period which concept would eventually prevail.

Finally, another concept used along with calidad, casta, and clase, was that of *género*. Robert Schwaller has proposed that the most appropriate term to study processes of social differentiation during the early colonial period is that of género, because the use of calidad was not as widespread during the sixteenth century, and according to the author calidad had not acquired the meaning it would have later.[27] There are several objections to these statements, however. First and foremost, the concept of calidad was indeed used since the early colonial period and it already exhibited most of the features that would characterize it later. For example, in his *Historia de los indios de la Nueva España* fray Toribio de Benavente already spoke about people's calidad. Similarly, in 1524 Hernán Cortez wrote to Francisco Cortez an *Instrucción civil y militar para la expedición de la costa de Colima*, in which he already mentioned indio's calidad.[28] Schwaller further argues that calidad in the

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[26] See for example Lasso, *Myths of Harmony*, 127; and Helg, *Liberty and Equality*.
[27] Schwaller, *Géneros de Gente*, 12-13.
[28] The original quote from Cortez's instruction reads: "trabajaréis vos con los naturales que estuvieren depositados, que los traten buenamente, habiendo respeto a la calidad de los dichos indios y de la persona en quien estuvieren depositados." These documents can be found in Joaquín García Icazbalceta, *Colección de documentos para la historia de México, tomo primero* (Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, 1999), digital edition, accessed online: http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/nd/ark:/59851/bmch70b5. Norah Gharala has

sixteenth century tended to conflate wealth with political privilege, and social status. In this sense it served to emphasize distinctions along the socio-economic spectrum and to judge an individual's merit according to his perceived circumstances. This in turn, created gradations of calidad within groups, despite their actual social ascription. For the author, this feature of calidad precludes it "for describing the system of socio-racial terms as they developed in the sixteenth century."[29] Once again, Schwaller dismisses the concept of calidad too quickly. That the scholarship on the subject has associated calidad with race in the late colonial period does not mean that this was the actual, or the only, usage of the concept. "Conflating," as the author puts it, various perceptions of difference (socio-economic, religious, ethnic, phenotypical, etc.) was a feature of calidad throughout the colonial period, not just in the sixteenth century, and it certainly does not impede its usage in the early period. Creating gradations within groups was also a feature of calidad throughout the colonial period not just during the epoch Schwaller studies. This characteristic, in fact, was probably one of the main aspects that distinguished calidad from modern conceptions of race. In their comparative study about race and slavery, for example, Alejandro de la Fuente and Ariela Gross have noted that gradations of status among españoles still existed in nineteenth-century Cuba. This was more evident in attitudes toward intermarriage. While in nineteenth-century US was inconceivable that a white person legally married a black person, in contemporary Cuba it did not really matter if an español, especially a poor, artisan español, married a person of African descent, because their overall status were not considered that different.[30] The

raised a similar criticism, however, she conflates the Spanish usage of the word calidad as applied to fruits and objects with its usage as applied to people. Moreover throughout her book the concept of calidad is presented in an inconsistent, and at times cryptic manner, *Taxing Blackness*, 41, 85, 90, 96, and 177.

[29] Schwaller, *Géneros de gente*, 31.

[30] De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Fee*, 209-218.

sixteenth-century characteristics of calidad that Schwaller thinks prevent the concept from being used throughout the colonial period, thus, were not specific of the time he studies, and in fact lend more credence to the argument of considering calidad and race as two distinct conceptions of social, and overall human difference.

Ultimately, as Schwaller himself clearly specifies in his study, people did not use the word género in the same sense they used calidad, casta, or clase. That is, one cannot find in colonial documents phrases such as género mulato, género indio, or género mestizo, as indeed one can find references about calidad español, calidad indio, or calidad mulato during practically the whole colonial period. Calidad, thus, remains the most historically accurate and most appropriate framework from which to analyze processes of differentiation in the Spanish world. Needless to say, this in any sense devalues Schwaller's work, whose relevance does not lie merely in proposing the term género for the early colonial period, but in revealing the fascinating social interactions and practices that resulted in the creation of a distinct vocabulary of difference in the Spanish world.

Moving back to our previous discussion, at the core of calidad were Iberian ideas of honor. Spaniards valued certain markers as the foremost signs of honor, namely descendance from an old Christian family, legitimacy of birth, or a title of nobility. People of the period considered honor both as an inherent quality and something that could be gained or lost. For instance, performing menial tasks dishonored people, while conducting virtuous deeds in the name of the crown gave honor. In this sense, españoles were at the top of the hierarchy, for they saw themselves as the people with more honor. Afro-descendants, in contrast, were thought of as inherently lacking honor, because of the stain of slavery, and were denied access to full participation into society. Moreover, people used slavery as a benchmark in legal processes of differentiation. Nonetheless, as it will be shown, Afro-descendants could, and

did, attenuate the stigma of slavery on the grounds of their merits.[31] With the implementation of the Bourbon reforms, in particular, the crown began to open more paths to honor, especially for afro-descendants. This shift responded to the belief that all subjects should, and could contribute to the aggrandizement of the monarchy.[32] As a result, in 1784 the king declared that illegitimacy would not be an impediment to practice some crafts anymore.[33] In a royal decree of 4 September 1803, the crown also declared that manual crafts, would not be considered dishonoring anymore, nor they would prevent individuals from holding local offices.[34] Despite these changes, there are numerous common trends in the usage of calidad as a means of governance across time and space.

Using Osorio and his fellow soldiers' cases as an entrée, the remainder of this chapter proceeds thematically rather than chronologically and presents an array of examples from across the Spanish empire to show how the components of calidad worked in different contexts.

Soldiers from four units petitioned their release or transfer between December 31, 1808, and January 29, 1809 on different grounds.[35] Most of them were simple soldiers, but two were first corporals, one was a second corporal, and one was a distinguished sergeant. Just 11 of the 51 petitions received a response, most of them from the fifth company under the orders of lieutenant Juan Antonio Brizuela, thus, preventing us from knowing the broader

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[31] On the importance of honor in the Spanish world see for example Boyer, "Negotiating *Calidad*; Johnson and Lipsett Rivera, eds. *The Faces of Honor*; Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets*; for an example on how these notions were Iberian, and not just Hispanic, see Raminelli, "Impedimentos da cor."

[32] Guardino, "La identidad nacional y los Afromexicanos", 265-266, and 271; Premo, *The Enlightenment on Trial*, 199; O'Hara, *A Flock Divided*, chapter 2; and Lasso, *Myths of Harmony*, 19-21.

[33] Cedulario de Ayala, tomo 48, fol. 171v., num. 187, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. II, 539-540. For some examples on the authorization of illegitimates to be notaries or priests see: AGI, Audiencia de Cuzco 17; Cedulario de Ayala, tomo 83, f. 254, núm. 133; and AGI, Indiferente 1535, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. II, 654-656, 685-686, and 691-692.

[34] Acad. Hist. Colección Mata Linares, Tomo 77, and 122, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. II, 814-815, and 832-834.

[35] These were the first, second, third and fifth companies of the second division of the Costa Sur militia.

repercussions of this measure. Of those who received a response, five were accepted and six were denied. Of the rejected petitions, two clearly stated the petitioner's dislike of being mixed with pardos.[36] They even cited chapter one, article 18 of the Costa Sur militias rules to back their claims.[37] Three other petitions, in addition to mentioning that the company should be composed of individuals of "clase pardo," militia men claimed to be poor and having a family to support.[38] The remaining petitioner stated only that he could not afford to be in the military, because of his obligations to his patron.[39] It is worth noting that in the six requests with a positive ruling, the soldiers tried to downplay their dislike of being mixed with pardos. Three of them mentioned the issue, but in addition, they remarked they were sick and could not serve well, and that they were poor.[40] The other two petitioners said only that they were poor and sick.[41]

Of the petitions that did not get a response, 11 stated that the petitioner did not want to serve with pardos. Four of these, even repeated Osorio's argument that they feared to be reputed as pardos from then on.[42] Five said that they were married or had a family to care for. Four argued that they were poor or had obligations to their patrons and could not afford to be in the militias. The remaining 20 presented some combination of these arguments.

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[36] Petitions of José Miguel Brizuela and Francisco Osorio, ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, fols. 3 and 16.

[37] This article stated: "Equal circumstances of age, size, complexion, conduct and residence shall concur in the free pardos enlisted in their respective companies…" see: *Reglamento provisional para el régimen, gobierno y nueva planta de las Compañías de Milicias de la Costa Sur del Reyno de Nueva España, desde la jurisdicción de Acaponeta hasta la de Tehuantepec*, ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 174, expediente 2, f. 5

[38] Petitions of Juan Nepomuceno Solórzano, Joaquín Salazar, and José Ygnacio Mendoza, ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, fols. 14-15, 18, and 20-21. It is interesting to note how Spanish soldiers when referring to themselves used the word calidad, but when talking about pardos or mulatos they used the word clase.

[39] Petition of José Enrique Solorzano, ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, f. 68-69.

[40] Petitions of Ramón Leandro, Marcos Silva, and José Francisco Alcaraz, ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, fols. 5, and 11-12.

[41] Petitions of José Martín Cárdenas, and Juan José Vizcaíno, ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, fol. 7-9.

[42] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, fols. 56, 60, 88, and 94.

Again, it is important to highlight the centrality of honor in this episode. Many of the petitioners claimed to have been dishonored by their transfer to a pardo unit. Don José Lucas Sandoval, for instance, complained that he was enlisted without recognition of his status of distinguished soldier ("disregarding the honor with which I was born"), and omitting that his family was one of the most honorable.[43] Ultimately, careful not to appear unpatriotic, some of the soldiers stated that they did not have to be enlisted to be loyal vassals of their king, and that they would spill to the last drop of their blood to protect their "king, fatherland and religion."[44]

Why, then, did Spanish soldiers fear to be reputed as pardos? How was social difference constructed and maintained in the Spanish world to lead Spaniards to make such a statement? The soldiers' cases should be read against a long-lasting tradition in the Spanish world, in which people tried to claim different rights in high courts (*audiencias*) by asserting their calidad. Calidad is a concept that is better captured in official records, wherein people contested how they were classified, or claimed their rights. As already mentioned, calidad encompassed various notions of difference -phenotype, kinship, personal merit, and honor- but sometimes one element overrode the others. The complexity of calidad, then, made authorities to rely on different criteria, and more prominently on reputation, on a case by case basis, to classify people.[45]

A key element to understanding the cases brought by Osorio and his fellow soldiers is reputation and how such a nebulous notion was managed in a corporate society. Military and religious corporations were a fundamental part of the social structure and reflections of

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[43] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, f. 2.
[44] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, f. 71-72, and 92.
[45] Douglas Cope has signaled this feature, calling it "reputational race," see: *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 57.

social life, and as such, belonging to one or more of these entailed social recognition. The next chapter will focus on how afro-descendants expressed their identities in catholic brotherhoods. Honor and reputation could also be obtained by leading a life according to the catholic precepts. Honor and reputation in the Spanish world are better understood by attending to gendered behaviors. For example, in stating that they would spill to the last drop of blood for their king, Spanish soldiers were asserting their masculinity while trying to keep their honor intact despite their discharge from the military. Similar dynamics involving honor and masculine behaviors are evident in the following cases.

In April 1798, Joaquin Trillo *vecino* (roughly a head of household) of Nochistlán and resident in León proposed marriage to Bernarda Cervantes. Manuel Cervantes, Bernarda's father, noted that Joaquín was a mulato and did not want his daughter to marry him. Joaquín went immediately to his parish to get his baptismal record, and it was then he realized that he was indeed classified as a mulato. He then presented a complaint before the high court to clarify he was an español, and not a mulato. As in analogous cases, Trillo presented witnesses that could attest that his parents and grandparents were reputed as españoles. Two of the witnesses were españoles, and the third one was an indio. All of them declared to have known Trillo's grandparents, and that they were "reputed as españoles descendants of old Christian Catholics, without any note of infamy."[46] Eventually, the court ruled in Trillo's favor.

Similarly, in 1772, don Juan Antonio Moreno de Ortega, vecino of Lagos, asked before the high court of Guadalajara to change his baptismal record, because he was classified as a mulato. Moreno claimed that he had lived "under the reputation of español" all of his life, the same as his ancestors. Although, he claimed, his baptism did not offend in anything

[46] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 375, expediente 9. On conflicts over marriage choice see for example: Seed, *To love, Honor, and Obey*; for the concept of vecino in the Spanish world see Herzog, *Defining Nations*.

his "known calidad" he preferred the mistake to be corrected. According to the court, his godparents had to attest his calidad, but because they had already died, Moreno presented the baptismal record of his siblings, who were classified as españoles. Within a few days the court changed his baptismal record.[47]

In another case, in 1792, doña María Macedo de Beas, of calidad español, petitioned to the high court of Guadalajara to correct the calidad of her son, José María Eustaquio, from mestizo to español, because he wanted to enter the Mercedarian order, and being categorized as a mestizo prevented him from doing it. Again, reputation and kinship were the decisive factors in stablishing José María's calidad. He presented two witnesses to declare in his favor, both of them confirmed to have known José María's parents and grandparents and said that all of them were "tenidos y estimados por españoles sin nota alguna" (held and deemed as españoles without any stain). After hearing Macedo's witnesses, the court had to rule in her favor.[48]

With these examples in mind, it is clear how malleable these classifications were. However, reputation cannot explain everything on its own, after all, it sounds very counterintuitive that an español would suddenly be categorized as a pardo, just for joining a different corporation. What about the other elements that calidad encompassed? When one mentions españoles, scholars and students alike typically think of white people, in fact many authors in their works substitute the word español for the word white, even though this word rarely appears in the historical record. Also, when we talk about pardos we often think of brown or colored people, the actual translation of the word. Unfortunately, we do not have physical descriptions of the soldiers who were assigned to pardo units. Complicating the

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[47] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 342, expediente, 1, fols. 1-2.
[48] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 365, expediente 13.

matter even more, the relation between calidad an physical appearance was not as straightforward as one might think. People were, indeed, aware of physical differences, and many calidad categories referred to these as it will be discussed in chapter three, but this awareness did not result in a widespread use of social categories directly associated with specific physical traits, as the previous examples already demonstrate. Further, as Joanne Rappaport puts it, calidad ascriptions "were not self-evident categories arising out of the natural process of human reproduction."[49] The relation between calidad and appearance was, then, highly contextual, and situational. Before delving further into the subject of to what extent physical appearance factored in determining people's calidad, it would be worth to discuss the issue of who was in charge of the social labeling.

In trying to explain why people were classified differently at various points in their lifetimes, some authors have argued that, when priests or officials recorded people's calidad, they were the ones who assigned the classification and not people themselves, and that those classifications were based solely on physical appearance.[50] Although this might have been the case in very specific circumstances, the concept of calidad cannot, and should not, be reduced to its phenotypical component. As it will be shown in subsequent chapters, there is ample evidence from the parishes of Guadalajara to argue that people were self-identifying at the moment of marriage, or that parents and godparents were stating their children's calidad at the moment of baptism.

The matter of who was in charge of the labeling process will be at the center of the discussions of this book, so it would be worthwhile to analyze it more thoroughly. Historians have long debated over what social labels of calidad meant for ordinary people, or if they

[49] Rappaport, *The Disappearing Mestizo*, 173.
[50] For example, although not exclusively, David Carbajal López, *La población de Bolaños.*

meant something at all for them. In considering who provided the calidad recorded in official documents, scholars place themselves within a spectrum that spans three different positions. First, are those who argue that priests or other imperial officers were in charge of assigning people a calidad, based either on physical appearance, lineage, people's reputation within the community, economic standing, or a combination thereof. Then, there are those who contend that people identified themselves pondering the abovementioned elements. Finally, the process of labeling has also been seen as a negotiation between people and imperial officers; one in which people tried to get the most out of, but without renouncing to their social circles.[51]

Inconsistencies in calidad designations in the baptismal records of Guadalajara during this period indicate that parents or godparents were identifying baptized children, not the priests. For example, on June 4, 1805, José Rafael Fernández de Castro, priest of the Sagrario parish of Guadalajara, baptized José Urbano "apparently coyote", son of María Guadalupe Masías, coyota. That is, while María Guadalupe's calidad was recorded without any hesitation, her son's was not. If the priest was assigning both of these ascriptions why did he doubt in one but not in the other? In another example, on June 7, 1805, the same priest baptized José Marcelino, legitimate son of Pedro Torres y Rosalía Masías mestizos, whose paternal grandparents were unknown "according to the people who brought the child [to the parish]." In a similar example, on Jun 17, 1805 again priest José Rafael Fernández de Castro

[51] The historiography on the subject is obviously immense. For an example of someone who contends that priests assigned calidad based on physical appearance, see David Carbajal López, *La población de Bolaños*; and "Introducción"; for an example of someone who sees people as self-identifying in documents, see Proctor III, *Damned Notions of Liberty*; most of the authors see the labeling process as a negotiation or a terrain of contestation between people and officers, for example Cope, *The Limits*, chapter 4; Boyer, "Negotiating Calidad. In the end, these three possibilities were not mutually exclusive, and there could be some cases in which undoubtedly people are being assigned a calidad and others in which they clearly are self-identifying, as Ben Vinson aptly argues in *Before Mestizaje*.

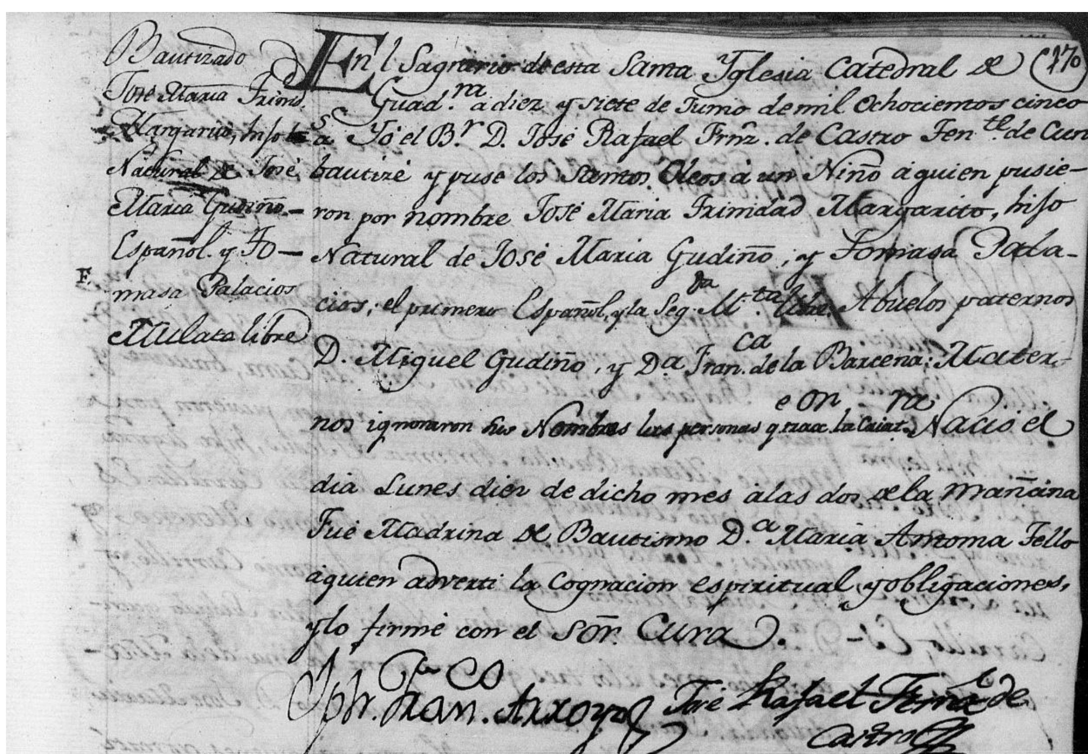
baptized José María Trinidad Margarito, of unspecified calidad, *hijo natural* (born out of wedlock) of José María Gudiño, español, and Tomasa Palacios, mulata libre, and whose maternal grandparents names were "not known by the people who brought the child"[52] (see figure 2.1). This means that sometimes parents did not even take their children to the parish to be baptized, but godparents did, as the two previous examples show, leaving them the responsibility to give the priests all the information needed to fill the baptismal entry (partida). Here, thus, we have the same priest applying what it seems to be different criteria to record children's calidad at the moment of baptism. How can we interpret these seemingly inconsistencies in labeling? The most likely answer is that the process of labeling can be better understood as a tacit or implicit negotiation between priests or imperial officials and people. However, it was a negotiation in which more often than not, people had the upper hand; one, in which they balanced the fluid components of calidad to at least maintain their status or try to improve it if possible.

Moreover, priests of the Sagrario parish, seemingly arbitrarily registered some children of mulatos and españoles as either mulato or español instead of the theoretically correct category of morisco. Similarly, priests tended not to write the calidad of baptized children of mixed ancestry, whose parents were mulato and mestizo, español and lobo, mulato and coyote, etcetera. Either because priests themselves did not know how to categorize those children, or more likely, because parents did not provide a calidad for them at the moment of baptism. Even in some "easy" cases of children whose parents were mulato and Spaniard, priests limited themselves to write just the parents' calidad. More direct evidence further supports that people, and not priests, provided the calidad stated in

[52] www.familysearch.org, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records, 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, Baptisms 1799-1806, images 682, 685, and 690, respectively.

sacramental records. In at least 12 cases throughout the period under study, in the parishes of Sagrario and Santuario de Guadalupe, priests simply wrote in some baptismal entries (*partidas*) "*no dieron razón de su calidad*"; that is, parents or godparents did not say the calidad of the baptized child. This was particularly the case in baptisms of *hijos naturales*, or in the case of foundlings (see figure 2.2).[53]

Figure 2.1 Baptism of José María Gudiño


Bautizado José María Trinid. Margarito, hijo Natural de José María Gudiño Español y Tomasa Palacios Mulata libre

En el Sagrario de esta Santa Iglesia Catedral de Guad.ra a diez y siete de Junio de mil ochocientos cinco. Yo el Br. D. José Rafael Frnz. de Castro Ten.te de Cura bauticé y puse los Santos Oleos a un Niño a quien pusieron por nombre José María Trinidad Margarito, hijo Natural de José María Gudiño, y Tomasa Palacios, el primero Español, y la Seg.da Mulata libre. Abuelos paternos D. Miguel Gudiño, y Da. Fran.ca de la Barcena: Maternos ignoraron sus Nombres las personas q. traxeron la Criat.a Nació el dia Lunes diez de dicho mes a las dos de la mañana. Fue Madrina de Bautismo Da. María Antonia Tello a quien adverti la Cognacion espiritual y obligaciones, y lo firmé con el Sor. Cura.

Br. Fran.co Arroyo   José Rafael Fernz. de Castro

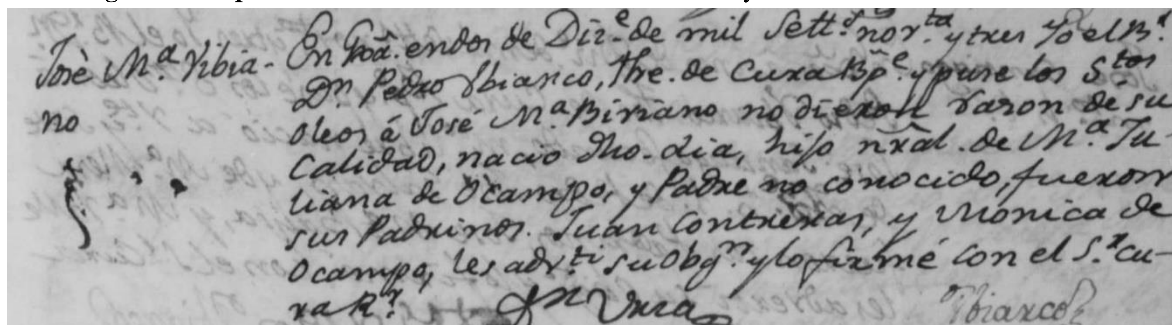
Source: www.familysearch.org, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records, 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, Baptisms 1799-1806, image 690.

It would be naïve, however, to think that imperial officers did not have the power to assign calidad categories to people. Priests did have, and exerted, their power to mark people permanently in written records. This is even more evident in some baptisms of children of

[53] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1786-1793, image 567; Bautismos 1793-1799, images 55, 68, 71, 82, 83, 86, 88, and 332; Bautismos 1810-1815, images 143 and 252; and Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Bautismos 1800-1812, image 106.

unknown parents. In such cases, since priests did not know the lineage of the baptized child, they wrote "al parecer mulato," or "al parecer coyote," and so on (see figure 2.3). One priest from the Sagrario parish even wrote about the parents of a legitimate child "al parecer españoles"; and in 1804one priest from the vicarage of Pilar wrote about a child of unknown parents "su calidad no parece buena"[54] (see figure 2.4). The process of assigning social labels, thus, can be better understood as a continuous negotiation between ordinary people and imperial officers. A process in which, the overall socio-economic standing of people, the power of the priest within the community, and the historical context in which the labeling took place, all played a role.

Figure 2.2 Baptism of José María Viviano. Notice how it says "no dieron razón de su calidad"



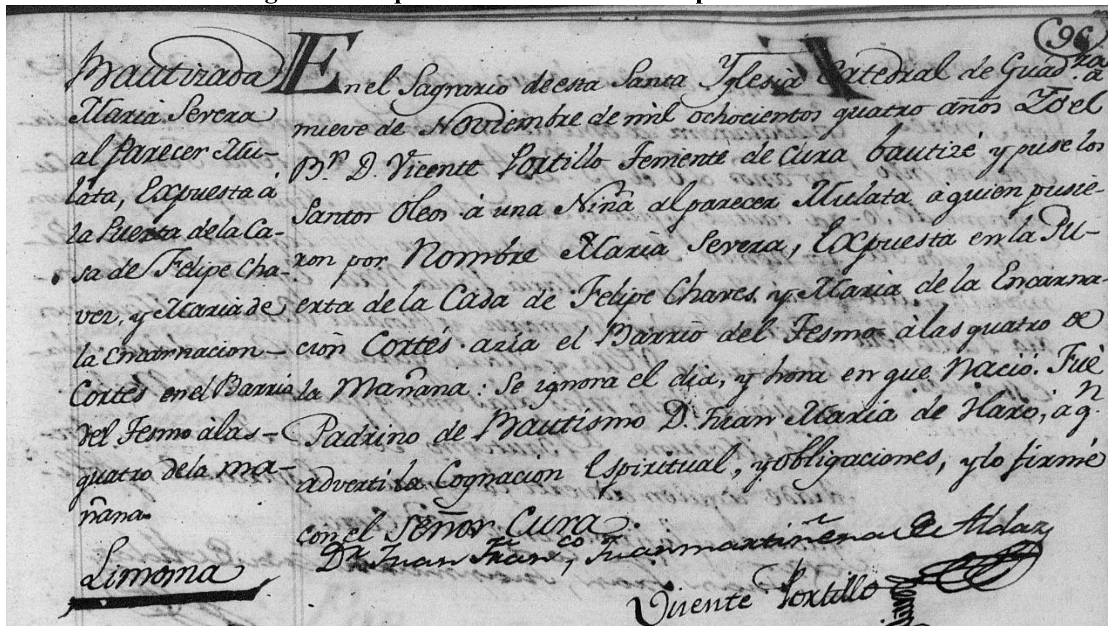
Source: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos1793-1799, image 68.

That being said, and going back to our discussion about how phenotype factored into calidad, there were some instances wherein people relied on physical appearance to contest their assigned calidad. In 1678, Domingo de la Cruz, slave "from the Chinese nation" petitioned before the high court of Guadalajara, to be freed because he recently heard about

[54] For examples of "al parecer mulato," see Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1799-1806, images 604 and 609; for an example of "al parecer coyote" image 682; for the example of "al parecer españoles" image 739; for the example of "su calidad no parece buena," Nuestra Señora del Pilar, Bautismos 1804-1821, image 11.

a royal decree that emancipated all the chino slaves.[55] In his request De la Cruz mentioned "I would ask your grace to declare me one of those included in said decree, because as it is apparent, my face and features [*facciones*] are those of a chino, and not of a mulato, nor other type of slaves." Since De la Cruz, as he explained in his declaration, was born in the Philippines and brought to New Spain by an español priest, there was no way to investigate his lineage, thus, he decided to draw on his phenotype. However, what ultimately gave him his freedom, was that his last master confirmed his story.[56]

Figure 2.3 Baptism of María Severa "al parecer mulata"



(96)

Bautizada
Maria Severa
al parecer Mu-
lata, Expuesta a
la Puerta de la Ca-
sa de Felipe Cha-
vez, y Maria de
la Encarnacion
Cortes en el Barrio
del Fermo a las
quatro de la ma-
ñana.

Limosna

En el Sagrario de esta Santa Yglesia Catedral de Guad.ra a
nueve de Noviembre de mil ochocientos quatro años Yo el
Br. D. Vicente Portillo Teniente de Cura bautizé y puse los
Santos Oleos a una Niña al parecer Mulata a quien pusie-
ron por Nombre Maria Severa, Expuesta en la Pu-
erta de la Casa de Felipe Chaves y Maria de la Encarna-
cion Cortes azia el Barrio del Fermo a las quatro de
la Mañana: Se ignora el dia, y hora en que nacio. Fue
Padrino de Bautismo D. Juan Maria de Haro, a q.n
adverti la Cognacion Espiritual, y obligaciones, y lo firmé
con el Señor Cura.

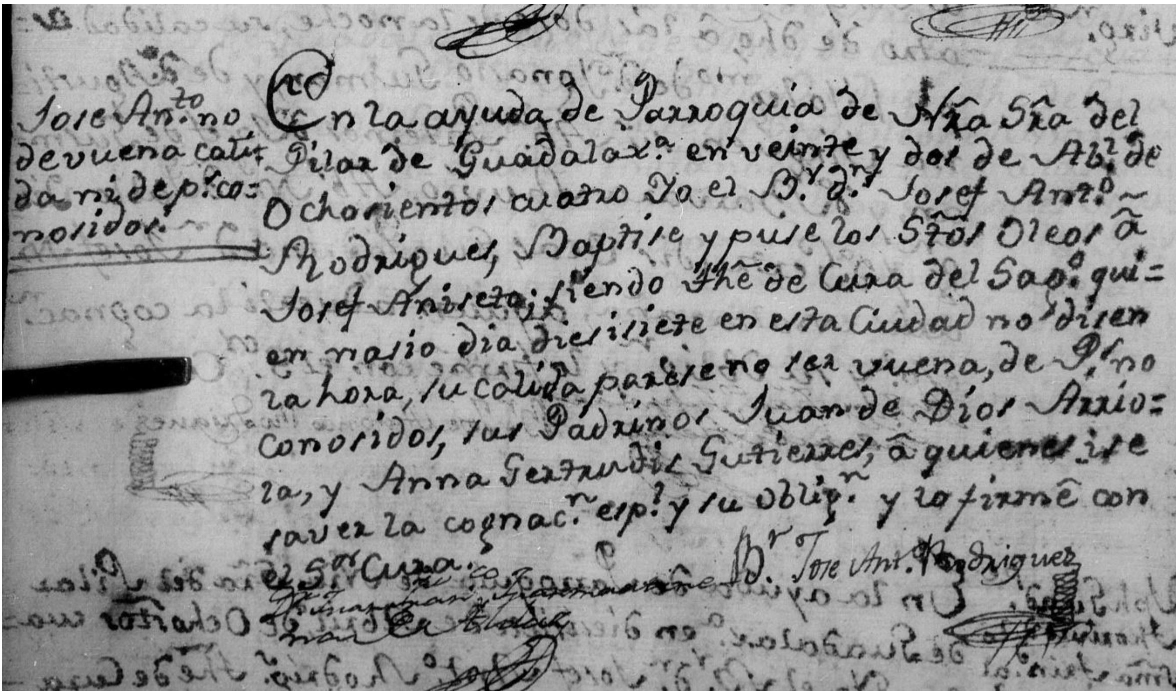
D. Juan Fran.co Juan Martinez de Aldaz

Vicente Portillo

[55] According to a royal decree of 1671 all Indians, and chinos were declared free of enslavement. For Asian slavery in colonial Mexico see González Claverán, "Un documento colonial sobre esclavos asiáticos"; Oropeza, "La esclavitud asiástica"; and Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*.

[56] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 9, expediente 9, f. 1. In comparison, when Inés Rodríguez, *china* from Tepic, petitioned for her freedom in 1683, she presented five witnesses to attest about her lineage, see: ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 4, expediente 9, 12 fols.

Figure 2.4 Baptism of José Aniceto "no de buena calidad"


Jose Ant.no de vuena cali. da ni de p.s co- nosidos

En la ayuda de Parroquia de Nra. Sra. del Pilar de Guadalaxa. en veinte y dos de Abl. de Ochocientos quatro Yo el Br. D.n Josef Ant.o Rodriguez, Baptize y puse los Stos Oleos á Josef Aniceto; siendo The de Cura del Sag.o qui- en nacio dia diesisiete en esta Ciudad no dicen la hora, su calidad parece no ser vuena, de P.s no conosidos, sus Padrinos Juan de Dios Arrio- la, y Anna Gertrudis Gutierrez, á quienes ise saver la cognac.n esp.l y su oblig.n y lo firme con el Sr. Cura.

Br. Jose Ant.o Rodriguez

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1799-1806, image 609; and Nuestra Señora del Pilar, Bautismos 1804-1821, image 11.

Imperial authorities were also attentive to physical traits in particular circumstances. Although we do not have descriptions of Osorio and his unit, we do have the list of the first unit of the pardo militia of Guadalajara. The list of the first company of infantry for pardos is a very detailed document that includes the names, ages, physical descriptions, and dates of enlistment and discharge of 176 individuals classified as pardos. It spans a period of approximately two decades from the 1760s to the 1780s. A couple of points stand out in the physical descriptions. First, skin color is barely mentioned. In all cases where it is alluded to, it is to remark specific nuances, mainly that a soldier was light-skinned ("*color claro*") but also "*color moreno*," or "*entreclaro*." These descriptions are also very attentive to beards. Phrases such as "full beard", "a little beard", or "beardless" can be found in nearly all of

them.[57] The shape of the nose, lips, and the presence of scars are also mentioned very frequently in these descriptions.[58]

Three of these cases serve for our purposes admirably. The first pertains to Bernardo Abarca, a second corporal in 1768. He was described as 19 years old, light-skinned, beardless, and pockmarked. The second deals with Ygnacio Gómez, 27 years old, "of calidad pardo, light-skinned, beardless, and with a mole to the right side of his mouth." Finally, Joseph de la Torre, 21 years old, "cerrado de barba," (thick beard) with an "hoyo de viruelas junto a la nariz del lado derecho" (a smallpox scar next to the right side of his nose). These descriptions were much like those of other men in this unit, except for marginal notes adding such things as: "This individual proved to be an español and he was transferred to another unit."[59]

Here we have three soldiers, all of them españoles, being portrayed with the same words used to describe pardo soldiers. How do we interpret their cases? Certainly, three examples do not offer a large sample, but they remain suggestive. First, these examples indicate that the categories of pardo and español encompassed a spectrum of physical traits, and that there could be some overlap between the two categories. Second, as Joanne Rappaport has stated, they show how the concept of calidad and phenotype were in a fluid, dynamic relation.[60] Moreover, españoles were described in a variety of ways across the empire and throughout the colonial period. Españoles could be white certainly, but they were also trigueños, morenos, and even *oscuros*. Equating Spanish-ness with whiteness, thus, is

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[57] Joanne Rappaport has also noticed this attentiveness to beards, *The Disappearing Mestizo*, chapter 5.
[58] For instance, noses were described with the adjectives: chata, corva, corta, gruesa, ancha, arremangada, hundida, caída, afilada, abultada, and tuerta; and lips with: gruesos, belfos, and arremangados.
[59] ARAG, Ramo Fiscal, caja 20, libro 100, fols. 43, 85, and 121. It is worth noting that soldiers from pardo units across the viceroyalty were also describe with similar words, see Vinson III, *Bearing Arms*, 96-97 and 201.
[60] Rappaport, *The Disappearing Mestizo*, 196.

an oversimplification, or an outright projection of a social reality that does not correspond with the history of the Spanish empire. One can further argue that the scholarly practice of arbitrarily substituting the word español with the word white has created a distortion of Spanish-American historical reality that must be corrected. Even more so considering that in places like colonial Mexico people rarely claimed a white identity.[61] This distinction is important and it goes beyond semantics. That a person or a group decided to highlight a specific physical characteristic to identify itself (whiteness) is very different than using a place of origin or belonging to a community as identifier (Spanish-ness). In this sense, the very definition of Spanish-ness was more contested and people could negotiate who belonged to that category based on a variety of factors, not just physical appearance. It is important to bear this in mind at the moment of analyzing the so-called disappearance of Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara.

Other sources add more nuance to the relation between calidad and phenotype. The tailors' guild of Guadalajara sometimes recorded physical descriptions of those who took the exam to become masters. These records do not mention calidad explicitly, but the people who took the exam were usually españoles and held the title of "don". Let us consider two examples. First Salvador Morelos, "medium size, big eyes, and *color cocho* (literally "cooked color")." The second, is Bernardo Escalante "forty years old, *trigueño* (wheat color), tall, and robust." Again, there is no mention of the word white, and although there is no indication of calidad, it is very likely that these men were reputed to be españoles, considering that they were masters of the guild. What is worth emphasizing is that even though all of these men

[61] For this point see Gonzalbo, "La trampa," locations 297, and 3026; even in modern Mexico a white identity remains weak at best, see Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*; for examples of Spaniards described as morenos see Rappaport, *The Disappearing Mestizo*, 186 and Bernand, *Negros esclavos y libres*, 11-12; for examples of Spaniards described as oscuros, Undurraga Schuler, "Españoles oscuros y mulatos blancos."

were classified as Spaniards, they were described using different adjectives for their skin colors. These examples buttress the fluid, even ambiguous, link between calidad and physical appearance.[62]

Taken together these cases suggest that people regarded lineage, reputation, and social networks as more important in deciding one's identity. However, in the absence of more accurate methods of deciphering one's ancestry, the standard procedure was to call witnesses that could confirm either one's social reputation or testify to their ancestors' calidad. It is also worthwhile noting that Spanish-ness was deeply associated with being an old Christian, and Catholic, but only rarely with whiteness. Something similar can be said about cases deciding if a person was indio, mestizo or chino (as people from southeast Asia in general were called), wherein reputation and social networks were the decisive factors. Let us consider a few examples to make this point clearer.

On April 28, 1683, Marcos Xil, native of Tepic, petitioned before the high court of Guadalajara that his wife Inés Rodríguez be freed on account that she was a china, and therefore, not subject to slavery according to the law. Xil argued that Inés was "hija natural" of Agustina Castellanos, china born in New Spain, who was daughter of María china native from the Philippines. To settle if Inés was china, the court asked Marcos Xil to summon five witnesses to prove his declaration. Just two of the witnesses declared to have met Inés's mother and grandmother. They said that people reputed them as chinas. Two other declarants said that they did not meet María, but that they knew one of her sons, Agustina's brother, and that he was freed because he was reputed as chino, therefore, they said, Inés had to be china

[62] AMG, Gremios, caja 2, año 1748, 14v and 15v.

as well. The other witness said that he always heard Agustina and Inés were known as chinas. With this evidence, in August 1683 Inés was granted her freedom.[63]

In 1807, Pedro Estevan Hernández, Cecilio Clemente Hernández, and José María Coronel, natives of Santa Ana Ascatlán, in Zacoalco, jurisdiction of Guadalajara, complained before the high court that they were left out of the tributaries list, even though they were indios. They alleged that Vicente Serrano, lieutenant of Zacoalco, influenced Vicente Selis, contador de indios (roughly the census taker for indios), to take them out of the list, because Pedro opposed the administration of Serrano. In doing so, they claimed, Serrano pretended to repute them as mulatos, and take from them their right to participate in the community. In this case, the plaintiffs said that Pedro had been a tributary for forty years, and Cecilio and José had been since they were the required age. Moreover, Pedro had been mayor of the town, and "held all the offices that people of our clase can hold." Ultimately, they argued that all of them were distinguished men for "their services and utility for the republic."[64] Even if we don't know the outcome of this dispute, it is worth noting that in this case being an indio meant paying tribute and being an active participant within the community. Furthermore, being classified as a mulato in a *pueblo de indios* entailed the exclusion from political participation.

In this sense, rather than reducing it to physical appearance, calidad is better understood as the product of different factors that acquired more or less importance according to the circumstances. Let us consider the following example. In 1759, Mateo Ruiz de Ahumada, mayor of Colima, presented before the High Court of Guadalajara some

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[63] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 4, expediente 9, 12 fols.

[64] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 243, expediente 6, f. 1. In other instances, people living in Indian towns prefer to claim a mestizo identity to avoid paying tribute. See for example: ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 312, expediente 15, año de 1793.

information against Juan Efigenio Solórzano, who had been alderman (regidor) of Colima since 1754. According to Ruiz, Solórzano was illegitimate, mestizo, and had practiced manual labor, for he was apprenticed to a tailor during his youth in Guadalajara. These accusations disqualified Solórzano for holding any office. To back his claims Ruiz summoned five witnesses. It is worth noting that the declarants could not agree on Solórzano's calidad. When asked about Solórzano's mother, one said that she looked like a coyota. Two more said that she was a mulata, and the last one that she was a mulata blanca. What they did agree on, was that Solórzano was illegitimate, and that he had worked as a tailor under master Joseph Antonio Zurita in Guadalajara. Therefore, he had to be removed from his office.[65] What is important to highlight from this case, is that Solórzano's calidad was understood as a product of three different factors: not being reputed as español, his illegitimate birth, and for having worked as a tailor. These elements were key in determining people's calidad, and thus in assigning privileges and obligations. Throughout the colonial period, and across the jurisdiction of the high court of Guadalajara, the same patterns appear repeatedly.[66]

The cases of Juan Efigenio Solórzano and the indios of Zacoalco introduce another dimension of calidad, that is, calidad can also be understood as a tool of governance, that allowed the Spanish crown to exert control over its dominions by granting or denying people access to key positions based on the components of calidad already mentioned. This political use of calidad also allowed the Spanish authorities to deal with, and manage, imperial and local circumstances. Political rivals in eighteenth-century New Granada used the same

[65] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 331, expediente 12.
[66] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 365, expediente 13; caja 243, expediente 6, f. 1; and caja 312, expediente 15, año de 1793.

arguments as Ruiz Ahumada to remove their opponents from office.[67] Similarly, in eighteenth-century Lima the officials of the native cabildo appointed a man named Toribio Ramos for the position of *procurador de naturales* (the attorney or defender of natives), legally reserved just for indios. A junta of natives from the whole jurisdiction of Lima objected the appointment, arguing that Ramos was a chino or a zambaigo.[68] Spaniards across the jurisdiction of Guadalajara were denied offices because of having practiced an "ejercicio vil."[69]

In contrast, the Spanish authorities sometimes appointed Afro-descendants based on their merits, and regardless of the calidad label they bore. In 1687, Vicente Méndez "de color moreno," from Panama, sent to the Royal Council of the Indies an account of his merits and services to obtain a governorship in that jurisdiction. In his response, the king granted him the governorship with a wage, "so in sight of this price others would be compelled to emulate him."[70] Also in Panama, but in 1717, the Royal Council, granted captains of the free-colored militias royal appointments. In their decree, they noted "este género de gente, la cual es de tan raro genio, que el defeco que le dio la naturaleza, le desvanece enteramente con sus honradas operaciones, de calidad que no ha habido capitán ni soldado blanco alguno."[71] Similarly, in 1760 the king granted Francisco Baez y Llerena, free pardo from Havana, permission to practice surgery in the city, because of his services to the crown. In his royal decree the king stated "I command … that Joseph Francisco Baez y Llerena could exercise

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[67] Bonil Gómez, *Gobierno y calidad en el orden colonial*, 53-72.
[68] Premo, *The Enlightenment on Trial*, 198.
[69] For example: AGI, Guadalajara, 231, Libro 4, f. 319; libro 5, f. 267; and libro 6, f. 131. In Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. II, t. II., 674-675, 760-761, and 790-791.
[70] AGI, Panama, 105. In Richard Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. II, t. II, 799-801.
[71] AGI, Panama, 100, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. I, 142-143. "That this type of people, who are so rare in character, that their natural defect fades completely with their honest deeds, of quality that has not existed captain, nor white soldier in those garrisons."

freely his faculty of surgery, keeping all exemptions, privileges, and prerogatives that correspond him as such … and I exempt him from his birth defect and I leave him as able and capable, as if he did not have it."[72] In 1707, the king allowed archbishop of Santo Domingo to appoint mulato priests, as long as they had enough merits, because of the lack of candidates.[73] However, authorities arbitrarily denied Afro-descendants access to offices in other contexts, for instance in 1709 the king reprimanded the bishop of Caracas for accepting mulatos and illegitimates as priests.[74] In 1714 the king even recommended the *cabildo* of Lima not to appoint poor españoles. These last example ties back to calidad's characteristic of creating gradations between people with the same social ascriptions. It is also related to the metropolitan authorities' idea that poor people would not adequately fulfil their duties as crown officials.[75]

Perhaps in a more telling example, in December 1782, Bernardo Ramírez, vecino of Guatemala, presented a testimony of his merits and services to the crown, and petitioned to the Royal Council of the Indies to change his status, and his children's, to españoles. Although his petition was eventually denied in September 1783, the Council's answer is eloquent because it highlights one of the features that sets calidad apart from the concept of race. In its response, the Council bluntly stated: "It is true that outstanding subjects should be rewarded for their actions, so they be satisfied, and others are compelled to take similar actions for the King and the fatherland … but in order to have a sensible *transmutation* there should be very singular and relevant motives, and Bernardo Ramirez's merits are not of such

[72] AGI, Santo Domingo, 1607, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. I, 293-294.
[73] AGI, Santo Domingo 879, libro 33, f. 250, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. I, 107-108.
[74] AGI, Santo Domingo 879, libro 33, f. 353, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. I, 111.
[75] AGI, Lima 577, libro 35, f. 326, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. I, 118; for the Crown's hesitance to appoint poor Spaniards as officials see Burns, *Into the Archive*, 29.

kind."[76] What all of these examples tell us, then, is that calidad was not fixed, one's rank could change through merits and honorable deeds. In addition, calidad, proved a very instrumental and malleable tool of governance, that at times appeared arbitrary, because it depended on the king's will.

The plasticity of calidad also allowed the crown to deal with larger historical processes and adapt to local demands. After several pardos and mulatos requested their change of status through *gracias al sacar* in the jurisdictions of Caracas and New Granada, local officials petitioned the Council of the Indies to prevent these individuals from improving their position in the hierarchy.[77] However, they decided to keep open the paths of honor for afro-descendants, so they could improve their status and thus, the council hoped, to be discouraged from notions of uprising.[78] This path remained open in the Cadiz constitution, which granted afro-descendants citizenship under the same conditions.[79]

Going back to our original example of Osorio and his fellow soldiers, why, then, were Spanish soldiers assigned to pardo units in the first place? And why did they fear to be reputed as pardos? The historical context in which this episode occurred provides an answer to the first question. In 1808, the Spanish monarchy entered a crisis that would ultimately lead to the independence of most of its vast empire. It was an "empire-wide crisis of coherence", that initiated discussions about the nature of the empire, and the inclusion of different subjects within it.[80] The abdication of Carlos IV and his son Fernando VII, created a vacuum of power

[76] AGI, Guatemala 411, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. II, 535. Italics mine.
[77] See for example: Archivo Histórico Nacional de Bogotá. Colegios II, f. 233 in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. II, 331-332; also, AGI, Audiencia de Santa Fe 542; Acad. Hist. Colección Mata Linares, Tomo 122; and AGI, Audiencia de Caracas 404, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. II, 754, 814-816, and 829-831; for an in-depth analysis of *gracias al sacar* see Twinam, *Purchasing Whiteness*
[78] Acad. Hist. Colección Mata Linares, Tomo 77, in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. III, t. II,821-828.
[79] Sartorius, *Ever Faithful*, 28-30.
[80] Sartorius, *Ever Faithful*, 22-23; the context of the Hispanic monarchical crisis is described in Brading, *The First America*, chapter 25.

that polarized political factions both in the metropole and its overseas territories. Beyond the later political developments, news about the Napoleonic invasion of Spain arrived in New Spain a few months after the abdications, and one of the main concerns of the colonial authorities was to protect the territory from any threat of invasion. Some of the soldiers assigned to pardo units between December 1808 and January 1809 stated that the measure was not a direct order of the general captaincy, but of particular captains of the Costa Sur militia.[81] Some of them even said that they thought it was a superior order from the captaincy, and accepted it, but when they realized it was not, they asked for their transfer.[82] Therefore, an acute crisis of political legitimacy provides the historical backdrop for this episode.

The array of examples analyzed in the previous pages provide an answer to the second question. The construction of difference in the Spanish world, structured around the concept of calidad, privileged people's lineage, reputation, and social networks in deciding whether a person was español, indio or mulato. However, in assigning a person's social ascription, officials or people themselves, deployed these factors on a case by case basis depending on the circumstances. In this sense, it was possible for people to be categorized as mulato, mestizo, español or indio in different occasions. This system, thus, did not just allowed for upward social mobility for those groups at the bottom of the social pyramid, but also downward mobility for those on the middle and, rarely, upper echelons. In this way, by assigning español soldiers to pardo units, officials were, in actuality, changing the soldiers' social networks, affecting their reputation and, therefore, their calidad.

To conclude this chapter, the Spanish imperial apparatus and society were configured around the notion of calidad; a pervasive enough idea that operated at the ground level, and

[81] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, fols. 71, 74, 81-82, 86.
[82] ARAG, Ramo Civil, caja 401, expediente 5, fols. 86 and 96.

on an imperial scale. This concept presented similarities across time and space that scholars have overlooked in favor of local specificities. Even during the late eighteenth century, calidad was still based on religious notions that date back to the period of the *Reconquista*, as Joaquín Trillo's case shows, and notions of royal favor. More importantly, the evidence presented here suggests that people of the period thought of calidad as something mutable, not fixed, and the biological bases that would characterize race in the nineteenth century were ambiguous at best in colonial Spanish America. The different components of calidad and the ways in which authorities deployed them made calidad a very instrumental means of governance. Nonetheless, afro-descendants and other imperial subjects also took advantage of the fluidity of calidad to navigate the colonial hierarchy. In an attempt to improve their position, these subjects shaped, reshaped, and gave new meanings to the social categories that were created to marginalize them. In turn, this dual character of calidad as an imperial tool of governance and as a notion of difference that people on the ground used to negotiate their place in society will help us to explain the "disappearance" of afro-descendants from Guadalajara during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Beyond the implications for the case under study, using the concept of calidad in order to approach power relations in the Spanish world also serves to make broader methodological reflections. In comparing Cope's study on race in colonial Mexico, and Ariela Gross' book on race in the United States, Ann Twinam highlights the similar terms in which both authors portray the construction of difference in their respective contexts.[83] However, as much as these authors use analogous terminology in their analyses, Gross also shows how colonial officials in the seventeenth century and beyond began to establish distinctions based on

[83] Twinam, *Purchasing Whiteness*, 43.

appearance, and how nineteenth-century US Americans thought that race was "recognizable at sight", and came over time to rely on "science" and the practice of summoning experts to elucidate someone's racial identity in courts.[84] Moreover, a recent comparative study of race and slave regimes has shown that since the late eighteenth century Virginian courts drew heavily on people's physical descriptions in identity cases. In determining if a person was Indian, nineteenth-century Virginians noticed if they had a "red complexion," or "wooly hair," instead of "frizzle-looking hair," as a way to ascertain their Indian or African ancestry.[85] Ultimately, in her study Gross also states that "witnesses' descriptions of appearance -skin color, hair, eyes, and features- were ubiquitous in racial identity trials."[86]

As this chapter demonstrates, this did not happen in colonial Spanish America. When Joaquín Trillo and Juan Antonio de Ortega came before the royal court of Guadalajara to claim that they were españoles and not mulatos, their physical traits were not even mentioned in their trials. Similarly, when Pedro Estevan Hernández, Cecilio Clemente Hernández, and José María Coronel argued that they were indios and not mulatos, they defined Indian-ness in terms of legal rights and their participation within the community, and not based on their skin color or hair texture. Therefore, diverging understandings of social difference must have been operating in each context. Recognizing this fact, should lead us to reconsider and redeploy historical vocabularies when analyzing the construction of difference in distinct cultures.

Nowadays it is accepted among scholars that human difference is not just biologically given, but socially and culturally constructed. Subsuming several notions of difference

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[84] Gross, *What Blood Won't Tell*, 20, 38-39, and 48.
[85] De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Free, Becoming Black*, 96-99 and 199-205. The quotations are from 96.
[86] Gross, *What Blood Won't Tell*, 26.

separated across time and space under the concept of race results in downplaying the cultural character of these processes. Indeed, we as scholars should be more attentive to the language, and to other cultural aspects, that people used in processes of differentiation, for underlying the words they used there are distinct worldviews. Moreover, instead of asking how "race" worked in any given society, we should be opened to ask far-reaching questions, such as how was social difference constructed in a given epoch? What concepts did people use to construct difference? Why did some societies have exclusionary practices based on difference but not a vocabulary about difference? When did people start to use the concept of race, and how did they use it? To say that the concept of race is not applicable to every historical context is not to deny the stratified character of those societies, nor the exclusionary policies they produced. It is a challenge to sharpen the analytical categories that we use to study the past.

Chapter 3

The African Presence and the Emergence of African-derived Identities in Guadalajara

The question of how African peoples with distinct identities became negros, mulatos, moriscos, etc. in the Americas is an old concern for historians; an interest that remains current, nonetheless. Pioneering studies on the subject stressed that black culture and notions of blackness emerged from the hardships of slavery and the segregation of the Afro-descendant population, particularly in the United States.[1] More recent studies have added increased complexity to this picture. Without challenging the assumption that the slave experience was central to the creation of an African-American culture, Michael A. Gomez contends that "The emergence of a new, collective self-perception in the African-based community was largely in response to the challenge of a hostile environment… race as a unifying ideal was not imposed upon the community but was a concept suggested by the logic and reality of the servile condition and adopted and fashioned by those of African descent to suit their own purposes,"[2] thus, stressing Afro-descendants agency in constructing their own identities. Alejandro de la Fuente and Ariela Gross agree with Gomez in some points but argue that race was indeed an imposition originally, one that Afro-descendants later appropriated. Moreover, these authors assert, it was "the law of freedom that was most crucial for the creation of racial regimes," rather than the laws of slavery.[3] In the case of colonial Latin America Alex Borucki argues that a black identity emerged in the Río de la

[1] For an ample review of the literature on the subject, Bennett, "Writing into a Void."
[2] Gomez, *Exchanging our Country Marks*, 234.
[3] De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Free, Becoming Black*, 4 and 15.

Plata region not from isolation, but from the interaction between the different groups that Spanish American societies brought together.[4] Pushing against the strong association between the slave experience and the emergence of blackness, Chloe Ireton has unearthed several cases in which individuals labeled as negros claimed old Christian blood in the Spanish empire as early as the sixteenth century.[5]

In the case of colonial Mexico, similar to what has happened with the concepts of race and whiteness, drawing from an older historiographical tradition, scholars have projected onto Latin American history notions created to analyze the social realities of the United States. English-speaking scholars tend to lump together negros, mulatos, moriscos, and other peoples of mixed ancestry into the concepts of "black" and "blackness."[6] This position presupposes that the experiences of a mulato libre, for example, was somehow equivalent to that of a negro criollo or an African. Such a concept blurs the important distinctions that Afro-Mexicans made among themselves. It also runs the risk to create a dichotomy white versus black similar to the one that existed during part of US history, one that never did in Spanish America. Reducing the wide variety of Afro-Mexicans' identities to a single concept of blackness also returns us to equating the black experience with the slave experience. It is true that negros, mulatos, and other Afro-descendant peoples endured enslavement, but their identities and social experiences should not be reduced to this aspect. These scholars have indeed tried to put distance between the black experience and the slave experience, but in doing so they have oversimplified Afro-Mexicans' identities, equating

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[4] Borucki, *From Shipmates to Soldiers*, 4-5.
[5] Ireton, "Old Christian Black Blood."
[6] For example Bennett, *Colonial Blackness*, 214; and Gharala, *Taxing Blackness*, 12; scholars of modern Mexico have tended to do this as well, for example Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*.

them with other aspects, like Christianity or tributary status. This strategy has also created an image of social identities in Spanish America as if they were fixed or immutable.[7]

It is time, therefore, to move on from these notions and analyze Afro-descendant populations of Latin America in their own terms. In writing about blacks and blackness in Spanish America or colonial Mexico we should be more attentive to the historical specificities of these contexts. This does not mean that we should not use these two terms when analyzing Latin American history, but that when we use them we should not create a dichotomy black versus white, that never existed in Spanish America. Nor should we homogenize or flatten the variety of Afro-Mexicans' identities. Blackness, mulatoness, pardoness etc. were complex, multilayered identities that should not be reduced to a single of their components, be that the slave experience, Christianity, or tributary status. This is increasingly important considering that US historians themselves have been trying to break the dichotomy black-white for several years. Scholars have documented that Englishmen did

[7] For instance, Bennett contends that "In urban New Spain, Christianity rather than race or slavery provided the structural contours of blackness," or that Afro-descendants "channeled many of their lived experiences through Christianity," *Colonial Blackness*, 61 and 162. For her part, Gharala argues that "the imposition of tributary status as a genealogical marker had simplified the meaning of African ancestry for the purposes of the Bourbon colonial regime," or "Tribute had existed in part to amplify the echoes of slavery through its imposition as a kind of manumission tax", and "African ancestry, unlike Indian ancestry, was nearly impossible to change," *Taxing Blackness*, 199 and 207. These generalizations are surely product of the primary sources on which this study relies. Therefore, it is doubtful that they would hold contrast with, or scrutiny under other type of sources such as sacramental and ecclesiastical records in general, notarial documents, and other types of judicial cases that together show a much more complex picture of Afro-Mexicans' identities. Gharala's notions of blackness are problematic in other ways. The author's assertions reduce blackness and Afro-Mexicans' identities in general to the perspective of imperial authorities and equate them with tributary status. Moreover, in seeing tribute as "a kind of manumission tax" that reproduced the stigma of slavery, Gharala returns to the narrative that equates blackness with slavery. Additionally, this statement completely ignores that a high percentage of Afro-Mexicans were of Afro-Indigenous origin, as Robert Schwaller has demonstrated, which in itself could have been another reason to tax the Afro-Mexican population. Ultimately, the claim that "African ancestry, unlike Indian ancestry, was nearly impossible to change" is unsustainable for various reasons. First, this assertion is based solely on tributary records, and as Gharala notes, for most of the colonial period taxation was irregular at best. Tributary records, therefore, reflect a very small section of society that do not allow for such an assessment. Secondly, as the fifth and sixth chapter of this study demonstrate, and many studies have done so before, one of the strategies that Afro-descendants used to advance socially was to downplay or deny their African ancestry. This, of course, does not mean that Afro-Mexicans denied their ancestry at every opportunity.

not begin to identify themselves as white until the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. They have also shown the existence of intermediate social categories, similar to those that existed in colonial Latin America, for much of US history. Ultimately, they have also found that the "one drop" rule or similar legislation was not implemented until the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century.[8]

Having this in mind, this chapter is divided into three sections that analyze different aspects of Afro-Mexicans' identities. The chapter begins with an analysis of demographic data from early-colonial Guadalajara and an examination of a sample of slaves' bills of sale from the seventeenth century to track the development of calidad labels imposed on enslaved Afro-Mexicans. Subsequently, drawing from notarial and ecclesiastical records, as well as petitions to the city council, a second section analyzes the development of a free Afro-descendant population in Guadalajara. Of special interest is to contrast which calidad labels free Afro-Mexicans used in comparison with those that appear in slaves' bills of sale. Finally, a third part examines Afro-Mexicans' collective identities through the prism of religious corporations.

The emergence of African-derived identities in Guadalajara

The information about the Afro-Mexican population in the region is scarce for the sixteenth and early seventeenth century. However, as we have seen in chapter one, Africans and their descendants have been present in Guadalajara since the conquest and colonization of the region.

[8] See for example Gross, *What Blood Won't Tell*; and "Beyond Black and White"; for the transition from Englishmen to whites see Wilkinson, *Blurring the Lines of Race*. It should be noted that the transition from Spanish-ness to whiteness did not seem to have happened in many places of Latin America, for example in Mexico, where a white identity remains weak and fragmented at best, see Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*.

A couple of partial ecclesiastical *padrones* offer glimpses on the evolution of the Afro-Mexican population of Guadalajara across the 17th century. First, a padrón of communicants and confessants (comulgantes and confesantes) from the Sagrario parish of Guadalajara reported in 1651 a total of 3,357 individuals, of whom about 20% were enslaved negros and mulatos, and more than 9% were free negros and mulatos (see table 3.1).

Table 3.1 *Comulgantes and confesantes* in Guadalajara, 1651

Category	Spaniards	Mestizos	Free blacks and mulatos	Black and mulato slaves	*Indios laboríos*	Total
Confession and communion	1164	124	193	373	149	2003
Confession	260	48	45	130	90	573
Children	415	61	72	180	53	781
Total	1839 (54.7)	233 (7)	310 (9.2)	683 (20.3)	292 (8.7)	3357

Sources: Calvo, *Guadalajara en el siglo XVII*, 47. Numbers in parenthesis indicate percentages.

Table 3.2 *Comulgantes and confesantes* in Guadalajara, 1679

Category	Spaniards or assumed Spaniards	Mestizos	Mulatos	Blacks	Indians	Chinos	Slaves without calidad	Total
Men	500	1	18	16	6	-	1	542
Women	689	2	48	37	14	1	6	797
Boys	38	-	-	1	1	-	-	40
Girls	35	-	2	1	-	-	-	38
Total	1262 (89)	3 (.2)	68 (4.8)	55 (3.88)	21 (1.48)	1 (.07)	7 (.49)	1417

Sources: AAG, Padrones, "Padrón donde se asientan las personas que confiesan y comulgan en esta Santa Iglesia Catedral de este año de mil y seiscientos y setenta y nueve desde la calle de San Agustín hasta la Compañía de Jesús que divide media ciudad," 9 fols. Note that I have assumed that individuals without calidad indication were Spaniards.

More than 20 years later, in 1679, a surviving padrón of the downtown and southern sections of the city (that were overwhelmingly Spanish districts) listed 1,417 people, of whom 4.79% were mulatos, and 3.88% blacks, either enslaved or free. In addition, the padrón listed 7 slaves without calidad ascription. If we add these three figures Afro-Mexicans

potentially amounted to about 9.2% of the listed individuals (see table 3.2). This last census, however, is too fragmentary to demonstrate more than the constant presence of Afro-Mexicans, both enslaved and free, in the city across the seventeenth century.

Slavery is by far the most documented aspect of Afro-Mexicans' experience, probably not just in Guadalajara, but across the Spanish world. Therefore, and unfortunately for the historian, one of the best ways to trace the development and evolution of calidad categories pertaining to Afro-Mexicans is through an analysis of the city's slave market. This, of course does not mean that the Afro-Mexican experience is equivalent to slavery. To this day, the only study of seventeenth-century Guadalajara's slave market is a small section (not even a full chapter) of a two-volume work about Guadalajara and its region during that epoch, crafted in the style of the French school of *Annales*, and published in Spanish at the beginning of the 1990s.[9]

It is not the intention of this chapter to scold an impressive and pioneering work about the history of Guadalajara (indeed the main source for historians of Guadalajara studying this period). However, perhaps because of its wide-reaching character, or the historiographic conventions of its time, that work presented a sample of 403 slaves sold for the period 1630-1699. Based on this small sample, and an analysis of sacramental records, Calvo's work perpetuated the idea that slavery declined in Guadalajara after 1640. In comparing the number of slave baptisms with those of the city as a whole, Calvo concluded that the relative importance of slavery decreased in the city as the century progressed. He stated that according to the percentage of slave baptisms enslaved people represented 20% of the city's population in 1600, 28% in the 1620s, 17% in the 1650s, and 13% by the end of the century.[10]

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[9] Calvo, *Poder, religión y sociedad*, 327-343.
[10] Calvo, *Poder, religión y sociedad*, 330-331.

This assertion, however, does not consider all the slaves baptized outside of Guadalajara and introduced later into the city (about 12% of all slaves sold were Mexican-born, but outside of Guadalajara, and this figure does not even include all the enslaved people without a known provenance). At stake here, then, are issues of representation and whether baptismal records or bills of sale reflect more accurately the relative importance of slavery within the whole population. On the one hand, it should be mentioned that notarial records about enslaved people from Guadalajara are basically non-existent for the first decade of the seventeenth century. This lacuna in the sources, nonetheless, is also evident in the period from 1671 to 1680. On the other hand, baptismal records only capture those enslaved Afro-Mexicans baptized in Guadalajara and not those baptized elsewhere, or those who were never baptized. In order to contend that slavery declined during the second half of the seventeenth century in Guadalajara, thus, it must have been necessary for a high number of bills of sale to be lost or to have never been recorded, which sounds doubtful.

Calvo's study is problematic in other ways. It glossed over the variety of African ethnonyms and slaves' provenance in general, mainly because his sample begins after the peak of the slave trade to Guadalajara. It also disregarded the development of calidad categories that the bills of sale allow us to observe systematically. To be clear, the history of Guadalajara's slave market still deserves a study of its own. What follows is simply an indication of the main trends of the slave population of the city, as suggested by the bills of sale, with a focus on calidad labels. The reader, thus, will not find here systematic information about price trends, slaves' sex, or ages, all important subjects that deserve a separate and thorough analysis.

For this study I have gathered a sample of 1,365 slave sales for the period of 1615 to 1700. As mentioned previously, the early records about the Afro-Mexican population of

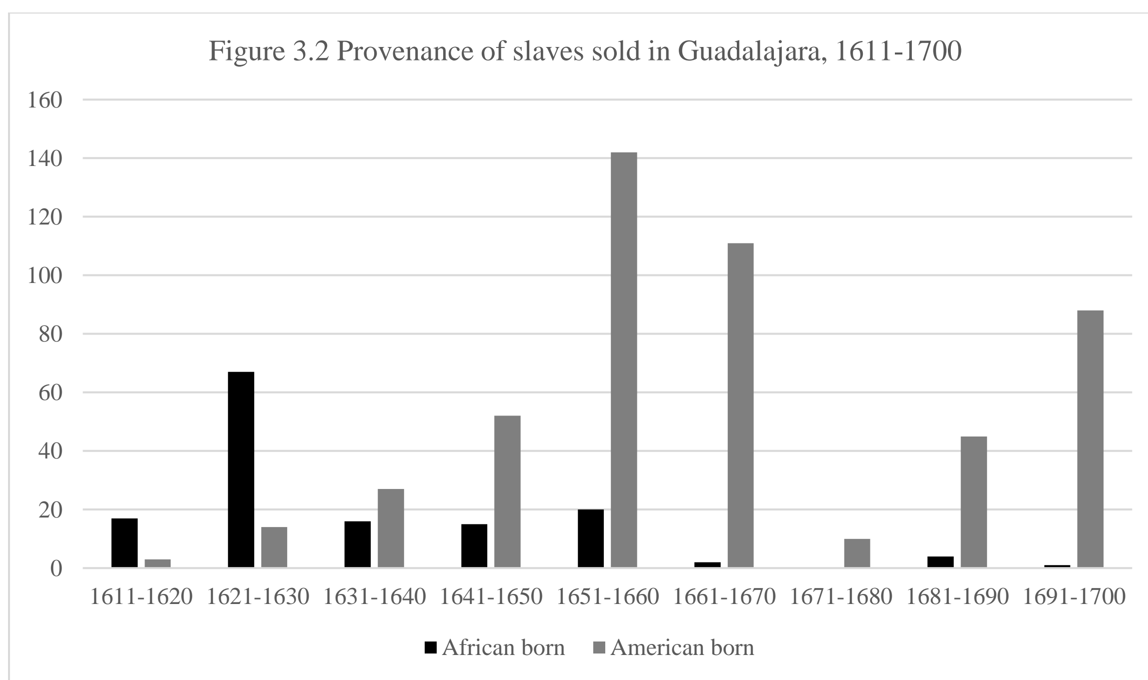
Guadalajara are scarce, and do not allow for a systematic analysis. Although there are a handful of surviving slave sales for the sixteenth century, the first slave sale for seventeenth-century Guadalajara that I was able to locate took place in 1615. This was the case of Magdalena, a *negra criolla* originally from Santo Domingo, 17 years of age, who was sold for 470 pesos.[11] This sale is also significant in that it foreshadowed that it would be creoles (both blacks and mulatos), not Africans, who would keep Guadalajara's slave market going for most of the century. From that year of 1615 on, the slave market of Guadalajara would experience an incredible expansion, presenting a pattern that contrasts with other colonial Mexican cities. It is important to say, thus, that this pattern of the expansion of slavery is very specific to Guadalajara and should not be generalized to other cities, where a decline of slavery indeed took place after 1640.[12]

Sources: AIPJ, Escribanos. **N**= 1365

[11] AIPJ, Escribanos, Andrés Venegas, 1, 131r-v.

[12] For studies of the slave market in colonial Mexican cities see for Veracruz Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz*, chapter 2; and Bermúdez, "Esclavos negros"; for Central Mexico, Sierra Silva, *Urban Slavery*, chapter 4; and Seijas and Sierra, "The Persistence of the Slave Market"; for Michoacán Chávez Carbajal, *Propietarios y esclavos*; for San Luis Potosí, Montoya, *El esclavo africano*.

Figure 3.1 presents all the slave sales that I was able to gather for the period 1615 to 1700 by decade. A simple glimpse to the data immediately casts doubt on the assumption that slavery declined after 1640. As a matter of fact, over three times as many slaves were sold in Guadalajara after 1650 than during the first half of the century (310 versus 1055, respectively). Just in the period 1651-1660 more slaves were sold (322) than in the four previous decades combined. This is also consistent with the population growth of the city as a whole, that passed from approximately 3,000 people in 1600, to 5,000 in 1650, to about 10,000 in 1700.[13] This pattern contrasts with the most well studied Mexican cities, that experienced a decrease in the overall number of slave sales after 1650.



Sources: AIPJ, Escribanos. **N**=634. Note that this excludes a small number of European-born and Asian born slaves, as well as those without known provenance.

A more in-depth analysis reveals that African arrivals to the city peaked between 1621 and 1630, then decreased significantly, but remained at a constant level between 1630 and

[13] Calvo, *Guadalajara en el siglo XVII*, 50-52.

1660. From 1661 to 1700, enslaved Africans would continue to arrive to Guadalajara, but just in small numbers. From 1631 forward, black and mulato creoles surpassed Africans in Guadalajara (this process is summarized in figure 3.2). Scholars of colonial Mexico have observed the replacement of Africans with creoles across the viceroyalty during the seventeenth century. In this regard Guadalajara is not different. This common process, however, seems to have occurred in Guadalajara earlier than in other cities. In San Luis Potosí, for example, creoles surpassed Africans until the period 1646-1650. In Central Mexico (Puebla and Mexico City), creoles became the majority of slaves sold beginning in 1640. In Jalapa, Africans remained the majority of slaves sold until 1670.[14]

The majority of enslaved Africans for whom we have data about their provenance were overwhelmingly from Angola. From 160 slaves who were not born in Mexico, almost 72% bore the ethnonym Angola. Small numbers of other ethnonyms also appear in Guadalajara's sources. For example, 4 Congo and 4 Arará slaves were sold in the city during this period. In particular, an Arará slave was the last African sold in Guadalajara for whom we have a precise origin. It is the case of an unbaptized *negro bozal*, between 18 and 20 years of age, who Diego de Roa *vecino* of Puebla acquired in Veracruz from the agent of Baltazar Coymans, a Dutch trader licensed to introduce slaves into the Spanish empire. Roa, then sold this slave to don Fernando de Velasco Anzures vecino of Guadalajara in 1687.[15] Slaves from other American places also reached Guadalajara, for example from Guatemala, Havana,

[14] Montoya, *El esclavo africano*, 249; Seijas and Sierra, "The Persistence of the Slave Market," 9-10; and Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz*, 32-33 and 172, respectively. Scholars have noted this pattern using other sources like marriage records, for example Proctor, *Damned notions of Liberty*, 60. The pattern observed in Guadalajara is also consistent with Colin Palmer's findings on the slave trade to Mexico, *Slaves of the White God*, 15-18.
[15] AIPJ, Escribanos, José Antonio Calleja, 1, 255v-256v.

Santo Domingo, and Perú. The ethnonyms and/or provenance of slaves sold in Guadalajara are summarized in table 3.3.

Again, Guadalajara is not unique in this respect. Angolans and central Africans in general predominated in the slave markets of Mexico City, Puebla, San Luis Potosí, Oaxaca, Veracruz, Valladolid (Morelia), and Chiapas, at least until the middle of the seventeenth century.[16] As it is common knowledge by now, the overwhelming presence of Angolans is explained by the Iberian Union between 1580 and 1640.

Table 3.3 Ethnonyms and/or provenance of slaves sold in Guadalajara, 1611-1700

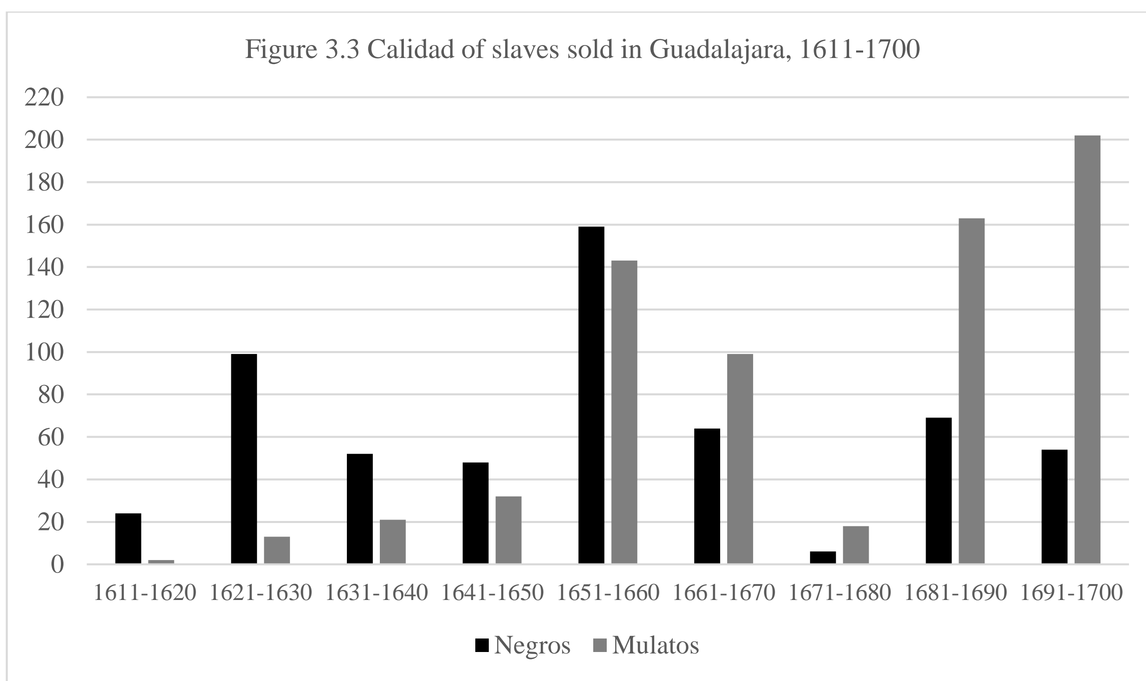
Angola	115	Mandinga	1
Philippines	5	Santo Tomé	1
Arará	4	Guinea	1
Congo	4	Guatemala	1
Cafre	3	Córdoba	1
Portugal	3	Camocon	1
Biafara	2	Cartagena	1
Bran	2	Mozambique	1
Malabar	2	Pinu	1
Malenba	2	Cabo Verde	1
India de Portugal	2	Seville	1
Santo Domingo	2	Havana	1
Bungi	1	Peru	1

Sources: AIPJ, Escribanos. Note that this excludes all the slaves born in Mexico. **N**=160.

Scholars have placed a great deal of attention to the use of these ethnonyms. In particular, there is an ongoing debate about the character of these monikers, whether they meant something to Africans or were European fabrications. Be that as it may, this is a debate in which this work cannot weigh into, leaving that for future studies. Such an engagement would require contrasting a variety of other sources and a more extensive quantitative and qualitative analysis than the one I can present with the available evidence. For the moment,

[16] Seijas and Sierra, “The Persistence of the Slave Market,”11-13; Montoya, *El esclavo africano*, 244-251; Córdova, “Procesos de convivencia,” 102-103; Carroll, *Blacks in colonial Veracruz*, 32-33; Chávez Carbajal, *Esclavos y propietarios*, 98; and Peña Vicenteño, “Esclavitud y libertad,” 96-97, respectively.

it seems that the only records where these ethnonyms were used systematically in Guadalajara were bills of sale.[17]



Sources: AIPJ, Escribanos. **N**=1268. Note that this excludes a small number of *chinos* and *moriscos* and all slaves of unknown calidad.

Parallel to this trajectory of creoles replacing Africans, there is another process consistent with what the aforementioned padrones show, that is, slaves classified as mulatos increasingly replacing negros. As shown in figure 3.3, mulatos passed from being 7.7% of all slaves sold in 1611-1620, to 44.4% between 1651 and 1660. Then, mulatos surpassed blacks in the slave market after 1661, and finally reached about 74% of all slave sales during the last decade of the century. It is difficult to draw comparisons with other cities because of the diverging ways authors present their findings. Nonetheless, a similar phenomenon is

[17] The literature on the subject is vast, see for example Gomez, *Exchanging our Country Marks*; Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities*; Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*; for Mexico, Proctor, "African Diasporic Ethnicity"; Palmer, "From Africa to the Americas"; and the classic study of Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*.

observable in San Luis Potosí, where mulatos passed from being 17% in 1625-1630 during the peak of the trade, to reach 65% of all sales between 1666 and 1705.[18]

Beyond this superficial analysis of the calidades assigned to slaves in seventeenth-century Guadalajara, there is a more complex reality that very few studies have uncovered so far. As the century progressed, not just creoles replaced Africans, or mulatos replaced negros in the slave market, but also calidad designations grew in complexity. Beginning in the 1640s some slaves in Guadalajara, mulatos in particular, exhibited what some authors have called a compound or composite calidad, that is a common calidad label such as negro or mulato, with an added qualifier highlighting a specific trait.[19] Basically all of the studies analyzing African arrivals have documented qualifiers such as negro bozal, negro ladino, negro or mulato criollo, negro entre bozal y ladino, or some other variations of these. Such designations referred to origin (in the case of criollo), or to the degree to which slaves were familiarized with Spanish culture (in the case of bozal or ladino and all of the variations in between). Composite calidades appearing in Guadalajara during the second half of the seventeenth century were different in that they highlighted features related to physical appearance, rather than origin or culture.

There is a consensus among scholars that the label mulato referred to a person of partial African ancestry, regardless of the other components of their background. This is a constant observed across the Spanish world.[20] Jack Forbes has presented compelling evidence about the origins of this term. The concept of mulato emerged during the early

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[18] Montoya, *El esclavo africano*, 244-251. Note that the increasing numbers of "afro-mestizos" during the seventeenth century is consistent with the figures presented by Aguirre Beltrán for Nueva Galicia and New Spain as a whole, *La población negra,* chapters 11 and 12.
[19] Vinson, *Before Mestizaje*, 82.
[20] See for example Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans*, 181; Schwaller, *Géneros de Gente*, 105, 124, 130-131; and Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 77.

sixteenth century. It is a derivative, a distortion basically, of the Arabic word used for a type of indentured servant common in the Islamic world, and the term employed to refer to the offspring of a Christian and a Muslim. With time, because of the observable somatic differences between servants and masters, or between the children of mixed marriages, people linked the word mulato to skin color. The hypothesis that the term mulato arose from the comparison between a mule and the physical features of specific individuals appeared until the 1600s when the concept of mulato had been in use for at least a century. Forbes has also documented the use of compound calidades in the Iberian Peninsula during the late sixteenth century, such as *mulato leonado*, *negro atezado*, and so forth.[21] Some authors have found the use of compound calidades in central Mexico as early as the 1590s. The first of such designations appearing in the historical record of that region seems to have been *negro amulatado*, *mulato blanco* and *mulato prieto*.[22]

In the case of Guadalajara notarial records suggest that this process occurred much later. The first slave with a composite calidad sold in Guadalajara was Francisco Dávila, *mulato morisco blanco*, branded on the face, 35 years of age, sold for 550 pesos in 1648.[23] In the following decade, 1651-1660, almost 10% of all the mulatos sold in Guadalajara had a compound calidad. This figure increased to 30% by the last decade of the century (table 3.4 summarizes all the composite calidades found in Guadalajara during this period).

The meaning of who was a mulato in terms of physical features, thus, was never homogenous, and constantly changed over time. The idea that a mulato was someone of

[21] The author devotes a long discussion to the origins and different usages of this term, see generally Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans*, chapters 5 and 6.
[22] Schwaller, *Géneros de* Gente, 125-126, has found a negra amulatada in 1593; Vinson, *Before Mestizaje*, 82-86, documents several compound calidades beginning in the 1620s; see also Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 166-170.
[23] AIPJ, Escribanos, Hernando Enríquez del Castillo, 1, 6.

African ancestry, however, remained constant. Take for example the case of José, "mulatillo," 10 years of age, who was the son of Antonia described as a "china," herself the daughter of Esperanza de la Cruz, also a china in 1654.[24] Even the offspring of a "china" (Jose's father is unknown, but probably was an Afro-descendant), thus, was considered a mulato.[25]

Table 3.4 Slaves with composite calidad sold in Guadalajara, 1611-1700			
Mulato prieto	29	Negro atezado	2
Mulato blanco	27	Mulato prieto pasudo	2
Mulato color membrillo cocho	14	Mulato amestizado	1
Mulato alobado	9	Mulato blanco pasudo	1
Mulato morisco blanco	5	Mulato claro	1
Mulato color cocho	5	Mulato negro	1
Mulato morisco	3	Mulato color pardo	1
Mulato atezado	3	Mulato prieto acochado	1
Negro amulatado	2	Mulato prieto color membrillo cocho	1

Sources: AIPJ, Escribanos. **N**=108

Compound calidades did not just grow in number as the century progressed, but also in complexity, including characteristics related to hair or complexion of the body. For example, José, "mulato de color claro y pelo liso," 18 years of age, sold for 350 pesos in 1685. Similarly, Lorenzo, "mulatillo peliliso alobado," five or six years of age, sold for 100 pesos in 1692. Also, Juan, "mulato algo blanco de pelo lacio," seven years of age, sold for 250 pesos along Francisco "mulato algo más prieto," five years of age, in 1694. Finally, probably the most extreme of all, José, "mulato prieto color membrillo cocho, carirredondo, alto y grueso," 24 years of age, sold for 350 pesos in 1690.[26] To a lesser extent, slaves labeled negros also were described using a composite calidad. For instance, Juana "negra amulatada"

[24] AIPJ, Escribanos, Hernando Enríquez del Castillo, 4, 208r.
[25] It is important to note that the term chino in seventeenth-century Mexico was applied only to people of Asian descent, and not to the calidad designation that would emerge later in some places, see Israel, *Razas, clases sociales*, 82.
[26] AIPJ, Escribanos, Miguel Tomás de Ascoide, 4, 142r-v; Miguel Tomás de Ascoide, 2, 186v-187v; Nicolás del Castillo, 2, 145r-146v; and José Antonio Calleja, 2, 123r-v, respectively.

originally from Sayula, 21 years of age, sold for 435 pesos in 1664. Similarly, Juan de la Madre de Dios "negro atezado," 21 years of age, sold for 400 pesos in 1694.[27] Clearly, these qualifiers referred to a black woman who somehow resembled a mulata, and a black man who was particularly dark.

An analysis of slaves' bills of sale reveals fascinating dynamics and general trends about this specific portion of the Afro-Mexican population of Guadalajara. First, Africans arrived in Guadalajara throughout the century, the peak years of the trade being between 1621 and 1630. Secondly, creole slaves surpassed Africans relatively early in Guadalajara, reaching the majority of slaves sold beginning in 1631. Thirdly, mulatos replaced negros as the majority of slaves sold in the city from 1661 forward. Ultimately, as the century progressed, calidad labels assigned to enslaved Afro-Mexicans grew in complexity. The slaves' bills of sale are an excellent start point to examine the development of calidad categories in Guadalajara. They also suggest some general population trends. What these sources do not allow us to know, however, is how Afro-Mexicans perceived themselves, what aspects they considered important for their identities, or even if they accepted the social labels Europeans imposed on them. In order to begin to approach these questions is necessary to contrast bills of sale with other sources, namely records created by Afro-descendants themselves. This is the subject of the next section.

[27] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego Pérez de Rivera, 11, 77v-78r; and Pedro Agundiz Zamora, 1, 19r-v, respectively.

Free Afro-Mexicans' Identities

As we have seen, at the same time that slavery expanded in seventeenth-century Guadalajara, a free population of African descent also grew slowly but steadily. Sources involving free Afro-Mexicans are scarce for Guadalajara, which makes them the more valuable.

If being of free status entailed for Afro-Mexicans at least a modicum of choice regarding the social categories they used in official documents, and I would argue that indeed this was the case, then the evidence from Guadalajara suggests that Afro-Mexicans felt comfortable using some of the same categories that also appear in slaves' bills of sale, records in which undeniably Afro-descendants had no opportunity to identify themselves. A small sample of 122 documents mentioning free Afro-Mexicans, coming from petitions to the city council, as well as notarial and ecclesiastical records, reveals that free Afro-Mexicans employed some of the calidad labels also used for slaves.

Table 3.5 Calidades of Free Afro-Mexicans in Guadalajara, 1611-1700

Mulato libre	29	Mulata libre	56
Negro libre	10	Negra libre	7
Moreno libre	7	Morena libre	1
Pardo libre	2	Parda libre	4
Morisco libre	2	Mulato morisco libre	4

Sources: AIPJ, Escribanos; AMG, Actas de Cabildo; AAG, Gobierno, Secretaría, Correspondencia Recibida.

As table 3.5 shows, free Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara predominantly identified themselves as mulata(o) libre and negro/moreno(a) libre. It is interesting to note that slightly more free women (56.2%) than men (43.8%) appeared in the historical records of Guadalajara. It is also worthwhile noting that women are overrepresented in the mixed-ancestry calidades of mulata/parda, totaling almost double than men in the same categories. The opposite is true in the negro/moreno classifications, where men doubled the number of women. Additionally, just men identified themselves as mulato morisco, or simply as

morisco. The preponderance of women among the free Afro-Mexican population, and particularly among mulatas and pardas, is consistent with local and broader Atlantic manumission trends, as we saw in chapter 1.

There is probably no better way to observe Afro-Mexicans exercising their freedom and expressing their personhoods than through notarial records. Indeed, a standard letter of freedom from this period defined it in the following terms: “I give him his freedom so he can have it and enjoy it from now on, and I give him irrevocable power so he can make transactions, appear before trial, write his last will, and do everything a free person can do.”[28]

Free Afro-Mexicans tried to secure formal apprenticeships for them or their relatives to gain financial stability and attenuate the social restrictions that their ancestry imposed on them in this colonial society. Over time, artisanship became one of the key components that defined mulato-ness during most of the colonial period. Securing apprenticeship contracts, however, was a shared strategy that slaveholders also employed to improve their financial situation.[29] I found 22 apprenticeship contracts in the notarial records of Guadalajara for the period of 1627 to 1700. Ten free Afro-descendants created these for themselves or their relatives, while twelve slaveowners arranged the rest for their slaves. Practically all of them involved becoming a shoemaker or a tailor official. For example, Hernando de Mujica, official of the royal treasury of Guadalajara arranged an apprenticeship of four years for Francisco, mulato slave, with Juan Martínez, master shoemaker in 1627. More than three decades later, Lorenza de Ortega, widow of Juan de Ayerra negotiated a five-year

[28] For example, AIPJ, Escribanos, Nicolás del Castillo, 1, 74r-75r. The original Spanish reads: doy libertad al dicho para que la tenga y goce de hoy en adelante y no esté más tiempo sujeto a servidumbre y me desisto y aparto de la dicha posesión, propiedad y señorío en él adquirida y todo ello se lo cedo y renuncio y le doy poder irrevocable en su fuero y causa propias como se requiere para que trate, contrate, compre y venda, aparezca en juicio, otorgue escrituras y testamentos y haga todo cuanto una persona libre pudiera hacer.
[29] A similar pattern can be observed in seventeenth-century Puebla, Sierra Silva, *Urban Slavery*, 13 and 175.

apprenticeship for Francisco negro criollo slave, with master shoemaker Francisco de la Cruz in 1659.[30]

The first apprenticeship contract created by a free Afro-Mexican that I was able to find dates to 1652. It is the case of Marta de Medinilla mulata libre, who arranged a five-year contract with master shoemaker Sebastián Pérez for his mulato son Martín. From then on, negros and mulatos from Guadalajara would follow a similar strategy. On 5 November 1660 María Cabrera mulata libre secured a four-and-a-half apprenticeship with master shoemaker Antonio Pinto for her nephew Diego Rubio, "who she raised as her son." On that same day, Petrona Rodríguez negra libre secured a similar deal for her legitimate son Damián de la Cruz with the same master artisan. Particularly revealing is the case of Nicolás Pinto, morisco libre, and his wife María de la Concepción, who in 1687 agreed with Matías de Barrionuevo to put their nine-year-old son Gerónimo de Alarcón under Barrionuevo's mentorship, so he could teach him how to write, read, and count.[31]

Knowing how to read and write facilitated free Afro-Mexicans to perform activities usually not associated with their marginalized status. For instance, José García de Contreras, mulato libre, reported in 1683 to bishop Santiago de León Garabito that when he was appointed to teach Christian doctrine to the villagers of Apango, Atlaco and Chiquilistlán (in the southern region of Nueva Galicia) in 1679 "neither children nor seniors knew the Christian doctrine, but now they do."[32] This knowledge also allowed them a more readily access to local and imperial institutions. Take for example the case of José del Pinal, mulato libre and master shoemaker, who on 27 August 1693 petitioned to the city council a plot of

[30] AIPJ, Escribanos, Juan Sedano, 1, 67r-v; and Tomás de Orendain, 2, 8r-9r, respectively.
[31] AIPJ, Escribanos, Hernando Enríquez del Castillo, 2, 104r; Diego Pérez de Rivera, 9, 368v-369v, and 370r-371r; and Miguel Tomás de Ascoide, 4, 42v-43v, respectivelly.
[32] AAG, Gobierno, Secretaría, Correspondencia recibida, caja 2, 1650-1685, carpeta 1680-1685.

land in the southern district of San Sebastián de Analco to build his house. A similar case is that of Gregorio Martín, mulato libre, who asked for a piece of land in the same neighborhood in 1694. Additionally, Petrona de Peralta and Sebastiana de Medinilla, both mulatas libres and vecinas of Guadalajara, requested plots of land in the central district of Santo Domingo in 1681 and 1687, respectively.[33] What these cases have in common is that all of these free Afro-Mexicans presented themselves as vecinos, and signed their petitions themselves, demonstrating a knowledge of the prerogatives granted to them in this colonial society, as minor as they might have been. This knowledge also allowed free Afro-descendants to respond to what they saw as threats to their rights or property. For example, Ana del Castillo, identified interchangeably as mulata or parda libre, fought a prolonged case that extended from 1681 to at least 1684, to protect her property. In her petition Ana declared that Alonso Calderón and her daughter Luisa Calderón had been trying to build a house on a plot of land that she had inherited from her mother Beatriz de la Mota and had been in her possession for over 60 years. As she recounted, her mother got the *solar* from Governor Juan de Canseco who served between 1636 and 1640. We do not have a ruling sentence for this case, unfortunately, but Ana's struggle remains illustrative.[34]

For many Afro-Mexicans their first notarized document as free people had to do with paying the price for their liberty. For instance, in January 1653, Tomasina de Valera, mulata libre, borrowed 120 pesos from Melchor de Santacruz to pay to Bartolomé de Valera for her freedom. On the same day she convinced Santacruz to buy her one-year-old son and agreed

[33] AMG, Actas de cabildo, 1680-1699, for José del Pinal, 134r; for Gregorio Martín, 123r-125r; for Petrona de Peralta, 124r-125v; and for Sebastiana de Medinilla, 175r-176r. Note that this book has an irregular numbering that restarts as the minutes of a new year begin. A complete English translation, as well as Spanish transcription of Joseph del Pinal's petition can be found in Appendix 1, document 3.
[34] AMG, Actas de cabildo, 1680-1699, 72. A complete English translation of Ana's petition, as well as an Spanish transcription, can be found in Appendix 1, document 2.

to work in his obraje until fulfilling her debt. Likewise, in 1664, Úrsula de la Parra, mulata libre, along with Diego García and Juana Vázquez, her *fiadores*, obliged themselves to pay 250 pesos to doña Mariana de Zamora for the freedom of Mariana de los Reyes, Úrsula's daughter. They also used as collateral "quince mulas aparejadas de lazo y reata, 2 manadas la una de burro con treinta yeguas y la otra de quince yeguas con silla." Finally, in 1687, Tomás de Barrios, mulato libre, agreed to serve don Juan de Villarreal *racionero* of the cathedral of Guadalajara until his debt of 150 pesos was fulfilled.[35]

Free Afro-Mexicans also made other transactions in which they bought, sold, or rented property. A particularly active Afro-descendant in Guadalajara's notarial record was Pedro de Betancour, who identified himself indistinctly as negro or moreno libre even within a single document. He was in the business of cattle raising and all of his transactions were related to this activity. In 1652 he agreed to pay 352 pesos to Juan de Isla Solórzano, vecino of Guadalajara, that Betancour borrowed from him to improve his business. Two years later he borrowed 167 pesos from Juan del Rivero Agustina "para su avío." Then, in 1657 he obliged himself to pay 1,220 pesos to Francisco Matías, that he would cover in three-year-old steers (novillos). Finally, in 1666 he committed to deliver to doña María de Miranda 50 four-year-old steers and 152 one-year-old calves (becerros), for a total of 391 pesos and four reales worth of cattle.[36] Most transactions conducted by men were related to cattle raising, land, or haciendas. In 1653, thus, Juan de Aragón Valdivia, mulato libre and son of captain Lorenzo de Meza Valdivia, sold to Nicolás Covarrubias "un sitio de estancia de ganado menor de veinte leguas en contorno y dos caballerías de tierra" for 100 pesos. Ultimately, in

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[35] AIPJ, Escribanos, Hernando Enríquez del Castillo, 3, 6r-9r; Diego Pérez de Rivera, 11, 248r-249v; and José López Ramírez, 4, 279v-280r, respectively.

[36] AIPJ, Escribanos, Hernando Enríquez del Castillo, 2, 322r-v; Hernando Enríquez del Castillo, 4, 22r-v; Nicolás de Covarrubias, 1, 7r-v; and Diego Pérez de Rivera, 13, 80v-81v.

1664, Pedro Navarro, negro libre, rented two *caballerías* of land from Juan Navarro Gaitán in the jurisdiction of La Barca for 100 pesos.[37]

In contrast with men, most of women's transactions revolved around buying, selling, or renting real estate. On 1 May 1651, Francisca de Rojas, mulata libre, sold to María de la Paz y Aceves a house that she had built adjacent to her own house within the neighborhood of San Francisco's convent for 390 pesos. In 1653, María Hernández, mulata libre, rented a house to Magdalena de Medinilla located in the district of Santo Domingo for three pesos a month for four years. In 1670, Ana Rodríguez, mulata libre and vecina of Guadalajara bought a solar in San Sebastián de Analco from Micaela Velázquez, a single woman also vecina of Guadalajara, for 50 pesos.[38] Together, these transactions also show the widespread distribution of Afro-descendants across the city, and in particular a historical presence of free Afro-Mexicans in the neighborhood of Analco, a presence that would persist until the end of the colonial period, as we will see in chapter five.

Among all of the different types of notarial records, last wills are probably the most revealing about Afro-Mexicans' subjectivities and identities.[39] I was able to find 13 last wills penned by Afro-Mexicans, all of them from the second half of the century, 10 written by women and just 3 by men. Testators were overwhelmingly free mulatos, 11 of them in total, one was a moreno libre, and another a parda libre. Collectively, this small group of free Afro-descendants exhibited some commonalities, as well as some interesting differences. Religious concerns were of particular importance for free Afro-Mexicans. Basically all of them left some amount of money to pay for masses for their souls. Nine of them asked to be

[37] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego Pérez de Rivera, 11, 257r-258r;
[38] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego Pérez de Rivera, 4, 33r-v; Tomás de Orendain, 1, 27r-v; and Tomás de Orendain, 4, 40r-v, respectively.
[39] For the case of Veracruz see for example, Fernando Winfield Capitaine, "Testamentos de pardos y mulatos."

buried in the cathedral of Guadalajara, one in the convent of santo Domingo, and another one in the convent of san Francisco. At least six testators had affiliations with one or more religious corporations, and three of them reported religious objects as part of their belongings. Their commonalities also had a more worldly character. Nine testators reported some type of real estate as part of their possessions. Five declared small amounts of cash or debtors. Another five listed several pieces of clothing or garments of various sorts. Three of them (all women), owned jewelry. One man had livestock. Finally, as a whole, these testaments also reveal Afro-descendants' set of social networks and some diverging life stories that exemplify the variety of experiences of this community. For example, Francisca Leal, mulata libre was probably born free, because she was married and had two legitimate children. In contrast, María Sedano, also mulata libre, mentioned an illegitimate child. Similarly, when Bernarda Muñoz wrote her testament, she declared having an enslaved son, suggesting a recent past of slavery.[40]

The testament of Francisca Rojas (whom we have encountered before doing other transactions), mulata libre and vecina of Guadalajara, written in 1657, is remarkably revealing. She was a member of the *Congregación de la Anunciata*, of the confraternities of Virgen del Tránsito, San Antonio de Padua, and Santísimo Sacramento, as well as of the Franciscan Third Order. She requested to be buried in the convent of San Francisco wearing saint Francis' habit, and left money for at least 13 masses to save her soul. She declared a house within the neighborhood of the same convent, and an adjacent lot of land, that she gave to her grandson Juan de Arce. She also had a religious figurine ("una imagen de bulto vestida con corona de plata"). Finally, Francisca also reported "una indezuela rayada de las de la

[40] The last wills of these three mulatas libres have been previously analyzed by Asunción Lavrin, "Perfil histórico," 44-45.

conquista de Nuevo León llamada María por tiempo de 10 años como consta del depósito firmado por el gobernador Martín Zavala," that is an india from northern Mexico with some country marks, who was supposed to serve her for ten years.[41] A contrasting case is that of Juliana de la Cruz, mulata libre. She wrote her testament in 1683 and declared to be "pobre de solemnidad." Juliana said to be the child of unknown parents and her sole possession was a house in the neighborhood of Santo Domingo. She asked to be buried in the cathedral of Guadalajara and had at least two debtors, Nicolás Meneses who owed her 15 pesos and Pablo de Zúñiga, who owed her three and a half pesos.[42]

In the case of the few men who wrote a testament, Francisco de Lepe's stands out. He identified himself as a moreno libre in at least another document besides his last will. He sold a plot of land adjacent to his own house to Inés de Ochoa for 20 pesos in 1692. On that same year he wrote his testament, wherein he declared to be the son of unknown parents. He wished to be buried next to his wife Clemencia Muñoz, also morena libre, in the cathedral of Guadalajara wearing saint Francis' habit. Francisco was a member of all the confraternities of the city and declared to had been once the mayordomo of that of San Antonio de Padua's. He listed as his possessions "4 lienzos de diferentes hechuras y un santo cristo de bulto," that he asked to be placed in the chapel of San Sebastián. In addition, he had a house and an adjacent lot of land in the neighborhood of San Sebastián de Analco. He left the house to Juana Ramos, "whom she raised with her wife as her child," and the adjacent lot to Micaela de Ibarra, mulata libre.[43]

[41] AIPJ, Escribanos, Nicolás de Covarrubias, 1, 14r-15r.
[42] AIPJ, Escribanos, Miguel Tomás de Ascoide, 1, 8r-9v.
[43] AIPJ, Escribanos, Miguel Tomás de Ascoide, 2, 37r-v; and 161v-164v.

Notarial and municipal records, therefore, show that free Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara comfortably used at least some of the categories that also appear in slaves' bills of sale. Men like Pedro de Betancour consistently identified themselves as negro or moreno libre in multiple documents. Likewise, women like Ana del Castillo and Francisca Rojas regularly appropriated the labels of mulata and parda libre in their multiple interactions with colonial institutions and notaries. These records suggest the emergence of individual identities around these calidad ascriptions. The content and meaning of these labels, however, was not the same that Europeans intended. These men and women presented themselves as vecinos and good Christians, as fathers, mothers, and children who, as the letters of freedom specified, did everything a free person could do. These documents also point toward the creation of social networks and collective identities, that are the focus of the last section of this chapter.

Confraternities and Afro-Mexicans' Collective Identities

Catholic brotherhoods, also known as sodalities or confraternities, were an integral part of religious life, therefore, fundamental for people's everyday experiences. Catholic brotherhoods can also be seen as platforms from which people could assert their identities and negotiate power relations. This section builds upon the discussion on the basic tenets of calidad presented in the previous chapter and argues that although, as we have seen in the last section, Christianity was a central aspect of Afro-Mexicans' lives, they expressed their collective identities through the language of calidad. It was calidad, not Christianity, what structured and delineated the contours of Afro-descendants' identities. This section focuses on three confraternities that accepted people of African descent among their members, San Antonio de Padua, Nuestra Señora del Tránsito and Nuestra Señora de Zapopan. It also pays

attention to other brotherhoods that interacted with these three, such as San José de Analco, and Santísima Trinidad.

The scholarship on black brotherhoods in the case of Mexico has a young but growing tradition. Now we know more about the role of these associations in different aspects of people's lives. In general, most of the works assert that confraternities helped Africans and their descendants to forge an identity, but few of them have examined this process closely.[44] Less so on how identity-formation was tied to ideas about calidad, and these to empire and social order. Studying confraternities, then, shows the complexity of the identities that these subjects manifested, and demonstrates that Afro-descendants actively participated in the construction of social hierarchies. Ultimately, examining Mexican confraternities outside of the most studied contexts, such as Mexico City, could provide new insights on the history of these subjects, and on the structure of New Spain's society.[45]

The brotherhoods of Guadalajara fit into a long tradition of negro and mulato confraternities in the Spanish world.[46] In Guadalajara, as well as in the rest of New Spain, the Spanish population founded the first confraternities. Soon afterwards, negros and indios also established their own brotherhoods. It is important to say at the outset, that few of the

[44] For pioneering studies see Roselló Soberón, "La cofradía de San Benito de Palermo"; Roselló Soberón, "Iglesia y religiosidad"; Calvo, *Poder, religion y sociedad*, 187-188; Masferrer León, "Por las animas de los negros bozales"; Mancuso, *Cofradías Mineras*; Rojas, "Esclavos de obraje: consuelo en la devoción"; Castañeda García, "Piedad y participación femenina."

[45] For the most recent, and influential studies on the subject see Von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers*; also, "Colonial Middle Men?; and "Black Brotherhoods in Mexico City"; and Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches.*

[46]On the subject of the first confraternities of the Iberian Peninsula, see: Ortega Sagrista, "La cofradía de los negros en el Jaén del siglo XVII"; Armenteros Martínez, "De hermandades y procesiones"; also, Von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers* 13-14. The first confraternity of blacks in Lisbon was created in 1476, but, as a consequence of the transatlantic slave trade, African-descended population grew within the city throughout the seventeenth century, reaching 15,000; they organized several of these associations and made a procession during the festivity of *Nuestra Señora de las Nieves*, see Braudel, *El Mediterráneo y el mundo Mediterráneo*, 445; Gutiérrez Azopardo, "Las cofradías de negros en la América Hispana," 1-2; and Bazarte Martínez, "Las limosnas de las cofradías," 65.

confraternities of the city accepted people of just one calidad. Most of them included españoles, negros, mulatos, indios, and mestizos, all in the same sodality. In many ways, the configuration of these associations reflected Guadalajara's social structure, a varied milieu, with a considerable concentration of Indigenous and African descended populations.

Confraternities were voluntary organizations of Catholic laymen that gathered for purposes of Christian piety and were devoted to a saint or virgin. There were confraternities that accepted members of any calidad, and confraternities that only accepted persons from certain groups. Urban confraternities acted as mutual-aid societies that conferred benefits to members' families. [47] In colonial Guadalajara confraternities organized processions during Holy Week and Corpus Christi, as well as planned and financed the patron saint's feast day. Some confraternities administered hospitals. Others organized bullfights in honor of their saint. Most of them encouraged mutual aid and provided welfare for their members.[48] A series of charters, also known as constitutions, established the privileges and obligations of confraternities' different members. These documents also delineated brotherhoods activities. Through constitutions is how we can see the most influence of calidad within these associations. *Cofrades* had to elect representatives who were in charge of managing the brotherhood and organizing the festivities in which the sodality was involved. Brothers also paid fees to enter sodalities. Charters regulated all of these aspects of confraternal life.[49]

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[47] Some authors have offered a few definitions of these collectivities. See Serrera, *Guadalajara Ganadera*, 351-52; Martínez López-Cano, Von Wobeser and Muñoz "Introduction", 13; and García Ayluardo, "El privilegio de pertenecer," 89-91.

[48] About the activities of different brotherhoods in Guadalajara, see: Calvo, *Poder, religión y sociedad*, 187-188; on the confraternity of San Clemente, see AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 22; on the confraternity of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra 'G', caja 20, expedientes 18-22. The confraternity of Nuestra Señora del Rosario was one of the oldest in the city, the oldest document preserved is dated on 1615, AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 18, expedientes 40 and 42.

[49] For an analysis of the different official's task within confraternities, see Martínez Domínguez, "Las cofradías en la Nueva España," 51-55; and Dávila Garibi, *Apuntes para la historia*, t. II, 438.

An analysis of the Nuestra Señora de Zapopan charters allows us to evaluate the influence of calidad in confraternities. *Vecinos* of Guadalajara founded the sodality on 24 April 1681, and its constitutions stated that persons of the four "*gremios* of the city and its surroundings, such as Spaniards, mestizos, Indians and mulatos," could enter as brothers.[50] Two mayordomos and eight deputies administered the *cofradía*. The brothers elected the mayordomos on a secret ballot taking place on December 18 every year. One of the mayordomos had to be a clergyman and the other a layman. Members also elected deputies during the same election. They chose two from each of the groups comprising the confraternity. The brotherhood had license to collect alms in the city and its surroundings. For this purpose, each group had an assigned day of the week to collect: españoles on Tuesdays, mestizos on Thursdays, mulatos on Fridays, and indios on Sundays. Each group needed a ledger, which they gave to the treasurer. The alms were kept in a chest of three keys (the mayordomos and the treasurer kept the keys) that only could be opened each year during the festivity, which they celebrated the same day of the election.[51]

Members used the alms collected during the year to pay for dowries for "poor and virtuous" women. It is interesting how they distributed the alms among the four groups, because it shows hierarchies at work within these associations. The alms collected by each group belonged to that specific group; that is, the alms collected by españoles were distributed among españolas, the ones collected by mulatos were distributed among mulatas, and so on. The alms collected on masses and festivities, along with other profits, were divided in half; one belonged to the españoles, and the other three groups distributed the rest in equal

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[50] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "Z", caja 3, expediente 26, 2r. The quote suggests that the word gremio was used for the categories of español, mestizo, etc. This is indeed a rare usage, and this is the only document I know where this word is deployed in that manner.
[51] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "Z", caja 3, expediente 26, 2v.

shares. A week before the festivity the brothers selected a number of women among their relatives to give them the money for their dowry. Finally, they distributed the money as follows: 300 pesos for each española, 100 for mestizas, 50 for mulatas, and 40 for indias. The treasurer had to deliver the money one day after the wedding or one day after the women entered a convent, if they decided to become nuns.[52]

The confraternity lapsed and was re-founded a few times during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Vecinos reestablished the confraternity in 1696. They also signed new constitutions and accepted people of every calidad. However, both documents present some changes in the prerogatives and obligations of each group. For instance, the constitutions of 1696 specified that all persons who wanted to enter the sodality should pay two pesos, except for indios, who paid what they could. Additionally, three deputies, elected from among all members, administered the confraternity.[53] These two documents are very detailed about the distribution of privileges and obligations between people of different calidad, and they also show how the establishment of hierarchies within brotherhoods changed over time. An analysis of the constitutions of San Antonio de Padua, its interaction with other sodalities and government institutions provides further evidence of the influence of calidad in daily life, as well as on how honor, and slavery were put into play.

The rules of this sodality stated the prerogatives and obligations of the members, according to their calidad. San Antonio de Padua was divided between those born in Africa and those born in the New World, (criollos and mulatos), and accepted both men and women. The rules stipulated that new male members should pay one *peso* and four *reales*, while female inductees paid one peso. In addition, all the brothers paid half a real each week, one

[52] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "Z", caja 3, expediente 26, 2-3.
[53] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "Z", caja 3, expediente 27, 1.

peso every two weeks and four pesos every year. All the *cofrades* had to participate in the confraternity's procession for Holy Week, the patron saint's day, and attend to the funerals of the deceased brothers, as well as to take care of the ill. Mulatos administered the alms collected in the city; blacks those collected outside the city, and those collected during Lent were split in half. Finally, all expenses were also split in half.[54]

The black brothers, comprising *negros criollos* and *bozales*, carried the saint and the *guión* during processions, whereas mulatos hoisted the banner. The position of mayordomo would alternate among each group: one year the mayordomo had to be elected among mulatos, and the next amongst blacks. However, the explicitness of the rules regarding the election of the confraternity's officials did not prevent the quarrel that would begin later.

In July 1667, only two years after the black and mulato parties signed the charter of the brotherhood, they began a dispute over the control of the association. Each party's arguments provide valuable information on how people perceived themselves and the others, and the distinction markers they used. First, bozales argued that their fathers were the founders of the brotherhood, and that mulatos already controlled the confraternity of Nuestra Señora del Tránsito:

> We [bozales] appear before Your Grace in our right and best interest and we say that said confraternity <u>was founded since its origin and commencement by bozales and creoles, and we have always had possession of it, and afterwards some mulatos</u> began to enter as brothers; as a result one year the bozales had the government and the next year the mulatos, provoking dissent, disrupting the peace and causing disturbances to this day… and regarding that the mulatos already have the confraternity of Nuestra

[54] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 7, "Constituciones de la Cofradía del Glorioso San Antonio", 3 fols.

Señora del Tránsito founded in the convent of Saint Augustine, we would ask Your Grace to declare that the government of our confraternity is ours and belongs to us bozales and not to mulatos.[55]

For their part, mulatos also claimed that their fathers were the founders of the confraternity, and that bozales did not have anything to do with the establishment of the sodality: "Firstly, that said confraternity in its commencement and first establishment was erected by negros criollos and mulato residents of this city, our forefathers, and they themselves made and carved the confraternity's chapel." Then, they targeted the alleged incapacity of bozales for managing the association for "not being capable or plenty to keep the confraternity for themselves." Finally, they insisted on bozales' condición and their lack of honor "for they are people in which we cannot trust the assets or the goods of the confraternity, as they are slaves and they might lose them because of villainy or carelessness, and they could not be admonished as we could be, because we are free and craftsmen, and that from our work have promoted said confraternity."[56]

[55] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 8, 1. The original Spanish reads: Ante vssa. Illma. Parecemos como mejor haya lugar y a nuestro derecho convenga y decimos: que la dicha cofradía <u>fue fundada desde su origen y principio por los negros bozales y criollos y siempre hemos estado en posesión y luego fueron entrando en la dicha. cofradía algunos mulatos</u> por cofrades de manera que un año entraban en el gobierno los dichos negros bozales y otro año los mulatos con que siempre hay disensiones inquietándolos los dichos mulatos perturbando la paz y causando alborotos hasta el día de hoy […] Y respecto de que los dichos mulatos tienen ya cofradía de Nra. Sra. Del Tránsito fundada en el convento de San Agustín se ha de servir vssa. Illma, de declarar que el gobierno de nuestra Cofradía nos toca y pertenece a nosotros los dichos negros bozales y no a los dichos mulatos.

[56] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 8, 4-5 and 12-12v. The original quotes are: Primero que la dicha. cofradía en sus principios y primera erección la fundaron y erigieron los negros criollos y mulatos residentes en esta ciudad, nuestros pasados, y ellos mismos hicieron y labraron la capilla de la dicha cofradía [Y también que los negros bozales] en la fundación de dicha cofradía tuviesen parte en manera alguna ni ayudando con sus personas ni con socorro [porque] no siendo los negros bozales capaces ni suficientes para tener por sí solos la dicha cofradía… Por ser gente de quien no se pueden fiar los bienes y propios de dicha cofradía porque siendo esclavos que o por descuido o bellaquería suya se pierdan no se les podría apremiar con el rigor y libertad que a nosotros siendo libres y oficiales y que de nuestro trabajo hemos fomentado la dicha cofradía.

The dispute ended on November 9, 1667, when the judge provisor Baltazar de la Peña y Medina declared that the government of the confraternity belonged to bozales and that mulatos could not participate in its administration, but still could be members.

This episode illuminates how notions of honor and slavery were interwoven with calidad. It also reveals the different layers of negros and mulatos' identities. Both parties arguments have plenty to unpack, and it is worth analyzing them with some detail. Both groups appealed to a tradition or legacy to back their claims regarding the government of the sodality ("our forefathers founded…"); an appeal that is surely related to the importance of custom in Spanish law. Both groups also contended that their ancestors build the confraternity's chapel. In arguing this, negros and mulatos fit into a pattern in which worshippers considered sacred spaces, buildings, and objects as part of their identities and communities. As Matthew O'Hara has put it for Mexico City's indios, for parishioners "control over the local church buildings and property did not just symbolize their attachment to their parishes; these items represented their community… and parishioners' claims on sacred property were also claims about community identity."[57]

Mulatos' claims are more contradictory, for they reproduce the idea of negros' lack of honor ("they are villains"), which relates to negros' status of slaves. Mulatos' assertions are also more multifaceted because they merge their perceptions of occupation ("we are craftsmen"), and condición ("we are free"), with the importance of custom. It is in this sense that mulatos spoke in the language of calidad. Moreover, in noticing that negros bozales could not maintain the confraternity because of their small numbers, mulatos showed an awareness of the historical processes unfolding in seventeenth century Guadalajara, namely,

[57] O'Hara, A Flock Divided, 1846; see also De la Torre, "Disputas por el espacio."

the replacement of the African population with a creole one, and of negros with mulatos, that we have examined in the first section of this chapter.

The confraternity of San Antonio de Padua also reveals interesting Atlantic dynamics. For example, the internal division between African-born and American-born negros can also be seen in some Brazilian confraternities. However, the case of Guadalajara is distinct, because while in Brazil Africans spoke about specific *naciones*, negros from Guadalajara used the term bozal to refer to themselves; an otherwise derogatory word that españoles used for Africans. As to why negros from Guadalajara did not preserved specific ethnonyms, it is likely that because of the predominance of slaves classified as Angola in seventeenth-century Guadalajara, at some point the terms Angola and bozal became interchangeable and negros appropriated the word, infusing it with new meanings.[58]

This case also shows that within confraternities Afro-descendants occupied leading positions in what could be considered a parallel hierarchy. This claim is more significant considering that these brotherhoods grouped persons of different calidad. For example, in 1675 Diego Rodríguez, black slave of Diego Gamboa, a merchant of the city, was the mayordomo of San Antonio de Padua.[59] Also, in 1684, Francisco de la Cruz, a tailor, was mayordomo of Nuestra Señora del Tránsito. The rector was a shoemaker with the same name, both free mulatos.[60] Although mulatos controlled the confraternity of Nuestra Señora del Tránsito, its composition was varied, as the lists of masses devoted to the deceased brothers show. In 1658 the sodality sponsored three masses for the soul of Simona de la Cruz,

[58] See: Mancuso, *Cofradías mineras*, 143; Carvalho Soares, *People of Faith:* 69-74, and chapter 5; and Von Germeten *Black Blood Brothers*, 192-193.
[59] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 10, 1-19; see also caja 20, expediente 4, 1; and expediente 7, 4r.
[60] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 10, 1-3.

deceased slave. In 1659 they did the same for captain Pedro Vidarte y Pardo, in 1660, for Hernando de Mujica, accountant of the Royal Treasury of Guadalajara, and in 1667 for Diego Pérez de Rivera, notary of the city council. All three, Spanish elites.[61]

The analysis of disputes over the place each confraternity occupied during processions sheds more light on processes of hierarchy formation. New Spain was a corporate society; that is, it was a society in which all members occupied a place according to a divine order that people should not disrupt, but in reality, people constructed that order through their interactions with imperial institutions. For example, during the processions in which all the confraternities of a city participated, like during Corpus Christi, they did so in an orderly fashion, in compliance with the seniority of the brotherhood and the calidad of their members. This means that Spaniards' confraternities always led processions, and behind them came the remaining sodalities. In addition, the days each confraternity organized its procession during the Holly Week was a way to draw lines of exclusion. While Spaniards preferred to organize theirs on Good Friday, other confraternities did theirs on Maundy Thursday. An analysis of a few cases where several confraternities fought over the place they occupied in processions reveals interesting dynamics about how these processes served the purposes of the empire. What follows builds upon Paul Kramer's proposals on "the imperial" -that is what empires do, and not what empires are- to show how local processes connect with the imperial.[62]

In May 1674, the confraternities of San Antonio de Padua, run by negros, Nuestra Señora del Tránsito, led by mulatos, and San José de Analco, administered by indios, began a dispute over which of these should lead the Maundy Thursday procession, during the

[61] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 20, expediente 1, 8-10.
[62] The author defines the imperial as: "a dimension of power in which asymmetries in the scale of political action, regimes of spatial ordering, and modes of exceptionalizing difference enable and produce relations of hierarchy, discipline, dispossession, extraction, and exploitation." See: "Power and Connection," 1349.

commemorations of Holy Week in Guadalajara. The representatives of San José claimed that it was their right to lead the procession because of the seniority of their brotherhood, and that because of their legal status as *naturales* the crown had the obligation to protect them.[63]

For their part, the brothers of San Antonio de Padua argued that they had always led the procession, and that no other confraternity should have a claim on this matter:

> Responding to the pretension of the brothers of said confraternity (Analco) on the preference, arguing that due to their seniority… they should have preference in the procession and activities conducted in the city, and the only thing in which they are right in their claims is that they should not get along with us, because the banner of our confraternity has always come in front of theirs… Spaniards and only Spaniards should have preference over us.[64]

As was the case with the internal dispute over the control of San Antonio de Padua, Indians, blacks and mulatos appealed to custom, in this case to the seniority of their brotherhood. Although, the exact dates of foundation are unknown, some sources assert that San Antonio de Padua was founded during the bishopric of Alonso de la Mota y Escobar between 1598 and 1607. Nuestra Señora del Tránsito, according to a document, already

[63] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 20, expediente 4, 3-6. In the original Spanish: debe vmd. en nuestra antigua real y legítima posesión de que por tiempo inmemorial emos gozado y poseído con buena fe y como más antiguos en la fundación, mejores en tiempo y derecho y por el privilegio que nos asiste de la Real y Católica voluntad en nuestra propia patria y tierras cuyo encargo… es fecho a todos los jueces eclesiásticos… que seamos amparados de todo género de pretensiones que con siniestra delación nos interturban en ella y en lo que por tantos títulos y causas nos toca y pertenece como en el caso presente en cuya atención debe vmd. mandar se nos dé el lugar y precedencia que nos viene de derecho.

[64] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 20, expediente 4, 5-8. In the original: respondiendo a lo que mira a la preferencia que pretenden los cofrades de dicha cofradía [of Analco] diciendo que por la antigüedad que tienen… deben preferir en el lugar que les toca en las procesiones y funciones que se ofrecen en esta ciudad y lo más que en esta razón alegan es constante que no se deben entender con nosotros porque el guion de nuestra cofradía ha ido siempre delante de ellos… los españoles y sólo ellos nos pueden preferir.

existed in 1620. According to Indians bishop Pedro de Ayala, who presided the diocese between 1560 and 1569, founded their confraternity.[65]

The quarrel began when mulatos complained to the judge because indios had "usurped" their place in the procession when they stood in front of the banner of San Antonio de Padua. They explained that, under the orders of bishop Francisco Verdín de Molina, the confraternity of Nuestra Señora del Tránsito should go in front of all the confraternities of Analco. Furthermore, they appealed to the legal status of their brotherhood, claiming that they had a foundation bull in the temple of Saint Augustine, while the indios of San José de Analco did not, and could not prove the antiquity of their brotherhood.[66]

The brothers of San Antonio de Padua defended a more privileged position, one that mulatos acknowledged, but not the indios. Adding to their claim that "Spaniards and just Spaniards should have preference over us," negros also pointed out that their patron saint, and of "all negros and mulatos of New Spain" was San Benito de Palermo, and because of that they should have preference,[67] thus appealing to their devotion and embracing of Christianity to obtain privileges.[68] It is unfortunate that we do not have a ruling on this case. Either way, this last claim clearly implies considerable complexity within Afro-descendants' social identity.

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[65] On the antiquity of Nuestra Señora del Tránsito see: AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 18, expediente 39, 3v; on the foundation of San José de Analco see: AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 20, expediente 4, 3. The Jesuits' yearly letters corroborate the existence of a negro confraternity in Guadalajara in 1595, see Zubillaga, *Monumenta Mexicana*, vol. VI, 30.
[66] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 20, expediente 4, 1-4.
[67] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 20, expediente 4, ff. 5 and 8. It is worth noting that many confraternities of African descended people were devoted to San Benito de Palermo. For the life of this African saint see: Roselló Soberón, "Iglesia y religiosidad", 232.
[68] Displaying religious piety or devotion was a way in which negros and mulatos could get recognition from other groups. For example, on 8 June 1637 the city Council gave negros and mulatos twelve pesos to buy shoes for their dances during Corpus Christi "because it was a devout act and due to that festivity." Paradoxically, as argued thus far, by doing this, they legitimized the empire. AMG, Actas de cabildo, 1607-1680, 165r.

Disputes among sodalities over the precedence during festivities continued during most of the colonial period. In 1679, the brothers of Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción de Analco asked the judge that the new confraternities of the city should respect the traditional order during processions, following the criteria of seniority, and not usurp places that did not belong to them.[69] The complaint alluded to the foundation of Santísima Trinidad, a confraternity that was involved in a few disagreements with other brotherhoods, particularly San Antonio de Padua's. Santísima Trinidad was founded in 1678 in the church of *La Merced*. We do not have much information about its composition, but there are some clues that it was also diverse. For instance, it also organized a procession on Maundy Thursday, the same day as San Antonio de Padua, and Nuestra Señora del Tránsito, and not on Good Friday, the day in which the elites' confraternities organized their processions.[70]

The last dispute ever recorded during the seventeenth century occurred in 1679, when the confraternity of Santísima Trinidad asked the judge to march in front of San Antonio during Corpus Christi. Nonetheless, the judge decided to keep the order as it was because the confraternity of the Santísima Trinidad was founded the year before the dispute.[71]

To conclude this chapter, social labels associated with African ancestry such as negro, mulato, and morisco emerged from Europeans' enslavement of Africans, first in the Mediterranean during the late Middle Ages, and then in the Americas. Iberians integrated Afro-descendants into their multi-layered schemes of social differentiation (discussed in the previous chapter) based on centuries-old prejudices against peoples with darker skin colors and non-Christian peoples. Because social differentiation in the Iberian world was based on

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[69] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "A", caja 7, expediente 31, 1.
[70] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 18, expediente 7.
[71] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 18, expediente 1.

a multitude of factors, and not solely on physical appearance or lineage, Afro-descendants occupied ambiguous positions in Spanish-American societies across the whole colonial period. Afro-descendants' statuses, then, ranged from enslavement to be master artisans, or to positions of relative power, like that of Jose García de Contreras who taught Christian doctrine.

In Guadalajara, the same as in other parts of the Americas and Europe, Africans and their descendants first arrived as slaves. As a result of the demographic changes unfolding because of the slave trade and because of the continuation of slavery after African arrivals decreased, Españoles fabricated increasingly complex calidad labels that they imposed to enslaved Afro-descendants. These social ascriptions encapsulated somatic and cultural differences, either perceived or invented. An analysis of slaves' bills of sales reveals that these categories changed as creoles replaced Africans and as mulatos replaced negros as the majority of slaves sold within the city. In turn, this development suggests Españoles' incessant attempts to police social boundaries.

Despite that the most documented aspect of Afro-descendants' history is slavery, sources from Guadalajara demonstrate the emergence of a free Afro-Mexican community in the city since the early seventeenth century. Ecclesiastical, notarial, and municipal records indicate that Afro-Mexicans appropriated and consistently used at least a handful of the calidad labels (negro, moreno, mulato, pardo, and morisco) that also appear in bills of sale. An examination of Afro-Mexicans' interactions with institutions and notaries show the wide variety of experiences of these subjects. It also reveals the construction of individual identities around these social ascriptions.

These individual identities also gave way to collective ones, as Catholic brotherhoods demonstrate. Within these corporations Afro-Mexicans actively participated in the

construction of social hierarchies. These records show that Afro-descendants were aware about the language of calidad and used it to draw distinctions among themselves. Mulatos also knew about the prejudices against negros and reproduced them in trying to put distance between each other.

Analyzing the construction of calidad labels and identities associated with African ancestry through a variety of records (rather than just one type of source) shatters the reductionism of lumping together Afro-descendants into a single (US American) concept of blackness. In what sense is appropriate to speak about blackness in general when the majority of the Afro-descendant population, both enslaved and free, bore the label of mulato for most of the colonial period? What did exactly link individuals like Juan de Aragón Valdivia or José García de Contreras, mulatos libres, for example, with the unbaptized Arará slave sold at the end of the century in Guadalajara? Neither their life stories, nor their social networks closely resembled to one another so as to group them into a general "black" population or experience. Blackness and mulatoness were complex, multilayered identities that indeed shared some common aspects, but one is irreducible to the other.[72]

Finally, some of the processes unfolding during the seventeenth century would continue during the eighteenth. In addition, new developments within the Afro-Mexican community would also emerge before Afro-descendants disappeared from written records. These are the subjects of the next chapter.

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[72] There are other similar cases. For example, in 1647 Antonio de Medina, español, declared in his last will that he had a mulato son named Juan de Medina. He had him with one of his enslaved women and freed him when he was a child. In his testament Antonio left 1000 pesos and several mules to Juan. AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego Pérez de Rivera, 3, 135r-138v. Similarly, in 1656 don Miguel de Contreras mayor of Guadalajara declared in his last will that he had a mulato son named Marcos, 16 years of age. He freed him, game him clothing, cattle, and 20 pesos, AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego Pérez de Rivera, 6, 163r-164v.

Chapter 4

Continuity and Change in Late-Colonial Guadalajara

Beginning with Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán's pioneer work, several scholars have analyzed Afro-Mexicans' place in late-colonial Mexican society through the lens of such notions as assimilation and integration. This approach indeed has resulted in remarkable studies.[1] However, these concepts portray Afro-Mexicans as permanent outsiders, and denote that Afro-descendants were introduced into already formed, or centuries-old, societies across Mexico and Spanish America. As we have seen in the previous chapter, this could hardly be the case in Guadalajara and other Mexican cities. African-descended peoples were present since the very beginning of Spanish colonization of Mexico and the Americas. They were certainly not "integrated" into Guadalajara's society. Afro-descendants helped to physically build Guadalajara as well as other Mexican colonial cities. More importantly, they were key agents in the formation of New Spain's society and in the creation of a colonial Mexican popular culture.

Similarly, in his book *Colonial Blackness* historian Herman Bennett takes issue "with those scholars who have framed the social history of this population [Afro-Mexicans] around upward social mobility." In doing so, Bennett says, researchers have overlooked the importance of Afro-Mexican families and the formation of communities.[2] This criticism remains relevant and it would be worthwhile to explore it further. The next two chapters will analyze how and why Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara stopped identifying themselves (at

[1] Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, chapter XV; Alberro, *Inquisición y sociedad*, chapter XXX; Martínez Montiel, "Integration Patterns"; Castañón González, "Asimilación e integración"; Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*; and Von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers*.
[2] Bennet, *Colonial Blackness*, 186.

least on paper) as negros, mulatos, moriscos, and lobos at the end of the colonial period. Interpreting this historical process as an inevitable outcome or as the defining aspect of Afro-Mexicans' history, however, would be teleological and erroneous, as it would be to portray Afro-descendants as always trying to deny the social classifications that the colonial system originally imposed on them, and that they eventually appropriated. Demographic and overall social trends beginning in the seventeenth century continued to unfold during the eighteenth, some of these in a more accentuated manner than others. None of these, nevertheless, indicated what would happen with this population during the last decades of the colonial period.

If we ignore for a moment Afro-Mexicans' eventual forfeiting of their calidad labels, what these trends do show, is a trajectory toward freedom and social advancement, albeit limited. After all, this was a hierarchical, and deliberately unequal, society. These developments also reveal how Afro-descendants formed social networks and communities around people with the same calidad ascriptions. More importantly, they did all of these before they relinquished calidad labels. Based on notarial, ecclesiastical, and sacramental records, then, this chapter reconstructs the evolution of the Afro-Mexican community of Guadalajara during the late colonial period.

Transformations in Slavery

Despite that Afro-Mexicans enjoyed more opportunities to become free during the eighteenth century, slavery remained a constant reality for many, even beyond the colonial period.[3] To date, there is no systematic study of eighteenth-century Guadalajara's slave market, but there

[3] A study that analyses these opportunities through manumission lawsuits and other types of legal cases is Martínez Castellanos, *Esclavos rebeldes*.

are a handful of studies focusing on specific years of this period.[4] Using a small sample of 234 bills of sale for the period 1701 to 1735, as well as secondary literature examining eighteenth-century Guadalajara reveals how demographic trends carried over from the previous century unfolded during that epoch.[5]

The replacement of enslaved individuals labeled as negros with mulatos that began in the 1660s continued and accentuated in eighteenth century Guadalajara. If we recall from the previous chapter, about 74% of all slaves sold in Guadalajara between 1691 and 1700 were mulatos. This figure increased to 78.5% for the period 1701 to 1735. Furthermore, African arrivals continued at least during the first years of the century. The only African within my small sample is Petrona, who was described as a 30-year-old negra bozal, with a seven-year-old girl also named Petrona, for whom there is no known calidad or place of origin. Pedro de Arcarazo, vecino of Guadalajara, sold them to Juan Martínez Gómez *chantre* of the cathedral of Guadalajara for 550 pesos in 1702.[6] It seems that españoles continued to introduce small numbers of Africans for the rest of the colonial period, mainly as their personal servants. For instance, in 1800 captain Pedro de la Guardia brought an African slave with him and asked the high court permission to baptize him. The court first asked de la Guardia to interrogate the slave about his knowledge of Catholicism and whether he was baptized in his homeland. The captain declared that he bought the slave (unnamed throughout the whole document) in Havana in 1797, and that at the moment of the purchase the slave appeared to be between 10

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[4] For example Fernández, "Esclavos de ascendencia negra"; and Jiménez Pelayo, "Una visión sobre la esclavitud."
[5] These are just the bills of sale I was able to gather before the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, and therefore before the archives closed, and for this reason this sample should not be considered comprehensive, nor even representative of this period as a whole, but just suggestive of some of the historical processes analyzed here. Because of this, throughout this chapter I am careful not to draw definitive conclusions from this sample, and instead use expressions such as these sources suggest, indicate, or seem to point toward such direction. The eighteenth century remains one of the most understudied periods of Afro-Mexicans' history in Guadalajara.
[6] AIPJ, Escribanos, Nicolás del Castillo, 10, 35r-38v.

and 12 years of age. He also stated that the slave was a native of the Mozambique coast, to the northeast of the Cape of Good Hope, that he did not know his parents' names, nor they knew about Catholicism in his land.[7] Beyond documenting the continuous arrival of Africans into the region even by the end of the century, this document is relevant insofar as it documents the reach of ideologies justifying colonialism. It is also significant for its incipient ethnography of African peoples, even if created in the context of imperialism.

The use of composite calidades also persisted during the first three decades of the eighteenth century. As we saw in the preceding chapter, 30% of all mulatos were assigned a compound calidad in bills of sale during the last decade of the seventeenth century. This figure remained basically unchanged between 1701 and 1735, for 29.8% of enslaved mulatos had a composite calidad during that period (the composite categories found in eighteenth century Guadalajara are summarized in table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Slaves with composite calidad sold in Guadalajara, 1701-1735

Mulato blanco	14
Mulato Prieto	11
Mulato color membrillo cocho	11
Mulato alobado	6
Mulato cocho	6
Negro atezado	4
Mulato aindiado	3
Mulato blanco alobado	1
Mulato blanco pasudo	1

N: 57.
Sources: AIPJ, Escribanos.

In addition, new categories emerged during the first decades of that century. This is the case of "mulato blanco alobado" that further qualified the pre-existing category of mulato alobado that emerged during the seventeenth century. Take for example Juan, five years of age, described as mulato blanco alobado, son of Francisca mulata, who fray José del Castillo

[7] ARAG, Civil, caja 376, expediente 12.

prior of the San Juan de Dios convent sold to don Juan Villere for 120 pesos in 1717.[8] Similarly, during this period three slaves classified as "mulato aindiado" were sold in Guadalajara. These were the cases of José, ten years old, and 20-year-old Sebastiana, who the same fray José del Castillo sold to Nicolás Juárez and doña Clara de la Parra, for 170 and 300 pesos, respectively, in 1713. Lastly, Andrea who was described as mulata "de color aindiado" and "pelilisa" who Marcos de Aguilar and his wife Manuela López sold to Gertrudis Ballesteros for 200 pesos in 1734.[9] It is interesting to note that all three, Juan, José, and Andrea, even though had different composite calidades were children of a Francisca mulata owned by the convent of San Juan de Dios.

From the discussion of compound calidades from this and the previous chapter, thus, we can see that to the extent that physical appearance factored in assigning people's calidad, the wide variety of understandings of the terms mulato and negro could have facilitated Afro-Mexicans' eventual disappearance at the end of the colonial period. Although, assigning too much importance to physical appearance runs counter to what most evidence suggests. More importantly, if priests, notaries, city officials, and other people who bought or sold slaves were also in charge of creating official documents, why did they not impose these classifications in those records too? The absence of similar composite categories in other records, thus, strongly suggests that Afro-Mexicans were identifying themselves in sacramental and notarial documents where they acted as free persons, or even as slaves, provided that they had more leeway to choose their calidad, as in baptismal and marriage records. This evidence, thus, poses a serious challenge to the argument that officials, particularly priests at the moment of baptism, assigned people's calidad based on physical

[8] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego de la Sierra, 7, 422v-423v.
[9] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego de la Sierra, 7, 156r-158r and 159v-160r; and José de Tapia, 2, 86r-88v, respectively.

appearance. If skin color was that important, according to the proponents of this argument, why are these composite classifications absent from sacramental records?

Another interesting trend that Guadalajara's slave market exhibited was the increasing number of enslaved women sold in the city. Men represented the bulk of slaves sold for most of the seventeenth century but beginning in 1681 women became the majority of slaves sold. Between 1681 and 1690 women amounted to 53.3% from a total of 257 sales. This figure slightly increased during the next decade, and women reached 54.2% of all slaves sold between 1691 and 1700. The number of women sold in Guadalajara seems to have further increased during the first 35 years of the eighteenth century, for 61.5% of the slaves purchased between the years 1701 and 1735 were women. These trends seem to have continued during most of the century. A study of late-colonial Guadalajara reported that 83.7% of the slaves sold during the years 1789 and 1790 were women. Moreover, all of the slaves purchased in these two years were mulatos.[10]

These developments, in particular women surpassing men as the majority of slaves sold in the city, suggest changes in the character of slavery in eighteenth century Guadalajara and most likely larger transformations in the society and economy of the region. Although, as we have seen, enslaved Afro-descendants could be craftsmen and journeymen, urban slavery in Guadalajara was overwhelmingly domestic, and in this sense enslaved women were a considerable percentage of the labor force of the city since early times. Moreover, since its fourth and definitive foundation Guadalajara was a commercial hub that supplied with various goods, and among these slaves, the western and northwestern regions of the

[10] Jiménez Pelayo, "Una visión sobre la esclavitud," 148.

viceroyalty.[11] Miners, obraje, and ingenio owners bought and sold enslaved Afro-descendants in Guadalajara throughout the seventeenth century, most of them enslaved men.

Based on the database used in the previous chapter, miners were involved as sellers or buyers in 105 slave transactions between 1611 and 1700, of these slaves 67.3% were men. For example, in 1653 Juan de Robles miner from Jolapa bought four slaves in Guadalajara, these were Gerónimo mulato, 20 years of age, for 300 pesos; Juan negro, 30 years old, for 400 pesos; Domingo de la Cruz mulato, 20 years of age for 320 pesos, and Blas Rivera negro, 23 years old, for 430 pesos.[12] During the same period ingenio owners bought or sold 20 slaves of whom 70% were men. Half of these slaves were actually purchased by a single person, Diego de Mora, who between 1641 and 1664 bought six men and four women and introduced himself as "sugar mill owner and resident of Tepic (dueño de ingenio de hacer azúcar y vecino de Tepic)." In 1650 Mora bought from Nicolás de Covarrubias Mateo and Matías, mulato brothers for 380 pesos each. Then in 1655 he bought three more slaves, Pedro de Rojas, 50-year-ol negro, from Bartolomé de Sabina for 130 pesos worth of sugar; Josefa, 12-year-old negra, and Lucrecia, 20-year-old china for 280 and 310 pesos respectively both from Francisca de Porras.[13]

For their part, obraje owners bought or sold seven slaves of whom six, or 85.7%, were men. Again, the majority of these transactions were conducted by a single person, Melchor de Santacruz, whom we have encountered before in the previous chapter and who sold three slaves and bought another three between 1640 and 1653. In 1640 he bought Lorenzo "chino de nación Malabar," 22 years old for 320 pesos. In 1641 he bought Melchor "negro criollo

[11] Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*, 142-149; and Calvo, *Poder, religion y sociedad*, 255-257.
[12] AIPJ, Escribanos, Tomás de Orendain, 1, 11v-12r, 12r-v,19r-20r, and 50v-51r, respectively.
[13] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego Pérez de Rivera, 4, 51r-v; Diego Pérez de Rivera, 5, 106r-v, 107r-v, and 109v, respectively.

de Oaxaca" for 270 pesos. Then, in that same year he bought 24-year-old Dominga "negra criolla de Guadalajara" for 400 pesos.[14] Altogether, this evidence is consistent with the city's role within the regional economy for this period. In contrast, between 1701 and 1735 just two miners bought or sold slaves in Guadalajara. These two transactions involved enslaved men. In 1702 Francisco Bernal "capitán, vecino y minero del Real de san Sebastián" bought Vicente Ferrer, 24-year-old negro, for 400. Then, in 1712 the same Francisco Bernal bought Lucas Efigenio, "mulato de color alobado", ten years old, for 250 pesos. No obraje, nor ingenio owners participated in the slave market during this period.[15]

The increasing number of enslaved women sold in Guadalajara across the eighteenth century along with the diminishing involvement of miners, obraje and ingenio owners in Guadalajara's slave market, thus, indicate a few things. Firstly, a shift from a slave market supplying mines, haciendas, obrajes, and ingenios, to a slave market centered on the urban demand for domestic slaves. This is also apparent in the involvement of women in slave transactions. The same study cited above found that from 43 slave purchases in 1789 and 1790 in Guadalajara just 19 men acted as buyers or sellers, the rest of the people conducting these transactions were women.[16] Finally, Although we lack studies about the relative importance of enslaved labor in the haciendas, ingenios, and obrajes of the Guadalajara region, we know that slaves were employed in all of these throughout the colonial period.[17] The data presented here, thus, is consistent with more general trends pertaining the use of slave labor across the viceroyalty. Authors have found that slavery steadily decreased in mines, haciendas, ranchos, obrajes, and ingenios in the Bajío region, Central Mexico and

[14] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego Pérez de Rivera, 2, 117; Diego Pérez de Rivera, 1, 94 and 154v, respectively.
[15] Antonio Morelos, 1, without numbering; and Diego de la Sierra, 7, 136v-137r.
[16] Jiménez Pelayo, "Una visión sobre la esclavitud," 148.
[17] For example, Chevalier, *La formación de los latifundios*, 410-412.

Veracruz during the eighteenth century.[18] Slavery then gave way to other forms of labor. The decrease in enslaved men sales in eighteenth-century Guadalajara could be explained by this process.

In any case, the slave market in eighteenth-century Guadalajara seems to have survived just by supplying the growing urban population with slaves, and slavery appears to have endured primarily as a marker of status, more than an important source of labor, even beyond the colonial period.

Changes within Confraternities and Religious Life

Afro-Mexicans continued to take part of religious and social life in general in Guadalajara throughout the eighteenth century. As we have seen, the confraternity of Nuestra Señora de Zapopan lapsed and was refunded a few times. A 1795 memoir, written at the request of Francisco Ramírez Morales, *subdelegado* of Zapopan, stated that the brotherhood was founded in 1696 and then again in 1757. Both times, new constitutions were signed, and the confraternity always accepted persons of different calidad. However, both documents present some changes in the prerogatives and obligations of each group. For instance, the constitutions of 1696 specified that all persons who wanted to enter the sodality should pay two pesos, except for Indians, who paid what they could. Additionally, three deputies, elected from among all members, administered the confraternity. The 1757 constitutions, instead, stipulated that "all people of reason should pay two pesos, poor people one peso, persons of color four reales, and Indians two reales."[19] Finally, about the government of the brotherhood

[18] Tutino, *Creando un nuevo mundo*, 447-50, and 472-476; Van Young, *Hacienda and Market*, chap. 11; Proctor, *Damned Notions of Liberty*, 17; Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz*, 71-78; and Serna, "Disolución de la esclavitud."
[19] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "Z", caja 3, expediente 27, 1.

the constitutions established that "in the elections of mayordomos and other representatives of this confraternity only Spaniards, considered or known as such, shall have a vote."[20]

These two documents are very detailed about the distribution of privileges and obligations between people of different calidad, and they also show how the establishment of hierarchies within brotherhoods changed over time. Several issues stand out in these charters. First, the fact that the last constitutions used markers related to class, phenotype, and Christianity shows how deeply interwoven these markers were regarding the construction of social boundaries. Second, the tightening in the hierarchy between the 1696 charter and that of 1757 that marginalized Afro-descendants, and related to this, the distinction between "persons of color," and people of reason. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries blacks and mulatos were indeed considered as *gente de razón*, a concept that referred to those that were prone to receive the holy scriptures, in opposition to those considered *gente sin razón*, or new Christians. It is beyond the scope of this work to elucidate the reason of these changes. In contrast, the assertion of "all Spaniards considered or known as such," relates to the importance of reputation for the construction of difference in the Spanish world. Because of the instability of the confraternity we do not know if these rules were ever enforced. Nonetheless, one could make the case that as official documents these reflected people's concerns of establishing social boundaries, and perhaps larger transformations within society.

For its part, the confraternity of Nuestra Señora del Tránsito that, as we recall, mulatos administered, seems to have ceased to exist during the late seventeenth century, or at least no eighteenth-century records have survived. In contrast, the sodality of San Antonio de Padua

[20] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "Z", caja 3, expediente 27, 2v.

kept existing well into the nineteenth century, although it eventually lost its designation of the "confraternity of the morenos" and began to be known as the "brotherhood of the mulatos," and it ultimately lost any calidad qualification.

Picking up our narrative where we left it in the previous chapter, the confraternity experienced numerous difficulties during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was also involved in more disputes with other brotherhoods. In 1675, Mateo de Vergara, master candle-maker, filed a legal suit against the sodality and in particular against the mayordomo Diego Rodríguez, whom as we remember was an enslaved negro property of merchant Agustín de Gamboa. Vergara declared that Rodríguez owed him 128 pesos and seven tomines that he lent him for the Maundy Thursday procession, but because Rodríguez was a slave he could not repay him. The case lasted for several years, Vergara died in the process and his widow continued with the suit. Unfortunately, we do not have a ruling sentence.[21]

A few years later, in 1678, Ignacio Correa and Domingo Casillas rector and mayordomo of the brotherhood, petitioned to the ecclesiastical judge of the bishopric permission to sell some cattle from the confraternity's ranch to support the cult, because they had "experienced many necessities because of the lack of demand [of cattle] and we cannot fulfil the obligations for the divine cult, such as the masses devoted to our deceased brothers, because the alms we collect are not sufficient."[22]

The confraternity's financial and broadly internal problems continued during the subsequent decades. In 1681 the cofrades accused Marcos Guerrero the confraternity's

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[21] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 10.
[22] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 11, loosely translated from the original: "han experimentado muchas necesidades por cortedad de demanda y no se pueden cumplir las obligaciones del culto divino como de los sufragios por los hermanos difuntos pues no alcanzan las limosnas."

mayordomo, Domingo Casillas his negro assistant, and Diego Maldonado, negro *vaquero*, of selling cattle from the corporation's ranch without permission. The complaint led Guerrero to present his resignation and to state "the negro brothers make so many scandals that it is pointless that I continue with my duties."[23] During that same year the brotherhood's ledgers reported that the chapel was in bad shape and that they had expended 433 pesos and five reales in renovations. More than a decade later, in 1695, the composition of the confraternity seems to have change, for Bartolomé de la Cruz, a mulato, was the new mayordomo, and as we recall from the previous chapter, after the internal dispute between negros and mulatos the latter were banned from the corporation's management. What had not changed was the issues faced by the sodality. In that sense, during that year of 1695 the rector and mayordomo asked to the heirs of Marcos de la Peña, who was a *racionero* of the cathedral, to fulfil his last will and contribute to the reparation of the chapel, because "it currently is in very bad state and the roof is about to fall apart."[24]

During the eighteenth century the confraternity experienced some interesting transformations. To begin with, it lost its designation as "cofradía de los morenos" and began to be known as the "cofradía de los mulatos." As we have seen, this is consistent with the demographic changes of the city, and the viceroyalty even, as a whole. A report of the city council informing on the state of the different churches and chapels within the city mentioned the chapel of san Antonio "de los mulatos de esta ciudad." Two decades later, in his chronicle published in 1742, Matías de la Mota Padilla provided a description of some of the city's

[23] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 12.
[24] For these problems with the chapel in general see AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 14, the original quote is: "por estar como a la sazón está la dicha capilla maltratada y ya para caer por defecto del techo."

confraternities and referred to san Antonio de Padua's as the "cofradía de los mulatos."[25] Intriguingly, this designation was only used in external sources, and not in the internal records of the brotherhood. We count with San Antonio de Padua's lists of membership for several years of the eighteenth century, but calidad is conspicuously absent from them. Whether it was because it was common knowledge that it was a mulato confraternity or for other reasons it is uncertain. These lists included a few mentions of craft nonetheless, such as *carpintero*, or *sillero*, which aligns with Afro-Mexicans' character of craftsmen across the colonial period.[26]

Furthermore, beginning in 1712, the confraternity created the title of "madre mayor" also referred to as "hermana mayor" in some documents. The responsibilities of this office are unknown, but it seems that cofrades elected a new person every two years. The first woman to be elected to this position was Antonia de Rocha in February 1712. Two years later they appointed Manuela Gallardo. Then, in 1716 Juana de la Cruz was named madre mayor. Bernarda de Mondragón was madre mayor in 1718, and so on.[27] The records do not provide further information about these women other than their names, but the mere fact that such an office was created within the confraternity speaks to the growing importance of women within the Afro-Mexican community of Guadalajara.

Beyond the internal changes within the brotherhood, the confraternity of san Antonio de Padua was involved in more disputes over privileges and preeminence during the eighteenth century, similar to those analyzed in chapter three. In fact, it was the same brotherhood of Santísima Trinidad that filed a case against san Antonio de Padua's. If we

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[25] AMG, Actas de cabildo, 1716-1733, 84r; Mota Padilla, *Historia de la conquista*, 425.
[26] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 15.
[27] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 12, expediente 15.

recall, A first dispute took shape in April 1679, when Santísima Trinidad asked the judge to march in front of San Antonio during Corpus Christi. Nonetheless, the judge decided to keep the order as it was because the confraternity of the Santísima Trinidad was founded the year before the dispute.[28] Some years later during the mid-eighteenth century, there was another misunderstanding between Santísima Trinidad and San Antonio de Padua about precedence during the procession of Corpus Christi. This time with different results. The case started in May 1753, by which time Santísima Trinidad had the status of *archicofradía*, a confraternity with more privileges or more seniority, than others. Additionally, by then, the tailors' guild controlled the brotherhood.

The dispute began when the masters of the tailors' guild and representatives of the brotherhood, gave José Barbosa y Cabrera power of attorney to bring a case against san Antonio de Padua. The brothers of Santísima Trinidad alluded to the previous disagreement and stated that they only lost it because Juan de Santiago de León Garabito, bishop of Guadalajara in 1679, was a devotee of Saint Anthony and favored the brotherhood devoted to his cult. This time, however, they expected a fairer sentence.

The brothers of the Santísima Trinidad claimed that, "the brothers of the confraternity [are] much nobler than those of San Antonio because of their patron and persona, but also for being more splendorous in this city than the brothers of San Antonio, as it can be seen from the subjects that hoist their banner and those that hoist the Holy Trinity's." Under these terms, they requested that they should have preference in the procession.[29]

[28] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 18, expediente 1, 3 fols.

[29] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 18, expediente 8, 6. The original Spanish reads: "siendo los alumnos de la cofradía mucho más noble que la de San Antonio por su objeto y patrón, sino también por ser ellos de más esplendor en esta ciudad que los cofrades de San Antonio como se ve según los sujetos que conducen su estandarte y los que conducen el de la Santísima Trinidad."

For their part, the brothers of San Antonio pointed again to the seniority of their brotherhood. However, nearly eighty years had passed since the previous dispute and they had lost any document that could prove the foundation date of the confraternity. Therefore, the judge decided on 19 June 1753, to give preference to the archconfraternity. Some days later the brothers of San Antonio appealed the sentence, but they lost the dispute.[30]

Although we do not know for sure the composition of both confraternities by that time, it is worth noting that the brothers of Santísima Trinidad used the same arguments in other disputes during the seventeenth century. Although there is no doubt that they were using the basic tenets of calidad to make their case, this time they utilized them in a more subtle and nuanced way. In this sense, they signaled the condition and calidad of their brothers ("we are nobler"), and then underscored the importance of their patron saint; thus, articulating concepts of honor and religiosity, and contrasting these with San Antonio de Padua's brothers' allegedly lack thereof.

This is the last dispute in which the confraternity was involved during the colonial period, or at least the last for which we have evidence. We count with ledgers and lists of membership for some years of the second half of the century. These let us know that the sodality kept working normally during the rest of the colonial period. The lists of membership do not specify people's calidad whatsoever, and therefore do not allow for a detailed analysis of the corporation's structure. They do indicate that the confraternity lost any designation of calidad. Moreover, the corporation seems to have been inundated by elites, because the lists of membership from the last decades of the colonial period are full with people holding the

[30] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 18, expediente 8, 8v.-10r., 11v.-12.

title of don, and by 1798 don Fernando de Cambre, governor of Nueva Galicia was the confraternity's rector.[31]

The history of the confraternity of san Antonio de Padua, thus, works as an allegory of the history of Afro-Mexicans in Guadalajara. First founded by Africans in the late sixteenth century, the confraternity then evolved as the demographic landscape of the city changed and went to accept all Afro-Mexicans within its ranks. The emergence of new groups associated to different calidad ascriptions then led to conflicts over identity, community, and social standing. As the transatlantic slave trade dwindled and the mulato group became the majority among Afro-Mexicans, conflicts arose but this time with other collectivities, namely those individuals labeled as indios. It was during these instances that Afro-Mexicans revealed themselves as a community. The constant troubles faced by the confraternity are also reminiscent of Afro-Mexicans' struggle to carve a space for themselves in colonial Mexican society. In the end, similar to what happened with the Afro-descendant population of Guadalajara, the sodality also lost its calidad designation by the end of the colonial period.

Some studies have suggested that parallel to their participation in crown-sanctioned activities and social interactions, Afro-Mexicans also were part of an unsanctioned "subculture" wherein they could exert power and authority otherwise denied to them in other domains of social life.[32] Beyond the most well-known cases of witchcraft and other popular ritual practices, there is evidence that Afro-descendants from Guadalajara also took part in this unsanctioned domain. On 12 September 1746, a *fiscal* of Guadalajara sent a complaint

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[31] AAG, Gobierno, Cofradías, Letra "G", caja 18, expedientes 15 and 20. Technically, by that year the kingdom of Nueva Galicia did not exist anymore, and the proper title of Cambre should have been Intendent of Guadalajara, although sources kept referring to Nueva Galicia for the whole colonial period.

[32] For example Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors*, 5-6; and Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*.

to the inquisition in Mexico City that was tellingly titled "Denunciation against the gatherings and processions that the negros and mulatos of Guadalajara have introduced into the city."[33]

In his writing, the fiscal remarked three situations that to his understanding were against Christian faith and that local authorities were purportedly ignoring. Firstly, that negros and mulatos of the city had created communities that simulated or imitated the religious orders of santo Domingo, san Francisco, san Agustín, san Pedro Nolasco, and san Juan de Dios. Afro-Mexicans, according to him, were organizing secret gatherings where they had their times of choir, feasts, and sermons, for which they made their own *retablos*, and ornaments of gilded paper. Secondly, that during the observances of the *semana de dolores*, between the 3rd and 11th of May, the processions gave way to "great disorder," music, dances, and drinking. Finally, the fiscal lamented that "many people" accustomed praying a new, and blasphemous, rosary called "of the sores of saint Francis."[34]

Afro-Mexicans across the viceroyalty seem to have organized similar gatherings during the colonial period. Joan Bristol has documented that in late-seventeenth-century Mexico City negros and mulatos organized congregations simulating the religious order of

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[33] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 897, expediente, 10, 374r-376v "Denuncia contra los conventículos y procesiones que mulatos y negros de la ciudad de Guadalajara han introducido." The author of the denunciation never gave his name and only identified himself as "el secretario que hace oficio de su majestad fiscal."

[34] The original document is worth citing at length: Las obligaciones de cristiano me están precisando a que solicitando el remedio ponga noticia en v. s. de tres cosas lastimosas que en esta ciudad se están experimentando. La primera que entre los negros y mulatos de estas tierras se han erigido unas comunidades que aunque para los señores de la ciudad es una lícita diversión y razón porque no acudo a los que pudiera para el remedio, para otros y para mí no lo es, pues simulados los sagrados ordenes de nuestros padres Sto. Domingo, san Francisco, san Agustín, san Pedro Nolasco y san Juan de Dios, tienen sus horas de coro, sus pláticas ocultas, sus fiestas con sermones para lo cual han hecho ornamentos de papel dorado y mandado hacer retablos. Y la segunda, que la semana de dolores de nuestra señora y especialmente desde el día tres de mayo hasta el día once en que hacen los incendios de la inversión de la santa cruz son estos con tal desorden que remitiendo el convidado para el a las tres de la tarde muchas luces con caja y trompeta van por delante las vasijas de vino con el que a la noche es crecida la embriaguez y por consiguiente en las músicas, bailes etc., grandísimo el desorden. La tercera un rosario que acostumbran muchas personas en estos días y llaman de las llagas de san francisco cuyo padre nuestro es este: seráfico san francisco santo querido de dios por aquellas cinco llagas que el señor imprimió en vos que me des una limosna. La ave maría es: por amor de dios, por amor de dios. Todo lo pongo en la alta contemplación de v. s. para que como muro de nuestra santa fe vea lo que le parezca conveniente que en sus acertados dictámenes será lo mejor. Septiembre 12 de 1746.

saint Augustin. On that occasion, however, authorities saw these reunions as subversive and began a prosecution that ended with people in jail and other minor punishments.[35] In Guadalajara, however, no further investigation, nor prosecution, ever followed the original denunciation. As the complaining fiscal mentioned in his account, local authorities saw these gatherings as "licit entertainment (una lícita diversión)" and inquisitorial authorities from Mexico City do not seem to have paid much attention to the denunciation.

What are we to make of these two episodes and their different outcomes? Bristol presents various possible answers to the Mexico City case that could offer some insights for the happenings of Guadalajara. Firstly, as mentioned previously, these gatherings could have been a way for Afro-Mexicans to exert some authority in an unsanctioned domain, an authority that was otherwise denied to them in basically all other aspects of social life. Under this interpretation, authorities' reactions to the case can be seen as an attempt to police social boundaries based on calidad, particularly considering that Mexico City's case occurred a few years after the big Mexico City riots at the end of the seventeenth century. On the other hand, according to Bristol, these illicit congregations could indicate one of two things. They can be interpreted as the degree of integration and assimilation of Afro-descendants to colonial society. It also might be the case that these religious gatherings are evidence of the creation of a distinct Afro-Mexican culture that had some elements in common with Spanish mainstream culture but that in other regards departed from it.[36]

The evidence for this case in Guadalajara is so scarce that it is difficult to get to any significant conclusion. For sure, it shows elites' disdain for plebeians and what we might call popular culture. Inquisitors from Guadalajara dismissed cases about sorcery and popular

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[35] Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*, ch. 6.
[36] Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches*, 195-197, 206-207, and 217-218.

healing practices during the seventeenth century showing the same attitude an calling them "liviandad de mujeres" (roughly, women's gossip) for example.[37] Whether these gatherings are evidence of the "integration" and "assimilation" of Afro-descendants to society, or of the emergence of a distinct Afro-Mexican culture it is more difficult to assess from this case alone and answering this question requires a more in-depth analysis than the one presented here. One could surmise that this case is indicative of how Afro-Mexicans contributed to the creation of a popular culture in colonial Mexico. Even more so, considering that Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara, as we have seen (and from other colonial Mexican cities for that matter) were not isolated from other groups. In this sense, this gatherings could indicate more class-based differences, rather than a "distinctive Afro-Mexican culture"; an assertion that could be stretching evidence too much. Other sources like notarial and sacramental records also show that Afro-Mexicans took part of a larger culture based on Christian values and more general ideas about calidad. This is the subject of the next section.

Freedom and Community

As the seventeenth and eighteenth century progressed, Africans and their descendants kept appropriating Spanish customs, this allowed them to claim the status of vecinos, and thus to integrate themselves more fully into the social life of the city.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the Afro-Mexican community of Guadalajara was diametrically different from that of the seventeenth century. Population trends beginning in the previous century accentuated and continued to unfold during the rest of the colonial period. What was an overwhelmingly negro community during most of the seventeenth

[37] See for example, Delgadillo, "Las caras de la resistencia."

century, during the course of the ensuing centuries, became a community in which the majority of its members bore the calidad of mulato. A sample of 2,447 baptisms of Afro-Mexicans across all existing parishes within the city between 1793 and 1822 reveals that about 89% of all Afro-Mexicans baptized in Guadalajara were mulatos. In contrast, negros, who were the majoritarian group during the previous century, became the minority within the community and just 0.5 of all baptized Afro-Mexicans were so classified. After appearing in the city around the middle of the seventeenth century, the classification of morisco consolidated among Afro-Mexicans of Guadalajara and 9.5% of children held this calidad at the end of the colonial period. Ultimately, at some point during the eighteenth century the calidad ascription of lobo (used to refer to children of mixed Native and African ancestry), emerged. Between 1793 and 1822, 1.1% of Afro-Mexicans were so classified in Guadalajara at the moment of baptism. This figures are summarized in table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Calidad of Baptized Afro-Mexicans in Guadalajara, 1793-1822

Parish/calidad	Mulato	Morisco	Negro	Lobo	Total
Sagrario	1088	166	11	16	1281
Santuario	414	47	0	8	469
Mexicaltzingo	326*	17	0	3	346
Analco	271	2	1**	1	275
Pilar	66	0	0	0	66
Jesús	10	0	0	0	10
Total	2175 (88.9)	232 (9.5)	12 (0.5)	28 (1.1)	2447

Sources: Baptismal records accessed through FamilySearch.org
* Includes 2 “Españoles africanos”
** Includes 1 moreno

The Afro-descendant community of eighteenth-century Guadalajara was also different in two very important regards. First and foremost, as we have seen, Afro-Mexicans from seventeenth-century Guadalajara were overwhelmingly negros and enslaved. Afro-descendants from late-colonial Guadalajara, in contrast, were predominantly mulatos and

free. The same sample of baptisms shows that only 46 (or about 1.8%) of the 2,447 Afro-Mexicans baptized in the city were enslaved.

Secondly, and crucially for Afro-Mexicans' social aspirations, if during the seventeenth century the majority of individuals within this group were of illegitimate birth, by the end of the colonial period the opposite was true. As we have seen in chapter two, ideas about honor and Catholic values were some of the basic underpinnings of notions of calidad. Therefore, being born out of wedlock could substantially hinder someone's possibilities to access offices, trades or specific privileges. This was true regardless of calidad designation. In fact, as argued previously, an illegitimate Spaniard could have been regarded as similar in status to a mulato or pardo, for example.

Initially, overall illegitimacy rates during the seventeenth century were astonishingly high in Guadalajara. At the beginning of the seventeenth century illegitimacy rates at the moment of baptism were of about 45%. This figure further increased by the middle of the century to 60%, and then decreased again at the end of the century to 48%.[38] These rates are by no means exclusive to Guadalajara. Places like Mexico City, San Luis Potosí, and Lima exhibited similar figures during the same period.[39]

Among all groups of society, Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara presented the highest illegitimacy rates during the seventeenth century. The only published study of Guadalajara during this period found that between 1600 and 1619 negros had an illegitimacy rate of 74.5% at the moment of baptism. Mulatos, for their part, presented an illegitimacy rate of 74.7%. Using a sample of baptisms from the years 1692-1693 and 1698-1702, the same study found that illegitimacy rates among negros decreased to 44.4%, while among mulatos it fell to

[38] Calvo, "Concubinato y mestizaje," 65, 73-74.
[39] Calvo, "Concubinato y mestizaje," 66.

60.5%. Considering Afro-Mexicans as a whole, illegitimacy rates dropped from 74.6% between 1610-1619 to 60.3% at the end of the century. That same research also documented, through baptismal records, the rise of the mulato population and the decline in number of individuals labeled as negro over the course of the seventeenth century. These processes are summarized in table 4.3.[40]

Table 4.3 Status of Baptized Afro-Mexicans in Seventeenth-Century Guadalajara

Calidad	1610-1619		1692-1702	
	Legitimate	Illegitimate	Legitimate	Illegitimate
Negro	57	167 (74.5)	5	4 (44.4)
Mulato	54	160 (74.7)	248	381 (60.5)
Total	111	327 (74.6)	253	385 (60.3)

Sources: Created based on Calvo, "Concubinato y mestizaje," 73-74. Note that the author included 20 slaves of unknown calidad in the category of negro for the period 1610-1619. Numbers in parentheses indicate percentages.

As the African slave trade dwindled and as Afro-Mexicans increasingly obtained their freedom, legitimacy rates grew slowly but steadily throughout the eighteenth century. The same sample of 2,447 baptisms of Afro-Mexicans between 1793 and 1822 reveals that illegitimacy rates among this group dropped during the course of the colonial period to 20.1%. This figure is also comparable to illegitimacy rates for the city as a whole for the years 1821-1822 (see table 4.4). Moreover, a similar pattern of increasing legitimacy rates across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be observed in Central Mexico.[41]

It is important to note that I have included under the category of "illegitimate" children of single parents, known in Spanish as "hijos naturales," foundlings or "expuestos," and children of unknown parents. Admittedly, there are slight differences among these categories, but all of them entailed a similar social stigma that prevented people's access to

[40] Calvo, "Concubinato y mestizaje," 73-74.
[41] For Puebla, Sierra Silva, *Urban Slavery*, 169; for Mexico City, Bennett, *Colonial Blackness*, ch. 5; for the illegitimacy rates in Guadalajara between 1821-1822, Calvo, "Concubinato y mestizaje," 66.

offices, crafts, and privileges granted only to people considered as legitimate children. The classification of hijo natural referred to those children of single parents, overwhelmingly children whose fathers did not recognize them. Although, in rare occasions the opposite happened. For example, on 3 September 1800 in the Sagrario parish José Manuel Romo baptized his son José María Antonio, mulato libre, of "unknown mother." There was plenty of overlap between the categories of foundling and children of unknown parents. Suffice it to say that almost always children of unknown parents were foundlings, but not all foundlings were children of unknown parents. Sometimes, legitimately married couples, for whatever reasons, could abandon their children at a church's door or with their godparents, thereby turning them into foundlings. In such cases, those children could argue that they were in fact legitimate and try to improve their social standing at adulthood.

Table 4.4 Status of Baptized Afro Mexicans in Guadalajara, 1793-1822

Parish/status	Legitimate	Illegitimate	Total
Sagrario	1015	266 (20.7)	1281
Santuario	355	114 (24.3)	469
Mexicaltzingo	301	45 (13)	346
Analco	229	46 (16.7)	275
Pilar	46	20 (30)	66
Jesús	9	1 (10)	10
Total	1955	492 (20.1)	2447

Sources: Baptismal records accessed through Familysearch.org.

A closer analysis shows that illegitimacy rates among Afro-Mexicans were higher in the newest parishes of the city, namely Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, where it was 24.3%, and the vicarage of Nuestra Señora del Pilar where it was as high as 30%. The former established during the late eighteenth century, and the latter at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is very likely that the communities of Afro-Mexicans in these new neighborhoods were also recent in origin, and higher illegitimacy rates suggest a process of maturation of these societies. On the contrary, in places with a historical presence of Afro-

Mexicans such as the parishes of Analco, Mexicaltzingo, and Sagrario illegitimacy was significantly lower. The Sagrario parish had the highest rate among these three, even so, at 20.7% it was very similar to that of the city as a whole.

The diminishing influence of slavery (in demographic terms, since slavery remained crucial politically and culturally in shaping hierarchies and social order)[42] and increasing legitimacy rates among Afro-Mexicans granted them access to better opportunities. An indication of this, is the number of people of mixed ancestry who were able to write their testament. According to a study, just nine people of mixed background did it between 1670 and 1679, in comparison with 22 for the period 1692-1701.[43] This trend is also observable in Afro-Mexicans' access to crafts. Early in the eighteenth century, for example, we know about the case of Ildefonso Rubio, mulato libre, who was a master silversmith, a craft allegedly reserved for Spaniards. His social standing also allowed Rubio to marry a Spanish woman in 1716.[44] Afro-Mexicans, however, were more often master artisans of less prestigious crafts. On 19 November 1708, Manuel Covarrubias "mozo y soltero" older than 20 years, presented before Antonio Rodríguez, pardo libre, vecino of Guadalajara, and master shoemaker, to be his apprentice for three years.[45] These examples contrast with those we saw for the seventeenth century, when Afro-descendants were the apprentices, rather than the master artisans.

During the first half of the eighteenth century free Afro-Mexicans, then, appeared more frequently in notarial records conducting different types of transactions. Take for

[42] For the relevance of slavery in cultural and political terms for Spanish American societies see Bryant, *Rivers of Gold, Lives of Bondage*.
[43] Calvo, *Poder, religión y sociedad*, 254.
[44] Calvo, *Poder, religión y sociedad*, 257.
[45] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego de la Sierra, 6, s.f.

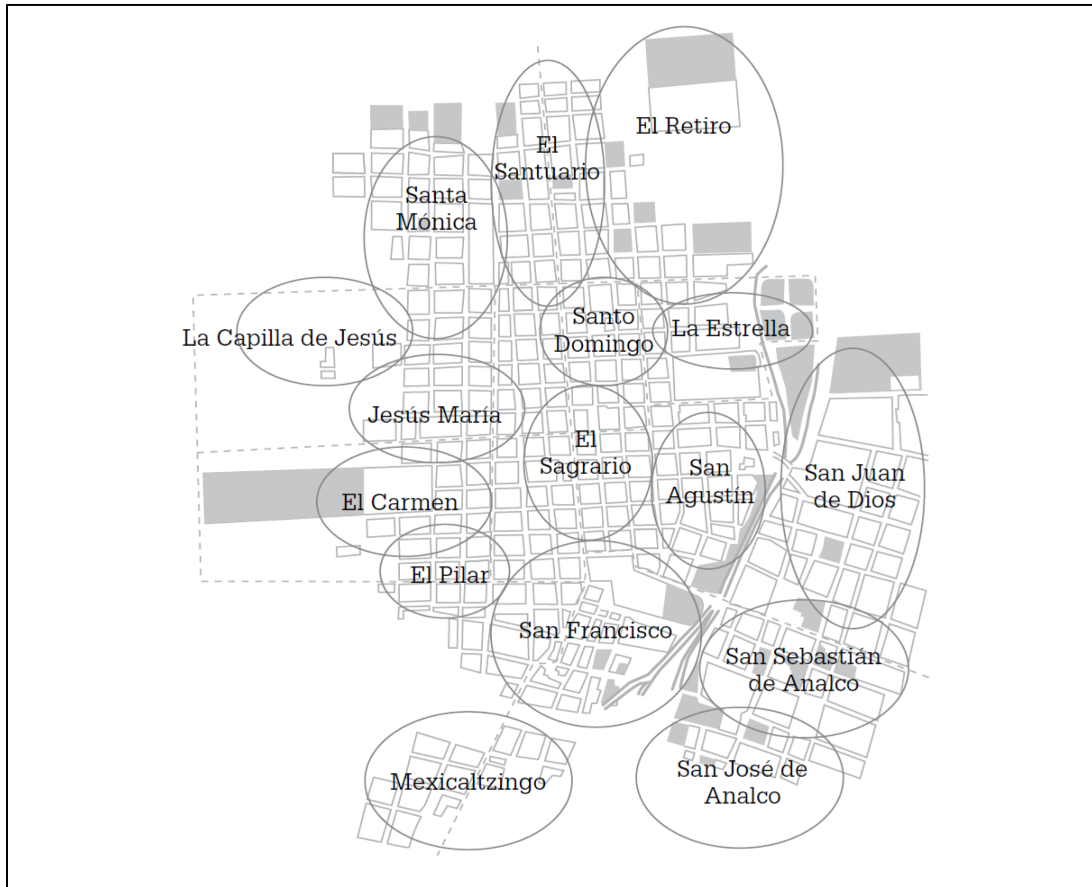
instance Damiana de San Miguel, mulata libre and vecina of Guadalajara, who in 1701 sold her store with and adjacent plot of land to don Luis Monje de Saavedra for 60 pesos. Damiana stated in the contract that she got the lot of land to build her store from the city council more than 20 years before, in 1679. The store, as many other Afro-Mexicans' real estate, was located on the San Sebastián de Analco neighborhood. On that same year, Nicolás Olvera, mulato libre and vecino of Guadalajara, bought a plot of land located on the San Francisco district of Guadalajara for 12 pesos from Diego Pérez de Villatoro.[46]

Similarly, on 14 December 1707 José de Mora, mulato libre and vecino of Guadalajara, sold to captain don José Verdad y Sierra a house with within the Santo Domingo neighborhood for 600 pesos. This sale is an example of the wealth that a few Afro-Mexicans had managed to amass by this point. Mora, further described the house he sold as: "said house is comprised of a living-room of 14 *varas*, a store of 4 varas, with its storage that is a bit larger, a kitchen, all roofed with beams and *morillos* (andirons), a patio and corral, as well as an adjacent plot of land to the west, with three rooms and other quarters half built."[47] A year later, on 17 December 1708 José de Ibarra pardo libre and María de la Trinidad india ladina, vecinos of the nearby town of Tlajomulco, donated a house located close to the convent of that town to six-year-old José Antonio in remuneration of the many debts that they had with his mother Petrona García, also vecina of Tlajomulco.[48] Lastly, on 11 October 1734, Pedro de Agundiz and Antonia Delgadillo, mulatos libres and vecinos of Guadalajara, bought a house in the neighborhood of San Juan de Dios to doña María Teresa de Jesús Aguiar for 125

[46] AIPJ, Escribanos, Nicolás del Castillo, 13, 46r-47r and 98r-v, respectively.
[47] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego de la Sierra, 6, s.f. In the original: dichas casas se componen de sala de catorce varas, una tienda de cuatro varas y su trastienda poco mayor, techada de vigas y su cocina techada de vigas y morillos, su patio y corral con un solar que corre y le corresponde hacia el poniente con tres jacalitos en él fabricados, como asimismo con otras piezas que están empezadas a fabricar.
[48] AIPJ, Escribanos, Diego de la Sierra, 6, s.f.

pesos.[49] What all these examples show, thus, is the spreading of the Afro-Mexican population across the city and its surrounding towns (see figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Neighborhoods of Late-Colonial Guadalajara



Sources: Taken from Delgadillo Guerrero, "La división de Guadalajara," 96.

As the discussion on slavery that open this chapter already demonstrates, assuming that all Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara experienced a homogenous and rising social trajectory would be erroneous. Afro-descendants had to endure the stigma of slavery even if they were several generations apart from it. Moreover, to varying degrees (because of its irregular application) they all had to deal with the consequences of Spanish openly

[49] AIPJ, Escribanos, José de Tapia, 2, 174r-177v.

discriminatory legislation and practices.[50] For example, on 26 May 1734 Domingo Lorenzo Moreira native of the Canary Islands, vecino of Guadalajara, and widower of Mariana Dornis, mulata libre, gave in adoption their son Antonio to Tomás Antonio García and his wife Manuela Efigenia de Saras, vecinos of Guadalajara, because he was poor and could not provide for him. Although Domingo's calidad is unspecified, this case is telling because of the disenfranchisement and misery that many people at the bottom of society had to suffer.[51]

In another telling, although not as sensitive example, Antonio de Velázquez and Antonio Gil de la Fuente, mulatos libres and vecinos of the real de minas de Santa Fé del Mezquital in the jurisdiction of Juchipila, Zacatecas, and residents of Guadalajara sold half of a silver mine to Pedro de Undargarin for 200 pesos. In the contract, they stated that they found the mine but since they had no capital to exploit it, they decided to sell half of it to Undargarin. Then, after some time of keeping the other half of the mine without benefiting from it, they decided to sell it also to Pedro de Undargarin.[52]

Increasingly higher legitimacy rates and a weakened influence of slavery also allowed Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara to build more stable communities and extended social networks. Sacramental records show that multigenerational families, that is grandparents, parents, and children alike, all bore Afro-Mexican-related calidades during the eighteenth century. A first example is that of Polonio Gavilán and Margarita Zaragoza, who lived within the Mexicaltzingo neighborhood of Guadalajara. They baptized a mulato son, Juan, on 4 June 1795. Then, they were the grandparents of at least four children baptized in the same parish between 1803 and 1811, all of them mulatos. On 17 January 1803, María Ciriaca Gavilán,

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[50] See for example Dantas, "Picturing Families."
[51] AIPJ, Escribanos, José de Tapia, 2, 95v-96v.
[52] AIPJ, Escribanos, José de Tapia, 2, 212v-216r.

Polonio's and Margarita's daughter, baptized along with her husband José Casimiro Blancas a child named María Hilaria. Two years later, on 11 February 1805, José and Ciriaca baptized José Rumualdo. Then, on 14 July 1811 they baptized María Isabel. Lastly, on 11 November 1810, Luis Gavilán (also known as Gavilanes) another of Polonio's and Margarita's children, baptized along with his wife Dorotea Puga a girl named Teodora.[53]

Another example is that of Mariano Zaragoza and Ignacia Mosqueda. They baptized a mulato son named José Procopio on 13 July 1796 in the parish of Mexicaltzingo. Then, on 15 October 1809, another of their children, María Manuela Zaragoza baptized along her husband José Luis Peña a mulata daughter named María Dionisia.[54] Similarly, on 16 February 1812, José Desiderio Medina and Gabriela Gavilán baptized a mulato son named José Silverio in the same parish of Mexicaltzingo. A few months later, on 24 May 1812, again in the same parish, José Desiderio's parents, Guillermo Medina and María Teresa Rivera baptized another mulata daughter named María Feliciana.[55]

A more complex example is that of the Cabrera-Carranza family, also from the Mexicaltzingo neighborhood. On 3 September 1796, Pedro Nolasco Cabrera and María Hilaria Carranza baptized a mulato son named José Agustín. José Blas Cabrera, another of Pedro's and Hilaria's children, acted as godparent. Then, on 10 November 1805 in the Sagrario parish, José Blas Cabrera married a Spanish woman named María Máxima Lozano. Interestingly, perhaps because of the change of parish, on that occasion José Blas was classified as a morisco. A year later, on 30 November 1806 José Blas and María Máxima

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[53] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, San Juan Bautista Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1782-1812, images 281, 494, 536, 679, and 693.
[54] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, San Juan Bautista Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1782-1812, images 301 and 647.
[55] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, San Juan Bautista Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1812-1822, images 25 and 36.

baptized in the Sagrario parish their daughter María Saturnina. That time, José Blas reverted back to his original mulato calidad. Then, on 23 September 1818 in Mexicaltzingo, José Blas and María Máxima baptized a mulato son named José Macedonio (or Macedo in other documents). By 1821, when the first independent provincial government created a census of population Pedro Cabrera and Hilaria Carranza lived in the San Juan de Dios neighborhood with Dominga Cabrera and close to their son Agustín. In 1822, according to another local census, they lived in the same place. For their part, José Blas and María Máxima lived in the Mexicaltzingo neighborhood in 1821, along with their son Macedonio. A year later, they lived in the same district with Macedonio, Juan José, and Saturnina Cabrera.[56]

Finally, another family that was constantly identified as mulato in different documents, although I was not able to reconstruct multiple generations of it, was that of Andrés Vasconcelos and María de la Luz López. They baptized four children in the Santuario de Guadalupe parish between 1801 and 1807, all of them classified as mulatos libres at the moment of baptism. On 14 February 1801 they baptized José María Guillermo. Two years later, on 20 June 1803, they baptized José Ciriaco Pablo. Then, on 2 June 1805, Andrés and María baptized Juan José del Espíritu Santo. Almost exactly two years later, on 3 June 1807, they baptized María Manuela Germana. Lastly, according to a city census of 1821, the first of the independent era, Andrés, María, and a total of seven children lived in the northern part of the city. Andrés was a 69-year-old construction worker (albañil), María was 54 of age,

[56] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, San Juan Bautista Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1782-1812, image 305; Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1812-1822, image 344; Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, Matrimonios 1805-1818, image 27; Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, Bautismos 1799-1806, image 123; and San Juan Bautista Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1812-1822, image 344; see also Rodney D. Anderson, *Guadalajara Census Project, 1791-1930.* Tallahassee: Florida State University, 2007, vol. 1, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822," hereafter GCP Database. Each individual within the database has an assigned number called mass index. Throughout this chapter and the next I use these for reference, 13510-13513, 13527, 18044-18047, 23071-23073, and 25012-25016.

without recorded occupation, Encarnación was 32 and a cigar maker, Guillermo was a 20-year-old painter, Manuela a 22-year-old cigar maker, Ciriaco was 18 and was also a painter, and then they had three small children, Juan Bautista 12, Arcadio 11, María Leonides 4, all of them students.[57]

Afro-descendants' social networks extended beyond their close relatives. They also formed ties with people bearing calidad ascriptions related to African ancestry through *compadrazgo*. Take for example the married couple formed by José María Becerra, also known as Juan José Becerra, and María Toribia Álvarez, also known as María Toribia González. They baptized eight children in the parishes of Sagrario and Analco between 1797 and 1810. They also acted as godparents of four Afro-descendant children during the same period.[58] Similarly, on 17 April 1811 Crisanto Sedano, or Cedeño, and María Ana García baptized in the Sagrario parish a mulato daughter named Hermenegilda de los Dolores. Subsequently, they were the godparents of María Ildefonsa Francisca de la Trinidad, mulata libre and daughter of Marcelino López and Narcisa Lozano, baptized in the same parish on 29 January 1816.[59] Another example is that of Juan José Cortez and Juana Irinea Zamora. On 21 January 1806 in the Sagrario parish, they baptized their son José Antonio Abad de la Concepción, mulato libre. A few weeks later, on 12 February 1806, in the same parish, they were the godparents of José Palomo de Jesús, son of Ambrosio Zamora y Josefa Casillas.[60] Finally, in the parish of Analco, on 5 May 1796, José Nepomuceno Leiva and María Simona

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[57] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1800-1812, image 34, 124, 204, and 299; also GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822," 47520-47528.

[58] For a closer analysis of this family see the next chapter.

[59] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, Bautismos 1810-1815, image 130; and Bautismos 1815-1820, image 37.

[60] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, Bautismos 1799-1806; images 795 and 803.

Damiana López baptized their mulato son José Dolores Estanislao. A year before that, on 2 May 1795 in the same parish, they acted as godparents of José Jorge, mulato libre son of José Francisco and María Leonicia.[61]

What all of these examples tell us, then, is that Afro-Mexicans from late-colonial Guadalajara formed communities around people with the same calidad terms like mulato or morisco. That many families identified themselves in sacramental sources consistently as Afro-descendants, even over three generations, entails that Afro-Mexicans were not constantly trying to escape social classifications or denying their ancestry at every opportunity. For that to happen, a series of specific political circumstances had to take place, and that is going to be the focus of next chapter.

Someone might argue that during the eighteenth century the Afro-Mexican community of Guadalajara "integrated" itself more fully into society. However, framing Afro-Mexicans role in colonial society in this terms entails considering them as permanent outsiders. While some officials and elites indeed might have shared this view, on the everyday interactions Afro-descendants not just physically built Guadalajara and other Mexican cities, but also were an integral part of the construction of Mexican colonial society and culture. This discussion might be considered outdated or irrelevant at this point. However, because of the lack of studies focusing on Guadalajara, it is important to reiterate it.

The Afro-Mexican community of eighteenth-century Guadalajara was, in several important regards, very different to that of the previous century. Slavery continued to be a reality for many Afro-descendants across the whole colonial period and even beyond. The

[61] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, San José de Analco, Bautismos 1761-1801, images 589 and 608.

number of Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara actually held in bondage, however, decreased as the century progressed. The practice of slavery seems to have changed at some point of the century from being resource-extraction oriented and dominated by men, to an overwhelmingly domestic practice in which women took a more prominent role. Significantly, from being the group of society with the highest illegitimacy rates during the seventeenth century, Afro-Mexicans reached similar legitimacy rates to those of the city as a whole by the end of the colonial period. Further, Afro-descendants from seventeenth-century Guadalajara bore predominantly the calidad of negro and during most of the century were enslaved. By the end of the colonial period almost 90% of all Afro-Mexicans baptized in all city parishes were mulatos and free. During the eighteenth century moriscos became the second most numerous group within the community and negros the least numerous. Additionally, a new calidad ascription associated with African ancestry, that of lobo, emerged at some point of the eighteenth century, adding more complexity and nuance to the Afro-Mexican community of the city. The precise moment and circumstances of the emergence of this social category should be the subject of future studies. Lobos, however, remained a very small minority within the community.

Afro-Mexicans had access to a wide variety of trades and occupations in eighteenth-century Guadalajara. From negotiating apprenticeships with Spanish master artisans in the seventeenth century, Afro-descendants passed to be the master artisans themselves in many crafts, and particularly those associated with leatherwork and the textile industry. From this position, they began to accept their own apprentices. A small minority, as we have seen, even had access to prestigious crafts, like silversmiths or goldsmiths.

Interpreting Afro-Mexicans' social trajectory during the eighteenth century as inevitably leading to the disappearance of calidad labels associated with African ancestry

from the historical record, or their eventual elision from Mexican history would be teleological and anachronistic. It would be to project onto the past modern notions of social mobility and/or political ideologies that emerged until much later. Few signs, if any, indicated that families like the Vasconcelos would identify themselves as mestizos by the end of the colonial period when the first independent government of the province conducted a census in 1821 (see figures 4.1a to 4.1e). Similarly, almost nothing suggested that the Cabrera-Lozano family would be known as indios in that same document (see figures 4.2a to 4.2e). How and why these families and many others forfeited their Afro-Mexican calidades before independence will be closely analyzed in the next two chapters.

Figures 4.1a to 4.1e

The Vasconcelos Family

Figure 4.1a Baptism of Guillermo Vasconcelos

Figure 4.1b Baptism of José Ciriaco Vasconcelos

Figure 4.1c Baptism of Juan José del Espíritu Santo Vasconcelos

Figure 4.1d Baptism of María Manuela Germana Vasconcelos

Figure 4.1e The Vasconcelos family in the census of 1821

Figure 4.1e The Vasconcelos family in the census of 1821 (continued)

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1800-1812, image 34, 124, 204, and 299; also GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822," 47520-47528.

Figures 4.2a to 4.2e

The Cabrera Family

Figure 4.2a Baptism of José Agustín Cabrera

Figure 4.2b Baptism of José Macedonio Cabrera

Figure 4.2c Marriage of José Blas Cabrera and Máxima Lozano

Figure 4.2d Baptism of María Saturnina Cabrera. Notice how on the right margin it says that the girl is Española at the same time that the baptismal record states that his father is mulato.

Figure 4.2e The Cabrera-Lozano family in the census of 1821

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, San Juan Bautista Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1782-1812, image 305; Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1812-1822, image 344; Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, Matrimonios 1805-1818, image 27; Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, Bautismos 1799-1806, image 123; and San Juan Bautista Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1812-1822, image 344; see also GCP Database "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822," 13510-13513, 13527, 18044-18047, 23071-23073, and 25012-25016.

Chapter 5

How Did Afro-Mexicans Disappear?

The late-colonial history of Guadalajara is marked by a perplexing phenomenon: the seeming plummeting of the African-descended population of the city. The first colony-wide official census of 1777 listed a total of 19,192 inhabitants, of which 37.5% were counted as mulatos; Afro-Mexicans in general represented 38.6% of the city's population.[1] A decade and a half later, in 1793, a new population count reported that Afro-Mexicans were 26.3% of the city's population (of about 24,768 people). In the last census that recorded colonial ascriptions from 1821-1822 this figure had further decreased to 2% (out of 38,021 inhabitants). This meant a 9.3% decrease between 1777 and 1793, and almost a 95% decrease between 1793 and 1822.[2] In other words, during the course of 29 years the Afro-Mexican population of the city virtually disappeared.[3]

As we have seen in the previous chapters, since the middle of the seventeenth century Afro-descendants fashioned themselves as vecinos of Guadalajara. As such, they conducted all sorts of notarized transactions, owned property all across the city, and took part of social life through civic celebrations and catholic brotherhoods. They also appropriated the language of calidad and used it to negotiate their place within the social hierarchy. Although slavery still existed in the city, by the end of the eighteenth century the Afro-Mexican community of Guadalajara was overwhelmingly mulato and free. Further, it passed from being the group with the highest illegitimacy rates of the city during the seventeenth century, to exhibit a similar illegitimacy rate to that of Guadalajara as a whole by 1821. More

[1] Martínez Castellanos, "Esclavos rebeldes," 13-14.
[2] For the character and history of these censuses see Hardin, *Household Mobility and Persistence*, 8-12.
[3] Anderson, "Race and Social Stratification," 215 and 240.

importantly, perhaps, by the end of the colonial period multigenerational families consistently used in sacramental records the calidad labels associated with African ancestry. In sum, most of the evidence suggests that Afro-descendants from Guadalajara felt comfortable using these social ascriptions and that a mulato identity indeed existed. How, then, did Afro-Mexicans stopped identifying themselves as negros, mulatos, moriscos, and lobos in official records at the end of the colonial period in Guadalajara?

Despite that researchers have been aware of this phenomenon for decades, this process has been more noticed than analyzed for the case of Mexico.[4] In contrasting the startling figures of the 1793 and 1821-1822 censuses, historians of Guadalajara have hypothesized that Afro-Mexicans became españoles, indios or mestizos in 1821-1822. After all, from being 39.5% of the city's population in 1793, españoles increased to being almost half of the city's inhabitants. Indios more than doubled, from 17.5% in 1793 to almost 40% in 1821.[5] Nevertheless, scholars have never presented empirical evidence to prove these claims. A closer look at this phenomenon reveals that the process by which Afro-Mexicans became "invisible" was much more complex than that.

Scholars have noticed the seeming plummeting of Afro-descendant populations across the Spanish empire and the republics that resulted from its disintegration. In Mexico City, 20.9% of the baptized children in 1724 in the Sagrario parish were classified as mulato, morisco or negro, but in 1811 just 1.1% were so categorized. In Oaxaca, about 24% of the population was classified as mulato in 1700, but by 1792 just 14% of the residents were so

[4] For some studies that have presented hypothesis about the invisibility of Afro-Mexicans see Jiménez Ramos, "Black Mexico"; Gaitors, "The Afro-Mexican Presence in Guadalajara," it should be noted that the focus of this specific work is not on the disappearance of Afro-descendants from Guadalajara, but on the 2% who kept their calidad; and Vaughn, "Race and Nation."
[5] Anderson, "Race and Social Stratification," 240.

classified. In Puebla, just 4.1% of the population was classified as mulato or pardo in the 1777 padrón. In contrast, 36.1% of people were not assigned any calidad in the same document; thus, suggesting an undercounting of Afro-Mexicans.[6] Historians have also analyzed the colonial roots of Afro-Latin Americans' invisibility for the cases of Colombia, Argentina, Uruguay, and Central America.[7]

In the case of Mexico, In trying to explain this process, the pioneer of Afro-Mexican studies Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán hypothesized that Afro-Mexicans integrated and assimilated, both "racially" and culturally, into the wider Mexican population during the late colonial and early independent periods.[8] More recently, it has become a commonplace to say that the Mexican State erased the African heritage from the national memory by endorsing an identity that embraced race-mixture (*mestizaje*), and privileged the indigenous and Spanish heritage of the nation, thereby forcing Afro-Mexicans to identify themselves as *mestizos*, or racially-mixed.[9] A third group of scholars, for their part, contends that the invisibility of Afro-Mexicans was a consequence of the early nation-state building process. Specifically, they argue, it was the result of the abolition of slavery and the prohibition of recording in official documents any colonial distinction of status.[10]

[6] For Mexico City, see Valdes, "The Decline of the Sociedad de Castas," 27; for Oaxaca Chance, *Race and Class*, 155-157, and 175; for Puebla, Loreto López, "Los artífices de una ciudad," 263; historians have also noticed similar trends in smaller towns within the Guadalajara province, see for example Becerra Jiménez, *Indios, españoles y africanos*, 64.

[7] For Colombia, see Helg, "Silencing African Descent," 185-206; Lasso, *Myths of Harmony*; for Argentina, Andrews, *The Afro-Argentines*; Geler, "'¡Pobres negros!'," 115-153; for Uruguay, Andrews, *Blackness in the White Nation*; and Borucki, *From Shipmates to Soldiers*; for Central America, Gudmundson and Wolfe eds. *Blacks and Blackness*. Spain also has its own narrative of disappearance, see Herzog, "How Did Early-Modern Slaves in Spain Disappear?".

[8] Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 265-292.

[9] Carroll, "Los mexicanos negros," 403-438; Hernández Cuevas, *African Mexicans*; Gerardo, "Writing Africans Out," 172-183; and Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*.

[10] For the most recent example, Cohen, *Finding Afro-Mexico*, 27 and chapter 1; see also Díaz Casas, "¿De esclavos a ciudadanos?," 273-303; Ballesteros Páez, "Los 'otros' mexicanos," 150-179; López Chávez, "Haciendo visible lo invisible," 217-256; and Gates Jr., 78; for an example of a study that also places this

Although there is a kernel of truth in all of these interpretations, the first one presents an idealized account of the formation of Mexican culture and society after independence. The second, glosses over the historical processes of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The third one, with its emphasis on the role of the state in "erasing" the African heritage of national history, construes Afro-Mexicans as passive subjects, thereby depriving them from any agency. As previous chapters have demonstrated, Afro-Mexicans played an active role in the creation and transformations of colonial ascriptions of calidad. The same can be argued about the disintegration of these colonial classifications.

The disappearance of Afro-Mexican-related social ascriptions in Guadalajara, therefore, was a multifaceted process. It was the result of a combination of several factors. First, as previous chapters have made clear, the fluidity of social differentiation processes in the Spanish empire. Second, as the next chapter extensively argues, the context in which the phenomenon of disappearance happened catalyzed this process. Then, Afro-Mexicans' ability to identify themselves at the moment of sacraments facilitated their abandonment of colonial categories of calidad. Marrying outside of their calidad group also allowed Afro-descendants to claim their partners identity. Ultimately, claiming a different calidad, or none at all, certainly entailed at least a tacit collaboration of priests and census takers in charge of recording people's social ascription in the different documents.

The testimony of a census taker from central Mexico during the late colonial period regarding the difficulties in recording people's calidad and his conduct on this matter could be enlightening four our purposes:

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process in the transition from colony to independent nation, but stresses the agency of Afro-Mexicans, see Guardino, "La identidad nacional y los Afromexicanos," 259-301.

"There is no one who dares to distinguish the different castes. This would be an upsetting information and if taken rigorously we will discover well regarded families with dark stains, erased or diluted by time. This would result in never-ending scandals. I understand that the list for militia membership is to grant honor, not to dishonor people. I have recorded the castes of español, castizo, mestizo, pardo, etc. *following the declaration of the vecinos themselves*, although I suspect some of them lied to me. In the town of Tepetlaoztoc, for example, your grace will find a village full of españoles, whether the people of this town are españoles or not, they live comfortably and honorably, and if some people grant themselves the distinction of a better caste, they have the merits to deserve it."[11]

It is unfortunate that we do not have similar evidence for the case of Guadalajara. Regardless, this official's testimony reveals a situation that priests and census takers from Guadalajara might have also faced during this period.

Although with what has been said thus far it should be clear what it is meant when talking about disappearance, before delving further into the analysis of how Afro-Mexicans stopped identifying themselves as such in official records, a note on the terminology used throughout this and the next chapter is in order. The disappearance of Afro-Mexicans is a highly complex and sensitive subject. Readers must understand that fostering and celebrating diversity are very recent phenomena. In contrast, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there were very few incentives (one of them being to keep their social networks, as

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[11] Cited in Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 269-270. Emphasis added. The original reads: "las castas no habrá quien se atreva a distinguirlas. Esta sería una información odiosa y tomándola rigurosamente se descubrirían en familias bien admitidas manchas muy oscuras que ha borrado el tiempo, resultando por precisión escandalosos expedientes que, convertidos en juicios ordinarios, nunca tendrían fin. El de los padrones para el establecimiento de milicias comprendo que es para dar honor y no para quitarlo. Yo he señalado las castas de Español, Castizo, Mestizo, Pardo, etc., gobernándome por las declaraciones de los mismos vecinos, aunque algunos me hagan hecho caer en la sospecha de que no me dijeron la verdad. En el padrón de Tepetlaoztoc vera Vuestra Señoría un pueblo lleno de españoles, pero séanlo o no, ellos disfrutan comodidades, viven honradamente y si algunos se abrogan la distinción de mejor casta, tienen buenos títulos para merecerla."

we have seen) for Afro-Mexicans to accept calidad labels such as mulato or lobo, and very strong reasons to try to avoid these classifications. Bearing this in mind, it should be clear from the outset that when using the terms "disappearance" or "invisibility" in this and the next chapter, in no sense I mean that Afro-Mexicans literally disappeared from Guadalajara. As it should be evident at the end of this chapter, people who identified themselves as negros, mulatos, moriscos or lobos remained for the most part in Guadalajara, they just stopped identifying themselves as such. It is in this sense that Afro-Mexicans disappeared or became socially invisible. The available evidence indicates that by the end of the process analyzed here, neither they, nor society, recognized them anymore as Afro-Mexicans.

At first glance, it might be tempting to say that the disappearance of Afro-descendants from Guadalajara was caused by the census takers in 1821-1822. Or, as some scholars contend, that it was the consequence of the government prohibition of recording calidad categories after independence. To be sure, there are many instances throughout Latin American history in which governments dispensed entirely with social categories between censuses in order to portray an idealized version of their communities.[12] Contrasting sacramental records, such as baptisms and marriages, from the period of 1793-1822 with the censuses of 1821-1822 casts doubt on the suspicion that census takers caused the undercounting of Afro-Mexicans in these censuses, because the same process is observable in different types of records.

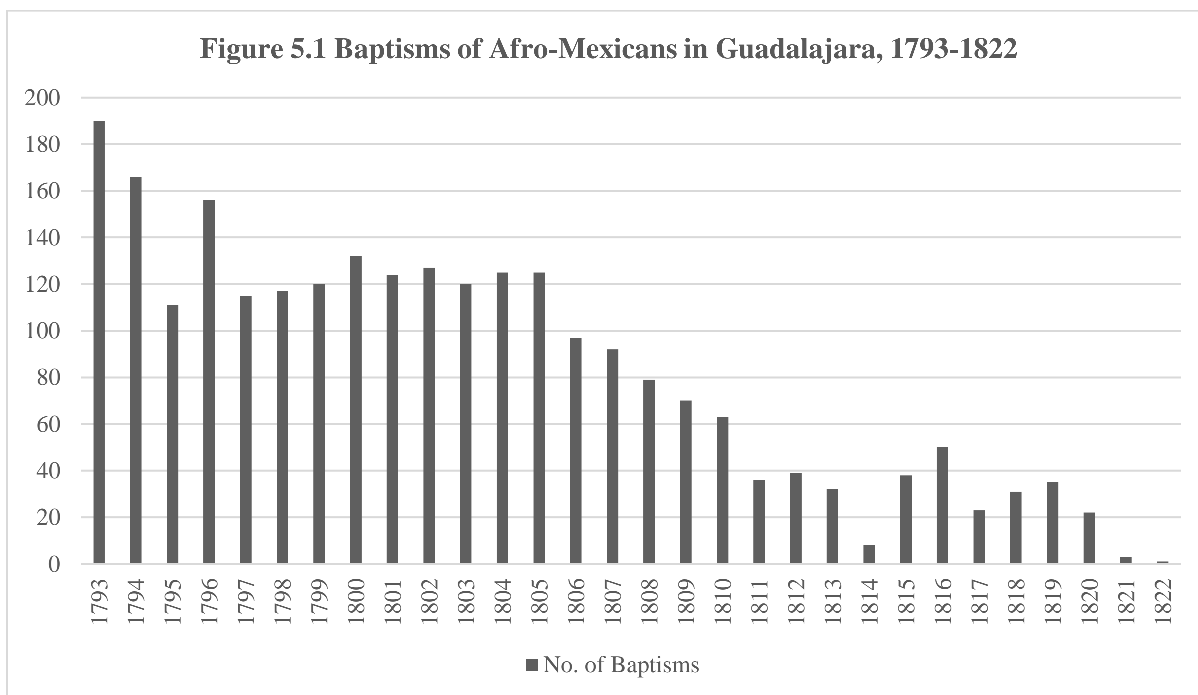
For this study I have gathered all of the baptismal (a total of 2,447 cases) and marriage records (a total of 816 cases) that I was able to locate in the Familysearch.org website, involving at least one person categorized as negro, mulato, morisco, or lobo in all of the

[12] For examples of this, see Andrews, *Afro-Latin America: Black Lives*, chapter 2.

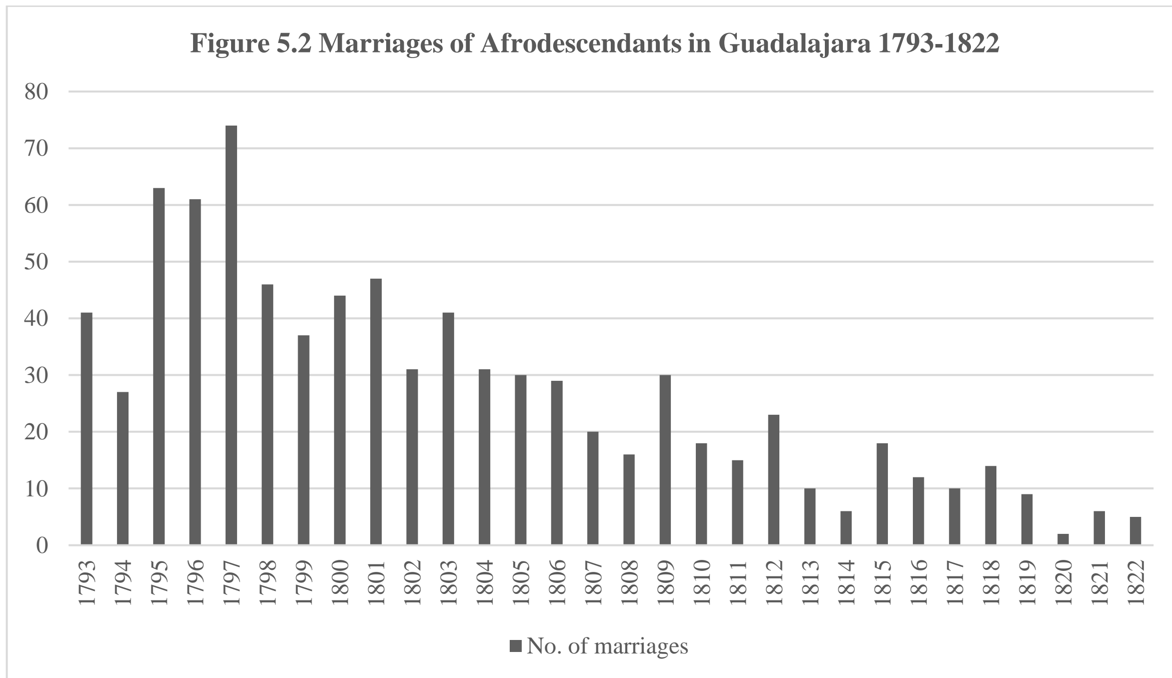
Guadalajara parishes of the period, these are Sagrario, Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Jesús, San José de Analco, Mexicaltzingo and the vicarage of Nuestra Señora del Pilar (see the map of the Guadalajara neighborhoods in chapter 4). In turn, I contrasted the names of those individuals mentioned in the sacramental records for whom calidad is provided (this includes parents, grandparents, and sometimes godparents for the baptisms; and spouses, their parents, and sometimes witnesses or sponsors, in the case of marriages), with those in the two censuses in order to see how they changed their calidad over time. This allowed me to locate 3,729 individuals in the censuses of 1821-1822 who were previously identified in the sacramental records as Afro-Mexicans or were children of Afro-descendants themselves. This figure includes all of the Afro-Mexicans listed in both censuses, regardless of if I found them in the sacramental records. It also includes children baptized with a different calidad, but who I knew were the offspring of identified Afro-Mexicans. For example, if a family that I had identified as Afro-Mexican had just one child listed in 1821, but then in 1822 they had more children whom I did not identify as Afro-Mexican in the sacramental records, because the number of Afro-descendants baptized in these years was so low, I assumed that they were baptized with a different calidad. Regardless, since I knew that their parents and even grandparents were Afro-descendants, I included these cases in my sample. I did this in order to stress the extent of the phenomenon under study and to reconstruct the community of Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara as fully as possible.

Admittedly, these 3,729 people are a small percentage (about 6.5%) of the 57,091 individuals listed in both censuses combined. Nonetheless, beyond the raw figures, the information contained in the censuses and sacramental sources about these individuals' lived experiences remains illustrative. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 clearly show that Afro-Mexicans' abandonment of colonial categories of difference was a gradual process of the late-colonial

period. Collectively, the two graphs show that the number of both baptismal and marriage records involving Afro-Mexicans gradually but incessantly decreased beginning in 1793, then they reached their lowest point in 1814. Subsequently, there was a small peak in these sacramental records between 1815 and 1819, to finally disappear in 1822.



Tables 5.1 and 5.2 summarize the calidad changes Afro-descendants from Guadalajara underwent in the two censuses. As it is evident from the two tables, Afro-Mexicans were spread across the 24 city districts (there is no surviving data for the 16th ward for 1821). The comparison between the baptisms, marriages and the census of 1821 shows that in the latter document slightly less than 42% did not have a calidad ascription. These were followed by 18% who kept their Afro-Mexican calidad, 16% who became indios, 13% españoles, 9% mestizos, and about 1% coyote, or castizo.



Sources for figures 5.1 and 5.2: Created based on Appendices 3 and 4.

As for the census of 1822, calidad categories clearly had become obsolete, for over 85% of individuals identified as Afro-Mexicans in other documents did not provide any. Interestingly, 8% claimed citizenship, all of them in the 10th ward; 2.6% claimed Indian-ness; 2.4% Spanish-ness; 1% kept their calidad, and less than 1% were coyotes. Intriguingly, in the census of 1822 no one declared to be mestizo. It is important to note, however, that the number of those who did not provide calidad in 1821 is inflated by the fact that ten of the 23 districts of the city did not provide calidad at all. Nonetheless, the other 13 districts that did provide calidad were evenly spread across the city, and their data remains representative of the whole. If we exclude these ten wards, then the number of individuals who did not claim any calidad drops to 16% of the located individuals in 1821.

Ward	Table 5.1 Calidad changes of Afro-Mexicans in 1821							Total
	Español	Castizo	Indio	Mestizo	Coyote	Afro-Mexican	None	
1	-	-	-	-	-	3	79	82
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	7
3	26	-	19	56	-	24	1	126
4	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	125
5	22	-	31	17	3	10	-	83
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	59	59
7	-	-	40	6	-	23	14	83
8	-	-	-	-	-	-	255	255
9	42	-	126	53	7	3	15	246
10	42	-	47	7	-	9	-	105
11	-	-	-	-	-	-	117	117
12	-	-	-	-	-	-	42	42
13	5	2	-	-	-	5	50	62
14	53	-	22	28	2	201	-	306
15	24	-	13	2	-	25	-	64
17	4	-	18	5	-	21	62	109
18	17	-	25	1	5	50	-	98
19	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	40
20	25	-	46	32	-	44	-	147
21	2	-	3	-	-	-	61	66
22	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	33
23	87	-	16	28	-	45	-	176
24	-	-	-	-	-	-	104	104
Total	349 (13.76)	2 (.078)	406 (16)	235 (9.26)	17 (.67)	463 (18.25)	1064 (41.95)	2536 (100)

Sources: Baptismal and marriage records from Guadalajara; Guadalajara Census Project, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822." Numbers in parenthesis indicate percentage.
Note: Wards for which there are no extant data are not shown in the table.

Table 5.1 shows that the majority of individuals who were Afro-Mexicans in the sacramental records, in 1821 lived on the east margin of the San Juan de Dios river within the eighth and ninth districts, also known as the San Juan de Dios and Analco neighborhoods (see figures 5.3 and 5.4 for reference). This in itself is unsurprising, because as we have seen in chapters 3 and 4, notarial records indicate a historical Afro-Mexican presence in Analco since the seventeenth century, and in San Juan de Dios since the eighteenth century. Interestingly, although the Mexican government tubed the river at the beginning of the twentieth century and built on top of it what is now one of Guadalajara's main avenues, the

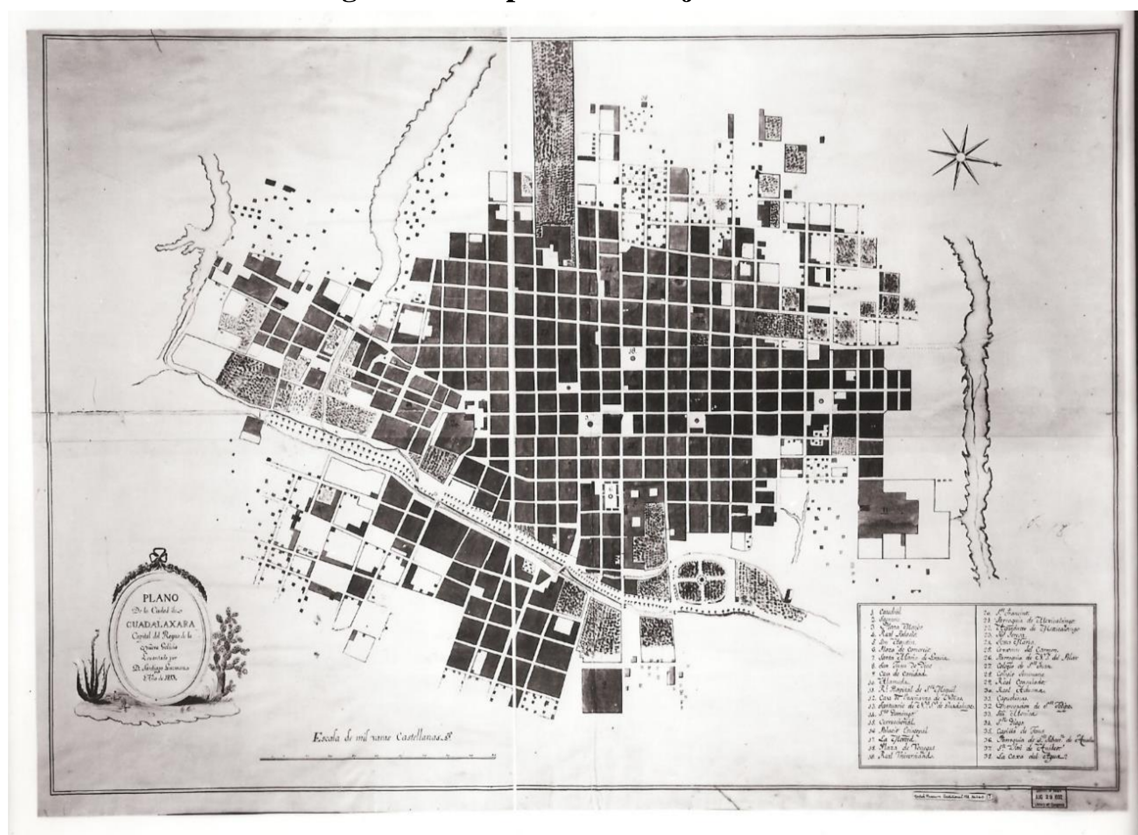
division of the city along class lines with the richest neighborhoods to the West and the poorest to the East to some extent endures to the present.

Table 5.2 Calidad changes of Afro-Mexicans in 1822

Ward	Spaniard	Indian	Coyote	Afro-Mexican	Citizen	None	Total
3	-	-	-	-	-	82	82
4	-	-	-	-	-	9	9
6	-	-	-	-	-	17	17
7	-	-	-	-	-	80	80
8	-	-	-	-	-	194	194
9	-	-	-	-	-	52	52
10	25	10	-	-	96	-	131
11	-	-	-	-	-	85	85
12	-	-	-	-	-	63	63
14	1	1	-	1	-	109	112
15	-	-	-	-	-	50	50
16	-	-	-	-	-	59	59
17	-	-	-	-	-	76	76
20	-	-	-	-	-	111	111
21	-	-	-	-	-	8	8
22	3	21	5	11	-	-	40
24	-	-	-	-	-	14	14
25	-	-	-	-	-	10	10
Total	29 (2.43)	32 (2.68)	5 (.41)	12 (1)	96 (8.04)	1019 (85.41)	1193 (100)

Sources: Baptismal and marriage records from Guadalajara; Guadalajara Census Project, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822." Numbers in parenthesis indicate percentage.
Note: Wards for which there are no extant data are not shown in the table.

Figure 5.3 Map of Guadalajara in 1813

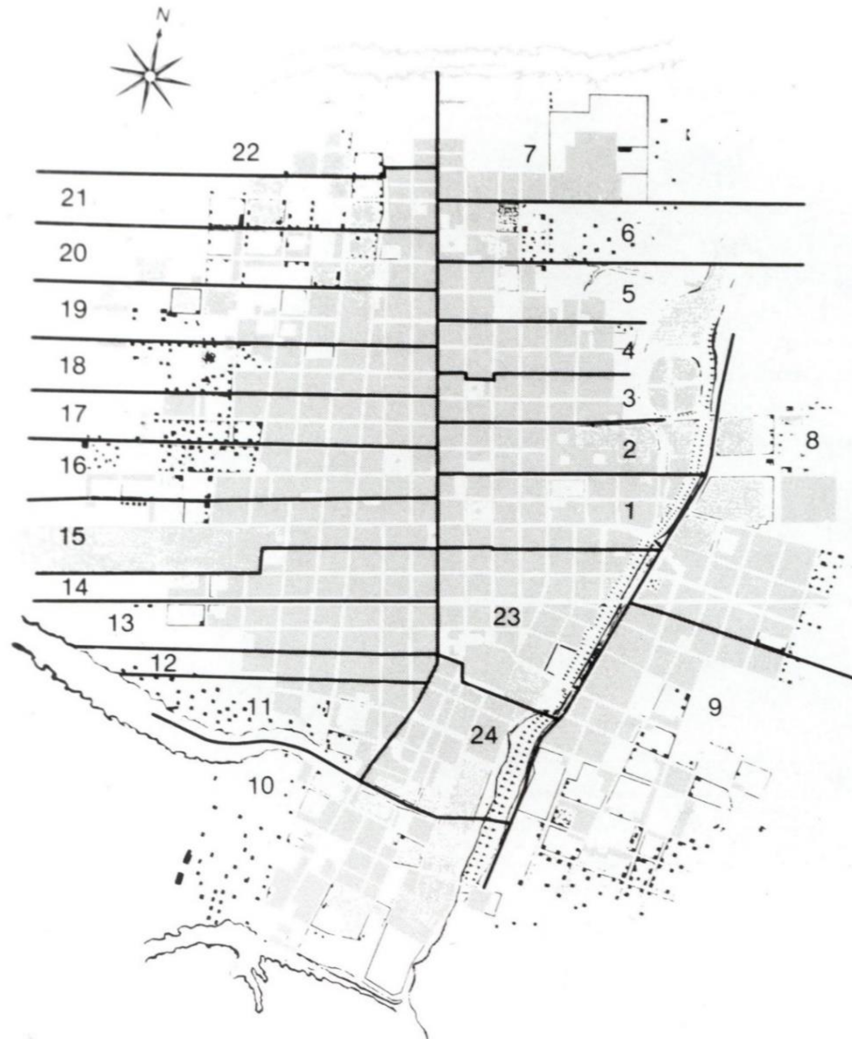


Sources: "Plano de Guadalaxara, capital de la Nueva Galicia levantado por D. Santiago Guzmán. Año de 1813" taken from Guadalajara Census Project, vol. 2.

Despite these figures, how can we be sure that the disappearance of colonial classifications was not a measure coming from the state as some authors argue? Certainly, eliminating social distinctions of calidad or casta from official records was one of the first policies of the recently created Mexican state. It was in October 1822, when the newly crowned Mexican emperor, Agustín de Iturbide, ordered parish priests to stop recording calidad in the baptismal records. They could, and did, nonetheless, keep recording calidad at the moment of marriage. The first Mexican constitution of 1824, ultimately declared the

equality of everyone before the law and formalized the ban over the use of colonial categories.[13]

Figure 5.4 Districts of Guadalajara in 1821



THE CUARTELES OF GUADALAJARA
Source: Taken from an 1813 map of Guadalajara drawn by Santiago Guzmán, a copy of which is available in the U.S. Library of Congress. The location of the cuarteles has been reconstructed from internal evidence found in the census manuscripts of 1821–22 and from later maps.

Source: Guadalajara Census Project, vol. 2.

[13] For these developments, see Vinson III, *Before Mestizaje*, 182-183; and Díaz Casas, "¿De esclavos a ciudadanos?," 283-290. It should be noted, however, that the use of calidad distinctions survived until the 1840s in many Mexican towns and cities.

A closer look at the dates when priests ceased recording calidad in the different parishes of Guadalajara lends credence to the argument that this was not a state-mandated policy. The only parish that seems to have complied with Iturbide's order of October 1822 was San José de Analco's, because in both baptismal and marriage records priests stopped recording calidad on that date. The rest of the city parishes discontinued calidad ascriptions before or after 1822. The Sagrario parish, the oldest and largest of the city, ceased recording calidad in baptismal records in May 1822. The vicarage of Nuestra Señora del Pilar, that depended on the Sagrario parish, did it in July 1822. The parishes of Jesús, Santuario de Guadalupe, and Mexicaltzingo present more interesting cases. In Jesús priests stopped recording calidad on 1 October 1820, while in Santuario de Guadalupe on 25 June 1821. This means, that in both parishes calidad had fallen into disuse even before Mexican independence. In the case of Jesús almost a full year before the declaration of independence, and three months before it, in the case of Santuario de Guadalupe. As for Mexicaltzingo, the last baptism with an indication of calidad was recorded in November 1821, just two months after independence. Before that date, however, some children were recorded as citizens while other still have a calidad ascription. This suggests that some people adopted the label of citizen right away, while others kept using colonial designations, at least until these were banned by law.

The interruption of calidad categories in marriage records followed a similar path to that of baptisms. The Santuario de Guadalupe was the first parish in discontinuing their use in July 1821, two months before independence, followed by Jesús in November of the same year. The Sagrario parish seemed to have completed this process on two stages. Beginning in May 1822 all people were designated as citizens, but on the margins of each entry, priests

still wrote the labels of españoles, indios, or castas. A year later, the annotations on the margins stopped appearing and everyone just received the status of citizens.

The fact that parishes discontinued calidad gradually, and that two of them stopped using it altogether before independence, strongly suggests that it was not a state-mandated measure. Further, it is of the uttermost importance to stress that the categories associated with African ancestry were the only ones in decline during the period under study, and not those with Spanish or Native ancestry. The last mulato to be ever baptized in the Mexicaltzingo parish was recorded in 1819, and in the Santuario de Guadalupe, Jesús, and Pilar parishes in 1820. The last marriage involving Afro-Mexicans in the Santuario de Guadalupe parish was registered in 1817, and in Jesús in 1819. In Analco, there was one marriage involving Afro-Mexicans in 1820, and just one in 1822. To all intents and purposes, Afro-Mexican-related social labels ceased to exist in Guadalajara years before independence. Furthermore, why would authorities grant Afro-descendants a status that they had denied to them for the last three centuries?

How, then, did Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara manage to manipulate or abandon colonial calidades during the last decades of the colonial period? As many studies have shown during the past 25 years or so, moving from one social category to another was not unusual in colonial Mexico. People could do that by marrying someone of a different calidad; by migrating; by improving their economic situation, etc. However, as Douglas Cope has noted, someone's social ascription was a summation of his social networks. Therefore, moving from one calidad category to another often meant changing one's "set of social relations."[14] The disappearance of Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara was rooted on the same

[14] Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 83-85.

principles that delineated these types of transformations during the colonial period, but it also exhibited new features that broke with the colonial past. In particular, this process was different in one very important regard: it did not entail for people to renounce to their social circles.

The first element to take into account in order to understand this phenomenon is the fluidity of social differentiation processes in the Spanish world, or more properly of the concept of calidad. In chapters two, three, and four we have seen that the concept of calidad brought together into a single overarching notion ideas about what we now might call race, ethnicity, class, and so on. Calidad also created distinctions within groups, that is, not all españoles were considered of the same status, nor indios or Afro-Mexicans for that matter. Such concept allowed imperial authorities to rely on different criteria to grant or deny access to resources and prerogatives to people on a case by case basis. Non-elites, however, could also manipulate the different components of calidad to their advantage.

If we are to understand how Afro-Mexicans disappeared from Guadalajara at the end of the colonial period, we ought to grasp the complex relation between calidad, reputation, and physical appearance. It would be worthwhile, thus, to synthesize here the findings from the previous chapters. From Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, the pioneer of Afro-Mexican studies, to recent works on demographic history, scholars have assigned phenotype a big influence in determining people's calidad during the colonial period.[15]

Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán worked under the assumption that social classifications in colonial Mexico operated in a similar way to modern conceptions of race; therefore, he assigned considerable weight to physical traits in determining social categories. Since then,

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[15] Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, chap. XIV; see for example the works by David Carbajal López, *La población de Bolaños*; and "Reflexiones metodológicas."

historians have moved on, for the most part, from these notions and have qualified the workings of social classification in the Spanish world; the relative importance of phenotype in these processes, however, remains a subject of debate.

Evidence presented in chapter two pertaining to legal cases wherein people's calidad was in question indicates that someone's physical appearance did not even factor into this process. In instances in which it was at stake whether a person was an español or a mulato reputation and social networks were key in determining someone's calidad. Similarly, when political factions fighting for power in and Indian town claimed that their rivals were mulatos in order to deny them access to political participation, the accused faction's response was that they had lived all their lives under the reputation of indios, and that they had conducted their lives as indios, actively participating within the community. In these cases, "living as" and indio or an español was reason enough to be considered as such.

There were, indeed, records in which people's physical traits are mentioned, but for the most part their calidad was not under question in these. Such is the case of slaves' bills of sale or legal cases in which enslaved people asked for a change of ownership or to reduce their price so they could buy their own freedom. In such records, Afro-descendants were clearly dehumanized and treated as merchandize; hence, the preoccupation to thoroughly describe them. Such records offer further evidence to argue for a very limited influence of phenotype in determining someone's calidad. What bills of sale show is the existence of at least twenty different variants of negros and mulatos based on their physical traits. Such classifications do not appear, whatsoever, in sacramental or census records, nor in petitions to the city council. This makes one wonder why, if the same people who bought and sold slaves were involved in the creation of other types of documents, such variety of descriptions is missing from the rest of the historical record? Together, the evidence from legal cases in

which people's calidad was questioned, and from bills of sale and sacramental records, lends credence to the argument that people were identifying themselves in most instances and that phenotype bore a limited weight at best in assigning someone's calidad.

High exogamy rates among Afro-Mexicans in Guadalajara were another important element that facilitated this process. Table 5.3 shows the number of marriages by calidad in all the parishes included in this study. Historians debate whether we should consider negros, mulatos, moriscos, and lobos as a single community of Afro-Mexicans, or as discrete groups when comparing their marriage patterns.[16]

Chapter three has extensively argued about the perils we run when uncritically treating Afro-Mexicans as a single and coherent community. Nonetheless, in the previous chapter we have seen that according to baptismal records the Afro-Mexican community of Guadalajara was overwhelmingly mulato. Bearing this in mind, if we treat them as separate groups, their exogamy rates are astonishingly high, and varied from 59.74% for mulatas to the 100% for negros, negras, lobos, and lobas. Surely, this is explained by the small presence of such designations in the city. In contrast, if we treat them as a single community, Afro-Mexican women exhibited an exogamy rate of 58.5%, almost the same as mulatas alone, since they were the majority among Afro-Mexican women. Men showed a slightly higher rate of 60.6%, but still lower than the 62.1% of mulatos alone, who were also the majority among Afro-Mexican men (see table 5.4)

[16] Vinson, *Before Mestizaje*; Proctor, *Damned Notions of Liberty*; Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*; and Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz*.

Table 5.3 Marriages of Afro-Mexicans by calidad group in Guadalajara, 1793-1822

	Negra	Mulata	Morisca	Loba	Española	India	Mestiza	Coyota	Castiza	Unknown	Total
Negro	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	5
Mulato	1	184	11	0	56	141	48	31	1	12	485
Morisco	0	7	2	0	7	9	3	3	0	0	31
Lobo	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	4
Español	1	36	7	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
Indio	1	171	8	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	183
Mestizo	0	35	4	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	39
Coyote	0	17	2	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
Castizo	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Unknown	0	5	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Total	3	457	34	4	63	152	54	35	1	13	816

Table 5.4 Exogamy rates among Afro-Mexicans by calidad group in Guadalajara, 1793-1822

Calidad	%
Negros	100
Negras	100
Lobos	100
Lobas	100
Moriscos	93.5
Moriscas	94.2
Mulatos	62.1
Mulatas	59.74
Afro-Mexican men	60.6
Afro-Mexican women	58.5

Sources for tables 5.3 and 5.4: created based on figure 5.2

If we take a closer look at Afro-Mexicans' marriage patterns we could further ask was there a correlation between these and the calidad changes Afro-descendants underwent at the end of the colonial period? It is difficult to answer this question, as many others, with a simple yes or no. On the one hand, high exogamy rates do not explain everything. Afro-descendants had presented similar figures since the seventeenth century, and they clearly did not disappear from the historical record during that period.[17] Moreover, that Afro-Mexicans married outside of their group did not automatically mean that they were absorbed into their spouse's calidad. Table 5.5 contrasts Afro-Mexicans' marriage patterns with the calidad changes they underwent in the censuses of 1821-1822. The middle column shows the percentage of Afro-Mexicans' who married people of different calidad. The column to the right represents the percentage of Afro-Mexicans who claimed other calidad in the censuses of 1821-1822 combined. As it is evident from the table, there is no clear correlation between these two sets of events. The closest percentages correspond to Afro-Mexicans marrying españoles in comparison with those who turned into españoles in the censuses. This, however, should not let us to think that Afro-Mexicans who married españoles immediately became españoles. The process of disappearance analyzed here was much more complex than that.

Table 5.5 Comparison between Afro-Mexicans' marriage patterns and calidad changes

Calidad	Afro-Mexicans Marrying to	Afro-Mexicans turning into
Españoles	13.23	10.13
Indios	41.05	11.75
Mestizos	11.39	6.3
Coyotes	6.61	0.59

Sources: Created based on data from tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3.

Sacramental records show that at least during the first years of the period under study Afro-descendants were the ones who absorbed their partners into their group at the moment

[17] Thomas Calvo, *Poder, religión y sociedad*, 243-245.

they baptized their children, regardless of how they were classified at the moment of marriage. Then, during the last years of the period, and in the censuses of 1821 and 1822 the opposite was true, and Afro-Mexicans were absorbed into their spouses' calidad, or they simply did not provide any calidad in the baptismal records or in the censuses. This happened across all the parishes analyzed for this study. For example, on 17 June 1798 in the Sagrario parish Jorge Redondo (also known as Arredondo) mestizo, married María Vitala García, mulata. Between that year and 1812 they baptized five children in the same parish. On 30 July 1798 they baptized Antonia Marciala. On 4 August 1800 they baptized José Ignacio Domingo. Exactly two years later they baptized María Joaquina. Then, on 10 March 1805 they baptized Juan de Dios Ignacio. Finally, on 14 August 1812, they baptized José Guadalupe Vicente. All of them were mulatos at the moment of baptism. Interestingly, in the census of 1821 Jorge, Vidala, and three of their children were listed in the 23rd district of the city. All of them were españoles and held the title of "don" (see figures 5.5a-5.5f).[18]

Figures 5.5a-5.5f. The Arredondo-García family in the sacramental records of Guadalajara and in the census of 1821

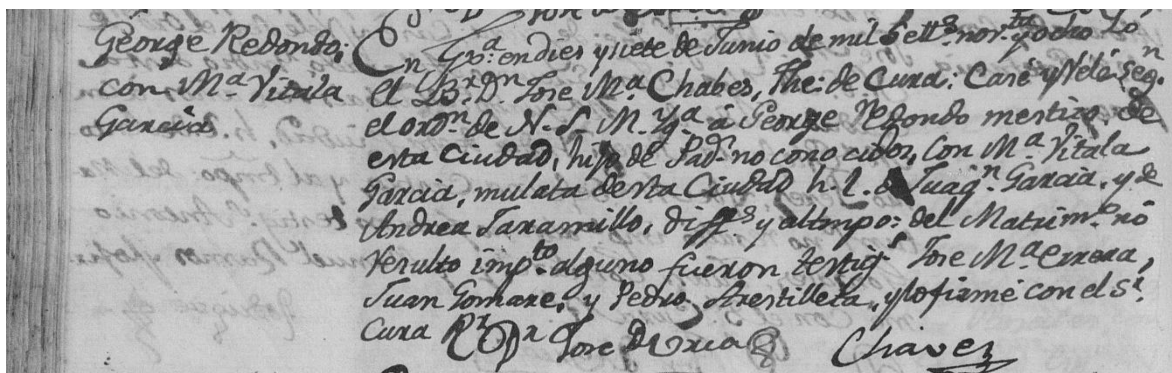

Figure 5.5a. Marriage record of Jorge Redondo and Vitala García

[18] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Matrimonios 1788-1805, image 406; Bautismos 1793-1799, image 497; Bautismos 1799-806, images 105, 332-333, 641; and Bautismos 1810-1815, image 286; and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 54465-54469.

Figure 5.5b. Baptism of María Antonia Marciala Redondo

Figure 5.5c. Baptism of José Ignacio Domingo Redondo

Figure 5.5d. Baptism of José Guadalupe Vicente Redondo

Figure 5.5e. Baptism of Juan de Dios Ignacio Redondo

Figure 5.5f. The Arredondo-García family in 1821

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Matrimonios 1788-1805, image 406; Bautismos 1793-1799, image 497; Bautismos 1799-806, images 105, 332-333, 641; and Bautismos 1810-1815, image 286; and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 54465-54469.

Similarly, On 11 September 1796, in the Parish of Analco, Bernardo de Lara, indio tributario, married Francisca Ramírez, mulata libre. They and four children, all listed as indios, lived in the ninth ward in 1821. On 19 January 1816, in the Parish of Jesús, Juan Manuel Torres, indio, married mulata libre María Antonia Barbosa. They lived in the 18th ward in 1821, when they were recorded as indios. On 24 September 1815, in the parish of

Santuario de Guadalupe, Pedro Briceño, indio laborío, married Mariana Sánchez, mulata libre. According to the 1821 census they lived in the fifth ward with two daughters, again all of them were indios. Finally, on 2 May 1813, in the Sagrario parish, Marcelino López, indio, married Narcisa Vázquez Lozano, mulata. They were listed in the third ward with their two sons in 1821 as indios.[19]

Despite what these examples might suggest, this was not a gendered process. That is, not just men absorbed women into their calidad group; the opposite was also true. On 7 June 1801, in the parish of Analco, Francisco Munguía, mulato, married india laboría Florencia Morillo. According to the 1821 census they were an indio couple living in the ninth ward. On 23 August 1811, in the Sagrario parish, Ignacio González mulato libre, married india Clara Sánchez. In 1821 both of them were indios living in the 20th district. Ultimately, on 13 November 1796, in the Santuario de Guadalupe parish, José María Saucedo, mulato libre, married Gertrudis Escamilla, india. In 1821 she was listed as a widow living with five children surnamed Saucedo in the ninth ward, all of them indios.[20]

Claiming their partners' calidad was not the only strategy Afro-Mexicans used to transform themselves during the late colonial period. Many of those who married outside of their group, and the vast majority of those who married endogamously, chose a calidad that worked to their advantage, or did not provide any category at all in the censuses of 1821-

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[19] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, San José de Analco, Matrimonios 1774-1792, image 196 and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 19914-19919; Jesús, Matrimonios 1815-1832, image 40 and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 45687-45688; Santuario de Guadalupe Matrimonios 1789-1817, image 709 and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 8036-8039; and Sagrario Matrimonios 1805-1818, image 330, and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 3632-3636 and 5518-5521, respectively.

[20] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, San José de Analco, Matrimonios 1798-1833, image 39 and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 19348-19349; Sagrario Matrimonios 1805-1818, images 269-270 and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 48455-48456; and Santuario de Guadalupe Matrimonios 1789-1817, image 253, and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 18931-18936, respectively.

1822. Take for example José Silverio Posadas and María Quirina Arriola. They got married in the Sagrario parish on 25 July 1803, when they identified themselves as mulatos. In December of that year they baptized a son in the same parish, who was classified as a morisco. Then, in 1805 and 1810 they baptized a mulato son and a mulata daughter within the same parish. Subsequently, in 1813 and 1815 they baptized a mulato son and a mulata daughter in the Santuario de Guadalupe parish. In 1821, Silverio and Quirina lived with three of their children in the fifth ward of the city and all of them claimed to be mestizos.[21]

The married couple formed by Antonio Serrano and Rufina Arámbula was another family consistently identified as mulato in the sacramental records that claimed a different calidad in 1821. They baptized three children in the Sagrario parish between 1793 and 1799. On 27 January 1793 they baptized mulata libre María Guadalupe Policarpia. On 17 January 1795 they baptized morisco José María de Jesús. On 1 November 1796 they baptized mulata libre María Florencia Simona. Subsequently, on 9 May 1799 they baptized mulato libre José Estanislao. In addition, during this period they were godparents of at least three Afro-descendant children. Then, between 1802 and 1807 they baptized another three children in the San José de Analco parish. On 12 May 1802 they baptized María Antonia Nepomucena without any calidad designation. Then, on 18 February 1805 they baptized mulato José Daniel. Finally, on 4 October 1807 they baptized mulata libre María Gerónima. In the census of 821 Rufina was a widow who lived in the ninth ward with one of her sons, Estanislao Serrano who, for his part, was married to Quirina González, with whom he had two children.

[21] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Matrimonios 1788-1805, images 558-559; Bautismos 1799-1806, images 468 and 731; Bautismos 1810-1815, image 30; Santuario de Guadalupe, Bautismos 1812-1820, images 28-29 and 166; and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 7992-7996.

Both Rufina and Quirina were españolas in 1821; Estanislao and his children were mestizos.[22]

One example of a family that was constantly identified as mulato during the period and across different parishes, but did not provide any calidad in the census, is that of José María Becerra, also known as Juan José Becerra, and Toribia Álvarez, also known as Toribia González. They baptized eight children in the Sagrario and Analco parishes between 1797 and 1810. On 5 June 1797 they baptized mulata libre Petronila de la Luz. On 29 September 1799 they baptized mulata libre María Matiana de la Luz. On 5 June 1801 mulata libre María Antonia Dorotea. Then on 21 July 1802 they baptized José Justo Rufino without calidad designation. On 16 August 1804 they baptized mestiza María Atanacia de la Asunción. Subsequently, on 24 September 1806 mulata María Cleofás. Curiously, in this occasion José María claimed to be a mulato libre and Toribia an india de casta. On 21 June 1808 they baptized mulato José Luis Antonio. Finally, on 3 November 1810 they baptized mulata libre María Hilaria de Jesús. In addition, José María and Toribia were godparents of at least four mulato children across this period. By 1821, José María and Toribia lived with four children in the ninth ward of the city. José María held the title of "don," and no one in the household had a calidad designation.[23]

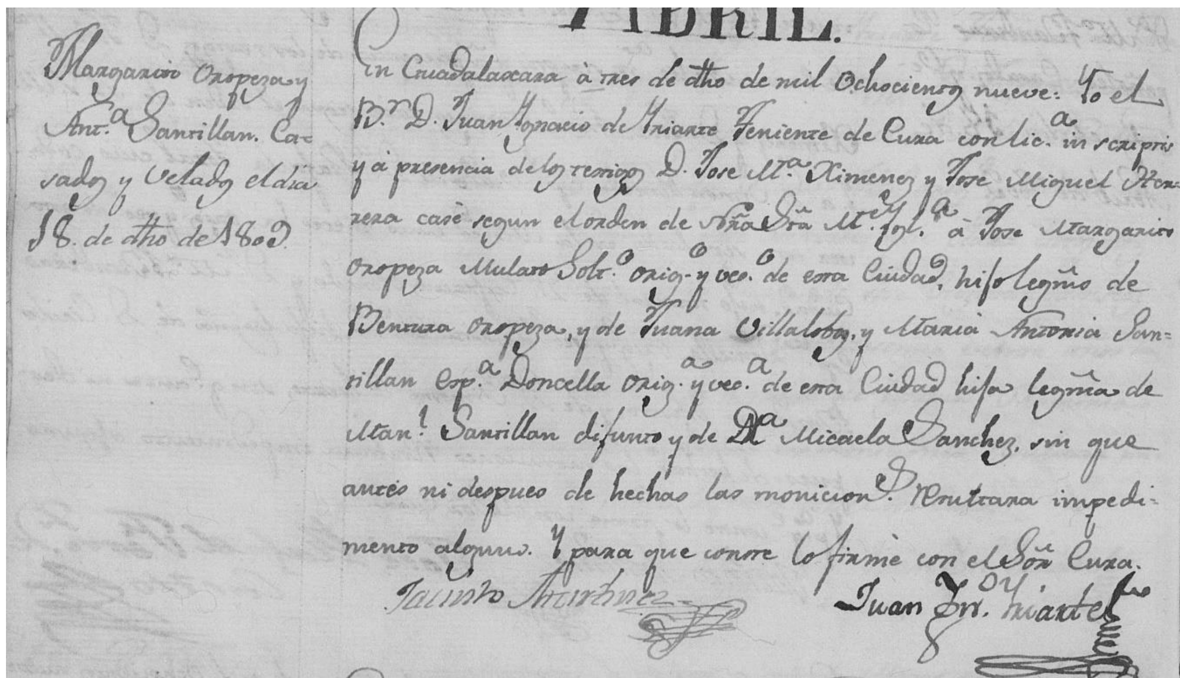
Families that did not specify their calidad in the censuses of 1821-1822, and that lived in socially diverse districts of the city, such as the Becerra-Álvarez, raise suspicions that they were indeed of African ancestry. Contrasting the censuses with sacramental records

[22] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1786-1793, image 563; Bautismos 1793-1799, images 181, 349, and 590; San José de Analco, Bautismos 1801-1816, images 37, 123, and 232; and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 21396-21400.

[23] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1793-1799, images 402-403; Bautismos 1799-1806, images 20, 213, 329 and 573; Bautismos 1806-1810, images 88 and 404; and San José de Analco, Bautismos 1801-1816, image 353; and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822,"19070-19075.

frequently confirms these suspicions. Take for example the married couple of Manuel Hernández, indio, and Trinidad Juárez, mulata. They got married in the Sagrario parish on 23 March 1809. By 1821 they lived in the ninth ward with five children. None of them had a calidad moniker, but they lived in between an español and a mestizo household. Similarly, José Margarito Oropesa and María Antonia Santillán. He was identified as a mulato and María Antonia as a Spaniard at the moment they got married in the Sagrario parish on 3 April 1809. In 1821 they lived next to his parents, Ventura Oropesa and Juana Villalobos, and five children surnamed Oropesa in the seventh district of the city. They did not provide any calidad, but curiously, they were listed in the census between an español and an indio household (see figures 5.6a-5.6b).[24]

Figures 5.6a-5.6b. The Oropesa family in the sacramental records of Guadalajara and in the census of 1821



Abril.

Margarito Oropeza y Ant.a Santillan. Casados y Velados el dia 18. de abril de 1809.

En Guadalaxara á tres de abril de mil ochocientos nueve: Yo el Br. D. Juan Ygnacio de Iriarte Teniente de Cura con lic.a in scriptis y á presencia de los testigos D. Jose M.a Ximenez y Jose Miguel Herrera casé segun el orden de N.a S.ta M.e Igl.a á Jose Margarito Oropeza Mulato Soltero orig.o y vec.o de esta Ciudad, hijo legitimo de Ventura Oropeza, y de Juana Villalobos, y Maria Antonia Santillan Esp.a Doncella orig.a y vec.a de esta Ciudad hija legitima de Man.l Santillan difunto y de D.a Micaela Sanchez, sin que antes ni despues de hechas las moniciones resultara impedimento alguno. Y para que conste lo firmé con el Sor. Cura.

Juan Ygn. Iriarte

Figure 5.6a. Marriage record of José Margarito Oropesa and María Antonia Santillán

[24] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Matrimonios 1805-1818, images 156 and 158; and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 20631-20637, and 10228-10236, respectively.

Figure 5.6b. The Oropesa family in the census of 1821. Notice how they lived between an español and an indio families

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Matrimonios 1805-1818, images 156 and 158; and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 20631-20637, and 10228-10236, respectively.

It seems likely that when Afro-Mexicans reached a relatively high social position, they could just keep silent about their calidad to get rid of the burdens that their ancestry imposed on them in this discriminatory society. For example, in 1794 Mariano Berrueco and Dolores Acevedo baptized a mulato son in the Santuario de Guadalupe parish. Two years later they baptized a mulata daughter in the same parish. Then, in 1821 Mariano was a widower living in the sixth district with five of his children. He was listed as a sacristan and Cayetano Berrueco, one of his sons, as a silversmith, a craft supposedly reserved for españoles. Moreover, Mariano Berrueco witnessed at least ten marriages involving Afro-

Mexicans in the Santuario de Guadalupe parish between 1812 and 1817.[25] Therefore, it seems plausible that his social position as a sacristan, and of his son as a silversmith, allowed them to put aside the label of mulatos.

Table 5.6. Occupations of Afro-Mexicans in Guadalajara by Economic Sector, 1821-1822

Economic sector	Number (%)	Economic sector	Number (%)
Clothing and Textiles	322 (24.5)	Woodwork	44 (3.35)
Transport and services	222 (16.9)	Administrative, Church, Military	43 (3.27)
Leatherwork	175 (13.3)	Metalwork	40 (3)
Other	127 (9.67)	Construction and Building	37 (2.8)
Agricultural/Pastoral	95 (7.23)	Arts and Entertainment	18 (1.37)
Commerce and Trade	92 (7)	Cigar Workers	8 (0.6)
Food and Drink	88 (6.7)	Mining	2 (0.15)

N: 1313.
Sources: GCP Database, "Guadalajara censuses of 1821-1822."

Occupation, then, was another element that together with the abovementioned factors facilitated Afro-Mexicans manipulation or abandonment of calidad categories during this period. Table 5.6 summarizes the occupations of those individuals in my sample for which a craft is listed in the census. There is data about occupation for only 1313 people. The census listed more than 80 different professions that I have consolidated into 12 larger categories based on the economic sector in which people worked. In doing so, I build upon previous studies of social history that have proposed similar occupational breakdowns. Guadalajara's Afro-descendant community exhibited a similar employment pattern to that of important colonial Mexican cities such as Puebla and Mexico City. By far, the clothing and textiles sector employed the most Afro-Mexicans in Guadalajara, followed by the transport and services, and leatherwork sectors. Similar patterns can be observed across the viceroyalty.

[25] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Bautismos 1794-1798, images 19 and 239-240; and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 8587-8592, and 9430-9431.

One important difference between Guadalajara and Puebla, for example, is the larger presence of Afro-Mexicans in commercial and agricultural activities in the former city in comparison to the latter.[26]

A closer look to the links between occupation and the calidad changes Afro-Mexicans underwent in the censuses of 1821-1822 reveals interesting patterns. Table 5.7 indicates the occupation that Afro-Mexicans reported in the two censuses in relation to their calidad changes. The second column from left to right reports the economic sectors in which Afro-Mexicans who kept their calidad in the censuses participated. The next columns indicate the same for those Afro-descendants who claimed to be españoles, indios, and mestizos, respectively. I have excluded from this table those Afro-descendants without calidad designation in the censuses.

Table 5.7 Occupation and calidad changes of Afro-Mexicans in 1821-1822

Economic sector	Afro-Mexicans	Españoles	Indios	Mestizos
Clothing and Textiles	44 (18.3)	44 (30.7)	43 (24.4)	18 (22.2)
Transport and services	108 (45)	10 (7)	21 (11.9)	14 (17.2)
Leatherwork	13 (5.41)	16 (11.1)	26 (14.7)	11 (13.5)
Other	24 (10)	12 (8.4)	11 (6.25)	11 (13.5)
Agricultural/Pastoral	7 (2.91)	9 (6.3)	27 (15.3)	1 (1.2)
Commerce and Trade	4 (1.6)	16 (11.1)	5 (2.84)	5 (6.1)
Food and Drink	17 (7)	10 (7)	18 (10.2)	5 (6.1)
Woodwork	10 (4.16)	5 (3.5)	7 (3.97)	2 (2.4)
Administrative, Church, Military	5 (2)	12 (8.4)	3 (1.7)	0
Metalwork	2 (0.83)	3 (2.09)	5 (2.84)	7 (8.6)
Construction and Building	3 (1.25)	3 (2.09)	6 (3.4)	2 (2.4)
Arts and Entertainment	1 (0.41)	3 (2.09)	2 (1.1)	2 (2.4)
Cigar Workers	1 (0.41)	0	1 (0.56)	3 (3.6)
Mining	1 (0.41)	0	1 (0.56)	0

N: 640. Numbers in parentheses indicate percentage within calidad group.
Sources: GCP Database, "Guadalajara censuses of 1821-1822."

[26] For Afro-Mexicans' occupational patterns in Mexico City, Puebla, Valladolid, and other minor towns during the eighteenth century see Vinson, *Bearing Arms*, 104-122.

While Afro-descendants participated in virtually all the economic sectors regardless of the calidad they claimed in the censuses of 1821-1822, such comparison reveals that Afro-Mexicans who kept their calidad in these censuses were overrepresented in the transport and services sector of the economy. That is, individuals recorded in the censuses as negros, mulatos, moriscos, or lobos were more likely to be maids, seamstresses, cooks, coachmen, porters, etc. Moreover, among those Afro-descendants who kept their calidad were at least four individuals who said to be beggars (limosneros or mendigos), whom I counted in the category of "other." In contrast, those Afro-descendants who claimed to be españoles in 1821-1822 were more likely to be invested in commercial activities or in the clothing and textile sector. Similarly, those who said to be españoles were more likely than the rest to work in the administrative sector. There were, indeed, Afro-Mexicans who claimed Spanish-ness in 1821 who worked in transport and services. Take for example José Guadalupe Castro, he was baptized at the Santuario de Guadalupe parish on 11 April 1808, when he was classified as a morisco. In the census of 1821 he was a 13-year-old español lackey (*lacayo*) living in the house of don Juan Leñeros, a member of one of the most prominent families of the city, within the third district.[27] One could surmise that because of his morisco calidad, as well as because of his association with an elite family, it was easier for individuals like José Guadalupe to change their calidad ascription to españoles.

For their part, those who reported to be indios in the censuses were more likely to participate in the leatherwork and agricultural sectors of the economy than anyone else. Ultimately, those Afro-Mexicans who claimed to be mestizos in 1821 (remember that no

[27] GCP Database, "Guadalajara censuses of 1821-1822," 2741; and Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Bautismos 1800-1812, image 361.

Afro-Mexican claimed this calidad in 1822) participated more in metalwork activities or were cigar workers in comparison to the others. There was also a considerable number of Afro-Mexicans who turned into mestizos working on transport and services. Collectively, this breakdown also reveals the overall important presence of Afro-descendants in the clothing and textiles sector, as well as in the leatherwork section of the economy.

The fact that Afro-Mexicans were represented in basically all the economic sectors of the city, regardless of if they changed their calidad or not, reinforces the argument of this chapter. That is, that Afro-descendants' manipulation or abandonment of colonial categories cannot be explained by a single factor. Performing a prestigious craft certainly helped some Afro-Mexicans to leave behind calidad labels at the end of the colonial period, but this phenomenon cannot be reduced to a class issue.

This discussion about calidad and occupation also leads us to the last subject to be treated in this chapter. If the majority of Afro-Mexicans transformed their identities during the first years of the nineteenth century, how do we explain the presence of 2% of mulatos in the census of 1821, or the small peak in the number of baptisms and marriages between 1814 and 1820? Thus far, I have been able to identify just one family that reverted back to its Afro-Mexican calidad, and that was between the two censuses, not int the sacramental records. That was the case of José Antonio Alcalá, Marcelina Santos, and their seven children, who in 1821 lived in the 22nd ward and had no calidad designation, but who in 1822, living in the same district were recorded as mulatos and Marcelina as an india.[28] It is unlikely that more families did that, particularly in the period between 1814 and 1820. The population growth experienced during the period might provide a more plausible explanation. This hypothesis

[28] GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 51,706-51,714, and 52,125-52,133.

is difficult to test, however, because sacramental records did not consistently provide people's places of origin. The case of the Alcalá-Santos family, for its part, lends more credence to the argument that Afro-Mexicans were indeed identifying themselves, and their calidad changes were not an imposition. Their personal, or familial motivations to keep their calidad of mulatos, however, are elusive.

There is another complementary, and more useful for our purposes, explanation of why Afro-Mexicans did not disappear altogether in the censuses of 1821-1822 that can be assessed by contrasting these with the sacramental records. Although, according to sacramental records, slavery was clearly declining during this period, its pernicious legacy lingered for longer than the practice itself, leaving an enduring mark on many Afro-Mexicans. In other words, the close association between African ancestry and slave status during this period While in the censuses of 1821-1822 there was just a handful of enslaved individuals, I was able to find the baptismal records of 46 enslaved children (34 in the Sagrario parish, 6 in Nuestra Señora del Pilar, 3 in the Santuario de Guadalupe, and 3 in Mexicaltzingo), as well as 11 marriage records involving enslaved Afro-Mexicans (1 in Analco and the rest in the Sagrario) during the period under study. About two thirds of these were recorded in the 1790s and the rest during the first years of the nineteenth century.

A comparison of sacramental sources and the census of 1821 suggests that experiencing a recent past of enslavement prevented many Afro-Mexicans from changing their calidad ascription. For example, on 15 February 1794 in the Sagrario parish, Santiago Apolinario Lozano, indio from Colotlán, married María Josefa Escobedo "slave." This couple baptized two children in the same parish. On 5 May 1795, they baptized María Mónica, who was recorded as "mulata esclava de D. José Duval." A year later, on 8 December 1796, they baptized José Nicolás who was registered simply as mulato. Whether

María Josefa gained her freedom before the baptism of her second child is unknown. What it is known, is that in 1821 Apolinario Lozano, María Escobedo, and their daughter Josefa Lozano, still lived with don José Duval in the 18th ward. Apolinario was an Indian, María a mulata and their daughter a loba. In another example, on 18 October 1802, María Gertrudis Díaz "esclava del Sr. Br. D. Manuel Arellano," baptized in the Santuario de Guadalupe parish a girl named María Ignacia Florentina. In the census of 1821, María Ignacia was a mulata seamstress still living with presbyter don Manuel Arellano in the 20th district. Ultimately, on 18 April 1810, María Esmeregilda, or Hermenegilda, "esclava de las señoras Nogueras," baptized in the vicarage of Nuestra Señora del Pilar a child of unknown father named Mariana. Eleven years later, Esmeregilda and Mariana were listed in the census as mulatas and servants in the household of Ana Antonia and Petra Paula Noguera, within the 14th district of the city. In 1822, Hermenegilda still lived in the same ward but without any indication of calidad.[29] In these cases, people who had been identified as slaves in the sacramental records, in the censuses were classified as servants, maids, or *criados*; whether these terms were euphemisms to conceal the ownership of enslaved individuals or the actual occupational status of these people, is unknown.

The fact that a high percentage of Afro-Mexicans who kept their calidad in 1821 were listed in the 14th ward of the city provides further evidence to support the assertion that the legacy of slavery hindered their possibilities of transforming their identities. This particular neighborhood, also known as *el barrio del Carmen*, was a wealthy district that also housed

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[29] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario 1788-1805, image 270; Bautismos 1793-1799, images 203 and 357, and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 45691-45693; Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Bautismos 1800-1812, image 105 and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 47405; and Nuestra Señora del Pilar, Bautismos 1804-1821, image 270 and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 33712-33713, and 35935.

the convent after which the neighborhood was named. There, both the convent and many Spanish families kept a high concentration of slaves and servants.[30] In fact, a similar phenomenon could be observed across the viceroyalty. An eighteenth-century census taker from Tlaxcala, for example, noted that in his jurisdiction pardos and morenos were basically "extinct," and that in the census "one can barely find six or eight men, and ten or twelve women who, because they are slaves, cannot hide it [that they are pardos or morenos]."[31] Considering this evidence, it is very likely that the enduring stigma of slavery thwarted these Afro-Mexicans' ability to claim a different calidad.

Bearing in mind that Afro-descendants who kept their calidad were represented in all economic sectors of the city, another possibility to consider is the impact of living in a neighborhood where a considerable number identified as Afro-Mexican, such as ward fourteen. In such places there were social networks, job opportunities, and perhaps even positive associations with the calidad labels associated with African ancestry, like that of mulato. These factors could have made some people to seriously ponder if they wanted to change their calidad.

A close reading of sacramental records and demographic data from late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century Guadalajara reveals that the process of disappearance of Afro-Mexican-related calidad ascriptions was multifaceted. The persistence of traditional notions of social differentiation, high exogamy rates, the fact that most Afro-Mexicans had been free perhaps for several generations, and the relative prominent position some of them had acquired were some of the most important factor to consider in explaining this process. Afro-descendants' manipulation of calidad categories drew from similar dynamics occurring

[30] For a description of this district, see Hardin, *Household Mobility*, 37-39.
[31] Cited in Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra*, 273.

during the colonial period. The fluidity of calidad allowed people who married exogamously to either acquire the calidad of their spouses or absorb them into their groups. Data from Guadalajara strongly suggests that during the 1790s and first years of the nineteenth century, Afro-Mexicans incorporated their partners and children into their calidad. On the contrary, during the second half of the period under study the opposite process took place, and non-Afro-Mexican partners who had been absorbed into their spouses group reverted back to their original calidad, this time granting their whole families the same status that they had as individuals before marriage. This was not a possibility for all Afro-Mexicans, however. The majority of those who married into their group experienced much more radical transformations, as the example of the Posadas family demonstrate. Many Afro-Mexicans preferred to forgo calidad ascriptions altogether, like the Oropesas in 1821.

This analysis also leads to some methodological reflections. Thus far scholars have studied similar processes to that examined here under the light of notions such as "whitening." Such a concept does not accurately convey the nuances of Mexican history. In what sense becoming an indio or a mestizo means whitening? This concept assumes that if someone is not black, it therefore must be white, as if there were nothing in between, thereby creating a dichotomy black-white that never existed in colonial Mexico. If taken literally, as earlier scholars like Aguirre Beltrán did, such a concept assumes calidad categories as products of biology, or human natural reproduction, and heavily based on physical appearance. However, that was simply not how calidad categories worked. Even if Afro-descendants married and had offspring with people of different backgrounds or ancestries, the calidades associated with African ancestry could keep existing because of the social dynamics examined in this chapter. The process of disappearance of Afro-Mexican-related

social ascriptions, thus, epitomizes the constructed, contextual, and contingent character of these labels.

What this analysis does not reveal, however, are the motivations behind this process. The many examples in this chapter indeed show a set of individual choices contained in a very specific historical context; a context that at the same time bolstered and constrained these decisions. It is in the period's political climate where we might find answers to this question. This context, and how it might have influenced Afro-Mexicans to leave behind calidad categories, are the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Becoming Citizens

During the fall of 1821, the newly independent provincial government of Guadalajara decided to create the first general census of population of the recently independent province. Among those counted in the provincial capital we find Tomás Reyes and Feliciana Becerra a married couple. They lived with their children in the 10th ward of the city and all of them claimed to be Indians. A year later, for reasons that remain unknown for historians, the first government of the city carried out a new census.[1] The Reyes-Becerra family appears again in the same district, but this time among the first people in the history of the city to be ever recorded as citizens.[2] At first glance, the case of the Reyes family suggests nothing out of the ordinary. The 10th ward, also known as Mexicaltzingo, was one of the original Indian towns surrounding the Spanish city of Guadalajara during the sixteenth century. By the time of these censuses, Mexicaltzingo was one of Guadalajara's urban neighborhoods, since the rapid population growth of the preceding three decades engulfed the previously independent community.[3] An Indian family residing within a former Indian town, thus, was nothing unusual; at least, this would be the case if it were not for the fact that the Reyes-Becerra were known mulatos within their community. They, along with Manuel Becerra and María Velázquez (Feliciana's parents), baptized children classified as mulatos in the nearby parish of Analco during the first decade of the nineteenth century.[4] Furthermore, the Reyes-Becerra

[1] For the character and history of both censuses see, Hardin, *Household Mobility*, 8-12.
[2] GCP Database "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822," 25479-25482.
[3] For the population growth of Guadalajara in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries see Van Young, *Hacienda and Market* 29-36; and Hardin, *Household Mobility*, 25-27.
[4] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, San José de Analco, Bautismos 1801-1816, images 41 and 128; GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 23506-23509, and 25479-25482.

were among the small percentage of people who claimed the status of citizens in the census of 1822.[5]

The case of this couple and their children exemplifies one of the different strategies that Afro-Mexicans used to try to improve their social situations in a moment of political uncertainty. For the Reyes family and thousands of others, the decision to forgo colonial categories of calidad in an attempt to move up the social ladder would have unintended consequences for generations to come. This transformation was part of a prolonged process that resulted in the invisibility of Afro-descendants from Guadalajara to the eyes of modern society.

In 2020, almost two centuries later, the Mexican government included in the national census of population the category of Afro-Mexican as one of the ethnicities comprising the nation. For some, this measure was a long-waited recognition of a historically marginalized group. For others, it seemed to impose an identity onto people who do not really claim it.[6] Be that as it may, the presence and contributions of Afro-Mexicans have been largely elided from the national narrative. How and why did people of African descent (who indeed continue to exist in Mexico) stop identifying themselves as such? While the previous chapter explained how this process of change was possible, it is the main contention of this chapter that the disappearance of Afro-Mexican-related calidades was deeply rooted in the political changes happening at the Atlantic, vice-regal, and local levels during the period under study.

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[5] According to the *Guadalajara Census Project* database just 6.2% of people were recorded as citizens in 1822.

[6] For some examples of how modern Mexicans deny blackness as part of their identities see: Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*; and Lewis, *Chocolate and Corn Flour*.

Latinamericanists have documented Afro-descendants' attempts to improve their social standing across the Spanish empire and throughout the colonial period.[7] These actions, however, were often individual efforts with limited outcomes, that in no sense resulted in the disappearance of African-related calidades like in the case of Guadalajara. For that to happen, profound political and ideological changes had to occur at various levels, from transformations in the empires of the Atlantic world, to alterations at the vice-regal and local levels. Afro-descendants from the Guadalajara region were sensitive to the political and ideological transformations occurring during their lifetimes. Through a series of strategies, such as using colonial ascriptions to their advantage, refusing to use them at all, or claiming citizenship, Afro-Mexicans undermined the bases of Spanish colonial rule in a time of political turmoil. In this sense, rather than being silenced or erased, Afro-Mexicans should be seen as protagonists of the construction processes of Mexican citizenship and equality.

Afro-descendants from the Guadalajara region saw no advantage in keeping colonial ascriptions that only served to marginalized them and gradually took steps to secure the benefits of citizenship. First, as a result of the increasingly aggressive Bourbon reforms targeting them during the late eighteenth century, Afro-Mexicans began to relinquish calidad categories or to claim different ones. Subsequently, in order to take advantage of political changes anchoring the Cadiz constitution recategorizing españoles, indios and mestizos as citizens, Afro-descendants who had not done so by this time, claimed those calidades. Finally, in seeking a place within the nation-building projects of the first Mexican governments, and in trying to secure access to local politics and resources, Afro-descendants abandoned their categorization of mulatos for a homogenous Mexican identity that promised

[7] For example: Landers, *Black Society*; *Atlantic Creoles*; Twinam, *Purchasing Whiteness*; and Von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers*.

equality, at least just in terms of the census. However, in so doing, they contributed, although inadvertently, to silencing their cultural heritage.

Critically, this chapter situates Afro-Mexicans' abandonment of calidad categories as part of the large spectrum of Afro-descendants' political actions during the age of Atlantic revolutions. It places itself as part of a growing historiography that during the last 25 years or so has begun to incorporate the stories of Afro-descendants into the larger history of the Atlantic revolutions.[8] This chapter is divided in two sections. The first one provides the background for the disappearance of Afro-Mexicans and examines the wide array of Afro-descendants' political actions across the Atlantic world during the age of revolutions. A second section presents the argument that underlying Afro-Mexicans' disappearance there were political motivations. Under these premises, then, this chapter challenges scholars to consider Afro-Mexicans' rejection of calidad categories as a political statement that bore direct influence into the processes of citizenship formation in nineteenth-century Mexico.

Afro-descendants and Political Action during the Age of Atlantic Revolutions

During the early 1990s a prominent historian of the Hispanic world opined that one of the most salient features of the Latin American revolutions of the nineteenth century was its lack of popular participation. In his own words: "It is, undoubtedly, in the absence of popular mobilization and of jacobine-like phenomena, where the largest specificity of the Hispanic revolutions lies."[9] Almost a decade later, a renowned Mexicanist assessed the participation

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[8] Andrews, *Afro-Latin America*; Lasso, "Los grupos afrodescendientes"; and Thibaud, "Race et Citoyenneté" offer excellent reviews of the literature from the last few decades and provide a starting point for the study of these topics.

[9] Guerra, *Modernidad e independencias*, 36. The original reads: "Es, sin duda, aquí, en la ausencia de una movilización popular moderna y de fenómenos de tipo jacobino, donde reside la especificidad mayor de las revoluciones hispánicas."

of non-elites in Mexican independence in the following terms: “it is an artifact of Whiggish official teleology and ‘cosmic race’ historiography to interpret the independence struggle as a whole as particularly mestizo in its essence, or as especially set along a course whose ultimate goal was vindication of the citizenship claims of people of color or the realization of theretofore thwarted ambitions especially mestizo in character.”[10] With these words, two influential scholars of our times openly dismissed, or downplayed at best, popular participation in Latin American independence processes, thereby considering it as pre-modern and rooted in tradition. To be sure, if one pretends that underlying popular participation in independence movements there was some sort of nationalism that preceded the state in Latin America, as some nineteenth-century liberal historians contended, then the authors cited at the beginning are right. There was no such a thing as a Mexican nation before independence, nor was this the case in any other Latin American country for that matter.[11] However, this does not eliminate the possibility that some of the non-elites’ demands during independence processes were rooted in values now deemed as modern, such as citizenship and equality before the law, along with the prohibition of calidad designations or other colonial distinctions of status.

This view of popular or non-elite participation in the Atlantic revolutions has considerably changed during the last two decades. Historians from around the world have unearthed how Afro-descendants fought for freedom and equality virtually all around the Atlantic world during the last years of the eighteenth century and first decades of the nineteenth. Afro-descendants’ political activities, alliances, and loyalties certainly cannot, and should not, be reduced into a single model. These varied from royalism in some regions

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[10] Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 4.
[11] For the historiography on Mexican independence see Van Young, *Writing Mexican History*, chapter 4.

to autonomist or independentist affinities in others. Despite these differences, one can find similar demands and struggles in diverse places across this period. As Ira Berlin has accurately put it, Afro-descendants "chose the cause that best assured the success of their cause: freedom."[12] The objective of this section, thus, is to provide a background that situates the disappearance of Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara as part of the larger spectrum of Afro-descendants' political activities during the same period. The point is not, however, to find direct links or causes between these Atlantic developments and the disappearance of Afro-descendants from Guadalajara, something that would be fruitless, but rather, to say that the process by which Afro-Mexicans became socially invisible cannot be fully understood without reckoning with these political movements around the Atlantic world. By necessity, the following paragraphs are simplifications of much more complex phenomena that cannot be explained in detail here.

Practically everywhere around the Atlantic world Afro-descendants shaped the meanings of freedom, citizenship and belonging using a variety of strategies. For example, by using the public sphere to voice their concerns, by migrating to places where they thought they could improve their living situations and running away from territories hostile to their cause, by capitalizing from the value that others placed on their work, and by participating in open political or military confrontations.[13] The degree of success of these different strategies, for sure, varied according to the historical context and other factors. As Alejandro de la Fuente and Ariela Gross have recently argued, the differences between the slave and "racial" regimes across the Americas stemmed from the elites' ability to impose their views on the

[12] Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, 230; for studies focused on royalism see Echeverri, *Indian and Slave Royalists*; and Soriano, "A True Vassal of the King."
[13] On these different strategies see for example, Stewart and Marks eds., *Race and Nation*.

subject onto society at large. Strong and sizable Afro-descendant communities, however, that had reached enough numbers and prominence, trumped elites' aspirations to exert complete control on society.[14]

In the United States, the first of the Atlantic revolutions, the involvement of Afro-descendants in the war for independence resulted in the weakening of slavery in some regions and in the proclamation of equality before the law in specific states, at least during the early independent period. Comparative studies of slavery and race relations in the United States and Latin America have, in general terms, projected the image of race relations from late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century United States to basically the whole history of the country. Afro-descendants, however, were not openly disenfranchised right away after independence, at least not in all the states, nor the "one drop" rule existed during this earlier period.

It is well known that, for the most part, African Americans favored the royalist cause during the American revolution. This is just part of the story, however. The British offered freedom to slaves very early during the war. Nonetheless, some authors argue that British recruitment of slaves and the offer of freedom were a response to enslaved people's willingness to fight for them, and not the other way around.[15] In startling contrast, black Americans in the Continental army had to "fight for the right to fight." Indeed, in November 1775 southern planters asked George Washington to remove African Americans from his army. Six weeks later, the Continental army decided to enlist just free blacks but not slaves. In subsequent years, the patriots decided to recruit slaves on a case by case basis. Every time

[14] De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Free*, 5 and 42.
[15] Nash, *The Forgotten Fifth*, 24-25.

this happened, owners were compensated.[16] In contrast, Afro-descendants' military participation was particularly widespread in the north. Authors estimate that, despite that the northern colonies had just five percent of the black population of the country, black northerners amounted to 50% of the black American forces.[17] Perhaps, because of this ample participation, and because of the specific circumstances of slavery in the north, notions of citizenship, freedom, and belonging were not as harsh during the early republic as they would become in later periods.

Once the war for independence ended, the free population of African descent in the north grew exponentially, giving them more leeway to fight for their rights, and slavery experienced a slow but certain death. Free blacks in the north passed from a couple of hundred in 1770 to about 50,000 in 1810. This free population created different types of societies and churches. Everywhere, these associations fought against discrimination and in favor of basic rights. Basically all of the northern states passed gradual abolition laws during this period and Massachusetts and Vermont declared all men free and equal in their first constitutions. Further, except for Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia, that restricted the vote to just white men, the rest of the ten states allowed free black men to vote, although with some property restrictions. New states incorporated after independence, such as Kentucky and Tennessee, also allowed free black men to vote during the early republican period.[18]

To be clear, prejudice against Afro-descendants kept existing, but legal discrimination was relatively limited during this period. The situation would begin to change after the war of 1812, and lead to racial tensions beginning in the 1820s after the Missouri compromise.

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[16] Nash, *The Forgotten Fifth*, 10-12, the quotation is at 10.
[17] Cottrol, *The Long Lingering Shadow*, 110-111.
[18] Cottrol, *The Long Lingering Shadow*, 111-115, and Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, chapter 9 in general for these developments.

Historians find in these events two breaking points with the racial politics of the first generation after independence. The debates about the first constitution of the state of Missouri would spark a controversy regarding the place of African Americans in the nation. From this point forward, several states would disenfranchise free blacks until the end of the civil war. In 1822 Rhode Island was the first state in taking from black Americans the right to vote. During the 1830s Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Tennessee and others would follow the same path. Black suffrage would survive the antebellum period just in New York and other northern states.[19]

Almost at the same time that the northern states of the first independent country of the Americas were passing gradual emancipation laws and granting Afro-descendants citizenship rights, what is perhaps the quintessential example in which Afro-descendants fought for freedom and equality during the age of Atlantic revolutions was taking shape. What we now understand as the Haitian revolution was a set of struggles that confronted the main groups inhabiting the French colony of Saint Domingue, each of whom originally pursued their own goals. Saint Domingue's society was roughly comprised of four distinguishable groups. First, there were wealthy French planters, some of whom did not even live on the colony. Then, there were the so-called *petit-blancs* or French small-property holders who sometimes worked for planters. Third, there were the free people of African descent, mainly of mixed ancestry, small-property holders, and some of them slave-owners

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[19] Cottrol, *The Long Lingering Shadow*, 115-127; and Nash, *The Forgotten Fifth*, 124-132 and 152-161; for Afro-descendants' struggle for freedom and equality in the US during this period see also Harris, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, chapter 2; and Helg, *Slave No More*, chapter 5.

themselves. Finally, there was the enslaved population, who for the most part was African-born and comprised the majority of the colony's population. [20]

The Haitian revolution is more easily understood if divided in four stages. A first phase can be identified from the start of the slave insurrection in 1791 to the emancipation proclamation of 1793. Despite that the most known story is that of the slave rebellion sweeping the island in 1791, conflicts on the colony actually started after the French revolution, with planters' demands for autonomy and more control of the colony's politics amidst a new political context in the metropole. Planters' claims were soon followed by free Afro-descendants' call for equality before the law and the elimination of social labels that they considered offensive. The planter class and, particularly, petit-blancs opposed free Afro-descendants aspirations of equality. It was in the middle of this context that, taking advantage of the division between the French and free people of African descent, the well-known slave insurrection began. The rebellion swept through the northern province of the colony, while free Afro-descendants raised up in the western province, although each pursuing their own goals, since free people of African descent initially did not desire the abolition of slavery. It is important to note that during this first phase no one, except for the enslaved insurgents, wanted to abolish slavery. It is also worthwhile noting that at this time slaves mobilized themselves or were mobilized to defend the causes of all the French, the free Afro-descendants, and the slave insurrection in the north. It can be argued that this phase ended after the proclamation of equality before the law and the prohibition of social labels in 1792 and with the emancipation of slaves in August 1793.

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[20] Arguably some of the best syntheses of the Haitian revolution are Popkin, *A Concise History*; Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*; and Helg, *Slave No More*, chapters 6 and 7. What follows is heavily based on these sources.

A second stage of the revolution can be distinguished between 1793 and 1798. During this phase, the war became an international conflict when the British, allied with the planter class, and the Spanish, aligned with a section of the free Afro-descendants, intervened in the colony. It was during this period that crucial figures such as Toussaint Louverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines rose to prominence. After realizing that neither the British nor the Spanish were going to protect the recently acquired rights of people of African descent, it was that this group allied with the French republic. It was the alliance between figures such as Louverture, and other Afro-descendants, with the recently created French republic that secured the abolition of slavery and the equality for all. After 1798, once the British and the Spanish were defeated, Toussaint Louverture took control of the colony's government, beginning a third stage of this historical process. Louverture had to confront many of the same problems that other post-emancipation societies experienced long after Saint Domingue. Namely, he dealt with the dilemma of how to keep the colony productive and appeased without going back to the social situation experienced under slavery.

Louverture's experiment did not last for too long, however. When Napoleon Bonaparte took power in France, Louverture and other on the island feared that he would repeal the emancipation decree of 1793, as well as equality before the law. Although Napoleon did not pay much attention to the colonies at first, he eventually did, materializing Afro-descendants fears and sending an army to take back the control over the island. This last stage is Haiti's war for independence properly speaking and lasted from 1801 to 1804. If abolition and equality were achieved with the alliance between people of African descent and the French republic, they were ultimately maintained with the defeat of the French government in the latter date. It was also during this phase that, for the first time in this convoluted process, Afro-descendants united in a single front against the French. Finally,

after some initial defeats and the capturing and death of Toussaint Louverture, the insurgents now led by Jean-Jacques Dessalines defeated the French and declared Haitian independence in 1804.

For the first time in history a conflict that began as two separate movements, one fighting for freedom and the other seeking for equality, turned out victorious resulting in the creation of the first independent country of the Americas founded by people of African descent. The country's first constitution abolished slavery and maintained equality before the law, but instead of banning all racial designations it turned by decree all inhabitants of the country into blacks. Both the independence of the United States and the Haitian revolution exerted a notable influence in the Latin American wars for independence. The latter is particularly interpreted by historians as a direct influence for independence movements in some South American countries.[21]

Under this influence, and by the time that state governments in the United States were discussing to deprive Afro-descendants from the rights that the first state constitutions granted them, that is during the 1810s and 1820s, Latin American countries were moving toward the opposite direction, beginning their own independence movements. Afro-descendants would also be important actors in these conflicts and issues of freedom, equality, and citizenship were also at the center of their struggles. The fact that the recently independent Latin American countries granted citizenship rights to Afro-descendants almost at the same time that US states deprived them from such rights created the impression that

[21] For the general history of this process, the dissemination of news about it, and its repercussions across the Atlantic World, see among others: Geggus ed. *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution*; Landers, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions*; Nessler, *An Islandwide of Struggle*; Scott, *The Common Wind*; García, "African Slavery; Von Grafenstein, "La Revolución e independencia de Haití"; Gómez, "La revolución de Caracas"; Lasso, *Myths of Harmony*; and more recently De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Fee, Becoming Black*, 79-83.

African Americans were disenfranchised since the very beginning. This contributed to the creation of a narrative that contrasted the harsher racial regime of the US against the allegedly more open Latin American societies as we will see with more detail in the next chapter. Brazilians already pointed to this diverging path in 1823, when they were in the process of writing their own constitution. In that document racial designations were conspicuously absent, and citizenship was restricted more in terms of native-ness than on racial distinctions. As Márcia Regina Berberl and Rafael de Bivar Marquese have argued, this decision derived from Brazilian politicians' reading of the Haitian and other revolutionary experiences of the period. "Given the dynamics of manumission, the economic, social, political and cultural roles played by freed slaves and Afro-descendants and the demands expressed in the process of independence [politicians] knew that, in Portuguese America it was impossible to produce criteria of political exclusion on the basis of African blood heritage alone, because of the risk of breaking up the whole institution of slavery."[22]

Former Spanish colonies that maintained slavery after independence would face a similar situation. In the case of what is now Colombia Afro-descendants participated on both sides of the conflict, as insurgents and as royalists. In Cartagena, in particular, in the middle of the Hispanic monarchical crisis, an alliance coalesced between the most radical wing of Spanish creole elites and free negros and mulatos who were, for the most part, artisans. These groups created their own governing *junta*, declared independence from Spain and proclaimed the equality of all men in 1811. Divisions among the elites of the Andean and Caribbean regions weakened the movements for independence and Spanish authorities regained control

[22] Berbel and Marquese "The Absence of Race"; on Brazilian citizenship see also Carvalho, *Cidadanía no Brasil*, chapter 1; on the participation of Afro-descendants in the Brazilian process of independence see Velasco, "La participación de los Afrobrasileños."

of Cartagena and its region, among other parts of the colony, in 1816. Cartagena would remain under Spanish rule until 1820, but the ample participation of Afro-descendants in the wars for independence made the question of equality and the prohibition of calidad designations a central issue for the new independent country.[23] Indeed, after independence classifying people with colonial designations became a symbol of oppression from the past that had to go away. A similar situation would be experienced in Mexico, where nineteenth-century politicians constantly attacked the hierarchical society implanted under Spanish rule.

In the case of Venezuela, free people of African descent were politically active since the late eighteenth century organizing several movements that fought the discrimination to which they were subjects. Old colonial grievances and resentment, as well as differences of status among Afro-descendants of the region divided their loyalties among royalists and independentist when the conflict arose. Initially, pardo militias favored the royalist cause, because they did not think that Spanish creole elites seeking for independence would represent their interests. When events unfolded and Spanish authorities began to show their distrust toward pardos and independentist changed their leadership, Afro-descendants began to support the independentist cause. In the end, it was the alliance between the radical wing of the creole elite, known as the Sociedad patriótica, and Afro-descendants that protected the creation of governing juntas in Caracas, maintained alive the movement in the Caribbean region, and secured the proclamation of equality before the law once independence was achieved.[24]

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[23] The centrality of equality before the law for the Colombian independence process is explained with more detail in Lasso, *Myths of Harmony*, chapters 3 and 4; "los grupos afro-descendientes"; Helg, *Liberty and Equality*; and Andrews, *Afro-Latin America*, chapter 3.
[24] For this process see Andrews, *Afro-Latin America*, 88-89; Lasso, "los grupos afro-descendientes," 360-364; and Gómez, "La revolución de Caracas."

This necessarily brief synthesis of Afro-descendants' political participation during the age of Atlantic revolutions demonstrates that without the participation of this actors in the conflicts that gave rise to Latin American nations it would have been difficult to establish freedom and equality as foundational values in these countries. It is also worth restating that regardless of the side they took, Afro-descendants everywhere around the Atlantic world sought to vindicate these values and that their allegiances responded to the elites' willingness to make a political compromise. This was true in Venezuela, Colombia, and as we will see in the next section, in Mexico. Although the disappearance of Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara was rooted in local and viceregal events, Afro-descendants' struggles for freedom and equality in the Atlantic world serve as the background from which to interpret this historical process.

The Disappearance of Afro-Mexicans and Political Turmoil in New Spain

What led Afro-descendants from Guadalajara to stop identifying themselves as negros, mulatos, moriscos, and lobos at the end of the colonial period? As mentioned previously, the disappearance of Afro-Mexicans is a highly complex and sensitive subject. Readers must understand that fostering and celebrating diversity are very recent phenomena. In contrast, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there were very few incentives (one of them being to keep their social networks, as we have seen) for Afro-Mexicans to accept calidad labels such as mulato or lobo, and very strong reasons to try to avoid these classifications.

By the eighteenth century, Afro-descendants were the only Spanish subjects who could be legally enslaved. Free Afro-Mexicans, for their part, had to pay the highest tribute rate of all groups in society without enjoying any of the legal privileges the other groups had. Afro-descendants had restricted access to particular crafts, could not hold offices or be ordained

as priests and nuns. On the contrary, españoles did not pay tribute, they had legal access to any craft they chose, they could become priests or nuns, as well as to hold offices and participate in local government. Indios enjoyed an especial legal status that the Spanish crown granted to them very early during the colonial period. They had the right to communal lands and access to resources such as wood, sources of water, and grazing lands. Indios also had the right to autonomous local government and were outside of the jurisdiction of the Inquisition. They also had some institutions and laws of their own. Ultimately, although mestizos were also subject to some of the same restrictions as Afro-Mexicans, they could not be legally enslaved, they did not pay tribute, and their close association with españoles sometimes attenuated the constraints to which they were subject.[25] Under this light and considering the political transformations of the late colonial period that opened new opportunities to non-elites, it is understandable why someone would not want to be classified as a mulato. This however, as we have seen in the previous chapter, should not lead to automatically think that other groups were not affected by similar calidad changes; they did, although not to the same degree as Afro-Mexicans.

How was, then, Afro-Mexicans' process of disappearance related to the political context of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries? If we look again to figure 5.1 in the previous chapter, we can find a clear correlation between specific events and with the decrease in the number of baptisms of Afro-Mexicans in certain years. Table 6.1 summarizes the percentage of variation for each year in the graph in comparison to their immediate previous year. Several dates stand out across the period. Beginning in the 1790s, we can

[25] For the legal restrictions and prerogatives of españoles, indios, and negros in colonial Mexico see among many others Rodríguez Dougnac, *Manual de historia*; Israel, *Razas, clases sociales*; Schwaller, *Géneros de gente*, chapter 2; O'Toole, *Bound Lives*; De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Free, Becoming Black*; for the tribute rate that indios and Afro-Mexicans paid see Gharala, *Taxing Blackness*.

observe a marked decrease between 1793 and 1795, followed by an increment in 1796, and a period of relative stability between 1797 and 1805, although Afro-Mexican baptisms never reached again the level of 1793.

During the 1780s and 1790s Spanish authorities implemented a series of policies targeting Afro-Mexicans directly. A recent study has discovered that the number of Afro-Mexican tributaries increased by 109% between 1794-1805 across the viceroyalty. In the Guadalajara region the increment was even higher reaching over 600% during the same period.[26] Furthermore, during the same decades enforced measures reducing the number of Afro-Mexican militias and restricting or revoking the privileges that Afro-descendant militiamen enjoyed; one of these being tribute exemption.[27] Increasingly aggressive taxation practices and the attack over one of the corporations that fostered Afro-Mexican-related identities, thus, might have led some Afro-Mexicans to try to deny their calidad in the sacramental records during that time.

Table 6.1. Percentage of variation in the baptisms of Afro-Mexicans, 1793-1822

Year	%	Year	%	Year	%
1794	-12.63	1804	+4.16	1814	-75
1795	-33.13	1805	0	1815	+375%
1796	+40.54	1806	-22.4	1816	+31.5
1797	-26.28	1807	-5.15	1817	-54
1798	+1.73	1808	-14.1	1818	+34.78
1799	+2.56	1809	-11.3	1819	+12.9
1800	+10	1810	-10	1820	-37.14
1801	-6.06	1811	-42.85	1821	-86.36
1802	+2.41	1812	+8.33	1822	-66.6
1803	-5.51	1813	-17.94		

Note: In comparison to their immediate previous year.
Sources: Created based on figure 5.1.

[26] Gharala, *Taxing Blackness*, 140.
[27] For the attack on Afro-Mexican militias in Guadalajara see Pérez González, *Fuero y milicias*, particularly chapter five; for New Spain Vinson III, *Bearing Arms*, 161-164, and 213-215; for an overview of the history of pardo militias in Guadalajara see Rojas Galván, "Milicias de pardos"; for Yucatán, Bock, "Entre 'españoles' y 'ciudadanos.'"

As we have seen, the 1790s also witnessed one of the most disruptive events in the history of the Atlantic world, the Haitian revolution. Although there is no evidence to support the assertion that the disappearance of Afro-Mexicans was related to the Saint Domingue revolt, several pieces of circumstantial evidence might justify to at least pose the question of whether these Atlantic processes might have influenced Afro-descendants from Guadalajara. Firstly, the more tangible piece of evidence from Guadalajara is the case of priest Juan Antonio Montenegro, who was trialed before the inquisition for discussing publicly the ideas of the French revolution and for owning books authored by French thinkers.[28] This shows that ideas of equality, although not precisely from Haiti, did reach Guadalajara. Secondly, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the seeming decline of Afro-descendant populations was an empire-wide phenomenon, it was not just observed in Guadalajara, but in other Mexican cities, as well as in what are today Argentina, Colombia, and other Central and South-American countries. Secondly, we know for a fact that both imperial authorities and Afro-descendant communities across the Atlantic World heard news about the Haitian rebellion and presented a variety of reactions to it. Ultimately, among these reactions, in 1794 in the course of the Haitian Revolution, colonial authorities from Caracas, Havana, Louisiana, and Mexico asked the Royal Council of the Indies to reconsider the royal decree of 1789 about the treatment and instruction of slaves.[29] Be that as it may, the evidence from sacramental records of Guadalajara suggests that some Afro-descendants tried to "lie low," and kept silent about their ancestry in the midst of this political context.[30]

[28] Castañeda, "La influencia de la Ilustración."
[29] "Consulta del Concejo de las Indias sobre el reglamento expedido en 31 de mayo de 1789 para la mejor educación, buen trato y ocupación de los negros esclavos de América," in Konetzke, *Colección de documentos*, vol. 3 T. II, 726-732.
[30] In this I agree with Ben Vinson who makes a similar argument, see *Bearing Arms*, 216.

A few examples could clarify this point further. On 17 February 1796 in the Sagrario parish José Jacinto Pacheco and María Josefa del Muro baptized their son José Ignacio Desiderio without any indication of calidad. Ten years later, on 3 September 1806, the same couple baptized in the same parish a boy named José Ramón Gil de los Remedios with the calidad of morisco.[31] Similarly, on 30 November 1794, Pedro José Villegas and Juana María Jiménez baptized José María Catarino, without designating him any calidad. Five years later, on 3 January 1799, Pedro and Juana baptized José Tomás Antonio in the same parish, but this time as a mulato libre (see figures 6.1 a and b).[32] These cases suggest that Afro-Mexicans failed to provide their calidad to priests during the early 1790s, but revealed their ascriptions in the second half of the decade.

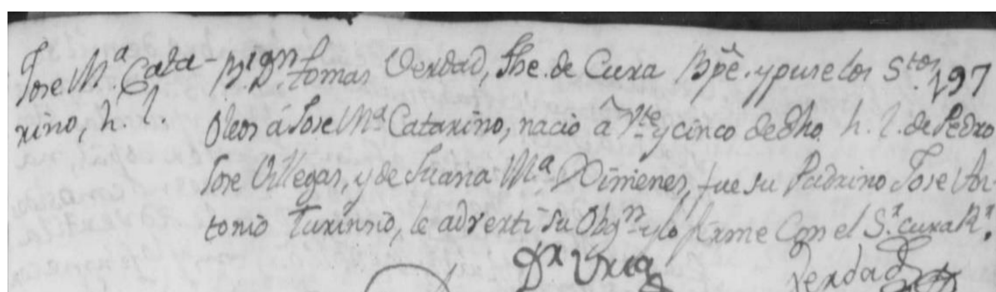

Figure 6.1a. Baptism of José María Catarino Villegas, notice the absence of calidad.

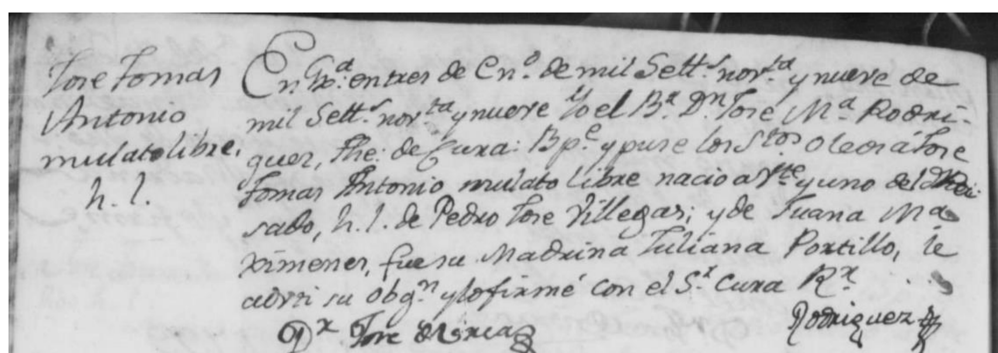

Figure 6.1b Baptism of José Tomás Antonio Villegas

[31] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1793-1799, image 270; Bautismos 1806-1810, image 77.
[32] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1793-1799, images 170 and 548.

Moving forward in time, figure 5.1 shows a steady decrease of Afro-Mexican baptisms from 1805 to 1814, when these reached their lowest number up to that point. Beginning in 1804 in the Sagrario parish (the church where more than half of the baptisms were recorded during the period) priests implemented a series of changes in their record keeping practices. Perhaps these explain the noticeable decrease in Afro-descendants' baptisms between 1805 and 1807. First, they began to record the baptized children's grandparents more consistently, something that up to that point they had not done. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, during this period some of the priests did not record the children's calidad, limiting themselves to write the parents' calidad instead. In other cases, it is notorious how some children bore the calidad of the father regardless of the mother's or vice versa. For example, on 22 July 1807, Benito Berrueco mulato libre and María Gabriela Guardado española baptized their son José Alexo who was classified as mulato. In 1821 José Alexo, his parents, and brothers lived in the fourth district of the city, all of them held the title of don, but did not have a calidad designation.[33] On 20 May 1807, Esteban Becerra español and Agustina Méndez mulata baptized their son José María Bernardino, following his father's calidad, José Bernardino was also classified as español. Interestingly, in 1821 the Becerra-Méndez family was listed in the fourteenth ward of the city and all of them were mestizos. In 1822 they lived in the same place but had no calidad designation.[34] On some occasions children were assigned their mother's calidad. In chapter four we mentioned the case of Blas Cabrera and Máxima Lozano, whose daughter María Saturnina was assigned the

[33] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1806-1810, image 235; GCP Database "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822," 5820-5823.
[34] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1806-1810, image 206; GCP Database "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822," 34528-34533 and 35500-35503.

calidad of española following her mother's. There is also the example of José Antonio Felipe. He was the son of José María Flores español and María Gertrudis Salcedo morisca. José Antonio Felipe was labeled as morisco in his baptismal record of 25 August 1806.[35] Whether calidad was self-reported or assigned by priest is a contentious matter and other chapters have presented some reasons to argue that it was the former. More importantly, these cases once again show the constructed and contextual character of calidad categories.

The steady decrease in baptisms of Afro-Mexicans between 1808 and 1814 can be more persuasively related to political events at Atlantic and local levels. The Napoleonic invasion of Spain in 1808 sparked profound political changes in the Hispanic world that eventually led to the creation of its first liberal constitution, to the disintegration of the Spanish empire, and to the establishment of new independent countries.[36] After the abdications of Carlos IV and his son Fernando VII in 1808, the Spanish people on both hemispheres decided to create autonomous *juntas* that defended the sovereignty of the Spanish empire and administered the government of the different territories in the absence of the king, but recognizing Fernando VII as the legitimate ruler of Spain.

In the case of Guadalajara, the authorities of the city received the first news about the abdications in August 1808. On the last day of that month, all the major institutions hosted in the provincial capital decided to temporarily recognize the governing junta of Seville. Then, during the first days of October they swore allegiance to the king and distributed

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[35] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1806-1810, image 73.

[36] The historiography on the subject is vast, some studies that have analyzed the political changes of this period are Guerra, *Modernidad e independencias*; Eastman and Sobrevilla Perea eds. *The Rise of Constitutional Government*; Breña ed. *Cádiz a debate*; Guardino, *The Time of Liberty* and *Peasants, Politics,* 42-45; Ortiz Escamilla and Serrano Ortega eds. *Ayuntamientos y liberalismo gaditano en México*; and Olveda coord. *Independencia y revolución*.

pamphlets exhorting the population to oppose Napoleon and to support the monarchy.[37] Contrary to what happened in Mexico City, elites from Guadalajara remained, for the most part, united. There were surely some divisions, but matrimonial alliances between European españoles and American-born españoles prevented a fracture of the governing classes of Guadalajara. On 22 January 1809, the Junta Central Suprema of Spain called all the provinces of the empire to choose their delegates to attend its meetings. In April of that year the authorities of the city recognized the Junta Central and chose a representative for the province, who would participate later in another election that included the whole viceroyalty.[38] Before it dissolved itself, at the beginning of 1810, the Junta Central called the provinces of the empire to elect their representatives who would participate in the cortes that would write the first constitution for the empire. In contrast with the previous election, this time each province had the right to choose a representative. Doctor José Simeón de Uría would be Guadalajara's representative. He would travel to Cádiz to discuss the articles for the new constitution and to keep authorities from Guadalajara informed about the political debates in Europe. In Cádiz, Uría would distinguish himself for advocating for the equality of all, including Afro-descendants. It was in this moment when the transition from subjecthood to citizenship began to take shape in the Spanish dominions; thus, altering traditional notions of social differentiation.[39]

At the same time that Uría was participating in the constitutional debates in Cádiz, the Mexican war for independence broke out. The elimination of calidad distinctions, and the

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[37] Rodríguez, "Rey, religión, independencia y unión," 12-13.

[38] Rodríguez, "Rey, religión, independencia y unión," 16-18; Pérez Castellanos, "Ayuntamientos gaditanos," 274-276; and "La constitución de Cádiz," 45; for events in Mexico City see for example Brading, *The First America*, chapter 25.

[39] For the role of Uría in Cádiz see Rodríguez, "Rey, religión, independencia y unión," 18-20.

enactment of equality before the law would be in the political program of insurgents such as Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos since the beginning of the movement. On 11 November 1810, the insurgent forces of José Antonio Torres, one of the leaders of the rebellion in the Guadalajara province, took the city and invited Miguel Hidalgo to organize his movement there. Once in Guadalajara, Hidalgo published two decrees on 29 November and 6 December, in which he abolished indigenous and casta tributes, as well as slavery; further altering two of the social practices that served the purpose of marking specific population groups. Hidalgo left Guadalajara in January 1811, and Spanish authorities reclaimed the city almost immediately.[40] Three years later, the new leader of the rebellion, priest José María Morelos, declared the formal abolition of calidad ascriptions and the equality of all persons before the law. The limited sphere of influence of the independence movements, and the early defeat of Hidalgo's insurgency in 1811 and of Morelos's in 1815, however, prevented the realization of these ideals. Regardless of the actual enforcement of these policies, they left a permanent imprint in society.[41]

It is not a coincidence that Afro-Mexican baptisms decreased in the city by almost 43% (see table 6.1) in 1811 in comparison with 1810. As Peter Guardino has convincingly argued in his study about state formation in the region that is now Guerrero: "Mulattos were the only group in New Spain that gained absolutely nothing from the caste system: they did

[40] For Hidalgo's stay in Guadalajara see Olveda, "La presencia de los insurgentes"; Núñez Guzmán, *Cuando el padre de la patria estuvo en Jalisco*; and Rodríguez, "Rey, religión, independencia y unión," 26. As we have seen, slavery was already declining in the city by the time Hidalgo published his decree. The institution, however, survived during the first years of the independent period. In contrast, the year 1810 did mark the end of tribute collection, both because of the turmoil created by the insurgency prevented its collection, and as a state measure, to ensure the loyalty of subjects in the face of the rebellion. See Gharala, *Taxing Blackness,* 201-202.

[41] For these developments, see Vinson III, *Before Mestizaje*, 182-183; and Díaz Casas, "¿De esclavos a ciudadanos?," 283-290. It should be noted, however, that the use of calidad distinctions survived until the 1840s in many Mexican towns and cities.

not receive the guaranteed access to resources and legal protection enjoyed by Indians, yet they were expected to pay tribute as well as the alcabala… mulattos were thus more likely to favor the abolition of the caste system and applaud the related idea that all men should enjoy equal rights and obligations."[42]

While this was happening in Mexico, in Spain the royal cortes debated who, from then on, would be considered a citizen. Mexican and Central American representatives pushed the recognition of Afro-descendants as citizens in the cortes, but without much success. The result of these political debates is well known: all the descendants of Spanish and Native peoples would have the right to citizenship; Afro-descendants, for their part, would have to earn that right with their services to the Crown.[43]

In the case of Guadalajara, things took an interesting turn from this point forward. The Cadiz constitution was enacted in Spain on 19 March 1812. It took more than a year for the same to happen in Guadalajara. In May 1813, authorities of the city sworn allegiance to the constitution and during the ensuing days the chart was read in the four main parishes of the city, Sagrario, Santuario de Guadalupe, Analco, and Mexicaltzingo.[44] Beginning that year and through 1814, before Fernando VII abolished the constitution, local authorities crafted and enforced a series of policies in order to create an active and educated citizenry. For example, it is known that in Guadalajara circulated "political catechisms," that instructed people about the constitution and about what it meant to be a citizen. Moreover, during most of the constitutional process the local newspaper *El Mentor de Nueva Galicia* spread the

[42] Guardino, *Peasants, Politics*, 65-66.
[43] The scholarship on the subject has profusely treated these debates, see for example Herzog, *Defining Nations*, chapter 7; the different contributions in Eastman ed., *The Rise of Constitutional Government*; and Breña ed. *Cádiz a debate*; as well as Díaz Casas, "¿De esclavos a ciudadanos?," 285-288.
[44] Rodríguez, "Rey, religión, independencia y unión," 29; Pérez Castellanos, "La constitución de Cádiz," 47.

news about the political debates in Europe and published the constitution.[45] It is, thus, very likely that Afro-Mexicans were sensitive to these developments. After all, according to the censuses of 1821-22, at least 40 Afro-descendants were students.

The new constitution divided the viceroyalty into *diputaciones provinciales*, *partidos*, and parishes. The diputación of Guadalajara had the right to elect nine representatives as well as three substitutes. The newly declared citizens would choose these in a three-stage election. Parishioners participated in local elections to choose electors. These parish electors then would meet at the *cabecera de partido* (roughly the seat of district) to choose *electores de partido* (district electors), who would finally meet at the provincial capital and choose the nine representatives of the whole province. For these elections, authorities created new population counts. They determined the provincial population to be 477,317 inhabitants, of whom 19,981 did not have the right to vote.

It is difficult to assess the participation of Afro-Mexicans in this process both at the provincial and local levels. However, there is some evidence to suggest that they might have done so. The general census of population of 1793, for example, counted 65,045 mulatos and 45,953 "otras castas" in the whole province.[46] Considering just the number of people who were disenfranchised during the two years when the constitution of Cádiz was enacted, it is evident that many of the Afro-descendants who changed their calidad in the previous decades were at least able to participate in the 1813-14 elections, whether they did it or not is perhaps impossible to know. Jaime Rodríguez tells us that the electoral process in Guadalajara "was a success" and that the majority of the city's inhabitants "chose the new political system,

[45] Pérez Castellanos, "La constitución de Cádiz," 51-54; for the press of the period Del Palacio, *La disputa*, 90-110.
[46] For a summary of this census see Serrera, *Guadalajara ganadera*, 21. The complete census is published in Menéndez, *Descripción y censo general*.

rather than violence, as a way to get more autonomy."[47] This assessment is consistent with what have been arguing throughout this chapter. Rather than taking arms during the age of Atlantic revolutions, Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara eroded the colonial system by manipulating the concept of calidad, the very foundation of colonial society, to their advantage.

What it is clear, is that the whole Cádiz experiment widely disrupted social differentiation practices in the city. Following a literal interpretation of article five of the constitution, officers recorded just two categories in the censuses of 1813-14, those of español and *Ciudadano Español*. During this time, individuals of African descent who had not categorized themselves as españoles began to do so. Sacramental records of these two years, for their part, still included the traditional classifications of español, indio, mestizo, coyote, and so on. Moreover, during this period new classifications appeared in the baptismal records. For example, in the Mexicaltzingo parish, a small number of children were labeled as "*Español africano*" or "*Español de origen africano*" only during this year (see figures 5.3a and 5.3b). Further, in 1814, baptisms of Afro-Mexicans reached their lowest point to that date in the history of the city; the same happened with marriage records involving Afro-Mexicans. Something similar would occur in 1821, when the Cádiz constitution was enacted again in Guadalajara. In September 1814, authorities of Guadalajara received news that Fernando VII had returned to power. It was until December of that year that they heard that the king had abolished the constitution. After that, authorities almost immediately dissolved all the institutions emanated from the Cádiz experiment and restated their allegiance to the king.[48]

[47] Rodríguez, "Rey, religión, independencia y unión," 47.
[48] Rodríguez, "Rey, religión, independencia y unión," 51.

Figures 6.2a and 6.2b *Españoles Africanos* in Mexicaltzingo

Figure 6.2a: baptism of Antonio Hipólito Casiano, Español de origen Africano

Figure 6.2b: baptism of Juana María, Española Africana

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos de hijos legítimos, 1812-1822, images 136 and 137.

It is interesting to note that baptisms of Afro-Mexicans showed a small peak after the abolition of the Cádiz constitution in 1814 and before its reenactment in 1820. The reasons for this are unknown, and we have previously discussed some possible answers. What it is

evident, is that the second constitutional period and the final stage of the independent process resulted in the ultimate disappearance of Afro-Mexicans. In June 1820, local authorities swore the constitution of Cádiz again, and performed public ceremonies similar to those of 1813 in the ensuing days. During the fall of that year people participated in a new set of elections. Finally, as a result of a political compromise between insurgents led by Vicente Guerrero and royalists forces under the command of Agustín the Iturbide, Mexican independence was consummated. Before that, the province of Guadalajara adhered itself to the plan of Iguala, that declared the equality of all before the law, and proclaimed its independence even before the country itself, on 23 June 1821.[49] Again, it is not a coincidence that the disappearance of Afro-Mexican calidades happened during those dates. As we have seen the parish of Jesús stopped recording calidad in the fall of 1820, which overlaps with the second electoral process. Significatively, the parish of Santuario de Guadalupe ceased recording calidad in June 1821, after the province declared its independence. However, it is important to stress that the fact that Afro-Mexicans did not disappear entirely from the sacramental records during this period, and that all other categories remained in use even after Afro-descendants' had disappeared, suggests that this process of change was not an imposition coming from imperial authorities. What this process of discontinuation of calidad categories indicates, is that Afro-Mexicans were clearly sensitive to the political context in which they lived.[50]

The enactment of the Cadiz constitution in Guadalajara, was, thus, the culmination of a process of identity change that had begun in the 1770s; a process by which thousands of

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[49] Rodríguez, "Rey, religión, independencia y unión," 57-69; in seeing Mexican independence as the result of a political compromise I agree with Guardino, *Peasants, Politics*, 74-78.

[50] For studies that show how ordinary people were sensitive to their political contexts, see Guardino, *Peasants,* Politics; and *The Time of Liberty*; for the case of Colombia, for example, Echeverri, *Indian and Slave Royalists*.

Afro-Mexicans began to identify themselves as españoles, indios, mestizos, or simply abandoned the colonial categories of calidad. There are several pieces of evidence that indicate that this process of change, in the end, was politically-motivated. Baptismal, marriage and census records show how Afro-Mexicans recategorized themselves as españoles during the first constitutional period of 1813-14, and then, at least some of them, took this opportunity to claim citizenship once Mexican independence was achieved.

Unfortunately, the lists for just three city districts have survived for the censuses of 1813-14. These are wards ten and nineteen for 1813 and district eight for 1814. A quick look to the summaries of these population counts suggests that very few Afro-descendants were able to claim citizenship during this period. In the tenth ward 83.6% of people were recorded as españoles and just 16.4% as ciudadanos españoles. In the nineteenth district citizenship was even more restricted, for almost 89% of individuals were classified as españoles and only about 11% were ciudadanos españoles.[51]

Despite the difficulty to claim citizenship during this time, Afro-Mexicans recategorized as españoles during this period seem to have hold on to this classification for the ensuing years, and from there, they claimed citizen status or moved to other calidades like indio. Take for instance Leandro Valderrama and his family. On 25 April 1804, Leandro and his wife María Gertudis Robles baptized their son José María Marcos in the Sagrario parish. In that occasion, Leandro claimed the calidad of mestizo and María Gertrudis that of morisca; their son had no calidad ascription. In 1813, they lived in the nineteenth ward. Following his previous calidad of mestizo, Leandro was granted the status of citizen. His wife and children, however, were all recorded as españoles. In 1821, Leandro and two of his

[51] These censuses can be accessed through the GCP, vol. 2.

children lived in the twentieth district and all of them were indios. In 1822 José María Marcos and María Gertrudis, his mother, lived in the same ward, but had no calidad label.[52]

Several cases exemplify the close relation between the events we have analyzed and Afro-Mexicans' calidad changes. First, we have the Pastrana family. On 4 January 1794 José Pastrana and Juliana Bollán baptized in the Sagrario parish their mulato son José María Inocencio. Then, they would go on to baptize three more children in the same parish. On 12 October 1795 they baptized María Antonia Atilana, without calidad designation. A year later, on 17 October 1796 José and Juliana baptized their morisca daughter María Micaela Brígida. Finally, on 6 April 1805, they baptized María Isidora. In this last baptismal record José was español, Juliana mulata libre, and their daughter had no calidad label. In the census of 1821 José and Juliana were both españoles living in the fifth ward with their daughter Ramona Pastrana, also española, her husband the indio Antonio Cotero, and Ramona's and Antonio's children Isidora, Pablo, Faustino, Pedro, Octaviano and Leonida, all of them mestizos (see images 6.3a-e).[53]

Figures 6.3a-e The Pastrana Family in the Baptismal Records and the Census of 1821

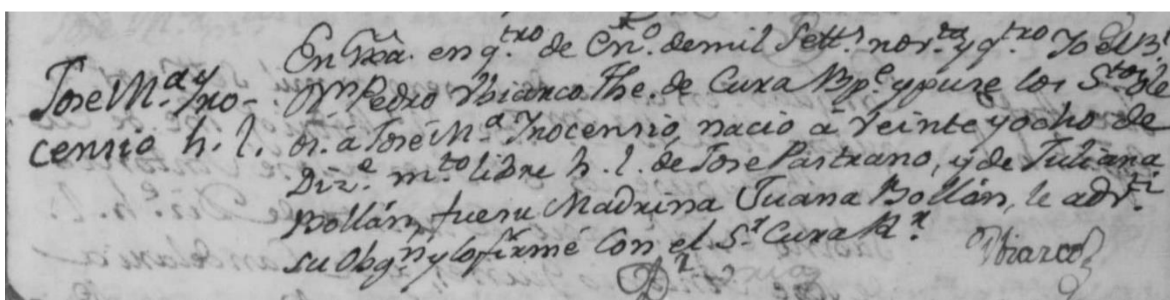

Figure 6.3a Baptism of José María Inocencio Pastrana mulato libre

[52] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Sagrario, Bautismos 1799-1806, image 526; GCP Database "Cuartel 19-1813," 9; and "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822,"48,578-48580, and 50,032-50,033.

[53] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Sagrario, Bautismos 1793-1799, images 75, 243, 345; Bautismos 1799-1806, image 652; and GCP Database "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822," 7,868-7,877.

Figure 6.3b Baptism of Antonia Atilana Pastrana without calidad

Figure 6.3c Baptism of María Micaela Brígida Pastrana without calidad

Figure 6.3d Baptism of María Isidora de Jesús Pastrana without calidad

Figure 6.3e The Cotero-Pastrana family in the census of 1821.

Another example is that of the Lomana, or Lomán, family. Beginning in 1796, José María, also known as José Roberto Lomana and María Margarita Solórzano, also recorded as María Margarita Ortiz, baptized five children in the Sagrario parish of Guadalajara. On 8 May 1796 they baptized José Atanacio de la Cruz, without calidad designation. Then, on 29 January 1799 they baptized María Soledad de la Paz, also without calidad label. It was until 1802 that it was revealed that the Lomana family was indeed of African descent. That year, José María and María Margarita baptized a morisca daughter named María Vicenta Quilimaca. Two years later, on 12 November 1804 they baptized María Herculana, but this time José María and María Margarita appeared as mulatos libres. Ultimately, on 30 August 1813, this couple baptized a child named José Mariano Ceferino Cesáreo. Interestingly, in this baptismal record José María and María Margarita were españoles and held the title of don. During the early nineteenth century another daughter of José María and María Margarita also baptized her own children. On 10 October 1803 María Ignacia Lomana and her husband José López baptized their morisco son José Marcos de la Merced. Two years later, on 15 April 1805 they baptized María Polonia de la Merced, but that time they were recorded as

mulatos libres. Finally, in the census of 1821 José María Lomana and Margarita Solórzano lived with their children María Soledad, Juana, Herculana, Agustina, Encarnación and Mariano, as well as with their grandchildren Apolonia, Guadalupe and Ramona López. All of them were españoles living in the fifteenth ward of the city.[54]

Both of these families exemplify the dynamics of calidad change discussed in this chapter. Both of them baptized children without calidad designation during the 1790s, then during the early nineteenth century when the Sagrario parish's record-keeping practices changed, it was revealed that these families were of African descent. In the case of José Pastrana and Juliana Bollán, as the preceding chapter extensively explained, in the census of 1821 Juliana was absorbed into her husband's calidad group. In the case of the Lomana family, they took advantage from the opportunities opened by the constitution of Cádiz and claimed Spanish-ness beginning in 1813 and kept that calidad in the census of 1821.

In addition to the case of the Reyes-Becerra family, that opened this chapter, another example of a family that claimed citizenship once Mexico became independent is the Carranza family. On 10 July 1796, in the Santuario de Guadalupe parish, María Josefa Carranza, mulata libre, married Bartolo Murillo, indio. María Josefa was the daughter of José Antonio Carranza who, on 14 December 1804, in the same parish, baptized along Juliana Arado a mulato son named José Nicolás. In 1813, both José Antonio and María Josefa were listed in the tenth ward as españoles, which means that, similarly to Leandro Valderrama's family, they were not able to claim citizenship during this time. Eight years later, in the census of 1821, José Antonio Carranza and Juliana Arado lived with their children in the

[54] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Sagrario, Bautismos 1793-1799, images 291 and 555; Bautismos, 1799-1806, images 296, 449, 610, and 656; Bautismos, 1810-1815, image 358; and GCP Database "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822," 36,489-36,496.

same district, but this time they were indios. Finally, six members of the Carranza family (Antonio Carranza, Juliana Arado, and either four of their children or grandchildren), still living in the tenth ward, were listed as citizens in 1822 (See images 6.4a-e).[55]

Figures 6.4a-6.4e The Carranza family in the sacramental records and in the censuses of 1813, 1821 and 1822

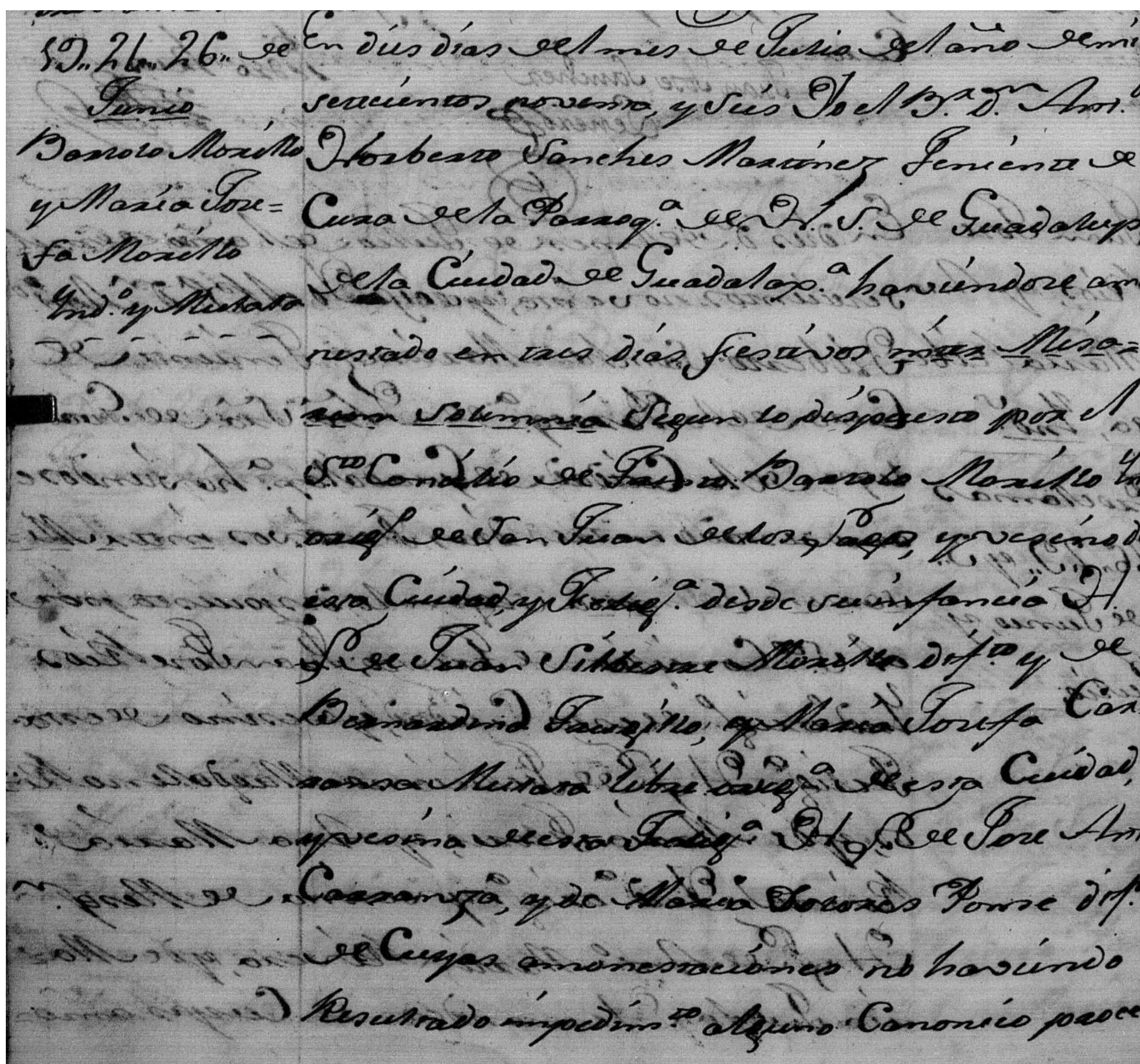

Figure 6.4a. Marriage of María Josefa Carranza

[55] Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Matrimonios 1789-1817, image 248; Bautismos 1800-1812, image 186, respectively; and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 23144-23148, and 26272-26277. For the censuses of 1813, 1821, and 1822 see the pdfs included in vol. 2 of the GCP, pages 15, 19, and 38, respectively.

Figure 6.4b. Baptism of José Nicolás Carranza

Figure 6.4c. The Carranza family in 1813

Figure 6.4d. The Carranza family in 1821

Figure .46e. The Carranza family in 1822

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Matrimonios 1789-1817, image 248; Bautismos 1800-1812, image 186, respectively; and GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 23144-23148, and 26272-26277. For the censuses of 1813, 1821, and 1822 see the pdfs included in vol. 2 of the GCP, pages 15, 19, and 38, respectively.

Even if most families did not follow a path as intricate as that of the Carranzas, what the trajectory of this family shows is that, in the midst of the political turmoil initiated by the Napoleonic invasion of Spain, Afro-Mexicans who in the previous decades had not engrossed the numbers of españoles, indios, or mestizos, did so in massive numbers after 1808. Once they claimed Spanish-ness, Indian-ness, or mestizo-ness, identities associated with citizenship after the Cadiz constitution, it seems that Afro-Mexican families did not let go of them. Others used these identities to assert their citizenship in 1822, when Mexico was already independent, but still ruled by the constitution of 1812. Most of them, nonetheless, simply abandoned the colonial terminology of difference.

This chapter has worked under the premises that Afro-descendants were able to self-ascribe their own calidad in official records and, as a result, relinquishing the calidad labels associated with African ancestry amidst a context of deep political transformations was a political statement on their part. Across the Atlantic world African-descended peoples fought during the age of revolutions for freedom, equality as well as for the elimination of "racial" labels that served the sole purpose of marginalize them and place them at the bottom of the social hierarchy. They did this through various means. By joining both insurgent and royalists armies and actively participating in armed conflicts, by creating and joining associations that promoted their social advancement, etc. Situating Afro-Mexicans' abandonment of calidad designations within this context, this chapter proposes to see this process as another model of Afro-Mexicans' political actions, and as part of the larger spectrum of Afro-descendants' political mobilization during the age of Atlantic revolutions.

Readers might argue that there is no real evidence to prove Afro-Mexicans' motivations, or that such impetuses even existed, to leave behind colonial calidad labels. To be sure, strictly

speaking there is no first-hand testimony of an Afro-Mexican saying something such as "I am not a mulato. I am a citizen." Neither there is, for that matter, a statement of a census taker or parish priest explaining their reasons to change all Afro-Mexicans' calidad. What thousands of sacramental and census records show, however, is that people who were considered as negros, mulatos, moriscos, and lobos in late-colonial Guadalajara, by the end of Spanish rule in Mexico, were no longer deemed as such. This chapter has interpreted this process as driven by Afro-Mexicans themselves. In the midst of a changing context and emerging possibilities, Afro-descendants deployed calidad labels to their advantage and eventually dismissed them. With this, inadvertently and unintentionally, they contributed to the elision of the African heritage from Mexican history. The alternative view is to perpetuate a distorting and unimpressive narrative of erasure and to condemn Afro-Mexicans forever as passive actors, who were neither interested, nor aware, of the political context in which they lived. Instead, this work has argued that Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara were neither silenced nor erased. They were protagonists of construction processes of Mexican citizenship and notions of equality.

Chapter 7

Slavery, Abolition, and Afro-Mexicans: Historical Memory in the Mexican Press, 1821-1860

In their interpretation of Mexican history classic nineteenth-century Mexican writers such as Lucas Alamán, José María Luis Mora, or Lorenzo de Zavala downplayed the presence of both slavery and Afro-descendants in Mexico. At the same time, these writers lauded the relatively early Mexican abolitionism.[1] For example, Zavala stated in his work that in the state of Yucatán "the black race can be barely found, where the number of slaves hardly reached two hundred, most of them located in the city of Campeche."[2] For his part, Mora asserted: "African blacks have always been very few in number in Mexico and during the last twenty years or so their arrival has completely ceased," therefore, Mora continued: "it can be assured that slavery has been practically unknown [in Mexico]; thus, it has not been difficult to abolish it, and today there is not a single slave in the Republic."[3]

These authors' influence in subsequent generations created the bases of a historical narrative in which the presence of slavery and Afro-descendants are downplayed or outrightly omitted from Mexican history. Mexicanists have been dismantling this narrative for several decades now, as it is evident from all the works cited across this book. The

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[1] Ballesteros Páez, "Los 'otros' mexicanos."

[2] "la raza negra apenas se ha conocido en aquel estado, en dónde no pasaba de doscientos el número de esclavos, cuya mayor parte estaba en Campeche," cited in Ballesteros, "Los 'otros' mexicanos," 157. See also López Chávez, "Haciendo visible lo invisible." Zavala's assertions are, of course, historically imprecise, the point of this chapter, however, is not to show these writers' historical inaccuracy, but to document their influence in creating a narrative that persists until today. For the history of slavery in the Yucatan peninsula see for example Campos García, "Esclavitud y servidumbre negra"; Bock, "Entre 'españoles' y 'ciudadanos'"; and Restall, *The Black Middle*.

[3] "Los negros del África siempre han sido en México muy pocos, y de veinte años a esta parte ha cesado del todo su introducción … puede asegurarse ha sido desconocida la esclavitud; así es que no ha costado trabajo el abolirla, y en el día no hay un solo esclavo en todo el territorio de la República," cited in Ballesteros, "Los 'otros' mexicanos," 158 and 172, respectively.

majority of their efforts, however, have concentrated on the colonial and modern periods, glossing over the history of Afro-Mexicans during the nineteenth century. The idea that Afro-Mexicans "disappeared from national history" a few years after independence, or that they were silenced, or even erased, from history during this period still persists in the scholarship.[4] The minimization of slavery and Afro-Mexicans' presence in history is undeniable. Beyond the writings of nineteenth-century Mexican politicians, however, a close reading of Mexican newspapers from this period reveals that slavery and the presence of Afro-descendants in the country remained very much a subject of public interest, at least until the 1860s.

The purpose of this chapter, then, is to document that these subjects remained being part of Mexican public life through the press. More than restoring these questions' visibility in Mexican history, the relevance of an analysis such as this rests on exposing the political uses and rhetorical power these themes had during that period. Slavery, abolition, and Afro-Mexicans' presence in the country were points of reference in the creation of national identities and historical narratives that still bear weight in modern Mexican society. Moreover, an analysis of these subjects reveals different connections between Mexico and the Atlantic world. The scrutiny of these themes in the Mexican press highlights the resonance that transatlantic slavery and abolition movements across the globe had in Mexico. Ultimately, this chapter situates Mexico within wider discussions about race, nation, and belonging happening across the world during the same period.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the consensus in the scholarship is that the process by which Afro-Mexicans became invisible to society was multifactorial. Some authors, however, stress that the role of Afro-descendants and their contributions to Mexican

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[4] Ballesteros, "Los 'otros' mexicanos," 153; and López, "Haciendo visible," 254, for whom Afro-Mexicans were relegated to the background of Mexican history after the abolition of slavery in 1829.

history and culture were erased from history because of racial prejudice.[5] Other scholars, without denying the very real discrimination Afro-descendants have suffered throughout history, contend that during the early years of independent life Afro-Mexicans themselves left behind the colonial categories that marginalized them. This, inadvertently and unintendedly, resulted in their own social invisibility.[6] This last argument, in addition, as the preceding chapter demonstrates, is consistent with demographic data from Guadalajara, and probably other Latin American cities. A limitation of these works, nonetheless, is that they stop their analysis before 1850. This decision leads them to reinforce the idea that slavery and Afro-Mexicans ceased being relevant after Mexican independence. Further, despite all of the progress this scholarship has made, few studies have paid attention to the press as a source to restore visibility to the history of Afro-Mexicans, or to link their histories to larger historical processes. That is, by not looking at the press, the scholarship fails to capture the public relevance that slavery, abolition, and Afro-Mexicans had during the first six decades of the nineteenth century.

In this sense, this chapter takes advantage of an underused source such as the press in order to advance our understanding of the cultural history and historical memory of slavery and Afro-Mexicans.[7] The press played a fundamental role in the development of political life and public opinion in nineteenth-century Mexico. Printers, editors, and book-sellers of the period served as cultural mediators. This intellectual elite contributed to the nation-building process in a variety of ways. For example, by preserving and reproducing Hispanic principles

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[5] For example Díaz Casas, "¿De esclavos a ciudadanos?"; and Ballesteros, "Los 'otros' mexicanos."
[6] For example, Peter Guardino, "La identidad nacional y los afromexicanos"; and Gaitors, "The Afro-Mexican Presence."
[7] On the historical memory of slavery in other contexts see for example the works by Araujo, *Public Memory of Slavery*; *Politics of Memory*; and *Reparations for Slavery*.

and values dating back to the colonial period. These precepts helped to create an inchoate national identity. They also spread new ideologies, political trends, and cultural movements.[8] Editors themselves were aware of their role within society. For example, in 1857 *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* published an article in which the South-American press reflected on its place in contemporary society: "the press understood its mission in its entirety… that is why it declared human rights in all manifestations of social life, the abolition of slavery, the destruction of old privileges, equality before the law."[9]

Newspapers, thus, were the sites where Mexican society discussed the most pressing national problems. Newspapers have been one of the most widely used sources to study this period of Mexican history. Discussions about slavery and abolition, however, have been relegated to a marginal place, especially in comparison to other themes, such as the creation of political groups or parties during the first half of the nineteenth century, political debates during *la Reforma*, or the diverse attempts to construct a national identity.[10] Considering slavery and Afro-descendants as something belonging to the colonial period, is the main reason why scholars have not paid attention to them in the Mexican press of the nineteenth century.

Using the press as a historical source entails several problems. Firstly, newspapers were the product of elites. In this sense, they reflect a specific point of view that does not

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[8] The scholarship on the subject is vast, some key readings are: Chávez Lomelí, *Lo público y lo privado*; Gantús and Salmerón eds. *Prensa y elecciones*; Del Palacio Montiel, *La disputa por las conciencias*; by the same author, *Rompecabezas de papel*; Suárez de la Torre, coord. *Constructores de un cambio cultural*; Suárez de la Torre and Castro, eds. *Empresa y cultura en tinta y papel*; and Wright-Ríos, *Searching for Madre Matiana*, 49-86.

[9] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 13 January 1857, 2.

[10] Costeloe, *La primera república federal*; Earle, *The Return of the Native*; Green, *The Mexican Republic.*; McGowan, *Prensa y poder*; Pérez Vejo, "La invención de una nación"; and Ruiz Castañeda, *La prensa periódica*. In other contexts scholars have paid more attention to the history of Afro-descendants during this period, see for example Geler, *Andares negros, caminos blancos*.

represent society as a whole. Secondly, because of this character, newspapers necessarily reflect their creators' political position, that is why we need to contrast several periodicals in order to gain a better understanding of the phenomena under scrutiny. Ultimately, Lara Putnam has recently warned scholars, and perhaps rightly so, about the potentially pernicious effects that accompany the use of digital repositories. Now more than ever researchers can write about and have access to an abundance of sources from places they have not even travel to. Moreover, Putnam contends, by focusing on specific word searches (like that used in this work), scholars miss the opportunity to discover unexpected things in the archives, and they run the risk of taking out of context what they find.[11] Putnam's concerns are legitimate, and indeed should be taken seriously. There are, however, several objections to her assertions. First, traveling to a country does not make one an expert in its history. One might travel to modern Mexico, but that does not qualify one in any sense in colonial Mexican history, for example. In order to be qualified in history it is necessary to have read a wide array of sources (digitized or otherwise), and authors who have studied themselves those sources, among many other things. Secondly, every historical work has to abide by a set of standards and academic criteria regardless of if it is based on digitized sources or more conventional ones. As long as one maintains rigorous criteria, whether one accesses sources in paper or using a screen is almost irrelevant.

For this chapter I ran systematic searches for specific keywords in all of the journals available at the Hemeroteca Nacional Digital de Mexico website for the period 1821-1860. Using the technological advantages of today, a search of the Spanish terms *esclavo*, *esclavos*, and *esclavitud* returned a total of 10,220 mentions of these words in over 100 periodical

[11] Putnam, "The Trans-national and the Text Searchable."

publications coming from 11 Mexican states. In addition to this general overview, I have systematically read all of the news related to slavery, race, and nation in a few selected publications at the beginning and at the end of the period under study. First *Águila Mexicana*, published between 1823 and 1828, as well as *El Sol*, published between 1823 and 1832, both of them in Mexico City. Then, the two most important publications of the first half of the nineteenth century in Mexico, *El Universal*, the most prominent conservative newspaper of the period, published from 1848 to 1855; as well as *El Siglo Diez Y Nueve*, the most important liberal journal published between 1841 and 1858, when its publication was suspended for a couple of years. The four selected papers were those who followed more closely discussions about slavery. The next section analyses the political uses and the rhetorical power of slavery in the Mexican press. A subsequent section places Mexico in the middle of wider discussion of slavery, abolition, race and belonging across the Atlantic world.

Political Uses and Rhetorical Power of Slavery and Blackness in the Mexican Press

On 16 September 1857, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* published an article commemorating one more anniversary of Mexican independence. In this piece, Francisco Zarco, the author, praised the character and individual actions of the insurgents, as well as their legacy to the nation and the world. Writing about priest Miguel Hidalgo, Zarco stated: "the glory of HIDALGO consists to the eyes of humankind to have been the first in proclaiming the abolition of slavery, a glory that today belongs to the nation and that no one can tarnish." After describing the character and actions of insurgents such as José María Morelos, Nicolás Bravo and Guadalupe Victoria, among others, Zarco reflected on the collective acts of these historical figures and their repercussions for contemporary Mexico: "insurgents were ahead of their time, they created liberal and humanitarian institutions, proclaimed the equality of all races,

abolished slavery and tribute. They wanted to place Mexico among the civilized nations of the earth." The author, however, lamented that after half a century the insurgents' legacy kept facing the same "slanders" and "resistance." Despite that, Zarco concluded his article expecting that Mexicans could reciprocate the insurgents' effort: "The worthiest homage that our people can offer to the memory of HIDALGO and MORELOS consists in the advance of civilization."[12]

Zarco's claims are, undoubtedly, historically imprecise. The relevance of his writings does not lie in their historical accuracy, however. The previous article exemplifies how the press, in this case the liberal press from mid-nineteenth century, reinterpreted the Mexican past of slavery and abolition. This reinterpretation was not fortuitous. It served the clear political purpose of creating a historical narrative on which to base a national identity. An identity based on modern values such as equality and freedom, and that was opposed to the idea (also a product of the press), of the pro-slavery United States.

The prevalence of this and other narratives in today's world, and their relevance for the formation of some aspects of Mexican identities cannot be overestimated. Indeed, despite that slavery persisted, although in decline, for nearly two decades after Hidalgo's proclamation, his decree has become a key component of the historical memory of the nation more so than any other subsequent law abolishing slavery. Elementary school textbooks in Mexico mention only Hidalgo's decree, and not those of 1829 or 1837.[13] Moreover,

[12] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 16 September 1857, 1, Zarco expressed a similar opinion in other occasions, for example, 30 March 1857, 1. The original Spanish quotes are: "La gloria de HIDALGO consiste a los ojos de la humanidad entera, haber sido el primero en proclamar la abolición de la esclavitud, gloria que es hoy de la nación, y que nadie puede empañar… los insurgentes caminaban sin plan; adelantándose a su época iban en pos de instituciones liberales y humanitarias, proclamaban la igualdad de todas las razas, abolían la esclavitud y los tributos, querían alojar a México entre las naciones cultas de la tierra… El más digno homenage que este pueblo puede ofrecer a la memoria de HIDALGO y de MORELOS, consiste en las conquistas de la civilización".
[13] History textbooks can be accessed online through: https://libros.conaliteg.gob.mex/

collaborators or informants of scholars studying modern Afro-Mexican populations remember Hidalgo's abolition and deem it a central aspect of their identities.[14] In this sense, the purpose of this section is to show the role of the press in producing and reproducing a historical narrative that still bears influence on our modern world.

These historical narratives began to take shape right after independence, when Mexican political elites still discussed the precepts of the first Mexican constitution. The national congress created a commission in 1824 to discuss the fate of the slave trade in the new republic. The journal *Águila Mexicana* followed closely those debates. The commission discussed seven articles. First, that the slave trade and the introduction of slaves into the country was banned from then on. Second, those slaves introduced going against the first article should be freed immediately. Third, all national and international ships transporting slaves into Mexico ought to be confiscated with their cargo. The owner, buyer, and seller of the confiscated slaves, as well as the ship's captain and pilot would endure ten years of prison. Article four stated that all people wanting to emigrate to Mexico would be able to bring with them the slaves who had been in their possession for at least one year. The slaves' children born in Mexico, however, would be free. The first three articles were approved unanimously. Article four was ardently debated and in the end was rejected with 71 votes against and five in favor. With the rejection of article four, the commission had to disregard the remainder three points, that stemmed from it. Article five stated that immigrants mentioned in the preceding article who could not prove that their slaves had been in their possession for at least one year would not be accepted into the country, and if they were already in Mexico their slaves would be free. Point six clarified that article four would be applied just for ten

[14] Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*; Gates Jr., *Black in Latin America*.

years. Article seven mandated that all slaves introduced into the country using article four would be free after ten years living in Mexico.[15]

The results of this commission are interesting on their own, because they reveal that the processes of abolishing slavery and the slave trade had little to do with Mora's or Zavala's assertions, that depicted a smooth, quick abolition process. A closer look on to the discussions that led to these results adds more depth to these processes and reveals how political elites forged historical narratives like that Zarco presented in his article.[16] From the beginning of the session congressmen Carlos María de Bustamante, Servando Teresa de Mier, and Juan de Dios Cañedo stated that slavery and the slave trade should be abolished altogether following Miguel Hidalgo's precedent. Mier, specifically, claimed that "Mexicans would never tolerate slavery in their country," and that "at the moment they declared their independence, their immortal *caudillo* Hidalgo freed all the slaves." Congressman Miguel Ramos Arizpe replied to them that although "it honored the Mexican republic that its first hero decreed the abolition of slavery," they could not apply Hidalgo's decree, because it was neither known by the wider population, nor enforced during his time, and they could not consider it a current law. Additionally, other congressmen responded, the commission's task was not to discuss slavery, but the slave trade only.[17] It is also worthwhile noting that the commission thought of its duty as part of a larger process, that began with the *cortes* that

[15] The beginning of the commission's debate can be found in *Águila Mexicana*, 15 January 1824, 1-2; the discussion of the first four points was reproduced on 16 January 1824, 1-2; the remainder of the discussion on 17 January 1824, 1-2.
[16] For earlier debates on this process see Méndez Reyes, "Hacia la abolición de la esclavitud."
[17] The quotes are from *Águila Mexicana*, 16 January 1824, 1.

wrote the constitution of Cadiz and that mirrored British contemporary efforts of ending the slave trade.[18]

During the discussion of article four, Juan de Dios Cañedo gave a lengthy speech that is worth analyzing with more detail. Contrary to what would happen in the following decades, Mexican elites saw the United States as an example to follow in this instance, and not as the pro-slavery nation that contrasted with the allegedly more humanitarian Mexican policies. Cañedo stated "if this article is approved, the civilized nations of the world, that have already banned this trade would soon scold our new republic," furthermore, Cañedo continued, "we would contradict ourselves, we would not be protectors of humankind, nor our actions would sympathize with the wishes and treaties we have signed with England and North America." Cañedo's speech also relied on a common trope, that of using slavery to refer to the colonial period, or to attack opposing ideological positions. In this sense, the congressman thought about article four: "this immoral measure is not worthy of a nation that has recently escaped from slavery." To conclude his speech, and regarding the provision that clarified that the approval to introduce slaves in order to promote migration to the country would last for just ten years, Cañedo ironized: "but their offspring would be free, the commission says, and this would be an unprecedented step toward freedom, never seen across North America, not even in the English colonies, it would be a testimony of our philanthropy…Ah, gentlemen! This is an illusion… I reject this type of philanthropy and I will never agree with a law that protects slavery so that from it, freedom could emerge… it is immoral and it degrades our nascent

[18] Congressmen Miguel Ramos Arizpe and Miguel Guridi y Alcocer reminded their fellow politicians of their labor in the cortes in promoting the abolition of the trade and suggested that their original proposals should be reconsidered by the new republic, *Águila Mexicana*, 16 January 1824, 1-2.

independence… it stains with slavery this rich and vast territory in which we want to establish freedom."[19]

Three years later, when the congress discussed the future of slavery in the country, congressman José Tornel displayed a more developed form of this narrative. Tornel began his address to the congress by asking "are not they [Afro-descendants] men like us? Are not they our brothers, those who in detriment of our republican institutions still carry the ignominious mark of slavery?". Then, he attacked the United States for their seemingly incongruent policies regarding slavery and equality: "How is that our nation, obliged by its constitutive act, keeps the right of man through just laws, but has tolerated for so long this hideous violation?... it is inconceivable that a free republic keeps enslaved some of its children…we should leave such contradictions to the United States." He, then, took this point even further: "I am astonished, gentlemen, to observe that our neighbors, falling into a lamentable inconsistency had introduced after their glorious rebellion and their declaration of independence more than a million slaves who grow the soil of the south with their sweat." And scolded Mexican politicians for allowing the country to go in that direction: "Our conduct would be equally strange and monstrous if in contempt of article 30 of our constitutive act, we would not hurry to destroy with a strong arm the remains of the [European] conquest." With this, Tornel took the trope of the colonial period as a time of slavery beyond Cañedo's speech: "The conquest that is so detestable to us was the cause to normalize the greatest of attacks [to humankind]."[20]

By the 1840s, when the war with Texas had passed, and during the years prior to the North American invasion, the Mexican press presented a more consolidated narrative, in

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[19] The whole speech can be found in *Águila Mexicana*, 10 February 1824, 2-3.
[20] *El Sol*, 17 January 1827, the whole speech is reproduced in 2327-2328, all the quotes are from 2327.

which Mexico was a champion of freedom and equality, in contrast with a pro-slavery United States, that favored the independence of Texas, a territory that protected slavery. On 15 November 1841, thus, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* published a note that recounted Mexico's progress since its independence: "Does not the abolition of slavery, one of our first laws, makes us more worthy than those nations that, going against the principles they claim, recognized the introduction of slaves into a territory in which it was already forbidden?"[21] this excerpt, of course, subtly referred to the United States, England and France, who acknowledged Texas as a new country after it seceded from Mexico.

Subsequently, on 25 October 1842, the same journal published a speech read during the end-of-school-year-ceremonies in Guanajuato. This address clearly articulated notions of Mexican equality, freedom, and a radical anti-slavery position. Establishing Mexico's position regarding equality, the author affirmed: "Mexico goes to great lengths to extend education to all, it does not limit itself to the equality before the law, a fundamental principle of its social pact, but it also provides to the masses the most noble of equalities, intellectual equality, to the extent that it can be applied to the human race." The speech then explained the country's stand on freedom: "Mexico aspires to an all-encompassing freedom, that should not be confused with debauchery, but that puts all classes under a single egalitarian law." By this time, the author maintained a clear anti-slavery position: "in Mexico we do not think in freedom for some and slavery for others, as some countries shamefully do, and that gratuitously think of themselves as champions of enlightenment and justice, when in reality

[21] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 15 November 1841, 3. Criticizing England and France for recognizing Texas' independence was a recurrent theme in the Mexican press, see for example *El Mosquito Mexicano* 18 May 1841, 2; and 29 June 1841, 2-4. The original quote reads: "¿Cuánto más honor no hace á la república mexicana la abolición de la esclavitud, como una de las primeras leyes, que a ciertas otras naciones el reconocimiento de esa esclavitud, introducida en un suelo que estaba prohibida, inconsecuentes con los principios que tienen proclamados?"

they use a criminal and ridiculous excuse, skin color, to perpetually tie the hands of our equals and put an iron yoke on their necks…oh! In Mexico we will never think that way."[22]

From then on, many newspapers would present Mexico as an example of freedom and equality for all, regardless of skin color. These newspapers would also contrast Mexico with the United States, who they construed as the antithesis of Mexico. Needless to say, this is an oversimplification, a distortion even, of both Mexican and US history. More so, as the political speeches of the 1820s already reveal, when Mexico's abolition process was far from straightforward.[23] The two countries' diverging paths regarding freedom, equality, and citizenship during the nineteenth century were the result of their particular situations during the colonial period, and of complex political, cultural, and economic processes thereafter.[24]

The resentment resulting from the loss of Texas gave way to more poignant remarks regarding the complicated relation between slavery, the United States, and Texas. In that same year of 1842, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* noted about the future of the young republic of Texas: "We see very difficult that Texas succeeds in creating a nation worthy of civilization

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[22] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 25 October 1842, 2, the original reads: "México toma el mayor empeño por la enseñanza de la multitud, estendiendo la instrucción á todos los ramos posibles: es decir, que no se limita a la igualdad ante la ley, principio fundamental de su pacto; sino que trata de proporcionar á los individuos que forman las masas la más noble de las igualdades, la igualdad intelectual, hasta donde esta pueda caber en la raza humana… México aspira á una libertad omnímoda, que no confunde con el libertinage; sino que hace consistir precisamente en la sujeción de todas las clases de la sociedad *á una sola ley equitativa*… sin que en México se piense en libertad para unos y en esclavitud para otros, como se practica vergonzosamente en algunos países, que de un modo gratuito se han creído el emporio de la ilustración y de la justicia, cuando con un pretesto criminal á par que ridículo, *el color de una piel*, atan perpetuamente las manos de nuestros semejantes, y ponen sobre sus cervices un yugo de hierro…¡Oh!... México jamás pensará de esa manera." For similar examples about equality in the press see: *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 10 February 1850, 4.

[23] While the scholarship on Mexican abolitionism is vast, the reach and effectiveness of the various abolition laws from the nineteenth century are still debatable. Thanks to several works, we know that slavery was declining since the eighteenth century, but it might have survived in some places until the 1830s or even the 1840s. See among others Guevara Sanginés, "El proceso de liberación"; Herrejón Peredo, "La abolición de la esclavitud en Hidalgo"; Naveda Chávez-Hita, "El Nuevo Orden constitucional"; Olveda Legazpi, "La abolición de la esclavitud"; and De la Serna, "Disolución de la esclavitud."

[24] Two recent comparative studies about the contrasting trajectories of Latin America and the US are: De la Fuente and Gross, *Becoming Fee, Becoming Black*; and Cottrol, *The Long Lingering Shadow*.

as long as it keeps slavery alive."[25] Also, between January and February 1849, when the Mexican congress debated a new immigration law that would allow foreigners to enter the country without a passport, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* considered that maybe the United States' example of order and prosperity would harm Mexico's effort to attract foreigners to populate the country. They hoped, however, that Mexican ideas of freedom and equality, "rooted in the country since independence," would attract more people to Mexico. They wished, thus, that "the virtuous and intelligent foreigner would be inclined for our delightful weather and for other, more important, advantages such as the abolition of slavery, proclaimed years ago in this part of the American hemisphere."[26] The same journal expressed a similar idea in 1855, when it published a translation of an article from the religious Society of Friends from Great Britain and Ireland, that exhorted the world to abolish slavery in the name of Christianity.[27]

Despite that Indian slavery survived well into the nineteenth century, as several studies have demonstrated,[28] writing about slavery and equality entailed referring to Afro-descendants more than to natives. This fact contrasts with the current situation in which "blackness" or African ancestry is seen as something external the nation. Moreover, it undermines the idea, still prevalent in Mexican scholarship, that Afro-descendants disappeared from the national imaginary after independence. In particular, it contradicts assertions such as: "the preoccupation for creating a homogenous nation… along with the reproduction of racial prejudices… led to silencing the Afro-descendant presence in national

[25] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 14 September 1842, 3: "nos parece muy difícil que Tejas llegue a formar una nación digna de alternar con los pueblos civilizados mientras mantenga en su seno la esclavitud."
[26] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 2 February 1849, 3, "el estrangero inteligente y virtuoso se decida mas bien por el delicioso clima de nuestro país y por la posesión de algunas ventajas importantes, entre otras, la de la abolición de la esclavitud, decretada hace años en esta parte del continente americano"
[27] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 6 May 1855, 2.
[28] Reséndez, *The Other Slavery*; and Rugeley, *Rebellion Now and Forever*.

history." [29] Beyond silencing the African presence, what the evidence suggests is that by writing about Afro-descendants, the Mexican press tried to buttress specific political projects.

For instance, between July and August 1857, the arrival of several free Afro-descendant families coming from New Orleans to Veracruz sparked a debate between several Mexican newspapers. On 15 July of that year, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* announced the arrival of these families to Papaloapan. They hope that these families' "knowledge about different types of crops, morality, civilized behavior, disposition, wishes, and hopes of improving our industry," would soon fill this zone with thriving haciendas.[30] The controversy began when the newspaper *Mexican Extraordinary* expressed concern that this new colony would "degenerate," and become a "plague for society."[31] Several journals like *El Progreso* and *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* immediately responded. The latter newspaper published a note penned by Francisco Zarco that stated: "men who come with capital and devote themselves to work in search for freedom, running from the country in which their brothers are slaves," do not inspire such fears, because "labor, wellbeing, and freedom do not make races degenerate." Furthermore, Zarco concluded: "the establishment of black colonies, whose individuals come to enjoy the rights of men, that without distinction our constitution grants to all, honor our country."[32] *El Progreso* agreed with Zarco's assertions about the black colony's potential contributions to the nation: "we do not think -they wrote- in any way that the degeneration,

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[29] Ballestero, "Los 'otros' mexicanos," 150. The original reads: "la preocupación por crear una nación homogénea … junto con el conocer y reproducir prejuicios raciales … influyeron en el silenciamiento de la presencia afrodescendiente en la historia nacional".

[30] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 15 July 1857, 3. The original: "inteligencia en distintos géneros de cultivo, hábitos de moralidad, costumbres cultas, disposiciones, deseos y esperanzas para el progreso de la industria."

[31] Cited in *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 3 August 1857, 3.

[32] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 3 August 1857, 3. "hombres que vienen con capitales y se dedican al trabajo buscando el aire de la libertad, y huyendo del país en que son esclavos sus hermanos… El trabajo, el bienestar, la libertad, no son á propósito para hacer degenerar las razas… hace honor a nuestro país el establecimiento de colonias negras, cuyos individuos vienen a gozar de los derechos del hombre, que sin distinción concede nuestro código fundamental."

gangrene, scourge that the *Extraordinary* fears ever come to realize, more so…. when the people who come to our country bring with them good, moral, and working habits, as well as an advanced civilization, strength, ability, and intelligence." This journal took its response even further and compared the black colonists of Papaloapan with European migrants arriving to the US: "These men, to whom society imposes an unjust stigma, offer more certainty for the country's future… than that starving, naked, uncivilized, semi-wild crowd that arrives to the United States running from hunger." Lastly, *El Progreso* hoped that after the Papaloapan settlers: "would come many other families who would run from the *Christian* and *civilizing* treatment from the Americans, for whom blacks are not people but things," and asserted: "in Mexico we do respect republican institutions, the sublime law of natural equality, and the humanitarian principles of Christianity."[33]

The debate about the black colonists of Papaloapan vindicated the type of liberal project that Zarco supported, a project that contrasted with contemporary US policies. According to modern researchers of Afro-Mexican populations, making this comparison between the US rhetoric and Mexican allegedly more humanitarian actions is still part of Afro-Mexicans' historical memory.[34] Moreover, this particular episode contrasts with similar ones happening during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. During that time, according to some authors, the arrival of Afro-descendant migrants elicited more negative than positive

[33] Cited in *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 27 August 1857: "No creemos en manera alguna que llegue a realizarse la dejeneración, la gangrena, el azote, que teme el *Extraordinary*, sobre todo … cuando los que vienen a fijarse en el país traen los hábitos de moralidad y de trabajo, traen una civilización adelantada, fuerza capacidad [e] inteligencia… mayores seguridades ofrecen para el porvenir del país … esos hombres, a quienes se quiere imponer una mancha injusta … que esa multitud hambrienta y desnuda, incivilizada, semi salvaje, que hemos visto acudía a los Estados Unidos huyendo del hambre… seguirán muchas otras familias, que vendrán huyendo del trato *cristiano* y *civilizador* de los americanos, para quienes el negro es cosa y no persona… atendemos mejor en México la gran institución republicana, la sublime ley de la igualdad natural, y el humanitario y regenerador principio del cristianismo."

[34] Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*, 156 and 183.

reactions. Many social sectors questioned whether that was the type of migration that Mexico needed.[35] Although surely the debates during that time were more complex than that, it is interesting to note the changes between the two periods regarding notions of race and racism.

The arrival to Mexico of runaway-slaves coming from Texas sparked similar discussions. Since the colonial period, the Spanish crown implemented a sanctuary policy that consisted in granting asylum to those runaway-slaves coming from other empires under the condition that they converted to Catholicism. After independence, several Mexican states enacted laws that declared free all the slaves coming to Mexico from other countries.[36] During the first years of the 1850s *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* and *El Universal* reported that people from the Mexican state of Coahuila gave refuge to run-away slaves from Texas. This, in turn, sparked conflict with Texans, who crossed the border to try to recover their slaves.[37] Similarly, in 1854 the Mexican press informed that Texans tried to deport Mexicans still living in the state, because they considered their abolitionist ideas dangerous.[38] Moreover, between 1855 and 1856 the Mexican congress discussed a fugitive slave law, that considered returning runaways to their owners in the US. As in analogous cases, politicians expressed contrasting opinions, but in the end the law was rejected.[39] These debates about migration add more complexity to recent studies that have stressed the undeniable racism that Afro-descendants have faced throughout history. They show that Afro-descendants' place within modern nation-states was passionately discussed and was not as straightforward as portrayed by some scholarship.

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[35] Pérez Vejo, "Extranjeros interiores y exteriores; and Saade Granados, "Inmigración de una 'raza prohibida'".
[36] On the sanctuary policy see Landers, *Black Society*; for states' legislation, Olveda, "La abolición de la esclavitud," 22-25.
[37] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 23 November 1850, 1292; 15 August 1851, 798; and 12 November 1855, 3; *El Universal*, 28 October 1854, 2.
[38] *El Universal*, 27 December 1854, 2.
[39] *El Universal*, 23 Febraury 1855, 1; *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 19 July 1856, 1.

We have seen thus far that in discussing about Afro-Mexicans, abolition, and slavery in the press, political elites meshed these subjects with larger historical processes, such as nation and state formation, and other important subjects about Mexican identity and culture. One of these subjects was religion and its complex relation with the themes that are the focus of this chapter. People of the period saw religion and Christian moral as catalyzers of freedom, equality, abolition. In January 1850, for instance, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* published a letter signed by "an African" who claimed: "the application of Christian principles to society has led to different results, among the most recent progresses is the equality before the law." This document is important because it was presented as a first-hand testimony coming from an Afro-Mexican in a period in which these individuals did not identify as such anymore. It would be worthwhile, therefore. To analyze it with more detail. After beginning his letter stating the importance of religion for society, the author continued: "black men… owe the restoration of their human dignity to the holy doctrines coming from the sublime predication of the Nazarene." Then, writing in a more personal tone, he recognized the contributions of religion to democracy:

> I, a descendant of men whose skin color was considered degraded before, and has been vindicated nowadays, I feel, and must be, grateful to the benefits of Christianity, the solid and indestructible basis of democratic doctrines, that has demolished the barriers that unrest and pride built to separate blacks and whites… it [Christianity] has proclaimed equality before the law, thank God we have free access and possibility… to hold important public offices, that mean policies emanating from private law, and some bad Christians, prevented us, and wish to prevent us, from having.

The previous excerpt is interesting in many ways. First, the author thanked religion for implanting equality before the law in Mexico. Although few scholars would claim exactly the same, some author have indeed identified Catholicism as a main source of Mexican modernity.[40] Additionally, the allegedly African adjudicated the end of slavery to Christian moral, something that in itself is historically inaccurate. Regardless, this person's interpretation of Mexican history is fascinating in its own right.

Subsequently, the author of this note questioned himself what would happen with "people of color" without religion's philanthropy. He also asked himself why some Afro-descendants were against religion and democracy, and desired "the restoration of colonial law." He, thus, wrote: "I do not find strange that our former masters pretend to do so; I am indeed amazed that some Afro-descendants, who thanks to democracy have risen to upper ecclesiastical and civil positions, present themselves as enemies of it." Lastly, he confirmed his commitment with religious and democratic principles and hope that his "*pasianos de origen*" followed his steps: "although thank God I have more than four *reales*, I would rather to be called *sans-culotte* and to be free, than being noble and enslaved, I pray to God to illuminate those in my situation, so they do not fall victims of such sagacious deceit… I wish the heavens put them a mirror in front of them, so they can see themselves, and they do not take it from me, so I do not fall to temptation."[41] Although it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine if the author was really Afro-descendant, it is interesting to know that *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* decided to publish an article of this character using the voice of an Afro-Mexican. More so, when this group was thought to be disappearing or as a minority at best.

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[40] For example, Pamela Voekel, *Alone Before God*; and Larkin, *The Very Nature of God*.
[41] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 8 January 1850, 2. For a complete English translation, as well as an Spanish transcription, of this letter see Appendix 1, document 4.

Despite this, there is some anecdotal evidence indicating that society still saw Afro-descendants as a differentiated group. For example, on 16 March 1853, a D. Mariano Morales using the advertisement section of *El Universal* searched for "two young women (maids) *legitimate blacks from the coast of Africa*, with good references and guarantee of good conduct."[42] Although without further context it is not possible but to speculate, a note like this suggests the survival of a paternalistic ideology, or a nostalgic view about slavery and the social classifications of the past.

The links between religion, freedom, and equality were at the center of debates again between July and August 1856, when the press followed closely the discussions of the constituent congress regarding freedom of belief. For example, Ponciano Arriaga in an address to the congress argued that: "Christian moral is the source of civilization. It abolished slavery, ended with caste distinctions, privileges, and by proclaiming that all men are brothers, children of the same heavenly father, it established equality as the basis of the republican system."[43]

Together, the reinterpretation of the Mexican past of slavery, the letter of the allegedly Afro-descendant, and the debates about the role of religion in Mexican society, buttress the argument that upholding a radical position against slavery and in favor of equality allowed Mexican politicians to claim a higher moral ground for the nation, in opposition to those territories that maintained slavery. Highlighting the importance of Catholicism also entailed,

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[42] *El Universal*, 16 March 1853: "dos jóvenes (criadas) *morenas legítimas de la costa de África*, que den buenos informes y garantías de su conducta," The advertisement was published for a week. I thank Professor Celso Castilho for this reference.

[43] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 6 August, 1856, 3: "La moral cristiana es la fuente de la civilización. Ella abolió la esclavitud, ella acabó con las castas, con los privilegios, y al proclamar que todos los hombres son hermanos, hijos de un mismo Padre que está en los cielos, estableció la igualdad que es la base del sistema republicano." José María Lafragua argued something similar in his address to the congress, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 16 Agugust, 1856, 2.

although in a more subtle way, make a distinction between Protestant and pro-slavery countries, like the US, and Mexico, a Catholic country. Opposing Catholicism to Protestantism was also a way to consolidate a national identity around one of the few things that united Mexicans during that period.

Using slavery as a metaphor was also a way to attack ideological rivals. This was a common tactic across Latin America, that consisted in, for example, referring to the colonial past as a time of slavery and then associating political adversaries with that past.[44] In the case of Mexico, it also worked by associating the US with slavery and then linking opponents with that country. On 21 January 1855, in the midst of the Ayutla revolution, *El Universal* expressed concern against the revolt and asked what would happen if the federalists won: "who does not tremble when thinking about the time of ignominy that would come upon us?… we would see the fatherland falling into perdition… without finding rest among the burdens of slavery in which foreign greed would bind us. Does anyone want to be a slave? Then join the revolt and the rebels."[45] Once the Ayutla revolution triumphed and a new constituent congress was created, the use of slavery as a metaphor to attack political rivals dominated the debates. In discussing the terms of the relationship between the states and the federation, Ignacio Ramírez criticized the idea of federalism that some congressmen had manifested. During one of the sessions of October 1856, Ramírez opined that these congressmen's idea of federalism was a "servile imitation" of the United States, and that

[44] Marixa Lasso, *Myths of Harmony*, 56-60.
[45] *El Universal*, 21 January 1855, 1.

surely they "were about to suggest that Mexico reinstituted slavery and adopted a bad English as language in the name of federalism."[46]

As we have seen, congressmen alluded to slavery during their discussions about freedom of belief, stressing how, according to them, religion had fomented many republican values. Congressmen also referred to slavery in the US in sophisticated ways during these discussions. Eligio Muñoz and Antonio Aguado compared the establishment of freedom of belief in Mexico with a hypothetical abolition of slavery in the US. Mexican culture and society, they said, would have to go through a profound transformation before that policy could be implemented. They argued that freedom of belief would have to manifest itself in society before becoming a law. Introducing their comparison with slavery in the US, they thought that the only way to abolish slavery in that country was to let it extinguish on its own. Aguado further argued that laws and constitutions "should be the reflection of the society that creates them, do not we see in the United States in the midst of that so admired, pure democracy… the most atrocious, cruel, and humiliating principle for humankind that is slavery?"[47] If Mexican people was Catholic, therefore, the constitution should reflect this reality.

We have seen thus far that, for most of the first half of the nineteenth century, Mexican politicians referred to slavery as something external to the nation; as a practice whose absence distinguished Mexico from other nations, and in particular from the United States. This of course is historically inaccurate, as the examples from the early independent

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[46] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 11 October 1856, 1: "servil imitación [de los Estados Unidos y que seguramente estaban] ya en vía de proponer en México en nombre del principio federativo, que se adopte la esclavitud y se hable un mal inglés."

[47] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 13 August 1856, 2: "no deben ser otra cosa que el retrato, por decirlo así, del pueblo para quien se forma: ¿no vemos en los Estados Unidos en medio de esa democracia pura que tanto se admira … consignado el principio más atroz, el mas cruel, el mas humillante para la especie humana, cual es la esclavitud?"

period demonstrate. Furthermore, fragmentary evidence suggests that seeing Mexico and Mexicans as isolated from the contemporary slave trade could be also imprecise. Indeed, the Mexican press suggested, however briefly, that Mexican ships, or at least vessels using a Mexican flag, were still participating in the trade. During the end of July and beginning of August 1851, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* reported that the Mexican senate discussed about slavery in successive sessions, at least one of which was secret. On first August, the senate decided to impose penalties to Mexican ships participating in the trade.[48] A few weeks later the same journal mentioned that the Mexican government was trying to establish common policies with Spanish America, one of them being fighting the slave trade.[49] The fact that the Mexican congress discussed how to fight slavery suggests that this practice was not something of the past, and certainly that Mexico was not isolated from these historical processes. We can also interpret the previous notes as an opportunity for these republics to build a common identity around abolitionism, which is the subject of the next section.

This analysis of the most important journals of mid-nineteenth-century Mexico reveals that Afro-descendants and slavery had not disappeared from the national memory, nor had been they silenced, as the scholarship assumes. This analysis also answers how and why slavery and Afro-descendants became a symbolic and political framework from which to discuss larger national concerns, such as migration and religion.

Slavery, Abolition, and the ideas of Hispanic America and Latin America

In 1858, ten years after the US invasion to Mexico, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* speculated what would happen to the country, and to Afro-Mexicans, if its northern neighbor continued with

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[48] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 29 July, 31, July and 1 August 1851.
[49] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 15 August 1851.

its expansionist policy: “Americans would introduce slavery into the country and Mexicans would see with horror how they whip the same freemen that we are accustomed to call brothers.”[50] These concerns, along with the attempt to unite Spanish American republics against US expansionism was already present in the press at the beginning of the 1850s. on 13 August 1850, *El Universal* published an article reflecting on the future of Spanish American republics in the aftermath of US-backed Narciso López’s invasion to Cuba. On that occasion the author of the note asked himself: “what would be their fate [Spanish American countries’] under the claws of the Anglo-Saxon, whose progress in the New World are tainted with the blood of its children? What does civilization owe him, as much as he proclaims himself free with his democratic institutions?” then he warned about a bleak future, should US expansionism continued: “be aware that their extermination projects … extend to all the Spanish American race that peoples this continent: its individuals would be their slaves and would die dragging ignominious chains, while their masters would chant deceiving hymns to freedom and equality.” The note, however continued with a hopeful tone and encouraged Mexico to take a more leading role in the region: “Mexico, that would be the first victim, should give the first cry of alarm. Wake America from your lethargy, put your eyes on the northern colossus that haunts you, greed of your riches.” The author concluded proposing Spanish American republics a change of policies, to endure the northern menace: “and if we want to endure the strike, we should fortify our governments, promote patriotism among our children, and establish a continental policy, based on our common origin, believes, and needs, to thwart the plans of the arrogant power that wants to dominate us.”[51]

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[50] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 2 June 1858, 2.
[51] *El Universal*, 13 August 1850, 1.

These two notes capture the themes around which this sections revolts. The association between the US and the entrenchment of slavery and the attempts to unite the Spanish American nations against what was considered a real threat, dominated the Mexican press between 1840 and 1860. This was a period full of contrasts and was crucial for the history of Atlantic slavery. On the one hand, slavery expanded in places like Cuba, the US and Brazil. On the other hand, an increasing number of countries, including most of Spanish America, abolished the slave trade and slavery within their territories. Mexico was not isolated from these fundamental processes. Through the press, Mexicans followed all of these developments. This section situates Mexico at the center of this moment in Atlantic history and focuses on how, by interpreting these historical processes, the Mexican press created narratives about the national and Spanish-American identities.

On a first level, the selected newspapers followed the news about slavery in Latin America and the United States in a general manner. The coverage of Latin American countries had a more optimistic tone than that of the US. In comparison, however, the coverage of US slavery was more extensive. The Mexican press followed closely the abolition process in Colombia. In 1851, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* said about the then republic of New Granada: "republican authorities… have gone through great lengths to free the remaining slaves in some provinces and the masters have rejected all sorts of compensation."[52] In subsequent days, the same journal published an abolition law, and a treaty that New Granada signed with England to fight the slave trade.[53] When New Granada finally enacted its abolition act, this newspaper wrote: "At last this republic has abolished

[52] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 4 November 1851, 4: "Las autoridades de la república … han tomado grande empeño en poner en libertad a los esclavos que aún hay en algunas provincias, y los dueños no han querido recibir ninguna indemnización."
[53] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 10 December 1851, 2; 10 August, 6 and 7 September 1852.

black slavery, following the example of her sister republics."[54] Lastly, in 1853, New Granada's secretary of government Patrocinio Cuellar reported to the congress that: "slavery, a source of disorder in the past, is gone forever."[55]

The coverage of abolition in Ecuador had a similar character. In 1857, Ecuadorian president José María Urbina gave a speech in which we can find similar tropes used in the Mexican press. Urbina stated: "Now that we have abolished the degrading slavery that reduced men to the state of thing, the republic counts with many hands capable of contributing to its advancement with their free work, that is the most productive." Ecuadorian president, the same as Mexican politicians, emphasized the equality of all men, and affirmed: "now we can open our arms to all those men who now hold the same position of their former masters," because law had given them "the possibility of reaching the status of citizens." Ultimately, Urbina claimed a higher moral ground for the country, now that they had abolished slavery, "in restoring the natural rights of these men, the republic has won and has made an invaluable progress for the rights of humankind [because] the property of a man over another is to the eyes of humankind and religion, an impious, sacrilegious, and execrable right."[56]

[54] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 23 April 1852, 4: "Al fin esta república ha abolido la esclavitud de los negros, siguiendo el ejemplo de las naciones hermanas."
[55] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 22 May 1853, 1: "La esclavitud, que antes era un elemento de desorden, ha desaparecido para siempre."
[56] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 22 February 1857, 2: "Abolida la degradante esclavitud que reducía al hombre a la vil condición de mercancía, cuenta la república con una multitud de ecuatorianos capaces de contribuir a su adelantamiento con el trabajo libre, que es el más productivo… podemos estender nuestros brazos a todos esos seres que hoy llevan el mismo título que sus antiguos señores… la posibilidad de colocarse en el rango de ciudadanos… Al devolver a tantos seres los derechos que les había concedido la naturaleza, ha ganado la república y ha hecho por su parte una inapreciable conquista en los fueros de la humanidad… la *propiedad* del hombre sobre el hombre [es] a los ojos de la humanidad y de la religión, un derecho impío, sacrílego, ecsecrable."

The same publication devoted a full page to transcribe the abolition law of Venezuela in 1854, but without making any additional comments.[57] Even when the Mexican press reported on those Latin American countries that still kept slavery, such as Brazil, it limited itself to describe specific events without making any judgements about them.[58]

The coverage of US slavery in the Mexican press had a completely different character. The press followed closer than in any other case the discussions of slavery in the US. In fact two thirds of the notes used for this chapter refer to the US case alone. Mexican elites considered these debates as a matter of national interest, because of the perception of the US as a threat to Mexico's existence. Years before the North-American invasion, Mexicans already discussed about US expansionism and the possible restoration of slavery in Mexico. the press wrote about the incoming war with northern neighbor as a strategy to expand the slave economy farther south.[59] Even years after the invasion, when tensions around the fate of slavery escalated in the US, similar statements were still common in the press. For example, in 1859 the journal *La Sociedad* signaled that if the US annexed the Mexican States of Sonora and Chihuahua, as well as the territory of Baja California, it would alter the balance between free states and slave states, and would precipitate a grave conflict.[60]

Beyond their links with Mexico, the press carefully followed discussions about slavery in the US during key moments, such as the compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska act between 1853 and 1854. Normally, Mexican journals reprinted political speeches from that nation, and limited themselves to stress the contradictions of the North-

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[57] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 9 July 1854, 2.
[58] News about Brazil can be found in *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 10 October 1850, 4; 27 November 1850, 4; 15 December 1850, 4; 27 January 1853, 1; 22 June 1853, 3.
[59] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 14 May 1843, 4; and *El Mosquito Mexicano*, 29 March 1843, 3.
[60] *La Sociedad*, 12 January 1859, 1.

American rhetoric. During most of 1850 headlines in the Mexican press stated such things as: "is the union in danger?" or "the dissolution of the union."[61] The majority of the coverage during 1850, for example, revolved around the failed invasion of Cuba mentioned at the beginning of this section. This development, as we have seen, sparked debate about what would happen with the nation in general and with Afro-Mexicans in particular if the US took more Mexican territory or expanded to other countries. A possible annexation of Cuba or of northern Mexico, thus, would lead to the entrenchment of slavery and to the detriment of Afro-descendants situation who, according to the press, enjoyed full equality in Mexico and a better condition in Cuba compared to the US.[62] Ultimately, in 1857 *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* opined about the problem of slavery in the US: "the question of slavery on its own, under any point of view, could entail sooner or later the end of the Union, and therefore, the end of that power that amaze us."[63]

The interpretation that the press gave to these news, more than the mere fact of reporting them, was the basis of the ideologies later called *hispanismo* and *latinidad*. This is the belief that Hispanic or Latin peoples were morally and culturally superior and should be united against the Anglo-Saxon threat. An incipient idea of hispanismo can be traced back to the early independent period. However, it was until the 1840s and 1850s when these ideologies took more shape and circulated widely across the globe. The emergence of hispanismo and latinidad was due to social and cultural changes within Latin American nations, as well as broader changes in world geopolitics. Internally, once the rancor of the

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[61] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 17 March; 8 April; and 28 December 1850.

[62] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* followed closely these news, see for example: 6, 7, 12, 24, and 25 March; 6, 14, and 23 April; 7, 8, 11, 21, and 29 May; 12, 14, and 27 June; 19 and 26 August; 10 September; 6 and 25 November; 2, 5, 17, 22, 25, 30, and 31 December 1850.

[63] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 6 April 1857.

independence wars had passed, creole elites across the continent began to reevaluate their Hispanic heritage in opposition to precolonial civilizations.[64] Externally, US expansionism and increasing interventionism across the region, as well as the foreign policy of European powers like France and England influenced in a variety of ways this reappraisal of Hispanic heritage across the continent. The scholarship on the subject contends that hispanismo and latinidad emerged in opposition to, as well as a part of, the imperialisms of the period. Behind these ideologies there were sentiments of racial and cultural solidarity and union of the so-called Latin peoples in opposition to the Anglo-Saxons.[65] In this regard, as opening vignette suggests, writing about slavery, abolition, and a Latin or Spanish-American race, laid the ground of a political discourse that pretended to unite diverse peoples from the Atlantic World.

In the aftermath of the conflict with Texas, and with the increasing of US expansionism, some Mexican politicians began writing about a "Spanish-American race," a "Latin race," or even a "Spanish-Latin race" and contrasting it with the Anglo-Saxon race. One of the first instances in which a Mexican politician used this phrase was a speech by Mexican president Manuel Gómez Pedraza published in 1842. In his address, Gómez Pedraza stressed the allegedly superiority of Hispanic peoples. This is a feature that would characterize political speeches across the region during the subsequent decades. Similarly to this section's opening vignette, Gómez Pedraza stressed the place of Mexico in this matter: "Mexico, undoubtedly, will have a distinguish position among the world's powers: its

[64] Earle, *The Return of the Native*, chapter 2.
[65] See for example: Gobat, "The Invention of Latin America"; Granados García and Marichal eds. *Construcción de las ideas*; Tenorio Trillo, *Latin America*; Mignolo, *La idea de América Latina*; Soler, *Idea y cuestión nacional*; Leopoldo Zea, *El pensamiento latinoamericano* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1976); Leal and Langebaek eds. *Historias de raza*; and Pérez Vejo and Yankelevich, *Raza y política en Iberoamérica*.

influence on the American hemisphere will be remarkable." Analyzing Spanish-American countries' history after independence, the author reflected on the learning curve that they had to experience to join the so-called civilized nations of the world. He also reaffirmed his conviction on the role these countries would play in the world: "[Mexicans] do not ignore that the Spanish-American race should submit itself to the universal rhythm that moves societies. They foresee that this race is destined, because of its importance, to figure in the concert of nations."[66]

During the years prior to the North-American invasion to Mexico, as the tension between the two countries grew, this type of discourse became more widespread and more radical. In 1843, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* wrote about the US: "they plot new aggressions every year, with the nerve to disclose that their objective is to robe and pillage the race they think of as degraded."[67] "Fortunately" the same journal said: "the Spanish-American race does not recognize the superiority that the Anglo-Saxon race proclaims, and even if that were the case, Mexico will know how to defend the territory that it managed to liberate from its former metropolis, and keep its honor and rights, or perish trying, before succumbing to such humiliation."[68] In general terms, from that moment on the incoming conflict was seen as war between the two races fighting over the domination of the hemisphere.[69]

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[66] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 29 September 1842, "[los mexicanos] no ignoran que la raza hispano-americana debe subordinarse el movimiento universal que conmueve a las sociedades. Ellos prevén que esa raza está llamada, por su misma importancia, á figurar en las grandes escenas del mundo político."

[67] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 22 June 1843, 2: "maquinan todos los años nuevas agresiones, con el descaro de anunciar que su objeto es el robo y el pillage de la raza que apellidan degradada."

[68] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 26 December 1843, 1: "por fortuna la raza hispano-americana no reconoce esa superioridad que se proclama en la raza anglo-sajona, mas aun cuando así fuese, México sabrá con gloria sostener el territorio que supo por sí solo hacer independiente de su antigua metrópoli, y conservar su honor y sus derechos, o perecer en la demanda antes que sufrir tan degradante vilipendio."

[69] For example, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 17 June 1844, 1; 21 June 1844, 2-3; 26 June 1844, 1; 29 June 1844, 2; 25 March 1845, 4. For studies mentioning this point see Guardino, *The Dead March*; Sanders, *The Vanguard of the Atlantic*; and Vaughn, "Mexico Negro."

Thinking that these discourse were the product of the war between Mexico and the US would be imprecise. This supposedly conflict between two races had also an Atlantic character. French papers like *La Démocratie Pacifique* and British journals such as the *Times* from London waged into these discussions. The French periodical praised the progress of the Spanish-American nations, while lamented that the French government did not intervene in the conflict between Mexico and Texas in order to protect the "Spanish-Latin race" from the Anglo-Saxons.[70] For its part, the British newspaper pointed that the "weakness of the Spanish race" would lead to the domination of the "Anglo-American race" in the whole hemisphere, but regrettably, this would result in the expansion of slavery.[71] These discourse about race, thus, laid the ground for the development of the ideas of hispanismo and latinidad in the second half of the nineteenth century.

As the remarks from the *Times* already show, one of the ways to make a distinction between these two races was to write about slavery and abolition. Writers from this period distinguished Spanish American countries from "Anglo-Saxon" countries by claiming that the former were abolitionists, or that a more benign form of slavery existed in those countries in comparison with the US. Mexican intellectuals from the early independent period already posited these arguments in the 1820s and 1830s. José María Luis Mora, for example, stressed that the slave trade to Mexico stopped much sooner than in other countries. Additionally, Mora argued, Spaniards gave a better treatment to their slaves, and Spanish legislation prevented masters' excesses. The author, however, lamented that Spain maintained its slave trade at the moment he wrote this.[72]

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[70] Reprints from this journal can be found in *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 10 February 1844, 4; and 24 April 1845, 2.
[71] Cited in the *Diario de Avisos*, 29 January 1859, 1.
[72] Ballesteros, "Los 'otros' Mexicanos," 158-159.

Presenting slavery in the Spanish world as less harsh, even benign, was then a way to establish a difference between Spanish American peoples and Anglo-Saxons. Between march and April 1842, for example, the pro-Spanish bi-weekly journal *La Hesperia* published a series of articles in which it contrasted the different types of slavery across the hemisphere. About England, this periodical writers' thought: "This nation that claims today to be the only protector of the black race treated its slaves with the worst of inhumanities… ancient English laws about slavery are written with blood, we cannot read them without horror." The author of this note even contended that a black slave from a Cuban plantation enjoyed a better condition than a free worker from an English factory.[73] In fact, the author continued, the British crusade against slavery was just a strategy to ruin Spanish economy.[74]

About the United States, the same journal affirmed that even in the states where slavery was abolished, Afro-descendants' rights were not respected. People of African descent wanting to vote, the journal published, feared for their lives. They could go to tribunals, but they were always judged by whites. They could not go to the same schools, churches or even be buried in the same places as whites. The author, thus, concluded: "black men [in the US] are free, but they cannot assert their rights, or share the same pleasures, jobs, even sorrows, nor that of death, with those men who said all men were created equal."[75]

In contrast, the author from *La Hesperia* stated that in the Spanish possessions slaves could possess and cultivate their own land, to take care of their own subsistence and eventually pay for their freedom. Additionally, the paper published, in contrast with an

[73] *La Hesperia*, 30 March 1842, 1-2: "Esta nación que se llama hoy la protectora esclusiva de la raza negra, es la que trataba á sus esclavos con más inhumanidad … Las antiguas leyes inglesas sobre la esclavitud están escritas con sangre: no pueden leerse sin espanto."
[74] *La Hesperia*, 2 April 1842, 2; and 6 April 1842, 2.
[75] *La Hesperia*, 26 March, 1842, 1: "El negro [en Estados Unidos] pues, es libre, mas no puede participar ni de los derechos, ni de los placeres, ni de los trabajos, ni de los dolores, y ni aun del sepulcro de aquel de quien ha sido declarado igual."

English worker who works for 16 hours a day and cannot "earn the minimum to support a family," a slave in Spanish America worked for "9 or 10 hour a day," had "meat and vegetables" for breakfast, and "meat stewed with bananas and seasoned with sesame" for supper. Moreover, Spanish slaves were taken care of during their old age.[76]

More than a decade later, the Mexican press repeated similar arguments during the debates about the black colonists of Papaloapan, analyzed in the previous section. On that occasion, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* published that the US kept the "colored classes" in a "rigorous segregation, and more than rigorous unjust, insulting for the whole of humankind." This journal also pointed to the contradictions in North-American society and showed indignation to Afro-descendants' situation in the northern states. Regarding the southern states, the author of the note wrote: "this conditions are even stricter and more humiliating."[77] Regardless of the veracity of all of these assertions, what is important to highlight is their political character, and their clear intention to make a distinction between the Spanish and Anglo-Saxon worlds by talking about slavery.

Far from being exclusive of the Spanish world, these discussions about the character of slavery and Afro-descendants' social conditions in general should be situated as part of larger debates about slavery and abolition in the Atlantic world. A translation of a US newspaper (whose name is not specified, but was clearly pro-slavery), stated that some slaves in the US south reached 100 years of age thanks to their masters who took care of them at old age. According to that journal: "to some extent, it is a blessing for black men to have a master who takes care of them and sees for their needs, when they are not able to do it

[76] *La Hesperia*, 30 March, 1842, 2: "no ha ganado lo necesario para el mantenimiento de su familia… entre 9 y 10 horas… carne y legumbres… carne cocida, guisada con bananas y sazonada con ajonjolí."
[77] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 27 August 1857, 2: "separación rigorosa, y mas que rigorosa injusta, y tan injusta como insultante á la humanidad…son más estrictas aún estas humillantes condiciones."

anymore." This note also presented a critique to abolitionist that resembled that Spaniards voiced against the British. For this periodical, as much as "abolitionist predicate from dawn until dusk against slavery, that does not mean that this is a humane institution." In contrast, the journal thought about the northern states: "at the same time we see the black race free in the northern states, poor but independent, and when they reach old age they will finish their days in a charity house because of their lack of resources." For southerners, then, if slavery were to be abolished: "the colored race would perish in misery when reaching certain age."[78]

These debates, therefore, linked to larger concerns already analyzed here, such as the allegedly superiority of Catholicism over Protestantism and the defense of Hispanic culture over distinct forms of social life in other nations. Even if they kept slavery, for some, Spanish American nations were morally superior to Anglo-Saxons. In this regard, these iterations of hispanismo and latinidad in the Mexican press would have not been possible without reckoning with the long history and legacies of slavery in the hemisphere. And without considering the relevance of these processes, economically and rhetorically, for inter-imperial struggles.

To conclude this chapter, we can still witness the significance of the narratives created during the nineteenth century for the historical memory and identities of many Mexicans. One of Henry Louis Gates Jr. collaborators, in being asked about racism, racial relations, and the creation of an Afro-Mexican identity responded: "Spain conquered us… the culture that conquered us was already familiar with blacks… it's a different culture… For example, if

[78] *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 5 March 1850, 2: "Es hasta cierto punto una felicidad para los negros tener un amo que los cuide y provea á sus necesidades, cuando ellos mismos son incapaces de hacerlo… que los abolicionistas prediquen en buena hora desde el amanecer hasta la noche contra la esclavitud; no por eso dejará de ser una institución humana… al paso que vemos á la raza africana, libre en los Estados del Norte, pobre, independiente y cuando llega a la vejez va á concluir sus días en las casas de beneficencia por falta absoluta de recursos… la raza de color perecería casi de miseria al tocar cierto periodo de la vida"

someone was a great artisan, the culture had to accept them and give them privileges. That explains much of the assimilation, the mixing. We're part of it all. We're not foreigners. We're Mexicans too."[79]

In recent years scholarship has put a lot of effort in returning visibility to subjects like African slavery and the Afro-descendant presence in Mexico. few works, however, have delve into the nineteenth century and those that do, generally stop before the 1850s. This decision has created the Afro-descendants and slavery disappeared from the historical imaginary of the nation after independence, or after the 1829 decree of abolition. On the contrary, an analysis of the most important Mexican newspapers of the period demonstrates that these subjects remain an important part of the nation's historical memory.

Beyond the now common place that maintains that Afro-descendants were silenced or erased from Mexican history, it would be more precise to say that talking about their presence at specific historical moments served Mexican elites to buttress their political projects. The fact that Afro-descendants did not receive as much attention to natives, for example, should not lead us to conclude that they were erased from history. That Afro-Mexicans receded to the background of history after independence is consistent with the demographic data presented in the previous chapter. It is also consistent with the idea that by eliminating colonial distinctions Mexico would be a more egalitarian society. For both elites and Afro-Mexicans there were no reason to keep the social categories from a past considered oppressive. The majority of times that Afro-descendants figured in political discussions in the press was to attack or reinforce liberal political projects. Moreover, realizing that Mexican elites used the image of Afro-descendants to create historical narratives about citizenship,

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[79] Gates Jr, *Black in Latin America*, 86-87.

equality, and belonging should encourage researchers to go beyond restoring the historical visibility of this group, and try to connect their history with larger processes.

Ultimately, by reporting news about slavery and abolition from around the globe, the Mexican press made the country take part of a wide net through which ideas and information circulated around the Atlantic world. Mexican interpretations of these news, in turn, laid the ground for the development of hispanismo and latinidad. Indeed, by presenting Spanish American republics as more liberal or progressive than the US, or by differentiating between slavery in the Spanish world and in the English world, the press contributed to the creation of narratives and identities that are still relevant today.

Conclusion

In his influential study *Silencing the Past*, Michel Rolph-Trouillot argued that power shapes not only what happened in the past, but also what it is said to have happened. That is, power dynamics influence the production of history itself as much as they influence historical events. In this process, some voices are highlighted while others are condemned to silence. It is the historian's task to reveal the silences that blur historical narratives in order to create new, perhaps more responsible and self-conscious, interpretations of the past. Further, the author contends, scholars should be aware that these silences can be imbued into the process of historical production at various critical moments. They can be introduced at the very moment of making primary sources. These can also be created at the moment of organizing those sources into archives. Silences appear too when people start producing narratives about past events and strongly hold to some aspects, while leave out others. Finally, historians also contribute to this process when they produce their own historical narratives and highlight specific details at the expense of others. In this sense, each historical narrative is its own collection of overlapping silences.[1] Rolph-Trouillot's insights offer a fascinating framework from which to examine the history of Afro-Mexicans and their social invisibility.

How primary sources and archives have silenced the histories of Afro-Mexicans is more readily notorious, conspicuous even. Certainly, the abrupt decline of people labeled as mulatos between the censuses of 1793 and 1822 in Guadalajara was the problem that originally inspired this work. It is also relatively apparent how the narratives that Mexicans created during the nineteenth century about the interrelated histories of slavery and peoples

[1] Rolph-Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 26-27.

of African descent in Mexico created their own silences. How scholars have introduced silences into this history, consciously or not, is not as evident and deserves further discussion. *Becoming Citizens* has delved into the deep historical roots of Mexico's neglect of its African heritage. It has sought to offer a new perspective on the presence and contributions of Afro-descendants in a largely unexplored location, and to present a new narrative that changes our understanding of Afro-Mexicans in Guadalajara and its region in, perhaps small, but crucial ways.

Becoming Citizens contributes to a growing body of scholarship focusing on the history of Guadalajara, on the histories of Afro-descendants in Mexico and Latin America, as well as on the construction of difference in the Spanish empire. This study has made five key interventions into these fields. First, it has offered a reconceptualization of the history of Guadalajara and of Afro-Mexicans' contributions to it. Extant studies about the African presence in this city have rarely, if ever, explicitly thought of Guadalajara as part of the black urban Atlantic or the Atlantic world more generally, and instead have framed their findings more within the realm of local or national history. By keeping a comparative perspective throughout, this work has unearthed interesting parallels between Guadalajara and other cities within the black urban Atlantic. Similarly to other places elsewhere in the Atlantic world, Afro-descendants participated in the conquest and peopling of the city and its region. They were among the first city's inhabitants too. They quickly occupied different economic sectors. Afro-Mexicans, ultimately, through their participation in civic and religious festivities, or through their interactions with other groups through all sorts of ritual practices, contributed to the forging of a colonial Mexican popular culture.

Second, by recovering historical categories of difference and trying to understand them, instead of imposing modern constructs, this work adds a new dimension to the study

of social differentiation in the Spanish empire. In a recent defense of the utility of the concept of race for historical inquiry, anthropologist Peter wade has argued that few other notions capture the multifaceted character of social differentiation processes as "race". Further, the author contends, applying this concept to different historical periods and societies should not be seen as cultural imperialism, since different cultures have their own ways to speak about race.[2] There are several objections to these assertions. When scholars use the word race in their studies it is either undefined or ill-defined, reducing it to a projection of a modern, mostly North American, concern. The notion of race is being treated as a catchall, ill-defined term into which scholars can put whatever elements they find convenient. This practice, beyond anachronistic, is ahistorical, because it glosses over the changes underwent by the word itself, obscures the historical processes linked to those changes, and tends to project our own moral judgements onto the past, more than helping to explain it. In this sense, they introduce silences into historical narratives by blurring relevant historical specificities. In the case of colonial Spanish America this practice leads to historical inaccuracies because, while used in the context under study, the word was applied differently to what scholars pretend, and only then in specific circumstances. Had scholars used the concept of race historically, as Wade contends, they would not have used it the way they have.[3] As Michel Rolph-Trouillot puts it, "words are not concepts and concepts are not words: between the two are the layers of theory accumulated throughout the ages."[4]

The practice of subsuming diverse understandings of social difference into a single concept has led some scholars to see colonial Spanish America as a "pigmentocracy" or

[2] Wade, "Skin Colour and Race."
[3] An exception would be Burns, "Unfixing Race."
[4] Rolph-Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 4.

organized along color lines.[5] Projecting these notions onto the past, however, does not help to explain, and in fact obscures, how and why Afro-descendants occupied intermediate positions across Spanish American societies and even reached positions of power in specific instances. Indeed, it does not answer how Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara were able to claim that "only españoles have preference over us" during the seventeenth century. While skin color and other physical features undoubtedly factored into social differentiation practices during the colonial period, their importance for these processes is less clear than some studies contend. As we saw, unlike what happened in the Guadalajara region, identity cases in Virginia and other parts of the US revolved around people's physical features and involved summoning so-called experts. Further, associations and societies for Afro-descendants in Charleston were clearly organized along color lines. The same cannot be said about confraternities in Guadalajara. Although people used terms like negro and mulato in Mexican confraternities, these were not automatically linked to specific skin tones. If we remember from chapters three and four, what a mulato meant in terms of phenotype varied widely. What is more important, people in Guadalajara did not refer explicitly to physical appearance, the way Afro-descendants from Charleston did, for example.[6] In characterizing colonial Spanish American societies as "pigmentocracies", then, and in overemphasizing the salience of skin color for social differentiation practices, some scholars have projected onto Spanish America a feature that would characterize the concept of race in the nineteenth century and mostly in the United States.

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[5] Telles, *Pigmentocracies*; Sue, *Land of the Cosmic Race*; Vinson, *Bearing Arms*, 3; Garrison Marks, *Black Freedom*, 101.
[6] Garrison Marks, *Black Freedom*, 119-140.

Recovering historical vocabularies and categories of social difference, thus, opens up new dimensions and possibilities for historical inquiry. The concept of calidad does a much better job at capturing the complexities of social differentiation practices in the Spanish empire than race, and importantly, unlike race people used the notion of calidad across time and space. Calidad offered a holistic assessment of people's character and value. Authorities and society at large, therefore, used it to assign people a place within a social hierarchy. This notion brought together an array of differentiation practices, privileging some of them in specific contexts, and others at different moments. This feature of calidad entails for scholars to thoroughly examine which practices, preconceptions, and understandings of social difference are being put at play in particular instances, before qualifying it as race or imposing any other category. An example taken from this work is how the label of mulato was reproduced in Guadalajara during the late colonial period before it eventually fell into disuse. As Ben Vinson has aptly put it, thus, calidad helps to illuminate aspects of the Afro-descendant experience that otherwise would be overlooked.[7]

Third, this work has presented a different narrative about the histories of Afro-Mexicans in Guadalajara during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Previous scholarship focusing on Guadalajara has portrayed slavery as a marginal episode of the city's history. Further, earlier studies have reproduced the idea that slavery declined quickly after 1640 and that the free population of African descent gradually "whitened" to the point that by the end of the colonial period it was difficult to distinguish it from other populations.[8] Evidence presented in this work from notarial and sacramental records challenges these

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[7] Vinson, *Bearing Arms*, 226.

[8] For the decline of slavery after 1640 see Calvo, *Poder, religión y Sociedad*, 327-343; for the narrative of whitening see Jiménes Pelayo, "Una visión sobre la esclavitud."

views and depicts a more complex reality. A close analysis of bills of sale registered in Guadalajara demonstrates that more enslaved people were sold in the city during the second half of the seventeenth century than during the peak years of the transatlantic slave trade to New Spain as a whole. This trajectory is consistent with the population growth of Guadalajara. Significantly, this trend also contrasts with the well-studied cases of Puebla, San Luis Potosí, and Jalapa, where most slave purchases took place during the first half of the century. The example of Guadalajara, nonetheless, fits within other larger patterns observed in those cities and elsewhere in the viceroyalty. Namely, the replacement of African slaves with Mexican-born bondsmen either during or after the first half of the seventeenth century. Likewise, the substitution of enslaved people labeled as negros with those deemed as mulatos at some point of the century. This analysis, then, leads to conclude that slavery did not decline in seventeenth-century Guadalajara; rather, it most likely peaked during the second half of that century. It would be the task of future studies to pinpoint precisely when slavery started to decline and why.

Related to this, with the decrease of the African slave trade, scholars have seen the Afro-Mexican population as gradually vanishing, transitioning from an overwhelmingly negro population, to a mulato during the course of the eighteenth century. While this transition is generally accurate, interpreting this trend as “whitening” would be to oversimplify calidad categories and to equate them with skin color; something that would be misleading. As we saw, mulatos prietos, atezados, or negros, were as numerous as mulatos blancos, claros, or other similar shades, and these categories kept existing throughout the colonial period. Under this light, trying to assign someone a specific complexion with the term mulato alone would be a dubious task. Crucially, the decreasing of African arrivals to Guadalajara and the intermingling of Afro-descendants with other groups did not

automatically lead to the disappearance of calidad categories. That is simply not how calidad categories worked. As we have seen, with certainty the classification of mulato referred to someone of African ancestry, and most likely of free status, but how people came to be labeled as mulatos was a much more complicated process. A person could become a mulato for association with other mulatos. He could become a mulato because of his place of residence, or because of his socio-economic standing, or because of a combination of these and other factors like tributary status or membership in a militia or other corporations. In contrast to this narrative of gradual vanishing, then, this work has portrayed a different picture. An examination of thousands of sacramental records from late-colonial Guadalajara demonstrates the existence of a stable and ample community of people who consistently used the label of mulato in different documents. Significantly, this community was comprised of multigenerational families who identified as mulatos over large spans of time, and who served as godparents or marriage sponsors for other Afro-Mexicans. These records also disprove local and imperial authorities' notions of mulatos as vagabonds who constantly tried to hide or alter their calidad ascriptions.

Fourth, this study has offered the first quantitative and qualitative analysis of the so-called disappearance of Afro-Mexicans from Guadalajara. Scholars have been aware of the seeming plummeting of Afro-descendant populations across the viceroyalty for decades, none of them, however, has actually presented ample empirical evidence to support their claims. Researchers have turned to narratives of whitening and mestizaje as the most recurrent explanations to Afro-Mexicans' social invisibility. In this case, notions of whitening, either used literally or as metaphors, have also distorted in various ways our understanding of the processes by which Afro-Mexicans became socially invisible. The term itself evokes racial and racist theories from the nineteenth century. It also elicits

governments' attempts to attract European migration to Latin America during the same period. In this sense, it projects nineteenth-century historical processes to the colonial past, when Afro-Mexicans actually stopped using calidad labels. At best, the term whitening poorly describes Afro-descendants' attempts to improve their situation. This is also problematic, because as we have seen mulatos consistently identified as such even over generations, and importantly, in Guadalajara there was no transition from an ethnic moniker like español, to a "racial" one like white (or blanco in Spanish), as there was in colonial United States. Further, and ironically, contemporary Europeans, unlike modern scholars, did not considered Iberian peoples as white.[9] Instead, evidence from Guadalajara offers a more multifaceted picture of this process. There was undoubtedly an intention from Afro-descendants to improve their social standing. This intent, however, was linked to the political actions of Afro-descendants during the age of revolutions and to ideas of citizenship, not to an anachronistic notion of whitening.

By situating Afro-Mexicans' abandonment of calidad categories within the larger spectrum of Afro-descendants' political actions during the age of revolutions, this work offers a new narrative of this process that runs counter to those studies who have dismissed Afro-Mexicans' mobilization as premodern. Demographic records from Guadalajara reveal that Afro-Mexicans manipulated and eventually abandoned calidad categories in a time of political distress and emerging political opportunities. Further, this phenomenon is also observable in different types of documents. An examination of these sources reveals that Afro-Mexicans strategically appropriated the categories of español, indio, or mestizo at a time when the meaning of these changed to include citizenship. Subsequently, they either

[9] British people in particular remarked during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that Iberians could not be considered white, see Wilkinson, *Blurring the Lines*, 232.

dismissed these classifications when they saw no need in keeping them, or outright claimed the label of citizens during the first year after Mexican independence. This new interpretation about Afro-Mexicans' disappearance also undermines the claim that ideologies of mestizaje led Afro-descendants to stop identifying themselves as such.

Fifth, this study presents a more nuanced perspective about the creation of historical narratives about the histories of Afro-Mexicans and slavery during the nineteenth century. Scholars have rightly signaled the development of a narrative about the disappearance of Afro-descendants from Mexico during this period. This narrative, nonetheless, was neither uncontested, nor the only one circulating about these themes during the period. A quantitative analysis of the Mexican press reveals that slavery and Afro-Mexicans remained subjects widely discussed. Mexican writers, similar to their Latin American counterparts, quickly associated slavery and calidad classifications as vestiges of the colonial past that the new nations had to leave behind in order to progress. In this sense, they used the colonial past of slavery to put distance with Spain. Mexican politicians also presented themselves as abolitionists and anti-slavery to claim a higher moral ground than their North American counterparts, as a counterbalance to US imperialism in the region. Crucially, some these narratives crafted in the nineteenth century did not portray Afro-Mexicans as a vanishing population. Instead, Mexicans of African descent were considered as exemplars of what the liberal, republican ideals could achieve.

The finding presented in this study elicit several questions that future scholarship should address. Considering the fact that Afro-Mexicans abandoned social classifications out of their own volition, can we keep speaking about historical erasure in this case? How can we reconcile Afro-Mexicans' agency with the fact that they did not have much control over the historical narratives created after they stopped identifying themselves as such? That is,

how can we balance the influence of individual or collective agency with structural constraints in our interpretations of this subject? Further, taking into account that Afro-Mexicans forfeited social categorization decades before any ideology of mestizaje took shape, what was precisely the role of these ideologies in Afro-Mexicans' invisibility? Does the explanatory power of mestizaje for issues of social invisibility still hold?

Finally, in 2020, amidst the worst health crisis humankind has experienced in over a century, the Mexican government conducted its general census of population. In addition to the unusual circumstances in which it was carried on, this census was also different in that, for the first time since the Mexican government conducts regular censuses, it included the category of Afro-Mexican. One year after the counting took place, the National Institute of Statistics (INEGI in Spanish) published its results. Over 2% of the more than 126 million people that inhabit the country considered themselves as *afromexicano*, *afrodescendiente*, or negro.[10] The event is significant in a couple of ways. With this census, almost two hundred years of social invisibility for Afro-Mexicans came to an end, at least on paper. Whether this policy materializes in actual changes for people's living situation remains to be seen. The event is also significant in that, in a way, it signals to the seeming failure of banning social classifications as a solution for the long-standing discrimination and marginalization that Afro-Mexicans have historically endured. The significance of historical inquiry should not be subordinated to present events. In this case, however, recent attempts to revive African-derived identities in Mexico and the recognition of Afro-Mexicans as one of the ethnicities comprising the Mexican nation, make the study of the history of these populations the more pressing and relevant.

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[10] The precise figure is 2.04% from the 126,014,024 Mexicans counted. https://censo2020.mx

Appendix 1: Four Documents about Afro-Mexicans

Document 1: Letter from Bartola de San Juan to the Holy Office of the Inquisition. AGN, Inquisición, vol. 643, exp. 1, f. 18v. October 1683. English Translation.

[Cross]

Two subjects sir move me to perturb your grace with this letter. The first is, that motivated by my superiors who told me to do it and ask your grace, as I am, to beg you to take action about my case, the one you know well. Further, that I did not forget to remember your grace about it, because of the many cases that keep your grace busy in his office, and that being my case of such concern it was necessary to beg your grace many times to remedy my situation. The second is, that being afflicted and miserable because of the depression that I am suffering because of my case. Some people ask me if I am excommunicated, other that if I am not a Christian, others ask me what is wrong with me, why I do not observe the sacraments, and how long has it been since I do not observe them, and because I cannot tell them why I live in continuous despair, that if it not were for the person whom I have told about my case (thank God) who has told me to endure in silence, I do not know what would I have done. And thus, for the love of the most holy blood of our lord Jesus Christ, I beg your grace to close my case, because I cannot handle more humiliation. I know well that I deserve it because of my grave sins, for which I deeply regret, but sir, all the gossip and chatter of people around me have become unbearable. I beg your grace to sympathize with my suffering and distress. I ask the most holy virgin to grant your grace the health and happiness that you deserved.

I kiss the hand of your grace. Your humble servant Bartola de San Juan

[Signed]

Document 1b: Carta de Bartola de San Juan al Santo Oficio de la Inquisición. Transcripción en español

(Cruz)

Dos cosas Sr. me motivan a importunar a vuestra merced con este papel, la primera es de movida por persona superior que me mandó lo hiciera y que pidiese a vuestra merced como lo hago, suplicándole me despache en mi negocio el que ya sabe vuestra merced, y mas que no me descuidase en acordarlo a vuestra merced, por los muchos negocios en que el oficio y dignidad tendría a vuestra merced tan bien ocupado, y que siendo el mío de tanta consideración, era necesario que [ilegible] y que suplicase a vuestra merced muchas veces para el remediarla. Otra es afligida y desconsolada con tantos bajones como por el caso estoy pasando, pues unas me dicen que si estoy descomulgada, otras que si no soy cristiana, otras que qué tengo pues no frecuento los sacramentos, y que cuánto ha que no me lo ven hacer, y como no les puedo decir el porqué, vivo en un tormento continuo, que si no fuera por la persona a quien tengo comunicado el negocio (primeramente Dios) que me ha mandado que calle y sufra no sé qué hubiera sido de mí y así por la sangre santísima de Jesucristo Nuestro Señor, que cuanto antes me despache vuestra merced que ya no puedo más con tanto abatimiento, que bien conozco lo merezco por mis grandes pecados, de los que me hallo muy arrepentida. Pero Señor, es cosa intolerable las hablas y discursos que entre tanta gente hay. Y cada una de por sí se hace. Y así mucho a suplicar a vuestra merced se duela de mi trabajo y muchos desconsuelos por la Virgen Santísima que conceda a vuestra merced mucha salud con las felicidades y bondades que vuestra merced se merece […]

BLM de vuestra merced. Su humilde criada Bartola de San Juan [rúbrica]

Document 2: Petition of Ana del Castillo, Parda libre, to the City Council of Guadalajara AMG, Actas de cabildo, libro de 1680-1699, f. 72. English translation

In Guadalajara on the seventh day of January, one thousand six hundred and eighty four years before Captain Francisco de Zúñiga Mendoza, senior alderman and mayor of the city the following petition was read:

Ana del Castillo, parda libre of color, vecina of Guadalajara, in the best terms that law allows me. I say that for sixty years, more or less, I have possessed, quietly and peacefully, and I still do, a lot of land located next to my house, that was granted to my mother Beatriz de la Mota, as well as the house in which I live, by don Juan de Canseco, then president [of the high court of Guadalajara]. And without further justification than to pretend that my lot was royal land, don Alonso Calderón, now deceased, last year trespassed into my property and tried to build a house, depriving me from my possession, going against my right and perturbing the acquisition and possession of said lot that I have claimed for so many years, I asked for judicial testimony and lawful possession, so no one perturbs me and tries to take me away from my possession, and particularly now that the daughter of said don Alonso de Calderón , Luisa de Calderón, without any justification other than contending that her father left it to her, pretends to dispossess me of said lot going against any law and right. Therefore, I ask your grace, and beg in relation to the abovementioned to notify said Luisa de Calderón to cease in her pretentions and do not disturb me. And if she has something to ask, that she do it before your grace, showing the titles under which she pretends to build in my property, because she has already set some stones and other materials to do so, despite that I have contradicted her verbally. And, thus, I legally charge her once and twice to not disturb me. I

ask for justice and swear before God and the cross that this petition is true and not driven by malice.

Ana del Castillo

Francisco de Zúñiga Mendoza

Document 2b: Petición de Ana del Castillo, mujer parda libre, ante el cabildo de Guadalajara. Transcripción en español

En Guadalajara en siete de enero de mil seiscientos y ochenta y cuatro años ante el Capitán Francisco de Zúñiga Mendoza Regidor más antiguo y Alcalde ordinario en ella se leyó esta petición:

Ana del Castillo de color pardo libre vecina de esta ciudad como mejor haya lugar de derecho = digo que al tiempo de sesenta años poco más o menos que he estado poseyendo, y con efecto lo estoy, un solar que está contiguo a mi casa quieta y pacíficamente sin contradicción de persona alguna respecto de que se le hizo merced a mi madre Beatriz de la Mota de dicho solar, y casa en donde moro, por el Sr. Don Juan de Canseco siendo presidente, que siendo necesario se justificara, y es así que sin más fundamento, que quererse dar a entender ser realengo dicho solar, Don Alonso Calderón, difunto, el año pasado se me entró en el solar referido y quiso fabricar en él, despojándome de la posesión en que me hallaba, que conforme a derecho ninguno puede serlo, ni menos inquietando en la adquisición y prescripción de tantos años por lo cual repugne y contradice entonces y habiendo hecho la dicha contradicción pedí testimonio, y juntamente posesión nuevamente judicial para o bien el que cada día cualquiera que quiere me molesta en querer desposeerme de dicha posesión, y ahora

al presente la hija del dicho Don Alonso Calderón, Luisa Calderón, sin más título que sólo decir que su padre se lo dejó quiere con este pretexto despojarme, y consiguientemente quitarme dicho solar contra todo lo regular, y dispuesto por derecho por tanto y lo demás favorable:

A Vuestra Merced pido y suplico en atención a lo referido mande se le notifique a la dicha Luisa Calderón sobresea en lo que pretende y no me inquiete en la posesión en que me hallo, y si tuviere que pedir lo haga ante vuestra merced y que muestre títulos en cuya conformidad quiere labrar en dicho mi solar, pues ya ha puesto piedra y otros materiales para edificar, sin embargo de habérselo contradicho verbalmente, y así jurídicamente le contradigo una y dos veces, no me inquiete ni perturbe por ser justicia que pido, y juro a Dios y a una cruz en mi ánima este escrito y contradicción ser cierta y no de malicia […]

Ana del Castillo Francisco de Zúñiga Mendoza

Document 3: Petition of Joseph del Pinal, mulato libre and master shoemaker, to the city council for a full lot of land in the neighborhood of San Sebastián. AMG, Actas de cabildo, libro de 1680-1699, f. 134

In the city of Guadalajara on the twenty seventh day of August, one thousand six hundred and ninety three years, before the justices of this most loyal and noble city's city council: Lic. Don Nicolás de Lesama Altamirano y Reinoso, lawyer of the high court of this kingdom, Captain don María Gutiérrez de la Flor mayor of the city, and in the absence of the aldermen the following petition was read:

Joseph del Pinal, mulato libre and master shoemaker, vecino of this city. In the best terms that the law allows me, I appear before your grace and say that I need a full lot of land on which to build a house for my woman and children. To that end, I ask your grace to dispatch the customary orders that instances like this require. Said lot is in the neighborhood known as San Sebastián, behind the church and hermit that borders to west with the lot of Salvador de los Reyes Villavicencio. It borders on the other three directions with royal lands. Being your orders dispatched and justified my petition, I ask your grace to grant me said lot, for I am ready to contribute to the city's arcs in the amount that your grace deems necessary.

I beg your grace to dispatch your orders and execute them as I have requested. I swear that this petition is lawful and not driven by malice.

Joseph del Pinal (signed)

Document 3b: Petición de Joseph del Pinal, mulato libre y maestro zapatero, de un solar de cuadra entera en el barrio de san Sebastián. Transcripción en español

En la ciudad de Guadalajara en veinte y siete días del mes de agosto de mil y seiscientos y noventa y tres años ante los señores cabildo, justicia y regimiento de esta muy noble y leal ciudad, es a saber: el Lic. Don Nicolás de Lesama Altamirano y Reinoso, abogado de la Real Audiencia de este reino; Capitán Don María Gutiérrez de la Flor que es Alcalde Ordinario de ella […] por ausencia de los señores regidores se presenta esta petición por el contenido.

Joseph del Pinal mulato libre maestro de zapatero y vecino de esta ciudad, como más haya lugar parezco ante V. S. y digo que yo necesito de un solar de cuadra entera en que labrar casa de vivienda para mi mujer e hijos y para ello se ha de servir V. S. Mandar se hagan las diligencias que en razón de dichas mercedes se acostumbran. Que dicho solar está en el barrio que llaman de San Sebastián a espaldas de la iglesia y ermita que linda por el poniente con solar de Salvador de los Reyes Villavicencio y por los otros tres vientos con tierra realenga; hechas dichas diligencias y contando estar sin perjuicio hacerme merced de dicho solar que estoy presto a servir para propios de la ciudad con la cantidad que V. S. Fuere servido.

A V. S. Suplico se sirva mandar hacer dichas diligencias y se han hacer como llevo pedido en que recibiré merced justa: y juro en forma ser cierto y no ser de malicia.

Joseph del Pinal (rúbrica)

Document 4: Letter from "an African" to *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 8 January 1850, sección remitido, p. 30. English translation

Dear editors of el Siglo XIX.-January 6, 1850.- Very much appreciated gentlemen: the development of the tenets of Christianity, among other results, has led to equality of rights: being established and admitted the equality in principle of the human species, it has been required to recognize its equality in goals and the equality of rights to use the means that lead to it. These tenets, product of the purest moral, have necessarily soften our customs and deprived the laws from the ferocity of barbaric times, when the source of rights were superstition and force. Men of black countenance, to whom superstition and brute force vilified to the miserable condition of beasts, and to be subjects of mercantile speculation, owe the restoration of their dignity of men to the most holy doctrine, product of the sublime preaching of the Nazarene.

I, who am a descendant of those men, whose color was considered degraded in the past and is now regenerated, am grateful and ought to be grateful for the benefits of Christianity, solid and indestructible foundation of the democratic doctrines, that have demolished the barriers product of distress and pride that separated blacks from whites, making the former servants and the latter masters. They have proclaimed the equality before the law, thank God we have a clear path to rise to the higher public offices, from where the hostile politics of private law warded us off, and from where some bad Christians, who miss the use of the lash and the fear to barbaric despotism, would like to move us away. That is what they wish, those who with known sophisms and fancy words try to defame the sacred principles, to bring back the stake, the bonfire, and slavery.

I do not find strange that our former masters pretend to do so: I am amazed, indeed, that some descendants of Africans who thanks to democracy have risen to the highest positions, be that in the ecclesiastical realm or the civil order, reveal themselves as its enemies. That ingratitude is not forgivable for people who do not belong to the imbecile mob that has always thrown stones at its redeemers. As much as they are willing to fight democracy and to sanctify absolute monarchy, they always work against their own interests, because the nobility does not concede. Although they present us now their chains covered with flowers, we would suffer them later, covered with hooks; because force alone maintains what the reason rejects. Is it not ridiculous that some of them try to pass as nobles where it is intended to build a dynasty of whites? like them, they offend those who, following the abovementioned holy principles, detest the dominion that iniquity gave them over our, previously, denigrated caste. How, without philanthropy, daughter of evangelic moral, so many of my countrymen would be employed to fulfil the destiny of those deemed of pure blood instead of pursuing their abilities? How would they appear in customs, legislatures, and other tasks reserved for the dominators? Would my dear countrymen be so imbecile so as to whish, and even work, for the restoration of colonial policies that would bring with them the privileges and assumptions of that epoch? Are they not aware that, instead of occupying the distinguished place that we now occupy and the right to chose we enjoy today, they would turn us into servants, consider us from the land of Guinea, and descendants of the rude? I am not delirious: although thank God I have more than four reales, I prefer being free and called sans-culotte, than being a slave and considered noble. I ask God to illuminate those who are in my situation, so they do not fall victims of such deceit so sagaciously fabricated. I wish heaven puts them a mirror in front of them, so they can look at themselves, and to never take one from me, so I do not fall into temptation.

I beg you, dear editors, to take the trouble to publish this letter in your very much appreciated journal, in order to help men of my color who are deceived. If you do so I would forever live in debt. Your most caring servant, who kisses your hands. *An African*.

Document 4b: Carta de “un africano” a *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 8 de enero de 1850, sección remitido, p. 30. Transcripción en español

Señores editores del Siglo XIX.-Enero 6 de 1850.- Muy apreciables señores: El desarrollo de los principios del cristianismo, entre sus nuevos resultados sociales, ha producido el de la igualdad de derechos: sentada y admitida la unidad de principio en la especie humana, ha sido preciso reconocer la unidad de fin y la igualdad de derechos para emplear los medios que a él conducen. Estos principios, hijos de la moral más pura, necesariamente han suavizado las costumbres y quitado a las leyes la ferocidad de los tiempos de barbarie en que no se conocían más fuentes de derechos que la superstición y la fuerza. Los hombres de tez negra, a quienes esa superstición y la fuerza bruta habían envilecido hasta la miserable condición de bestias, y a ser objetos de especulaciones mercantiles, deben el restablecimiento de la dignidad de hombres a las doctrinas sacrosantas hijas de la sublime predicación del Nazareno.

Yo, que soy descendiente de los hombres de ese color degradado un tiempo y regenerado hoy, me muestro y debo mostrarme agradecido a los beneficios del cristianismo, base sólida e indestructible de las doctrinas democráticas, que derribando las barreras de la inquietud unida al orgullo establecieran entre los morenos y los blancos, haciendo a estos señores y a los otros siervos, han proclamado la igualdad ante la ley, gracias a Dios que tenemos ya el paso franco y libre acceso, a la par, para ascender hasta los primeros puestos

públicos de donde nos alejaba la política mezquina del derecho privado y de donde alejarnos quisieran algunos malos cristianos, que extrañan el uso del látigo, y el humo de los inciensos que tributa el miedo al bárbaro despotismo: eso desean los que con pomposo juego de voces y sofismas conocidos desprestigiar intentan a los principios bienhechores, para volvernos el reinado de la hoguera, de la picota y de la esclavitud.

No me parece extraño que tal pretendan nuestros antiguos dominadores: me asombra, sí, que algunos descendientes de africanos que merced a la democracia han ascendido a elevados puestos ya en estado eclesiástico, ya en el orden civil, se manifiestan acérrimos enemigos de ella. No es disculpable tanta ingratitud en personas que no pertenecen al imbécil pueblo que siempre ha apedreado a sus redentores. Por más oficiosos que se encuentran en combatir la democracia y en santificar la absoluta monarquía, siempre obran contra sus verdaderos intereses, porque la nobleza no transige: aunque por ahora se nos presentan las cadenas cubiertas con flores, las sufriríamos después erizadas de garfios; porque la fuerza sola puede sostener lo que la razón repugna. ¿No es ridículo que algunos de ellos pretendan pasar por nobles en donde se trata de establecer una dinastía de hueritos? A guisa de tales arrojan vituperios a los que en fuerza de los santos principios ya enunciados detestan el dominio que la iniquidad les diera sobre la nuestra, un tiempo degradada casta. ¿Cómo sin la filantropía, hija de la moral evangélica, tantos de mis paisanos en origen, habrían de ser empleados en los destinos que se reservaron a la llamada pureza de sangre, primero que a la capacidad? Cómo habían de figurar en aduanas, legislaturas y otras funciones reservadas a los dominadores? ¿Qué, serán mis caros compatriotas tan imbéciles, que desconozcan sus verdaderos intereses hasta el punto de desear y aun trabajar por el restablecimiento de la política del tiempo de la colonia, que traería consigo los derechos y pretensiones de la época? ¿Qué, no conocen que en vez del lugar distinguido que hoy cada uno ocupa y del derecho

para optar, se nos volvería a la condición de siervos, y seríamos reclamados del congreso de Guinea o de los descendientes de los yermos? Yo no me alucino: aunque gracias a Dios tengo algo más de cuatro reales, quiero mejor que me llamen sans-culotte estando libre, que noble en la esclavitud, y pido a Dios que ilumine a varios de los que se hallan en mi caso para que no sean víctimas del engaño tan sagazmente manejado. El cielo les ponga un espejo por delante para que se vean, y a mí no me lo quite nunca a fin de no caer en la tentación.

Suplico a vdes., señores editores, que se dignen dar publicidad a esta carta en el apreciable diario que les pertenece, en obsequio de hombres de mi color que se hallan engañados, a cuyo favor les vivirá reconocido quien es de vdes. afectísimo servidor Q. B. SS. MM.-*Un africano*.

Appendix 2: Afro-Mexican Families in the Demographic Records of Guadalajara, 1793-1822

The Lomana Family

Baptism of Atanacio de la Cruz Lomana

Baptism of María Soledad de la Paz Lomana

Baptism of María Vicenta Quilimaca Lomana

Baptism of María Herculana de Jesús Lomana

Baptism of María Apolonia de la Merced López Lomana

Baptism of José Marcos López Lomana

Baptism of José Mariano Seferino Cesáreo Lomana

The Lomana Family in the Census of 1821

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario, Bautismos 1793-1799, images 291 and 555; Bautismos, 1799-1806, images 296, 449, 610, and 656; Bautismos, 1810-1815, image 358; GCP Database "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821 and 1822," 36,489-36,496; and Cuartel 15, 1821, p. 9.

The Muñoz-Pérez Family, citizens in 1822

Baptism of José Antonio Manuel Muñoz, mulato

Baptism of José Hilario Muñoz, mulato

Muñoz-Pérez Family in 1822, citizens

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, San Juan Bautista Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos 1812-1822, images 217 and 357; GCP Database, "Guadalajara Censuses of 1821-1822," 26,727-26,734; and Cuartel 10, 1822, p. 47.

Appendix 3: Baptisms of Afro-Mexicans in Guadalajara by Parish and Year, 1793-1822

Year	Sagrario	Santuario	Analco	Jesús	Pilar	Mexicaltzingo	Total
1793	122	42	11	-	-	15	190
1794	115	24	10	-	-	17	166
1795	68	26	10	-	-	7	111
1796	88	37	13	-	-	18	156
1797	57	32	14	-	-	12	115
1798	57	29	14	-	-	17	117
1799	62	33	5	-	-	20	120
1800	88	19	10	-	-	15	132
1801	68	30	8	-	-	18	124
1802	78	15	17	-	-	17	127
1803	57	21	19	-	-	23	120
1804	78	17	9	-	2	19	125
1805	67	15	15	-	5	23	125
1806	54	14	10	-	7	12	97
1807	48	16	6	-	8	14	92
1808	40	23	7	-	3	6	79
1809	25	11	8	-	6	20	70
1810	17	12	14	-	8	12	63
1811	16	7	3	-	4	6	36
1812	8	8	10	-	3	10	39
1813	3	11	8	-	5	5	32
1814	1	1	1	-	3	2	8
1815	1	8	8	5	6	10	38
1816	21	4	13	2	0	10	50
1817	9	2	3	1	1	7	23
1818	12	7	4	0	3	5	31
1819	10	4	13	1	1	6	35
1820	10	1	9	1	1	0	22
1821	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
1822	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total	1281	469	275	10	66	346	2447

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, Bautismos 1786-1793, 1793-1799, 1799-1806, 1806-1810, 1810-1815, 1815-1820 and 1820-1824; Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Bautismos de hijos legítimos, 1782-1794, 1794-1799, 1799-1812, 1812-1820, and 1820-1827; San José de Analco, Bautismos, 1761-1801, 1801-1816, and 1816-1827; Nuestra Señora del Pilar, Bautismos 1804-1821 and 1821-1837; Jesús, Bautismos 1815-1821, and 1821-1828; Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1782-1812 and 1812-1822.

Appendix 4: Marriages of Afro-Mexicans in Guadalajara by Parish and Year, 1793-1822

Year	Sagrario	Santuario	Analco	Jesús	Total
1793	24	10	7	-	41
1794	19	6	2	-	27
1795	44	10	9	-	63
1796	36	10	15	-	61
1797	45	8	21	-	74
1798	24	11	11	-	46
1799	26	8	3	-	37
1800	36	6	2	-	44
1801	35	9	3	-	47
1802	25	3	3	-	31
1803	31	3	7	-	41
1804	14	11	6	-	31
1805	14	15	1	-	30
1806	15	12	2	-	29
1807	12	6	2	-	20
1808	10	4	2	-	16
1809	20	7	3	-	30
1810	8	7	3	-	18
1811	4	10	1	-	15
1812	13	4	6	-	23
1813	8	2	0	-	10
1814	3	2	1	-	6
1815	7	5	4	2	18
1816	3	3	2	4	12
1817	2	3	2	3	10
1818	10	-	1	3	14
1819	5	0	1	3	9
1820	1	0	1	0	2
1821	6	0	0	0	6
1822	4	0	1	0	5
Total	504	175	122	15	816

Sources: Familysearch.org, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979, Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, 1788-1805, 1805-1818, and 1819-1827; Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Matrimonios, 1789-1817, and 1819-1868; San José de Analco, Matrimonios, 1774-1792 and 1798-1833; Jesús, Matrimonios, 1815-1832.

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Archives

AGI Archivo General de Indias
    Mapas y Planos
AGN Archivo General de la Nación
    Inquisición
ARAG Archivo de la Real Audiencia de Guadalajara
    Ramo Civil
    Ramo Criminal
    Ramo Fiscal
AMG Archivo Municipal de Guadalajara
    Actas de Cabildo
    Gremios
AIPJ Archivo de Instrumentos Públicos de Jalisco
    Andrés Venegas, 2 volumes, 1606-1625
    Francisco Guerrero, 1 volume, 1614-1619
    Pedro Mancilla, 2 volumes, 1620-1629
    Juan Sedano, 9 volumes, 1627-1638
    Francisco de Orendáin, 7 volumes, 1629-1638
    Diego Pérez de Rivera, 13 volumes, 1637-1666
    Hernando Enríquez del Castillo, 4 volumes, 1641-1655
    Tomás de Orendáin, 4 volumes, 1652-1674
    Nicolás de Covarrubias, 1 volume, 1654-1658
    Tomás de Ascoide, 4 volumes, 1674-1693
    José de Tapia Palacios, 2 volumes, 1678-1735
    Diego de Galarreta, 1 volume, 1681-1684
    José López Ramírez, 6 volumes, 1682-1689
    José Antonio Calleja, 2 volumes, 1685-1690
    Pedro de Agundiz Zamora, 2 volumes, 1692-1716
    Nicolás del Castillo, 11 volumes, 1693-1706
    Diego de la Sierra y Dueñas, 7 volumes, 1697-1718
    Antonio Morelos, 11 volumes, 1697-1739
AAG Archivo del Arzobispado de Guadalajara
    Gobierno
VSCUA Vanderbilt Special Collections and University Archive

Digital Archives and Databases

Biblioteca Cervantes Virtual
Family Search, Mexico, Jalisco, Catholic Church Records 1590-1979,
    Marriage records: Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, 1788-1805, 1805-1818, and 1819-1827
    Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Matrimonios, 1789-1817, and 1819-1868
    San José de Analco, Matrimonios, 1774-1792 and 1798-1833
    Jesús, Matrimonios, 1815-1832
    Baptismal records: Guadalajara, Sagrario Metropolitano, Bautismos 1786-1793, 1793-1799, 1799-1806, 1806-1810, 1810-1815, 1815-1820 and 1820-1824

Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Bautismos de hijos legítimos, 1782-1794, 1794-1799, 1799-1812, 1812-1820, and 1820-1827
San José de Analco, Bautismos, 1761-1801, 1801-1816, and 1816-1827
Nuestra Señora del Pilar, Bautismos 1804-1821 and 1821-1837
Jesús Bautismos 1815-1821, and 1821-1828
Mexicaltzingo, Bautismos de hijos legítimos 1782-1812 and 1812-1822

HNDM Hemeroteca Nacional Digital de México
Águila Mexicana
Diario de Avisos
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