Chapter 2
The first speakers of Mexican Spanish

2.1 The first Spanish speakers in Mesoamerica and social stratification

This chapter describes the external factors that contributed to the transplantation and adaptation of the Spanish speakers living in Mesoamerica during the 16th and 17th centuries. Spanish explorers arriving in Mexico had a short-lived experience in the Caribbean islands and brought to Mexico some of their practices and recently acquired knowledge of that region; this encounter armed the Spaniards with sufficient understanding of the New World, an experience that helped them to prevent the mistakes they had made in that region. The Caribbean contact is useful at present to grasp the functions of the most important institution, the *encomienda*, and the activities and attitudes about it. The *encomienda* era also explains the formation of new gentry, which could have been more powerful had the *encomenderos* (grantees or trustees of Indian labor) counted on the full support of the Spanish Crown. Nevertheless the woes that betided the early Spanish speakers jeopardized their intentions to enslave permanently the native population. The ambiguous position toward the indigenous, protected by the Christian mission and exploited by the prevailing forces, led to a process of acculturation that turned into a process of gradual assimilation. The opposition to slavery narrowed the social distance between Spanish speakers and speakers of indigenous languages and prevented the formation of socio-ethnic dialects with glaring features of indigenous languages.

This chapter also explores the roles that some of most important institutions played in the transmission of oral Spanish in the environment that ensued after the fall of Tenochtitlan. The significance of this analysis is not redundant given that to date, most scholars have dealt abundantly with the preservation of Mexican indigenous languages, primarily Nahuatl, and some others of central and southern Mexico. Those Spanish speakers who explored the islands were first exposed to Taino, which was appropriated after only two decades of contact. The second Amerindian language known to Spanish explorers was Nahuatl while some others were at least distinguished in the early stages of Discovery. Taino and Nahuatl are however the two languages that directly influenced proto-Mexican Spanish. In addition to Spanish speakers and speakers of indigenous languages, the newer Mesoamerican area received speakers of other European languages as well as speakers of African languages; this unsuspected diversity was ideal for the formation of proto-Mexican Spanish, which was used mostly for daily interaction

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between Spanish speakers in informal domains. By the time of the colonization of New Spain, Spanish had more than sufficient regional and social variations that were used in the intermingling between Spanish speakers belonging to the first and second generation of immigrants. The interaction of Spanish speakers from diverse peninsular regions and sociocultural strata and occupations led to a process of koineization followed by popularization or vernacularization.

The diffusion of oral Spanish by agents representing the Spanish officialdom is as significant as the (re)transmission at the informal spheres of interaction and intra-familiar domains. Spanish speakers very soon formed a compact group of close-knit networks identified by language, religion, and other norms of societal interaction. Religion was a major component intervening in the identification of socio-ethnic stratification. The semi-formal variety of Spanish used in the Mesoamerican area followed to an extent the prevailing norms of educated or semi-educated Spanish speakers in the domains of religion, education and government. The active agents of (re)transmission were the Spanish speakers empowered by the *encomienda*, the municipal councils, the Inquisition, and the Church, among others. Acts of identity proclaimed in public celebrations and activities conducive to the process of socialization proved to be effective forces of transmission and solidarity amongst Spanish speakers, who were always the minority. While the information on the quantities of Spanish immigrants is not entirely reliable, this chapter illustrates how the qualitative functions of Spanish grew first in informal domains and later in formal domains.

2.2 The Spanish Caribbean experiment

Mexico's conquest and colonization was preceded by the discovery of the Antilles. Spanish explorers were in Hispaniola (present-day Santo Domingo), Puerto Rico and Cuba (mostly Spanish-speaking countries at present) before they reached Mexico. There they clashed with the natives, who were speakers of Taino. All of the men who participated in the conquest of Mexico had been on those islands for different periods of time. Cortés' expedition departed from Santiago de Cuba on July 1519 (see Map 3. 1). Encouraged by the Spanish Crown, the early Spanish explorers had established the *encomienda* system (from the verb "*encomendar*" 'to trust' or 'to commend'), which apparently was legitimized by the *Leyes de Burgos*, promulgated on December 27, 1512 in Burgos, Spain. This was the first codified set of laws governing the behavior of Spanish colonists in the New World particularly in reference to native Indians. These procedures enumerated the regulations for the government of the indigenous peoples, forbade the maltreatment of natives, and endorsed their conversion to Catholicism, albeit they were never

truly enforced. Despite the heated debates over the *encomienda*, the Spaniards in charge of the islands succeeded in retaining rights to exploit the land shares and the peoples who were living there. In the Antillean period, Indians were delivered for service in haciendas, mines and farms. The *encomendero* receiving the cacique and his group of Indians had permission to take them to the mines and farming lands. In Hispaniola there were 715 *repartimientos* (sites for labor draft) with 22,344 Indians for service (Zavala 1944: 112, 118). The *encomienda* had the support of the royal powers to enslave the native population from the time of the discovery of the New World through the mid-16th century (cf. Simpson 1929). The difference between the slave trade pioneered by the Portuguese and the experiments of the *encomenderos* resided in the manner in which human traffic was administered. Slaves were carried back and forth from territory to territory, while the indigenous populations remained mostly in their own environment, notwithstanding major disruptions to their autochthonous way of life.

A component of the Iberian identity, the *encomienda* was more than a pragmatic solution for economic and government development, an institution that gave order to social status and religious zeal since it effectively focused the energy of the crusading impulse and encouraged the Spanish Crown's desire for power. For those who participated in battles against non-Christian peoples, the *encomienda* was the replication of familiarity with Iberian socio-cultural structures, where wealth, power and success were not symbolic but real. It was a key element in the conquest and transplantation of the Spanish civilization. In Extremadura and Andalusia, the *encomienda* was a common practice. Therefore, for Hernán Cortés and his men, such form of organization served manifold purposes: it recreated something of the existence they had known in their homelands and exploited the resources of the conquered land. While details differed depending upon geography and location, the shared characteristics between the Iberian and the American *encomienda*, i.e. tribute extraction, population and labor administration, military organization and religious indoctrination, are indicative of continuity with the traditions of the Reconquista. The *encomienda* stands out in the process of transplantation of the Iberian civilization in the New World, because it facilitated the shift from governments of military occupation to governments of Hapsburg bureaucracy; the *encomienda* developed the labor and resources of the native populations into the wealth of the Spanish Empire and brought order and structure to the Spanish evangelical effort. In sum, because the *encomienda* was the only legally defined space where natives and Spaniards could interact, it turned into the primary institution of the conquest era (Lemon 2000: 25, 38-39, 51-52).

2.3 The *encomienda* in New Spain

In his overview of the *encomienda*, Simpson introduced the notion of transplantation of institutions and social habits into the New World (Simpson 1950: vii-viii). Known as acculturation, this process consisted in bringing the Christian faith to non-Christian natives. Spain had been accustomed to having contact with various peoples such as the Moors, who invaded them and attempted to convert them to the faith of Islam. For all the above reasons, Spanish people learned to live in a social system that was erected upon the privileges of conquest. This feudal system was based on a relationship of control and subjugation whereby the conqueror would levy a tribute or a feudal due on his vassals. This scheme would make the conqueror the sole protector of the ones which he conquered and would also make those he conquered serve him. In the Mesoamerican scenario peoples had already developed a stable economy based on corn and had learned to adjust their lifestyles around the production and harvesting of the crop. Indians at first were also supposed to be paid and supplied with the sustenance to live on. There was even a time period when the Crown of Spain encouraged the Indians and the Spanish to intermarry so they could help to promote this assimilation process (Simpson 1950: 10). The history and juridical basis of the *encomienda* is found in Zavala (1935: 104 and 1971), who sees a close relationship between maintaining this system and the survival of Spaniards in Mesoamerica, which was also equivalent to maintaining the Catholic faith. Services in mines were needed as tribute due to the silver boom in New Spain. The Spanish settlers founded dozens of towns where they also received tribute in form of corn and wheat. The *encomienda* gradually disappeared and became extinct in the early 1700's (Zavala 1935: 310, 339).

The underlying goals contributed to the establishment of a large and cheap labor supply for Spanish settlers. Not only did the Crown try to prevent the mistreatment of the Indians but others came into the forefront and protested against the abuse. Bishop Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566) was one of the main advocates for the suppression of the *encomiendas*, a tenacious humanist who sought the Indians' relief and liberation. In Cuba, las Casas had had an *encomienda* of his own and knew from direct experience that such system succeeded in exploitation more than in acculturation, given that a large number of Indians were dying as a result of the arduous conditions imposed on them. He witnessed the abuses of the *encomenderos* against the native peoples in diverse areas of the New World and fought zealously as an advocate of indigenous rights. His strengths and weaknesses were seen in his inability to change his opinions on issues such as the sins of the *encomienda*. Las Casas was so determined to show the abuses of the *encomenderos* that even after the *encomienda* had been reduced from a thin

disguise for slavery into something like a social system, he was still attacking it as if nothing had changed (Simpson 1950: 37). The Spanish Crown was opportunely informed of the new environmental conditions brought about to the natives of the islands and the clashes between explorers and natives. By the time new expeditions were launched to Mexico, it was well known that the Caribbean experiment had been an ecological and human disaster. Cortés was convinced that what had happened on the islands could be prevented in the newly discovered areas of Mesoamerica. What is known today about the explorations of the Caribbean and Mesoamerica derives from the reports that Hernán Cortés himself wrote to the kings of Spain in his *Cartas de Relación* (cf. Cortés 1520/2007).

2.4 The new system of social stratification

The most influential settlers became *encomenderos* and were the principal miners and commercial agriculturalists. Labor, mines, supply and all other activities related to the *encomienda* were headquartered in the nearest Spanish city. Active participants in the conquest of Mexico were rewarded with *encomiendas*, a grant to a Spaniard of the Indians of an indigenous polity, who were to provide the *encomendero* tribute in the form of commodities and service in return for protection and religious instruction, which was normally neglected. Land was not a formal component but the grantee often acquired separate grants of land. Hernán Cortés made the initial assignment and was succeeded by various governors, the *Real Audiencia* (Royal Tribunal), and the viceroy. The municipality in New Spain reflected urban-centered modes of organization where each city dominated a surrounding area while serving as the center for all economic, social, political and ecclesiastical activities. The political body representing the new Spanish city was the *cabildo* (municipal council) administered in the early years by *encomendero* families; the cabildo had jurisdiction over the reassignment of *solares* (urban house lots), *huertas* (suburban tracts for orchards, vineyards, and vegetable gardens), *estancias* and *caballerías* (rural tracts for raising horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, or the cultivation of cereal crops). In turn, the *cabildo* licensed all business and artisan activities, and let contracts for municipal services: *cabildo* officials included *regidores* (councilmen), *alcaldes* (magistrates), *alguaciles* (constables), the *alcaide* (jail warden), *procuradores* (legal representatives), the *escribano* (city clerk), the *pregonero* (town crier), and the *portero* (doorman). The *encomenderos* of New Spain and the officials who granted *encomiendas* paid great attention to distinctions based on time of arrival in New Spain. The basic division between "conqueror" and "settler" distinguished between those who arrived before or after the establishment of the first Audiencia in Mexico City in 1528, a year that

marks the end of the conquest period. Conquerors were present at the fall of Tenochtitlan in 1521 or had arrived shortly after the siege and took part in subsequent actions before 1528. In contrast, those arriving after the first Audiencia were merely *pobladores* (settlers), even though many of them earned a claim to an *encomienda* through *entrada* (entrance into a city) service in Oaxaca, Michoacan, and Jalisco (Himmerich 1991: 4-6).

Four rankings have been identified according to the merits of the Spanish protagonists in the conquest and colonization of Mexico: (a) First conquerors were members of the original Cortés *entrada* that passed muster at Cozumel and again at the founding of Veracruz. Almost 400 are identified as such with some degree of authenticity; one-half of those might have survived, and only 133 became *encomenderos*. (b) Conquerors were members of subsequent *entradas* and individual shiploads of reinforcements who arrived in New Spain in time to take part in the siege and capture of Tenochtitlan. The largest group sailed from Cuba under Pánfilo de Narváez; the survivors probably ranged from 400 to 600; of these some 300 have been correctly identified, and of this number, 178 became *encomenderos*. (c) *Poblador antiguo* (old settler) was a resident of the Indies prior to the capture of Tenochtitlan who moved to New Spain thereafter but within the first decade after 1521. Thirty-two of them must have received *encomiendas*. (d) *Poblador* (settler) was the person who arrived in New Spain after the capture of Tenochtitlan, but who had no previous residence in the Indies. Of the thousands who arrived in the second quarter of the century, only 158 became *encomenderos*; some by entrada service; others by purchase, still others by virtue of social status, but the majority by marrying an *encomendera* or lady trustee (Himmerich 1991: 6-7).

2.5 Origins of the first Spanish speakers

The *encomenderos* were mostly Spanish speakers who perpetuated themselves ten years after they took over Mexico City, where they itemized their wealth consisting of mineral deposits, agricultural products, and Indian tribute. The consolidation of the New Empire was possible thanks to arranged marriages and family representation in the local government (Himmerich 1991: 71, 73). Some of the most celebrated *encomenderos* were: Jerónimo de Aguilar (Cortés' loyal interpreter); Pedro de Alvarado (his lieutenant); Alonso García Bravo (the architect planner of Mexico City); Bernal Díaz del Castillo (Cortes' loyal soldier and author of the *Verdadera historia de la conquista de la Nueva España*); Juan Jaramillo de Salvatierra (prominent soldier married to Doña Marina or Malinche); Francisco de Montejo (founder of Merida, Yucatan); Juan de Villaseñor y Orozco (sixth great-grandfather of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, leader of Mexican Independence); Francisco

Vázquez de Coronado (the explorer who trekked nearly 5000 miles through Northwestern Mexico and the U.S. Southwest); Cristóbal Pérez de Oñate (founder of the mining town of Zacatecas and brother of Juan de Oñate). The latter led the entry to New Mexico in 1598; Hernán Cortés himself, among many others. Two women descending from emperor Moctezuma were also granted *encomiendas*, Doña Isabel and Doña Leonor, his daughters. Many young males working with Cortés were members of the same family, for example, the three brothers, Gonzalo, Jorge and Pedro de Alvarado had been together in Cuba and Santo Domingo. Some of the well-known family names that made history in the *encomienda* system were the Ávila brothers (Alonso, Francisco, Gaspar, Juan and Luis) and the Gallegos brothers (Álvaro, Gonzalo and Juan). The Gómez family came with Gonzalo Gómez, who was only 12 years old. The López, Maldonado, Ruiz, de la Torre, Villanueva, and many other brothers arrived together to explore the islands. They were indeed from different social strata, but the *encomenderos* had something in common: they had been with Hernán Cortés at the bloody battles of the conquest of Mexico or had arrived from Spain shortly after because of their privileged status. Many of them knew how to read and write, as attested in their own chronicles.

The total number of *encomenderos* amounts to 506; of those, almost 300 had been living in or exploring the Caribbean islands before they embarked themselves in the adventure that led to the discovery of Mexico (Himmerich 1991: 71, 73, passim). Their regional origin reflects the provenance of Spanish immigrants in the 16th century with those from Andalusia, Extremadura, New Castile and Old Castile representing slightly more than one-half of the total and the rest coming from other regions. The four groups of *encomenderos* (Columns 3, 4, 5 and 6) coming from the abovementioned regions comprise more than one-half of the total or 311 (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Origins and numbers of the encomenderos of New Spain

Provinces	Indians	First conqueror	Conqueror	Old settler	Settler	Total
Andalusia		39	42	9	38	128
Extremadura		24	20	8	27	79
New Castile		6	9	4	15	34
Old Castile		16	30	8	16	70
Leon		13	11	--	17	41
Biscay		6	6	--	2	14
Other Spain		8	14	--	12	34
Foreign countries		6	9	2	2	19
Unknown origin		17	37	1	29	87
Totals	3	135	178	32	158	506

Source: Himmerich (1991: 21)

The *encomienda* was for a time a master institution, the source of great wealth and power, the centerpiece of Spanish urban life, and the only military force in New Spain. Its basic nature in any given area was determined by the needs, numbers, the expectations of local Spaniards and the profile of indigenous groups. With the exception of the *pobladores* coming directly from Spain, the *encomenderos* of New Spain were familiar with the Antillean *encomienda*. Those who took part in the Conquest of New Spain were fully aware of the prolonged deliberations concerning the institution, with their own struggle to retain it and the Crown's desire to abolish it. Other colonists conceived it as an opportunity to obtain upward mobility. Hernán Cortés' (re)assignment of *encomiendas* provoked reactions and charges of favoritism; the assignees were delighted to receive tribute in kind (which was a well-established indigenous tradition) and various goods and commodities. In the lands of Mexico, severe population losses ensued and almost destroyed the availability of units sustaining the *encomiendas* (Himmerich 1991: 11-13). Between 1524 and 1526, Hernán Cortés assigned *encomiendas* to his allies while he struggled to maintain his own. He nearly lost Texcoco to royal officials, and in 1528, his enemies proceeded rapidly to usurp his holdings. In 1529 Cortés received title to a large number of towns with 23,000 Indian vassals while other royal orders made him a Marquis and granted him jurisdiction in his *marquesado* (Gibson 1964: 60).

The occupations and professions of the *encomenderos* were varied: Men of arms (*hidalgos*), notaries, medical practitioners, accountants, artisans, mariners, miners, interpreters and merchants made up one-third of the *encomenderos* representing a broad selection ranging from the middle and upper echelons to semi-skilled, unskilled and unspecified occupations but sufficiently diverse to mirror their original societal organization. With respect to residence, the pattern of the newcomers was to prefer to live in or around the Great Tenochtitlan (or Mexico City), which became the initial focus of all Spanish activity. The e*ncomiendas* were normally concentrated within 75 miles of Spanish settlements. The proximity of about one-half of the *encomiendas* to Mexico City reinforced the city's position as the hub of all Spanish activity. The *encomiendas* were often retained by the family—whether in Spain or in New Spain, although more than half were inherited by a son and more than a quarter by widows. The first and second generation of *encomenderos* arranged marriages for their daughters, widows, and nieces, who were the preferred brides-to-be of the region. At times, the *encomiendas* could also be reverted to the Spanish Crown (Himmerich 1991: 34, 75, 102). A total of 46 *encomiendas* with the corresponding number of Indian towns were recorded in the Valley of Mexico between 1531 and 1702. The largest *encomiendas* ca.1560 were located in Texcoco with a total of tributaries at 16,015; Chalco with 14,842; Tenochtitlan with 12,971; and Xochimilco with 10,583. The remaining 32

encomiendas' tributaries ranged from 220 to 8,665 whereas the total number of tributaries for those years was 109,980 (Gibson 1964: 64).

The *encomienda* system used different methods to collect tribute. The first one made the tribute payable directly to local recipients, and the second to the imperial *calpixque* or tax collector. The first generation of *encomenderos* maintained a good relationship with cooperative caciques (chieftain or lord) but the latter protested when the survivors of Indian nobility engaged in legal disputes with the former. Indigenous leaders who wanted to defend portions of their *encomienda* had to learn the ropes of the new legal system. Each *encomendero* negotiated with the cacique of the town of his *encomienda* the amount of payable tribute causing in turn the native upper class to make excessive demands on tributaries while delivering only a portion of the yield to the recipient, who added money, wheat and other goods to the native materials. The pressures imposed on the caciques eventually reduced this class, and by the mid-16th century, each tributary was required to pay only with maize, turkey, firewood and some other products. After 1550, the Spanish class in control of New Spain included the legal escheatment of the encomienda to the Crown. Tribute exaction affected the most vulnerable members of the surviving indigenous society and their municipal finances; from the 1550's to 1575 they abandoned the native agriculture. Free blacks and mulattoes became tributaries in 1580 while mestizos remained exempt from tribute payment. While Indian officials were in charge of collecting tribute arrears, new governors were appointed to ensure the payments. After the late 16th century, community tribute debts were personal debts of the governors and members of the *cabildo*. Indian officials unable to pay were jailed and their properties were seized and sold while the proceeds were taken as payment of (inheritable) debts. The annual tribute and the Indians' position as intermediaries and responsible parties in cases of default eventually impoverished Indian officials. Two major developments of the 16th century were the decay of the *encomienda* system tribute and the intensification of Hispanicization of the procedures on liability and payment (Gibson 1964: 195-196; 202-206; 217-219).

2.6 The New Laws of 1542

A major adjustment to the *encomienda* system was triggered by charges of anti-*encomenderos* who had pressured the Spanish Crown to pass the *Leyes Nuevas de 1542* (New Laws of 1542) making a big impact on the Spanish colonies. The New Laws allowed Indians to own property and stipulated that the Catholic Church merely had dominion over the Christians and held no power over the Indians; they also promoted trade with the Indians as long as the Indians were not harmed.

The removal of the Indians from the service of the *encomenderos* aggravated economic problems, and eventually the *encomienda* system was reshaped to make the conditions less harsh on them (Simpson 1950: 135, 152.). The New Laws were the result of conscientious and responsible research and counsel on the part of theologians, jurists and philosophers who advised Emperor Charles V on the inconveniences of Indian slavery (cf. García Añoveros 2000). Indian slavery was legally abolished at a time when the diminution of the indigenous population was glaring. In view of the booming silver economy, Spanish colonists resorted to African slaves so they could work on the mines and sugar plantations. By 1550 slaves were no longer found among the Nahuas; instead there were *tlacotli* or black slaves owned by Spaniards with sufficient resources; the former turned into objects of trade in the colonization process, and permission was given for their import albeit cautiously and in small numbers (Blackburn 1997: 135).

In the early period Friar Bartolomé de las Casas, the author of *Historia de las Indias* (1547/1875/1951) found the enslavement of Africans acceptable. In his famous three-volume masterpiece, las Casas narrates the negotiations taking place in Hispaniola where there were only about a dozen black slaves who belonged to the king of Spain; presumably the sale of those slaves would have freed the Indians from slavery (las Casas 1547/1875/1951, vol. 3: 274). Las Casas could not have imagined that his recommendations would encourage colonists to massively introduce Africans in hard labor. He expressed his disapproval and antipathy over the destructive impact of such practice for their lives were precarious after a year or two of forced labor, and consequently, they were unable to care for their families. Las Casas regretted having being "*inadvertente*" (archaic Spanish for 'inadvertent') because later on he found out that the captivity of blacks was just as bad as the captivity of Indians. His rejection of Indian slavery was inspired by the sermon delivered in 1511 by Friar Antón de Montesinos, who reprimanded the colonists of Hispaniola over the unkind treatment given to the indigenous (cf. Montesinos 1511/1982). The text from *Ecclesiasticus* (chapter 34, vss. 21-22) or the *vox clamantis in deserto* preached against those who used cruelty or tyranny against innocent human beings (las Casas 1547/1875/1951, vol. 2: 441-444). He recalled having warned the *encomenderos* with the following words: "God condemns the goods taken away from the neighbor's living, and he who defrauds the laborer of his hire" (las Casas 1547/1875/1951, vol. 1: 130). Unfortunately, his sermons did little or nothing to discourage the colonists from obtaining permission after permission to import more and more slaves from the mainland simply to provide a labor force. In the early 1500's there were 30,000 African slaves in Hispaniola and about 100,000 in the Indies; to his dismay, the gross amount of black slaves was ineffective in liberating the Indians from the

same backbreaking work conditions that victimized Africans slaves (las Casas 1547/1875/1951, vol. 3: 275-276).

Las Casas' hostility towards the colonists was motivated by his viewpoints on egalitarianism though the rate of importation of Africans increased because Indians were unavailable and the colonists had the resources to pay for the former. His advocacy for the indigenous suit well with the royal powers but his retraction on African slavery had no impact on policy (Blackburn 1997: 136). "At the end of his life Las Casas wrote that he bitterly regretted ever having recommended the introduction of more African slaves, and was unsure whether God would forgive him for this" (Blackburn 1997: 136). His renewed perspectives came about after the discovery of Mexico and Peru and were indeed influential during the discussion of the New Laws of 1542. Unfortunately, by then other nations had joined Spain and Portugal in the practice of human contraband due to "economic" needs. In agreement with popular Aristotelian principles, it was accepted that Africans were the only available slaves, and that their fate was inescapable, since they had been born to be enslaved.[3] According to Hanke (1949/2002: 9), throughout the course of the 16th century, Spaniards did not fight as hard or as consistently against black slavery, although Jesuits did work on behalf of the African slaves in the following century.[4]

In Mexico, the Jesuits were in charge of educating and alleviating to an extent the living conditions of the African slaves. In Veracruz, they established orientation classes in Spanish and Catechism for those who were going to be taken to Mexico City. In the capital city and mining sites throughout New Spain there were established confraternities for blacks; two of these are documented in 1569 and 1582. By 1570, Mexico had a black population of 25,000 (including those who were mixed); by 1650, the estimate increased to 30,000 but mulattoes are counted separately at 20,000. When compared to the Antilles as a whole with 400,000 and Brazil with 100,000, these figures are rather low. The blood-mixing phenomenon, occurring after the discovery and colonization of the Spanish/Portuguese New World, has not repeated itself too many times in the history of humanity. With a three-tier ethnic base (indigenous, black and white), the new major groups were formed rather fast and rendered two more groups: white-indigenous, white-black or indigenous black, in addition to all other possible mixtures (Martínez

3 For discussions on the arguments advanced by Bartolomé de las Casas see André Saint-Lu (1968) and (1982).

4 A partial English version of the New Laws is found in Simpson (1950: 129-132). For historiography and the climate of opinion in Spain at the time, see Hanke (1949/2002) and (Hanke 1959). Discussions on the New Laws of 1542 can be found in Zavala (1984).

1983/1999: 193, 195, 209-211, 213). The clan of founders of Spanish Mexico was nonetheless effective in maintaining unions with surviving members of the indigenous groups who had access to land and other commodities.

2.7 Spanish speakers in the 16th century: numbers and regions

Scholars have been raising questions about the quantity and provenance of the Spanish speakers settled in the New World in general and the Mesoamerican area, in particular. When compared to the Amerindian population of the early 16th century, Europeans living in Mesoamerica constituted an insignificant minority. Demographic reconstructions provide data extracted from various sources. By 1529, ten years after the arrival of Hernán Cortés in Veracruz, Bishop Juan de Zumárraga estimated a population of 8,000 Spaniards, although many of them were temporarily in the area. Other estimates indicate that by 1570 the European population was only between 6,644 and 7,067 (Velasco 1993). To learn about its territories in the New World, Spain commissioned a survey to cosmographers and historians. In 1574, one of the royal mapmakers, Juan López de Velasco, reported that there were 17,711 people of European descent in New Spain, which included children of mixed legitimate marriages (López de Velasco 1894). Scholars assume, however, that in the 16th century the total number of Spanish immigrants to the entire New World might have been between 200,000 and 250,000, but certainly no more than one-quarter of a million Spanish speakers (Martínez Shaw 1994: 15).

2.8 The new environment

The reconstruction of Mexico took place over the ruins of the Aztec Empire and other Mesoamerican landmarks where the joyful Spanish troopers celebrated their victory over the Aztecs and the fall of Tenochtitlan which took place on Tuesday August 13, 1521. Hernán Cortés himself registered his glory in his *Tercera Carta de Relación* delivered to Charles V on May 15, 1522 (Cortés 1523: 51; also in Cortés 1520/2007: 205). Year after year, on *La fiesta del Pendón* (The Procession of the Flag), a parade from the municipal council to the temple outside of the walls of the city, Spanish speakers commemorated their new identity through their participation in animated spectacles, festivities, and games (cf. García Icazbalceta 1898). While every participant had its own role, all of them ended up having a banquet at the home of the *alférez* (standard bearer). Spanish speakers were building a new nation for themselves; this seems to have been the beginning of

Spanish Mexico (cf. Simpson 1950) or the life of the first (Spanish-speaking) Mexicans (cf. Benítez 1953/1985). The Procession of the Flag was institutionalized by Spanish authorities and went on for almost three hundred years (Garrido Asperó 1998: 190; see also Garrido Asperó 2006).

By the mid-16th century the new landscape inspired Francisco Cervantes de Salazar, the author of *Tres Diálogos Latinos* (1554), to describe the new city: the viceroy was occupying the house that had belonged to Moctezuma's father. Along the sidewalk leading to the Plaza Mayor, there could be found many imported craftsmen such as carpenters, locksmiths, barbers, bakers, painters, stonecutters, tailors, chandlers, sword makers, pastry cooks, grocers, leather cutters, cord makers, shoemakers, weavers, hatters, and many others. The first colonial authority had its litigants, business agents, procurement officers, an attorney general, the chief constable, counsels, clerks and soldiers awaiting a contract, or immigrants looking for work. On the city mall, there was the Plaza Mayor, the only group of buildings that had retained its antique character. There they sold Spanish brocades and Flemish damasks, Chinese silk, laces, velvets, plumes for hats, jewelry, ornament, weapons, and furniture, all goods consumed by the new mercantile aristocracy that was building a solid urban tradition with merchants and bureaucrats committed to working for a new system of social stratification. The protagonists of the story were many Spanish speakers who worked in the *Real Audiencia*, hospitals, convents, shops, and markets. The magnificent residences of the *encomenderos* were lined along the *Calle del Reloj* (Clock Street), where Luis de Castilla, the sensational miner, and the Ávilas, Ávalos, Alvarados, Benavides, Estradas, Mendozas, Saavedras and Villafáñezes, the oldest dynasties of *encomenderos*, occupied the aristocratic sector of the city (Benítez 1953/1985: 15, 16, 18, 28).

2.9 The process of socialization and diffusion

The process of socialization began on the ships that transported Spanish immigrants to the New World and continued unabated during three centuries of contact and (re)contact. Moreover, such process enabled Spanish speakers to acquire the skills and habits necessary for participating within their new society, which was formed with shared norms, attitudes, values, motives, social roles, religious beliefs and even knowledge of language(s). Socialization was not only the means by which social and cultural continuity were attained but an important process by which individual views on certain issues, such as race or religion turned out to be perceived as normal within the emerging society. A speech community of Spanish speakers was formed in a few decades, and socialization occurred at

many different levels, domains and spheres of interaction where the new protagonists played the roles they chose or those available to them at certain societal junctures. The informal process of socialization among Spaniards, who were like today naturally gregarious, contributed significantly to the dissemination of oral Spanish not only among Spanish speakers but among those who knew little or none. The residents of the most important cities were regularly exposed to public announcement made by criers.

The crier or *pregonero* was an old position assigned to a man in charge of reading the most important news. *Pregoneros* served the Spanish authorities in all the Spanish colonies. Their voices must have been recognized by Spanish and non-Spanish speakers; the *pregoneros'* broadcasts delivered the official news to the crowds at the same time that the Spanish speakers in charge made statements of public power. The following announcement made by Hernán Cortés after his two-year trip to Honduras on June 10, 1526 was extracted from the *Archivo General de Indias, Justicia* 113, 02 (in Lemon 2000: 84-85). A crier read it aloud in the plazas of Mexico:

> Hago saber, asi a todos los moradores de esta ciudad de Mexico, como los de afuera, que el que tuviese indios encomendados o repartimiento por cédulas obtenidas en mi ausencia y expedidas por mis tenientes el tesorero Juan Alonso de Estrada y el contador Rodrigo de Albornoz, los pierda; declarando las dichas cédulas por nulas; y mando (que) posean otra vez los dueños que anteriormente las gosaban en virtud de sus puestos títulos.
>
> [I make known, to all those who dwell in Mexico City, as well as those outside it, that those who received encomiendas or repartimientos through certificates obtained in my absence from my lieutenants Juan Alonso de Estrada and the accountant Rodrigo de Albornoz, shall lose them. I declare omit the said certificates null, and command that those who held and enjoyed the encomiendas by virtue of their proper titles possess them again.]

Another announcement was made when Hernán Cortés was disputing the local power with one of his fellow *encomenderos*, Marcos de Aguilar. After Cortés commanded the proclamation read publicly, there was a great commotion in the city and everyone thought that Cortés wanted to arrest Marcos de Aguilar and take over the governorship (in Lemon 2000: 92-93).

> Un domingo en la tarde a dos de Setiempre del año de mill e quinientos e veynte e seys, el dicho D. Fernando Cortes como estava con aquella ansya de governar y aun corrido entre los naturales de la tierra por que veyan que sabia que no hera governador fizo pregonar en la plaza desta dicha cibdad unas hordenanzas sobre el buen tratamiento de los yndios y en la cabeza dellas dezia yo D. Fernando Cortes governador y capitan general desta Nueva España por su Majestad y el primer capitulo de lo que en ellas se contenia hera que mandaba que ninguna persona fuese osada de salir desta dicha ciudad syn su licencia o de su lugar teniente–, y este testigo tiene en su poder el original de la dicha información

> sobre este pregón que el dicho Fernando Cortes mandó dar ... (Sumario de la Residencia, v. 1 pp. 294-295).
>
> [One Sunday afternoon, 2 September 1526, don Fernando Cortés, yearning to govern and embarrassed because the natives of the land saw and knew that he was no longer governor, had proclaimed from the plaza of this city some ordinances concerning the good treatment of the Indians; and on the head of the proclamation was written, 'I, don Fernando Cortés, governor and captain general of New Spain for his Majesty.' The first thing contained in the ordinances was the command that no one should dare to leave from this city without his license or that of his deputy—and this witness has in his possession [Cortés'] original proclamation].

The early criers who settled in New Spain were from Spain or from the Caribbean area. The municipal councils issued permission to those who applied for the position. In turn the crier was an appointed professional who had to be loyal and maintain confidentiality. Between 1533 and 1560 in Puebla de los Angeles, the second most important city of New Spain, there were 37 criers working in designated spots of the city. The crier was accompanied by two witnesses and a notary who recorded the agreements that were announced and approved. The announcements can be classified in two major groups: those stemming from the local council and those coming from the Mexican capital and from Spain. The content of the announcements can be further subdivided in social and urban organization, municipal administration, trade, supplies and prices, labor organization, festivities, and public ceremonies. The crier was responsible for providing all kinds of details about the location and logistics of the announced events (Illades 2008).

2.10 The center

Following the instructions of Hernán Cortés, Alonso García Bravo laid down the foundation for urban design, which was modeled after 16th century Spanish cities. It is known as the Spanish *traza* (layout or grid plan) which delimited an area of thirteen blocks. García Bravo traced the layout of the new city over the ruins of the Aztec Empire. His sketch turned into a living scheme: cut stone, heavy timber, and thousands of well-trained sculptors, painters, carpenters, masons and gardeners. Hundreds of Indians tore down one spot while the walls of another were being roofed. Between demolition and construction they built the Cathedral, the city hall, the pillory and the gibbet—powerful symbols of the municipal jurisdiction. The city was built for Spanish speakers who were not missing any of the components of a new Westernized civilization: viceroy and

archbishop, cathedral, monastery, and in time, a university, a printing press and a theater (Benítez 1953/1985: 17).

The usurpation of Tenochtitlan as a colonial capital demanded the dismantling of an indigenous urban complex and its reassembly in an altered form (Holler 2007: 107). This was a syncretic process in which the assertion of Spanish identity and sovereignty required the memory of the indigenous past. In order to reach this goal the alteration had to include the island of Tenochtitlan. Though impractical "the rationale for Hernán Cortés's unpopular decision to build the Spanish city on the ruins of the Aztec capital" was based on the symbolic power and on the belief that such space "was necessary to maintain the flow of imperial tribute payment" (Holler 2007: 108-109). The indigenous character of the city was used to either anchor or dispute competing claims among largely Spanish interests. Reserved for Spaniards and their families the *traza* was surrounded by canals on three sides (see figure 2.1). This boundary separated the indigenous sectors of the city from that exclusively occupied, at least in theory, by the Spanish colonists (Holler 2007: 109-110). By 1580, the city had not lost its watery beauty, and it still had two great reservoirs supplying sufficient water for gardening in the convents and to grow vegetables on the *chinampas* (aquatic gardens) while all the basic products arrived in canoes. The Valley of Mexico was more gentle and fertile than Castile, and the European fruit trees such as orange, lemon, apples, clingstone, peach and pomegranate flourished in the new land side by side with avocados, berries and marmalade trees (Benítez 1953/1985: 24, 28).

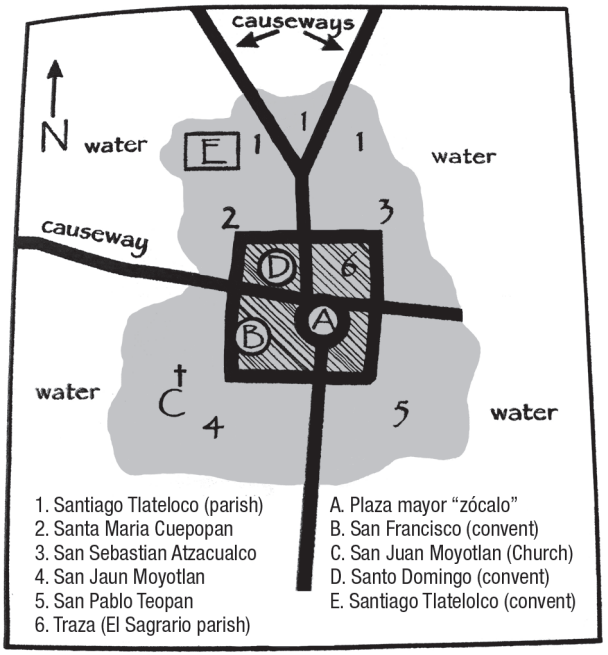

Figure 2.1: Mexico City urban structure, ca. 1520's. Source: Adapted from Holler (2007: 110)

When at the end of the 16th century, the social mobility of the Indian elites was obstructed by the new Spanish rulers, the contradictions of the new society were expressed in social conflict over privileges and land. The differentiation between the contending groups (Spaniards and Indians) was manifested in the opposition between the Spanish city and the Indian countryside. The almost invariable structure of the city was nucleated early in the colonial period with a better-developed center, which grew indefinitely through expansion of the *traza*. While the center maintained a near total stability, where the most powerful of the *encomenderos* dominated the municipal council, the councils favored them in grants of land and mining sites. New residents of the city were usually the conquerors' relatives and fellow townsmen, whereas Indian servants and employees of Spaniards became a major element in the cities and mines. Some lived with their masters, and others, not all steadily employed, lived in the irregular periphery. The *encomienda* was part of the center and was a restricted and well-defined institution in which the holder performed certain governmental duties and in turn received tribute, which residually belonged to the Crown (Lockhart and Schwartz 1983: 67-68, 91-92).

Ceremonies and main events were regimented by a protocol of distinguished groups: those belonging to the religious hierarchy and groups of artisans, stu-

dents, and college Lecturers. Throughout the chivalry period, ballet spectacles and other performances were seen daily on the streets of Mexico City but there were also funerals and celebrations of the mighty, which were truly solemn, sumptuous, lengthy and costly, and thus requiring special attire. Two of the most garlanded events were the funerals of Charles V in 1559 and Viceroy Luis de Velasco in 1564. Spanish speakers and other groups enjoyed these events together, which contributed to enhance the process of socialization. Some of the prominent Spanish speakers were fond of hunting. Viceroy Velasco kept falcons, geese, and cranes. Where there were cattle, the viceroy and his men used to bait the bulls with dogs; fans of bullfights and horses were always quick and ready to animate the games. The feudal events entertained those who were closer to the royals. In the new colonial society the horse was extremely important since it was only necessary for transportation but also a symbol of luxury and pride. The travels and adventurous spirit of the Renaissance inspired the first Mexicans to engage in expeditions to other regions such as Guatemala, Honduras (then known as Las Hibueras), Florida, Chihuahua, and even the Philippines. At the end of the 16th century Mexico had become the center of exchange that affected a good part of the New World, Europe and the Orient; and despite the fact that the Inquisition was normally monitoring the entrance of proven Catholics, a good number of Jews, Flemish and Protestant Germans were able to enter in New Spain. Mexico also became the center of trade and immigration, activities in the piers and ports, caravans to Acapulco, and the like (Benítez 1953/1985: 49-50, 55-57, 62-65).

2.11 The Inquisition

When the Inquisition was established in 1571, the new Spanish-speaking Mexicans and many others lost their *joie de vivre* since they were exposed to regular monitoring of their beliefs and behavior, primarily in the religious realm but also in their private lives and agendas. The Inquisition was a bureaucratic apparatus administered by members of religious orders known as *comisarios* (commissaries), who occasionally collaborated with the Holy Office, which in turn counted on specialized functionaries with different roles. The *familiares* were lay and permanent collaborators; there was also a *fiscal* or prosecutor, a secretary, and two *notarios del secreto* (notaries of the secret) in charge of endorsing the depositions of witnesses. The notaries in every tribunal had the responsibility of maintaining the *cámara del secreto* (secret chamber) in conjunction with the prosecutor. The inquisitors relied on the judgment of six *consultores* (councilors appointed to give legal advice), eight *calificadores* (evaluators who were doctors in theology or canon and civil law), twelve *alguaciles* (constables), *alcaides* (guards

at *cárcel secreta* or secret jail), and a few more responsible for a penitence jail and a perpetual jail. During the colonial period, there were plenty of trials consisting of hearings, where both the denouncer(s) and the defendant submitted their testimony. The *notarios* transcribed verbatim both the interrogatories and the replies of the defendants, who normally had a chance to present favorable proof. The procedure began with *un edicto de fe* (edict of faith), an inventory of heretic actions and beliefs which encouraged the defendants' denunciation of crimes against the faith; those who willingly denounced themselves and showed contrition often received lighter sentences. In contrast, those pronounced guilty were given sentences of reconciliation, including the wearing of *sambenitos* (garment of sackcloth) during the event known as *auto de fe*. Guilty prisoners could be sentenced to death (*sentencia ordinaria*) and punished at the *auto de fe* (cf. Chuchiak 2012: 51 and ff). *Autos de fe* were public spectacles attended by major functionaries of the ecclesiastical and civil governments of New Spain and by the Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish-speaking crowds. During the ceremonies sentences were read upon those brought before the Inquisition and executed by the secular authorities. The functions staged by the Inquisition were meant to divulge the ideological underpinnings of the Spanish (Christian) Empire.

2.11.1 Matters of routine in and around the Holy Office

The sumptuous ceremonies were normally staged in the city plaza in the presence of royalty comprising a lengthy procession, a solemn mass, an oath of obedience to the Inquisition, a sermon, and the reading of the sentences. The victims were normally apostate former Jews and former Muslims, then *alumbrados* (followers of a condemned mystical movement), and Protestants; occasionally also those who had been accused of such crimes as bigamy and sorcery. Life imprisonment was the extreme penalty that the inquisitors could impose whereas the death sentence was imposed and executed by the civil authorities. Major struggles to establish purity-of-blood policies can be traced to the practices of the Old Christian population of Toledo in the mid-15th century, which aimed at protecting the city and the Catholic faith by ensuring that only people with blameless Christian lineages were in positions of power and authority. This was the beginning of anti-Jewish and anti-*converso* rhetoric which spread from Toledo to other Spanish cities. The establishment of the Inquisition in Castile was the result of the hard work of members of religious orders who established an institution with the authority to try *conversos* suspected of heresy (Martínez 2008: 33).

The Spanish Crown was extremely concerned about the Jewish population that had been expelled from Spain after the defeat of the Muslim invaders in 1492.

Of the 200,000 Jews expelled from Spain, one-half had sought refuge in Portugal while the others had fled to France, Italy and the regions controlled by Turkey in the eastern Mediterranean. Those who remained in Spain were presumably persuaded to convert themselves to Catholicism (Hordes 2007: 220). The estimate of voluntary immigrants from Spain is approximate due to last-minute conversions and changes of heart. The figure then "wavers between fifty and one hundred thousand, that is, fewer than half the Jews in Spain" (Pérez 2005: 35-36). Various decrees were issued across Spain in the late 1500's compelling non-Christians to leave the Iberian Peninsula unless they converted in four months. Those unwilling to convert were either executed or burned in effigy.

The focus was on the public shaming of religious deviants and on their reconciliation with the church. The principles upheld by the Inquisition led to the establishment of *probanzas* (certificates of purity of blood) or *limpieza de sangre* which required reliable and iterating testimonies on legitimate genealogy. Factors such as parental identification, social rank, initial demographic imbalances, and level of acculturation could play a role in the patterns of classification of ancestry. Children of Spaniards and indigenous people were considered of privileged status but the need to absorb them into the Spanish group became less common as pre-Hispanic lineages declined, which meant that the mestizo population was also more distant from noble blood (Martínez 2008: 29-37; 146-147). All groups resulting from mixed ancestry were known as *castas* (castes), a notion which was distinct and more neutral than race, the latter term associated with peoples of Muslim and Jewish descent. The caste system was more inclusive because it allowed the different groups to claim genealogical or symbolic connections. In contrast, as early as the 17th century or before, the notion of race was used against persons of African descent and the distinction was attributed to slavery, a condition clearly linked to negation of nobility and religious infidelity (Martínez 2006: 27-30).

A good number of heretics tried by the Inquisition were the Portuguese of Spanish descent whose ancestors had fled Spain in 1492. Before the establishment of the Inquisition in New Spain, Judaism was practiced with great freedom for a short period between 1541 and 1571. However, as a result of the union of the Crowns (1580-1640) they returned to Spain and began to think of the New World like any of their contemporaries who dreamed of an opportunity of obtaining easy fortune and practicing Judaism. Towards the end of the 16th century and the decade 1640-1650 the harassment due to religious beliefs was exacerbated due to internal conflicts amongst the Spanish authorities in New Spain (Alberro 1988: chapter 34). Approximately 34 to 37 of them received death sentences while 97 to 107 were burned in effigy; many others died of illness, old age, desperation, or suicide until their communities were finally annihilated (Alberro 1988: 172, 380).

In appearance, New Spain served as a haven for crypto-Jews who wished to observe their rituals in an atmosphere of relative security, but active periods of persecution have been recorded for posterity. Various dynamic communities had emerged in Mexico City since the early 1500's; some of its members were involved in trade across the Atlantic importing goods from Spain and slaves from Angola, or exporting silver, dyestuffs, and the like. Others worked out of Acapulco and had businesses in the Philippines while certain others maintained ties with Peru, Maracaibo or Caracas. In New Spain there were about 2,000 crypto-Jews (Hordes 2007: 224). Towards the late 16th century, the slave trade in the New World increased considerably inasmuch as Spain and Portugal had agreed with Holland to protect the ships loaded with slaves during the voyage between Africa and the New World. The Jews established themselves in the Caribbean where they were in charge of the slave and sugar trade; they bought slaves in Angola and sold them in Spain, Peru and the Caribbean islands; finally they extended their activities to Guatemala and Honduras and were able to build pretty good networks in South America (Liebman 1971: 158, 159, 267).

Their assimilation to the emerging New Spanish mainstream culture resulted from the pressures imposed on them during critical periods. Some of the Jews living in New Spain were multilingual. Others knew some Latin and Hebrew although there is no evidence that they had studied the latter formally. They were most likely Spanish / Portuguese bilinguals and some of them showed what these days is known as inter-language features in their Spanish writings (Liebman 1971: 186, 182). The changes they made in New Spain gradually eroded the traits of the ethno-culture. For instance, women were in charge of educating children but their Judaic practices were mostly domestic rituals rather than religious teachings. Their diet was slowly modified and adopted the most common foods available in the New World. Although they were inclined to endogamy, the process of socialization did include the intermingling with other groups, e.g. wealthy merchants attracted ladies of Old Christian lineage and ended up in solid engagements. Wealthy men were more distant from true religion while poor women did not have sufficient resources and received payment in exchange of fasting for rich men. The poor began to denounce the rich if the former refused to pay a bribe. At times they married blacks and Indians because these groups could easily convert to Judaism. Lack of religious leaders and religious instruction contributed to discontinuity, and in the end, the attitudes of solidarity collapsed. When the harassment period was over, the far northern frontier served as a haven for converts with Zacatecas as the preferred center for practicing Judaism in New Spain (Alberro 1988: 417-454).

In 1632, the decadence of Portugal was attributed to the influence of the Jews, and an amnesty was negotiated several times if there was conversion in differ-

ent ways (e.g. exchange of money). From Holland to Madrid, Spanish and Portuguese Jews used their languages and other cultural traits, although they were not loyal to Iberian ways. From Holland, they helped the Iberian Jews and were active in negotiations or bribes offered to the inquisitors in order to get others off the hook, since the bails were not commonly used to free prisoners from the jails. The connections between Holland and New Spain can be reconstructed via the biographies of the Portuguese Spanish Jews, who extended their commercial activities to Guatemala and Honduras and also had networks in South America. In the early decades of the 17th century, the Inquisition extended its tentacles to the northern and southern provinces of New Spain; it is assumed that by 1642 Portuguese Jews were conspiring against the Holy Office and against Spain in order to take over the colonies of Mexico and Central America. On the other hand, the inquisitors wanted to seize the properties that the Portuguese Spanish Jews had in New Spain and were successful doing so in the late 1640's (Liebman 1971: 228, 230, 235, 254-256, 267-268, 271, 272).

The reading and interpretation of Inquisitorial archives may be traced to several decades after the Holy Office was abolished. In his *Bibliografía Mexicana del Siglo XVI*, the 19th century historian Joaquín García Icazbalceta (1886) published important documents describing the foundation of the Spanish Inquisition in Mexico, the miscellaneous roles of its inquisitors, and the routine practices mounted on a yearly basis with the celebration of the *autos de fe*. The first ones took place in Mexico City in 1574 and 1575; between 1575 and 1596 there were eight more functions in which more than 130 penitents were present. The infamous *auto de fe* of 1596 added a new meaning to the word Portuguese, which was almost synonymous with Jew, since the vast majority came from Portugal (Liebman 1971: 223-226). According to García Icazbalceta the function staged on December 8, 1596 was truly solemn. Some of the members of the legendary Carvajal (or Carbajal) family were sentenced to death in person (García Icazbalceta 1886: 370-389).

> Fue cosa maravillosa la gente que concurrió a este Auto famoso, y la que estaba en las ventanas y plazas, hasta la puerta de las casas del Santo Oficio para ver este singular acompañamiento y procesión de los relajados, penitenciados, que salieron con sogas y corozas de llamas de fuego, llevando cada uno de estos un religioso a su lado para que lo exhortase a bien morir, y un familiar de guarda. Los reconciliados judaizantes con sambenitos y familiares a sus lados; los casados dos veces con corozas pintadas significadoras de sus delitos; las hechiceras con corozas blancas, y velas y sogas; otros por blasfemos con mordazas en las lenguas, en cuerpo descubiertas las cabezas, y velas en las manos; todos en orden siguiendo unos a otros. Los de menores delitos delante, y por este orden los demás, quedando los relajados atrás y los dogmatistas y enseñadores de la Ley de Moisés como capitanes y caudillos, últimamente con sus caudas sobre las corozas, retorcidas y enroscadas, siguiendo las falsas proposiciones de sus magisterio y enseñanza; con que fueron

> procediendo hasta su Tablado que hacia frente con el asiento del Tribunal a cuyos pies había gradas donde se sentaron los oficiales y ministros del Santo Oficio por su antigüedad (1886: 370).
>
> [It was something glittering the large crowd attending this notorious function, and those standing by the windows and plazas, and all the way to the door of the houses of the Holy Office to see this infamous procession of the sentenced convicts who came out with ropes and white cone-shaped caps with flames, each of them accompanied by a monk who would exhort him to die in peace, and a guarding lay volunteer (familiar). The Judaizers [were] reconciled with sack clothes and guarding lay volunteers by the side; the bigamous [were] wearing white hooded straw caps with paintings of their crimes; the sorcerers with white hooded straw caps and candles and ropes; the blasphemous with gags in their tongues, their heads uncovered and candles in their hands; all of them orderly following the others. Those convicted for minor crimes were ahead with all others following this order, while the accused were at the end, and the dogmatists and teachers of the Law of Moses marching like captains and caciques, last with their trains over the twisted and entangled cone-shaped caps following the false propositions of their teachings; all were proceeding toward their own Forum which was right across from the Tribunal seat where there were more Holy Office functionaries seated according to seniority]. (My translation).

From the original inquisitorial manuscript, García Icazbalceta (1886: 372) transcribed the names of the 67 penitents present at the infamous function the vast majority being Portuguese of Spanish descent. The following members of the Carvajal family were sentenced to death in person for observing the Mosaic Law: Manuel Díaz, Beatriz Enríquez, Manuel de Lucena, Doña Beatriz de Carvajal, Doña Francisca Núñez de Carvajal and her three children (Doña Isabel Rodríguez de Andrada, Doña Catalina de León y de la Cueva, and Luis de Carvajal, single (alias José Alumbroso). The same day ten Portuguese crypto-Jews (9 men and 1 woman) were burned in effigy, while twenty-four of them (18 men and 6 women) were reconciled with the Catholic Church. Twenty-four more crypto-Jews were accused of bigamy, sorcery, or blasphemy; some were persecuted just for claiming that fornication was not a sin; among them there was a woman, Ana Vaes, who was merely a suspect of observing Judaism. *Autos de fe* were read by inquisitors or criers before crowds of curious spectators. According to Alfonso Toro (1944, vol. 2: 255-256), the procession of 1596 was truly memorable for it was presided by 14 *familiares* and 60 friars followed by no less than 800 monks carrying lighted torches while at least 50,000 solemnly silent spectators representing all ethnic groups thronged the streets, the windows, and the rooftops near the offices of the Inquisition.

Although the Inquisition began to operate in New Spain in 1571, Spanish authorities had collected sufficient information on individuals who were suspicious of heresy, blasphemy, bigamy, sorcery and sins of the flesh since 1525. The

authorities waited almost five decades to process each case. The cases tried by the first bishop and archbishops from 1525 to 1571 shed light on the tribulations that Spanish speakers and the castes had to endure and also on their lifestyles. The roster prepared by the Santo Officio on November 4, 1571 registered the names, dates, and miscellaneous activities of the accused. This inventory of suspects is known as *El Abecedario de relaxados, reconciliados y penitenciados en la Nueva España*, 1571. A reconstruction of archives on the Spanish Inquisition in Mexico and the analysis of the societal forces, the dynamics of socialization, prevailing moral values, interpersonal relationships and conflicts can be found in Liebman (1963, 1970, 1971, 1974) and Alberro (1988). The Inquisition was not an impartial tribunal; its administration of justice was sometimes based on personal, political or economic interests. The most famous case tried by the Holy Office in 1590 was that of Luis de Carvajal y de la Cueva, known as *el viejo* ("the old man") who is to be distinguished from his own nephew, Luis de Carvajal *el mozo* ("the younger"), known for being irreverent. Luis de Carvajal *el viejo* was a convert of Portuguese descent who led the journey to the New World with about one hundred people who were exempt from *probanzas*; his sister, Francisca Núñez de Carvajal, his brother-in-law, Francisco Rodríguez de Matos and their nine children traveled to the New World under pretension of being Catholic. When Luis de Carvajal *el viejo* arrived in New Spain he explored the northern lands and not only founded the kingdom of Nuevo Leon but also became its governor. His aggressive entrepreneurial spirit was tarnished by the invasion of the territories that belonged to the king of Spain. Falling out of grace with the Spanish authorities, he was persecuted for political rather than religious motives and arrested at the Port of Tampico in 1582 from where he was taken to Mexico City only to be confronted with the inquisitors, who had collected information about his dubious ancestry and also about the new converts who happened to be his relatives (Toro 1944, vol. 1: 225-226). He was sentenced in the *auto de fe* of 1590 and was reconciled with the Catholic church. His full-length trial case in modern Spanish appears in *Los judíos en la Nueva España* (Toro 1932: 207-372).

The fate of his nephew Luis de Carvajal *el mozo*, the son of Francisca Núñez de Carvajal, was memorable because he was tried twice, once in 1590 and again in 1596, when he was sentenced to death in person along with his mother, his two sisters, and some other relatives and friends. He was a single young man who was given a chance to repent from his religious beliefs in the first trial of 1590. He even had a Franciscan mentor and tutor protecting his mother and sisters who were living at the time near the well-known *Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco*, where he taught Latin to the children of the Indian nobility. The young Carvajal knew Hebrew, Latin, Portuguese, Spanish, and indigenous languages. His writings include his biography, religious guides to practice Judaism, and poems and

songs in either Hebrew or Spanish interspersed with Portuguese glosses. Despite the privileges afforded to him and his family by the inquisitors, his inner struggle must have been so intense that he was unwilling to live a monotonous Catholic life; instead he assumed the consequences of having an audacious existence since he was denounced twice by nosy neighbors, so-called friends, imprisoned spies, and even relatives. Luis de Carvajal, *el mozo*, was the sacrificial victim who died as he had lived, painfully and zealously (Toro 1944, vol. 2 and Liebman 1967). He is considered the first Jewish writer of the New World.

2.12 Spanish and the Holy Office

The Holy Office in New Spain was not organized in the early decades; it was in addition lenient with the rich and powerful, negligent with the poor and powerless, and otherwise replete with irregularities. Because not all functionaries were salaried on a regular basis, inquisitors depended on the funds they confiscated from the accused. They were prone to go after the wealthy colonists since their property, personal belongings, and even their slaves could be legally seized. Black and mulatto slaves were imprisoned with their heretic masters and obliged to serve them in different ways. Slaves had better communication with the outside world, moved around more freely, established various connections with other convicts, and were charged with doing different errands such as bringing the daily meals, select menus, or useful objects such as ink and woolen balls, which were used to write messages. In jail, some Spanish speakers improvised their own secret codes (e.g. telegraph-like wall beats, use of languages other than Spanish). Portuguese, Nahuatl and African languages learned by merchants or Spanish ladies nursed by nannies were used for "secret" communication. Despite the imaginative use of additional codes, the convicts could not succumb to the temptation of chiming in all kinds of conversations in Spanish. Their indiscretions were revealing of personal, financial and family anecdotes or full stories that were conveniently logged in by the more cautious inquisitorial personnel who used the information gathered via chirpy chats against other suspects (Alberro 1988: 236-247).

The higher ranks amongst all functionaries were designated mostly to Spanish speakers born, educated, or with previous inquisitorial experience in Spain. Some of the *familiares* were descendants of the *encomenderos* or established merchants of silver or cacao, while still others were related to the inquisitors. By the beginning of the 17th century, members of the traditional aristocracy were marrying Spanish immigrants belonging to merchant, mining, and manufacturing groups, a pattern emerging between members of the *encomendero* class and the new bourgeoisie in Mexico City, Puebla and Morelia. As opposed to the

early colonizers who had married noble indigenous women, this new class was highly endogamous, and their estates and surnames survived through at least the 18th century while their children and grandchildren born in New Spain eventually gained positions within the Inquisition (Martínez 2008: 193). According to Alberro (1988: 60, 67-68), having a post with the Inquisition was prestigious because the functionaries' background was associated with the legacy of Old Christians who formed a stable and compact group maintaining stability in their new land, where their wealth derived from agriculture, commerce, mining, and civil, ecclesiastical, or inquisitorial duties. Some of them were colluded with new Christians because they had the same social class interests. In addition to the personnel needed to triple-check the lineage of new Christians and other suspicious individuals, the Inquisition maintained an active pool of interpreters of indigenous languages, German, English, Flemish, French, and other aides of minor ranks (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Functionaries of the Holy Office in New Spain (1571-1700)

Years	Positions	Origin / Title / Other information
1571-1679	Inquisitors and fiscals 30	12 doctors, 11 licentiates, 7 without title, mostly from Spain
1571-1696	Commissaries 222	17 born in Spain, 2 born in Portugal, 203 born in New Spain (including Guatemala and New Mexico)
1571-1700	Familiares 154	57 born in Spain, 30 born in New Spain, 57 not specified
1571-1696	Evaluators 211	211 priests ordained in regular orders: Franciscan (63), Dominican (47), Augustinian (25), Jesuit (25), Mercedarian (7) and 44 in the secular clergy
1571-1696	Consultants 55	Of a total of 55, fourteen had had previous experience in Spain.

Source: Alberro (1988: 82-136)

Spanish speakers, speakers of other European languages and speakers of indigenous languages living in the capital of New Spain regularly listened to the proclamations of the powerful Spanish inquisitors. Over almost three centuries, the Holy Office had the capacity to disseminate at least the Spanish spoken by empowered speakers, who were not solely those identified as Spain-born but who also were born in New Spain and raised in the Spanish-speaking households. The exposure of *criollos* to Spanish within the family and to the networks they had with recent Spanish immigrants might have reinforced the norms of the mother country for a few generations. Simultaneously learners of Spanish as a second language who attended the ceremonies of the Holy Office on a regular basis might

have had more than sufficient passive knowledge of the same norms. The rosters and trials are the best sample of careless writing based on spontaneous speech, which had to be literally registered. The documents prepared by the Holy Office are extremely useful in the reconstruction of the Spanish spoken in New Spain.

2.13 The sins recorded by the Holy Office

In spite of its pitfalls, the Spanish Inquisition provided abundant files in which the crimes of the accused, guilty or innocent, were recorded for posterity. Table 2.3 shows the variety of accusations from two sources: the Archivo General de la Nación or AGN (Columns 2 and 3) and the *Abecedario de Relaxados y Penitenciados* or *APR* (Columns 4 and 5). Individuals accused of heresy are about 500 in both sources. Minor religious offenses are about 30 percent in the AGN sample and 27.3 percent in the *ARP* sample, followed by sexual transgressions and solicitation of sexual favors (more than 20 percent in both archives). Sorcery and civil crimes are not too frequent, whereas heterodoxy and idolatry are virtually non-existent because the Holy Office did not persecute the indigenous peoples. Columns 2 and 4 in Table 2.3 yield 3,369 cases reported for the period 1571-1700. In over a century of persecution one percent of death sentences were recorded (Alberro 1988: 207).

Table 2.3: Distribution of trials according to crimes (1571-1700)

Crimes	AGN	%	*ARP*	%
Heresy	525	27.5	497	34.1
Idolatry	0	0	1	0.1
Heterodoxy	11	0.6	8	0.5
Minor religious offenses	568	29.7	391	27.3
Solicitation of sexual favors	157	8.2	90	6.2
Sexual transgression	462	24.1	300	20.6
Sorcery	138	7.2	121	8.3
Civil crimes	52	2.7	42	2.9
Total	1,913	100	1,456	100

Source: Alberro (1988: 205, 207)

After the establishment of the Inquisition, religious diversity was not tolerated. The expulsion of non-Christian groups after the unification of the Christian kingdoms involved a great deal of mental and physical exertion; consequently the Spanish Crown expanded its policy to the newly acquired dominions in other parts of the world. The most significant non-Christian groups in the New World were

the indigenous peoples, known for being polytheists, idolatrous and inclined to practice human sacrifice, but as the Spaniards became more familiar with them, they realized that they were also flexible and that they could be converted by peaceful means. In contrast, the Spanish Crown was not willing to withstand groups with roots in Lutheranism, Islamism, Judaism, or in any of the African religions encompassing a wide variety of beliefs. For almost three hundred years, the inquisitors were charged with identifying heterodox individuals who could be easily distinguished from Spanish speakers or indigenous groups. The Holy Office not only induced fear, anxiety, and hatred against the crypto-Jews but false piety on the part of those who were Catholic. It built a powerful officialdom with brawny tentacles in various cities and towns of New Spain. It contributed to the dissemination of Spanish as spoken and written by the ecclesiastic and civil authorities in charge of collecting testimonies, keeping files, and reading sentences aloud, but the most effective form of dissemination was the intimidating public functions regularly staged before large crowds. Despite the terrifying experiences reported over centuries, the records of the Inquisition of New Spain show that the rate of death sentences was low. The summary published by García Icazbalceta (1886: 389) indicates that the total of sentenced heretics in person was 41 while 99 were sentenced in effigy. Between 1574 and 1795 there were 11 *autos de fe* where the authority in charge of executing the sentences was the New Spanish Inquisition. Liebman (1964) assumes, however, that there were more *autos de fe* and more individuals sentenced to death.

2.14 Spanish speakers and ethnic groups in the *Abecedario*

In the *Abecedario*, the notaries logged in the name, occupation, origin, and other data related to individuals accused of different transgressions. This bound manuscript has been examined by scholars interested in the fate of Jews and crypto-Jews living in New Spain (Liebman 1964). The roster identifies subjects very briefly, though occasionally it elaborates on the familiar and religious background of the accused as well as on the sentences imposed on the deponents. The names, short biographies, and accusations of subjects appear in Liebman (1971). The *Abecedario* tends to follow the alphabetical and chronological order as of 1525, a few decades before the Inquisition was officially established, but the entries do not appear in strict order. This section sheds light on the diverse origin of both Spanish and non-Spanish speakers registered in the *Abecedario*, a rare manuscript retrieved from the Henry A. Huntington Library. A subsample of 883 subjects classified in Table 2.4 shows the diversity of geographic and ethnic backgrounds. Spanish speakers of Groups 1, 2, and 3 make up 61.4 percent of all sub-

jects. Group 1 includes those born in diverse regions within Spain; Group 2 refers to their offspring born in New Spain; Group 3 consists of those whose origin is unspecified but who were residing in New Spain or other territories belonging to Spain. Group 4 comprises the bilingual Portuguese-Spanish speakers, most likely Jewish or crypto-Jews fluent in Spanish, and Catholics reconverted to Judaism. Speakers of African languages appear in Group 5 while speakers of European languages other than Spanish and Portuguese are put together in Group 6. Finally, since the Inquisition did not regularly persecute the indigenous groups, subjects in Group 7 changed their "mestizo" ethnicity to an "Indian" ethnicity in order to get off the inquisitorial hook. Two subjects in Group 8 appear in this rare category; one of them was born in the kingdom of Granada, the last redoubt of Muslim resistance. Asian Subjects appear in Group 9.

Table 2.4: Groups by origin, language, religion, and ethnicity

Subj.	Ethnic group	Number	%
1.	Spanish speakers born in Spain coming from different regions, cities and villages; most likely monolingual in Spanish and heterodox Catholics	337	38.16
2.	Spanish speakers born in New Spain (including Guatemala, San Salvador and Nicaragua) and other colonies (e.g., Puerto Rico and Peru), most likely belonging to the second or third generation of criollos and mestizos; heterodox Catholics	106	12.0
3.	Origin unspecified, most likely Spanish speakers of first, second, and subsequent generations residing in New Spain, crypto-Jews from Spain or Catholic but uncertain about dogma (including priests)	99	11.21
4.	Portuguese / Spanish speakers from Portugal and Spain, most likely Jewish or crypto-Jews fluent in Spanish, and Catholics reconverted to Judaism.	164	18.57
5.	Speakers of African languages most likely familiar with Portuguese and/or acquiring Spanish; originally non-Christian but converted to Catholicism; their descendants could have been free or of mixed ancestry, fluent in Spanish.	92	10.41
6.	Speakers of other European languages, e.g. English, Flemish, French, Irish, German, Greek, and various Italian dialects, sometimes accused of being Lutheran or Calvinist; most likely learned Spanish.	76	8.60

Table 2.4 (continued)

Subj.	Ethnic group	Number	%
7.	Spanish-speaking Indians passing as Indians, or Indian working as *naguatlatos* [interpreters] most likely learned Spanish.	1 + 3	0.45
8.	Spanish-speaking Muslims most likely born in Muslim nations or regions.	3	0.34
9.	Non-Spanish speakers of Asian origin (Chinese or Filipino), enslaved or free.	2	0.22
	Total subjects of all ethnic groups	883	100 %

Though irregularly, the Inquisition logged in the origin, occupation, marital status, and the current residence of the accused subjects. Spanish speakers born in Spain (Group 1) came from different places, large and small, from northern, central, southern regions, and from the Canary Islands or the Philippines. Their occupations were diverse: priests, muleteers, sword makers, silver crafters, book sellers, carpenters, bakers, mariners, servants, merchants, singer-dancers, architects, foremen, iron workers, knife makers, soldiers, captains, hatters, barbers, harpists, scribes, shoe makers, weavers, *encomenderos* or conquistadors, physicians, lawyers, tavern owners, miners, tailors, store owners, socks makers, laborers, slave traders, and the like. They were speakers of the various Spanish peninsular dialects coming from various social strata and had settled in a city or villa in New Spain. Those classified in Group 2 were born in the cities of Mexico, Guadalajara, Antequera or Puebla de los Angeles. There are also subjects born in Indian towns such as Tecamachalco or mining towns such as Taxco and Tulancingo. In this group there are Spanish speakers and mestizos of diverse occupations and backgrounds. Group 3 refers to Spanish-speaking subjects whose origin is uncertain. Spanish speakers are identified as "*natural de*" ('native from') and "*vezino de*" ('resident of') which literally means 'neighbor' in modern Spanish but used to mean 'homeowner' or 'parcel owner'. Groups 1, 2 and 3 make up the growing class of Spanish speakers who were settled on a permanent basis in New Spain. Over the generations, the Groups 4-8 most likely accommodated to the three former Groups.

A select subsample of 221 Subjects retrieved from the *Abecedario* is listed in the Appendix. Ethnic groups are subsumed in six classifications: Group 1 (Ss. 1-100) comprises those born in Spain; it is followed by Group 2 (Ss. 101-125) made up of those born in New Spain, and Group 3 (Ss. 126-145) residents in New Spain. After the three Spanish-speaking groups, Portuguese-Spanish bilinguals appear in Group 4 (Ss. 146-177) and African and Afro-Hispanic (Ss. 178-200) are listed in

Group 5. Speakers of European languages other than Spanish and Portuguese (Group 6) are presented at the end of the Appendix (Ss. 201-221). When the Subject is a native of a town or city within Spain, it is considered a Spanish speaker born in Spain or "first generation"; when the name of the Subject is followed by the indication "native of Mexico", or "native of Guaxaca", it is considered a Spanish speaker belonging to the second or third generation. The basic data of each Subject was not logged in consistently, and many Subjects appear only with name, surname, and the major accusation. Assuming that all Subjects appearing before the Inquisition were adults, all the Spanish speakers who appeared in 1555 or before are considered natives from Spain. At times, the Inquisition only recorded the names of Subjects who belonged to secular or regular orders without specifying their provenance. Many priests were not identified by origin but they were most likely Spanish speakers born in Spain.

Group 4 represents the Subjects who were Portuguese-Spanish bilinguals practicing Judaism secretly while publicly feigning their beliefs in Catholicism. Portuguese and Spanish Jews used their languages and other cultural traits, but they were not loyal to Iberian ways. It is known they transliterated and recited prayers in Hebew (Liebman 1971: 235-6, 254). Their life stories have been well-researched by 20th century scholars (Toro 1932 and 1944; Liebman 1963; 1967 and 1974; Alberro 1988). For decades, the Carvajal family has attracted the attention of scholars for their story begins with the voyage of Luis de Carvajal, his sister Francisca Núñez de Carvajal, his brother-in-law Francisco Rodríguez Matos, their nine children, and about one hundred people of Spanish-Portuguese origin. Most of them were apprehended by agents of the Inquisition a few times. In the *auto de fe* of 1596 Doña Francisca Núñez de Carvajal (S. 161), the matriarch of the family, was sentenced to death with her children, Doña Catalina de León y de la Cueva (S. 163), Doña Leonor de Carvajal, and Luis de Carvajal *el mozo*. The Inquisition awaited a few years to convict Doña Mariana de Carvajal (S. 166), a single young lady who had a nervous breakdown when her mother and siblings were being arrested. The youngest daughter, Anica (S. 167) was a minor when she was also accused of being Judaizer; the Inquisition waited almost five decades to sentence her to death in 1649 for having had Judaizer tendencies. Baltasar and Miguel were able to flee Mexico City before their mother and sisters were arrested; they resettled in Rome, where they continued to practice Judaism but were relaxed in effigy in 1596. Friar Gaspar de Caravajal was the only member of the family who was ordained in the Dominican Order but later reconverted to Judaism.

Finally, Luis de Carvajal, the ex-Governor, appears once in 1590 whereas his nephew Luis de Carvajal *el mozo* appears twice, once in 1590 and relapsing in 1596. Other Subjects include Beatriz Enríquez, who was also executed in the *auto de fe* of 1596. Her role as the female dogmatist and leader of Judaism in her com-

munity was noticeable. The case of Blas de Magallanes was dismissed because he committed suicide, while Bernardo de Luna and Constança Rodríguez (S. 157) were reconciled with the Church. Catalina Enríquez, Clara Enríquez, daughter of Manuel de Lucona and Catalina Enríquez, were also reconciled with the Church. Manuel de Lucerna was relaxed in person in 1596. Andrés Núñez, Antonio Machado, Antonio Gómez, Antonio Díaz de Cáceres, Antonio Méndez, Alvaro Rodríguez, Antonio Díaz Márquez, and Leonor Díaz were accused of being Judaizers. The rest of the Portuguese subjects, accused of minor crimes, were relaxed in effigy, or were reconciled with the Church (see Ss. 146-177 in the Appendix).

Group 5 refers to Subjects of African descent, those who were still enslaved at the time they appeared before the Inquisition and those who had been freed. It includes those of mixed ancestry and fluent Spanish-speaking Subjects born in New Spain. The earliest case recorded in the *Abecedario* was as female slave known as Francisca (1537) whose master was Luis Marín. Those who were born in the New World are classified as *mulatos* (Ss. 178, 180, 184, 189) or *negros criollos* (Ss. 181, 183) and free slaves (Ss. 179, 190). The vast majority are however slaves who were classified as *negros* or *mulatos esclavos* (S. 188). When they were *mulatos libres* or *negros libres criollos* it was specified (Ss. 190, 193, 196, 197, 199). Additional information is given about the slaves' masters, who were mostly Spanish-speaking males (S. 194), and with rare exceptions, Spanish-speaking females born in either Spain or New Spain. Another distinction is made about language and ethnicity because *negros ladinos* (e.g. S. 200) were fluent in Spanish. The first generation of African slaves was not fluent in Spanish but might have been familiar with Portuguese just like the Sephardic Jews. The diversity of Subjects is also shown in Group 6, made up of Europeans speaking languages other than Spanish or Portuguese commonly accused of being Lutheran Calvinists. They were speakers of English, French, German, Greek, Irish, or Italian dialects. They were merchants, separators of gold and silver, or adventurers who had relatives or acquaintances in the New World (see Ss. 201-221 in the Appendix).

2.15 Spanish speakers of African descent

The New Laws of 1542 did not apply to Africans who were slaves, whether they were born in Africa or in the New World. Therefore, the slave trade continued unabated in the New World colonies. The origin of African slaves taken to Mexico dates back to the time of the Conquest since many Spanish captains e.g. Hernán Cortés, Pedro de Alvarado, Pánfilo Narváez, Francisco de Montejo, and others transported a few slaves who had been living previously in the Caribbean islands. As compared to Brazil, Cuba, and the United States, Mexico was not a significant

recipient of black slaves insofar as it had agreed to take about one-eighth to one-tenth of all of those delivered to Spanish-speaking colonies. The origin of black slaves destined to Mexico was diverse. They were from Zafi-Lisboa, Cape Verde, Bantu ethnic provinces, and São Thome (Aguirre Beltrán 1972: 19, 217).

From Church records it is known that the Spanish colonists encouraged legal unions among slaves so they could secure reproduction of younger slaves at the same time that slave owners were discouraged to sell members of the same family (husband and wife) in faraway regions; in this way, they again protected the labor of adult slaves and their offspring. In 1570 the African population was calculated at 20,569 while the mixed population was less than one-tenth or 2,435 (0.6 %) of the total population of New Spain. Between 1595 and 1650 the highest estimate for Mexico reached 38,974 almost equally divided between males and females. The average for those years decreased to 35,089, and was distributed in the following provinces: Mexico (19,441), Tlaxcala (5,534), Nueva Galicia (5,180), Michoacan (3,295), Oaxaca (898), Yucatan (497), and Chiapas (244). The growth of the Afro-Mexican population was not related to the slave trade but to mixed unions, to the extent that by 1646, there was a larger group of Afro-mestizos distributed as follows: Mexico (95,544), Tlaxcala (17,381), Oaxaca (4,712), Michoacan (20,185), Nueva Galicia (13,778), Yucatan (15,770), and Chiapas (1,330). This makes a total of 116,520 people or 6.8 percent of all groups, a proportion contrasting with the minuscule percentages of previous decades. At the end of the colonial period, Mexico had one of the largest populations of African descent most of them freemen (Aguirre Beltrán 1972: 214-218; 222-230). They were highly dispersed throughout the major urban centers, coastal zones, rural areas, and in selected portions of the northern frontier (Vinson 2000: 269). While in Mexico slavery diminished considerably in the mid-18th century only to disappear at the end, countries such as Brazil, Cuba, and the United States continued slave trading until the 19th century.

The Afro-Mexican population was present, too, in the central valleys of Puebla, Guanajuato, Campeche, Tabasco, Veracruz, Nuevo Leon, Colima, and Tamaulipas. In all these regions, they worked in the mines, agriculture, cattle-raising and the like (cf. Martínez Montiel 1994). Since ca. 1550 Afro-Mexicans were needed in the mining sites. Between 1556 and 1562, miners from Zacualpan, Taxco, Sultepec, Tlalpujahua, Temascaltepec, Pachuca, and Guanajuato owned 867 slaves increasing to more than a thousand in 1579-1582. The textile industry also employed Afro-Mexicans as early as 1594 and continued to do so through 1750. In addition, as of the second half of the 16th century the sugar haciendas introduced enslaved agricultural workers of African descent. In the mining and agricultural centers, Afro-Mexicans (slaved and freed) intermingled with Indians and mestizos. This encouraged the unions of different ethnic groups. Descend-

ants of slaves had an incentive to marry free individuals because their offspring would be free. This policy was encouraged by miners and agriculturalists who found it convenient having a larger and cheap labor force at their service but working under more flexible conditions. At the end of the colonial period, it was common to hire free workers of African descent (von Mentz 2005: 259-276).

2.15.1 Afro-Mexicans and the process of acculturation

The struggles to preserve African cultural patterns, lifestyle, activities in different enclaves and even religious practices have been explored in various colonial contexts. However, researchers find more information on assimilation or acculturation. In Puebla, for example, the registration was implemented in 1540. The slaves' origins and data on their owners were logged in for a fee. The data found cover a very small proportion of slaves, their age, price and general physical condition. In the second largest city of New Spain, Puebla de los Angeles, individuals of African descent worked as cowboys, shepherds, foremen and muleteers. They were also in charge of transporting wares and goods along the colonial roads and worked as cloth shearers and fullers. At the end of the 16th century there is evidence of paperwork done over civil and judicial cases by free slaves and their descendants, a fact that corroborates that they participated in common transactions and in the incipient colonial economy. Their integration in the Puebla society was consolidated in various domains such as trade, paternity suits, and the like. In 1582, cases of social mobility were registered inasmuch as former slaves had the right to inherit other slaves. Some others were even given credit to open small businesses (e.g. grocery shops). The case of Isabel de Limpias, a free slave, is interesting since she was a *"ladina en lengua castellana"* (proficient in the Spanish language); she was born and raised in Puebla and married a Spanish-speaking man who was both a tailor and a merchant. The most effective form of integration was manumission since slave owners were able to grant a certificate of freedom to their slaves and their children (Lara Tenorio 2005: 285-297).

African and Afro-mestizos were introduced in Cholula, an Indian town near Puebla, at the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century, a period corresponding roughly to drastic losses of the Amerindian population. In Cholula, other trends were recorded such as the disproportion between male and female slaves; the intermingling of African slaves, mulattoes, Indians, apprentices and professional weavers both mestizos and Spaniards, i.e. diverse ethnic groups who shared the same space inside the *obrajes* or wool workshops. This enhanced the contact between those of African descent and other groups while fostering mixed unions. The offspring of mixed unions provoked changes along

the semantic categories established by the racial policy and were registered under a different ethnicity; this practice was favorable in obtaining a fee exemption because wool loom owners only paid taxes for possessing Indian workers. Many cases of exogamy were recorded since the early stages of colonial society (Castillo 2005: 299-325).

In Mexico City, women of African descent worked as nannies and nurses and were active in raising Spanish-speaking children. The proportion of Afro-Mexican women working as nannies in New Spain is higher than the proportion of Spanish-speaking or Indian women. Researchers thus assumed that this mere fact endorses the notion of acculturation or integration of Spanish-speaking members of the colonial society with those of Afro-Mexican descent. In addition, they served as cooks and domestics in the households of Spanish and *criollo* families, were employed in the convents, churches, and even in the viceregal palace. Finally, they also acted as sales persons in the distribution of goods produced by their owners or employers. Sometimes free slaves lived with their former owners and even took care of them when the latter could no longer work. All these activities led to building socio-affective relationships that consolidated the practices of manumission (Velázquez Gutiérrez 2005: 335-356). For information on slave labor, identity and manumission, see (Proctor 2003a, 2003b, and 2006).

2.15.2 Afro-Mexican enclaves

An Afro-Mexican enclave was identified in the past century along the coast of the states of Guerrero and Oaxaca on the Pacific Rim. It is known as La Costa Chica (Small Coast) which begins to the southeast of Acapulco (state of Guerrero) and extends for about 120 miles as far as the border with Oaxaca, where the Small Coast of Oaxaca begins. As of the late 16th century, African slaves were assigned to work in sugar mills in the sub-region known as La Cañada. The *bozales* (Africa-born slaves who spoke little or no Spanish) were from Bantu provinces particularly Congo and Angola. This was facilitated by Portuguese slave traders who had the license to deliver slaves to New Spain where the proportion of Bantus was normally 60 percent. The massive arrival of Bantu slaves was conducive to obtaining permission to establish sugar mills. Some of the toponyms of this area are reflective of the Bantu traces: Matamba (also in Zaire, Angola and Tanzania); Amapa, a town founded by *cimarrones* (fleeing slaves from the sugar mills). In Bantu Kikongo, *Mbamba* refers to a large snake that bites rapidly. This is the origin of the dance known as *la bamba* (Motta Sánchez 2005: 357-410). These enclaves have been recently studied by Althoff (1998) and Rosas Mayen (2007). Both studies offer insightful ethnographic analysis of Afro-Mexican communities

of the region and sufficient language data showing the popular residual variants of this dialect zone.

The other region of Afro-Mexican presence is Veracruz on the Gulf of Mexico. As early as 1529, Hernán Cortés had obtained a sugar plantation in southern Veracruz. Once Spaniards discovered that Central Veracruz and other parts of Mexico offered ideal climate and soil conditions for the crop, they encouraged its cultivation but were unable to use Indian labor consistently because the New Laws of 1542 had abolished Indian slavery. When colonists began to seek an additional pool of workers, Africans presented a good choice because of their track record in the Iberian Peninsula. In Veracruz, Africans worked in mines and on large livestock-raising estates that supplied mining areas with meat and hides. These coerced laborers proved as multiple and complex as the settings in which they arrived. In major cities such as Mexico, Puebla, Valladolid, and Antequera (or Oaxaca City), they built roads, bridges and buildings; they also transported goods and people within and between these population centers; they hawked wares in the streets, cut and sold firewood, tended gardens and livestock, kept house and waited on their masters. African slave labor was also utilized in the production of sugar. Because it lay on the mainland and encompassed highland and lowland areas, Central Veracruz provided a regional variant of the overall Caribbean black experience in sugar culture. The region lay in the heartland of New Spain's sugar industry until nearly the end of the 17th century. During this time Mexico became a strong market for slaves, and as many as 2,000 Africans arrived annually at the port of Veracruz between 1580 and 1620. In this setting, blacks integrated into variegated labor systems instead of a single slave-dominated system (Carroll 1991: 15-19). Two cities of Veracruz are identified as centers of slave trade and labor, Jalapa and Cordoba. Jalapa's peak period of African slave purchase falls between 1597 and 1610 during which planters purchased two or three *bozales* yearly. In Jalapa, 430 slaves were registered although Jalapa represented one of the many New World markets where trade was not increasing rapidly; in fact, it declined after 1610 and from 1670 onward it virtually ceased. The origins of the slaves sold in Jalapa in the periods of 1578-1610, 1611-1640 and 1641-1670 was extremely diverse, and the total registered was 797. Of all the slaves sold in Jalapa, 219 were identified as coming from Angola in the first period (Carroll 1991: Table 3).

Hernán Cortés integrated slaves into the Veracruz labor force before 1530; by 1534, he had already imported one group of Africans for his mill at San Andrés Tuxtla. Veracruz emerged as a center for the early industry. The royal accountant Rodrigo de Albornoz founded a plantation near Cempoala in 1535 and purchased 150 slaves to work it. During the next decade Spaniards built five more estates in the Orizaba region including a huge plantation belonging to Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza, known as the *Ingenio de Orizaba* or Orizaba Mill, where over 100

African slaves worked. Some urban slaves held skilled occupations in which they had received training from Spanish carpenters, shoemakers, masons, and blacksmiths, while a few held positions as household and body servants. In these capacities, slaves lived and worked in the same surroundings as their owners, and probably enjoyed better accommodations than many of the poorer class of any race. Occasionally, these servants enjoyed near-kin status with their masters; the affective bond was manumission for "the love and loyalty". Slaves of less wealthy masters usually led less secure lives because they were rented to others and lived off the fees of the rent. Renting sometimes gave slaves the opportunity to acquire some capital and property of their own (Carroll 1991: 66).

Little is known about patterns of language maintenance and language shift, bilingualism in African languages and Spanish, and the hypothetical processes of pidginization and creolization. The major question posed by researchers pertains to the formation of pidgins and / or creoles resulting from contact between African languages and Spanish or Portuguese. The enclaves of African *bozales* in Mexico were too small and not efficiently interconnected to produce new forms of speech. The sub-regions of La Costa Chica and Central Veracruz could have been the sites in which Spanish-based creoles might have emerged, but the conditions of isolation and marginalization were not sufficiently strenuous to maintain the social distance between masters and slaves. Daily and face-to-face interaction with the Spanish-speaking families among those who remained in-and-around the Spanish households fostered at least acculturation and later assimilation to colonial life; in turn this seems to have contributed to the acquisition of the popular version of Mexican Spanish and its residual variants. This suggests that Afro-Mexicans most likely skipped one whole stage of language evolution known as creolization, the second-generation process that originated a new speech in those milieux that maintained the social distance between Europeans and Africans (e.g. Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad, etc.). The absence of full-fledged Afro-Hispanic creoles remains a question in creoles studies. This underlying assumption reads that as of the second generation, speakers of African languages were inclined to acquire or learn the local or regional vernacular of Mexican Colonial Spanish, and that in turn they were the agents of inter-generatioal retransmission of popular residual variants.

How do we know now that Afro-Mexicans were proficient in Spanish? The trials of the Inquisition aid in the reconstruction of the slaves' profile and their personal depositions before the Holy Office. Spanish speakers of African descent were present in New Spain since the 1520's. Those who were born in New Spain were *negros ladinos* (proficient in Spanish), and as such they were able to deliver their own testimonies in Spanish. More than one hundred cases of Afro-Mexicans accused of blasphemy were recorded between 1596 and 1669. Afro-Mexicans com-

monly used blasphemous speech as a strategy of resistance under unbearable working and living conditions. In most cases the defendant was a young acculturated male from urban settings and a few from rural areas. In both cases blasphemy was the result of excessive physical punishment inflicted by their angry masters. In attempting to stop the abusive punishment, the slaves blurted out expressions of blasphemy against God, an act that warranted the prompt intervention of the Inquisition, where their cases were heard (Villa-Flores 2002).

2.16 Conclusions

(1) Indigenous Spanish. This chapter highlights some of the most important components of the emerging Spanish-speaking society in which Spanish speakers used Spanish. Clearly dominating the life of the Spanish colonies throughout the 16th century, the *encomienda* had manifold functions. It strengthened the position of the newcomers in Mesoamerica, solidified the Spanish alliances despite their own internal conflicts, empowered the clan of Spanish speakers in the new land, and imported slaves from African nations, adding another group to an already multilingual / multicultural scenario. The humanists who tenaciously opposed the *encomenderos* obstructed the legal and permanent enslavement of the native population. If the enslavement of the indigenous peoples had been solidly established during three centuries of colonial life, the process of gradual assimilation would have been delayed. If the process of assimilation had been delayed, the acquisition of Spanish by the indigenous would have rendered a socio-ethnic vernacular variety with features derived from deeper language contact coupled with social distance (e.g. massive Nahuatl-accented Spanish or semi-creolized Spanish with features of indigenous languages). External factors were not propitious to the emergence of a socio-ethnic variety of 'indigenous Spanish' during the first century of colonial life.

(2) Saliency and repression. In the most prosperous Spanish colony, the role of the Inquisition was two-fold: on the one hand, it had the power to repress divergent attitudes, behavior and 'inappropiate' discourse; on the other, it had the ability to record basic statistics referring to the subjects under its control. The Inquisition's files reveal interesting aspects of the daily life in New Spain and narrate ordinary stories about common individuals of diverse origin and religious orientation (cf. Mott 2001). Furthermore, they aid in the reconstruction of the initial ethno-linguistic diversity existing in New Spain and the strategies to eliminate it. Given the saliency of the crypto-Jews, one more hypothesis may be advanced for the reconstruction of New World Spanish. If Spanish-speaking Jews living in New Spain had maintained some of the original traits of late medieval

Spanish (assuming that most were bilingual or recessive Portuguese-Spanish), they might have given continuity to the distinction between voiced and voiceless fricatives (just like in the other communities of Sephardic Jews). Voicing was the pertinent feature that might have made them even more salient, because at the time all the voiced sibilants had been devoiced. In combination, language, ethnicity, and religion led to the extinction of the Spanish-speaking Jews. The writings that have been rescued reveal two major strains: one is the adherence to the prevailing variety of Mexican Colonial Spanish, e.g. the autobiography of Luis de Carvajal (cf. Toro 1944 Vol. 2: 315-350), and the letters delivered to his mother and sisters while in prison (cf. Silverstein 2015). The other is the innovative contribution in the poetry of Leonor de Carvajal (cf. Hamilton 2000), which shows the use of both traditional Sephardic and current skills in Mexican Colonial Spanish. Finally, the evidence gathered thus far points to the multilingual and multi-dialectal resources of a community that contributed to the diversification of ritualized domains of language use (e.g. the home of the religious leaders, the synagogues, and various congregations).

(3) Speech accommodation. Notwithstanding the quantitative disadvantages of Spanish speakers, they were able to settle in a major city where they began the process of language diffusion via acts of identity such as *La fiesta del Pendón*, carefree public spectacles, regular public announcements, and inexcusable functions that gathered thousands of people for about three centuries. The urban space was re-organized to convey images of Christianization. The presence and miscellaneous activities of Spanish speakers during the 16th century were determining in the formation of a new dialect that is known as proto-Mexican Spanish, discussed in the next chapter. Appendix I shows the diverse origins of Spanish speakers: they were from all regions and from tiny places and big cities. They had more than one reason to accommodate or show solidarity with one another. Accommodation took place in face-to-face interaction in the domains of family, work, education, religion or simply in the animated social life they had despite the disadvantages of being a quantitative minority.

(4) Koineization. The process of dialect mixing was accelerated in the highlands of New Spain as a result of the inter-dialectal experience that Spanish speakers had had in the Caribbean area, where the primitive koine had been shaped. The Inquisition files aid in the reconstruction of speakers' regional origins and various backgrounds, their transatlantic experiences, and the experience in exploration.

(5) Absence of creolization. The Inquisition's files complement other sources related to the population of the Spanish-speaking New World. Thirty percent of the cases tried by the Holy Office in the 17th century refer to descendants of Africans. This tends to decrease while the cases of mulattoes increase during the

same century, a trend reflecting a solid pattern towards mestizaje. The total of both groups makes up about one-half of all subjects, and there is no doubt that the individual's ethnic origin was logged in with precision. Their sins were normally blasphemy, curse, sorcery, bigamy, or aggression. The archives also shed light on their lives marked by the disgrace of being uprooted from their families and native lands; finally, despite the fact that the vast majority were victims of excessive corporal punishment, some of them enjoyed surprising freedom and some others were even able to read and write (Alberro 1988: 457-461, 467). The presence of Afro-Mexicans corroborates the multiple regional, socio-economic, and religious origins of the immigrants; they are included in the category of the "first speakers", inasmuch as no enclave or community favored the evolution of an Afro-Hispanic pidgin or creole.

By the second half of the 16th century and the first half of the 17th century, the Spanish-speaking Jews had become the scapegoats of the Spanish-speaking officialdom. As compared to all the other groups, Sephardic Jews had ascended rapidly in the political and economic colonial power. Their involvement in the slave trade had a dual effect: they became wealthy but were doomed by their role as brokers in legal commerce. The Spanish crown was not inclined to empower the *encomenderos* and the non-Christian groups in adventurous enterprises such as the slave trade. According to Hordes (2007: 222, 224), after the scandalous case of the Carvajals, the Holy Office returned to its policy of relative toleration, and from this point on until its demise in 1821, it was not too interested in persecuting converts. In fact, many of them progressively assimilated to mainstream Catholic society, whereas others retained residuals of Jewish practices.