

## *A Note about the Terms “Town Council,” “Stores,” and “Shops”*



The town council plays a very important role in the following book, but the term “town” has multiple meanings. We will be discussing villages, towns, and cities, which all had governing councils. I have tried to use the term “town council” as it applied to towns but also sometimes to the governing councils of villages, towns, and cities. In English we sometimes say “we stayed in town over the weekend” when we might be talking about Manhattan or that we have a “townhouse” in a large city. To avoid confusion I have sometimes adopted the term “municipal council” when speaking about the councils of towns and cities or those of villages, towns, and cities taken together. In every instance, my intention was clarity.

I have also adopted the term “store” rather than “shop” when discussing the workplaces of entrepreneurs and artisans alike. In English we often speak of “artisan shops” rather than “artisan stores.” However, “shop” sometimes conveys a less than full participation by artisans in the market economy, and indeed some guilds did manage to restrict the free functioning of the marketplace; but on the whole the artisans of colonial Spanish America were entrepreneurial enough for their workplaces to be referred to as “stores.” This usage avoids possible confusion about my meaning.

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THE COLONIAL SPANISH-AMERICAN CITY

Houses make a town, but citizens make a city.

—JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU



Perhaps the best definition of the city in its higher aspects is to say that it is a place designed to offer the widest facilities for significant conversation. The dialogue is one of the ultimate expressions of life in the city: the delicate flower of its long vegetative growth.

—LEWIS MUMFORD