

7-12-2014

# Beyond the Missions: Ethnogenesis in Colonial Paraguay, 1556-1700

Shawn Michael Austin

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**BEYOND THE MISSIONS:  
ETHNOGENESIS IN COLONIAL PARAGUAY,  
1556-1700**

**by**

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**DISSERTATION**

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**History**

The University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

**May, 2014**

## **DEDICATION**

for Camille

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe thanks to scores of individuals for their intellectual, financial, and emotional support. A special thanks to my dissertation chair, Kimberly Gauderman, for supporting my interest in the “fringe” and encouraging me to pursue the stories that I found inspirational. Kymm’s mentorship style provided me with serious critiques and feedback while also allowing me an incredible amount of freedom to explore my interests. Her regular advice to me before embarking on archival trips was always to “follow your instincts,” a refrain that bolstered me when the archive was daunting.

I thank all the members of my dissertation committee. This project began in Judy Bieber’s seminar on the Atlantic World and her enthusiasm for my project served as a critical catalyst. At the early stages of the project, Kris Lane suggested the title for this dissertation, a phrase that has shaped several arguments and aided me in making this research relevant. From the moment we met, Kris has treated me like a colleague and for that I am grateful. Liz Hutchison has advised me since I began the graduate program at the University of New Mexico in 2007. She has guided my professional trajectory from the beginning and I consider her advice to be worth its weight in gold. Les Field has been an unyielding fount of support for this project since its earliest stages. For his candid critiques of my conceptual framework and suggestions with regards to the anthropological literature, I am deeply indebted.

Other colleagues have supported this dissertation at various stages. A special thanks belongs to Suzanne Oakdale, who graciously accepted to chair an individual readings seminar on Tupí-Guaraní groups and oriented my exploration of Tupían kinship. Laura Fahrenkrog, my Chilean colleague, who gets as excited as I do about colonial

Asunción, provided numerous citations, support, and stimulating dialogue. Ignacio Telesca, an extraordinary scholar of colonial Paraguay, was a major help and an enthusiastic supporter of my research on Africans in Paraguay. I also thank Barbara Ganson and Julia Sarreal, both experts on the Guaraní and the Jesuit missions, for their encouragement and archival advice. Julia provided me with several references and copies of primary sources that have enriched this dissertation and promise to advance future projects. Suzanne Schadl made it possible for me to conduct primary research at UNM through the purchase of a large microfilm collection of Paraguayan documents.

This research was supported financially by a variety of institutions. Two Field Research Grants and a generous two-year Ph.D. Fellowship from the Latin American and Iberian Institute/Tinker Foundation facilitated the research for this dissertation at all stages. Other UNM institutions that supported my research include the UNM Office of Graduate Studies and the History Graduate Student Association. At the 2013 Mellon Summer Institute in Spanish Paleography, directed by Carla Rahn Phillips, I conducted research at the Newberry Library and expanded my paleography skills.

Family members have been a tremendous support. Thanks to Bob and Chris Heywood for their unyielding physical and emotional support throughout the entirety of my graduate career. Their investment in this project and in my professional success has been an incredible strength. The same must be said for Mark and Patrice Austin. My parents have provided overwhelming support and they have never once questioned my pursuit of advanced degrees. Without their support, I would have thrown in the towel long ago. Thank you for helping me pursue this dream.

I thank Annie, Ethan, Richard, and Lucas for their patience during this long process. I never imagined that my children could inspire me as they have. The frequent query about “when Daddy is going to finish his book” has kept me motivated when I otherwise would have wandered.

To my best friend, counselor, and the love of my life I owe the deepest thanks. Camille’s unending support for this research, which included remaining with our children for three months while I conducted archival research abroad, is the unseen framework of this dissertation.

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**ABSTRACT**

This dissertation argues that Guaraní socio-cultural practices determined what Spaniards could and could not do in colonial Paraguay. “Beyond the Missions,” refers to colonial encounters outside the oft-romanticized Jesuit missions, especially within the provincial capital of Asunción. This research, therefore, complements the scholarship on the Jesuit missions by demonstrating that the Guaraní among the Spanish were just as influential as their counterparts in the missions in shaping the process by which they assumed new ethnic identities (or ethnogenesis) in Christian communities. Moreover, Guaraní social norms deeply influenced colonials and their institutions, including Blacks and the practice of African slavery. This argument challenges the dominant paradigm scholars have applied to the conquest of the Río de la Plata and builds on recent scholarship suggesting that ethnogenesis should be applied to the colonizers, not only the colonized. By examining ethnic relations in one of the most peripheral region of the Spanish Empire, this research provides new insights into cultural change and exchange in Spanish America.

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## Chapter 1

### "Introduction"

"Paraguay has become a byword for a strange, exotic land, falling off the edge of our mental maps of the world—Latin America's answer to Timbuktu. Repeatedly presented as an isolated and underdeveloped cultural backwater, a dangerous but attractive land where magical realism and reality seem to collide, it is often portrayed as the epitome of exoticism, peculiarity, and exceptionalism, in a self-perpetuating circle of myth and stereotype."<sup>1</sup>

Paraguay has experienced a long history of isolation, relative to its neighboring countries, which has worked to shape myths about its colonial and national histories. In the passage cited above, the editors of *The Paraguay Reader* describe two polar opposite views of Paraguay discernible in historical scholarship: either Paraguay is a dystopia, characterized by moral degradation, or a “vanished arcadia,” a lost paradise hidden in the heart of South America.<sup>2</sup>

Both of these mythic visions have their roots in Paraguay’s colonial period. Within a decade after Asunción was founded in 1537, a disgruntled priest named Francisco González Paniagua famously called Paraguay a “Mohammed’s paradise,” a reference to Spanish conquistadors’ sexual unions with dozens of Guaraní maidens and the violent acquisition of Guaraní as slaves.<sup>3</sup> This dystopian vision has largely been applied to Paraguay’s secular society while the myth of a lost paradise has been used to describe the Jesuit missions, most famously portrayed in the Roland Joffé’s 1986 film, *The Mission*. The film and a whole corpus of scholarship describe the missions as sites where noble

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Lambert and R. Andrew Nickson, *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 4.

<sup>2</sup> “Vanished arcadia” comes from Graham Cunninghame, *A Vanished Arcadia: Being Some Account of the Jesuits in Paraguay, 1607 to 1767* (London: W. Heinemann, 1901).

<sup>3</sup> Paniagua to Cardenal Juan de Tavira, 1545, *Documentos históricos y geográficos relativos a la conquista y colonización rioplatense*, ed. Jose Torre Revello (Buenos Aires: Talleres S.A., 1941), 449.

savages became civilized through the Jesuit fathers' benevolence, patience, and Christian indoctrination.<sup>4</sup>

Of course, both visions are flawed. In the last two decades, scholarship on the Jesuit missions has dispelled the notion that the Jesuits and their neophytes lived on social harmony and that the missions were attractive because they offered the path to salvation.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, very little has been written about colonial Paraguay "beyond the missions." This dissertation addresses the gaps in the scholarship on colonial Paraguay and contributes an original analysis of interethnic relations and cultural change in the region.

Paraguay was, indeed, defined more by its isolation than by its connections to the wider world. Spaniards came to Paraguay in the first place to find a route to the silver-rich Andes. Asunción was established in 1537 by a vanguard company of Spanish conquistadors because it was located near semi-sedentary native populations who practiced swidden agriculture and provided the conquistadors with basic provisions in exchange for metal tools. Spaniards eventually referred to the various of Tupí-Guaraní groups who lived east of the Paraguay River as simply Guaraní, because of their shared language. Through a variety of activities, including alliances, trade, kinship, and violence, the conquistadors established tributary relations with the Guaraní and permanent colonial settlements were founded.

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<sup>4</sup> See Cunninghame, *A Vanished Arcadia*; Pablo Hernández, *Misiones Del Paraguay* (Barcelona: G. Gili, 1913); Guillermo Furlong, *Misiones y sus pueblos de guaraníes* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Theoría, 1962).

<sup>5</sup> See Florencia Roulet, *La resistencia de los guaraní del Paraguay a la conquista española, 1537-1556* (Posadas: Editorial Universitaria, Universidad Nacional de Misiones, 1993); Barbara Anne Ganson, *The Guaraní Under Spanish Rule in the Río De La Plata* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003); Guillermo Wilde, *Religión y poder en las misiones de Guaraníes* (Buenos Aires: Editorial SB, 2009); Dorothy Jane Tuer, "Tigers and Crosses: The Transcultural Dynamics of Spanish-Guaraní Relations in the Río De La Plata: 1516-1580" (University of Toronto, 2011); Julia Sarreal, "Revisiting Cultivated Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Daily Life in the Guaraní Missions," *Ethnohistory* 60, no. 1 (Winter 2013): 101-124.

Since Paraguay did not reveal any lucrative commodities or precious metals, few Europeans migrated to the region (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Immigration to the Río de la Plata, 16<sup>th</sup> c.**

	<b>Immigrants</b>
Expedition- Pedro de Mendoza (1535)	1,500
Armada- Alonso Cabrera (1537)	95
Single Ship-León Pancaldo (1537)	28
Expedition- Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca (1540)	400
Expedition- Sanabria (1550)	300
Armada- Martín Orúe (1555)	48
Expedition- Juan Ortiz de Zaráte (1572)	536
Single Ship- Alonso de Vera (1582)	50
Deserters from Expedition- Alonso de Sotomayor (1582)	80
Fleet- Governor Rodríguez de Valdés (1598)	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,087</b>

Source: Richard Konetzke, *La emigración española al Río de la Plata durante el siglo XVI* (Madrid: Miscelánea Americanista, 1952), 58.

Of the total immigration to the Río de la Plata less than half arrived and remained in Asunción. Paraguay's demographic isolation parallels its economic and physical isolation. Currency did not circulate in Paraguay until the 1780s and most commodities were exchanged in a barter system.<sup>6</sup>

Asunción served as the Río de la Plata's provincial administrative center (under the Audiencia of Charcas and the Viceroyalty of Peru) until 1617 when the provinces were split between the Río de la Plata (Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, Corrientes) and Paraguay (Asunción, Villa Rica, and Ciudad Real). After the first quarter of the seventeenth century, what connected Paraguay to the outside world was yerba mate, a leaf harvested from a tree of the holly family (*ilex paraguariensis*) which was ground into a tea. By the 1630s, yerba was being consumed in Potosí. The wide-spread use of that commodity in Peru is evidenced in the elaborate silver gourds and straws that adorned many elite Limeños' tables.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Juan Carlos Garavaglia, *Mercado interno y economía colonial* (México: Grijalbo, 1983), 65. Historians of colonial Paraguay are limited in their knowledge of demographic facts and political economy.

<sup>7</sup> Adalberto López, "The Economics of Yerba Mate in Seventeenth-Century South America," *Agricultural History* 48, no. 4 (1974): 493-509.

The first priests to actively create *doctrinas* or rural parishes in Paraguay were the Franciscans. From the 1580s to the 1630s, Franciscans worked with Spaniards and Guaraní caciques to establish *reducciones* or Indian pueblos. By the early seventeenth century, Jesuit priests were active evangelizers in Paraguay. After a number of serious setbacks, they were forced to move the majority of their missions to the region in-between the Paraná and Uruguay Rivers. By the eighteenth century, the Jesuits managed thirty mission settlements in the region and directed the development of various economic enterprises, including yerba and tobacco cultivation and cattle ranching. Thanks to the economic successes of the missions, the Jesuits and Guaraní invested in various cultural productions: Guaraní artisans painted, sculpted, and crafted musical instruments. Guaraní caciques and other officials fulfilled their administrative and political assignments, pouring into them cultural and social patterns that made them distinctly Guaraní-Christian.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, in Asunción, Spaniards and Guaraní built their own social arrangement through the *encomienda*, a grant of indigenous labor to a Spaniard.<sup>9</sup> In Paraguay, the *encomienda* was based entirely on the personal service of small populations of Guaraní. Spaniards throughout the region were dependent on indigenous personal service organized through the *encomienda*. Most *encomenderos* possessed on average fifteen

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<sup>8</sup> For a cultural analysis of the missions, the best work is being done by Guillermo Wilde. See Wilde, *Religión y poder*. Julia Sarreal's recent work is equally important for its fresh perspectives on Guaraní agency and economy in the missions. See Julia Sarreal, *The Guaraní and Their Missions: A Socioeconomic History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014); Sarreal, "Revisiting Cultivated Agriculture."

<sup>9</sup> The *encomienda* was an obligatory system for extracting surplus goods or labor from groups under Spanish control. The crown granted an *encomienda* to a Spaniard for one or two lifetimes or generations. Spanish colonial law required *encomenderos* to provide their *encomendados* with Catholic indoctrination, protection, and basic necessities. In Paraguay, there are no recorded instances of *encomienda* grants made to native caciques, as there were in central areas.

tributaries, and, therefore, remained relatively poor.<sup>10</sup> Yet, the number of encomenderos remained constant throughout the seventeenth century, reflecting the crown's hands-off attitude toward Paraguay. In 1610, there were around 250 encomenderos in the Province of Paraguay. Sixty-four years later, in 1674, there were 257 encomenderos.<sup>11</sup> While the number of encomienda grants remained stable in Paraguay, in the core areas of Spanish America, the institution declined.<sup>12</sup> Most Guaraní tributaries in Paraguay provided around sixty days of personal service to their encomenderos, while others, called *yanacona*, served permanently on Spanish estates.

Rather quickly, Spaniards and the Guaraní exchanged a variety of cultural practices. The Guaraní living in Asunción and surrounding pueblos adopted Christianity, but signs of Christian indoctrination are difficult to ascertain given the dearth of ecclesiastical records. Spanish-Guaraní interactions were frequent and often intimate, since tributaries lived on their masters' estates during their annual terms of service. Out of this social closeness, a large number of mestizos emerged in Paraguayan society, many demonstrating ambivalent cultural identities.

Cultural and social development in Asunción, therefore, was characterized by a deep hybridity. This dissertation emphasizes conquered groups' agency, which has been largely ignored in the historiography. This chapter will introduce the major themes and methodologies of this dissertation. It begins with an analysis of a legal dispute from the early eighteenth century between a Guaraní man and a Spanish encomendero.

### **Nandu and His Would-Be Encomendero**

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<sup>10</sup> José Luis Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay, 1600-1650* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1973), 197.

<sup>11</sup> Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay*, 67.

<sup>12</sup> James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, *Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 303-304.

In February 1707, a middle-aged Guaraní named Nandu (short for Fernando) appeared before one of Asunción's magistrates to defend himself and his family from don Joseph de Abendaño, who claimed that Nandu pertained to his encomienda.<sup>13</sup> To prove that he was not part of a tribute population, Nandu provided a brief narrative of his personal background. As a boy, he belonged to the Pueblo of Terecañy, originally founded by Spaniards and Franciscans sometime between 1580 and 1600 in Itatín, a frontier region to the northeast of Asunción. Terecañy was in the heart of the tumultuous yerba mate region and was under constant threat from enemy Natives, and Brazilian *bandeirantes* or slavers from São Paulo. In 1676, a massive *bandeira* or slaving expedition destroyed Terecañy, capturing hundreds of Guaraní who were then sold into slavery in São Paulo. Among those who escaped was twelve-year-old Nandu. After arriving in Asunción, he was placed in the care of the Jesuit college. Many of Nandu's townsmen and kin from Terecañy were in Asunción for a brief time before pushing southeast to join one of dozens of Jesuit Guaraní-Christian reductions.<sup>14</sup> Nandu explained that he "entered into the service of the Jesuits," working on one of their many haciendas and farms within and surrounding the city. By the 1730s, the Jesuit college in Asunción was an economic powerhouse, possessing 345 African slaves who worked the many properties and industries of the Jesuits. Some Jesuits learned "Angolan" to communicate with these Africans, indicating that many of their slaves were first generation. It was

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<sup>13</sup> This suit is found in ANA, NE, 1707, vol. 71, fol. 130-39. It is possible that the name Nandu was a "guaranization" of "Nando" short for Fernando or Hernando. A special thanks to Carla Rahn Phillips and Ignacio Telesca for their insights.

<sup>14</sup> For an account of the 1676 *bandeira* and subsequent transmigrations, see ANA, SC, 1676, vol. 17. See also Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*, 284. Other transmigrants remained in the Indian pueblos near Asunción. See Branislava Susnik, *El indio colonial del Paraguay*, vol. 1 (Asunción: Secretaría Nacional de Cultura, 1965; reprint, 2011), 200-201.



probably from this large African population that Nandu met his wife, Manuela, a free mulata, with whom he had several children.<sup>15</sup>

Nandu claimed that he had never been subject to an encomendero and had always enjoyed his freedom. He added that he was prepared to assemble witnesses to defend his position and keep himself and his children out of “slavery.” Nandu’s conflation of tribute service and slavery was a common trope of his patrons, the Jesuits. Nandu made his case through legalistic logic, citing a royal provision from 1634 which provided that a person who had been in one place for ten years or longer could be considered a “*natural*” or natural-born inhabitant. Since Nandu had been in the service of the Jesuits for more than ten years he claimed that he was not subject to Abendaño’s encomienda, which originated from a different locale.<sup>16</sup> Unfortunately for Nandu, the governor of the province, don Baltazar García Ros, who adjudicated the suit, sided with Abendaño, ordering Nandu to pay tribute.

Much was at stake for Nandu. If the sentence were upheld, Nandu *and* his children would be subject to pay tribute in the form of personal service to their would-be encomendero, a frightening possibility for one who had enjoyed freedom from this system. Nandu appealed and requested that the governor consult the archives to verify that he and his family did not appear in the last *padrón* (census register) of Abendaño’s encomienda. The governor found no record of Nandu in the encomienda.

For his part, don Abendaño decried Nandu’s “treacheries” and appealed to his own virtuous character, describing himself as a man who sustained his wife and dependents by

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<sup>15</sup> On the Jesuit college see Ignacio Telesca, *Tras los expulsos: cambios demográficos y territoriales en el Paraguay después de la expulsión de los jesuitas* (Asunción: Universidad Católica Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, 2009), 133-134.

<sup>16</sup> The royal provision is cited in full in another suit involving litigants from Tucumán. See ANA, SH, 1643, vol. 2, no. 24.

his own labor. Abendaño further explained that as the crown's royal vassal, he had spent his own resources in defending the king's territories in Paraguay from “frontier enemies,” a reference to a variety of non-sedentary groups who inhabited the regions to the west of the Paraguay River.

Ultimately, Nandu's tactic was successful. In July of the same year, the governor offered his final sentence and declared Nandu “free from Abendaño's encomienda and any other encomienda.” What proved crucial in Nandu's case was that he did not appear in the *padrón*, the most important legal document used by encomenderos for keeping track of encomendados. It is ironic that the legal apparatus used by Spaniards to validate their tributary rights over Natives was used by a Guaraní man to affirm his free status.

Nandu's dispute with Abendaño provides a lived experience to discuss the central arguments of this dissertation and its major historiographical interventions. Above all, Nandu's actions display indigenous historical agency in colonial Paraguay, a place where conquered groups have traditionally been portrayed as slaves to their encomenderos.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the central purpose of this dissertation is to demonstrate how the Guaraní under Spanish control, Indigenous outside Spanish control and Africans (and their descendants) exercised agency.

### **Personal Service and the Encomienda**

Nandu's suit is at once typical and exceptional. That Nandu successfully sustained his status as a non-tributary Guaraní was exceptional. Most Guaraní under colonial control and outside of the Jesuit missions, were associated with an encomienda, something Spaniards worked hard to ensure, as this case illustrates. Even in Asunción,

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<sup>17</sup> This idea that the encomienda was a system of slavery is prominent in almost all accounts of the encomienda. See especially, Susnik, *El indio colonial del Paraguay*; Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*.

the region's largest urban center, nearly all natives were attached to an *encomendero*. In other words, there were few *forasteros* in Paraguay, that is natives not associated with a Spanish *encomendero* or a tribute-paying native community.<sup>18</sup> By comparison, in the Andes, *forasteros* were exempt from tribute payment because the foundation of labor and production was the community, under the guidance of a *cacique*. But in Paraguay, the labor scheme was much more personal. For a time, the *encomienda* was based on direct kinship networks based on concubinage between a Spaniard and one or more small Guaraní communities. These linkages channeled Guaraní kin from indigenous *pueblos* to Spanish estates in Asunción. (Chapter 2 will discuss these networks in greater detail).

The trajectory of Spanish estates in colonial Paraguay was determined by these kinship networks. Most *encomenderos* lived on their *chacras* or farm plots with houses for their family, tributaries, and slaves. In other Spanish American regions, *chacra* described indigenous rustic farmsteads usually not associated with Spaniards.<sup>19</sup> Colonial Paraguay is distinct in that complete *encomienda* populations existed in Asunción, living with Spaniards in their homes where they gave them tribute in personal service. Silvio Zavala has written extensively about personal service and indigenous labor, mainly focusing mainly on crown and local legislation.<sup>20</sup> This dissertation contributes to our understanding of indigenous labor in a fringe region, by exploring the social networks that facilitated the continuation of labor relations.

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<sup>18</sup> In the Andean context, a *forastero* was a native separated from his indigenous community, usually by choice, to avoid tribute payment. Often *forasteros* migrated to towns or cities where they came into the service of a Spaniard or entered the free wage labor force. Karen Vieira Powers, *Andean Journeys: Migration, Ethnogenesis, and the State in Colonial Quito* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 7.

<sup>19</sup> The entry for “*chacra*” in the Real Academia Española (1729) defines it in this way.

<sup>20</sup> For the Rio de la Plata, see Silvio Arturo Zavala, *Orígenes de la colonización en el Río de la Plata* (Mexico City: Colegio Nacional, 1977). For the Andes, see Silvio Arturo Zavala, *El servicio personal de los indios en el Perú* (México: El Colegio de México, 1978). For New Spain, see Silvio Arturo Zavala, *El servicio personal de los indios en la Nueva España* (México City: Colegio de México, 1984).

Typically, we consider cities to be the sites of Spanish corporate power and pueblos or indigenous communities the sites of Indian corporate power.<sup>21</sup> To the cities flow all finished goods and mineral wealth; in the hinterlands raw goods are exploited and sent to the cities. In Paraguay this dynamic is complicated by the fact that two intertwined forms of *encomienda* co-existed side by side, one in the city, the other in the hinterland. The *encomienda* populations in the rural pueblos were called *mitayas* while the tributaries in Asunción were called *yanaconas*. The labor of both populations was directed towards small Spanish *chacras* in Asunción. Unlike Peru and Mexico, where Spaniards usurped the tribute-collecting role the Inca and Mexica empires had played before them, Spaniards in Paraguay appropriated Guaraní labor by becoming their kin.

Complicating the matter further is the fact that the primary agriculturalists in Guaraní society were women, making them the most important laborers in Paraguay until the seventeenth century. In exchange for this kinship, the Guaraní required Spanish metal tools, especially axe heads. Spaniards' reliance on female indigenous labor is what makes the Paraguayan *encomienda* and social relations within it so distinct from other *encomiendas* in Spanish-America. Of course, female servants or personal retainers were used throughout the Americas, but in Paraguay they were the foundation of the tributary system.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> There are some exceptions: Spanish American cities that were created as an overlay on top of pre-Columbian Native cities, like Mexico City and Cuzco. In Mexico City, there were both Spanish and Nahua *cabildos*, although they did not share equal power. See the excellent essays in *City Indians in Spain's American Empire: Urban Indigenous Society in Colonial Mesoamerica and Andean South America, 1530-1810*, ed. Dana Velasco Murillo, Mark Lentz, and Margarita R. Ochoa (Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2012).

<sup>22</sup> Nancy van Deusen traces the lives of several Central American female slaves in Lima during the conquest period. She describes how after the New Laws were proclaimed in 1542 many of these women were declared "free." Nancy E. van Deusen, "Diasporas, Bondage, and Intimacy in Lima, 1535 to 1555," *Colonial Latin American Review* 19, no. 2 (August 2010): 247-277. Van Deusen focuses exclusively on female service during the conquest period in Nancy E. van Deusen, "The Intimacies of Bondage: Female

The Guaraní women in these exchanges were more than agricultural laborers; they physically embodied the alliance between a Spaniard and a Guaraní cacique. Until the first quarter of the seventeenth century, when male labor became as important as female labor, Spaniards carefully defended their female Guaraní servants from other men, both Guaraní suitors and Spanish encomenderos. This dissertation's focus on Guaraní women contrasts with the scholarship on the Jesuit missions, which has focused mainly on control over male sexuality by Jesuit priests who had hoped to eradicate polygyny.<sup>23</sup> In the Paraguayan encomendero context, colonials were more concerned about female sexuality since a Guaraní women's choice of sexual partner and maternal lineage determined her encomienda affiliation. In this way, women were the linchpin of the encomienda system and diplomatic relations between Spaniards and the Guaraní.

### **Cultural Exchange and the Encomienda**

This dissertation argues that the deep influence of Guaraní social norms on the encomienda was due to the fact that for nearly two decades Spaniards depended upon Guaraní provisions. It was not until 1547, when Governor Domingo Martínez de Irala discovered that the silver-rich Andes had already been claimed by other conquistadors, that Spanish officials moved to make Asunción a fully-fledged colonial center rather than a strategic site from which to launch expeditions to the Andes. This helps explain why there were no official encomiendas until 1556. At that juncture Spaniards created official encomiendas based on Guaraní villages, which they called *encomiendas mitayas* or

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Indigenous Servants and Slaves and Their Spanish Masters, 1492-1555," *Journal of Women's History* 24, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 13-43. For a more general analysis of women in the conquest, see Karen Vieira Powers, *Women in the Crucible of Conquest: The Gendered Genesis of Spanish American Society, 1500-1600* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

<sup>23</sup> See Wilde, *Religión y poder*, 133-135. The Jesuit Antonio Ruíz de Montoya discusses polygyny in Antonio Ruíz de Montoya, *Conquista espiritual hecho por los religiosos de la compañía de jesus en las provincias de Paraguay, Parana, Uruguay y Tape*, ed. Ernesto J.A. Maeder (Rosario: Equipo Difusor de Estudios de Historia Iberoamericana, 1989, orig. published in 1639).

simply *mitayas*.<sup>24</sup> Since there was no unifying political authority linking these small native groups, *encomiendas* often contained a handful of Guaraní political units, each headed by a patrilineal cacique. Most *encomiendas* were so small that an *encomendero* often knew personally each Guaraní in his service.

Anthropologist Elman R. Service's classic account of the Paraguayan *encomienda* concludes that Spaniards maintained intimate involvement with the Guaraní because they "could not simply remove the top-level native rulers and govern through an intermediate bureaucratic class. Control had to be immediate and specific, *reaching the individual Indian*, in contrast to the situation in Peru and Mexico."<sup>25</sup> This dissertation complements

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<sup>24</sup> The term *mita* or *encomienda mitaya* is derived from the Andean term, *mit'a*, for turn. On the Andean *mita* in the silver economy, see Jeffrey A. Cole, *The Potosí Mita, 1573-1700: Compulsory Indian Labor in the Andes* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985). For a general treatment of *encomienda* service in the Río de la Plata, see Zavala, *Orígenes de la colonización*.

<sup>25</sup> Elman R. Service, "The *Encomienda* in Paraguay," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 31, no. 2 (May 1951): 232. Emphasis mine. Service's legacy on Paraguayan scholarship is profound. His work is still viewed as the staple work on the Paraguayan *encomienda*: it was recently, republished in David J. Weber and Jane M. Rausch, *Where Cultures Meet: Frontiers in Latin American History* (Wilmington: SR Books, 1994). While North American scholars are familiar with Service's HAHHR article, most are not familiar with his book-length treatment of colonial Paraguay: Elman R. Service, *Spanish-Guaraní Relations in Early Colonial Paraguay* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1954). This latter publication has predominantly been cited by Paraguayan scholars and its conclusions have proved useful for nationalist historians. Service concluded that rapid and complete acculturation of the Guaraní occurred inside the Spanish *encomienda*—in contrast to the Jesuit missions—creating "national characteristics very early in its history" (81). Service's publication and conclusions need to be placed in the context of his ethnographic work published in the same year. In 1954, Service and his wife, Helen Service, produced an ethnography of Tobatí, a small Paraguayan town near Asunción. They argued that "in rural Paraguay today there are virtually no Guaraní cultural traits surviving other than language." They concluded that Paraguay had been fully hispanized with the same notions of leisure, the same notion of kinship, the same patronage practices, the same games, the same magic, and the same regard for Catholic saints. Elman R. Service and Helen S. Service, *Tobatí: Paraguayan Town* (Chicago: U.P. Press, 1954), cited in J.A. Pitt-Rivers, review of *Tobatí: Paraguayan Town*, by Elman R. and Helen S. Service, *Man* 55 (November 1955): 176. Turner and Turner have challenged some of the Service's claim through an analysis of Paraguayan naming practices: Christine Bolke Turner and Brian Turner, "The Role of Mestizaje of Surnames in Paraguay in the Creation of a Distinct New World Ethnicity," *Ethnohistory* 41, no. 1 (1993 (Winter)): 139-165. Service's work can be placed in context with a trend in anthropology to discern who in the world were Indians and who were not. Judith Friedlander's work provides an example. Regarding the people of Hueyapan, Friedlander concluded, "like the Aztec pyramid in the Plaza of the Three Cultures, the Hueyapeños' indigenous culture is in ruins and has been for centuries.... I suggest that Hueyapeños so-called Indian identity relates more precisely to their low socioeconomic position in the national stratification system than it does to their culture." Judith Friedlander, *Being Indian in Hueyapan: A Study of Forced Identity in Contemporary Mexico* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), xv. See also Richard N. Adams, *Cultural*

Service's analysis by providing quotidian examples of the close contact between Spaniards and Guaraní through an original analysis of heretofore unused sources. It also develops Service's claim that "the concubinage-kinship-labor pattern was never entirely replaced" and confirms that "it imparted its flavor to the whole subsequent history of Spanish-Guaraní relations."<sup>26</sup>

Paradoxically, Service also argues that Spanish colonization was not capable of accommodating indigenous cultural survival. Service maintains that the intimate nature of Spanish-Guaraní relations quickly and decisively ended Guaraní cultural integrity: "the kind of acculturation which occurred in Paraguay must have resulted in the replacement of much of Guaraní culture, with the exception of a few things (including language). Most other elements of true Guaraní culture have long since been lost."<sup>27</sup> Other scholars associate the official creation of the *encomienda* in 1556 with the beginning of rule by force and indigenous cultural declension. Anthropologist Branislava Susnik, author of the staple histories on the Guaraní under the *encomienda*, argues that "the initial service through kinship and friendship turned into service of the dominated and service by right of conquest."<sup>28</sup> According to this view, kinship was replaced by violence and rule by force in one fell swoop. This dissertation shows that while violence was a crucial character of the Spanish conquest in Paraguay, Guaraní kinship norms continued to inform *encomienda* relations.

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*Surveys of Panama-Nicaragua-Guatemala-El Salvador-Honduras* (Washington: Pan American Sanitary Bureau, 1957).

<sup>26</sup> Service, *Spanish-Guaraní Relations*, 234.

<sup>27</sup> Service, *Spanish-Guaraní Relations*, 81.

<sup>28</sup> Branislava Susnik, *Una visión socio-antropológica del Paraguay, XVI-1/2 XVII* (Asunción: Museo Etnográfico Andrés Barbero, 1993), 26. See also Susnik, *El indio colonial del Paraguay*; Branislava Susnik, *Los aborígenes del Paraguay*, vol. 5 (Asunción: Museo Etnográfico Andrés Barbero, 1978).

After 1556, Spanish officials sought to congregate the small, politically independent Guaraní villages into larger villages called reductions. They worked with Franciscan priests to create these reductions, which they called *pueblos de indios* (hereafter *pueblos*).<sup>29</sup> Guaraní from the *pueblos* served Spanish encomenderos on a rotational basis; these were the *encomiendas mitayas*. At the same time, Guaraní caciques maintained traditional alliances with Spaniards and gave women to Spaniards as wives/servants in exchange for metal tools. This latter group became known as *yanaconas*, a loan word from the Andes that identified personal retainers detached from indigenous communities.

Nandu's case highlights the strong gravitational pull of the Paraguayan *encomienda* by showcasing a century-long practice among the *encomendero* class to augment their tribute populations by plucking would-be tributaries from the spaces in-between the *encomienda* or from other *encomiendas*. Because there were so many *encomiendas* and the majority of these were small, Spaniards sought to augment or maintain their tributary populations any way they could, even directly interfering in tributaries' marriages. But Spaniards' access to Guaraní tributaries was mitigated by caciques at the *pueblo*. Throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Spaniards and Guaraní caciques continued to exchange goods and female servants. I define the compact of experiences and relations that held the *encomienda* together as the *encomienda* community. The term "community" underscores the commonalities of Paraguayan life, including the near-universal use of the Guaraní language and shared material experiences.

The *encomienda* was the main mechanism that moved individuals back and forth between the *pueblos* and Asunción and created spaces for cultural exchange. That most

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<sup>29</sup> For clarity, I will use the term *pueblos* to refer to reductions under the *encomienda* and missions to refer to the Jesuit reductions, which ultimately received exemption from the *encomienda*.



native tributaries were mobilized in work gangs to move from pueblo to city should surprise us. Why were natives not moving from pueblo to mines, yerba groves, or large haciendas? The answer has to do with the nature of the economy in Paraguay, the encomendero class, and Guaraní patterns of labor. Until the 1630s, there was no export market, only a regional trade. Even after the yerba mate trade gained impetus after the 1630s most encomenderos were bypassed by a trader class from Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, and Tucumán. Juan Carlos Garavaglia shows that for the seventeenth century the percentage of encomenderos who possessed licenses to harvest yerba after the 1630s ranged from 35 to 50 percent.<sup>30</sup> The majority of the yerba harvesters were *impresarios* or agents whose origins are unknown, but most likely from Santa Fe or Buenos Aires.

Most of the labor for the yerba economy was provided by the pueblos closest to the wild yerba groves in a region generally referred to as Mbaracayú, near the city of Villa Rica. However, after the *bandiera* of 1676, which destroyed most of the pueblos near Mbaracayú, pueblos closer to Asunción were called on to harvest yerba. Under a tribute mechanism called the *mandamiento*, the governor assigned bands of Guaraní tributaries on a one-time basis to harvest yerba (called the *beneficio*) under the direction of an agent who paid the governor as well as the tributaries. Besides the *beneficio*, many tributaries were called on to transport the yerba from Mbaracayú to Asunción. From there, normally another team of tributaries was assembled to carry it down river. Garavaglia notes that the status of the Natives employed in the *beneficio* and the transport took on every conceivable arrangement: some were *yanacona*, others served under the *mandamiento*, others still under the *mita* (i.e. directly for their encomendero). To groups of tributaries were added slave and free Blacks as well as mestizo wage laborers. More research is

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<sup>30</sup> Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*, 327.

needed to better understand the relationship between the yerba economy and tribute in Paraguay and the variety of economic activities in which the Guaraní participated. For the most part, however, settlers in Paraguay engaged in a subsistence economy and minor regional trade. When encomenderos sought to enter the yerba market, they often assumed subordinate roles to the traders who were granted tributaries under the *mandamiento*. The small size the encomenderos' tributary forces compounded the slow economic development of the region: by 1674, the average encomienda contained only fifteen tributaries.<sup>31</sup> Most of these tributaries worked their encomenderos' *chacras*.

In contrast to most scholarship on colonial Paraguay, I argue that the *encomienda* was not an institution of slavery cloaked in official legality. The conflation of the two institutions stems from the fact that in the sixteenth century women and children taken in “just wars”—campaigns against rebellious native groups—were added to *yanacona* populations. A handful of registers have survived, documenting official distribution of war captives, but they are too few to conflate the encomienda with slavery. And while some Spaniards traded, sold and bequeathed Indigenous, usually captives, these were infrequent practices and never became institutionalized.

This dissertation contributes to an understanding of ethnogenesis in Paraguay by exploring Natives' use of the corporate identity of “Indian” in Spanish courts to defend their personal and community interests. While Nandu was not the only Guaraní who initiated litigation, it was comparatively rare.<sup>32</sup> In short, the Guaraní under the Spanish

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<sup>31</sup> This figure is based on my analysis of the 1674 *padrón* of the entire province of Paraguay, found in AGI, Charcas, 1674, 30, 7, no. 19. The largest encomienda was possessed by don Gabriel de Vera y Aragón, with 129 tributaries. But this total constitutes three encomiendas from three distinct pueblos.

<sup>32</sup> On indigenous legal cultures in Mexico see Woodrow Wilson Borah, *Justice By Insurance: The General Indian Court of Colonial Mexico and the Legal Aides of the Half-Real* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); Brian Philip Owensby, *Empire of Law and Indian Justice in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008). For the Andes see Kimberly Gauderman, *Women's Lives in*

did not develop a strong legal culture. Unlike Andean or Nahua communities, Guaraní communities did not use the courts frequently to defend or pursue their interests. The absence of pre-Columbian indigenous writing systems, the relatively weak role of indigenous caciques, and the strong role of encomenderos in natives' lives helps explain the modest indigenous litigiousness. There was, however, a healthy Habsburg legal culture among Spaniards, especially among encomenderos who fought bitterly over tributaries.<sup>33</sup> In fact, it was often the case that if a native had been wronged, an encomendero initiated litigation proceedings. And yet, there are enough cases where natives initiated litigation proceedings to merit close attention. Other Guaraní reacted to Spanish labor demands with violence or flight.<sup>34</sup>

### **Incomplete Conquests**

Nandu's would-be encomendero was typical for colonial Paraguay. Referencing military service and rank, just as Abendaño did, was a standard tactic for any Spaniard seeking favors or corporate privileges. Individuals who wanted to request an encomienda grant or generally improve their social position demonstrated their possession of honor and social capital through valiant military service on Paraguay's dangerous frontiers. Most Spanish military activities were directed at a number of non-sedentary indigenous groups to the west of the Paraguay River, generally referred to as "*indios fronterizos*."

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*Colonial Quito: Gender, Law, and Economy in Spanish America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), Chapter 5; Frank Salomon, "Indian Women of Early Colonial Quito as Seen Through Their Testaments," *The Americas* 44 (January 1988): 325-341.

<sup>33</sup> On the development and effects of Habsburg legal cultures see Richard L. Kagan, *Lawsuits and Litigants in Castile, 1500-1700* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981).

<sup>34</sup> The bulk of Guaraní armed rebellions occurred during the sixteenth century and the majority of these were isolated, not general rebellions (according to one count there were 23 Guaraní rebellions). After 1616, the last isolated rebellion occurred in 1660, in a northerly region where Spanish domination was tenuous. See Louis Necker, "La reacción de los guaraníes frente a la conquista española del Paraguay; movimientos de resistencia indígena (siglo XVI)," *Suplemento Antropológico* 18, no. 1 (June 1983): Appendix; Guillermo Meléndez, ed., *Levantamientos indígenas ante los abusos de la encomienda en Paraguay* (San Jose: Editorial Departamento Ecuménico de Investigaciones, 1992).

Spaniards referred to these unconquered groups of the Chaco using the ethnic categories of Guaycurú, Mbyá, and Payaguá. These groups shared enough cultural traits that historians refer to a general Guaycuruan society.<sup>35</sup> Similar to the Comanche of the Southwest, some Guaycuruan groups, especially the Mbayá, adopted the horse and maintained a dominant position over the Spanish in the regions west of the Paraguay and north of the Jejuy Rivers.<sup>36</sup> Some of these groups, like the riverine Payaguá, called "river pirates" by the Spanish, maintained territorial dominance over important trading sites on Paraguay's borderlands. Despite Spanish attempts to pacify them, the Guaycurú flourished, strengthening their societies through seasonal raids of Spanish-Guaraní settlements.<sup>37</sup>

Attacks from São Paulo *bandeirantes* or slavers from Portuguese Brazil contributed to the instability of the region and the continual contraction of Spanish-controlled territories throughout the seventeenth century. The *bandeirantes* were active in Guayrá, Itatín, and Tapé, where their raids produced transmigration or the uprooting of both Spanish and indigenous communities and their subsequent reconstitution in different locales.<sup>38</sup> Nandu's early life serves as a poignant example of transmigration. After his pueblo was destroyed by a massive *bandeira* in 1676 he relocated to far-flung Asunción,

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<sup>35</sup> James Schofield Saeger, *The Chaco Mission Frontier: The Guaycuruan Experience* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2000).

<sup>36</sup> On the Comanche, see Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Pekka Hämäläinen, "The Politics of Grass: European Expansion, Ecological Change, and Indigenous Power in the Southwest Borderlands," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 67, (April 2010): 173-208.

<sup>37</sup> See Barbara Ganson, "The Evueví of Paraguay: Adaptive Strategies and Responses to Colonialism, 1528-1811," *The Americas* 45, (April 1989): 461-488.

<sup>38</sup> On transmigration see Wilde, *Religión y poder*, chapter 2.

hitching himself to the Jesuit college. This dissertation will detail other transmigrations in the region as well as Spanish-Guaraní reactions to these threats.<sup>39</sup>

The history of Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo is illustrative of colonial instability in Paraguay, and especially in Guayrá. Known as the “*ciudad andariega*” or vagabond city, Villa Rica transmigrated no less than thirteen times from the city’s founding in 1570 to the eighteenth century.<sup>40</sup> Other cities, Jesuit missions, and Franciscan pueblos were caught up in this shifting human geography and the people at the center of these dramas either migrated, found a way to maintain some sense of community, or joined other unassociated groups. Despite impressive expansion from the 1550s to the 1630s, Spanish territory continually retracted until the middle of the eighteenth century. Eventually some Guaycuruan groups came under the aegis of the Jesuits, leading to the conquest of some parts of the Gran Chaco or the region to the west of the Paraguay River.<sup>41</sup>

While it is well-known that the Guaraní in the Jesuit reductions mobilized into militias and were employed in some famous campaigns, until now no historian has recognized that the Guaraní under the Spanish *encomienda* were also mobilized.<sup>42</sup> Accounts of various expeditions against the Guaycurú and *bandeirantes* reveal that Guaraní actively defended their own communities and provided the majority of the soldiers in punitive expeditions. Joint military activities date back to the earliest years of

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<sup>39</sup> On *bandeirantes*, see John M. Monteiro, “From Indian to Slave: Forced Native Labour and Colonial Society in Sao Paulo During the Seventeenth Century,” *Slavery and Abolition* 9, no. 2 (1988): 105-127; John M. Monteiro, *Negros da terra: índios e bandeirantes nas origens de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994).

<sup>40</sup> J.M.G. Kleinpenning, *Paraguay, 1515-1870: A Thematic Geography of Its Development*, vol. 1 (Frankfurt: Iberoamericana Vervuert, 2003), 301.

<sup>41</sup> Ganson, “The Evueví of Paraguay”; Saeger, *The Chaco Mission Frontier*.

<sup>42</sup> On the Guaraní militias see Magnus Möerner, *The Political and Economic Activities of the Jesuits in the La Plata Region; the Hapsburg Era* (Stockholm: Victor Pettersons Bokindustri Aktiebolag, 1953), 200-202; Arno Alvarez Kern, *Missões: uma utopia política* (Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto, 1982), Chapter 4; Ganson, *The Guaraní Under Spanish Rule*; Wilde, *Religión y poder*.

the Spanish-Guaraní alliance. Throughout the course of sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, these expeditions became more formalized under Spanish military logic. Through their participation in defending the crown's territories in Paraguay, the Guaraní gained exemptions from encomienda service, a boon to their communities, or direct payments.<sup>43</sup> Jesuits and Spanish officials' abilities to mobilize large armed forces also resulted in escalated civil disturbances. In 1650, during a political fiasco that reached its conclusion only after a civil war erupted between encomenderos and officials supportive of the Jesuits, Asunceños and their Guaraní allies fought against Guaraní militias under Jesuit control. So while this dissertation attempts to move beyond the missions, it also recognized the profound importance of Jesuit-Spanish conflicts in Paraguayan society and how Guaraní were involved in these tensions.

### Conceptual Framework

Conquest paradigms in Paraguay—like other regions in Spanish America—have vacillated from romantic notions of free love and idyllic alliances between noble Spaniards and noble savages to the most brutal and inhumane conquests carried out in blood and fire.<sup>44</sup> Today, this latter paradigm dominates the Paraguayan professional historiography while the former still carries the day in nationalist circles. Branislava

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<sup>43</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 140. On the Guaraní-Jesuit militias, see Kern, *Missões*; Eduardo Neumann, "Fronteira e identidade: confrontos luso-guarani na Banda Oriental, 1680-1757," *Revista complutense de Historia de America* 26 (2000): 67-92.

<sup>44</sup> Barbara Potthast-Jutkeit explains that the Paraguayan historiography is imbued with a "strong nationalism" that portrays "a romantic harmony in which a peculiar culture was hatched." Barbara Potthast-Jutkeit, "*Paraíso de Mahoma*" o "*país de las mujeres*?" : *el rol de la familia en la sociedad paraguaya del siglo XIX* (Asunción: Instituto Cultural Paraguay-Alemán, 1986), 30. One of the most prominent examples of such portraits is found in the works of Efraím Cardozo: "...the clerics covered their eyes, the conquistadors sheathed their weapons and under the direction of Irala a most extraordinary reciprocal recruitment campaign began between two races on a path of free love without obstacle." Efraím Cardozo, *El Paraguay colonial; las raíces de la nacionalidad* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Nizza, 1959), 64. Another scholar evoked the glory of the first inter-ethnic unions: "...the Indian woman, noble and brave, gave all to the conquistador, with the heat of her body and her heart..." Pastor Urbieta Rojas, *La mujer paraguaya; esquema historiográfico* (Asunción: Colección Paraguay, 1962), 20, 22. These portraits evoke a Freyreian conception of racial mixture.

Susnik has been the most important scholar to shift the emphasis to violence.<sup>45</sup> Susnik's interpretations of traditional colonial sources, however, lack sufficient contextualization, leading her to draw literal conclusions from nearly every account. For example, conquest accounts must be read as *probanzas de mérito*, highly selective and unbalanced conquistador narratives designed to flaunt in hopes of royal endowments.<sup>46</sup>

The stark portraits of colonial activities in Paraguay are related to historians' assumptions about how power and authority functioned in the early modern Spanish Empire. Paraguayan historiography has defined political and social power in strictly hierarchical terms. For example, in the 1540s, Domingo Martínez de Irala (the *de facto* leader of the conquistadors after the expedition broke apart) and Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca (the crown's appointed adelantado to replace Irala) were engaged in a bitter political struggle. Ultimately, Irala won the day and shipped Cabeza de Vaca home in chains on a ship Irala christened "*El Comunero*," a reference to the castilian Revolt of the Comuneros from 1520 to 1521. Paraguayan historians have interpreted Cabeza de Vaca's

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<sup>45</sup> Susnik, *El indio colonial del Paraguay*. See also Susnik, *Los aborígenes del Paraguay*; Branislava Susnik, *El rol de los indígenas en la formación y en la vivencia del Paraguay* (Asunción: Instituto Paraguayo de Estudios Nacionales, 1982); Branislava Susnik, *Una visión socio-antropológica del Paraguay del siglo XVIII* (Asunción: Museo Etnográfico Andrés Barbero, 1991); Susnik, *Una Visión Socio-Antropológica Del Paraguay, XVI-XVII*; Branislava Susnik, "Ni Indio, Ni Espanola. La Identidad Ambigua De La Elite Colonial Paraguaya," in *Muchas hispanoamericanas: antropología, historia y enfoques culturales en los estudios latinoamericanistas*, ed. Thomas Kruggeler and Ulrich Mucke (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2001). For other accounts that emphasize Spanish violence and social control see Enrique de Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro y la condición social de los indios; Río de la Plata, Paraguay, Tucumán y Perú, siglos XVI y XVII* (Buenos Aires: Librería y editorial "El Ateneo", 1939); Rafael Eladio Velázquez, *La rebelión de los indios de Arecaya, en 1660* (Asunción: Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociológicos, 1965); Rafael Eladio Velázquez, *Roque González de Santa Cruz, colonia y reducciones en el Paraguay de 1600* (Asunción: S.N., 1975); Rafael Eladio Velázquez, "Caracteres de la encomienda paraguaya en los siglos XVII y XVIII," *Historia paraguaya* 19 (1982): 113-163; Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*; Necker, "La reacción de los guaraníes"; Rafael Eladio Velázquez, *Breve historia de la cultura en el Paraguay* (Asunción: Centro de Publicaciones de la Universidad Católica, 1985); Bartomeu Melià, *El Guaraní conquistado y reducido: ensayos de etnohistoria* (Asunción: Centro de Estudios Antropológicos de la Universidad Católica, 1986); Louis Necker, *Indios Guaraníes y chamanes franciscanos: las primeras reducciones del Paraguay, 1580-1800* (Asunción: Centro de Estudios Antropológicos, Universidad Católica, 1990); Durán Estrago, *Levantamientos indígenas*.

<sup>46</sup> On the dangers of reading conquest narratives and *probanzas* uncritically see Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 12-14.

ouster and all other expressions of local authority as expressions of proto-nationalism, but in reality these were typical expressions of decentralized authority evident throughout the Spanish world during the reign of the Habsburgs.<sup>47</sup>

Moreover, historians have depicted social relations in colonial Paraguay in strictly hierarchical terms. This dissertation interprets social and political relations, contrarily, in the context of decentralized political and social authority and shared jurisdictions among various colonial institutions. Clarence Haring's analysis of Spanish colonial administrative bodies shows that these institutions were not hierarchically arranged with the crown at the top and natives at the bottom. Building on Haring's work, John Phelan argues that horizontally arranged administrative bodies created a network of checks and balances "guaranteeing that organizations and individuals, jealous of their own power, would control and limit abuses by others, thereby negating the need for a centralized figure of authority."<sup>48</sup>

In her book *Women's Lives in Colonial Quito*, Kimberly Gauderman demonstrates that decentralization marked all relations "throughout the social and political institutions and practices of seventeenth-century Spanish America...promoting asymmetry, disequilibrium, and difference, while at the same time ensuring authority and flexibility

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<sup>47</sup> For proto-nationalist portraits of colonial Paraguay, see Cardozo, *El paraguay colonial*. On decentralized authority, see John Leddy Phelan, "Authority and Flexibility in the Spanish Imperial Bureaucracy," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 5, (June 1960): 47-65; Alejandro Caneque, *The King's Living Image: The Culture and Politics of Viceregal Power in Colonial Mexico* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

<sup>48</sup> Kimberly Gauderman's summary of Phelan's theory is apt here because she applies it to social and gender relations Gauderman, *Women's Lives*, 7. For the classic essay on decentralized authority, see Phelan, "Los Aborígenes Del Paraguay". For an example of decentralized authority in New Spain and Quito, respectively, see Caneque, *The King's Living Image*; Chad Thomas Black, *The Limits of Gender Domination: Women, the Law, and Political Crisis in Quito, 1765-1830* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2011).



and, ultimately, social stability.”<sup>49</sup> Applying decentralization to Paraguay clarifies a variety of interactions and confrontations in society and politics. In particular, this conceptualization of authority, helps explain why Guaraní and Blacks were able to defend their interests in local, regional, and even royal courts.<sup>50</sup> This conceptual framework also explains why Spaniards and Guaraní were able to maintain the personalistic foundation of the encomienda community, despite several attempts by the Audiencia of Charcas to eradicate it.

By focusing on “community” and kinship, this analysis might be seen as eschewing the violent nature of the Spanish conquest. To be clear, violence was crucial to the Spanish colonial project, but historians have overlooked other equally critical factors like epidemics, trade, and reciprocity to explain colonial encounters. In her classic work, *Andean Journeys: Migration, Ethnogenesis and the State in Colonial Quito*, Karen Powers demonstrates that Andean migrations were not a withdrawal or retreat from Spanish colonialism, but an act of agency. She describes ethnogenesis, the process by which distinct ethnic cultures are continually recreated over time, as a constellation of various factors and forces brought on by colonialism, but also as acts of Andean social agency and survival strategies.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, I describe ethnogenesis among the Guaraní as a process that was not simply determined by Spanish colonialism, but as an expression of Guaraní cultural agency.

Tupí-Guaraní culture tended to extend outside the basic community and culture, what Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Batalha Viveiros de Castro calls a “centripetal

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<sup>49</sup> Gauderman, *Women's Lives*, 7.

<sup>50</sup> See for the example of Andrés Benítez, a mestizo, who in 1665 challenged the claim that he was an Indian and therefore tributary, by appealing his suit to higher authorities, including the governor and the king. See Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*, 209-11. The suit is available in AGI, 16 Escribanía, 876B.

<sup>51</sup> Powers, *Andean Journeys*, 7.

dynamism.”<sup>52</sup> Guillermo Wilde documents this dynamic in his analysis of Guaraní-Christian caciques in the Jesuit reductions: “Indian receptivity towards objects, concepts, and Christian practices can be understood in terms of an ‘opening towards the outside.’”<sup>53</sup> In this way, Guaraní utilization of European or Christian ceremonies, symbols, objects, and behaviors was less a function of colonial acculturation than a reflection of the Guaraní’s tendency to internalize external forces. This “plastic capacity of the Tupi-Guarani matrix” is especially evident in Guaraní kinship relations with Spaniards.<sup>54</sup>

Recent studies of ethnogenesis in the Atlantic World have sought to demonstrate indigenous or Afro-American agency under the pressure of colonialism, including violent conquest, forced migration and demographic collapse. Generally, however, ethnogenesis has only been applied to the analysis of groups that experienced colonization. But what about the colonizers?<sup>55</sup> In *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis: Race and Sexuality in Colonial San Francisco*, Barbara L. Voss explains,

Acts of colonization cause profound ruptures in the cultures of both colonizer and colonized. Though the indigenous populations displaced by or entangled with

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<sup>52</sup> While his primary subjects are the Amazonian Arawete, Viveiros de Castro makes arguments about the the larger Tupian cultural community, both past and present. Eduardo Batalha Viveiros de Castro, *From the Enemy’s Point of View: Humanity and Divinity in an Amazonian Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 3-4.

<sup>53</sup> Wilde, *Religión y poder*, 113. Hélène Clastres explains similar cultural receptivity in her analysis. This must be contrasted with James Lockhart’s notion of double mistaken identity explained in James Lockhart, *Of Things of the Indies: Essays Old and New in Early Latin American History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000). Lockhart’s model works well for the Spanish encounters with the Mexica, especially, because there were congruencies in governmental and religious institutions that both sides of the cultural exchange assumed that the other was engaged in the same practice. For the Guaraní, there is sufficient evidence that Guaraní cosmology emphasized absorbing or modifying outside elements.

<sup>54</sup> Viveiros de Castro, *From the Enemy’s Point of View*, 25.

<sup>55</sup> Karen Powers defines ethnogenesis in this way: “Ethnogenesis is the process by which distinct ethnic cultures are continually recreated over time, especially cultures that have experienced colonization.” Powers, *Andean Journeys*, 183, footnote 1. Jonathan Hill’s definition of ethnogenesis highlights the severities of colonialism: “a creative adaptation to a general history of violent changes—including demographic collapse, forced relocations, enslavement, ethnic soldiering, ethnocide, and genocide—imposed during the historical expansion of colonial and national states in the Americas.” Jonathan David Hill, “Introduction: Ethnogenesis in the Americas, 1492-1992,” in *History, Power, and Identity: Ethnogenesis in the Americas, 1492-1992* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996), 1, 2.

colonial institutions are the most severely affected, the colonists themselves are irrevocably transformed by their own displacement and by their encounters with local indigenous people.<sup>56</sup>

Voss's use of archaeological data combined with traditional written records reveals local factors that shaped social, cultural, and gender paradigms in El Presidio de San Francisco. In Paraguay, the native culture deeply penetrated the European and the African, most notably expressed in the ubiquitous use of the Guaraní language, indigenous foodways, and mundane material possessions, like hammocks. By analyzing various ethnogenic transformations this dissertation avoids inventing a homogenizing narrative of ethnogenesis and portraying “colonizers” and “colonized” as static groupings.<sup>57</sup>

### **Complicating Mestizaje: Blacks in Colonial Paraguay**

Recent Paraguayan scholarship runs counter to a generation of historians who sought to rebuild a shattered Paraguay following the Paraguayan War or the War of the Triple Alliance, a war that pitted Paraguay against Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay (1864-70).<sup>58</sup> These historians produced two main ideas that persist, despite several attempts to unseat them. The first was that mestizaje was the peaceful union of hidalgo conquistadors and noble Guaraní women. The second has to do with the postbellum nation-building project. The Paraguayan War and subsequent Brazilian occupation of Paraguay produced propaganda that emphasized Brazil's backward, monkey-like, and wholly black race. This sentiment, as expressed in generations of historical production, has served to de-

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<sup>56</sup> Barbara L. Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis: Race and Sexuality in Colonial San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 3.

<sup>57</sup> Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis*, 2.

<sup>58</sup> See, especially, the works of Cecilio Báez (1862-1941), Manuel Domínguez (1868-1935), Fulgencio R. Moreno (1872-1933), Blas Garay (1873-1899), Juan O’Leary (1879-1969).

Africanize Paraguay.<sup>59</sup> Thus the project of nation building in Paraguay has produced a notion of mestizaje that erases Blacks from the racial equation. Nandu's marriage to a free mulatta, however, is representative of the many Afro-Indigenous unions challenging this idea.

This dissertation includes Africans in Paraguay's social equation by documenting their activities within the encomienda community as laborers, sexual partners, and social actors. Only a handful of studies have examined Africans in Paraguay. Poet and artist Josefina Pla pioneered Black Studies in Paraguay with her monograph *Hermano negro*.<sup>60</sup> Pla's study examines Blacks in isolation without recognizing their broader social and economic experiences. Argentine historian, Ignacio Telesca, shows in his immensely important *Tras los expulsos* that the Paraguayan slave population was crucial to the regional economy. In his analysis of the Jesuit college in Asunción in the eighteenth century, Telesca finds that the college was completely reliant on its hundreds of slaves because the encomendero class maintained a tight monopoly on indigenous labor. In 1682, Black slaves represented eleven percent of Asunción's population. A century later, that number rose to around fifty-four percent, thanks largely to the Jesuit college.<sup>61</sup>

Similar to Matthew Restall's work on Blacks in the Yucatan, this dissertation demonstrates that Africans must be viewed within the broader indigenous social

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<sup>59</sup> On this generation of historians see Telesca's excellent historiographic essay. Ignacio Telesca, "Paraguay en el centenario: la creación de la nación mestiza," *Historia Mexicana* 60, no. 1 (2010): 137-195.

<sup>60</sup> Josefina Pla, *Hermano negro: la esclavitud en el Paraguay* (Madrid: Paraninfo, 1972). Pla focuses on eighteenth-century sources and highlights blacks' roles as domestic servants. See also German de Granda, "Origen, función y estructura de un pueblo de negros y mulatos libres en el Paraguay del siglo XVIII (San Agustín de la Emboscada)," in *Pasado y presente de la realidad social paraguay* (Asunción: Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociológicos, 1983); Ana María Argüello Martínez, *El rol de los esclavos negros en el Paraguay* (Asunción: Centro Editorial Paraguayo, 1999); Alfredo Boccia Románach, *Esclavitud en el Paraguay: vida cotidiana del esclavo en las Indias Meridionales* (Asunción: Servilibro, 2004).

<sup>61</sup> Telesca, *Tras los expulsos*, 132.

context.<sup>62</sup> Restall shows that Blacks found themselves in the “middle,” awkwardly fixed between the Republic of Spaniards and the Republic of Indians in intermediary roles. The paradigm that emerges in Paraguay is that Blacks were more closely associated with the indigenous sphere and had fewer opportunities to function as overseers. Due to the small size of Spanish *encomiendas* and the practice of personal service, which closely approximated the master-slave relationship in African slavery, Africans frequently functioned alongside indigenous tributaries. These factors contribute to the complex patchwork of paradigms that is the African diaspora in the Americas.

### **Beyond the Missions**

“Beyond the Missions” refers to this dissertation’s explicit focus on colonial encounters between Spaniards, indigenous groups and Africans, outside the oft-romanticized Jesuit missions. The cultural encounters of Paraguay often have been defined by what occurred in the Jesuit reductions between the Paraná River and the Uruguay River. This dissertation agrees with recent scholarship that suggests that the Jesuit reductions were not hermetically sealed, communitarian utopias. Guillermo Wilde describes a “paradigm of mobility” in the mission context, wherein various groups moved in and out of the missions according to their needs.<sup>63</sup> What made the missions so distinct in the region was their exemption from the *encomienda*. By around 1649, nearly all of the Jesuit missions were exempt from the *encomienda*.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Matthew Restall, ed., *Beyond Black and Red: African-Native Relations in Colonial Latin America*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005); Matthew Restall, *The Black Middle: Africans, Mayas, and Spaniards in Colonial Yucatan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).

<sup>63</sup> At the forefront of this revisionist history is Guillermo Wilde, “Estrategias indígenas y límites étnicos. Las reducciones jesuíticas del Paraguay como espacios socioculturales permeables,” *Anuar IEHS* 22, (2007): 213-240; Wilde, *Religión y poder*.

<sup>64</sup> Mörner, *The Political and Economic Activities*, 200.

Contrarily, the Franciscan pueblos developed as joint Spanish-Franciscan enterprises and became the population bases from which tribute under the encomienda was extracted.<sup>65</sup> Under the direction of Father Luís de Bolaños, there were some twenty pueblos established from the 1580s to the 1620s (see Appendix A for a map of the region). These represented the most important source of labor for Spaniards. The pueblos varied greatly in their economic stability and size, but every pueblo came under the obligations of the encomienda, serving as the backbone of the Paraguayan barter economy and yerba mate trade. Until the national period, the Guaraní in the pueblos took turns providing “personal service” to their encomendero, usually temporarily migrating to Asunción to perform their service. Given the importance of the Franciscan pueblos to this dissertation it is unfortunate that only a handful of scholars have analyzed the Franciscan pueblos.

Louis Necker’s *Indios guaraníes y chamanes franciscanos* is still the staple monograph on the Franciscans in Paraguay.<sup>66</sup> Necker explains that the reasons the Guaraní and other Indigenous entered reduction life was similar for both the Franciscan pueblos and the Jesuit missions. Necker argues that the Franciscans successfully presented themselves as eloquent orators and demonstrated their generosity by means of gift-giving, two characteristics that were essential to Guaraní political authority.<sup>67</sup> But the process of “settling” natives was long and often experienced setbacks. Necker acknowledges, for example, that “reducing” Indians did not imply “settled” Indians: the

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<sup>65</sup> While both Jesuit and Franciscan reductions were referred to as both *pueblos* and *reducciones*, for clarity I will use “pueblo” to designate Franciscan-sponsored communities and “reduction” for Jesuit-sponsored communities.

<sup>66</sup> Originally published in French in 1979, and then in Spanish in 1990. Necker, *Indios guaraníes y chamanes franciscanos*.

<sup>67</sup> Necker, *Indios guaraníes y chamanes franciscanos*, 81.

Guaraní frequently left the pueblos to engage in traditional subsistence gathering, hunting, and trading.

Studies of Jesuit evangelization similarly agree that the fathers displaced indigenous shamans through their ability to transcend the spiritual worlds, their eloquence and their generosity.<sup>68</sup> Guillermo Wilde notes that "mission ethnogenesis" was a complex process in which legislation, symbols, economy, politics, and native cosmologies interacted.<sup>69</sup> Recent trends in mission scholarship emphasize the indigenous contributions to and negotiations of subject formation and political articulation.<sup>70</sup> The most important pillars of the Jesuit reductions were indigenous *cacicazgos* or political units headed by a cacique. Into these frames of power, Guaraní caciques poured indigenous norms, especially reciprocity and kinship. These political units, Wilde reveals, were based on kinship alliances. Research into indigenous leadership in the Franciscan pueblos is scant, but the analysis this dissertation provides of litigation records and *padrones* reveals that institutions and leadership patterns similar to the Jesuit missions also existed in the Franciscan pueblos.

Above all, what this dissertation contributes to the scholarship on the Franciscan pueblos is the other half of the pueblo coin: the encomienda. In fact, to refer to the pueblos as the "Franciscan pueblos" is misleading. Eventually, the Franciscans turned

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<sup>68</sup> Hélène Clastres, *The Land-Without-Evil: Tupí Prophetism*, trans. Jacqueline Grenez Brovender (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1975); Judith Shapiro, "From Tupã to the Land Without Evil: The Christianization of Tupi-Guaraní Cosmology," *American Ethnologist* 14, (1987): 126-139; Ganson, *The Guaraní Under Spanish Rule*.

<sup>69</sup> Wilde, *Religión y poder*, 42.

<sup>70</sup> Erick Detlef Langer and Robert H. Jackson, *The New Latin American Mission History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995); Saeger, *The Chaco Mission Frontier*; Ganson, *The Guaraní Under Spanish Rule*; Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Wilde, *Religión y poder*.

over many of their pueblos to secular priests, who had little influence on the communities. In the 1590s, Governor Ramírez de Velasco referred to the Franciscan reductions as the “*pueblos de encomenderos*” or “encomenderos’ pueblos.”<sup>71</sup> Priests were so few in number that the pueblos were only occasionally directed by a priest.<sup>72</sup> Thus encomenderos, their agents, and a culturally ambiguous sector of mestizos played equally important roles in the pueblos. Therefore, current scholarship is inadequate. Margarita Durán Estragó has portrayed the pueblos as discrete, hermetic units and Franciscan friars as highly effective *doctrineros*. Similar to Susnik and Service, Durán Estragó argues that the Guaraní were empty vacuums filled with European forms and Christianity. By exploring the pueblos as sites of cultural exchange, my dissertation marks a significant shift in the study of the pueblos under the Spanish encomienda.<sup>73</sup>

Excavating the cultural exchanges in colonial Asunción requires a different methodological and theoretical approach when compared with the mission and pueblo scholarship. The missions were impressive sites where indigenous cultural values melded with the European baroque to produce stunning masonry, music, and impressive political organization. The Guaraní made these expressions their own and were active agents in mission cultural and political life. There are few synonymous examples of cultural expression among the Guaraní in the Asunción area. That is why Carolyn Dean and Dana Leibsohn’s warning about the “deception of visibility” is so apt here. The “deception of

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<sup>71</sup> Necker, *Indios guaraníes y chamanes franciscanos*, 93.

<sup>72</sup> Necker, *Indios guaraníes y chamanes franciscanos*, 79.

<sup>73</sup> Durán Estragó’s works read almost like institutional hagiographies. See especially, Margarita Durán Estragó, *Presencia franciscana en el Paraguay* (Asunción: Universidad Católica, 1987). Durán Estragó has also written several microhistories of individual pueblos; the best ones are Margarita Durán Estragó, *San José de Caazapá: un modelo de reducción franciscana* (Asunción: Editorial Don Bosco, 1992); Margarita Durán Estragó, *Areguá: rescate histórico, 1576-1870* (Asunción: Fondo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes, 2005). James Lockhart refers to the position that these authors take as the “displacement model.” James Lockhart, *The Nahuas After the Conquest: A Social and Cultural History of the Indians of Central Mexico, Sixteenth Through Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 2.



visibility” is the tendency for modern scholars to search for signs of indigenous cultural in conspicuous places while missing the less obvious signs of cultural hybridity. Dean and Leibsohn explain further, “there lies at the heart of many discussions of cultural mixing the uncomfortable notion that we—as interpreters living in the present—have to see pre-Hispanic forms to be convinced that indigenous people were not completely vanquished.”<sup>74</sup> This dissertation heeds this warning by reading between the lines of completely unused records to find examples of hybrid cultural expression.

In short, this dissertation proposes to explore the genesis and development of Paraguayan colonial institutions with an ethnohistorical lens.<sup>75</sup> It will demonstrate that the primary institution that promoted and facilitated these cultural exchanges was Guaraní kinship, which came to define the Spanish *encomienda* for the first two centuries of the colonial period.

### Sources

This dissertation relies on a variety of sources from several archives, including the Archive of the Indies (AGI) in Seville, the Asunción National Archives (ANA), the Manuel Gondra (MG) collection at the University of Texas at Austin and the Edward E. Ayer collection at the Newberry Library. This dissertation relies equally on litigation and notarial records as well as institutional records, like Franciscan reports and *cabildo* records. Notarial records include testaments, *padrones*, barge registers, and bills of sale.

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<sup>74</sup> On hybridity see Carolyn Dean and Dana Leibsohn, “Hybridity and Its Discontents: Considering Visual Culture in Colonial Spanish America,” *Colonial Latin American Review* 12, no. 1 (2003): 14.

<sup>75</sup> The term and methods of ethnohistory have gone through many transformations since the 1950s. Today the journal *Ethnohistory* defines the discipline as follows: “Ethnohistory reflects the wide range of current scholarship inspired by anthropological and historical approaches to the human condition. Of particular interest are those analyses and interpretations that seek to make evident the experience, organization, and identities of indigenous, diasporic, and minority peoples that otherwise elude the histories and anthropologies of nations, states, and colonial empires.” <http://www.ethnohistory.org/journal/> (accessed March 2, 2013).

The most novel methodological contribution this dissertation makes, however, is its use civil and criminal litigation records. This dissertation is the first book-length work to systematically utilize litigation records for colonial Paraguay.<sup>76</sup> Three-hundred fifty litigation proceedings for the period from 1540 to the 1730s were selected, based on the involvement of Natives, Blacks, or encomenderos. The suits reveal a degree of indigenous agency that has never been documented for the region and demonstrate the protection of indigenous corporate rights, dispelling Lascasian myths of Spanish colonization in Paraguay. Through witness statements and charges brought by natives, we are able to hear natives “speak” in colonial Paraguay. This dissertation demonstrates that dominated groups were not without recourse and, among other methods, used the Spanish courts to defend their individual and community interests. The goal is not to provide a quantitative schema of the types of suits, but a qualitative analysis. For some suits, the substance of disputes are paramount. For others, ethnographic and social details are culled by reading between the lines of the suits.<sup>77</sup> The justice system in Paraguay functioned as it did in most other regions of Spanish America. Most individuals filed suits with the *alcalde mayor* (mayor or sorts), especially if they were violent or petty crimes. For suits regarding the encomienda, the lieutenant governor or the governor often adjudicated. Unlike in central areas, where individuals could shop their disputes with a variety of institutions, including the cabildo, the audiencia, the viceroy, or the Inquisition,

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<sup>76</sup> My use of litigation records and, therefore, this study would have been impossible just six months before I began my research in Asunción in the summer of 2011, given that the *sección civil y judicial* had not been organized and catalogued. Previously, litigation records were scattered throughout the *sección nueva encuadernación*, a section of the archive that possesses an almost random (chronological and thematic) logic and has not been adequately catalogued.

<sup>77</sup> On “reading between the lines” see chapter 9 of Lockhart, *Of Things of the Indies*. Lockhart’s “The Social History of Early Latin America” (chapter 2) provides an overview of the evolution of historical approaches to early Latin America. My dissertation fits into Lockhart’s social history schema insofar as it triangulates a variety of socio-historical sources.

in Paraguay there were not so many viable options. While some individuals appealed their suits in Charcas, Buenos Aires, or even Madrid, most Paraguayans negotiated the justice system in Asunción.

This dissertation relies on thirty-five *padrones* or censuses of indigenous pueblos, the majority from after 1670. Since data was recorded with different criteria for each *padrón*, this study is not able to provide a comprehensive statistical analysis. Moreover, while traditional histories have used *padrones* to sketch economic portraits, this dissertation uses them to reveal social networks, patterns of movement between communities and interracial unions, especially Afro-Indigenous unions. Capturing the context surrounding the production of these documents is also important. *Padrones* were produced during *visitas*, when a governor (or his lieutenant) inspected a pueblo or the *yanacóna* populations in Asunción to record tributary data. When compared across space and time these sources reveal human and economic networks and their effects on encomienda communities.<sup>78</sup>

The sources employed in this dissertation reflect this dissertation's goal to avoid relying on prescriptive accounts or laws that require conjecture to draw conclusions about social realities. By triangulating socio-historical records with traditional sources (e.g. institutional records and reports) this work will provide a clearer view of social relations in Paraguay.

## Chapter Outline

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<sup>78</sup> In total, this dissertation relies on thirty-five *visitas*, the majority from after 1670. Since data was recorded with different criteria during each *visita*, this study is not able to provide a comprehensive statistical analysis. María Laura Salinas uses *visitas* in the ways I propose in her work on Indian pueblos and encomiendas in Corrientes. Salinas shows that while *visitas* recorded discrete nuclear families, reading between the lines of these sources reveals larger kinship arrangements that defy the categories Spaniards employed. María Laura Salinas, *Dominación colonial y trabajo indígena: un estudio de la encomienda en Corrientes colonial* (Asunción: Universidad Católica Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, 2010).

In order to provide a discussion of Paraguay's encomienda community, Chapter 2 will discuss Spanish-Guaraní relations in the period before the official encomiendas were created. This chapter also explores the categories Spaniards used to define Guaraní female servants/concubines. An analysis of notarial records from the period before 1556 reveals the complex nature of these relationships. This chapter also provides a revision of the foundation of the encomiendas through an analysis of Irala's *ordenanzas* regulating the encomienda.

Chapter 3 analyzes a corpus of legal disputes among encomenderos over individual female tributaries between the 1580s to the 1640s. These suits reveal the importance of Guaraní kinship in defining what encomenderos could and could not do with their tribute populations. This chapter focuses on Guaraní women in the encomienda community and posits that they were the linchpin of the labor system. In contrast to the Jesuit missions, where priests dwelt on male sexuality and the ills of polygyny, encomenderos in the Asunción area focused on female sexuality because it was through women that they sustained and increased their encomienda populations. Local and regional officials attempted to institute significant reforms of the encomienda during the period when these suits occurred. The most significant reforms were conducted by a judge (*oidor*) from the Audiencia of Charcas, named don Francisco de Alfaro. Heretofore unanalyzed sources from the Archive of the Indies demonstrates that Alfaro's reforms—often compared to the transformative Toledan reforms of Peru (1570-1600)—failed because of the persistence of kinship-based relations between encomenderos and encomendados.

Building on the framework provided in the previous chapters, Chapter 4 provides a social geography of Asunción and focuses on the *yanacona* and their relations with

Spaniards. The paved streets, open plazas, and towering cathedral we would expect to see in a Spanish city and jurisdictional center were substituted in Asunción with a network of canals and bridges, cultivated fields and thatched roofs. Colonial Asunción challenges what we consider "urban" in Spanish America and provides an ideal site to discuss the nature of social development in this fringe region. This chapter turns to questions of corporate and socio-racial status and complicates the notion that Paraguayan mestizaje only included the Spanish and Guaraní by documenting Afro-Indigenous unions and the relationship between African slavery and the *encomienda*.

Chapter 5 explores the borderlands of colonial Paraguay through an exploration of the actions of "*indios fronterizos*" and *bandeirantes* in Spanish-Guaraní territories, especially Itatín and Guayrá. An analysis of the 1660 rebellion of Arecayá, a pueblo at the heart of yerba production and trade region, reveals the limits of Spanish demands on newly incorporated indigenous groups. But the frontier was not far from Asunción either. A review of cabildo records reveals that Asunción was constantly attacked by Chaco groups who preyed on the city's herds. Spaniards were reliant on their Guaraní auxiliaries and they called on them frequently. This chapter will analyze the nature of this military service and what the Guaraní stood to gain from defending Paraguay's borderlands. This chapter concludes that various groups in Paraguay, used the region's borderlands as a strategic resource.

By way of a conclusion, Chapter 6 will analyze Spaniards' response to yet another attempt to eliminate the *encomienda* in the late seventeenth century. The coalition of priests and *encomenderos* who opposed this effort invoked the famous formula "*obedezco pero no cumplo*" (I obey, but do not comply), communicating to the king that

despite his best intentions, locals knew better. This response once again highlights the central role that personal service and the encomienda community played in colonial Paraguay, all couched within notions of decentralized political authority.

My analysis describes relationships between the missions and Spanish populations under the encomienda and finds that in both contexts Guaraní kinship was a crucial factor in determining the nature of the colonial encounter. Indigenous social customs mitigated the consolidation of Spanish colonial power in Paraguay and that the Guaraní maintained a degree of social integrity by fostering relations within the encomienda.

## Chapter 2

### "The Genesis of the Encomienda Community"

An understanding of Guaraní social organization and cultural values is crucial for an ethnohistorical interpretation of the Paraguayan colonial experience. This chapter begins with a review of Guaraní society at the time of the Spanish conquest. It then explains how Spanish conquistadors integrated with Guaraní communities in order to create networks of labor. In the 1550s, Spaniards finally institutionalized these kinship networks as the *encomienda*. The genesis of the *encomienda* community, therefore, emerged from organic networks between individual conquistadors, Guaraní caciques, and Guaraní women.

Irala's *ordenanzas* or the first laws regulating the *encomienda* and officials' discourse about them illustrate the tensions between colonial ideals for the *encomienda* and the socio-political realities in Paraguay. Spaniards had hoped to enforce tribute demands on sedentary conquered groups who could direct their labor through community organization to economic enterprises that would bring Spaniards capital wealth; in a region filled with non- and semi-sedentary indigenous groups, this was not possible in Paraguay. In this way, the dynamics of institution-building in colonial Paraguay underscore the give and take of the colonial encounter.

#### **Guaraní Society**

According to Guaraní mythology, Tupí and Guaraní were brothers who separated after their wives fought over the possession of a beautiful parrot. The elder brother, Tupí, remained in Brazil while Guaraní and his family moved on to subtropical lowlands and

river systems of the Río de la Plata.<sup>79</sup> From those two brothers, so the legend goes, the Tupí and Guaraní developed as distinct groups. The Tupí-Guaraní linguistic family stretched from Amazonia to the delta of the Río de la Plata. The Tupí inhabited the lower middle part of the Amazon Basin and much of the Atlantic coastal area. The Guaraní occupied the inland plateau, establishing themselves along the Paraná, Uruguay, and Paraguay Rivers and their tributaries. The southern limit of Guaraní settlement was just below the Río de la Plata delta. Initially, Spaniards referred to distinct Guaraní groups with a name that either referenced their locale or a principle cacique. For a number of decades, the Guaraní around Asunción were called the “Carío.” Spaniards even referred to the Carío language.<sup>80</sup> Eventually, Spaniards began using the generic “Guaraní” to refer to Guaraní-speaking groups and a commonly shared set of social and cultural norms: semi-sedentary lifestyles and small political bands headed by patrilineal caciques. Whenever possible this dissertation will employ specific ethnic or geographic identifiers, but “Guaraní” is normally the only available option. To use the term Carío to describe natives under the encomienda neglects a variety of other ethnic groups who were incorporated into the encomienda community and a process of “guaranization”—the expansion of the Guaraní language and other social characteristics across a variety of cultures (including the Spanish).<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Jesuit authors in the 1650s recounted a version of this Guaraní myth, which they culled from Barco de Centenera’s epic poem about Paraguay and Ruy Díaz de Guzmán’s history. See *Revista del Archivo general de Buenos Aires fundada bajo la proteccion del gobierno de la provincia*, ed. Manuel Ricardo Trelles (Buenos Aires: Impr. del Porvenir, 1869), 53. See also Ganson, *The Guaraní Under Spanish Rule*, 18.

<sup>80</sup> In a suit from 1604, the following was said of an interpreter (*lengua*): “*q entiende bien la lengua carío*.” I have not seen “carío” used after this date. ANA, CJ, 1604, vol. 1811, no. 5, fol. 100.

<sup>81</sup> On ‘guaranization’, see Isabelle Combés and Kathleen Lowrey, “Slaves Without Masters? Arawakan Dynasties Among the Chiriguano (Bolivian Chaco, Sixteenth to Twentieth Centuries),” *Ethnohistory* 54, no. 4 (Fall 2006): 689-714; Wilde, *Religión y poder*. For an encyclopedic treatment of Guaraní societies in the Río de la Plata, see Juan Carlos Garavaglia, “The Crises and Transformations of



The Cario-Guaraní were one of at least a dozen other Guaraní political groups in the greater Paraguayan region.<sup>82</sup> Some scholars suggest that there were around 100 thousand Guaraní living within a 200 kilometer radius around Asunción.<sup>83</sup> The Guaraní practiced swidden agriculture, abandoning agricultural plots after two or three years. Their principal crops were maize, several varieties of manioc, sweet potatoes, groundnuts, beans, calabash, and various fruits. Just as important as agricultural crops were food sources acquired through gathering and hunting. The Guaraní collected wild honey, pineapples, palm fruits, wild rice, pulses, medicinal plants, dye-yielding plants, and yerba. They hunted fish and other game like the tapir.<sup>84</sup>

Guaraní political and spiritual leadership could be assumed by one figure, the shaman (*karaí*).<sup>85</sup> Many shaman began as caciques (*mburuvichá*) then developed their roles to include spiritual powers that could be extended to external villages. Shamans were powerful leaders because they provided a link between the temporal and spiritual through their speeches, dances and songs. They led the community in rituals and ceremonies, including the veneration of dead ancestors, and maintained their oral traditions. Shamans used charms, amulets, gourds and rattles, yerba leaves and tobacco, items they believed

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Invaded Societies: The La Plata Basin (1535-1650),” in *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>82</sup> It is impossible to determine the nature of the divisions between these groups because their supposed designation as *naciones* or ethnic groups was provided by Spaniards who did not understand their social organization. For example, it is not clear that the Cario-Guaraní saw themselves as a distinct ethnic group.

<sup>83</sup> Population density estimates for central Paraguay are about 28 per 100 km<sup>2</sup> and for the eastern region of Guairá about 33 per 100 km<sup>2</sup>. Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*, 163-164; Kleinpenning, *Paraguay, 1515-1870*, 113.

<sup>84</sup> For a contemporary description of swidden agriculture see Father Maciel de Lorenzana’s letter to the Crown cited in Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 73.

<sup>85</sup> Hélène Clastres argues that there was a distinct split between political and religious authority at the time of the Spanish conquest. Clastres, *The Land-Without-Evil*, ch. 3. Contrarily, Guillermo Wilde suggest that these two kinds of authority were separated as a result of the Jesuit reduction system. Guillermo Wilde, “Prestigio indígena y nobleza peninsular: La invención de linajes guaraníes en las misiones del Paraguay,” *Jahrbuch für Geschichte Lateinamerikas* 43 (2006): 119-145; Wilde, *Religión y poder*, 29.

possessed spiritual powers. Gourds and rattles were crucial instruments that set the rhythm of ceremonial dances and served as links to the spiritual world.<sup>86</sup>

The Tupí-Guaraní did not build monumental structures. They kept time by measuring the phases of the moon. Their religion was animistic. The sun, moon and meteorological phenomenon, like lighting and thunder, possessed strong spiritual powers. Jaguars and colorful birds also possessed spirits that could provide them with strength or passage to the afterlife. The Tupí-Guaraní believed that in the afterlife their spirits resided in the mountains and danced in beautiful gardens. The dead were buried in large, decorated ceramic urns (*yapepó*) in an upright fetal position.<sup>87</sup>

The Tupí-Guaraní consumed human flesh to obtain the magical powers of their captives or family members. Guaraní warriors were known to have consumed their enemies to acquire their strength and valor.<sup>88</sup> Florencia Roulet argues that unlike the Tupinambá of the Atlantic seaboard, the Guaraní did not consume warriors from their meta-ethnic group. Instead, their victims came from Chaco tribes, with whom they were frequently at war. Cannibalism was linked with manhood: to become a man a boy killed and consumed an enemy warrior in a communal ceremony. He would then take on the victim's names. Jesuit priests associated this practice with baptism.<sup>89</sup> Barbara Ganson suggests that beyond their spiritual benefits cannibalism, the Tupí-Guaraní consumed other humans as a form of psychological warfare and revenge against their enemies.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Ganson, *The Guaraní Under Spanish Rule*, 19-21.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 213

<sup>89</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 80.

<sup>90</sup> Ganson, *The Guaraní Under Spanish Rule*, 23. For a treatment of Hans Staden's account of cannibalism and how it relates to early-modern and modern political discourses of nature and civilization, see Neil L. Whitehead, "Hans Staden and the Cultural Politics of Cannibalism," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80, no. 4 (November 2000): 721-751.

In most cases, pre-Columbian Tupí-Guaraní groups were loosely patrilineal and uxori-local.<sup>91</sup> The basic Guaraní social unit was the *tevy* or small lineage group headed by one male. Several *tevy* might reside in one maloca, or longhouse.<sup>92</sup> Contemporary descriptions of the size of these units range from a dozen to upwards of three-hundred individuals. *Tevy* were loosely organized and most subsistence activities were performed at the domestic level or within nuclear family units. Most nuclear units possessed their own "kitchens" (fires) and were given spaces divided by the poles that sustained the longhouse. Often, collecting, farming and gathering were done communally, under the direction of the *tevy*'s cacique. When multiple *tevy* were found together in a village the unit was defined as a *teko'a*. These villages were often surrounded by a protective palisade.<sup>93</sup> Relations between villages (*teko'a*) or individual *tevy* were fostered through reciprocity and the most valued form of reciprocity was expressed through kinship or affinal unions.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> I say loosely patrilineal because in Guaraní society, political power might descend from the father, but political authority was also based on culturally defined leadership qualities, including generosity and bravery. Thus, political authority could circulate around a community despite the claims of political heirs. On patrilineality among the Tupí-Guaraní see Roque de Barros Laraia, "Kinship Studies in Brazil," *Vibrant* 8, no. 2 (2011): 427-449. Uxorilocality is similar to matrilocality (husband resides in his wife's community) but specifies that the son-in-law directs goods and services to his father-in-law, not his mother-in-law. These patterns do not hold true for all Tupí-Guaraní groups, past and present. Anthropologists have found a multitude of social arrangements, but generally, for the early colonial period, this pattern was common. On Guaraní social structure see especially Egon Schaden, *Aspectos fundamentais da cultura guaraní* (São Paulo: Difusão Européia do Livro, 1962); Susnik, *Los aborígenes del Paraguay*; Rubem Ferreira Thomaz de Almeida and Fabio Mura, "Historia y territorio entre los Guaraní de Matto Grosso do Sur, Brasil," *Revista de Indias* 64, no. 230 (2004): 55-66; José Otávio Catafasto de Souza, "O sistema econômico nas sociedades indígenas guaraní pré-coloniais," *Horizontes Antropológicos* 8, no. 18 (December 2012): 211-253.

<sup>92</sup> Archeological evidence suggests that smaller residencies (huts) housing only a nuclear family existed, but these were not the norm. See Catafasto de Souza, "O sistema econômico," 226.

<sup>93</sup> Affines are relatives through marriage as opposed to blood relatives. Susnik, *El rol de los indígenas*, 29-33; Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 75-77; Catafasto de Souza, "O sistema econômico," 225-230.

<sup>94</sup> Viveiros de Castro argues that lowland societies, especially Tupían groups, relied on affinity, incorporating outsiders through marriage. He argues that kinship was the highest form of reciprocity. Viveiros de Castro, *From the Enemy's Point of View*.

Preferred marriage unions among many Guaraní groups were avuncular or between men and their siblings' children (a male uncle with his niece). Usually, these were cross-cousin unions: the children of siblings of the opposite sex (brother marries his sister's daughter). This marriage pattern usually resulted in uxorilocal residency or the groom's residence in the bride's house. At his in-laws' residence, the groom paid a kind of bride-service to his father-in-law (or brother-in-law) by providing services like hunting or soldiering. But there was more than one marriage pattern among the Guaraní, the most prominent was polygyny, practiced by *cacique*.<sup>95</sup>

When Europeans encountered Tupí-Guaraní groups, many priests said that they rarely could distinguish between native rulers and “commoners.” One difference they noticed, however, was the *caciques*' practice of polygyny and their consequent exemption from providing labor to in-laws.<sup>96</sup> These women could be acquired through trade or enslavement. In the former method, the *cacique* provided the giving party exotic items (one we know of for sure was parrot or huron feathers) or foodstuffs, only available because of his high number of agriculturalist wives. Young men that were valiant in war could invert the spouse debt by gifting women taken in captivity, thereby redirecting tribute, honor and service to himself. If he possessed enough power and materials, a *cacique* could acquire wives through gifting instead of the spouse debt.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Susnik, *Los aborígenes del Paraguay*, 129; Catafasto de Souza, “O sistema econômico,” 226.

<sup>96</sup> The Jesuit Antonio Ruiz de Montoya highlighted this social asymmetry in power and privilege, noting that some powerful principals had twenty or thirty women. See Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 82-86. See also Guillermo Furlong, *Antonio Ruiz de Montoya y su carta a Comental, 1645* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Theoría, 1964).

<sup>97</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 85. Terence Turner provides an example of how bride service functioned among the Kayapo, a Jê group of the southern Amazon. Kayapo socio-economic patterns are different from Guaraní patterns, but they are still instructive when we consider Guaraní polygyny and how Spaniards were able to channel Guaraní male and female labor to themselves through kinship networks. “The basis of dominance and control of men over women in the social organization of productive activities, and particularly in the organization of family and extended family roles, is an important point for the

Branislava Susnik has identified three basic relations in Guaraní society: 1) grandparent-grandchildren relations, responsible for sustained sociobiological continuity; 2) mothers and maternal aunts, whose relationships were fostered through uxorilocal residence; and 3) *tovayá-taichó* (brother-in-law-father-in-law), defining the integration of new members of the socio-residential community.<sup>98</sup> This last relationship between brother-in-law and father-in-law is especially important when analyzing the encomienda in colonial Paraguay. As Spaniards entered into kinship relationships with the Guaraní, the *tovayá* and *taichó* determined Spaniards' relationships with the community.

An analysis of Guaraní socio-economic structure reveals that economic production was found at the nexus of exogamous or affinal unions and that the spouse debt could be reversed depending on how a woman was acquired. Acting like other caciques, Spaniards used their metal trading item to purchase a space for themselves within this social context.

### ***Gente de Servicio***

Spanish expansion in the Americas followed a pattern of relay conquest: as Spaniards established control in one area, the ambitious, mid-level conquistadors fanned out in search of more lucrative opportunities. This explains the actions of Cortés and Pizarro,

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understanding of Kayapo social organization as a whole. The reason for this is that the structure of the extended family...is based squarely on the exploitation of men's control over women in order to control other younger men. Specifically, this means the exploitation of the control over young women exercised by their fathers, and to a more limited degree, their mothers, as a basis for getting control over their husbands, who are forced to move in with the parents of the young women. In the absence of property in land, livestock, or other resources that might serve as extrinsic bases of social control, Kayapo society has resorted to the exploitation of a class of its own members (young women) as the basis for developing a relatively complex, stratified society based on the domination of young men (and women) by older men (and, to a lesser extent, older women)." Terence Turner, "The Kayapo of Central Brazil," in *Face Values: Some Anthropological Themes*, ed. Anne Sutherland (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1978), 258.

<sup>98</sup> Susnik, *Los aborígenes del Paraguay*, 128-129.

among others, but conquest in the Río de la Plata did not follow this pattern.<sup>99</sup> Embarking from Seville in 1535, an expedition led by don Pedro de Mendoza, left with the intention of claiming the fabled riches of the Incan Empire. After losing Mendoza, the expedition's leaders established a fort they named Asunción from which they could regroup and launch exploratory expeditions with the purpose of reaching the Andes. Unable to find a reliable route to the Andes, the small band of Spaniards quickly found itself mired in Asunción. Two decades and several other expeditions (including the inauspicious expedition of Álvaro Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca) passed before Spaniards demonstrated that they were permanent residents of Paraguay by institutionalizing their relations with the Guaraní under the *encomienda* in 1556. Before 1556, Spaniards often referred to the region as "*la conquista del Río de la Plata*" (the conquest of the Río de la Plata), underscoring the unsettled nature of the Spanish settlement in Asunción.<sup>100</sup>

Traditional narratives of initial contact in the 1530's have underscored decisive Spanish military victories. In his epic poem, *La Argentina* (1602), the cleric Martín del Barco Centenera recounted that the Spanish established relations with the Guaraní after they defeated them in the great Battle of Lambaré, named after one of the region's powerful caciques. But the only contemporary account of the Battle of Lambaré was provided by a Bavarian conquistador named Ulrich Schmidl in his popular chronicle, which was published in Europe in 1567. Schmidl related that the Spanish overcame forty-thousand well-armed Cario warriors and that this decisive victory led to the first political

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<sup>99</sup> Restall, *Seven Myths*, 33. Lockhart and Schwartz note that Paraguayan conquest "bypassed the step-by-step tradition of the Indies." Lockhart and Schwartz, *Early Latin America*, 85.

<sup>100</sup> For chronicles of Spanish activities in the Río de la Plata see Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, *Nafragios y comentarios*, ed. Roberto Ferrando (Buenos Aires: Historia 16, 1935); Ruy Díaz de Guzmán, *La Argentina*, ed. Enrique de Gandia (Madrid: Historia 16, 1986). In a suit from 1552, the prosecuting official indicated that he was an "*estante en esta conquista del Río de la Plata*." ANA, SC, 1552, vol. 5, fol. 19-69.

alliance between the two groups, ceremonialized by the delivery of various gifts and six Guaraní women to the Spanish captain Juan de Ayolas.<sup>101</sup> Florencia Roulet argues convincingly that Schmidl manipulated the order of the conquest events since the other four extant contemporary accounts do no mention significant inter-ethnic conflict until a few years after contact.<sup>102</sup> Barco Centenera's poem and other conquistador accounts privilege the epic Battle of Lambaré to glorify the conquistadors and delineate the conquered from the conquerors.

Initial Spanish-Carío contact was characterized by reciprocal exchanges, which Spaniards called "*rescate*." During these initial years the Guaraní were expensive friends. The price of their friendship was trade and incorporation into their affinal alliances.<sup>103</sup> Spaniards offered iron tools (hatchets, knives, etc.) and clothing items while the Carío offered surplus provisions, military support and labor.<sup>104</sup> Once Spaniards ran out of metal trade items they began dismantling their swords, harquebuses and other metal objects so they could continue to survive in the region.<sup>105</sup> Guaraní laborers, the most important element in this exchange, were acquired as Spaniards received Guaraní women in exchange for European trade items and political affinity. Thus, Spaniards assumed the role of powerful *caciques* who had enough resources to purchase women rather than entering into a spouse-debt.

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<sup>101</sup> Ulrich Schmidl, *Viaje al Río de la Plata* (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1997), 60.

<sup>102</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 113-118.

<sup>103</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 175.

<sup>104</sup> Metal became so important for the Spanish in Paraguay that in 1544, the cabildo set prices of basic commodities on these metal exchange items: "two hens for three knives, eight eggs for one knife, three sets of fishing line for one knife, and two sets of fishing line for one knife." ANA, SH, 1544, vol. 11, no. 4, fol. 34.

<sup>105</sup> *Decretos del adelantado Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca* in J. Fitte Ernesto, *Hambre y desnudeces en la conquista del Río de la Plata* (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1963), 293.

While many Paraguayan historians have exaggerated the sexual nature of this first encounter, it is more important to underscore the absolute political and material necessity of acquiring Guaraní women.<sup>106</sup> As the primary agriculturalists of their society, Guaraní women could provision Spaniards and as the daughters/concubines of powerful caciques they were the means by which Spaniards became the Guaraní's affines or political kin.<sup>107</sup> With an extremely small European female population, Spaniards turned to the Guaraní for sexual partners.<sup>108</sup> In their testaments, the first conquistadors referred to these women with variety of terms: *criadas* (servants), *yanaconas*, *piezas* and, if acquired through war, *esclavas*. Generally, Spaniards referred to this indigenous servant class as “*gente de servicio*.”

Historians of colonial Paraguay have referred to this population of servants as *originarias* and later the *encomienda originaria*. In Tucumán and the Andes *originaria* identified a Native from the community in which they resided, as opposed to *mitmaq* communities, or resident colonists who maintained ties to their homeland. It is assumed that this term was adopted in Paraguay because it implied that these personal servants were cut off from their original communities. But for historians to use the term *originaria* to refer to *yanaconas* in the period before the 1650s is anachronistic. Before then, Spaniards referred to natives living on their estates as either “*indios*,” “*gente de servicio*” or “*yanaconas*.” One of the first extant *padrones* of *encomiendas originarias* in Asunción

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<sup>106</sup> Barbara Potthast was one of the first historians to draw attention to this dynamic. Potthast-Jutkeit, *Paraíso de Mahoma*. Florencia Roulet’s analysis (cited above), however, is the most recent and convincing work to systematically analyze all available sources from the first thirty years after contact and explain the nature of these first inter-ethnic relationships.

<sup>107</sup> The significance of women in inter-ethnic relations in Paraguay relates with Juliana Barr’s work on the Spanish among the Caddo in Texas. Barr shows that Indian constructions of the social order and of economic and political relations were defined by gendered terms of kinship. This social milieu was at the crux of Spanish-Indian politics in the eighteenth-century. See Barr, *Peace Came*.

<sup>108</sup> Between 1535 and 1600 only 3,087 Europeans came to Paraguay. There was no other major European influx until the eighteenth century. Konetzke, *La emigración española*.



was not conducted until 1694, suggesting the lack of clear divisions between natives living on Spanish estates and those in pueblos. Clarifying the use of this terminology in the historiography is important because it helps break down the notion that the *yanacona* and *mitaya* were always distinct social groups with distinct cultural development. While Chapter 4 of this dissertation will treat issue more directly, it is important to recognize now that some *yanacona* became *mitaya* and vice versa.

Testaments and criminal suits provide insights into the diverse social arrangements of the early conquest period. Anticipating another expedition to the dangerous Chaco in 1543, several Spaniards drew up their testaments. One of these, Lu s de Hern ndez, prescribed that the “Christian *indias*” in his service “remain in the company and union of the Christians, that they be indoctrinated and taught in our holy Catholic faith.”<sup>109</sup> These *indias*, were to be given to another Spaniard, presumably a close friend or relative. A few years later, in 1547, Cleric Mart n Gonz lez provided a significant sum of money to his Guaran  servants’ children: “to Mar a, child-daughter of Mar a, my servant (*mi criada*), and Petrolina, child-daughter of Francisca, my servant, to each be given one-thousand gold pesos. God be served that when the time arrives they marry and assume another condition (*estado*) and manner of living.”<sup>110</sup> The size of these girls’ dowries strongly suggests that this cleric was their father. During the sixteenth century, priests decried Spaniards and their immoral unions with so many Guaran  servants. This cleric’s will is valuable since it affirms that even the gadflies of society were reliant on indigenous female service, the very thing they decried in their letters to their superiors.

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<sup>109</sup> ANA, SC, 1543, vol. 1, fol.151

<sup>110</sup> “...se de a Maria ni a hija de Mar a my criada e a Petrolyna ni a hija de Francisca my criada a cada una de las dhas ninas mil pesos de oro a su justo peso...si dios fuere servido de las llegr a tpo q se puedan casar o tomar otro estado e orden de vivir lo cual yo les mando.” ANA, SC, 1547, vol. 4, fol. 78

Others were not so reserved about declaring their relation to their mestizo children. Pedro Arias declared that “under [his] house and power” a native woman named Elena gave birth to Juana, who he declared as his daughter.<sup>111</sup> Arias had come by several indigenous slaves taken in war and he ordered that these slaves remain with Elena and Juana in Juan Gallego’s power.<sup>112</sup> Testators also commonly requested masses and candles for their “*gente de servicio*.” From indigenous slaves to servants to sexual partners, the relationships between Spaniards and native women in early Asunción were diverse.

Spanish-Indigenous sexual unions were not unique to Paraguay, but the minimal amount of immigration compounded the racial diversity of the region. How Spaniards treated their mestizo children reflects the diverse relationships they maintained with their Guaraní servants and concubines.

Spaniards deposited some of their mestizo children with Spanish caregivers while others they left to the care of their Guaraní mothers. It is not clear why, but the conquistadors incorporated their male mestizo children into family strategies far less than their female daughters.<sup>113</sup> Unlike the conquistadors in Cuzco who created the convent of Santa Maria to house their *mestiza* daughters, the conquistadors in Paraguay did not have the means to create a convent for their mixed-race children.<sup>114</sup> Only by 1603 was a “*casa de recogidas*” and orphanage officially established by a lay woman named doña

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<sup>111</sup> “...*declaro por mi hija*.” They designation “*legítima*” or “*natural*” was not given. ANA, SC, 1549, vol. 4, fol. 157-58.

<sup>112</sup> ANA, SC, 1549, vol. 4, fol. 153-60

<sup>113</sup> One exception is Domingo de Irala’s testament, wherein he names his male mestizo children. Ricardo de Lafuente Machaín, *El gobernador Domingo Martínez de Irala* (Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial La Facultad, 1939), 239.

<sup>114</sup> On the Cuzco convent, see chapter one of Kathryn Burns, *Colonial Habits: Convents and the Spiritual Economy of Cuzco, Peru* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999). See also Kathryn Burns, “Gender and the Politics of Mestizaje: The Convent of Santa Clara in Cuzco, Peru,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 78, (1998): 5-44.

Francisca de Bocanegra, but it was an utterly poor institution, dependent on daily charities (more on the *casa de recogidas* in Chapter 4).<sup>115</sup>

### **Creating Kinship and Pueblos**

This chapter has explained the kinds of relations that existed between Spaniards and indigenous female servants. It will now turn to the question of how the networks between Guaraní political units were established and maintained before they were officially sanctioned by colonial authorities. Further, this chapter will describe the process by which Spaniards and ecclesiastics congregated the Guaraní into Christian communities or pueblos.

Individual Spaniards formed relationships with Guaraní communities individually through trade or communally through violence. Hostile Guaraní groups incited Spanish military action against them, which resulted in forced kinship arrangements. To maintain peace with these communities, Spaniards continued to honor reciprocity and delivered trade items for female laborers. At the same time, individual Spaniards created kinship networks through trade. This latter pattern appears to have been more common.

During the period before 1556, these networks created a hierarchy in Asunción among Spaniards based on which individuals could most effectively negotiate Guaraní communities and who possessed the greatest amount of trade items. Dorothy Tuer indicates that some of the most powerful early conquistadors were castaways from earlier expeditions who had lived among the Guaraní and learned the Guaraní language. Their positions as go-betweens allowed them to maintain intimate connections with Guaraní

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<sup>115</sup> In 1612, the cabildo begged that the crown endow Bocanegra's *casa de recogidas* and orphanage (consisting of one-hundred "orphan daughters of the nobles") claiming that it was in utter ruin. ANA, SH, 1612, vol. 14, no. 3. Documentation about this institution and its patroness, doña Bocanegra, is extremely slim.

communities and acquire more servants. Others that did not possess wealth were often found stealing (both women and provisions) from indigenous villages. In an attempt to stave off abuses, the governor required any Spaniard hoping to trade (*rescate*) European items for Guaraní servants to obtain a license.

In 1552, a judge accused Cristóbal Bravo of illegally taking a Guaraní woman from a village headed by the cacique Tamynbu Ñero. The judge noted that Bravo had also robbed the community of honey, wax, and several hammocks, adding that wherever he went "the land was despoiled."<sup>116</sup> The judge placed the woman, Felipa, under protective custody in his own home until the suit could be resolved. Incensed by these legal actions and living up to the meaning behind his name, Bravo marched into the judge's house and took Felipa away with him to the region of Guayrá, where he could escape the law. When Bravo returned months later, officials detained and questioned him. In his defense, Bravo claimed that he had given two hatchets, a number of knives and two-hundred fish hooks to the community before he took Felipa. Whether or not Bravo was telling the truth, he reveals Spanish expectations regarding these networks with the Guaraní. While some Spaniards acquired Guaraní servants through violent *rancheadas* or raids of native communities, this suit indicates that Spaniards also understood Guaraní expectations and that they negotiated with Guaraní communities on their own terms.

After 1545, Spanish-Guaraní relations soured. Guaraní violent resistance mounted following a number of failed expeditions against Chaco groups and as groups of desperately poor Spaniards went on unofficial *rancheadas*.<sup>117</sup> Spanish chronicles refer to

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<sup>116</sup> "...se despoblaran." ANA, SC, 1552, vol. 4, fol. 19-69.

<sup>117</sup> The surge in violence is documented in Tuer, "Tigers and Crosses," 221.

native "*alzamiento*," which implied both violent resistance and flight.<sup>118</sup> There are many accounts of Natives deserting the land and taking refuge in the forests. In other words, many Guaraní chose to relocate when Spaniards employed violence. The Guaraní had already learned that the Spanish possessed greater military power, so they allied (through marriage) with their former enemies, the Agaces.<sup>119</sup> Seeing their peril, the Spanish likewise allied with other Chaco groups, the Yaporis and Guatatas. Hostilities dragged on for over a year as the Spanish attacked isolated Guaraní groups. Many of the original principal caciques of the region were killed during this period.<sup>120</sup> The repression was severe, forcing many Guaraní groups to make peace with the Spanish. Guaraní violence against Spanish non-reciprocal engagements appear to have been decentralized but frequent.

Louis Necker counted no less than twenty-two "rebellions" between the 1530s and 1600.<sup>121</sup> The majority of these rebellions occurred after the *encomiendas* were established in 1556 and most scholars suggest that these rebellions represent a rejection of the official *encomiendas*.<sup>122</sup> Of course, labor demands on a people not accustomed to producing surplus and illegal *rancheadas* were crucial factors. Other factors included epidemics, ecological changes and the expansion of the Spanish throughout the region.<sup>123</sup> This last point is crucial. From the 1550s through the rest of the century, the "relay conquest" pattern is applicable to Paraguay. An intermediate class of conquistadors (often an elite

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<sup>118</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 126.

<sup>119</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 207; Schmidl, *Viaje al Río de la Plata*, 230.

<sup>120</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 210.

<sup>121</sup> Necker, "La reacción de los guaraníes," 21-25.

<sup>122</sup> Following Necker's count, eighteen out of twenty movements against the Spanish occurred after the *encomienda* was established. Necker, "La reacción de los guaraníes," appendix. Duran Estrago, Velázquez, and Garavaglia emphasize this point. Other explanations include shamanic or millenarian movements against the Spanish. See Clastres, *The Land-Without-Evil*, ch. 3; Necker, "La reacción de los guaraníes".

<sup>123</sup> There are virtually no systematic demographic studies for this period. This is largely due to the fact that there are no extant *padrones* for the sixteenth century.

class of mestizos) that were not given an encomienda fanned out throughout the region and founded a number of towns: Ciudad Real (1557), Santa Cruz de la Sierra (1561), Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo (1570), Santa Fe (1573), the second Buenos Aires (1580), Corrientes (1588).<sup>124</sup> Several of the rebellions that occurred during this period were directly related to this outward expansion of Spanish power throughout the region.

Spanish expansion cannot be separated from ecclesiastical evangelization. During the 1580s, Franciscans and Spaniards worked together to create consolidated native pueblos. Franciscans were an important historical force in colonial Paraguay, arguably as much as the Jesuits. The critical divergence between the two orders was that the Franciscans did not resist the Spanish encomienda while the Jesuits did. By the mid seventeenth century, the Jesuits were successful in exempting nearly all of their missions from Spanish labor demands. In contrast, the Franciscans often defended Spanish rights to indigenous labor and personal service among the pueblo populations. The role of the Spanish in the pueblos was so pronounced that Governor Ramírez de Velasco referred to the Franciscan reductions as the "*pueblos de encomenderos*."<sup>125</sup>

The first Franciscans arrived at Paraguay in the 1570s and were active in founding pueblos from the 1580s to around 1620. They founded some twenty-one pueblos, largely under the leadership of fray Luis de Bolaños. The nature of Guaraní "indoctrination" in the Franciscan context has received little attention compared to the Jesuit literature. Margarita Durán Estrago argues that Christian indoctrination was effective and transformative.<sup>126</sup> Luis Necker, on the other hand, has little to say about the Guaraní's Christian expressions. Instead, he argues that the Guaraní were more converted to their

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<sup>124</sup> Kleinpenning, *Paraguay, 1515-1870*, table 5.1.

<sup>125</sup> Necker, *Indios guaraníes y chamanes franciscanos*, 93.

<sup>126</sup> This view is evident in many of her works, already cited.

priests than to Christianity.<sup>127</sup> Sources allowing for cultural analysis of Guaraní religiosity are scant, therefore, we know little about religious life within the pueblos.<sup>128</sup>

Necker argues that Franciscans appeared in Paraguay at a time of general rebellion and that they forged a new path towards a peaceful colonial compact by assuming the role of Guaraní itinerant shaman, or *karai*. The Franciscans usurped the power of the Guaraní shaman, who were the primary instigators of rebellion. These priests attempted to be eloquent and generous, two characteristics that were essential to Guaraní political authority. While this paradigm might be partially realistic, there are too many gaps and contradictions in the documentation to maintain that every pueblo was founded after Franciscans hijacked Guaraní religious authority. If the Franciscans were so crucial to the sustained peace, then how can we explain such prolonged peace when they were barely present in the pueblos?

Generally, Paraguay lacked a strong ecclesiastical presence, underscored by the fact that the Paraguayan Bishopric was vacant from 1537 to 1599. In the pueblos, there were not enough priests to go around. From their base in Asunción, Franciscans frequented the Pueblos of Los Altos, Itá and Yaguaron, but they were rarely permanently stationed there. The pueblos to the north, in Itatín, received even less attention. In fact, to maintain the obeisance of the pueblos, Fray Bolaños distributed tools and cloths to the Guaraní when they came to Asunción to fulfill their tribute obligations.<sup>129</sup> Well into the seventeenth century, encomenderos also continued to distribute similar objects, suggesting that

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<sup>127</sup> “*Los Guaraníes se habían convertido más a los monjes (nuevos chamanes) que a la religión cristiana.*” Necker, *Indios guaraníes y chamanes franciscanos*, 196.

<sup>128</sup> For example, we know that during the first quarter of the sixteenth century, the yanaconas in Asunción had their own religious brotherhood (*cofradía*), but I have still not found a single source that lights our way.

<sup>129</sup> The record of this occurrence is from 1595. Necker, *Indios guaraníes y chamanes franciscanos*, 89.

reciprocity continued to define these relationships. For example, in a suit over an encomendero's poor treatment of his tributaries, the defense assembled witnesses who spoke to his consistent and liberal gifting of knives and hatchets to his tributaries.<sup>130</sup> For the Jesuits, gifting also represented the primary means through which reductions were founded. Once gifts like cloth, hatchets, and knives had been distributed and caciques were baptized and christened, Jesuits believed that a permanent pact had been created between themselves and the native community.<sup>131</sup>

When we review the process of founding pueblos, it is clear that trade and reciprocity were at the center of the process. If violence was employed to pacify the Guaraní, reciprocity sustained that peace. It was at that point that encomenderos became *tovayá*. Any reciprocal exchanges provided by the governor were then supplemented by exchanges between individual encomenderos and their caciques.

While encomenderos frequented the pueblos, they also maintained intermediaries and overseers in the pueblos, referred to as "*pobleros*" in the documentation. Pobleros were present in almost every pueblo, but their roles and responsibilities are unclear. Many pobleros lived with their families in the pueblos and it is probably that they were somehow connected with the indigenous community through kinship. In a 1608 litigation proceeding, the wife and daughter of the supposed overseer (he also served as interpreter in the case), provided testimony to a crime they witnessed inside the Pueblo of Yaguaron.<sup>132</sup> This family lived on a ranch within the pueblo territory and freely moved in

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<sup>130</sup> ANA, NE, 1603, vol. 144, 2.

<sup>131</sup> See Wilde, *Religión y poder*, 94-95.

<sup>132</sup> ANA, CJ, 1608, vol. 1811, no. 8.



and out of the village complex. Local officials were concerned about poblero-Guaraní unions and so they required all pobleros be married.<sup>133</sup>

Very little is known about the physical layout of these early pueblos. Necker guesses that they were very similar to the *teko'a* structure, with longhouses and a palisade surrounding the compound. The Christian "*política*" was ostensibly instilled once separate quarters were constructed within these buildings, organizing natives into discrete family units and once polygyny was eradicated.<sup>134</sup> Until 1607, when priests took up permanent residence in the pueblos, their economies were in a transitional stage, where hunting and gathering remained one of the primary subsistence activities. After this period, more significant agricultural and ranching activities dominated.

The significance of the Franciscan pueblos was that they helped to fully sedentarize the Guaraní in fixed settlements throughout the seventeenth century and provided the institutions through which the *encomienda mitaya* could be fully developed. The same patterns of Spanish-Guaraní relations that defined the first eighty years of colonization (i.e. reciprocity and political kinship) underlay ethnic relations even after the pueblos were fully established. But if the *encomienda* was so crucial in transforming natives, what did it prescribe?

### **Institutionalizing Kinship**

Governor Domingo Martínez de Irala made what was his last attempt for the Andes between 1547 and 1549. He must have been devastated to discover that the most important Andean zones had already been claimed. It was at this juncture that Spaniards

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<sup>133</sup> *Ordenanzas*, Governor Velasco, ord. 30, in Juan Carlos García Santillán, *Legislación sobre indios del Río de la Plata en el siglo XVI*, vol. Biblioteca de historia hispano-americana (Madrid: Imp. del Asilo de Huérfanos del S. C. de Jesús, 1928), 368.

<sup>134</sup> Necker, *Indios guaraníes y chamanes franciscanos*, 95.

showed signs of permanent colonial presence in Paraguay. Shortly after his return in 1551, the first *padrón* of surrounding Guaraní villages was made and in 1555 and early 1556 native communities were finally divided up as encomiendas. Irala allocated some twenty-thousand Guaraní to 320 Spaniards (out of around 650 Spaniards), thus making over half of the Spanish population encomenderos, an honor granted to only a handful of conquistadors in Peru and Mexico.<sup>135</sup> But encomienda titles in Paraguay did not imply marvelous wealth since most Spaniards were only granted forty tributaries—an average that would drop by more than half that size in later years. Of course, Irala and his favorites took the lion's share, laying claim to some two-hundred or three-hundred tributaries.<sup>136</sup>

Irala was reluctant to create official encomiendas. In a letter to the metropolis, crown agent (*factor*) Pedro Dorantes explained that by channeling all their women to the Spanish, the Guaraní were destroying themselves and creating an unwieldy mestizo population. His solution was that Irala create Indian pueblos and "*encomendar*" the Guaraní. He reasoned that by doing this "the custom of the Indians to sell their women, children, and relatives" would be eliminated.<sup>137</sup> Dorantes was referring to the concubinage-kinship-labor pattern, the pattern that was responsible for so many mestizos in the region. His suggestion that "pueblos" be created reflected a desire to create two separate native populations or republics: the Republic of the Indians and the Republic of the Spaniards.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Susnik, *Una visión socio-antropológica del Paraguay, XVI-1/2-XVII*, 31.

<sup>136</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 247.

<sup>137</sup> Cited in de Lafuente Machaín, *El gobernador*, 484.

<sup>138</sup> On early campaigns to maintain discrete populations in the Americas, see Lesley Byrd Simpson, *The Encomienda in New Spain: The Beginning of Spanish Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), Chapters 9 and 10.

Irala's response to the crown, explaining why he delayed creating *repartimientos* speaks volumes about his perceptions of the land, his dashed hopes for greater conquests, and the nature of Spanish-Guaraní relations:

[Your servant] has been occupied many times in making and sustaining *armadas* to discover and conquer lands which, he was informed, contained wealth of gold, silver and great populations of people. He has dedicated himself to this effort so that God, Your Majesty, and the conquistadors, vassals of Your Majesty, could be served. He has not attempted to make a *repartimiento* out of this land nor an *encomienda* out of the natural Indians...because the land is miserable and contains a small and scattered (*derramada*) population. They are a people without Lord and leader (*principal*) to whom they should pay obeisance or with whom they should trade or provide tribute. To the Spaniards, they have only provided the service of their persons, an ancient custom of this land that has been kept and guarded. All the Indians or a great part of them are connected with the *conquistadors* and *pobladores* by way of kinship, having given their daughters, sisters, women, and relatives so that they serve them. For all these reasons your servant has not wanted to distribute (*repartir*, *encomendar*) the Indians.... And if by doing this a scandal or disturbance or other damage occurs, may the blame and charge be to Your Majesty's officials and to their possessions, not to your servant."<sup>139</sup>

Irala's reluctance to institute the *encomienda* in Paraguay underscores early modern Spanish aspirations to create colonies amidst sedentary peoples who could integrate with political empire through tribute payment and political obedience. The Guaraní in Paraguay could only offer their personal service through kinship bonds. According to Irala's logic, without powerful political figures and the ability to manipulate and access the labor resources of large Guaraní political units, the *encomienda* was not a viable labor structure.

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<sup>139</sup> "...se a ocupado muchas veces en hacer y sustentar *armadas* para descubrir y conquistar tierras de que se tenia noticia y tiene aver riqueza de oro y plata y grandes poblaciones de gente como lo a puesto por obra y entiende poner y avido respecto de lo principal en que dios y su magestad mas fuesen servidos y los conquistadores vasallos de su magestad aprovechados no a procurado ocuparse ni embarazarse en el *repartimiento* de esta tierra y *encomienda* de los yndios naturales de ella y asi mismo lo a dexado de hazer por ser tierra miserable y de muy poca y *derramada* poblacion y gente sin señor y principal a quien obedescan ni tener que dar de rescates ni tributos a los conquistadores sino solamente al servicio de sus personas y por la antigua y vieja costumbre que en esta tierra se tomo guarda y a guardado estan todos los yndios a la mayor parte dellos adebdados con todos los conquistadores y pobladores por via de avelles dado sus hijas hermanas y mugeres y parientes que les sirvan por todo lo quel no embargante que el quiso repartir la dicha tierra y encomendar los yndios y los embio a empadronar siempre a tenido y tiene por dificultoso y muy largo y embaraçoso...y que si por lo hazer asi algun escandalo o alboroto o otro mal o daño se recreciere o pudiera recrecer sea a culp e cargo de los dichos oficiales de su mag y de sus bienes y no a la suya y que esto dava e dio por su respuesta y que asy se les notifique...." Cited in de Lafuente Machain, *El gobernador*, 85-86.

Despite his hesitation, Irala proceeded to institute the *encomienda* in 1556. Little is known about the logic of the original *encomienda* units. Branislava Susnik has identified one early *encomienda* grant, given to Francisco de Escobar in 1558. It encompassed the *tevy* (or perhaps *teko 'a*) of a cacique named Icocha, which contained some forty-four men, who, with their families, Susnik estimates totaled two hundred souls.<sup>140</sup> We can only assume that Irala considered pre-existing Spanish-Guaraní kinship ties. For example, it is likely that Irala first determined which Spaniards already possessed kinship alliances with specific *tevy* and then simply sanctioned those relationships as an *encomienda*. To these, other *tevy* could have been added indiscriminately. But even if assigned indiscriminately, it is clear from later documentation that *encomiendas* were shaped around the *tevy* or individual caciques and that *encomenderos* played by the rules of Guaraní kinship. In her dissertation on early colonization in the Río de la Plata, Dorothy Tuer demonstrates that the best *encomiendas* were those which were part of the concubinage-kinship-labor system and the less attractive *encomiendas* were those in far-flung regions where no contact had yet been made.<sup>141</sup> In the mixing and matching of assigning the *encomiendas*, some Guaraní were upset that their Spanish *tovayá* were removed and replaced with another. But we can assume that where possible Irala created as much overlay as possible.

The argument that Irala's *encomiendas* legitimated pre-existing networks is strengthened by the fact that so many *encomiendas* were granted: a total of 320.<sup>142</sup> Had Irala disregarded kinship, then he might have made much larger *encomiendas* and fewer *encomenderos*. Contemporaries complained that Irala had given out too many

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<sup>140</sup> Susnik, *El indio colonial*, 171.

<sup>141</sup> Tuer, "Tigers and Crosses," 315.

<sup>142</sup> Zavala, *Origenes de la colonización*, 168.

encomiendas and made them too small. They lamented that in Peru, encomenderos possessed populations of four, five, or six thousand, while in Paraguay the average size of an encomiendas was thirty souls, and many less than ten. And while some concluded that Irala created so many encomiendas to appease his enemies, it is probable that Irala was attempting to maintain some kind of continuity with previous relationships based on kinship.<sup>143</sup>

A suit from the eastern region of Guayrá illustrates the networks of the early encomiendas. Guayrá was not settled until the 1570s, but the concubinage-kinship-labor pattern discussed for the conquest period in Asunción applies. The most obvious difference was that in Guayrá the concubinage-kinship-labor pattern was immediately institutionalized as an encomienda, whereas in Asunción institutionalization was delayed for two decades. The suit is from 1577, when the Spanish were only recent arrivals (Villa Rica was established in 1570) and maintained a very tenuous presence in the region—to call it a colonial presence would be a stretch.

According to the depositions, a company of Spanish conquistadors, led by Captain Ruy Díaz de Melgarejo (the famous founder of Villa Rica) had just pacified a group of "rebellious" natives.<sup>144</sup> They moved up the Iguazú River, passed the glorious Iguazú Falls, then took lodging at a Guaraní village just above the falls to rest for a few days. One of the members of the company, Ortuño Arbildo, possessed an encomienda in this village; hence, the Spaniards' access to the village for provisions and lodging. Captain Melgarejo gave strict orders to his men that they should be respectful of the villagers. The

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<sup>143</sup> *Colección de documentos relativos a la historia del América y particularmente a la historia del Paraguay*, comp. Blas Garay (Asunción: Talleres Nacionales de H. Kraus, 1899), 260. Hereafter BG.

<sup>144</sup> For a biography on Melgarejo, see Ramón Indalecio Cardozo, *Ruy Díaz Melgarejo, fundador de la ciudad de la Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo* (Asunción: La Colmena, 1939).

cacique of this village, Macaçu, was a very powerful cacique, and the "key to the whole land."<sup>145</sup> Furthermore, Melgarejo gave orders that Macaçu's granddaughter, María, was off-limits and was not to be touched. Arbildo ignored Melgarejo's orders, approached María's brother, Sebastian, and requested that he be allowed to take her. In exchange for María, Arbildo offered Sebastian several items of clothing, but Sebastian refused. One witness explained that Macaçu had plans to unite María with another powerful cacique in the region, obviously a greater political interest or of higher status than any one of the conquistadors. Sebastian offered Arbildo four other women in exchange for the clothing, but Arbildo again refused. In desperation, Arbildo returned after dark, took María by force, carried her to some kind of lodging and there raped her. Upon hearing of this crime, Sebastian went directly to Captain Melgarejo to complain. Arbildo was promptly found and shackled inside one of the villages longhouses. After depositions were collected in the village, Arbildo was chained inside one of the company's canoes and carried upstream to Villa Rica, where the rest of the proceedings could be carried out.

The descriptions of this village and the human networks at work illustrate that encomiendas were made up of one or multiple *tevy*. The village the Spaniards lodged in possessed seemed to possess no physical colonial alterations and possessed all the attributes of a *teko'a* or Guaraní village. When encomiendas were formally distributed, each encomendero was assigned a cacique (often multiple) and the village site was described in detail. During this period, there was little attempt to congregate native communities. The encomienda that Arbildo possessed was functional insofar as he was a *tovayá* to the cacique. Arbildo acquired concubines/laborers through kinship bonds, mitigated by a cacique and validated with material goods. This example complicates our

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<sup>145</sup> ANA, SH, 1577, vol. 11, no. 7, fol. 110.

understanding of "reduced" or "conquered" Indians in Paraguay and reveals the kinds of human networks that upheld the early *encomienda*.

Irala's *ordenanzas* or regulations governing the *encomiendas* were issued on 14 May 1556, some months after the *encomiendas* in the Asunción area were created. They provide a window into the social and cultural behaviors that defined the *encomienda* and, from an administrative point of view, threatened the institution. Irala explained that without gold or silver, the only meaningful tribute that the Guaraní could provide was personal service. The governor provided examples of the kinds of work *encomendados* should perform: construction of houses, bridges, and other buildings; general repair of basic infrastructure; and basic subsistence activities like farming, caring for livestock, and fishing.

After the *encomienda* was firmly in place and Spanish towns began to emerge in the region, a robust regional barter trade emerged. Thanks to the labor of their *encomendados*, Paraguayan *encomenderos* acquired sugar, wine, preserves, honey, leathers, pork, wax, and palm wood in exchange for luxury items (clothing, accessories, weapons) and wheat. By the 1590s, yerba mate circulated regionally and by the 1630s Paraguayan yerba was being consumed in Potosí; thus, Irala's *ordenanzas* did not reflect on labor performed in regions far from Asunción.<sup>146</sup> Unlike later laws governing the *encomienda*, Irala's regulations were fairly lax when it came to how many tributaries could serve a Spaniard at one time: one-quarter to one-half of the *encomienda*. Surprisingly, the *ordenanzas* gave no time limit on personal service, suggesting that the official *encomiendas* were based on the same foundation as the original concubinage-kinship-labor arrangements.

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<sup>146</sup> On regional trade, see Susnik, *Una visión*, 61. On the yerba trade see Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*.

The *ordenanzas* also outlined cacique's roles in relation to tribute service. They encouraged encomendados to obey the "*principales*" or "*mayorales*" that "they have or have been put in place," suggesting that the Spanish were involved in manipulating indigenous leadership.<sup>147</sup> Caciques were commanded to regulate the flow of labor between pueblo and Spanish farmsteads, ensuring that "Indians are sent for a period or months to live in the houses of their encomenderos, serving them or doing what is commanded of them."<sup>148</sup> This statement is perhaps the most concise definition of personal service, as Spanish contemporaries understood it. It suggests that this live-in service arrangement would be on a rotation so that when one group vacated another came in its stead, leaving an encomendero with a constant supply of tributaries.

Irala prohibited encomenderos from contracting or renting out their encomendados to other Spaniards. He also attempted to eradicate the former system in which caciques managed the networks of kinship: "no Indian is to contract the women, daughters, sisters, nor relatives (female) with another person, conquistador, *estante*, nor inhabitant because the Indians are so few and to avoid passions."<sup>149</sup> This indicates that caciques continued to actively engage Spaniards (even non-encomendero Spaniards) to create kinship networks. When Irala used the term "contracting" he specified that it was all female labor. During the early period (1530s to 1580s), labor tasks were largely determined by Guaraní gender norms: women farmed, men hunted. By the last quarter of the sixteenth century, this would change and men began assuming women's labor roles.

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<sup>147</sup> Guillermo Wilde shows that the Jesuits attempted to create a hereditary native leadership class where one had never existed. See Wilde, "Prestigio Indígena". Spanish strategies for manipulating Guaraní leadership in the pueblos are less clear.

<sup>148</sup> Cited in de Lafuente Machaín, *El gobernador*, 512.

<sup>149</sup> "*ni mismo dar ni contratar las mugeres hijas ni hermanas ni parientas con ninguna persona poblador ni conquistador estante ni avitante asi por los dhos yndios ser muy pocos y entre muchos repetidos como por evitar pasiones.*" de Lafuente Machaín, *El gobernador*, 515.



One of Spaniards' greatest concerns regarding the repartimiento was indigenous mobility and migration. Irala demanded that Indians "not move nor abandon their homes and pueblos to go to other pueblos, nor any other part."<sup>150</sup> For the encomienda to function, stable tributary populations were essential and the Guaraní negotiated these demands in a variety of ways. Transforming the Guaraní from semi-sedentary to sedentary populations was ultimately successful, but it occurred in stages. The first stage occurred as Spaniards took Guaraní concubines who would remain permanently in Spanish households. But for the majority of Guaraní who remained with their cacique, it appears that swidden agriculture and cyclical relocations continued. Irala's first *ordenanza* required all Indians to follow their cacique if he decided to move their village location, thus allowing the Guaraní to relocate their longhouses if their slash-and-burn agriculture had exhausted the earth's nutrients. From the 1580s to the 1620s, swidden agriculture became obsolete, a result of larger conglomerations of populations under the Franciscan pueblos and as Spaniards instituted new kinds of subsistence living based on trade and more sophisticated forms of agricultural production. Plots of land were given to Spaniards around the same time that the encomiendas were established and it was off these lands that the *yanacona* population subsisted. While no indigenous land contracts exist, circumstantial evidence from litigation illustrates that encomenderos provided small plots of land for their encomendados, probably sections of an encomendero's land.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> de Lafuente Machaín, *El gobernador*, 515.

<sup>151</sup> Susnik also confirms this pattern. Susnik, *Una visión*, 61. The introduction of European animals also had a profound impact on the Guaraní's transition from semi-sedentary to sedentary lifestyles. Julia Sarreal discusses cattle husbandry in Julia Sarreal, "Revisiting Cultivated Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Daily Life in the Guaraní Missions," *Ethnohistory* 60, no. 1 (Winter 2013): 101-124. She shows that even by the eighteenth century, many Guaraní resisted raising cattle, but preferred to hunt them as wild game.

While Guaraní communities under the Spanish encomienda were becoming sedentary, Guaraní men were frequently absent on hunting parties and trading expeditions. Another set of regulations from 1597 speaks to this mobility: "I have learned that the principal profit the Indians have come from the heron feathers, which they collect at certain times of the year. This activity makes them absent from their homes for three to four months."<sup>152</sup> This feather trade pre-dated the Spanish; the Guaycurú and other Chaco groups were often documented exchanging goods with the Guaraní for or with exotic feathers.<sup>153</sup> So while the Guaraní experienced profound transformations in their semi-sedentary life-ways, men continued to be extremely mobile.

Besides indigenous mobility, political kinship unions built through exogamous marriages troubled officials and encomenderos. Moreover, Guaraní sexuality favored multiple partners, making it difficult to keep track of marriages and offspring. The *ordenanzas* required that "no Indian allow Indians from foreign repartimientos and encomiendas to move into their own repartimiento."<sup>154</sup> Guaraní social customs were not consistent with this law. Borrowing insights from modern anthropological studies of the Guaraní, ethnohistorians suggest that Guaraní unions did not normally occur within a *tevy*, but between *tevy* or *teko'a*. Uxorilocality did not apply to polygynous caciques who acquired wives through trade. These unions were usually arranged between two caciques from separate *teko'a*.<sup>155</sup> In both of these cases, marriage unions occurred between distinct patrilineal kinship groups or distinct *tevy* and *teko'a*. Unfortunately, for the Spanish, the

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<sup>152</sup> *Actas capitulares y documentos del Cabildo de Asunción del Paraguay, siglo XVI*, comps. Roberto Quevado, Margarita Duran and Alberto Duarte (Asunción: Municipalidad de Asunción, 2001), 219.

<sup>153</sup> See, for example, AGI, Charcas, 1705, 216.

<sup>154</sup> "no consienten q yndios de otros repartimientos y encomiendas no se pasen ni muden a do los suyos estubiere." de Lafuente Machain, *El gobernador*, 516.

<sup>155</sup> Susnik, *El rol de los indígenas*, 28-29.

encomienda was based on multiple—if the encomienda was that big—*tevy* that may or may not have been part of the same *teko'a*. So when Irala prohibited the Guaraní from "contracting" women, what this meant in Guaraní social terms was no "trading" or "arranging" exogamous unions.

## **Conclusions**

This review of Guaraní social organization, the concubinage-kinship-labor pattern, the first encomiendas and the original laws regulating them reveal how Guaraní social structures integrated with the Spanish encomienda. It demonstrates the pliancy of this system to incorporate culturally distinct outsiders as well as Spanish flexibility and receptiveness to Guaraní modes of kinship and political alliance. At the 1556 juncture, most scholars assume that kinship dropped out and traditional colonial methods (violence and force) took their place. Susnik concluded that with the official encomiendas "the initial service through kinship and friendship turned into service of the dominated and service by right of conquest."<sup>156</sup> Yet, as Chapter 3 will show, the encomienda continued to rely on patterns rooted in kinship.

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<sup>156</sup> Susnik, *Una visión*, 26.

## Chapter 3

### "According to Their Customs"

This chapter illustrates how Guaraní social practices informed relations within the encomienda community from the 1580s to the 1630s, a period most scholars assume was marked by indigenous cultural decline. It focuses on a select group of litigation records from this period, to illustrate that those individuals who most rapidly experienced cultural change were Spanish creoles and their mestizo children.

Spanish creoles grew up learning Guaraní, eating indigenous foods, and maintaining intimate connections with Guaraní communities. These transformations alarmed Spanish observers new to the region. In 1608, the new Bishop of Paraguay, Fray Reginaldo de Lizárraga, remarked, that "pure" Spaniards were rare in Asunción and that the many mestizos possessed "customs like the Indians (*naturales*)."<sup>157</sup> What concerned officials most was the close cultural contact facilitated by the *yanacona/originario* system. According to outsiders and crown officials, locals in Asunción were not pursuing the ideal of maintaining two distinct societies, the Spanish Republic and the Indian Republic. In their letters to the crown, officials suggested that if something was not done, the Guaraní would disappear—a theme crown officials throughout the Americas commonly communicated to the metropolis.<sup>158</sup> In response to these trends and warnings, several local and regional officials attempted to remedy the situation through legislation. These laws and local reactions to them provide insight into the nature of indigenous service in Paraguay and the social foundations of the encomienda community.

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<sup>157</sup> "...por ser la gente un poco intratable como quien se a criado no con mucha policia Christiana y la mas hijos de españoles y de yndios cuyas costumbres les son como naturales." Lizárraga on his journey from Chile to Córdoba, 28 April 1608, Manuel E. Gondra Manuscript 1531-1920, Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin.

<sup>158</sup> Alfaro to the crown, 1613, Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*, 483.

### Mohamed's Paradise?

A few years after the Spanish entered into kinship relations with Guaraní and began taking on multiple Guaraní servants/concubines, Father Francisco González Paniagua spoke out against the utter depravity of the conquistadors. He famously referred to Paraguay as "Mohammad's paradise," insinuating that Spaniards maintained harems of Guaraní women, like the Muslims the Catholic monarchs had only recently defeated in Iberia.<sup>159</sup>

A handful of disputes from the 1570s to the 1640s between Spanish encomenderos over a single (usually female) tributary provide a more nuanced portrait of this population of supposed Guaraní concubines (see Figure 2).<sup>160</sup>

**Figure 2. Distribution of 24 Disputes over Tributaries, 1570 to 1640**

Disputes over a female tributary	Disputes over a male tributary	Disputes over a family of tributaries	Disputes initiated by a native
15	4	5	4

They reveal that even by the turn of the seventeenth century, the primary interest of encomenderos was still Guaraní *female* laborers and that Guaraní social and cultural integrity continued despite Spanish tribute demands and close cultural interaction.

On 14 August 1595 Pedro Sánchez Valderrama sued Antonio Denis for taking a tributary named Francisca out of his encomienda population.<sup>161</sup> The suit dragged on for sixteen months, generated dozens of claims, counterclaims, multiple rounds of

<sup>159</sup> Paniagua to Cardenal Juan de Távira, 1545, *Documentos históricos y geográficos*, 449.

<sup>160</sup> While this section highlights only a few suits, there are at least twenty-four extant disputes between encomenderos over single (usually female) tributaries for the period from the 1570s to the 1640s. ANA, CJ, 1590, vol. 1987, no. 2; ANA, CJ, 1592, vol. 1810, no. 4; ANA, CJ, 1593, vol. 1966, no. 4; ANA, CJ, 1596, vol. 2117, no. 6; ANA, CJ, 1598, vol. 1941, no. 3; ANA, CJ, 1600, vol. 1810, no. 10; ANA, CJ, 1605, vol. 1811, no. 6; ANA, CJ, 1605, vol. 2185, no. 1; ANA, CJ, 1610, vol. 2010, no. 3; ANA, CJ, 1615, vol. 1685, no. 3, fol. 1-36; ANA, CJ, 1617, vol. 1362, no. 2; ANA, NE, 1707, vol. 71; ANA, SC, 1552, vol. 5, fol. 19-69; ANA, SC, 1594, vol. 12, fol. 75; ANA, SC, 1594, vol. 12, fol. 103; ANA, SC, 1595, vol. 12, fol. 177-251; ANA, SC, 1595, vol. 12, fol. 109-110; ANA, SC, 1595, vol. 12, fol. 130; ANA, SC, 1596, vol. 13, fol. 26-56; ANA, SC, 1598, vol. 13, fol. 73-170; ANA, SC, 1602, vol. 14, fol. 72-190.

<sup>161</sup> Balderrama, who is apparently away from Asunción, is represented by Diego González de Santa Cruz, but to avoid confusion, I will refer to Balderrama. This suit is found in ANA, SC, 1595, vol. 12, fol. 177-251.

depositions, and a bit of foul play. It began after Denis removed Francisca from an Indian pueblo and placed her in his home in Asunción. Valderrama claimed that Francisca was not Denis's tributary and he persuaded a local magistrate to have her placed in protective custody until an official sentence could be issued. Valderrama's claim on Francisca revolved around proving that her mother, Mariana, was part of the original encomienda bestowed on the former encomendero. This strategy of using genealogies culled from witness testimonies to determine encomendero rights over individual tributaries was a common tactic in these kinds of disputes.<sup>162</sup>

Francisca was from a pueblo named Juan Farrel; the pueblo's name changed sometime after this suit, therefore, it is impossible to determine its physical location. On Valderrama's insistence, an official and notary were sent to the pueblo to take depositions. When notaries took depositions (or in any other legal circumstance throughout the colonial period) they recorded an indigenous person's encomendero. Similar to the way Spaniards might note that they were a "vecino" and their office (e.g. "tanner" or "crier"), tributaries in Paraguay were expected to state their encomendero. The witness examinations (in questionnaire format) were designed to determine that Mariana came from an encomienda that Valderrama had inherited. Most witnesses affirmed that Mariana was the daughter of Mocarapé, a cacique of Basbaldo's encomienda, the same encomienda Valderrama inherited. The examination also sought to confirm under what house Mariana was recorded in the most recent *padrón*.

Denis's examination of Guaraní witnesses probed similar questions. An unusual aspect of Denis's examination was that many depositions were not taken in the pueblo, but rather in Asunción. When Valderrama challenged Denis's use of witnesses in

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<sup>162</sup> For all of these disputes, lineages were traced through the mother's line, not the fathers.

Asunción for their lack of knowledge of pueblo social affairs, Denis's representative responded that the Indians in Asunción (we assume on Denis's estate) were from Mariana's pueblo and possessed a sufficient knowledge of her genealogy.<sup>163</sup> These depositions were obviously taken from *yanacóna* who possessed knowledge of social happenings in Juan Farrel, indicating that *yanacóna* and pueblo populations definitely maintained ties with one another. The other possibility is that those examined were on the *mita* and therefore not permanent servants on Valderrama's estate.

Denis's witnesses reveal an intact Guaraní social structure within the encomienda. Witnesses who explained their relation to Francisca and Mariana, revealed that Guaraní kinship terms like sister/brother, mother/father did not easily map onto Spanish notions of kinship. One witness named Elvira said that she and Mariana were "sisters." The interpreter explained, "they are sisters...according to their customs" and then added that they were actually cousins.<sup>164</sup> Among Guaraní today, children of two sisters call each other siblings, not cousins. Aunts, by our terms, are often referred to as "little mothers" by their nieces and nephews.<sup>165</sup> There were several moments when the interpreter could not translate Guaraní concepts into Spanish because they had no equivalent. For example, one witness explained that Mariana lived with the cacique Mocarapé, whose house was called "*tequa*," probably "*teko 'a*" (see Chapter 2). The consistent use of the phrase "according to their customs" in reference to kinship, marriage practices, and political

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<sup>163</sup> Denis was away at this time, so his wife responded for him.

<sup>164</sup> "*son hermanas de padre segun su costumbre q llama a las primas hermanas quanto son hijos o hijos de los hermanos o hermanas.*" Ibid., fol. 210.

<sup>165</sup> See Schaden, *Aspectos fundamentais da cultura guaraní*; Catafasto de Souza, "O Sistema Econômico". There are many other tantalizing ethnographic details in these suits that require further study and cross-disciplinary collaboration. For example, one witness referred to Mariana as "suhetanbi" which the translator explained was "a name that the Indians put on women of their houses or their relatives." ANA, SC, 1595, vol. 12, fol.206.

alliances demonstrates that many Guaraní social norms persisted within the encomienda system at the end of the sixteenth century.

Denis also assembled Spanish witnesses. One witness had observed Francisca cohabiting with the cacique of that pueblo, from which two children had been born. Other witnesses described Francisca's lifestyle as peripatetic: "she went from house to house deceitfully," as a "vagabond." All told, the depositions reveal show Francisca had at least three sexual partners, all in distinct encomiendas. Had Francisca possessed multiple partners within the same encomienda there would have been no problem. What created this dispute, and nearly all the other suits over individual tributaries, were cross-encomienda unions, facilitated by the fact that most unions extended outside a *tevy*, which also served as the boundary for most encomiendas. One witness explained that Francisca's mother, Mariana (as the *taicho*, or mother-in-law), had arranged a union between Francisca and Francisco, a cacique from another encomienda/*tevy*. Unions among higher status Guaraní often occurred between *teko'a*, which almost always transcended encomienda boundaries. Irala's *ordenanzas* attempted to remedy this practice by demanding that Indigenous not abandon their pueblos nor "allow Indians from other repartimientos and encomiendas to move into their own."<sup>166</sup> Since encomiendas were mapped onto individual *tevy* or individual lineage groups, any network or practice that moved people in and out of the *tevy* caught the attention of encomenderos.

But one encomendero's loss was another's gain. Juan Jiménez, another encomendero who was also in the company of Governor Hernandarias for the *visita*, explained that when he arrived in Juan Farrel he recognized Francisca as a foreign tributary. He inquired among his encomendados about her and they explained that her

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<sup>166</sup> de Lafuente Machaín, *El gobernador*, 511.



mother had given her to the cacique named Francisco, who was part of Jiménez's encomienda. He also noted that their union had produced a child. Jiménez pleaded with Francisco on three separate occasions that he marry Francisca. But Francisco knew that a Spanish marriage and a Guaraní union were not the same and implied different social and legal obligations. Jiménez referred to the Guaraní union between Francisco and Francisca arranged by her mother as *amancebamiento* or “concubinage.”<sup>167</sup> Guaraní witnesses used the terms “marriage” and “concubinage” interchangeably to describe Francisca's several relationships (though the vacillation might have been a function of translation). What Jiménez desired was an official post-tridentine marriage overseen by a priest and, most importantly, recorded by a notary; this would legalize Francisca's status as Jiménez's tributary. Frequently in the litigation, witness testimony from a priest regarding a Church marriage proved encomienda ownership.<sup>168</sup> One Guaraní witness explained that when Francisca's grandfather, a powerful cacique, was married the priest demanded that he abandon all his other wives. But Jiménez was not interested in such ideals; his interest in Francisco and Francisca's marriage was related to augmenting his encomienda and without a Spanish marriage, Francisca *and* her two children were not legally bound to Francisco and, therefore, Jiménez's encomienda. Having failed to convince Francisco to marry Francisca, Jiménez suggested to her encomendero—who he recognized as Denis—that they arrange a “swap” (*trueque*): Francisca and her children for an Indian (female) from his encomienda. The cacique, Francisco, did not concede to this arrangement and Denis was allowed to take Francisca to his estate.

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<sup>167</sup> ANA, SC, 1596, vol. 12, fol. 211.

<sup>168</sup> In this suit, we learn that Mariana was the subject of an encomendero dispute that was settled, in part, with evidence of her official marriage to a cacique. See also ANA, CJ, 1615, vol. 1685, no. 3, fol. 1-36.

Ultimately, the magistrate sided with Denis, providing him access to Francisca's labor and the labor of her children. The magistrate explained that Denis convincingly showed that Francisca's mother, Mariana, had effectively been "annexed" (*aneja*) to Denis' encomienda, through marriage, despite the fact that she had originally pertained to the encomienda that Valderrama inherited. The litigants employed two conflicting legal logics: one demonstrated the tributary's descent from her grandfather while the other demonstrated descent through the mother's line, identifying her mother's most recent marriage. In all the suits over individual female tributaries, this latter logic won out. Thus, rather than following Spanish legal logics of paternal and parental descent, officials in Paraguay molded the legal logic to the indigenous social reality, which was marked by fluidity and movement of women between *tevy*. Spaniards' focus on women and matriarchal descent reveals their recognition that Guaraní women were crucial in elite Guaraní political and economic exchanges.

Another suit from 1596 illustrates the same logic employed by Denis.<sup>169</sup> The defendant won the dispute over a female tributary named Malgarida because he demonstrated that even though she was connected to the plaintiff's encomienda through her grandfather, that connection was no longer valid. Malgarida's grandmother had married a cacique that pertained to the defendant's encomienda. Again, descent followed the matriarchal line. Explaining encomenderos' incessant preoccupation over control over female tributaries must take into account the women's physical *and* reproductive labor: child-rearing women added to an encomenderos' tribute population.

The ethnographic details of these suits are also revealing. Officials used indigenous names (Suhetanbi, Mocarape, Ropema Ynanbi, Quaraçiaca) as well as Christian names,

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<sup>169</sup> ANA, SC, 1596, vol. 13, fol. 26-56

indicating the transitive cultural moment the Guaraní were in. For most Guaraní under the Spanish *encomienda*, Christians names won out by the end of the seventeenth century. Spanish translators and notaries used the term "*casa*" when describing what were large kinship groups or entire *tevy*. The Guaraní probably would have referred to one communal longhouse headed by a patriarch as *teyi-oga*.<sup>170</sup> Each pair and their children had a designated area in the longhouse divided by the poles that sustained the roof and on which their hammocks were strung. Each of these units possessed their own hearth and cooking space. The Jesuits determined population sizes of Guaraní villages by the number of fires that burned in each village, or the number of domestic units. The details that emerge in these kinds of suits reveal that similar patterns of Guaraní life under the *encomienda* existed well into the seventeenth century.

### **Reforming the Encomienda**

During the period when these suits over individual tributaries occurred local and regional officials attempted to reform the *encomienda* system. Several governors commented on the proliferation of litigation between *encomenderos* and suggested that it was symptomatic of *encomendero* meddling and inappropriate cultural mixing. These efforts included the reforms of governors Juan Ramírez de Velasco (1597), Hernandarias de Saavedra (1603) and the general inspection by Charcas Audiencia judge don Francisco Alfaro (1611-1618). The documentation produced during these efforts reveal that while women continued to be considered tributary laborers, new kinds of labor had changed the roles that Guaraní men and women performed. It is important to not that the Franciscan-Spanish *pueblo* movement (1580s-1620s) was part of the solution creole and Spanish

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<sup>170</sup> Catafasto de Souza, "O sistema econômico," 224.

officials envisioned would create a viable colonial presence.<sup>171</sup> The Jesuit order had also become active since the 1580s, but their activities were pushed to the Chaco region and the eastern region of Guayrá (discussed in Chapter 5).

The *ordenanzas* of Governors Velasco and Hernandarias, in contrast to Irala's earlier *ordenanzas* (1556), emphasized Catholic indoctrination. They lamented the lack of organized Catholic worship and demanded at least yearly sacraments, daily prayers, and typical religious materials (churches, chalices, cloths, crosses) in every pueblo. Focus on indigenous evangelization reflects the difficulty of evangelization, especially the plurality of indigenous languages, and the dearth of priests qualified to catechize. Hernandarias issued his *ordenanzas* in conjunction with the first synod of Paraguay and the Río de la Plata (1603). The Franciscan priest Martín Ignacio de Loyola, a relative of Ignacio de Loyola (the founder of the Jesuit Order) oversaw the synod. The synod requires careful interpretation because it is a near exact copy of the synod of Tucumán (1597); therefore, like many formulaic ecclesiastical documents, it does not reflect social reality. One article of the synod, however, recognized that in Paraguay many indigenous “*naciones*” and languages existed and that creating a catechism for each one would be impossible. The synod concluded that the Guaraní language would be the only indigenous language used by the religious to catechize. This contributed to the guaranization of other indigenous

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<sup>171</sup> Perhaps the greatest proponent of the reduction movement was Governor Hernando Arias de Saavedra. He continually pressed the crown for more priests to help in the process of incorporating more indigenous groups into the encomienda system. Walter Rela Hernandarias, ed., *Hernandarias, criollo asunceño: estudio preliminar, cronología anotada y ordenamiento de cartas y memoriales al rey Felipe III y al Consejo de Indias, 1600-1625*, (Montevideo: Embajada de la República del Paraguay, 2001).

peoples integrated in the pueblo, encomienda and reduction systems and the ethnogenesis of a common Guaraní culture.<sup>172</sup>

With regards to indigenous labor, the *ordenanzas* confirmed that there were no clear boundaries between *yanacona* and *mitaya* populations. All natives were considered tributaries and while some lived in the pueblos others lived on Spanish estates. Governor Velasco's ordinance number eight explained: "the encomenderos make use of the service of the *mitas*, giving them sufficient work for the allotted time and then once the second *mita* arrives they dispatch the Indians that they have in their house. In this way the Indians will not be overcome with the work."<sup>173</sup> Velasco and Hernandarias' *ordenanzas* attempted to regulate the length of these turns: if a pueblo lived twenty leagues from the city, the service term was two months; forty leagues, four months; beyond forty leagues, six months. We can glean from these *ordenanzas* that Spaniards had native tributaries on their estates at all times.

The most radical aspect of Velasco and Hernandarias's *ordenanzas* was that they sought to abolish *female yanaconas*, which provided too many opportunities for inter-racial sexual relationships. Not surprisingly, this regulation was universally ignored. Female *yanacona* remained just as prominent as male *yanacona* throughout the period of study, even as agriculturalists. But over time, the colonial system altered Guaraní gender norms and male tributaries became just as important as women in agricultural labor.

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<sup>172</sup> On priests' use of the Guaraní language, see *El primer Sínodo del Paraguay y Río de la Plata en Asunción en el año de 1603*, ed. Bartomeu Meliá (Asunción: Centro de Estudios Paraguayos "Antonio Guasch": Missionsprokur Nürnberg, 2003).

<sup>173</sup> "y los encomenderos se serviran de las mitas dandoles trabajo suficiente y abiendo benido segunda mita despachen luego la que en su casa tubieren para que de esta manera biendo que son sobrellebados del trabajo y despachados con fidelidad serviran de mejor gana a sus amos y goçando de la libertad del matrimonio se aumenten los pueblos." *Ordenanzas*, Governor Velasco, ord. 8, in García Santillán, *Legislación Sobre Indios*, 360.

Women's tasks shifted to include domestic work and cotton spinning, work the *ordenanzas* sought to institutionalize.

From the governors' perspectives, spinning was an ideal form of labor for Guaraní women because they could remain stationary in the pueblos, where much of the spinning took place, and, therefore, would not have to reside on Spanish *chacras*. It appears that many encomenderos' wives oversaw the work of the *hilanderas*, as the Guaraní spinners were called, and generally managed the manufacturing of cloth. Velasco explained that the "encomenderos' women go to their encomienda pueblo, causing great damage to the *naturales* and especially to the Indian women, making them spin cotton every day. And when they return to their homes they attempt to take with them *chinas* (native girls) who can serve them."<sup>174</sup> To remedy the situation, Velasco ordered that these women first obtain a license from the governor to visit the pueblos—a regulation that was universally ignored—and that Guaraní women only labor four days per week.

But spinning also occurred amongst the *yanacona*, in Asunción, albeit on a much smaller scale than the work performed in the pueblos.<sup>175</sup> The *ordenanzas* state that spinning occurred only in a few pueblos. Some indigenous women explained to officials that they earned a living by spinning, suggesting that they might have bartered privately in cloth or rented out their labor.<sup>176</sup> There were no large *obrajes* or workshops where spinning took place; instead, it occurred on a small, decentralized scale in the pueblos or

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<sup>174</sup> "y por que de ir las mugeres de los encomenderos a los pueblos de su encomienda redundo en mucho daño a los naturales y en particular a las indias haciendolas hilar y trabajar todos los dias y cuando se vuelven a sus casas procuran llevar chinas para su servicio." Ibid., 363.

<sup>175</sup> Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*, 279.

<sup>176</sup> In a suit from the late seventeenth century, one Guaraní woman, after being asked her office, explained that she "vive de su hilado y labor de su chacra." ANA, CJ, 1693, vol. 1682, no. 3. Barbara Ganson briefly documents spinners in her work on the Jesuit reductions. See Ganson, *The Guaraní Under Spanish Rule*, 73. See also Sarreal, *The Guaraní and Their Missions*, 69. I have not yet identified any labor contracts for *hilanderas* or male tributaries, for that matter.

on encomendero estates. That such a decentralized system developed underscores the importance of the encomienda community and the limits of expanding industry beyond individual encomiendas. In other words, the boundaries of economic production were determined by the productive capabilities of individual encomiendas. There was simply not enough capital and labor capacity to create industries on a larger scale.

Besides attempting to cut women out of personal service, Governor Velasco sought to change the language encomenderos used to describe the system. He demanded that encomenderos stop using the phrase "my Indians," reminding them that, in fact, the Indians were vassals of the royal crown.<sup>177</sup> Velasco and other governors were concerned with the close contact encomenderos had with their tributaries, a relationship that was created and sustained through concubinage and affinity. These *ordenanzas* were an attempt to eradicate the indigenous patterns of alliance and kinship that defined the encomienda community. Generally, most of the provisions Velasco and Hernandarias issued were ignored. This is evidenced by the fact that the same issues were discussed in the next round of reforms that took place in the form of a royal inspection (*visita*), conducted by don Francisco de Alfaro, a judge from the Audiencia of Charcas, between 1610 and 1618.

During his tenure as *visitador* and ultimate authority in Paraguay, Alfaro issued a number of reforms designed to completely eradicate personal service and replace it with a wage and more formalized *mita* system. Alfaro's reforms have been portrayed in the historiography similar to the ways some scholars have depicted Francisco Toledo's reforms in the Viceroyalty of Perú in the 1570s: that they were effective in channeling more tribute to the crown and profoundly restructured native cultural life-ways through

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<sup>177</sup> *Ordenanzas*, Governor Velasco, ord. 40 in García Santillán, *Legislación sobre indios*, 371.

increased demands and more formalized reductions.<sup>178</sup> In a way, Alfaro's reforms were Paraguay's "New Laws," insofar as they represented the first serious attempt by the crown to reform the *encomienda* in the region. Unlike the New Laws of 1542, however, Alfaro's reforms were never implemented. Paraguay's *encomenderos*, creole priests, and Guaraní leadership vehemently opposed Alfaro's proposals, especially the proposed head tax and the prohibition of personal service.

The reforms addressed Spanish misconduct related to the close contact *encomenderos* had with the Guaraní, personal service, and the *yanaconas*. When Alfaro came to Paraguay he observed Guaraní families living with Spaniards on their estates. This population included *mitayas* from the pueblos as well as *yanacona*. According to Alfaro, this arrangement would result in the disintegration of Guaraní communities. The ideal was to construct and maintain two separate spheres: the Republic of the Spaniards and the Republic of the Indians. His remedy included abolishing personal service and creating an Indian pueblo close to Asunción in which all *yanacona* could settle permanently. The first *ordenanza* stated "that no person create *encomiendas* of personal service in which the Indians serve their *encomenderos* personally, giving for tribute personal service, and those already made are void of effect."<sup>179</sup> In its place, Alfaro established a head tax on male Indians ages 18 to 50, which tributaries could pay directly

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<sup>178</sup> See, especially, Steve Stern and Karen Spaldings' works. Both authors apply a materialist framework to colonization in the Andes. But whereas Spalding sees Toledo as a major turning point in native cultural dissolution through the material restructuring of society, Stern suggests that ideological restructuring after the Taqui Onkoy rebellion shaped the material. Karen Spalding, *Huarochiri: An Andean Society Under Inca and Spanish Rule* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988); Steve J. Stern, *Peru's Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), ch. 4. Jeremy Mumford's recent monograph examines the "colonial ethnographies" and colonial logic that informed Toledo's reforms. He shows that what actually occurred "on the ground" was ambiguous. Jeremy Ravi Mumford, *Vertical Empire: The General Resettlement of Indians in the Colonial Andes* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012). While not explicitly materialist, some of the works on Paraguay that portray Alfaro's reforms as a critical juncture and effective are Susnik, *El indio colonial*, 35-39; Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay*, 174-176.

<sup>179</sup> *Ordenanzas*, Francisco de Alfaro, ord. 1 in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*.



to the encomendero. Since no currency circulated in Paraguay, tributaries could pay in cloth and/or other agricultural goods (*la moneda de la tierra*). If a tributary still wanted to pay his encomendero in personal service then the encomendero would be required to effectively rent a tributary's labor based on a fixed daily wage. Regarding the *mita* and pueblos, Alfaro moved the service time from four months (based on Irala's *ordenanzas*) to sixty days and restricted the kinds of work they could perform. It was implied that tributaries would go on the *mita* only once per year for sixty days during the harvest period, eliminating the circular flow of tributaries in and out of Spanish estates. He prohibited Spanish contact with native pueblos and emphasized the need to "settle" natives in urban villages with ecclesiastical indoctrination.<sup>180</sup>

In a letter to the Crown dated 1611, Alfaro explained that one of his greatest concerns was that all natives fell under the encomienda, including women and children. He claimed that there were no "reserved" or "retired" statuses bestowed on natives. He was equally concerned by encomenderos' meddling in natives' lives: "even marriages between tributaries were not free; everything depended on the will of the encomendero or a poblero."<sup>181</sup> Given the evidence from the litigation reviewed above, this was a fair observation. Above all, Alfaro pointed to personal service as the primary evil in Paraguay.<sup>182</sup>

Paraguay's encomenderos, creole priests, and even Guaraní leadership vehemently opposed Alfaro's proposals, especially the proposed head tax and the prohibition of personal service. Generally, all corporate groups in Paraguay cast their arguments in similar ways. Representing the priests of the Mercedarian monastery in March 1612,

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<sup>180</sup> Francisco de Alfaro to the crown in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*, document XX.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 453

<sup>182</sup> See Alfaro's letter to the Crown, 15 February 1613 in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*, 483.

Father Jerónimo Luján de Medina argued that this radical change in labor relations would tear apart the bonds that created Paraguay's encomienda community. Father Lujan's strongest piece of evidence came from the mouths of the Guaraní themselves.

Apparently it had circulated in Asunción, that when Alfaro announced his reforms the tributary communities opposed them. Alfaro himself recorded,

“the majority of the Indians, especially those in Asunción, say that they do not want to pay the tax. Most say this because they do not know what the tax is. Others say they oppose it because they can serve their encomenderos when and how they want and in return the Spaniards give them some kind of recompense not by way of the tax nor service, but as kin (*parientes*).”<sup>183</sup>

Alfaro concluded, “they would rather serve their encomenderos as they always have.”<sup>184</sup>

Father Luján de Medina explained that, contrary to Alfaro's negative appraisal, the Indians had not been de-naturalized from their original communities. Referring to the *yanacóna* population, Luján de Media explained, “the majority of those that currently serve were born in the same houses, plantations, and farms as their encomenderos, growing up in the company of the Spaniards' sons since infants. An almost natural love (*amor casi natural*) between the one and the other, has been conserved to this day.”<sup>185</sup>

Luján de Medina's use of the term “natural love” referenced the concubinage-kinship bonds that initially jumpstarted the encomienda community and recognized the continuation of kinship. He suggested that encomenderos and their encomendados were

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<sup>183</sup> “porque los más indios, en las visitas q he hecho, especial en esta ciudad de la Asunción dicen q no quieren pagar tasa; unos, o los mas, porque no saben lo q es, aunque se les ha procurado dar a entender; otros, porque dicen que ellos sirven cuando quieren y como quieren y les dan alguna gratificación los españoles, no a título de tasa ni servicio sino como a parientes.” Francisco de Alfaro, *Ordenanzas*, in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*, 221.

<sup>184</sup> “los yndios en aquella governacion no quieren pagar tasa sino servir a sus encomenderos como de antes.” Francisco de Alfaro, *Ordenanzas*, ord. 57 in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*.

<sup>185</sup> “los dichos yndios no estan desnaturalizados sino que biven y habiten dentro de su mismo natural no solo comarcanamente sino casi dentro de los mismos terminos donde nacieron, que demas de que abitan dentro de sus mismos pueblos alrededor de esta dicha ciudad muchos dellos a la mayor parte de los que al presente son de servicio an nacido en las mismas casas y chacaras y estancias de los dichos encomenderos criandose en compañía de los hixos de los españoles de nacimiento de que se a conservado y conserva hasta aora un amore casi natural entre los unos y los otros.” Father Jerónimo de Medina to His Majesty, 19 March 1612 in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*, 453.

almost family: “they live with their Indians with such love as if they were from the same place (*de un natural*), to such a degree that the Indians call the Spanish their kin (*parientes*).”<sup>186</sup>

In a separate letter to the Crown, Asunción's procurador (prosecutor), Bartolomé Fernández Pedro del Toro, speaking for encomendero interests, explained that when the Guaraní worked for the Spaniards they said they did it “by way of friendship and kinship.”<sup>187</sup> Pedro del Toro further explained that the Guaraní’s personal service was not free; encomenderos reciprocated by providing material goods: mules, tools, and whatever else was necessary for their fields and crops. Pedro del Toro underscored the idea that encomenderos reciprocated with tangible goods, not just their ‘civilizing effect.’ Luján de Median also noted that all Spaniards on their deathbeds provided material goods and spiritual donations for their *yanaconas*. A review of fifty testaments from the early 1540s to the end of the seventeenth century suggests that Luján de Medina was somewhat sincere.<sup>188</sup> On their deathbeds, many encomenderos paid a few pesos for masses, prayers, and candle vigils on behalf of their deceased “*indios de servicio*.” While it was far less frequent, some encomenderos bequeathed material goods to their *yanaconas*. In 1593, for example, Damian Muñoz requested that each of the Indians in his service receive a pair of clothes.<sup>189</sup> It is difficult to interpret bequests of these kinds, but whatever feelings encomenderos had for their tributaries, they regarded them in their wills as servants or

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<sup>186</sup> “*biven con ellos con tanto amor como si todos fueran de un natural en tanta manera que los llaman parientes a los españoles*.” Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> “*por via de amistad y parentesco*.” Bartolomé Fernández Pedro del Toro to His Majesty in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*, 512.

<sup>188</sup> A statistical schema of encomenderos’ bequests is impossible since testaments do not state if a Spaniard was an encomendero or not.

<sup>189</sup> “*y mando q a todos los yndios y yndias de mi casa e servicio q les den un vestido de la tierra de lienço el ombre como a ombre y la muger como es costumbre sus tipos aun que tenga otros y otras*.” ANA, SC, 1593, vol. 12, fol. 46-50.

domestics who had become almost fictive kin. Pedro del Toro suggested that if reciprocity was removed and a head tax installed encomenderos "would have no obligation to give the Indians" everything from material goods to Christian examples of righteous living.<sup>190</sup>

Spaniards' close contact with the Guaraní and general poverty in the region created a common material experience. In true European form, Luján de Medina illustrated Paraguay's extreme poverty by explaining that Spaniards could afford to consume wheat bread or wine but only half the year. Those that could not afford such luxuries, he continued, ate the same foods as their Indians and wore similar cloths. Jesuit Nicholas Mastrillo Durán noted in 1628 that Spaniards in Paraguay did not eat bread, only cassava.<sup>191</sup> Rebecca Earle has noted that food raised anxieties in early modern Spaniards' minds about the social and socio-racial status of individuals because they believed that food could transform the human body. When Europeans consumed "Indian" foods, some Spaniards thought, they would become culturally more like the "Indians."<sup>192</sup> Moreover, Spanish men wore ordinary jackets and those that could afford it wore wool. Those less fortunate wore plain cotton clothes without adornment of jewels, gold nor silver. The "daughters of the conquistadors remained in the countryside because they have nothing proper to wear in the city." Many encomenderos even slept in hammocks, just like their

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<sup>190</sup> Father Jerónimo Luján de Medina to crown, 19 March 1612, in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*, 453.

<sup>191</sup> "no comen pan sino de unas rayzes que llaman de palo en en brazil." Cited in *Jesuítas e bandeirantes no Guairá (1549-1640)*, ed. Jaime Cortesão and Pedro de Angelis (Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca Nacional, Divisão de Obras Raras e Publicações, 1951), 213.

<sup>192</sup> Rebecca Earle, "'If You Eat Their Food.': Diets and Bodies in Early Colonial Spanish America," *American Historical Review* 115, no. 3 (2010): 688-713.

tributaries.<sup>193</sup> The common material experience in the encomienda community is reflective of the hybridity of ethnogenesis for both Spaniards and Natives in Paraguay.

Some of the arguments encomenderos made in opposition to Alfaro's reforms resembled arguments made decades before when the New Laws were implemented in Mexico and the Andes: Spaniards had a civilizing effect on Indians, they treated them like their own children, they could not survive without their tribute, etc.<sup>194</sup> Yet the appeals in Asunción were distinct in that they highlighted kinship and emphasized the "ancient customs" that had sustained encomienda relations since the conquest. Pedro de Toro also recognized that the Guaraní were not a tribute-paying people who could produce large surpluses.<sup>195</sup> Moreover, both Pedro de Toro and Luján de Medina both concluded that the tax (five pesos per tributary, per year) was not sufficient, especially considering that encomiendas ranged from six to thirty tributaries. Five pesos per tributary, payed in the "fruits of the earth," minus tithes, was not enough to sustain the system.

While Spaniards expressed a strong sense of cultural superiority and while much of their arguments is marked by hyperbole, by triangulating their statements with notarial records, they do reflect some degree of social reality. Paraguay was, indeed, an extremely poor place where the Guaraní and the bulk of the encomenderos possessed many experiences that overlapped: wearing cloth made by the same *hilanderas*, eating the same cassava, speaking to each other in Guaraní, sleeping in hammocks, etc.<sup>196</sup> Spanish

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<sup>193</sup> "y muchas hijas de conquistadores que abiten en el campo por no tener que bestirse en la ciudad." Father Jerónimo de Medina to His Majesty, 19 March 1612 in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*, 455.

<sup>194</sup> On the New Laws in New Spain, see Simpson, *The Encomienda in New Spain*, Chapter 11.

<sup>195</sup> Bartolomé Fernández Pedro de Toro to His Majesty in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*, 513.

<sup>196</sup> Ignacio Telesca believes that a shared material experience was crucial to Paraguay's social development. "If it is not appropriate to speak of ethnic groups given that they all spoke the same language (Guarani), they shared the same kind of relationship to the land, they shared the same conception of family,

material poverty is confirmed in their testaments. Still there was a numerically small tier of encomenderos who possessed unusually large encomiendas, who engaged in the regional trade (and later in the yerba trade) and, thereby, acquired enough wealth to mark themselves as elite. For much of the year, however, these few encomenderos lived in Santa Fe or Buenos Aires; therefore, their social presence in Paraguay was less pronounced.<sup>197</sup>

The Guaraní's negative reactions to Alfaro's reforms are most instructive. With such a strong encomendero reaction, we might suspect (and some officials did) a display of Spanish ventriloquism.<sup>198</sup> Yet, when we consider that Alfaro himself noted indigenous opposition to the reforms, we can move forward with the evidence that follows with less skepticism.<sup>199</sup> The Archive of the Indies contains a folder documenting Guaraní reactions to Alfaro's reforms, some of them originating from indigenous cabildos. The responses were recorded after Lieutenant Governor Francisco González de Santa Cruz announced the reforms and attempted to receive the Guaraní's approval. He visited many of the

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and shared the same gender relations, we will need to find other categories that can explain Paraguayan social reality." Of course Telesca is referring to the late eighteenth century, when there were even fewer social distinctions. Moreover, it is not clear that notions of land, family, and gender were shared among all social groups. The kinship-concubinage-labor paradigm is one thing, but that does not imply a complete cultural collapse into one hybrid identity. Telesca, *Tras los expulsos*, 156. Evidence from testaments seems to confirm Spaniards' complaints about the poverty of the region. Most possessed small wardrobes and usually no liquid wealth. To declare only few *arrobas* of yerba, a piece of land, a few weapons, and one or two sets of clothing was common in encomenderos' wills.

<sup>197</sup> For example, most of the governors of Paraguay (all American creoles after the 1590s) lived *rio abajo*, leaving their lieutenant governors to rule in Asunción. For a social portrait of Paraguay's encomendero class see Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay*. One of the most powerful encomenderos of the mid-seventeenth century was Don Gabriel de Vera y Aragón. He possessed five encomiendas, or some five-hundred tributaries. Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*, 298.

<sup>198</sup> Consider, for example, the following account from Lieutenant Governor Pedro Sánchez Valderrama who noted in May 1612 that when Alfaro's *ordenanzas* were announced in the Pueblo de Pitu, eighty indians interpreted the news as a renunciation of Spanish labor demands on them. So they fled back to the forests where they were "free to celebrate their ancient rites" and idolatries. With no other records to support this, we can safely assume that Valderrama was inventing the episode. Cited in Gandía, *Francisco de Alfaro*, 520.

<sup>199</sup> Mora Merida, who also reviews these documents, seems to accept them as truthful responses to Alfaro's reforms. But Mora Mérida only mentions these sources in passing, almost as if he was not sure how to interpret them. Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay*, 173-180.

surrounding pueblos and even held a meeting in the San Blás parish church (the Indian and Black parish) with the *yanacóna* population in Asunción on 12 August 1613. Cruz explained to the crowd of *yanacóna* (“*gran concurso y junta de ellos*”) that by Alfaro's decree they were to resettle in a pueblo that had been designated just outside the city, where they could learn administrative offices and work for a wage. The *yanacóna* did not accept the reforms. Cruz explained that there were many “*ladino*” Indians among them who rejected the reforms, explaining that they “wanted to serve their encomenderos as they always have done.”<sup>200</sup> Still plans proceeded for the pueblo and a cross was placed on the proposed site. On 22 August, Juan Escalante, the Indian Protector (*protector de los naturales*) met with the *yanacóna* in San Blás and urged them to accept the reforms. The *yanacóna* responded that they did not want to keep the new tax and claimed that “their encomenderos love them and they treat them like their own children.”<sup>201</sup>

Over the course of the next year, the same process was repeated in Itá, Altos, Yaguaron, and Tobatí, the pueblos in closest proximity to Asunción. In every pueblo, the logic employed to reject Alfaro's reforms was the same: a head tax would undermine kinship ties. In each pueblo, a “*cabildo abierto*” was called and all the indigenous leaders of the pueblo were asked to confirm the *ordenanzas*. For example, in Itá the *alcaldes* and *regidores* of the pueblo presented a statement that emphasized their concern about instituting a system like the one that existed in Peru. They added that one of the cabildo members had been to Peru and observed the labor system first hand.<sup>202</sup> They opposed the Peruvian system because of the negative social consequences of the head tax and wage:

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<sup>200</sup> AGI, 1613, Charcas, 33.

<sup>201</sup> “*que los dhos sus encomenderos los aman mucho y les tiene en lugar de hijos.*” Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> If a Guaraní had been to Perú, he most likely would have been a porter as part of a mule train taking goods to Potosí from Tucumán.

"we have seen in these parts that *naturales* who contract themselves out and provide service for pay do not endure the difficult work and servitude they find themselves in."<sup>203</sup>

The tax and wage would exhaust tributaries and force them to become servants of an impersonal tax. Ita's cabildo officials requested that tribute demands remain connected to an encomendero, with whom they shared a politico-filial bond.

If don Francisco de Alfaro's central goal was to eliminate personal service, then he failed; personal service continued throughout the colonial period. Indeed, several years later, Governor Hernandarias, noted that Alfaro's reforms had been completely neglected.<sup>204</sup> During the proclamation of the reforms in the pueblos, the lieutenant governor conceded to the Guaraní's wishes that customary labor relations remain. As with most legislation in the Americas, there were multiple standards for implementing new policies. Locals in Paraguay chose to ignore the standards regarding personal service.<sup>205</sup> Other regulations, regarding the *mita*, for example—that it be no longer than sixty days—seems to have been upheld as a standard in Paraguay throughout the colonial period.

## Conclusions

The concubinage-kinship-labor paradigm that marked Spanish-Guaraní relations in the early period was surprisingly durable. In the 1620s, Guaraní women were still crucial to the encomienda as agriculturalists and as the embodiment of the political alliance between the Spanish and the Guaraní. Yet despite this continuity, aspects of Guaraní society were under transformation: male and female labor roles were transformed as men

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<sup>203</sup> "*despues q las ordenanzas se hizieron a esta parte que los naturales que han querido guardar conciertos y servir por paga no permanecen por el demasiado trabajo y esclavitud en que se veen sin libertad q con sus encomenderos hazen y dizen q por no verse con esta subjeccion que les caussara gran novedad.*" AGI, 1613, Charcas, 33, fol. 6.

<sup>204</sup> Hernandarias, 33.

<sup>205</sup> The government and visita of Alfaro is a classic example of the functioning of decentralized authority in Spanish America. See Phelan, "Los Aborígenes Del Paraguay."



moved to the fields and women to the loom, Guaraní communities became sedentary and increasingly more Christian, and new kinds of economic exchanges emerged.

At the same time, European practices became deeply marked by the indigenous, most notable in the ubiquitous use of some version of the Guaraní language. By reading between the lines, the litigation makes clear that insults, rebuffs, commands, and, generally, all inter-ethnic communication occurred in Guaraní. Thus, most creole Spaniards grew up speaking both Guaraní and Spanish. Mestizo children raised by their Guaraní mothers were more comfortable in Guaraní than they were in Spanish. Terms like “brother-in-law,” “sister” and “cousin” became embedded in a matrix of meaning that was informed by both Spanish and Guaraní conceptualizations of kinship. Spaniards adopted local foods, slept in indigenous-style hammocks and wore simple clothing made of plain cotton spun by Guaraní women.

Yet, Spanish and indigenous corporate identities developed and sought to create their own spaces of power and authority. A corporate identity developed among the *yanacóna* in Asunción through their participation in the brotherhood (*cofradía*)—an institution we know nothing about but is frequently mentioned in the documentation. In the pueblos, Indian cabildos provided opportunities for social climbing and spaces for the exercise of authority.

Juan Carlos Garavaglia argues that indigenous culture was always moving towards the Spanish sphere because being “Indian” was onerous and burdensome.<sup>206</sup> But as this chapter demonstrates, the Guaraní expected Spanish reciprocation. In the 1694 *visita* of the *yanacóna* tributaries in Asunción, the governor found Juan Pascual serving as an “Indian” in the encomienda of Field Master Juan de Encinas. The governor noted that

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<sup>206</sup> Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*, 185.

Pascual had been declared mestizo in former *padrones*, but he had remained on Encinas' estate with his indigenous wife and child as tributary. The governor explained that because of the "love that he had for his encomendero and because he treated and paid him well" Pascual did not abandon his encomienda.<sup>207</sup> For some individuals, remaining under the encomienda possessed social, economic, and cultural attractions. What made the Indian sphere less onerous in Paraguay was the fact that the Spanish sphere adopted many of its traits.

This chapter has detailed the factors that sustained Paraguay's encomienda community. It is possible now to provide a social geography of Asunción and plunge deeper into the networks that linked the city with the pueblos. As we seek to understand ethnogenesis within the encomienda system, it becomes clear that analyzing Guaraní cultural transformation in isolation is limiting. As Chapter 4 will illustrate, an analysis of emerging ethnic identities must include the Guaraní, Spaniards, and Blacks.

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<sup>207</sup> ANA, NE, 1694, vol. 185, no. 3, fol. 105.

## Chapter 4

### "Uncommon Urbanism: A Social Geography of Colonial Asunción"

The grandeur or humility of Spanish colonial cities often reflected their status in the imperial system, economic importance, and social structure. The grand cathedrals, monasteries, government buildings, and boulevards of cities like Lima, Cuzco, and Mexico City communicated political and economic power.<sup>208</sup> Each building or feature of a city can tell historians much about the human figures or corporate groups responsible for their construction. Cities also reveal stories about the people who toiled to build them and the cultural melding associated with colonial societies. For example, the Cathedral of Santo Domingo in Cuzco was built by Andeans atop foundation stones from the Inca temple Kiskarwancha, making the indigenous contributions to this impressive edifice less conspicuous.<sup>209</sup> For Carolyn Dean and Dana Leibsohn, Santo Domingo is an example of the "deception of visibility" or the tendency of modern scholars to search for obvious examples of pre-Columbian indigenous cultural expressions while missing the rich hybrid expressions found in cultural productions. Indeed, after the colonial encounter, indigenous groups expressed their cultural values through a matrix of relationships with colonials.

These principles should be especially relevant for fringe cities of the Spanish Empire. Beyond all the signs of their marginality, what do cities on the periphery tell us about their societies? Because there are so few ostensible markers of indigenous influence,

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<sup>208</sup> On the power of architecture, see Valerie Fraser, *The Architecture of Conquest: Building in the Viceroyalty of Peru, 1535-1635*, vol. Cambridge Iberian and Latin American studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). On Spanish-colonial cities, see René Martínez Lemoine, *El modelo clásico de ciudad colonial hispanoamericana: ensayo sobre los orígenes del urbanismo en América* (Santiago: Universidad de Chile, 1977); Jay Kinsbruner, *The Colonial Spanish-American City: Urban Life in the Age of Atlantic Capitalism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005).

<sup>209</sup> Dean and Leibsohn, "Hybridity and Its Discontents."

Asunción provides an ideal example of the deception of visibility at work. Unlike the Jesuit mission complexes, with large stone masonry and woodwork carved by Guaraní hands, there is nothing similar in Asunción. To find the Guaraní's mark, we must dig deeper. This chapter examines Asunción's social relations by beginning with a discussion of the city's physical layout. The lack of stone buildings and contiguous urban structure serve as a powerful metaphor for Asunción's interethnic relations. But more than a metaphor these characteristics literally reflected Paraguay's encomienda community and the profound influence the concubinage-kinship-labor pattern had on Asunción's urban structure.

The earliest extant pictorial representation of Asunción is found in Guaman Poma de Ayala's 1615 *Nueva Crónica*, which depicts "the city of Paraguay" as an island (see Appendix A).<sup>210</sup> Guaman Poma added, "it is a land in the middle of the sea towards the north."<sup>211</sup> By referring vaguely to the "city of Paraguay" and placing it in the middle of the sea, Guaman Poma reveals his ignorance about Paraguay. It is possible that Guaman Poma was referring to Tucumán, but either way this image of Paraguay can provide a literary tool to describe the region's isolation. As described in Chapter 2, very few Europeans immigrated to Asunción, isolating the city and region from many of the radical changes that would occur in other colonial cities during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> "la ciudad de Paraguai [sic]." Guaman Poma de Ayala, *Primer crónica y buen gobierno*, available at <http://www.kb.dk/permalink/2006/poma/info/en/frontpage.htm>.

<sup>211</sup> *Y es tierra en medio de la mar hacia e[l] norte.*

<sup>212</sup> On the importance of Iberian immigration to central cities, see Lockhart and Schwartz, *Early Latin America*, 91-92. See also the collection of essays in David J. Robinson, ed., *Migration in Colonial Spanish America*, Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

If Guaman Poma wanted to suggest that Asunción was a watery place, he would not have been amiss. Appendix C is an anonymous French copy of a 1786 drawing of Asunción by a Spanish bureaucrat and naturalist named Félix de Azara. Azara was sent to the Río de la Plata in 1777 as part of a delegation to negotiate the territorial terms of the Treaty of San Ildefonso between Portugal and Spain. His *plano* of Asunción is the earliest realistic aerial-perspective map of the city. It shows that Asunción, like many other Spanish American cities, was never constructed according to the regulations the crown had established in its 1573 "Ordinances for the Discovery, New Settlement and Pacification of the Indies."<sup>213</sup> That is, Asunción was not established with a grid-like or chessboard pattern with a central plaza exhibiting the city's most prominent institutions and social actors. But while most other colonial cities attempted to create a grid patterns of some sort, Asunción has an almost haphazard appearance. Moreover, Asunción, at least in the late eighteenth century, appeared to be a very watery place, cut through by deep ravines or rivulets that could only be crossed on bridges. Contemporaneous written records from the eighteenth century confirm Azara's map of the city and reveal a topographical texture. One traveler to Asunción noted that buildings and complexes of houses were separated by ravines; some of these required that a person ascend a ladder or steep bridge to reach them, while others were accessed by descending a ramp.<sup>214</sup> Thus, what was striking about the layout of Asunción was the lack of contiguous urban structures connected by streets and thoroughfares.

Even though Azara's *plano* of Asunción was drawn in the late eighteenth century, circumstantial evidence from other records establishes that a similar layout existed during

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<sup>213</sup> Kinsbruner, *The Colonial Spanish-American City*, 24.

<sup>214</sup> Alberto Duarte de Vargas, *Cartografía colonial asuncena* (Asunción: Academia Paraguaya de la Historia: Municipalidad de Asunción, 2001), 24.

the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even though churches and monasteries relocated several times in reaction to flooding and fires, Asunción had always lacked a contiguous layout.<sup>215</sup> Cabildo records constantly refer to rebuilding and repairing the city's numerous bridges.<sup>216</sup> Moreover, buildings and unpaved streets were separated by masses of bushes, trees, and foliage. One governor in 1694 asked that all residents in the city remove the foliage in-between the buildings and houses because they provided hiding places for enemy Indians and sinful behavior.<sup>217</sup>

The most striking evidence for Asunción's unusual urbanism is the fact that the city possessed no public stores or shops regulated by the cabildo. It was only in 1779, with the establishment of the royal tobacco monopoly and the introduction of silver coinage, that the circumstances existed for a central marketplace to exist.<sup>218</sup> A review of litigation and notarial records for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reveals no sales or exchanges at a centralized market. Instead, basic goods were exchanged through barter between individuals on their chacras. When sale contracts were made for high priced commodities like yerba, mules, and slaves, notaries were called upon to formalize agreements. People in Asunción did not exchange goods at a central location in the city until the late eighteenth century.

It seems that most chacras remained relatively independent, producing most of their own basic provisions. Returning to Azara's *plano*, Asunción was a patchwork of

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<sup>215</sup> Duran Estrago describes the frequent relocation of the Franciscan cathedral and monastery in Durán Estragó, *Presencia franciscana*.

<sup>216</sup> ANA, AC, 14 March 1655, vol. 9, fol. 321; ANA, SC, 1597, vol. 13, fol. 116-126; ANA, AC, 1675, vol. 11, fol. 539.

<sup>217</sup> ANA, SH, 1694, vol. 38, no. 11.

<sup>218</sup> Garavaglia reviewed governor's *residencias* and found that there was no mention of any market regulation until the late eighteenth century. Juan Carlos Garavaglia, "Soldados y campesinos: dos siglos en la historia rural del Paraguay," *Suplemento Antropológico* 21, no. 1 (1986): 66. On the royal tobacco monopoly, see Thomas Whigham, *The Politics of River Trade: Tradition and Development in the Upper Plata, 1780-1870*, 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991).

chacras or farmsteads, broken up by a smattering of institutional buildings and churches. This layout combined urban and rural lifestyles into one. Litigation records rarely refer to streets, but rather to individuals' chacras or the *camino real*, the main road leading out of the city. Juan Carlos Garavaglia has referred to Asunción as “a large plantation peppered with houses.”<sup>219</sup> In short, from its humble beginnings, Asunción challenged what was urban in Spanish America.<sup>220</sup>

This unusual layout begs the question: should Asunción be defined as a city or a village? According to Jay Kinsbruner, all cities possess the following characteristics: people in residence all or most of the year, few residents produce all or even most of their own food, and differentiated labor patterns and social classes. Further, cities have a range of crafts, specialized economies, schools, religious institutions, professionals of various types, and bureaucrats.<sup>221</sup> Asunción possessed all of these characteristics.

This chapter argues that more than any other factor—including topography and economic marginality—Asunción's unusual urban-rural layout was a result of Spanish-Guaraní relations and stunted economic development. Spanish encomenderos in Asunción combined urban living with rurality by remaining as close as they could to the city center while maintaining a plantation-style household, with pastures, farms, and of course indigenous tributaries. For individuals in early modern Paraguay, living *in Asunción* might have signified living next door to the cabildo or on a small farm one hours' walk from the city center. This arrangement was dictated by the reality of indigenous service in Paraguay. The Guaraní, who provided nothing more than their

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<sup>219</sup> Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*, 213.

<sup>220</sup> On the importance of urban plots around the central city square or *solares*, see Karen B. Graubart, “The Creolization of the New World: Local Forms of Identification in Urban Colonial Peru, 1560-1640,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 89, no. 3 (2009): 478.

<sup>221</sup> Kinsbruner, *The Colonial Spanish-American City*, 2.

personal service, were channeled from the pueblos to individual *chacras* in or near Asunción where they worked the ground or engaged in small-scale productive tasks, like the *hilanderas* reviewed previously. Because Spanish encomenderos maintained constant populations of *yanacóna* on their estates with very minimal economic output, Spaniards were not able to sustain traditional city living and thus remained on their *chacras*.

This chapter also provides insight into the social lives and relationships that existed in Asunción's urban-rural space. By reading between the lines of litigation records, colloquial interactions and social networks of Asunción come into relief. While some historians might regard the corpus of litigation from Asunción as evidence of Spaniards' complete dominance over their *yanacónas*—given the prominence of violence in the suits—this chapter notes the equally important evidence demonstrating indigenous access to and protection under the Spanish legal system. This chapter also considers Asunción's relationship to the hinterland or the pueblos that sent tributaries to Asunción on a rotational basis. An analysis of data from censuses reveals the pull factors that created a flow from the pueblos to Asunción, other neighboring pueblos, and other cities in the Río de la Plata.

Finally, this focused analysis of Asunción reveals the importance of Africans and Blacks in colonial Paraguay. Paraguayan national mythologies emphasize the relationships between Spaniards and the Guaraní, but litigation and notarial records indicate that Afro-Indigenous relations were common in Asunción and were one of the social networks that facilitated the migration of Guaraní from the pueblos to Asunción and of Blacks from Asunción to the pueblos.

### **Asunción's Institutional Apparatus**



Like other Spanish colonial cities, Asunción was home to the region's major religious and civic institutions, including the cabildo, the Jesuit college, and several monasteries and churches. Social and corporate groups conducted affairs of all kinds in the city, including judicial proceedings, trade, and provincial administrative business.

Asunción's most important institution was the cabildo, established in 1537. Unlike the governor and other top officials, cabildo members were rooted in Asunción and remained in the city most of the year—governors and other top officials resided outside the provincial capital, usually Santa Fe or Buenos Aires during the majority of the year.<sup>222</sup> The cabildo was an active institution in the defensive operations of the city and the province. In 1676, the cabildo removed the governor for neglect and appointed its own general to confront an *bandeirante* invasion from São Paulo (see Chapter 5). The cabildo owned a variety of resources, including cattle herds and stockpiles of yerba. It also maintained an island for war horses in the Paraguay River.<sup>223</sup> During the sixteenth century, the cabildo possessed an encomienda headed by a cacique, but by the seventeenth century this encomienda had given way to the *mandamiento*.<sup>224</sup>

The *mandamiento* was the right of the governor and the cabildo to rent indigenous labor from the pueblo populations. This was done to supply trader agents with laborers to harvest yerba in Mbaracayú, repair the city's infrastructure, or repair or build *presidios*. For example, in 1655 the cabildo requested fifteen to twenty natives from the surrounding pueblos to come and repair the bridges and adorn the city in preparation for an upcoming

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<sup>222</sup> Mora Mérida notes that Paraguay's internal market was underdeveloped because most of the Spaniards with the greatest purchasing power lived in the cities down river. Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay*, 122.

<sup>223</sup> On the cabildo's horse island ANA, AC, 21 February 1656, vol. 9, fol. 386.

<sup>224</sup> ANA, SC, 1597, vol. 13, fol. 116 to 126.

festival. Payment was mentioned in the cabildo's records, but never officially recorded.<sup>225</sup> Usually payment was in the form of cloth, yerba, or food commodities.<sup>226</sup>

The cabildo also supported the *casa de recogidas*, which served as the city's house for female orphans and widows. The *casa de recogidas* was founded in 1603 with the support of the house's matron, the mother Francisca Jesusa Pérez de Bocanegra and governor Hernandarias. Founding charters or correspondence for the *casa de recogidas* have not yet been located and the only explanations for its founding come from a report and petition conducted by the cabildo to request support from the crown. Contemporaries explained that the *casa de recogidas* was founded in order to house the orphaned daughters and widows of the poor conquistadors and *caballeros* (gentlemen or noblemen) and instruct them in the true Catholic faith.<sup>227</sup> The Santa Clara convent in Cuzco also claimed the same mission, but unlike Santa Clara, which possessed a great deal of wealth, Bocanegra's *casa de recogidas* was an utterly poor institution.<sup>228</sup> For some years the *casa* was under the auspices of the Dominican order. Then in 1627, the cabildo claimed that the Dominicans were not being good stewards of the *casa*, and so the cabildo became the *casa's* primary patron.<sup>229</sup>

Very little is known about the religious cults and institutions of the city. The Franciscans, Dominicans, and Mercedarians all had their own houses and chapels. The Franciscans, of course, oversaw several pueblos during the sixteenth century. Gradually, however, the Franciscans gave up their control of most the pueblos to secular priests. By

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<sup>225</sup> ANA, AC, 16 Feb 1655, vol. 9, fol. 317. On the governor requesting natives to repair *presidios*, see ANA, SH, 1677, vol. 36, no. 2. On yerba *mandamientos*, see Garavaglia, *Mercado interno*, 309-310.

<sup>226</sup> ANA, AC, 14 March 1655, vol. 9, fol. 321.

<sup>227</sup> ANA, SH, 1612, vol. 14, no. 3 fol. 30 r.; AGI, Charcas, 1607, vol. 27, r. 8, no. 40.

<sup>228</sup> Burns, "Gender and the Politics of Mestizaje".

<sup>229</sup> ANA, AC, 1627, vol. 4, fol. 181, 191.

1707, the Franciscans administered Caazapá (in the Paraná region), Itá, and Yutí while the seculars administered Ipané, Guarambaré, Yaguarón, Altos, Atirá, and Tobatí.<sup>230</sup> Next to the Jesuits, the Franciscans were the most important order in Asunción.

The Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy, or the Mercedarians, also maintained an important presence in Asunción. This order followed an unusual mission in Europe and Spanish America.<sup>231</sup> Founded in the early thirteenth century in the Kingdom of Aragón, the Mercedarians redeemed Christian captives from Muslim lands. In the Americas, the order pursued evangelization among indigenous groups. At least in Asunción, the Mercedarians' activities were centered on ransoming Black slaves from bondage and housing them on their ranch at Areguá, just to the east of Asunción. In the late sixteenth century, the Mercedarians received a donation of a family of Black slaves from an *vecina* named Isabel López. From this group of slaves (and most likely other donations) the population of Blacks in Areguá grew to around one hundred people by the latter half of the seventeenth century. The 1674 Ruano report on the *encomienda*—discussed in Chapter 3—counted ninety-nine Blacks and mulattos in the Mercedarian convent, with thirteen males “of tribute age.”<sup>232</sup> In this way, the report counted the Mercedarian's Black population as an *encomienda*, specifically calling it an “*encomienda de negros*”—an interesting point that will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Ernesto Maeder, “Las encomiendas en la misiones jesuíticas,” *Folia histórica del nordeste* 6 (1984): 123.

<sup>231</sup> James Brodman, *Ransoming Captives in Crusader Spain: The Order of Merced on the Christian-Islamic Frontier* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986); Alfonso A. Morales Ramírez, *La Orden de la Merced en la evangelización de América, siglo XVI-XVII* (Bogotá: Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano, 1986).

<sup>232</sup> AGI, Charcas, 1674, vol. 30, R 7, N 19

<sup>233</sup> Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay*, 198-202; Durán Estragó, *Areguá*.

Besides the Franciscan and Mercedarian monasteries, another important religious institution in Asunción was the Jesuit college, which was the city's primary school for Spanish children. The college was also Asunción's most important slaveholder, lender, and food producer. By 1767, the Jesuit college owned 1,002 slaves. Of this total, 388 resided in the college proper, 530 in Paraguairí ranch, and 84 in San Lorenzo ranch. The college's large numbers of slaves is explained by the fact that the *asunceño* encomenderos maintained a near-complete monopoly on indigenous labor. In 1674, the Jesuit college possessed a humble encomienda of forty-seven tributaries—which had been endowed in 1595—distributed throughout three “*haciendas*” near Asunción.<sup>234</sup> With their large slave population, the Jesuits became the major commodities provider for the region. In 1767, the college's most important ranch, Paraguairí, was sending two hundred head of cattle to Asunción for consumption every month. The college also produced sugar, yerba, candles, cotton cloth, tobacco, bricks, and roof tiles and imported wine, brandy, and wheat. In 1729, the college had lent 26 thousand pesos, presumably to *asunceños* and a variety of regional traders.<sup>235</sup> In short, the Jesuit college was the economic and social powerhouse of Asunción.

The city also had its *cofradías* or religious brotherhoods, including one administered by the city's *yanaconas* and at least two *cofradías* managed by the Africans of the Jesuit college. Unfortunately, there are no extant records detailing the organization and management of these *cofradías*.<sup>236</sup> Highlighting the important relationship between Asunción and the Andes, was the cult of Our Lady of Copacabana in Asunción. Cabildo

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<sup>234</sup> AGI, Charcas, 1674, vol. 30, R 7, N 19.

<sup>235</sup> Telesca, *Tras los expulsos*, 133-138; Ignacio Telesca, “Esclavitud en Paraguay: las estancias jesuíticas,” in *La ruta del esclavo en el Río de la Plata: aportes para el diálogo intercultural*, ed. Marisa Pineau, (Argentina: Editorial de la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, 2011).

<sup>236</sup> Telesca, *Tras los expulsos*, 134.

records from 1644, reveal that the Mercedarians housed an image of the Andean saint in their convent in Asunción. The Asunción cabildo was particularly devoted to Our Lady of Copacabana, claiming her as their patroness and creating a brotherhood for her in the Mercedarian's chapel.<sup>237</sup>

This overview of Asunción's main social institutions demonstrates that Asunción possessed the basic institutional frameworks of a Spanish American city but that it had a very weak economic foundation. The primary motor that kept Paraguay running was labor given through the *encomienda*, making *encomenderos* the most important social cohort.

### **Encomenderos**

Chapter 3 demonstrates that Asunción's *encomenderos* were generally a poor group who clung tightly to their Guaraní personal servants. This section explores how *asunceño* *encomenderos* positioned themselves in society as a corporate group and what kinds of relationships they carried on with their tributaries.

By 1622, there were around four hundred *vecinos* in Asunción and at least half of these were *encomenderos*.<sup>238</sup> In 1674, there were nearly 190 *encomenderos* in the Asunción area and more than half of these possessed an *encomienda* that had been granted for two lives (i.e. heritable for two generations).

Since *encomiendas* were not granted in perpetuity, *vecinos* could compete for them. So what claims did *vecinos* make when competing for *encomiendas*? *Probanzas de mérito* or proofs of merit were drawn up by hopeful Spaniards who sought *encomiendas*.

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<sup>237</sup> ANA, AC, 2 November 1644, vol. 6, fol. 344. On the Our Lady of Copacabana, see Sabine MacCormack, "From the Sun of the Incas to the Virgin of Copacabana," *Representations* 8, (1984 (Autumn)): 30-60.

<sup>238</sup> Roberto Quevedo, "La Asunción de mil seiscientos en dos padrones inéditos," *Historia paraguaya* 8 (1965): 96-127.

These documents indicate that the most important characteristics *vecinos* highlighted were their ancestral relationship to the first conquistadors and their military service to the crown. For example, in 1661 two encomiendas in Yuiapariara became vacant and the petitioner that received the grant, General Francisco Sánchez de Vera, claimed that he was the son and grandson of one of the original conquistadors "and in remuneration of the many services of my ancestors" he made his claim. Sánchez de Vera also highlighted his military service to the crown, but did not narrate any particular expedition in which he had participated. The omission of military heroics perhaps reflects the reality that most soldiers in the Río de la Plata had little or no heroic material to draw from. As Chapter 5 will explore, most Spanish punitive expeditions against Chaco groups ended in failure.

In these proofs of merit, *vecinos* also noted their offices (many held positions on the cabildo), their marriage to "daughters of the conquistadors" and the fact that they were fathers of legitimate children. They often indicated that they were in dire need of indigenous service.<sup>239</sup> *Vecinos'* consistent use of these characteristics in the proofs of merit reveal that they had become boilerplate petitions. Proofs of merit from the seventeenth century do not elaborate on valorous deeds or specific actions that might have given an applicant an edge over the rest. Their almost insincere brevity suggests that most encomenderos were handpicked by the governor. In this way, being selected to receive an encomienda better reflected patron-client relationships than any meritorious characteristics.

Not all encomenderos, however, were made equal. A handful possessed relatively large encomiendas while the rest held only a few tributaries. Figure 3 provides a snapshot from 1674 of the distribution of encomiendas based on size.

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<sup>239</sup> ANA, SH, 1661, vol. 24, fol. 15; ANA, SH, 1680, vol. 436i, no. 5

**Figure 3. Number of Tributaries per Enc.**

<u>Number of Tributaries</u>	<u>Number of Encomiendas</u>
From 1 to 10	147
From 11 to 20	49
From 21 to 30	30
From 31 to 40	11
From 41 to 50	6
From 51 to 60	4
From 61 to 70	4
From 71 to 80	1
From 81 to 90	1
From 91 to 100	2
Over 100	1

Source: Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay*, 197.

This data demonstrates that the majority of encomenderos in Paraguay possessed fewer than ten tributaries. By comparison, the average encomienda in the Yucatán in the first half of the eighteenth century was 364 tributaries and the average encomienda in mid-seventeenth century Venezuela was 21 tributaries.<sup>240</sup>

Given the small size of the encomiendas, it is surprising that Asunceños fought so bitterly over them. This dissertation has already reviewed some encomendero disputes that revolved around identifying and tracing the ancestry of female tributaries. Other encomendero disputes bring into focus the urban-rural nature of Asunción and provide brief glimpses of social relations within the encomienda community.

In July 1605, an encomendero named Ochoa Márquez sought out a justice and charged Joseph Denis Pastrana with slander and disturbing his household. Just hours earlier, Denis Pastrana had barged into Márquez's home, called him several dishonorable names, and then took one of Márquez's young female *yanacona*, who Denis Pastrana claimed was his tributary. The justice moved quickly to resolve the suit, ordering Denis Pastrana to return the girl to Márquez and pay a fine of two pesos and the court costs.<sup>241</sup> In another suit, Francisco Vallejo appeared before a judge with his encomienda title in

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<sup>240</sup> Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay*, 198.

<sup>241</sup> ANA, CJ, 1605, vol. 1811, no. 6.

hand to explain that Diego Bañuelos had taken his *yanaconas* from him. The notary did not record Vallejo's explanation, but the encomienda title provided sufficient proof of his claim. The magistrate ordered that the *yanaconas* be returned to Vallejo's chacra.<sup>242</sup>

These kinds of disputes occurred frequently in Asunción and they highlight the nature of a society whose economic base were handfuls of indigenous tributaries.

Other suits reflect long-held and bitter contentions between encomenderos over handfuls of tributaries. In 1620, Pedro Argüello explained before a magistrate that twelve years prior, *vecinos* Ochoa Márquez (the same Márquez discussed above) and his wife Doña Beatriz de Cáceres had sued and won rights to his encomienda of *yanaconas*. Apparently, Argüello had been waiting for the couple to die so that he could try to reclaim his encomienda. When that day came, Argüello did not wait long. Only ten days after doña Beatriz de Cáceres' death in 1620, Argüello filed his suit. Part of Argüello's logic of possession of the *yanaconas* was that they had pertained to his family for over seventy years, underscoring the importance of the original kinship networks that bound conquistadors to the Guaraní.

Encomenderos maintained a constant vigilance over their encomiendas, especially *yanaconas*. This close surveillance was facilitated by the fact that they often lived in the same household. But viewing these kinds of cases in isolation would suggest that Guaraní were like personal property. Complementing the analysis from Chapter 3, the following section demonstrates that Guaraní made strategic decisions about their fates within the encomienda community.

### **Tributaries, Courts, and Agency**

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<sup>242</sup> ANA, SC, 1602, vol. 14, fol. 72.



One of the reasons why modern scholars have argued that the *yanacona* were no different than slaves is that they have relied on historical sources that sought to create precisely that image. In *Orígenes de la colonización en el Río de la Plata*, Silvio Zavala quotes a 1621 letter from a Jesuit priest named Father Lorenzana to the crown in which Lorenzana complained that Spaniards were renting and giving *yanacona* in dowry to their children. Lorenzana added, "for the Indians to be truly slaves, they only lacked chains."<sup>243</sup> Reflecting on this statement, Zavala concludes, "there was a dangerous approximation of the state of the *yanaconas* to the system of slavery, lacking only public sales of Indians."<sup>244</sup> This dissertation has already shown how this view is too simplistic in that it does not take into account the agency of indigenous actors, their mobility throughout the region, and the important role that kinship played during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Evidence from litigation records provide a social complexity that scholars have heretofore overlooked because the Guaraní did not develop a strong legal culture. For example, there are few examples of Guaraní pueblo leaders suing to defend their communities from land encroachment or excessive tribute demands. Moreover, given the Guaraní's lack of concern with surplus and inheritance, it is not surprising that Guaraní in the encomienda community did not testate.<sup>245</sup> Nonetheless, many Guaraní learned to use the Spanish legal system to pursue their own interests or were protected by other Spaniards.

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<sup>243</sup> "que para ser verdaderamente esclavos, no faltaba sino herrarlos y venderlos a público pregón." Father Lorenzana, 1621, cited in Zavala, *Orígenes de la colonización*, 162.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> The only Indian testament I have located, was drawn up by Diego de Espinoza, an "indio ladino," who was raised by one of the first Franciscans to arrive in Paraguay, Luís de Espinoza. Diego de Espinoza owned land near Asunción and provided humble inheritances to his children and grandchildren. ANA, NE, 1594, vol. 3417, no. 144.

In 1590, Hernando and Mariana, husband and wife *yanacona*, sued their would-be masters for their freedom. Their legal action was preceded by the death of their former encomendero, Pedro de Orúe, a powerful figure in Asunción society. After Orúe's death, his descendants rushed in to take possession of his *yanacona*. Hernando and Mariana might have been brought with Orúe from the Andes. What makes their ethnic status suspect is their claim that they were "not subject to tribute nor to the dominion of any cacique."<sup>246</sup> This reference to a cacique seems anachronistic to Paraguay; most Guaraní in the sixteenth century did not feel bound to a cacique, but rather to an encomendero. There is no other synonymous usage of that term in the litigation from sixteenth and seventeenth century Paraguay. The other clue is that no official was appointed to translate for Hernando and Mariana, suggesting that these *yanacona* spoke Spanish. It was very rare for Guaraní *yanacona* to learn Spanish, evidenced by the fact that nearly all Guaraní who appeared in any notarial context required a translator.

Mariana strengthened the couple's case by communicating her desire to be with her mestizo son, who was a vecino of the city of Santa Fe. The lieutenant governor ruled on the case and ordered that Mariana be free from tribute and free to live with her son. Hernando and their other children were to remain subject to the tribute demands of personal service. All parties in the suit appealed the decision, but because the file is so deteriorated, the final sentence is illegible. Mariana's reference to her son suggests that she maintained important social ties with him, despite his relatively high status. That the judge would suggest that she leave Hernando to be with her mestizo son is puzzling, since husband and wife were to remain together according to Spanish law. The case begs

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<sup>246</sup> ANA, CJ, 1590, vol. 1987, no. 2.

more questions than it answers, but it is a rare example of a *yanacona* suing for her freedom.

A few years later, in 1598, Anton, a *yanacona* in the service of Salvador Camelo appeared before a magistrate and demanded that his wife and children be returned to live with him so that they could enjoy "*vida maridable*" or married life, a status that was legally required of all couples. Anton's wife and children had been separated from him because they belonged to Francisco Alvarez's encomienda. Here again is evidence that encomenderos meddled deeply in the lives of their encomendados in order to maintain their tributary populations. The magistrate sided with Anton, issuing an order that his wife and children return to live with him. The ruling was not only a victory for Anton, but also for his encomendero, Salvador Camelo, who enjoyed the service of these additional individuals to his encomienda.<sup>247</sup>

In the following case, Francisco, a Guaraní in the service of Joseph Denis, blew the lid off a scandal perpetrated by Juan Bautista Corona, the city's Indian Protector. On 29 March 1617, Francisco, on his own account, located an *alcalde* and testified that Juan Bautista Corona had taken his wife and was keeping her on his *chacra*.<sup>248</sup> The *alcalde* investigated and called on several *vecinos* to testify. It came to light that Bautista Corona, in his capacity as the Indian Protector, was removing tributaries from Guayrá and the Asunción region under the pretext that their encomenderos were abusive. Other tributaries that the governor removed from Spanish *chacras* were given to Bautista Corona with the charge that he return them to their native home villages, but the Indian Protector was retaining them as his personal servants. When an *alcalde* and Francisco

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<sup>247</sup> ANA, SC, 1598, vol. 13, fol. 173.

<sup>248</sup> ANA, CJ, 1617, vol. 1362, no. 2.

went to Bautista Corona's *chacra* with an order to return Francisco's wife, Bautista Corona had attempted to convince the disputed woman to say that her encomendero was a wicked man and that he had maintained sexual liaisons with her. This foul play and the witness testimony against Bautista Corona indicate that he had seriously abused his office. Unfortunately, the file is incomplete and no sentence is provided. The significance of this case is that a Guaraní's legal action resulted in an investigation that uncovered a deep scandal that touched many lives throughout the province.

When the Guaraní did not defend themselves in court, their encomenderos and others in their social circles did. In 1691, in the absence of her husband, doña Catalina de Abalos y San Miguel sued Captain Juan de Leyba for having beaten a tributary in her service named Lucas.<sup>249</sup> According to doña Catalina, that same day a "mestizo Indian" from Leyba's encomienda named Pasqual had stolen one of her husbands prized horses.<sup>250</sup> She sent Lucas to retrieve the horse from the thief. In response, Leyba arrived at doña Catalina's *chacra* and beat Lucas fiercely. Again, the file is incomplete and we are left wondering about the outcome of the case. More important than the final sentencing, however, is the fact that Lucas' encomendera defended him and sought redress for his grievances.

Other suits demonstrate that Spaniards could not abuse tributaries without severe repercussions. In 1616, a *yanacóna* named Anton was working in his vegetable garden, a piece of land his encomendero allotted him, when Pedro de Abendaño rode by on his horse and attempted to destroy some of the garden.<sup>251</sup> Anton angrily ordered that

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<sup>249</sup> ANA, CJ, 1691, vol. 1682, no. 5.

<sup>250</sup> Assigning Pasqual the *casta* "Indian mestizo" is tantalizing. Yet, this kind of *casta* labeling is very rare in the documentation from colonial Paraguay.

<sup>251</sup> ANA, CJ, 1616, vol. 1776, no. 1.

Abendaño leave and an exchange of insults ensued. It is important to note that Anton was not bilingual (an interpreter was required for his petition), revealing that Abendaño, a Spanish *vecino*, possessed at least a working knowledge of the Guaraní language. Words were not enough for Abendaño and he quickly dismounted and attacked Anton with some wooden tools lying around the *chacra*. After receiving several wounds from Abendaño, Anton fled to the authorities. A lengthy investigation followed which resulted in Abendaño's imprisonment. The final sentence was solidly in favor of Anton: Abendaño was exiled from Asunción for six years and one month and ordered to pay all the court costs.

Other Guaraní litigants used the *protector de indios* to pursue justice. Francisco Pané, a *yanacóna* in the service of Juan Cantero went straight to the protector's house after an altercation with an encomendero named Tomás Rolón. Rolón's cattle had wandered into the *chacra* Pané and two other *yanacóna* were cultivating. As they chased the cattle off the land, Rolón approached atop his horse. He claimed that the *yanacóna* were attempting to steal his cattle and that he was compelled to defend his property. Rolón's case was not convincing and the magistrate fined him two pesos for the royal treasury, five pesos for other court costs, a new cotton shirt for Anton, plus the two months jail time he had served during the course of the investigation.<sup>252</sup> This kind of sentence for Spaniards was typical for non-mortal wounds against tributaries.<sup>253</sup>

Some Guaraní under the encomienda system lashed out in violence against Spaniards. In 1604, a tributary named Domingo was sentenced to death after he struck the son of his encomendero and fled to take refuge amongst "rebellious Indians." He was found living

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<sup>252</sup> ANA, CJ, 1610, vol. 1600, no. 2.

<sup>253</sup> For example, see ANA, CJ, 1617, vol. 1605, no. 1.

in a private hut with other Guaraní armed with bows and arrows. Domingo's example is probably illustrative of how some Guaraní left their encomiendas to seek refuge among like-minded individuals who had reason to abandon the encomienda. Some of these individuals joined groups who had never been brought under Spanish service. In 1595, local officials launched a short-lived inquiry into a group of four or more Guaraní who wandered the area stealing livestock. One Guaraní witness in the service of Francisco de Aquino said that one day while he was leading sheep to pasture four "Indians" arrived on horseback and made off with the sheep. When this tributary tried to defend his flock, the bandits attacked him, leaving him with a head wound. He only barely escaped thanks to the strong mare he was riding.<sup>254</sup>

The *yanacona*'s mobility also challenges the notion that they were slaves. This dissertation has already shown that many Guaraní chose their own marriage partners—despite encomenderos' attempts to arrange them—and effectively litigated to sustain their marriage choices. Encomenderos fussed enough over this issue of marriage that local officials attempted to create legislation that appeased both *yanacona* and encomenderos. In 1595, a litigant named María Mosquera claimed that she had lost all of her *yanacona*. Her last female servant was lost to the marriage of a *yanacona* from a foreign encomienda. Mosquera demanded that she be delivered a replacement *yanacona*, explaining that in years past Governor Juan de Torres Navarre (1584-86) mandated that when one tributary left the encomienda because of a marriage, the receiving encomendero was to give up a *yanacona*.<sup>255</sup> Yet, it is unclear if this policy was ever carried out; the absence of any other mention of this law suggests that it was not. In the

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<sup>254</sup> ANA, CJ, 1595, vol. 1810, no. 7.

<sup>255</sup> ANA, SC, 1595, vol. 12, fol. 109-110.

absence of a legal system of bondage within a service-based tribute system, Spanish officials and encomenderos were creative in their attempts to maintain stable encomiendas.

These trends of cross-encomienda marriage among the *yanacona* no doubt had a social foundation. Imagining Asunción's urban-rural layout, we can envision *yanacona* moving about this world, paying visits to friends, relatives, lovers, and enemies in the *chacras* that constituted the city of Asunción.

### **Africans**

A discussion of African slavery and Afro-Indigenous relations in an analysis of Asunción society highlights the distinctions between the encomienda and African slavery. At the same time, comparing these two institutions reiterates that indigenous forms of labor arrangements had long-lasting and profound reach into other colonial institutions. This section will demonstrate that the institution of African slavery and Afro-descendents were transformed through their interactions with the Guaraní. This approach builds on recent scholarship which attempts to debunk the notion that Spaniards maintained racial integrity between Africans and Indigenous and that Afro-Indigenous relations were marked by hostility.<sup>256</sup>

The dearth of scholarship on Africans and Afro-Indigenous relations in Paraguay is the result of a nationalist narrative that has sought to 'de-Africanize' Paraguay since the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870). War-time propaganda created for Paraguayan soldiers portrayed their Brazilian enemies as racially inferior because of their blackness; Brazilian soldiers depicted as dark monkeys was the most common trope. In 1911, during

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<sup>256</sup> Restall, *Beyond Black and Red*, 4; Restall, *The Black Middle*; Rachel Sarah O'Toole, *Bound Lives: Africans, Indians, and the Making of Race in Colonial Peru* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012).

the nationalist hype of Paraguay's centenary, one of the country's foremost scholars wrote, "a perfect ethnic homogeneity exists among us; the black pigment does not darken our skin."<sup>257</sup> Only a handful of scholars have written about blacks in Paraguay, but my research represents the first attempt to examine Afro-indigenous relations and, thereby, challenges the dominant nationalist paradigms that have erased Blacks from Paraguayan history.<sup>258</sup>

Africans accompanied Spaniards in the conquest of the Río de la Plata, but very little is known about their activities or their numbers.<sup>259</sup> In the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Paraguayan governors attempted to secure subsidies from the crown for the importation of Africans, but these requests were ignored and colonials in the Río de la Plata turned to illicit trade through Brazil.<sup>260</sup> Africans quickly found indigenous partners in Paraguay. The first extant record of an Afro-Indigenous union in Paraguay is a legal suit between a black slave and a Spanish encomendero. It showcases the ways colonials defined African slavery vis-à-vis indigenous personal service and merits close attention.

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<sup>257</sup> Ignacio Telesca, "Paraguay en el centenario: la creación de la nación mestiza," *Historia mexicana* 60, no. 1 (2010): 137-195. Arsenio López Decoud cited in *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>258</sup> Works on Africans in Paraguay during the early to mature colonial period include Josefina Pla, *Hermano negro: la esclavitud en el Paraguay* (Madrid: Paraninfo, 1972); Germán de Granda, "Origen, función y estructura de un pueblo de negros y mulatos libres en el Paraguay del siglo XVIII," in *Pasado y presente de la realidad paraguaya* (Asunción: CPES, 1994); Ana María Argüello Martínez, *El rol de los esclavos negros en el Paraguay* (Asunción: Centro Editorial Paraguayo, 1999); Alfredo Boccia Románach, *Esclavitud en el Paraguay: vida cotidiana del esclavo en las Indias Meridionales* (Asunción: Servilibro, 2004); Ignacio Telesca, "Esclavitud en Paraguay: las estancias jesuíticas," in *La ruta del esclavo en el Río de la Plata: aportes para el diálogo intercultural*, ed. Marisa Pineau (Argentina: Editorial de la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, 2011).

<sup>259</sup> Beyond a few references in the early accounts and a few notarial records, almost nothing is known about the Black conquistadors. For example Álvaro Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca owned a slave named Juan Blanco. ANA, SC, 1544, vol. 3, fol. 39. On Black conquistadors, see Matthew Restall, "Black Conquistadors: Armed Africans in Early Spanish America," *The Americas* 57, no. 2 (October 2000): 171-205.

<sup>260</sup> For example, Governor Hernandarias reported to the crown in 1606 that 1,500 slaves were brought into the province by Portuguese traders. Hernandarias to the crown, cited in *Hernandarias, criollo asunceño: estudio preliminar, cronología anotada y ordenamiento de cartas y memoriales al rey Felipe III y al Consejo de Indias, 1600-1625*, ed. Walter Rela Hernandarias (Montevideo: Embajada de la República del Paraguay, 2001), 138. See also José Luis Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay, 1600-1650* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1973), 113.



On a summer's day in 1598, Asunción, Martín de Insauralde, acting on behalf of Captain Antonio Tomás, an encomendero from Santa Fe, sued a black slave named Anton for possession of Anton's two "*mulatillo*" sons. Some six years earlier, Anton had married one of Tomás' *yanacona*, Teresa, while accompanying his master on official business in Santa Fe. After their marriage, Anton's master and lieutenant governor of the province, Felipe de Cáceres, returned to Asunción, taking Anton and Teresa with him. Insauralde argued that Felipe de Cáceres had encouraged his slave to marry Teresa in a ploy to take her back to Asunción as his own *yanacona* and that he had planned to use the couple's children as slaves. After a number of days, Felipe de Cáceres had still not appeared in Anton's defense and so the governor ruled in favor of Insauralde. He ordered that Anton's boys, Anton and Domingo, be returned to Santa Fe and delivered to their encomendero.<sup>261</sup>

Upon receiving news of the sentence, Anton quickly submitted an appeal. Calling himself "*Anton de Cáceres de color moreno*," he explained that it was on his own account that he had married Teresa and it was under the auspices of both the law and tradition (*costumbre*) that he had taken his wife to live with him in Asunción.<sup>262</sup> Anton explained that when he had attempted to leave Santa Fe with Teresa, Tomás had sued him, but the magistrate had sided with Anton and allowed him to take his wife who was a "free" person.

In July of the same year, the governor issued the final sentence, which seemed to find a middle ground between the two litigants' logic of possession of the two mixed-race children. He definitively declared the legal categories of the two boys: "*hijos de yndia y*

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<sup>261</sup> ANA, CJ, 1598, vol. 1941, no. 3.

<sup>262</sup> "es costumbre y se guarda que cualquiera yndia q se casare libremente la puede llevar su marido a donde el quisiere...de mas de ser ley es costumbre...en la ciudad de Santa Fe." Ibid.

*no como esclavos, pues no lo son*” (children of an Indian and not slaves). Defining them as Indians, thus, the governor concluded that the boys were still required to provide personal service to their encomendero in Santa Fe, but that they were to remain with their father until he died. We can only imagine how Anton might have felt about this sentence: surely a sense of relief that he could retain his children, but tinged with the bitter possibility that at some future date they might be forced to return to an encomendero as his personal servants.

This suit highlights the entangled categories of servitude and tribute, yet it ultimately illustrates their distinctions. The *mulatillo* sons did not inherit their fathers servitude since that condition could only be inherited from a slave mother. Applying this same logic of biological inheritance, Hernandarias ruled that the mixed-race boys were to inherit their indigenous mother's tribute status. But he also found a compromise by allowing the boys to remain with their father until he died. The root cause of this legal battle has everything to do with the nature of indigenous service in the region. Personal service as a form of tribute closely approximated master-slave relationship of African slavery, but because *yanaconas* were not commodities there were limits on Spaniards control over them.

Scholars of African slavery have provided useful categories for understanding how the system functioned in the Americas. On the one hand, Europeans practiced slavery *en masse*, where large concentrations of slaves worked monoculture enterprises. The true slave societies were found in the U.S. South, Cuba, and northeastern Brazil. Most other places in Spanish America can be described as societies with slaves. In these contexts, auxiliary slavery was more common. Auxiliary slaves supplemented small-scale economic industries, served as intermediaries between Spaniards and native tribute

communities, or provided skilled labor. In Asunción it appears that a variation of slavery *en masse* and auxiliary slavery existed side-by-side.

Large concentrations of Blacks were found in the regular orders' convents and ranches (*estancias*). In the early sixteenth century, a Spanish *vecina*, Isabel Lopez, donated a handful of African slaves to the Mercedarian convent, founded in 1540. By 1666, the Mercedarians housed one hundred blacks and mulattos at Areguá, a ranch just outside Asunción, and by the eighteenth century, the population had risen to five hundred.<sup>263</sup>

The Jesuits managing the college of Asunción and the ranches surrounding the city were purchasing slaves by at least 1614; in that year, they bought (on credit) sugar and wheat mills and seven black slaves to service them.<sup>264</sup> Through similar investments and consistent growth, the Jesuits became the largest slaveholders in the Río de la Plata and maintained the largest plantation-style enterprises in the Asunción region.

Other Black and mulatto communities emerged around *presidios* or fort-towns, underscoring the importance of Blacks as soldiers. The community of Emboscada (also known as *Camba Reta*) was founded in 1741 by the local governor to serve as a barrier to native enemies and housed some 1,500 free *pardos*.<sup>265</sup> Just as with most other Spanish colonial centers, the slave population in Asunción for much of the colonial period was

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<sup>263</sup> Mora Mérida, *Historia social de Paraguay*, 199; Margarita Durán Estragó, *Areguá: rescate histórico*, 1576-1870 (Asunción: Fondo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes, 2005).

<sup>264</sup> Fray Diego de Torres, Carta anua, 1614, cited in Iglesia; *Cartas anuas de la provincia del Paraguay, Chile y Tucumán, de la Compañía de Jesús*, ed. Emilio Ravignani and Carlos Leonhardt, vol. 19 (Buenos Aires: Talleres S.A. Casa Jacobo Peuser, 1927), 284.

<sup>265</sup> de Granda, "Origen, función y estructura de un pueblo de negros y mulatos libres en el Paraguay del siglo XVIII"; Telesca, "Esclavitud en Paraguay," 156.

above 10 percent. Based on the 1682 padrón, 15 percent of the Asunción population was slave. By 1782, 31 percent was free black and 23 percent slave.<sup>266</sup>

African ethnogenesis in Paraguay was diverse. African cultural continuity among the large Central African populations at the Jesuit college is evidenced by the fact that at least one priest spoke “Angolan” in order to communicate with the slave population.<sup>267</sup> Imagining African languages mixing with the various Tupí-Guaraní dialects, Guaycuruan languages, and Spanish enriches our vision of colonial Asunción.

In contrast to the large concentrations of slaves amassed by the Jesuits was a kind of auxiliary slavery on Spanish chacras. Testaments and sales from the early seventeenth century suggest a consistent trade in African slaves. In 1600, doña María de Guzmán willed thirteen slaves to her daughter.<sup>268</sup> In 1618, Gaspar Fernández found himself in trouble after one of his slaves, Antón, fled to Tucumán directly following Anton’s sale to a Spaniard in Corrientes. Anton’s wife, Ana, was also sold in the transaction and was described as “*costal de huesos, alma en boca*” (bag of bones, soul in mouth), yet both slaves sold for four hundred *pesos reales* each, underscoring slaves’ high value in this peripheral region.<sup>269</sup> Fernández agreed that if he could not bring Anton back he would reimburse his buyer the four hundred pesos.

Some sale contracts provide brief glimpses into slaves’ social lives. In 1621, for example, doña Úrsula de Rojas Aranda sold her mulatta slave, Rufina, and the slave’s young daughter, Petrona, to the Jesuit college for 550 *patacones de plata* because Rufina

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<sup>266</sup> Ibid., 154, 158.

<sup>267</sup> Telesca, *Tras los expulsos*, 134.

<sup>268</sup> ANA, NE, 1600, vol. 125, fol. 137-140

<sup>269</sup> This was boilerplate language that Spaniards used to describe a black slave who they thought was worth very little due to their poor health. Providing full disclosure to a buyer in these transactions was important in the Spanish legal system. ANA, NE, 1618, vol. 363, fol. 141. On slave sales and slaves in testaments, see Kris Lane, “Captivity and Redemption: Aspects of Slave Life in Early Colonial Quito and Popayán,” *The Americas* 57, no. 2 (October 2000): 225-246.

had married a slave owned by the Jesuits. Doña Úrsula stated that she sold her slave to keep the slave family united.<sup>270</sup> The notarial record indicates that individual Spaniards and priests (especially the Jesuits) frequently exchanged in human property, but the Jesuits were most frequently the buyers. It appears that strong social networks existed between slave populations in the Spanish *chacras* and the Jesuit college, reinforced by the Jesuits' buying power. Slaves in Paraguay were rarely exchanged for silver pesos, but rather for yerba, the most common currency in the region.

As it did for many Spanish creoles, the Guaraní language became the *lingua franca* for most Afro-Paraguayans. Many Blacks who appeared in litigation proceedings could only speak the Guaraní language—just like their indigenous counterparts—and required an interpreter.<sup>271</sup> Moreover, contextual information culled from litigation records indicates that slaves and tributaries worked side by side on Spanish *chacras* and developed a degree of community cohesion.

A suit from 1694 provides a snapshot of these arrangements. Away at a wedding in one of the surrounding pueblos, the encomendero Tomás Jiménenez left his *chacra* in the charge of his black slave, Juan Moreno, and Juan, a *yanacóna*. While performing their duties, they discovered a *yanacóna* from a foreign encomienda stealing cane from their master's field. In their attempts to stop him, a scuffle broke out which ended when the thief's encomendero (armed with a sword) came to his defense, seriously injuring Juan Moreno and Juan. In the litigation that ensued, the magistrate ordered that the encomendero repay Juan, the *yanacóna*, for his damages: twenty-five *varas* (or seventy-

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<sup>270</sup> ANA, SC, 1621, vol. 17, fol. 193.

<sup>271</sup> For example, see ANA, CJ, 1600, vol. 1810, no. 10, fol. 129 and ANA, CJ, 1669, vol. 1679, no. 2, fol. 43.

five yards) of common cloth—another common currency in Paraguay. The logic by which Juan Moreno was left without payment for damages is not provided.<sup>272</sup>

Blacks' acquisition of the Guaraní language and their social closeness to the Guaraní under the encomienda facilitated all kinds of relationships. The earliest record of an unsanctioned Afro-Indigenous social community comes from a 1625 criminal inquiry into a band of robbers who were found stealing livestock, clothing, weapons, and other goods from Spanish *chacras*.<sup>273</sup> Led by a mulatto named Anton, the group was composed of three blacks (two from the same Spanish master) and two natives. This quasi-maroon group worked together to steal from Spaniards and received help from their free Black families who resided in Lambaré, just on the outskirts of Asunción. In one heated episode, Spanish officials spotted the group on the *camino real* and pursued them on horseback. The outlaws fired arrows at the officials atop stolen horses and managed to escape in the forest. They maintained a hide-out in the forests somewhere between Asunción and Atyrá, an Indian pueblo, where they traded their stolen goods. The group's choice of market for their booty is revealing: instead of selling in the city, they went to the surrounding pueblos, where they had greater anonymity and privy buyers. Atyrá must have been a reliable black market, because in 1695, a Black slave named José was also found selling stolen goods to the natives in that pueblo. As a lone thief, José sold directly to indigenous buyers, thus revealing his ability to speak Guaraní and his informal connection with the pueblo.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> ANA, CJ, 1694, vol. 1682, no. 2.

<sup>273</sup> ANA, CJ, 1625, vol. 1678, no. 2.

<sup>274</sup> ANA, CJ, 1695, vol. 1682, no. 6.

Another band of at least five Afro-Indigenous robbers preyed on *mitaya* tributaries as they traveled to their pueblos on the *camino real* to Asunción.<sup>275</sup> Several of the black members of the group came from the same Spanish owner and it is probable that some of the natives also shared the same encomendero. A few of the bandits had formerly been locked up for their crimes, but a native woman and partner to one of the band's native members had sprung them from jail. Just as in the former case, black members' families aided the group, revealing interethnic social networks. Renewed focus on catching the band occurred after they had kidnapped a *mitaya* women in 1669 while she was bathing in the Paraguay River and had stolen some of the *mitayas*' livestock and a few bows and arrows. Unfortunately, the documentary trail ends and we have no further information about this group.

Evidence from these inquiries suggests that these quasi-maroon bands of robbers developed social bonds while serving together on Spanish chacras and that despite their status as slaves and tributaries they also were able to maintain ties with their kin. Just like the *yanacóna*, who moved about the area freely, it appears that many slaves possessed similar mobility. Auxiliary slaves seemed to perform the same kinds of tasks as the *yanacóna*: agriculture, livestock, and some skilled work. Thus, the majority of Blacks were culturally closer to the Guaraní than they were to the Spanish.

Perhaps one of the most poignant examples of the close relationship between African slavery and indigenous service is the so-called "*amparo*" tax. *Amparo* was based on a royal ordinance issued in 1574 that provided for an annual tax on all free Blacks and mulattos.<sup>276</sup> This tax was not practiced systematically in Spanish America, but appears to

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<sup>275</sup> ANA, CJ, 1669, vol. 1679, no. 2

<sup>276</sup> See Appendix F in Pla, *Hermano Negro*.

have been an important practice in colonial Paraguay because it was integrated with indigenous forms of tribute. Registers of the *amparo* indicate that most Blacks paid the tax in personal service to a Spaniard, who was appointed by the governor. Ana María Argüello attributes the *amparo* to don Francisco de Alfaro, who supposedly instituted the system sometime after he arrived in Paraguay in 1611. But the only source that supports that idea is from the late eighteenth century.<sup>277</sup>

The earliest extant record of the *amparo* is a register made in the 1650s (precise date is illegible) of 222 free blacks and mulattos of whom thirty-eight or seventeen percent were "*de taza*" or *amparados*.<sup>278</sup> Josefina Pla provides evidence that the *amparo* system functioned until the eighteenth century, noting that in 1722 there were one thousand *amparados* and thirty-eight of these paid the tax in the common Paraguayan currency, either yerba or tobacco, rather than in personal service.<sup>279</sup> According to late eighteenth century accounts, the tax had practically disappeared by the end of the century. The decline of the *amparo* tax can probably be attributed to the fact that in the eighteenth century local officials applied free blacks' labor mainly to military activities. For example, in 1740, the governor of Paraguay migrated hundreds of free blacks to the frontier town of Emboscada.<sup>280</sup>

What is intriguing about the systematic application of the *amparo* in Paraguay is that it so closely resembles the logic of the *encomienda originaria* (*yanaconas*). Just like the Cario, who had nothing else to give Spaniards but their personal service on Spanish estates, so free Blacks were required to serve. This hypothesis underscores the

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<sup>277</sup> Azara, *Viajes*, 271.

<sup>278</sup> ANA, AC, c. 1650, vol. 1, fol. 9-13.

<sup>279</sup> Pla, *Hermano negro*, 120.

<sup>280</sup> Telesca, "Esclavitud En Paraguay," 156.



importance of studying African and Afro-Paraguayans in the social context of the encomienda system. Until recently, scholars have studied Africans in economic isolation or only in relation to the Republic of the Spaniards, but what this dissertation suggests is that by focusing on documents ostensibly about the Guaraní pueblos, we find important information about Blacks.

An analysis of three seventeenth-century *padrones* from the *mitaya* pueblos of Arecayá (1671) and Altos (1671) and the *yanaconas* of Asunción (1694) reveals Afro-indigenous unions and social networks heretofore unseen.<sup>281</sup> Over 5 percent of the tributaries (mostly all males) from the two pueblos and the *yanacona* population were living with or married to a Black or mulatto. Some tributaries' black partners lived with them in the pueblos (or on Spanish estates in the case of the *yanacona*), but most Guaraní were absent from their encomiendas, living with their black partners on separate encomienda estates or as tenants. In the pueblos, the governor usually commanded that a native return with his black wife to live in the pueblo *if* the partner was a free Black. For example, in Arecayá, the governor learned that in Antonio Gonzalez's encomienda of twenty-two tributaries, an absent tributary named Baltazar was living with a mulatta from the Mercedarian convent. But because she was a free mulatta the governor ordered that the couple return to live in the pueblo so that Baltazar could pay tribute.<sup>282</sup> When tributaries were married to enslaved Blacks, they were not ordered to return with their black spouses because doing so would violate the slave-owner's right to possess his/her

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<sup>281</sup> The Altos and Arecayá *visitas* are located in ANA, NE, 1677, vol. 177 and the *originaria* in ANA, NE, 1694, vol. 185, no. 3.

<sup>282</sup> *Baltazar casado con una mulata del combento de nuestra señora de las Mercedes y por ser la dha mulata libre, se mando siguiese el pueblo del marido y desde el paque tributo a su encomendero.* There is no evidence that these orders of return were ever enforced. ANA, NE, 1677, vol. 177, fol. 38.

human property.<sup>283</sup> In this way, ironically, a native's freedom from tribute obligations (at least on paper) was contingent on his/her black partner's servitude. This pattern illustrates the close relationship between tribute service and African servitude.

It is significant that Baltazar's mulatta partner was from the Mercedarian convent. In her analysis of the Mercedarian's convent, Margarita Durán Estragó argues that the population of the some one hundred Blacks was completely endogamous because the Mercedarians were bound by their monastic regulations not to sell the slaves they had "redeemed" from captivity.<sup>284</sup> But evidence from the *padrones* suggests that similar to all other religious houses in Spanish America, the convent was not a hermetic space and that people and capital moved in and out of the convent. Ostensibly, the Blacks in the Mercedarian convent were considered free, yet in the 1674 encomienda report, Ruano recorded information about the Mercedarian's Black population as if they were an encomienda. Ruano noted that there were ninety-nine Blacks or mulattos, of which thirteen were of tributary age. The conflation of this Black population with the encomienda is astounding. Just as with the *amparo*, Spaniards fit other forms of labor and patronage into the encomienda community. It is also possible that these thirteen individuals of tribute age were the children of Black men and Guaraní women who had inherited their mothers' tribute status, just like Anton's mulatillo sons. This section has demonstrated that Blacks' relationships with the pueblos and the *yanacona* population in Asunción were deep and embedded within the encomienda community.

### **Asunción and the Pueblos**

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<sup>283</sup> Ibid., fol. 42 v.

<sup>284</sup> Durán Estragó, *Areguá*.

In his analysis of "city Indians," David Cahill reveals that Andeans in Cuzco maintained strong economic and political contacts with outlier villages and micro-regions. This dissertation agrees with Cahill's assertion that "any study of urban ethnicity needs to involve outlier groups as an integral part of its analysis."<sup>285</sup> This is especially true for colonial Paraguay, where much of the *mitaya* labor was directed towards the city. The close and frequent contact between city and pueblos created all kinds of social networks.

In March 1608, a Spanish encomendero named Bartolomé de Miño (age twenty-five) and his companion, Pedro Tamayo (age twenty-eight and a *zapatero* or shoemaker), were imprisoned for having arranged a sexual liaison with two female *mitaya* in Yaguarón, a pueblo to the southeast of Asunción.<sup>286</sup> The suit was brought by the governor who explained that Miño had abandoned a military expedition in Santa Fe, where Spanish troops were congregating to launch an attack on enemy Natives. For his part, Miño explained that the expedition had already broken up when he arrived in Santa Fe. On his return to Asunción, Miño met up with Tamayo in Yaguarón where they arranged their meeting with two Guaraní women, Elvira and Estefanía, who were in their late teens or early twenties. According to the governor, these women were both married.

There is nothing in Elvira and Estefanía's statements that indicated that Miño and Tamayo had abused them; it appears their relationships with Miño and Tamayo were consensual. In fact, Estefanía explained that she had wanted to accompany Miño back to Asunción, but he had encouraged her to remain in Yaguarón. Because Elvira and

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<sup>285</sup> David Cahill, "Ethnogenesis in the City: A Native Andean Etnia in a Colonial City" in *City Indians in Spain's American Empire: Urban Indigenous Society in Mesoamerica and Andean South America, 1530-1810*, eds. Dana Velasco Murillo Mark Lentz and Margarita R. Ochoa (Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2013), 33.

<sup>286</sup> ANA, CJ, 1608, vol. 1532, no. 4.

Estefanía required translators and Miño and Tamayo did not, we can assume that the latter were bilingual. When the magistrate asked Miño why he had been in Yaguarón, he responded that he was looking for one of his *yanacona* as well as a *yanacona* belonging to Alonso Pérez, revealing that Miño was an encomendero.

Ultimately, Miño was punished, especially for abandoning the military expedition in Santa Fe. The magistrate sentenced him to six months military service in one of the regions frontier forts. Tamayo was sentenced to two months of military service, two pesos, and all the court costs. The magistrate ordered them to never again enter an indigenous pueblo. This suit is rare when compared with the corpus of litigation from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In fact, there are no other extant records that punished Spaniards for their interactions with indigenous pueblos. The more important question this case raises is why were a bilingual encomendero and a *zapatero* from Asunción spending time in this indigenous pueblo? Obviously they had social and sexual relationships that they wanted to pursue, but the more important point is that Miño and Tamayo possessed the cultural skills to interact with this community, especially the Guaraní language.

Normally, indigenous communities in the orbit of surrounding urban centers went to cities to celebrate festivals and engage in its Christian life.<sup>287</sup> In Asunción, Spaniards celebrated regular festivals, but there is no clear sense that Guaraní from the pueblos were a visible corporate presence in public ceremonies.<sup>288</sup> The only documents that mention tributaries in relation to festivals are cabildo requests for indigenous labor to repair city bridges and to adorn the city.

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<sup>287</sup> See, for example Dean, *Inka Bodies*.

<sup>288</sup> There are no extant records describing public festivals from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

It is clear, however, that festivals were celebrated in the pueblos and they attracted encomenderos and *vecinos* from Asunción. In 1694, the governor ordered *vecinos* to attend the festival of Corpus Christi in Asunción, not in the pueblos. Apparently, many *vecinos* were going to the pueblos to celebrate this most important Christian festival rather than remaining in Asunción, leaving the city poorly adorned and depopulated.<sup>289</sup> It is not clear what social networks led Spaniards to celebrate such an important festival in the pueblos instead of in Asunción, but we can assume that these networks were nested within the encomienda community.

Spaniards also became involved in the pueblos' politics and leadership apparatus because these had direct effect on their *mitaya* populations. We know very little about leadership in the pueblos, only that there was a cabildo and a *corregidor*, or indigenous governor, for each pueblo. The *corregidor* negotiated with the various caciques regarding things like *mita* service and pueblo communal work. We get a sense of the tensions present in the pueblo through the following dispute.

On 26 June 1620, the *corregidor* of Tobatí named Alonso, who described himself as the "principle cacique of the Indians" of the pueblo, appeared before a magistrate in Asunción to complain that doña María Pineda had instigated the Guaraní in his pueblo to oppose him and deny his authority.<sup>290</sup> His legal action was in response to an investigation into his poor character and use of his office. Apparently doña María Pineda convinced an encomendero and official of the cabildo named Salvador Camelo to take witness testimony from Guaraní of Tobatí that reflected poorly on Alonso's character. Alonso explained that he had commanded the Natives of his pueblo to create and tend to

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<sup>289</sup> ANA, SH, 1694, vol. 38, no. 11

<sup>290</sup> ANA, SH, 1620, vol. 45, no. 2.

agricultural plots so they would have sufficient provisions. According to Alonso, his Natives had not yet created *chacras* nor did they want to. That these Guaraní in Tobatí were relying on hunting and gathering instead of on agricultural plots reflects on the transitional stage of the pueblos at that time. Alonso also noted that when tributaries fled from their Spanish encomenderos in Asunción and returned to Tobatí, he made sure they returned to their encomenderos' *chacra*.

Alonso explained that the Indians of Tobatí hated him because he made "them observe [Christian] doctrine and good behavior." He added that he didn't drink wine, which was one of his peoples' "ancient customs."<sup>291</sup> Guaraní communities frequently held ceremonies that involved heavy drinking of wine usually made from honey. These celebrations often commemorated some positive social event (e.g. a good harvest or a hunt) and were sought to bring *tevy* together.<sup>292</sup> Spanish officials and ecclesiastics referred to these events simply as *borracheras* (drunken revelries) and in the early seventeenth century they sought to eradicate them. The 1603 Synod suggested that the *borracheras* were closely related to the power of the shaman, superstition, and all kinds of vice.<sup>293</sup> Spanish officials in Asunción prohibited *vecinos* from distributing cane liquor to both Natives and Blacks, claiming that alcohol consumption caused violence, theft, and idolatry in the pueblos.<sup>294</sup> In 1608, during a *borrachera* in Yaguarón, a cacique named Alonso murdered another cacique during a fit of drunkenness and rage.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> On group ceremonies that involved drinking, see Susnik, *Los aborígenes del Paraguay*, 133-134.

<sup>293</sup> See the sixth article in the synod. *El primer sínodo*.

<sup>294</sup> ANA, SC, 1605, vol. 14, fol. 107-210.

<sup>295</sup> ANA, CJ, 1608, vol. 1811, no. 8.

All of these records referring to *borracheras* highlight colonial officials growing concerns about the Guaraní's Christian indoctrination.<sup>296</sup> The *corregidor* Alonso had apparently internalized Spanish-Christian opposition to the *borracheras*, a position which placed him at odds with his pueblo. Alonso's positions on these issues of drunkenness and tribute service when compared with the attitudes of his community signal a transitional moment, when some Guaraní became mediators between clerics and the pueblos. And yet, did doña Maria Pineda attempt to oust him? We will never fully understand her reasons, but it probably involved her encomienda population and perhaps Alonso's attempt to strictly regulate *mita* service, something encomenderos balked at. Whatever doña Maria Pineda's motivations, this example illustrates that encomenderos/as were intimately involved in the politics of their Indian pueblos. Moreover, Spaniards' interests in these relatively new leadership positions (*corregidores* and Indian cabildos) in the pueblos signaled changing political structures for the Guaraní.

The analysis above has demonstrated asunceños' involvement in the pueblos. What follows is a focus on the pueblos and the networks that moved individuals from the pueblos to Asunción, other pueblos, and beyond. *Padrones* provide the evidence for these networks, but they are complicated sources. *Padrones* were created during a governor's *visita* or inspection of a pueblo. While each padrón possesses its own organization logic, most *padrones* recorded different information. During these inspections the governor or his lieutenant called the pueblo together, including the *corregidor* and all the caciques.

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<sup>296</sup> Patricia Seed notes that after the mid-sixteenth century, clerics in Spanish America began blaming alcohol as the greatest impediment to Indians' conversion. See Patricia Seed, "'Are These Not Also Men?': The Indians' Humanity and Capacity for Civilization," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24, no. 3 (October 1995): 648. On drinking and violence, see William B. Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide and Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979).

Technically, each encomendero was supposed to be present at the *visita*, but they were often represented by an overseer or family member.

The purpose of the *visita* was to record the names and ages of all men considered tributary age, the caciques at the head of each *parcialidad* or lineage groups. Most governors also counted tributaries' female partners, children, orphans, single women, and *jubilados* or retirees (men over fifty or unable to work). Even though women were not recorded as tributaries—only men over eighteen years of age were considered legal tributaries—they were counted. Women's sexual labor was just as important as their physical labor as agriculturalists, *hilanderas*, and domestic servants.

Figure 4 shows the totals of data culled from the 1671 *visita* to Yutí, a pueblo on the Tebicuary River.

**Figure 4. *Visita* Data from Yutí, 1671**

Tributaries	Women	Single Women	Children	Orphans	Trib. Married to Female of Foreign Enc.	Absentee in Mita	Absentee in PA or Down River
349	357	181	726	36	398	58	174

Source: ANA, NE, 1671, vol. 160

The categories represented here do not exactly mirror the categories the governor and his notary used. For example, when recording women, the notary noted the wives of tributaries. Separately, he recorded the women who might have been widows or wives of tributaries that were absent. The *ausente* or absentee category often implied that tributaries were away on the *mita*. At other times, governors did not distinguish between *huidos* (runaways) and *ausentes*, therefore, it is difficult to determine if these had simply disappeared or were absent serving the *mita*.

The percentage of total tributaries from Yutí absent in Paraguay or down river (i.e. Corrientes, Santa Fe, or Buenos Aires) was 30 percent. This high figure is evidence



of the various pull factors that drew people out of the pueblos, including to encomenderos' chacras in Asunción and the yerba transport industry. When family members or the cacique provided such information, the notary indicated where the absentee was. For example, "Francisco, absent in Paraguay for the past six years, in the *chacra* of Fernando (damaged)...," undoubtedly his encomendero.<sup>297</sup> Only 58 or 10 percent of absentees were on the *mita*; the rest had either become *yanacona* on their encomendero's estate, were working in the transport trade, or struck out on their own somewhere else in Paraguay.

Absenteeism was a major problem for governors in Paraguay because they represented a decline in viable Guaraní tributary communities. Some officials took action to remedy the situation. On 23 February 1697, the *alcalde de la hermandad* (justice over rural areas around Asunción) noted that there were many young "Indians" living in Spaniards' homes when they should have been living in their pueblo, Itá. He took note of over two dozen young male and female Guaraní, usually one or two per Spanish home. The *alcalde* reported that even the governor had Guaraní from Itá in his home: "two *muchachos* and one *india* with her daughter." The *alcade* suggested that all of these Natives were eventually returned to their pueblos.<sup>298</sup>

Another piece of information the governor requested in his *padrón* of Yutí was if a tributary's partner belonged to a foreign encomienda. Of 581 tributaries, 398 or 69 percent were married to a female belonging to a foreign encomienda. If we remember that each encomienda was based on one or more lineage groups headed by a cacique and that the average encomienda contained fifteen tributaries, it is easy to understand why the

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<sup>297</sup> "Francisco ausente en PA que avia siete anos que avia faltado del pueblo que estaba en la chacra de Fernando." ANA, NE 1671, vol. 160, fol. 48.

<sup>298</sup> ANA, NE, 1697, vol. 8, no. 13.

majority of marriages were be cross-encomienda unions. These encomiendas were essentially small lineage groups and because most marriages were exogamous, they crossed encomienda boundaries. Similar data noting that a tributary's wife was from a foreign encomienda were recorded for the pueblo Atyra in 1614.<sup>299</sup> Fifty-two percent of the tributaries' wives were from a foreign encomienda. Why were governors interested in recording that kind of data? Chapter 3 has shown that tracking women and their partners was important because it could ultimately determine to which encomienda they pertained; therefore, this data was most likely recorded to track encomienda ownership if litigation ensued.

Another important aspect of the *visitas* demonstrating Asunción-pueblo networks was the "*declaración de mestizo*" or declaration of mestizo. In this legal act, a governor could officially change an individual's *casta* from "Indian" to "mestizo." The large majority of these were for children. The problem for modern historians is that it is not clear what criteria the governor used to make his decision. The boilerplate language the governor used when recording the writs suggested the child's physical appearance as a major impetus for issuing a declaration of mestizo. Declaration of mestizo writs were most often initiated by a child's cacique, mother, or relative. But, the governor also initiated these writs. For example, in the inspection of Arecayá in 1677, the governor indicated that a tributary named Gregorio was absent in Corrientes, but his wife, Ana, was present with her son, Salvador. The governor noted that Salvador, "by his looks, appeared to be a Spaniard's son and his mother confirmed the same under oath." The

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<sup>299</sup> ANA, NE, 1614, vol. 160.

governor "ordered that Salvador enjoy every liberty and he separated him from the encomienda." He then ordered him to "dress in a Spanish jacket."<sup>300</sup>

As this chapter has shown, there were a variety of contexts, both in Asunción or in the pueblos, where all socio-racial groups intermingled, facilitating inter-racial sexual unions. The data from the pueblos surrounding Asunción indicate the close connections between the city and the centers of indigenous corporate identity. The following section turns to the *yanacona*, which did not possess the same corporate structure as the pueblos, like Indian cabildos, caciques, or *corregidores*. Nonetheless, the *yanacona* still possessed some degree of corporate identity.

### The Encomienda Originaria

The first extant *visita* of the *yanacona* in Asunción was conducted in 1694.<sup>301</sup> By this time Spaniards systematically referred to *yanacona* as "*indios originarios*" and these encomienda units as "*encomiendas originarias*."<sup>302</sup> Figure 5 shows the totals and averages per encomienda for this *visita*.

**Figure 5. *Visita* Data, *Originarios* in Asunción, 1694**

	Tributaries	Married Women	Single Women	Children	Runaways	Retired	Declared Mestizo	Married to a Black
Total	401	301	88	616	130	58	28	14
Average per enc.	4.4	3.3	.96	6.74	1.4	.63	N/A	N/A

Source: ANA, NE, 1694, vol. 185, no. 3

<sup>300</sup> "que pareció por su aspecto ser hijo de español y la dha su madre assi lo declaro con juramento que hizo conforme a derecho." ANA, NE, 1677, vol. 177, fol. 32 r.

<sup>301</sup> There were earlier counts of *originarios* before 1694. For example, the 1674 Ruano report on the encomienda recorded *originario* numbers for each encomendero. But this 1694 is the first extant *visita* of the *originarios* in Asunción.

<sup>302</sup> Of course the 1674 report on the encomienda registered orFor the remainder of this dissertation, I will refer to *yanacona* as *originarios*.

Compared with the data culled from Ruano's 1674 report, the number of runaways among the *originarios* was much higher: 9.7 percent among the *mitaya* in 1674 compared with 22 percent in 1694 among the *originarios*. The higher rate of runaways among the *originarios* in Asunción is likely related to tributaries' close proximity to the transport industry. From Asunción, yerba transport teams were assembled to move down the Paraguay R. or overland towards Corrientes and Santa Fe.

The high number of declarations of mestizo among the *originarios* is not surprising given the constant inter-racial contact. One declaration of mestizo, however, stands out. When a tributary named Juan Pasqual was recorded with his wife and child, the *protector de indios* noted that he has been declared a mestizo during a previous *visita*, yet Pasqual was still serving in the encomienda. The notary explained, "because of the love that [Pasqual] had for his encomendero, Field Marshal Juan de Encinas, and the good treatment and pay that he received, he did not abandon the encomienda." Pascual had every right to abandon Encinas' encomienda with his indigenous wife and child and given previously reviewed evidence, magistrates in Paraguay would have supported him; yet, he chose to remain as a tributary.<sup>303</sup> We can only speculate as to why Pascual remained as a tributary when he had the opportunity to be free of tribute. Perhaps the patronage, lodging, agricultural plot, and other materials his encomendero offered the *originarios* of this encomienda were more attractive than striking out on his own. Pascual's case is rare, but the language used to describe his connection to an encomendero has a historicity rooted in the concubinage-kinship-labor pattern and underscores some of the elements that bound the encomienda together.

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<sup>303</sup> Examples of magistrates upholding a mestizo or "Indian's" choice to live with his partner can be found here: ANA, CJ, 1688, vol. 1362, no. 3; ANA, SC, 1598, vol. 13, fol. 173

By at least the 1690s, *originarios* were viewed by their encomenderos as culturally different than the pueblo populations. In 1688, the city prosecutor of Asunción, explained that *originarios* were “more expert in Spanish politics because they live with Spaniards,” noting also that they dressed better than their pueblo counterparts.\*<sup>304</sup> Yet, there is some evidence that a sense of corporate identity was maintained. In the same year, two clerics named Domingo Cerím and Joseph Domínguez who oversaw the parish of San Blas (the Black and Indian parish), noted that the *originarios* were active in a *cofradía* or religious brotherhood housed in the parish of San Blas and then they added that the *originarios* conducted all their religious devotions in the Guaraní language.<sup>305</sup> More research needs to be conducted on this Indian *cofradía* in Asunción, but that fact of its existence speaks to a degree of corporate identity heretofore unexplored in the scholarship. Moreover, it is important to remember that the Guaraní living in Asunción as *originarios* still spoke the Guaraní language. Of all the Indian groups of Paraguay, we would expect the *originarios*, those living in closest proximity to Spaniards, to be the first to acquire Spanish, yet by the late seventeenth century, most *originarios* were still monolingual. That Guaraní was the dominant language of Asunción is reflective of the profound contributions Guaraní culture made to colonial Paraguayan society.

## Conclusions

Asunción's urban-rural configuration sets it apart from other Spanish colonial cities. In the absence of early colonial maps of the city, records detailing the distribution of *solares* or plots of land at the city's center, and descriptive accounts of the city, this chapter has attempted to provide a social and physical geography of Asunción. By

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<sup>304</sup> ANA, SH, 1688, vol. 7. Further analysis of these statements will be provided in Chapter 6.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

including an analysis of the relations between Asunción and the pueblos and the various networks linking Guaraní, Blacks, Spaniards, and their mixed-raced descendants, this chapter paints a complex portrait of Asunción. The evidence provided here suggests that the very physical organization of Asunción as portrayed in Azara's *plano* reflects the encomienda community and, thereby, the Guaraní's socio-cultural contribution to the foundation stones of Paraguay's primary city. There are many factors that created this urban-rural space, including poverty and topography, but the most important was the large number of encomenderos and their reliance on Guaraní personal servants on their private estates.

## Chapter 5

### "On the Fringes of Empire: *Indios Fronterizos*, *Bandeirantes* and Indian Soldiers"

This dissertation has focused on Paraguay's slow and gradual cultural and social changes, marked by hybridity and Guaraní cultural contributions. But Paraguay also possessed frontiers and borderlands, marked more by violence and rupture than cultural accommodation. (For the purposes of this chapter, frontiers are defined as meeting places in which geographic and cultural borders are not defined while borderlands are contested spaces between colonial domains).<sup>306</sup> Paraguay's frontiers and borderlands were at once places of intense violence and arenas of indigenous agency. This chapter will examine two frontiers and borderlands: the frontier between Paraguay and the Gran Chaco, home to various non-sedentary groups, and Guayrá, an area that was decimated by slavers from São Paulo.

The shifting dynamics of power on Paraguay's frontiers and borderlands opened up spaces for groups who might otherwise have been marginalized. In particular, Paraguay's frontiers benefited Chaco groups, who came to depend on raiding Spanish and Guaraní settlements. In Guayrá, *bandeirantes* and their native allies, the Tupí, captured thousands of Guaraní.<sup>307</sup> In reaction to these threats, Spanish officials called on Guaraní auxiliary forces, who leveraged their military service to acquire socio-economic benefits. This dissertation is the first to analyze these heretofore invisible Guaraní militias and contributes to recent scholarship that seeks to debunk the "myth of the white

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<sup>306</sup> This definition of frontiers and borderlands is from Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, "From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in Between in North American History," *The American Historical Review* 104 (1999): 814-841.

<sup>307</sup> Monteiro, "From Indian to Slave"; Monteiro, *Negros da terra*.

conquistador" or the notion that only Spaniards fought in the long conquest of the Americas<sup>308</sup>

Given their volatility, frontiers and borderlands are often characterized by shifting identities, boundaries, and allegiances. Paraguay's frontiers and borderlands not only encompassed "enemy Indians" and *bandeirantes*, but also Guaraní who moved back and forth between various worldviews, cosmologies, and political identities. This chapter will begin with a cultural analysis of several liminal Guaraní figures and explore how they indexed their identities within both Spanish and Guaraní cultural frameworks. The first example comes from the life of a Guaraní shaman named Juan Cuarací who was accused and convicted of sorcery under a Spanish court. Cuarací's hybrid spiritual beliefs and practices provide a framework to analyze the 1660 rebellion of a Guaraní community in Itatín, which only decades earlier had begun participating in Christian-pueblo life. The Arecayá Rebellion illustrates the many choices Guaraní made when placed under onerous tributary demands and how those choices were informed by Guaraní cultural values. Moving from cultural frontiers to borderlands, this chapter will then explore Paraguay's eastern borderlands and western frontiers, shared with indomitable Chaco groups and Brazilian slavers.

### **Guaraní Spiritual Power**

In August 1625, a Guaraní who called himself Juan Cuarací was violently executed in Asunción's public square. After being garroted and drawn and quartered, his limbs, torso, and head were placed in specific locations throughout the province to warn other Indigenous that acts of rebellion would not be tolerated.<sup>309</sup> Asunción justices found

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<sup>308</sup> Restall, *Seven Myths*, Chapter 3.

<sup>309</sup> ANA, CJ, 1625, vol.1533 , no. 4.



Cuarací guilty of sorcery and of usurping Spanish authority. Cuarací had distributed Spanish-style staffs of justice to Indigenous from various pueblos throughout the province, a political act he had internalized and adapted based on his experiences in various Jesuit and Franciscan reductions throughout the region. When bringing a Guaraní group into a reduction, the Fathers would usually bestow on the group's cacique a staff of justice, symbolically representing the cacique's authority as a political leader within the reduction and under the supervision of the priest.<sup>310</sup> By distributing his own staffs of justice, Cuarací had usurped the Catholic fathers' spiritual and political authority.

Cuarací also preached a variety of hybrid religious teachings, melding Guaraní and Christian cosmologies. Witness testimony and Cuarací's own confession reveal that he called himself the "Son God" and the "God of the Earth." He told many natives that he did not fear death at the hands of the Spanish because he would be resurrected and live again. He urged his followers to ignore the Fathers' teachings and taught them that the sacraments, especially baptism, poisoned them and their children. Polygyny, which the Fathers were attempting to eradicate in the reductions, was essential to Cuarací. In his view, the Fathers' prohibition of polygyny was a veiled attempt to destroy the Guaraní; therefore, Cuarací told his followers that they could have as many wives as they could support.<sup>311</sup>

Cuarací's socio-religious actions indicate that he was acting as a Guaraní shaman, or *karai*.<sup>312</sup> He was baptized in the Guayrá region in the Jesuit reduction called Tobay, where he served the encomendero Juan Jiménez in his *chacra*. From Guayrá he moved about the province, from Asuncion to Santa Fe to the Jesuit missions of the Paraná region

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<sup>310</sup> Wilde, *Religión y poder*, 97.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., fol. 122 v.

<sup>312</sup> Clastres, *The Land-Without-Evil*; Wilde, *Religión y poder*, ch. 2.

and finally to the Franciscan pueblo of Yaguarón in Itatín. He was arrested and escaped at least twice during his journeys and preached among the Guaraní and the Charrúa—a non-sedentary indigenous culture in frequent conflict with the Spaniards of Santa Fe. Cuarací also visited a native woman in Asunción, whom he said he loved and with whom he had several children. In Yaguarón, he preached clandestinely and maintained a hideout in the forests where he raised crops with great success because of his magical powers. Cuarací baptized his followers' children by marking their chests with charcoal and giving them Guaraní names.<sup>313</sup> He claimed to have learned many of these rites and teachings from the devil, who appeared to him in visions brought on by the consumption of copious amounts of yerba.

Cuarací's movement throughout the province, from Asunción to two Franciscan pueblos (Yutí and Yaguarón) to a Jesuit mission (Caazapá) whilst preaching his own doctrines was typical of Guaraní *karaí*. Giving new names, re-baptizing, usurping Spanish symbols of power, claiming to be “God” or “Son of God” were all typical of shamanic and messianic movements among the Tupí-Guaraní in Paraguay and Brazil.<sup>314</sup> Daisy Rípodas Ardanaz has counted some fifty shamanic movements among the Guaraní from the period from 1537 to 1735. Of these fifty she analyzed the specific religious characteristics of twenty-four movements and found that 58 percent were led by shaman who proclaimed to be gods, making them messianic in nature. Most of these movements were a negative reaction to encomienda labor or the strictures of reduction life and sought

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<sup>313</sup> ANA, CJ, 1625, vol.1533 , no. 4, fol. 128 v.

<sup>314</sup> On Guaraní religion and shamanism, see Clastres, *The Land-Without-Evil*; Daisy Rípodas Ardanaz, “Pervivencia de hechiceros en las misiones guaraníes,” *Folia Histórica del Nordeste* 6 (1984): 199-217; Melià, *El guaraní conquistado*; Daisy Rípodas Ardanaz, “Movimientos Shamánicos De Liberación Entre Los Guaraníes (1545-1660),” *Teología* 50 (1987): 245-275; Graciela Chamorro, “La buena palabra. Experiencias y reflexiones religiosas de los grupos guaraníes,” *Revista de Indias* 65, no. 230 (2004): 117-140.

to revitalize the Guaraní's ancient mode of living.<sup>315</sup> What makes Cuarací's movement interesting is that he, as a *karái*, had access to small groups of supporters in Paraguay's major cities and religious reductions, an extensive reach. That Cuarací had followers in all of these places is indicative of the ambiguous "conversion" of the Guaraní taking place throughout the region and the incomplete nature of the conquest.

How can we explain Cuarací's rejection of Jesuit and Spanish rule while simultaneously utilizing Christian and Spanish-colonial symbols of power and authority? As with other Indigenous throughout the colonial world, the Guaraní did not interpret Christian "conversion" as an abandonment of all their former beliefs. In the late sixteenth century, a Spanish priest named Alonso Barzana said that the Guaraní "were inclined towards the true and the false religion," suggesting that the Guaraní actively adopted Christianity while holding on to ancient religious rites and beliefs.<sup>316</sup> For Cuarací, there was no inherent contradiction in rejecting Spanish colonialism while simultaneously internalizing European symbols, for they had become part of his conceptual and spiritual paradigm, what Viveiros de Castro calls the "centrifugal dynamic" of Tupí-Guaraní culture.<sup>317</sup> Cuarací was able to gain a following thanks, especially to the fluidity of the missions and pueblos. Wilde notes, "initially the mission spaces were unstable and the forest was considered an alternative space for immutable natives, facilitated through permanent contact with gentile populations, both within and without the pueblos."<sup>318</sup>

After Cuarací was ignominiously quartered, the Spanish magistrate ordered that his body parts be distributed throughout the province: his head was taken to Yutí (in Itatín),

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<sup>315</sup> Rípodas Ardanaz, "Movimientos Shamánicos," 246.

<sup>316</sup> Barzana's statement is cited from Chamorro, "La buena palabra," 122.

<sup>317</sup> Viveiros de Castro, *From the Enemy's Point of View*, 3. On the "guaranization" of Spanish-Christian concepts or objects, see Chamorro, "La buena palabra," 122.

<sup>318</sup> Wilde, *Religión y poder*, 113.

one member to the camino real, or the main artery in and out of Asunción—visible to Guaraní coming to and from the pueblos on the *mita*—, and another to Asunción's public plaza. Finally, the magistrate ordered that one of Cuarací's members be sent to the western shore of the Paraguay River, where it could be visible to the Guaycurú. This last order is puzzling; in his trial, neither Cuarací nor the witnesses mentioned that he maintained connections with the Guaycurú. Why were the Guaycurú suddenly relevant to this episode of Guaraní witchcraft? For the Spanish, Cuarací represented the ills of a life forged on the cultural frontiers of Spanish-Christian civilization, or the spaces in-between the encomienda and religious reductions, while simultaneously taking advantage of and distorting European/Christian elements and resources. By the 1620s, the Guaycurú, Mbayá, and Payaguá had proven to be intractable enemies who became dependent on the Spanish-Guaraní communities in Paraguay as raiding sites. Putting Cuarací's body parts in their territory signaled that he had become like them and they would become like him. It was a performance of an invented Spanish dominance over the Guaycurú, a diplomacy defined by war.

Either invented or real, Spaniards connected Guaraní sorcery and rebellion with the Chaco groups' in Paraguay, who defied colonial authority. These connections are more explicit when examining the Arecayá Rebellion.

### **The Arecayá Rebellion**

The Arecayá Rebellion of 1660 is a tangible example of the incomplete conquest in the Itatín region, a territory that stretched from the Apa River to the Jejuy River.

Spaniards used the east to west flow of the Jejuy River to transport yerba mate from Mbaracayú out to the Paraguay River and then south to Asunción. Founded by Spaniards

and seculars in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, Arecayá was situated just south of the Jejuy River, an important location on the yerba route.

Rafael Eladio Velazquez is the only historian to write a focused analysis of the Arecayá Rebellion.<sup>319</sup> He concludes that the rebellion was a result of the encomienda's devastating labor demands. Onerous labor demands help explain this rebellion, but the sources point to other reasons related to the position of Arecayá on a frontier with the Payaguá and the role of vengeance in Guaraní culture.<sup>320</sup> The most important source for accessing these perspectives is the official inquiry and criminal trial that prosecuted and ultimately executed the dozens of conspirators and co-conspirators in the rebellion.

The rebellion occurred in November of 1660 during Governor Alonso Sarmiento de Figueroa's *visita*. Figueroa was governor from 1659 to 1663 and regarded by his contemporaries as a stern but able leader. He is known for revamping the provinces' presidios: in Itatín alone he oversaw the construction of three presidios.<sup>321</sup> Figueroa arrived at Arecayá in October with his entourage of thirty vecinos, notaries, encomenderos, and their personal retainers, including *yanacona* and African slaves. Figueroa had heard that the community was planning a rebellion, but when they arrived the Guaraní received them warmly. So the governor continued on to Villa Rica, where he conducted other *visitas* and official business.

By 5 November, Figueroa had returned to Arecayá and had concluded the *visita*. That night, Guaraní warriors began intoning their war cries, mimicking birds and other animals, as well as flutes and other instruments. The governor summoned the pueblo's

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<sup>319</sup> Velázquez, *La rebelión*. Branislava Susnik has also written about Arecayá, but only briefly. Susnik, *El indio colonial*, 235-236.

<sup>320</sup> On vengeance as motivator for Guaraní rebellions, see Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 164-165.

<sup>321</sup> Velázquez, *La rebelión*.

principal cacique, don Mateo Nambaici, to his lodgings and inquired about the noises. Nambaici claimed that his sentinels suspected the Payaguá were approaching and began the war cries to prepare for war. Despite his concern, the governor allowed Nambaici to return to his lodging. Later that night, some 350 Arecayense attacked the Spanish with cudgels and bow and arrow. They burned the lodging where the governor and his entourage were sleeping in as well as the pueblo chapel. In the *mêlée* that ensued four Spaniards were killed and twenty-two wounded. The remaining *vecinos* locked themselves inside the sections of the church made from stone. The Spaniards remained there for five days, fending off the Guaraní's attacks and staving off hunger and thirst.

Surrounding the church, the Arecayense shouted at the Spanish and told them that they could not stay in the province; those who remained would become the Guaraní's servants.<sup>322</sup> They further declared that their rebellion was to avenge the death of their former cacique, who had been executed for leading a rebellion in 1650. During the siege, the son of this cacique, Bartolomé, proclaimed angrily that he was avenging his father's death and that after they had killed Figueroa they would eliminate the rest of the Spanish throughout the province. According to *yanacona* pages who were held captive during the siege, the Arecayense had planned to sack Villa Rica and Asunción. After having killed all the Spanish men, they had planned on taking the Spaniards' women. This reference to taking women should be read within the context of the *encomienda* community. Even by the 1660s, Spaniards were still channeling women from the pueblos to their estates as *yanacona* and the documentation from Arecayá reveals that there were women from Arecayá serving on Spanish chacras at the time of the rebellion. The reference to "taking

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<sup>322</sup> AGI, Escribanía, 1660, vol. 882. Folio pages are not available for this file.

their women" refers then to recouping women lost through the encomienda and acquiring new female concubines/laborers.

After five days, Guaraní auxiliary troops arrived from the Franciscan pueblos of Atyrá, Ypané, Guarambaré, and Caaguazú (a nearby Jesuit mission). These troops sent the Arecayense fleeing into the forests. Most of the warriors and ringleaders were, however, captured. Some of the *vecinos* directly involved in the siege attributed their survival to God's miracles. At one point of desperation near the end of the siege, God sent rain which puddled enough around the church that the Spaniards inside were able to drink. Mana from heaven appeared in the form of a pig that wallowed conveniently near the church door. Eye-witnesses explained that Figueroa was their anchor, giving them heart when they were ready to despair. At one point, during the battle, Figueroa encouraged his men saying, "my brothers and friends, for God and for King life is nothing." Defending the church and its sacred objects took center stage in some of the depositions. Others highlighted Spaniards' bravery in fending off their enemies, who tried to disassemble the church and fired weapons through every opening they could find.

When the ringleaders of the rebellion were questioned, they confirmed that their purpose in rebelling was to avenge their dead cacique and take the Spaniards' women. The notary summarized their explanation in this way: "[the rebellion] was an ancient grudge (*pasión*) that they held against the Spanish. They wanted to avenge the punishments executed against their fathers and grandfathers and particularly against Pedro Tiesu, the principle cacique, who was hanged for leading a previous uprising."<sup>323</sup> Violence during the siege became brutal and seemed to reflect the Arecayense's former

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<sup>323</sup> "fue una pasión antiquísima que tienen a la nación española y procurar vengar castigos que en sus padres y abuelos an executado y particularmente la muerte de Pedro Tiesu Casique principal, que mando a ahorcar por civesa de otro alsamiento el maestro de campo don Fernando Sorrilla del Valle." Ibid.

grudges. At some point, the Arecayense decapitated a Spaniard and paraded his detached head around the pueblo like a trophy—it is tragically ironic that the Spaniard who lost his head was named Pedro Chaparro, which means squat or short. Given the displays of violence and the Arecayense's stated goals, the rebellion should be viewed within a framework of Guaraní revenge and masculine authority.

One of the best sources for understanding the role of revenge among Tupí Natives comes from Hans Staden's captivity narrative (originally published in 1557). In 1554, Staden was taken captive by the Tupinambá, a Tupí group in coastal Brazil who shared many characteristics with the Guaraní of Paraguay. The Tupinambá captured Staden, who they assumed to be a Portuguese, to avenge the deaths of their kin. Contemporary priests and some modern scholars note that vengeance is the key to understanding the Tupinambá's punitive raids and a hermeneutic tool for interpreting the practice of cannibalism.<sup>324</sup> For the Guaraní in mid sixteenth-century Paraguay, Florencia Roulet shows that while most scholars have framed Guaraní uprisings as acts of "rebellion" against the Spanish, it is important to note that most Guaraní violence against Spaniards were framed around vengeance.<sup>325</sup> In the 1660 Arecayá uprising, vengeance also framed violence against Spaniards, but it also ran parallel to a complete rejection of Spanish colonialism.

In the investigation that followed the siege of the Arecayá church, officials pointed to Arecayá's location on the frontier with the Payaguá and the populations' continued

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<sup>324</sup> Hans Staden, *Hans Staden's True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil*, ed. Neil L. Whitehead and Michael Harbsmeier (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 47. On interpreting cannibalism through vengeance, see Whitehead, "Hans Staden," 738. On the importance of vengeance in Tupí violence against Europeans, see Frank Salomon and Stuart B. Schwartz, eds., *The Crisis and Transformations of Invaded Societies: Coastal Brazil in the Sixteenth Century*, *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 987-988.

<sup>325</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 164.



practice of idolatry as the principle causes of the rebellion. One witness, a vecino from Villa Rica, explained that the Arecayense adored the pueblo's *corregidor*, Rodrigo Yaguariguá, as a god and worshiped his daughter as the Holy Virgin. That the *corregidor* was acting as a *karaí* reflects that lack of priestly oversight in the pueblo. The pueblo also made potions from boiled tree bark with which they used to wash themselves as part of public ceremonies akin to Christian community baptisms—these might also have been “counter-baptisms.”<sup>326</sup> Other witnesses explained that the Arecayense danced with calabash rattles and declared themselves free from all sins. All of these activities are familiar when compared with other shamanic and messianic movements among the Guaraní.

Captain Martín de Cruz de Zarate, acting as prosecutor in the proceedings, explained that the pueblo had degenerated because of its "proximity to different enemy [nations] and the rugged mountains."<sup>327</sup> The dichotomy between pueblos as civilization and mountains/forests as heathenism was a trope the Jesuits frequently employed. Wilde explains, "the ritualization of mission space carried with it the use of the effective metaphors which tended to figure a polarity between inside and outside in terms of good and bad."<sup>328</sup> This polarity was expressed in the final sentencing. The governor determined that the principal leaders should be executed and the entire pueblo of Arecayá be subjected to perpetual servitude and become *yanaconas* in Asunción. To bolster his sentence, Figueroa cited a royal cédula from 1618 which gave Spaniards the right to enslave Chaco enemies. The cedula was issued as a result of a severe Payaguá raid in

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<sup>326</sup> Melià notes that several *karaí* performed to “*contrabautismos*” on their followers. Melià, *El guaraní conquistado*, 39.

<sup>327</sup> AGI, Escribanía, 1660, vol. 882.

<sup>328</sup> Wilde, *Religión y poder*, 64.

which many Guaraní and Spaniards had been massacred. The prosecutor reasoned that “[Arecayá] should not be permitted to remain as one body, but should be divided. In this way they will easily enter into the Faith and Christian law.” Once they reached Asunción, nearly two hundred natives from Arecayá were distributed to local encomenderos as *yanacona*.

As the governor and his prisoners moved south from Itatín towards Asunción, the investigation continued. Officials took depositions from surrounding communities, revealing that many people had known that Arecayá was planning a rebellion. Moreover, other Guaraní from pueblos in the immediate Asunción orbit had colluded with the Arecayense. In Captain Juan de la Peña’s *chacra* a female *yanacona* from Arecayá explained that many Natives in Asunción knew about the rebellion and some had planned to collaborate with the traitors.<sup>329</sup> Officials also took depositions in the pueblos, including the Jesuit mission of Caaguazú and Terecañy and identified several co-conspirators. Among them were two Guaraní from Yaguarón, one from Tobatí, and a *yanacona* from Asunción. The conspiracy had spread over a great geographic distance but failed to incite a general rebellion.

En route to Asunción, Governor Figueroa decided to execute the ringleaders he had in his possession because, so he claimed, he feared they were going to escape. So, Figueroa ordered that the thirteen rebels he had taken from Arecayá be garroted. Among the executed was Domingo, a “*mulato mameluco*.”<sup>330</sup> Spaniards often referred to *bandeirantes* as *mamelucos*, indicating that perhaps Domingo had come to Arecayá by way of São Paulo. Once the company had arrived in Asunción the other conspirators

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<sup>329</sup> AGI, Escribanía, 1660, vol. 882.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid. Mameluco in Brazil implied “mestizo” or mixed-raced.

were brought from their respective pueblos and were also garroted. Figueroa ordered that the bodies of the executed be displayed and the head of their leader, Rodrigo Yaguarigua, be placed atop a pike in plain view.

After the Arecayense were distributed in Asunción as *yanacona*, several Guaraní and Paraguay's Bishop, Andrés Cornejo and the governor's political enemy, complained. Bishop Cornejo accused the governor of excessive harshness and launched an investigation. Cornejo's investigation revealed that some Natives had not been present in Arecayá during the rebellion but were, nonetheless, submitted to perpetual servitude. One cacique named don Ambrosio Taupi appeared before a magistrate in 1665 and demanded that he be released from the power of Alonso Fernández Ruano (the notary who created the 1674 encomienda report).<sup>331</sup>

Despite Cornejo's accusations, Figueroa had the cabildo's support because of his acumen as a military leader. The cabildo explained in 1660 that bringing the pueblo of Arecayá to Asunción, where they would be in constant contact with Spanish-Christian morals, their rebellious spirit would be tamed. They also noted that increased numbers of *yanacona* would bring relief to the city's poverty.<sup>332</sup> But pressure from Cornejo, the crown, and other parties during the 1660s mounted and Arecayá was eventually reconstituted as a pueblo. The crown had ordered in 1662, that Arecayá be resettled by its inhabitants in its original location, but because of the Payaguá threat, local officials reasoned that Arecayá remain as close to Asunción as possible. By 1669, the population of Arecayá had been settled within the pueblo of Los Altos, the pueblo in closest proximity to Asunción.

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<sup>331</sup> AGI, Escribanía, 1665, vol. 882.

<sup>332</sup> AGI, Charcas, 1660, vol. 33.

In 1669, the governor of Paraguay, Juan Díaz de Andino, collected donations for the transmigrated pueblo of Arecayá. Spaniards gave horses, mules, beans, corn, and metal goods (including axe heads) as a kind of start-up kit for the new pueblo.<sup>333</sup> Recognizing their free status, the governor gave Arecayense the choice of remaining in Asunción among the *yanacona* they had been originally assigned to in 1660 or of moving to the transmigrated Arecayá pueblo in Los Altos. A total of twelve adults chose to stay with their Spanish masters in Asunción. Two of these Arecayense had married individuals in Asunción, one of whom was a Black belonging to the "vicar." The notary recorded, that twenty-five orphans remained with their Spanish masters in Asunción. Obviously, these orphans were not given a choice as to whether they would remain as *yanaconas* or return to their transmigrated pueblo.

In 1673, the governor conducted a *visita* of the joint Arecayá/Altos pueblos, providing a social snapshot of this newly reconstituted pueblo. The Arecayá population contained 120 tributaries divided into 12 encomiendas, the average encomienda containing 10 tributaries. The *padrón* indicates that the Arecayense had not abandoned their former lives and social networks in Itatín. Fourteen tributaries (some with their families) had abandoned Arecayá and were living in a pueblo named Atyrá, not far from where Arecayá once existed before it was transmigrated. Ten more tributaries had made their way in the yerba transport industry and were in Corrientes.<sup>334</sup>

The story of Arecayá provides a microhistory of forced transmigration and colonial repression in Paraguay. The violence Spaniards employed to reign in the Arecayá population provides a counterpoint to the processes that defined the encomienda

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<sup>333</sup> ANA, NE, 1669, vol. 160.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

community. At the same time, the violence the Arecayá pueblo experienced complement this dissertation's analysis of the encomienda community: even when severe violence was employed, the Arecayense recreated their former social networks through migration. Moreover, the cultural expressions of the leaders of the Arecayá rebellion represent profound examples of the "plastic capacity of the Tupí-Guaraní matrix."<sup>335</sup> The Guaraní of Arecayá absorbed Spanish-Christian symbols, holy figures, and pueblo political organization, shaping them to fit their Guaraní cosmologies. Their chosen women became holy virgins and their *corregidor* a god. Through hybrid Guaraní-Christian ceremonies they cleansed themselves of sin, a concept that had less to do with Christian judgement than with transforming men into prophets.<sup>336</sup> As a frontier pueblo, Arecayá illustrates the complex connections between Chaco groups and the Guaraní.

Arecayá serves as reminder that colonial Paraguay during the seventeenth century experienced a constant process of contraction. But besides the Arecayá Rebellion, territorial contraction in Paraguay was not a result of Guaraní rebellion. The most serious threats came from bellicose Chaco groups.

### ***Indios Fronterizos***

The groups Spaniards frequently called *indios fronterizos* or frontier Indians were ethnically diverse. To a certain degree, this complexity has been filtered out of colonial sources. The three macro-ethnic groups that most frequently raided Asunción and the pueblos of the Itatín region were the Guaycurú, Mbayá, and the Payaguá. During the conquest period, Spaniards left the Chaco region largely uncolonized because of the difficult terrain and the people who inhabited that land. During half the year, the Chaco

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<sup>335</sup> Viveiros de Castro, *From the Enemy's Point of View*, 25.

<sup>336</sup> See Ana María Gorosito Kramer, "Liderazgos guaraníes. Breve revisión histórica y nuevas notas sobre la cuestión," *Avá: Revista de Antropología* 9 (2009): 11-27.

was so dry it was uninhabitable and the other half of the year it flooded. But various native groups learned to thrive in the Chaco by remaining mobile and following seasonal crops and game.<sup>337</sup>

Spaniards earliest encounters with Chaco groups were defined by violence. This was partially due to the fact that the Spaniards' first allies, the Carío-Guaraní, were constantly at war with the Guaycurú, especially the Payaguá (also called Agaces).<sup>338</sup> For example, in 1539, Irala led a joint Spanish-Carío expedition, in which the Carío massacred and enslaved hundreds of Payaguá. This collaboration in indigenous warfare helped to confirm the alliance Spaniards had created with the Guaraní. Despite brief interludes when Guaraní groups were in rebellion against the Spanish, this interethnic military collaboration remained constant.<sup>339</sup>

In the early seventeenth century, several Jesuit missionaries attempted to reduce the Guaycurú and a few groups experimented with mission life. From 1609 to 1626, the Codalodis, a band of Mbayás, created missions with the Jesuits in exchange for material goods at a site just to the west of Asunción. Other missions appeared in the Chaco but by the 1620s all had failed due to epidemics and the contradictions the Guaycurú found in sedentary life. Finally in the 1730s, on the heels of ecological changes that made the Guaycurú more vulnerable, Spanish officials in Paraguay made efforts to create alliances with Chaco groups and increase peaceful trade. It was at this point that some Guaycurú cooperated with the Jesuits. Combined with diplomatic tactics, better Spanish military

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<sup>337</sup> The best account of the Chaco groups in the Paraguay region is James Schofield. Saeger, "Warfare, Reorganization, and Readaptation At the Margins of Spanish Rule: The Chaco and Paraguay (1573-1882)," in *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Saeger, *The Chaco Mission Frontier*.

<sup>338</sup> On the Agaces, see Ganson, "The Evueví of Paraguay".

<sup>339</sup> Roulet, *La resistencia de los Guaraní*, 135.

capabilities, and ecological changes, many Guaycurú decided that mission life provided the security and protection their communities needed.<sup>340</sup> This chapter treats Spanish-Chaco encounters before Chaco groups began permanently living in mission settlements. Guaycurú encounters with Spaniards and Guaraní from the late sixteenth through the seventeenth century were defined by tense barter negotiations and violence.

Natives of the Chaco responded innovatively to the Spanish-Guaraní alliance and the ecological changes brought on by the ecological Columbian exchange. The Mbayá, who were active in the Apa River region, adopted the horse and became able equestrians. The Mbayá crossed the Paraguay River and hunted large herd animals, retaining some to trade with other Chaco groups, Guaraní pueblos, and even Spaniards. Eventually, the Asunción cabildo attempted to regulate this trade and they designated an area in Asunción where the Mbayá traded items like honey, wax, animal skins, and salt for iron, which they used for lance and arrow tips. With these items the Mbayá bartered with their Chaco neighbors.<sup>341</sup> Like the Mbayá, most Chaco groups learned to accommodate and thrive on the new dynamics of trade in the region.

While the Spanish might have seen trading relationships with the Chaco groups as a sign of peace, the Guaycurú maintained no such notion. They freely mixed trade with raids on Asunción and Guaraní pueblos. The back and forth from peaceful to violent exchanges led Spaniards to adopt confused and inconsistent attitudes towards the Guaycurú, reflected in the Asunción cabildo's contradictory edicts regulating trade with the Guaycurú. In 1613, for example, the cabildo prohibited the Guaycurú from trading in Asunción, but instead allowed them to trade at individual *chacras* in the Asunción area.

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<sup>340</sup> Saeger, *The Chaco Mission Frontier*, 27-33.

<sup>341</sup> Saeger, *The Chaco Mission Frontier*, ch. 1.

Any vecino or inhabitant who did not dismiss the Guaycurú after the trade was complete was subject to fines.<sup>342</sup> The idea was that if the Guaycurú were allowed to trade in the city, they would be able to hide themselves and launch night raids. This policy reflects a love-hate relationship with the Guaycurú, a deep mistrust mitigated by Spaniards' need to barter.

It is clear from Spanish records that the Guaycurú believed they were the dominant actors in these trading negotiations. Many displayed an attitude of cultural superiority, evident in the following commentary from 1613:

“[The Guaycurú] enter [Spanish] homes and chacras under the pretense that they are there to trade and sell their things, but they leave the people scandalized and fearful. From some [Spanish homes] the Guaycurú take whatever they can. To others the Guaycurú make threats that if they do not let them take what they want they will kill them. The Guaycurú have acquired so much freedom that they mock Spaniards to scorn in their fields, even tugging on their beards in contempt.”<sup>343</sup>

The cabildo surmised that the Guaycurú's flagrant attitudes of disrespect were signs that they were planning a raid on Asunción on Holy Thursday, suspicions strengthened by the many reports of stolen canoes and horses. Later in the year, the cabildo noted that Guaycurú began trading only for horses or mules which heightened the anxiety even more. At night, one could hear droves of canoes and paddles sloshing down the river. From the opposite side of the river the sounds of ominous war cries (*chifles de guerra*) could be detected.<sup>344</sup>

The arrival of so many people in canoes from the north led the cabildo to suspect a joint Guaycurú-Payaguá raid of some two-thousand warriors. Officials believed that the invaders sought to destroy the Christian faith and the city of Asunción. The documentation, however, does not suggest that this raid actually occurred. Spanish

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<sup>342</sup> ANA, SC, 1613, vol. 14, fol. 195.

<sup>343</sup> MG, 1613, vol. 14118.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.



officials hyperbolic language describing imminent Guaycurú threats and raids must be read carefully. In reality, Spaniards probably understood that the Guaycurú actually relied on the survival of Asunción and the province's other pueblos, for they provided seasonal raiding grounds and trading sites, resources they depended on for over a century.

A large portion of the booty the Guaycurú took from the province came from Guaraní-Christian pueblos. In the *visita* of Atyrá, a pueblo then under Franciscan control some sixty kilometers east of Asunción, one cacique (out of thirty-four total) explained to the governor that he had no more Guaraní "vassals" because they had all been killed or carried away captive by the Guaycurú.<sup>345</sup> Atyrá suffered several other major attacks over the years, largely without any aid from the Spanish militia.<sup>346</sup> Years later, in 1672, the cabildo recounted that the Guaycurú took several women and children from Atyra and Asunción. Then in September 1675, the Guaycurú and Mbayá appeared in Asunción to barter with these same captives as well as with sacred ornaments that they had taken from the church Atyrá. The cabildo saw this as a providential opportunity to "redeem" (*rescatar*) these Christian souls and sacred objects from the "heathen." By offering items that the Spanish could not resist—Christian souls and holy objects—the Guaycurú forced the Spaniards to trade.<sup>347</sup>

Not all Guaycurú raids were for economic gain, some were punitive. In 1620, the governor of the Río de la Plata, don Diego de Góngora, reported to the crown that the former governor, Hernandarias, had conducted a "war of fire and blood," resulting in the massacre of some eighty Guaycurú. In retribution, the Guaycurú attacked *chacras* in

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<sup>345</sup> ANA, NE, 1614, vol. 160.

<sup>346</sup> ANA, AC, 8 February 1628, vol. 5, fol. 20.

<sup>347</sup> ANA, AC, 14 September 1675, vol. 11, fol. 534-35

Asunción and captured Hernandarias' sister and niece.<sup>348</sup> We will never know if the Guaycurú had actually targeted Governor Hernandarias' family, but given the Guaycurú's access to Asunción as regular traders, the abduction was most likely premeditated. Other colonials noted that the Guaycurú sought to capture and enslave female *yanacona* on Spanish chacras, underscoring the gendered dimensions of service and indigenous slavery shared by many groups in the broader region.<sup>349</sup> Frequent raids for both goods and slaves ultimately led Spanish officials to outlaw any kind of economic (or otherwise) exchange with the Guaycurú, but repeated prohibitions throughout the seventeenth century indicate that many Paraguayans continued to trade with the Guaycurú.<sup>350</sup>

Guaycurú raids also destroyed private and city-owned properties. In 1674, vecinos abandoned a number of important wheat farms in the Valley of Tapecca after a severe raid. The cabildo ordered that a group of fifty Guaraní from a nearby pueblo, under the protection of Spanish contingent of soldiers, go and harvest the wheat.<sup>351</sup> The Guaycurú also targeted the city's herds of horses and cattle, an easy and plentiful target. In the Valley of Tacumbú, near Asunción, the cabildo owned pasturelands and corrals, which housed essential mules and "war horses" for the city's militia. This population of animals was under constant threat from *indios fronterizos*. The cabildo also mentioned that the herds were frequently attacked by "tigers" and "lions," references to the region's apparently large population of jaguars.

Mentioning the Guaycurú, and ferocious tigers in the same breath was a common literary technique in the conquistador accounts and the early histories of the region. For

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<sup>348</sup> MG, 2 March 1620, vol. 1668

<sup>349</sup> Raul Molina, "La obra franciscana en el Paraguay," *Misionalia Hispanica* XI, no. 33 (1954): 519-520.

<sup>350</sup> ANA, AC, 1 December 1670, vol. 10, fol. 98.

<sup>351</sup> ANA, AC, 1675, vol. 11, fol. 508-14.

example, Cabeza de Vaca recounts that in the 1540s, as he was leading a group of Cario-Guaraní against an encampment of enemy Guaycurú, the Guaraní spotted a "*tigre*" or jaguar, which caused them to withdrawal in fear. To the Guaraní, the jaguar was a powerful being, whose appearance portended destruction and danger.<sup>352</sup> The connection between the Guaycurú and the jaguar in this rather ordinary cabildo entry might be nothing more than a faithful recounting of the damages to the herds, but it nonetheless recalls a deep fear of the Guaycurú which Guaraní and Spaniards shared.

In 1675, during a time of constant and damaging Guaycurú raids, the Asunción cabildo recorded their frustration with *indios fronterizos*, explaining why they were completely incompatible with colonial society and goals:

The frontier enemies, the Guaycurú and Mbayá, and other infidel enemies of Christianity have never desired to embrace the Catholic faith nor desist from persecuting the faithful. They are without profession, life, nor habit. They sustain their art of war without a town, labor, nor other assistance. Instead, they wander naked as vagabonds with their portable shacks, without any other impediment other than the management of their arms, which they use on foot or on horse. In their agility on land and water they are insurmountable. They suffer through thirst, hunger or any inclemency. When they retreat they swim across many mighty rivers and when they attack they appear from different parts of our lands without being detected. Because the bank of this river (*costa*) is forty open leagues, it is impossible to defend it, not even with the twelve forts we already have along her banks.... [The Guaycurú's] lands are cunning, full of marshes and floods. At times there is no water, at others it floods. This makes it impossible for them to have villages nor labor and impossible for us to locate them.<sup>353</sup>

This statement underscores Spanish constructions of the foreignness of the Guaycurú's non-sedentary lifestyle and their associated bellicosity. The Guaycurú's abilities to navigate terrains and waterways, impassible to Spanish military forces, were confounding. Even the Guaycurú's lands possessed "cunning" and deceptive traits, almost as if the people and their land were spiritual kin locked in alliance against the Spanish.

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<sup>352</sup> Tuer, "Tigers and Crosses," 159-163.

<sup>353</sup> ANA, AC, 4 July 1675, vol. 11., fol. 514.

The evidence reviewed above, which highlights the effectiveness of Guaycurú tactics and Spanish helplessness, contrasts with two visual representations of Spaniards' status on their borderlands with Chaco groups. Appendix D is an anonymous drawing of the "Castle of San Ildefonso," which was constructed in the 1660s on the banks of the Paraguay River, just to the north of Asunción.<sup>354</sup> The drawing is divided into two separate halves, separated by the Paraguay River, presenting the viewer with a discernible borderlands. On the upper half, the artist depicts the "Land of Enemy Indians." From the shore, Natives fire arrows at the fort. Some of them have painted skins and colorful plumes adorning their heads. Two of these figures are playing long flute-like instruments. Spaniards knew firsthand that before a raid or battle, Chaco groups would play music on flutes and shout war cries in an ominous cacophony. On the river, canoes carrying two to three Natives, advance on the fort. These figures probably represent the Payaguá, sometimes referred to as "River Pirates."<sup>355</sup> On the bottom half, the artist drew an imposing castle, whose straight lines and foreboding stone walls communicate steadfastness. Spanish soldiers fire their muskets from ramparts at each of the four corners of the fort, as if it represented the four corners of the earth.

Appendix E is a drawing of the "Castle of San Agustín de Arecutagua," constructed in the early eighteenth century, situated just north of the San Ildefonso fort, where the Pirebebuy River runs into the Paraguay River.<sup>356</sup> The drawing communicates Spanish strength, grandeur, and permanence. Both of these drawings attempt to display

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<sup>354</sup> AGI, MP-Buenos Aires, 1660, vol. 225. The two images analyzed in this section have not previously been analyzed for their discursive messages. This is surprising given their stunning color and excellent preservation.

<sup>355</sup> Ganson, "The Evueví of Paraguay," 461.

<sup>356</sup> AGI, MP-Buenos Aires, July 1719, vol. 15. The drawing was accompanied with a report from governor don Diego de los Reyes Valmaseda.

Spanish imperial power and authority. In the drawing of San Ildefonso, the discursive undercurrent is that even though Chaco groups were not settled in reductions or Spanish-styled pueblos, they were at least kept out of Spanish territory and held at bay on what Spaniards called “*la otra banda*” or the “opposite shore of the river.” To be sure, the message of Spanish strength implicit in these images does not reflect social reality. In the first place, these forts were made of wood and mud and were constantly being repaired by Guaraní tributaries.<sup>357</sup> Second, as the analysis above has demonstrated, Spanish military defenses were not effective at keeping Chaco groups out of Paraguay.

### ***Bandeirantes and Guayrá***

The previous section has discussed the porous borderlands that Asunción shared with the Guaycurú and other Chaco groups. We will now turn to Guayrá, Paraguay’s eastern borderlands (see Appendix F for a map of the region), where Portuguese *bandeirantes* and their indigenous allies, the Tupí, used the borderlands as a resource to acquire indigenous slaves. This section will deal specifically with the period from 1600 to 1629, when a massive *bandeira* emptied Guayrá, forcing Jesuit villages and Spanish cities to transmigrate.

Guayrá was a region where a variety of unconquered native groups, Jesuit priests, Spanish encomenderos, and Portuguese *bandeirantes* all pursued diverse socio-economic interests. During the first decade of the seventeenth century, the competition between Jesuits and Spaniards over indigenous labor increased as a result of the growing importance of yerba mate in the Río de la Plata and Peru. After the seventeenth century, Paraguay’s economy depended on harvesting and transporting yerba mate, making the

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<sup>357</sup> In 1677, the governor ordered the repair of the San Ildefonso fort, because it was burned, along with its watchtower. ANA, AC, February 1677, vol. 11, fol. 659.

native populations closest to Mbaracayú crucial. Spanish officials frequently referred to yerba as the gold or silver of the land and Mbaracayú as “*las minas*” or the “mines” of Paraguay, underscoring Spaniards’ desire to identify and exploit an exportable commodity.<sup>358</sup> Moreover, since yerba trees grew naturally in Mbaracayú, local and crown officials successfully created a monopoly on yerba, requiring would-be harvesters to acquire leases, just like the miners of Potosí. In this way, Spanish and crown officials applied subsoil rights, which usually were only applied to precious metals or minerals, to wild yerba groves.

Because the yerba zone, was positioned upriver from Asuncion, it was very difficult to access. São Paulo, on the other hand had much easier access to Guayrá and the yerba zone since the Paranapanema River flowed from east to west. In this way, the very geography of the land, facilitated social and economic linkages between São Paulo and Guayrá. In fact, São Paulo was just as deeply connected to Guayrá as Asunción, if not more.

From the 1570s, when Guayrá was settled by Spaniards, through 1629, when the *bandeira* devastated the region, Spanish officials constantly complained about the Portuguese entering Guayrá illegally.<sup>359</sup> Part of the geo-political context was that from 1580 to 1640 the Kingdom of Portugal came under the control of the Spanish Habsburgs in what is called the Iberian Union. Despite the union, the kingdoms separate trade monopolies were to remain intact. In this far flung corner of the Spanish and Portuguese empires, colonials referenced the Spanish-Portugal union to justify creating inter-kingdom economic networks. Sometime before 1610, traders in São Paulo received

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<sup>358</sup> AGI, Charcas, 1662, vol. 148 B.

<sup>359</sup> See for example, Governor Cespedes de Xeria’ reports on Guayrá in *Anais do museu paulista: historia e cultura material*, vol. 2 (São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 1922), 54-187.

permission from local officials in Rio de Janeiro to create a road between São Paulo and Guayrá, despite inter-kingdom trade being strictly prohibited.<sup>360</sup>

In 1607, the Lieutenant Governor of Paraguay found that a crown official in Guayrá was allowing citizens from São Paulo into the region to trade commodities, including African slaves from Guinea.<sup>361</sup> In 1629, in Mbaracayú, on the eve of the *bandeira* that destroyed Guayrá, the provincial governor demanded that all the Paulistas come forward and be registered. After a six-day grace period, twenty-two Paulistas came forward, not a trivial population given that the total Spanish population of Mbaracayú ranged from 100 or 150. Many of these Paulistas claimed that they were married to women in Asunción, which might have been a cover-up to legitimate their presence in the Spanish realm. Most likely, these Paulistas were in Mbaracayú to trade goods from São Paulo.<sup>362</sup>

Local Spanish settlers and some Spanish officials fostered these inter-kingdom networks. In 1628, don Luis de Céspedes Xeria took up his post in Paraguay as the crown-appointed governor. Rather than traveling to Paraguay from Spain via the normal route up through Buenos Aires, Céspedes Xeria came to Paraguay by way of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.<sup>363</sup> His connections to Brazil were deep. In Rio de Janeiro, Céspedes Xeria married a Portuguese noblewoman named doña Vitoria de Sá, whose uncle was none other than Salvador de Sá, the highly influential governor of Rio de

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<sup>360</sup> Monteiro, *Negros da terra*, 69.

<sup>361</sup> Lieutenant Governor Diego de Teba for Governor Hernandarias, AGI, Charcas, 18 September 1607, vol. 13

<sup>362</sup> The register was taken by Governor Céspedes Xeria on 27 February 1629. See *Anais Do Museu Paulista*, 183.

<sup>363</sup> Céspedes Xeria's detour began in Castille after he failed to secure passage leaving from a Spanish port. Instead, he went to Lisbon and found passage that took him to Bahía and then to Rio de Janeiro. See C.R. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angona, 1602-1686* (London: University of London, The Athlone Press, 1952), 82-86.

Janeiro (1637 to 1643).<sup>364</sup> Leaving his wife in Rio de Janeiro, Céspedes Xeria travelled to São Paulo, and from there to Paraguay. Some time after he arrived in Paraguay, Céspedes Xeria had a map drawn up of Guayrá (see Appendix G). Starting from São Paulo in the upper left, he indicated the riverine path he took, his waypoints, marked by crosses, the dangerous river crossings and waterfalls, marked by black slashes, as well as the Spanish cities and towns and Jesuit missions. What is noteworthy about this map, which was directed to the King, is that there was no attempt to draw up territorial borders between Portuguese Brazil and Spanish Paraguay. The map's structure and design indicate the logistics of traveling to and from São Paulo and Guayrá as well as the natural riverine connections, almost highways, between the administrative center of Guayrá, the city Ciudad Real, and São Paulo. The message seems to be one of interconnectivity rather than separation and boundaries. Knowing Céspedes Xeria's relationship with one of Brazil's most powerful families, we can recognize that this map has an economic and social overlay.

In his map of Guayrá, Céspedes Xeria only drew two Jesuit "villages" or missions, but by 1629 there were fifteen Jesuit missions in the region. The Jesuits used the term village instead of mission to describe their settlements, indicating the transitory and early development of these communities. Most Jesuit villages looked more like a pre-contact Guaraní villages than a reduction fashioned according to Christian ideals. The Jesuits were recent arrivals in Guayrá. They began proselytizing and founding reductions or mission in 1609. By 1628, when Céspedes Xeria came to Guayrá, the villages contained

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<sup>364</sup> Sá's dowry was supposedly 40 thousand ducats in cash, apart from sugar plantations and extensive landed property. Ibid, 84.



anywhere from 1000 to 5000 Guaraní.<sup>365</sup> These were fluid spaces where groups of Guaraní and other native ethnic groups, like the Guayaná and Carijós, moved in and out of the villages.<sup>366</sup> Some Guaraní groups willingly accepted mission spaces and internalized Christian ideas; others rejected the Jesuit villages and Spanish labor demands. One group, called the Guayaná, worked for Spaniards as mercenaries, aiding them in the conquest of native groups in rebellion. The Guayaná also traded with Spaniards, most likely providing them with provisions or perhaps even indigenous slaves, in exchange for metal goods.<sup>367</sup>

The period from 1609 to 1628, was a time of intense competition and bickering between Spaniards and Jesuits over who deserved rights to indigenous labor. Jesuit Diego de Torres, writing from Asunción in 1614, remarked that Guayrá was “the ultimate corner of the earth, the most distant from human commerce.” He added that “the most avaricious and lost people take refuge [in Guayrá].”<sup>368</sup> For their part, Spaniards also denounced the Jesuits for taking Guaraní out of the province or moving them from village to village. Spaniards also feared that the Jesuits were arming the Guaraní to protect them from the small-scale *bandeiras* that continually entered the region.<sup>369</sup> All of these denunciations should be understood in the context of the emerging yerba economy and

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<sup>365</sup> On Jesuit activities seventeenth-century Guayrá see *Jesuitas e bandeirantes*; Wilde, *Religión y poder*, 92.

<sup>366</sup> Guillermo Wilde describes a “paradigm of mobility” in the Jesuit missions. Wilde, *Religión y poder*, 21.

<sup>367</sup> See AGI, Charcas, 1628, vol. 30, R1, no. 1, fol. 25 v.

<sup>368</sup> Se puede decir que este es el ultimo rincon del mundo, el mas apartado del comercio humano. Pero ¿a que privaciones no se sujeta la loca avaricia humana? Alla se refugia la gente mas codiciosa, para no decir: la mas perdida. Hasta alla han sido atraidos los nuestros por su afán de lograr una mercadería celestial, no con deseos de reducir a esclavitud miserable a los habitantes, sino precisamente por querer librarlos de ella a toda costa, hasta contra la voluntad de los espanoles Diego de Torres in *Iglesia; cartas anuas de la provincia del Paraguay, Chile y Tucumán, de la Compañía de Jesús*, eds. Emilio Ravignani and Carlos Leonhardt, vol. 19 (Buenos Aires: Talleres S.A. Casa Jacobo Peuser, 1927), 302.

<sup>369</sup> Spaniards were concerned that if the Guaraní were armed and they turned against Spanish tributary demands, they would be overrun. AGI, Charcas, 1628, vol. 30, R1, no. 1, fol. 17-19, 23 r; *Anais do museu paulista: historia e cultura material*, vol. 1 (São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 1922), 204.

competition over labor. The populations of natives that provided labor for the Spaniards and the Jesuits were the linchpin of the economy. In this way, Jesuits and Spaniards hoped to direct their native laborers towards a South American economic network that started in Guayrá and ended in Potosí. In the end, however, much of their tributaries' labor was directed towards subsistence.

Portuguese *bandeirantes* were connected to the demands of the Atlantic economy. Often compared to crabs on a beach, the Portuguese made few incursions into the interior of the country, unless it yielded viable commodities for export. In the case of Guayrá, Paulista *bandeirantes* sought to enslave the region's natives and direct them to the economic networks of Bahia in northeastern Brazil, where sugar and dye-wood industries were the priorities, as well as to landowners in São Paulo and Río de Janeiro.<sup>370</sup> Highlighting their profound connections to the Atlantic world and Atlantic Africa, the Portuguese called the Indigenous they enslaved in Brazil "*negros da terra*" or "blacks of the land." So while the Spanish and the Jesuits sought to harness native communities and direct their labor to internal and regional economies, the Portuguese saw the natives of Guayrá as commodities to be sold in a trans-regional and Atlantic markets.

The *bandeiras* that invaded Guayrá before 1629 inflicted minimal damage, but the growing threats of enslavement encouraged many Guaraní to join Jesuit villages. If what Spaniards claimed was true and Jesuits were indeed amassing arms, then it would explain many Guaraní's willingness to enter into Jesuit villages. But the tragic irony, which the Jesuits themselves recognized, was that by congregating one to five thousand Guaraní in

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<sup>370</sup> On the ultimate destination of these native slaves, see Monteiro, "From Indian to Slave"; Monteiro, *Negros da terra*, 777-778.

villages, the Jesuits created easier targets for the *bandeirantes*.<sup>371</sup> The critical blow to Guayrá began in August 1629, when a massive *bandeira*, led by Antonio Raposo Tavares and consisting of 900 Paulista *bandeirantes* and 2,000 Tupí, invaded Guayrá.<sup>372</sup> As the *bandeira* moved through Guayrá, they captured by force many native groups not congregated in the fifteen Jesuit missions. They constructed a fort with a wooden palisades which served as a prison camp for their captives.<sup>373</sup> By October, they began raiding the Jesuit villages. Thirteen villages fell to the *bandeira* and their inhabitants were enslaved. Only two villages remained. One Jesuit estimated that anywhere from 22 to 50 thousand Guarani were forcibly enslaved by this one *bandeira*.<sup>374</sup>

The 1629 *bandeira* devastated the region, forcing the two remaining Jesuit villages to transmigrate south to the Paraná region. The Spanish towns of Ciudad Real and Villa Rica also transmigrated, moving west of the Paraná River. Guayrá was never recovered by the Spanish; the territory mattered little if there were no tributary populations. The *bandeirantes* were not after territory either, only human property.

Following the Jesuit populations to the Paraná region, the *bandeirantes* continued to used the borderlands as an arena for capturing slaves, raiding Jesuit missions throughout the 1630s, 40s and 50s. During this time the Jesuits acquired permission from the crown

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<sup>371</sup> In the aftermath of the 1629, two Jesuits who lost their villages, Justo Mancillo and Simon Mareta suggested that it was because the of the Jesuit villages that the *bandeira* attacked the region: “*pues nosotros hemos sido la causa de que esten captivos, y sus mugeres, maridos, hijos y parientes apartados unos de otros y repartidos entre muchos dueños, y vendidos como animales brutos, aviendoles juntado debajo de nuestra palabra, que les dimos, prometiendoles, que estando con nosotros en nuestras aldeas para ser Xpanos y hijos de dios estarian seguros seguros de los portugueses y del captiverio, con que se juntaron y si no les ubieramos prometido tanta seguridad no se uvieran juntado tan presto la mayor parte dellos y por lo consiguiente...probablemente estarian libres.*” *Anais do museu paulista*, 258.

<sup>372</sup> Monteiro, *Negros da terra*, 71. For an account of the Paulista attack and the transmigration of Loreto, see Ruíz de Montoya, *Conquista espiritual*, 153-173.

<sup>373</sup> *Anais do museu paulista*, 250-257.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid. John Monteiro argues that these estimates were not far from reality, since it was not only from the Jesuit villages that the Paulistas enslaved Guaraní, but also from non-reduction Guaraní pueblos. Monteiro, *Negros da terra*, 74

to arm the Guaraní and over the course of several decades organized Guaraní-Jesuit militias. Eventually, the Guaraní-Jesuit militias were deployed in a variety of contexts, including against enemy Chaco groups and in Spanish civil disputes.<sup>375</sup> It was in the context then of *bandeira* raids that Guaraní-Jesuit militias arose in Paraguay. Simultaneously, Spanish officials in the Asunción area organized militias that depended on Guaraní auxiliaries from the encomienda community. These included tributaries from Franciscan and secular pueblos as well as a few Jesuit missions still subject to Spanish tribute demands.<sup>376</sup> While there was one massive *bandeira* in 1676 that attacked the northern region of Itatín, Spanish-Guaraní militias directed most of their military energies towards the Chaco frontier. Because Spaniards used their military service to garner social capital, encomienda grants, and local administrative posts, they downplayed the importance of their Guaraní auxiliaries.

### **Invisible Armies**

In all the punitive expeditions against the Guaycurú, or any other enemy force for that matter, Guaraní made up the majority of total soldiers. Most Spanish officials negated the Guaraní's contributions and emphasized their own roles in defense of the province. For example, in Alonso Fernández Ruano's 1674 report on the encomienda, he explained that the Spanish could not survive without their personal servants. In turn, Ruano noted, the Guaraní could not survive without the protection of their encomenderos: "the [Guaraní could not survive] without the protection of their encomenderos because of the continual wars raged by the various nations of infidel frontier Indians."<sup>377</sup> Ruano's suggestion that

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<sup>375</sup> On Guaraní militias among the Jesuit missions see Möner, *The Political and Economic Activities*, Chapter 2, Conclusion; Kern, *Missões*, Chapter 4; Neumann, "Fronteira e identidade," 74-83.

<sup>376</sup> Maeder, "Las encomiendas en las misiones," 120-121.

<sup>377</sup> AGI, 1674, Cartas de Gobernadores, 30, R. 7, no. 19.

it was solely because of Spanish defensive and military activities that the province was safe was typical of Spanish officials' reports on Paraguay.

Spaniards' selective descriptions of military activities in Paraguay have trickled down to modern historiographies. The myth of the "white conquistador" and "Spanish soldier" is ubiquitous in the histories of the conquest of Ibero-America and is only recently being debunked by historians.<sup>378</sup> Scholars who have explored Paraguay's civil colonial militias reflect the same theme of Spanish valor that contemporary Spanish officials and soldiers articulated. In an article-length treatment, Paraguayan historian Rafael Eladio Velázquez provides an account of the structure of the Spanish militias from the conquest through the eighteenth century, but he focuses specifically on Spaniards' contributions to the militia.<sup>379</sup>

The only scholars who analyze Indian soldiers in the colonial Río de la Plata are researchers of the Guaraní-Jesuit militias.<sup>380</sup> These scholars emphasize the vital role these militias played in defending the Río de la Plata from Portuguese *bandeirantes* and Chaco groups, yet they fail to recognize that Guaraní in the encomienda community were just as important. In fact, in several expeditions, Guaraní-Jesuit militias fought alongside Guaraní militias from the encomienda community.

Magus Mörner's classic *The Political and Economic Activities of the Jesuits in the La Plata Region* emphasizes the importance of the militias in the Jesuit missions by comparing them to the presidio-mission system of the Southwest. In the Southwest, frontier expansion in California, Texas, and northern New Spain was subsidized by the

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<sup>378</sup> Restall, *Seven Myths*, Chapter 4. On Black soldiers, see Restall, "Black Conquistadors".

<sup>379</sup> Rafael Eladio Velázquez, "Organización militar de la gobernación y capitanía general del Paraguay," *Estudios Paraguayos* 5, no. 1 (1977): 25-69.

<sup>380</sup> Mörner, *The Political and Economic Activities*; Kern, *Missões*.

crown through presidio-mission towns or settler colonies, policies and tactics reflective of eighteenth-century Bourbon rulers' new philosophies of governing. In the Río de la Plata, from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, the crown relied on the Jesuit missions as buffer zones between Spanish and Portuguese domains. But as the previous section detailed, in the borderlands of current-day Paraná and Matto Grosso do Sur the greatest concern was not over occupying territory, but controlling indigenous populations.<sup>381</sup>

One of the first documented instances in which Guaraní-Jesuit militias wielded arms in defense of their mission communities was in 1639 at Caaçapaguaçu. In this engagement, the militia was led by a cacique named don Nicolás Ñeengirú.<sup>382</sup> In 1641, four thousand Guaraní gained access to three hundred guns and fashioned cannons out of bamboo and leather. Despite a few reversals, Guaraní militias increasingly professionalized and were frequently engaged in punitive expeditions against enemy indigenous groups. They also actively defended the missions against *bandeirantes*. Seven missions in the Uruguay region were strategically positioned to provide a buffer between the missions and *bandeiras*. The Jesuits invested the most resources and training in these borderlands missions. The mission militias were also employed in the defense of the civil provinces of Paraguay and the Río de la Plata. While most of their actions were against enemy Natives, other instances included some high profile activities. For example, in 1697, two thousand mission Indians aided Buenos Aires in defending against a potential attack from the French.<sup>383</sup>

Other actions involved putting down internal political strife, including two "revolts" commonly referred to as the Comunero Revolts of 1649 and 1720s-30s. Underlying both

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<sup>381</sup> Mörner, *The Political and Economic Activities*, 200-215.

<sup>382</sup> Kern, *Missões*, 172.

<sup>383</sup> Kern, *Missões*, 198.

episodes was the eternal struggle between the asunceño encomenderos and the Jesuits. In both conflicts, the Jesuit faction won out after Guaraní-Jesuit militias defeated the opposing forces and occupied Asunción.<sup>384</sup> Of these two conflicts, the civil strife that erupted in 1649 has received the least historical attention and merits our attention in this chapter insofar as it represents the first time Guaraní soldiers were used in a conflict between rival factions of colonials. Moreover, an original analysis of primary documents from the Newberry Library makes visible the Guaraní soldiers fighting alongside Asunceños *against* the Guaraní-Jesuit militias from the missions.<sup>385</sup>

The superficial causes of the conflict have their roots in the year 1638, when a creole Franciscan friar named Bernardino de Cárdenas was appointed the Bishop of Paraguay. After waiting three years for his papal bulls, Cardenas pushed his ordination through in 1641, ignoring the technicality of the papal bull authorizing his bishopric. Once in Asunción, Cardenas and the governor, don Gregorio de Hiestrosa, became embroiled in petty rivalries. Cardenas became increasingly bitter about the Jesuits wealth relative to the other orders. After some tense exchanges, Hiestrosa ordered that guards protect the Jesuit college from the Cardenas faction, which consisted of asunceño encomenderos. The Jesuits threw their support behind Hiestrosa and ordered mission militias to occupy Asunción and protect the college. Hiestrosa forced Cardenas to flee to Corrientes, where he awaited his next move. In the meantime, Cardenas ignored the Audiencia of Charcas' orders that he appear in Charcas to answer to the claims Hiestrosa and the Jesuits made

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<sup>384</sup> Adalberto López, *The Colonial History of Paraguay: The Revolt of the Comuneros, 1721-1735* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007); Telesca, *Tras los expulsos*; Ignacio Telesca, *La provincia del Paraguay, revolución y transformación, 1680-1780* (Asunción: El Lector, 2010).

<sup>385</sup> Kleinpenning estimates that between 1601 and 1700, thirty-five expedition were led against the Guaycurú. This figure does not include defensive activities in response to attacks, which were very frequent. See Kleinpenning, *Paraguay, 1515-1870*, 298

against him. In 1647, a new governor of Paraguay was appointed in don Diego de Escobar Osorio, who took a neutral position in the conflict. Taking advantage of Osorio's neutrality, Cárdenas returned to Asunción. When Osorio suddenly died on 22 February 1649, the Asunción cabildo elected Cárdenas as the interim governor and the stage was set for a larger conflict.<sup>386</sup>

On 6 March 1649, Cárdenas ordered the expulsion of the Jesuits from the capital and, according to Jesuit sources, a mob broke down the doors of the Jesuit college and violently removed the fathers and looted the college.<sup>387</sup> The Jesuits used their connections in Charcas to get a judge from the Audiencia of Charcas to come to Asunción, restore the Jesuit college, and put down the Cárdenas faction. Audiencia judge don Sebastián de León y Zarate accepted the assignment, but when he attempted to enter Asunción he was blocked by Cárdenas' partisans. In response, León y Zarate amassed an army of seven hundred Guaraní from the missions.

According to the histories by Adalberto López and Magnus Mörner, Cárdenas assembled several hundred "militiamen" and met the mission army in battle at San Lorenzo, just outside of Asunción. As the historical narrative currently stands, we are to believe that a small force of "soldiers" supporting Cárdenas, bravely marched into battle against a Jesuit mission militia made up entirely of Guaraní-Christians, in which Cárdenas and his followers were handily defeated. A "*memorial*" created at Cardenas' behest—a copy of which is housed in the Newberry Library in Chicago—complicates this narrative. This document reveals that in the battle at San Lorenzo, Cardenas' forces

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<sup>386</sup> Mörner, *The Political and Economic Activities*, Chapter 3; López, *The Colonial History of Paraguay*.

<sup>387</sup> López, *The Colonial History of Paraguay*, 61.



were bolstered by four hundred "friendly Indians."<sup>388</sup> The *memorial* narrative mentions these friendly Native auxiliaries only as numbers and highlights Spanish bravery in the face of an overwhelming but cowardly Guaraní-Jesuit militia. The *memorial* claims that only a handful of Spaniards and five or six friendly Natives died while 385 Jesuit-Guaraní were killed. Descriptions of the battle scene emphasize the mission Indians' cowardice: "if the Indians had not been so interested in stripping dead Spaniards they would have killed all of [the Spanish]. But scarcely had a Spaniard died when over twenty Indians began arguing over which would take the dead man's clothing and supplies."<sup>389</sup> Even though the *memorial* mentioned the friendly Indian soldiers in passing, the true purpose of the memorial was to highlight Spanish bravery in the face of impossible odds.

The battle at San Lorenzo ultimately determined Cárdenas' fate. A few days after the battle, Cárdenas fled and the mission militias occupied the city. Imagining both factions battling out their differences with indigenous partisans complicates how we understand colonial politics in Asunción. Until now, scholars have imagined the Jesuit missions as the only sites of indigenous power and resources. Scholars who have treated the mission militias have suggested that Asunceños were completely dependent on mission militias to repel the *bandeirantes* and to mobilize punitive expeditions.<sup>390</sup> For example, after reviewing the accomplishments of the mission militias, historian Arno Alvarez Kern concluded,

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<sup>388</sup> "Memorial y defensorio al rey nuestro señor por el crédito y opinión y derechos episcopales de la persona y dignidad del ilustrísimo y reverendísimo Don Fray Bernardino de Cárdenas" 1652, MS 1300.5, p. 2, S 19, Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago.

<sup>389</sup> "y si los Indios no se huvieran entretendio en desnudar a los Españoles muertos, los huvieran muerto a todos. Pero tassadamente (scarcely) veian muerto al Español, quando avia mas de veinte Indios en litigio sobre quen le avia de llevar el vestido." Ibid., fol. 50 v.

<sup>390</sup> See Möerner, *The Political and Economic Activities*, 200.

"The Guaraní demonstrated a greater capacity to work than the Indians under the slavery and system of genocide that was the *encomienda*. The Guaraní also demonstrated that they possessed a great warrior fervor. Their warrior spirit became even more disciplined than before contact with the white world once they were organized as militias patterned after the Spanish military. This does not seem to have diminished their attacking strength and their ability to inflict devastation on their enemies."<sup>391</sup>

For Kern, the Guaraní's warrior spirit was perfected and harnessed within the Jesuits material and spiritual order. The Guaraní-Jesuit militias' accomplishments on the battlefield provide Kern with a foil to reflect the decrepit culture of the Guaraní under the *encomienda*.

Even in the sources that make Asunción's Guaraní soldiers visible, there is a tendency to downplay their participation and importance. Unfortunately, no extant accounts from Indigenous themselves document their participation. For example, we would expect to see native caciques writing "*probanzas*" to seek favors from colonial officials or even the crown for their military service. Despite the absence of these records, other sources point to the absolute necessity of the Guaraní auxiliaries in the Asunción area and the fact that indigenous military service was not free.

In 1663, Field Master Lázaro de Horteiga Vallejo wrote a letter to the crown recounting a punitive expedition the governor had asked him to lead in August 1662. The Jesuit missions of Caaguazú and Guaranbí had been attacked by a coalition of Guaycurú. Vallejo explained that he went to the aid of these two northern missions with 120 Spanish soldiers and 600 Guaraní auxiliaries from surrounding Indian pueblos, which he did not name. He also added that the Jesuit mission of San Ignacio in the Paraná region contributed one hundred soldiers, praising their bravery and excellent service. But what of the other five hundred Guaraní soldiers? These anonymous soldiers likely came from the pueblos in the Asunción orbit. Officials frequently amassed expeditionary forces that

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<sup>391</sup> Kern, *Missões*, 204.

included Guaraní from both the Jesuit missions and the pueblos in the encomienda community under the control of secular and Franciscan priests.<sup>392</sup>

Paraguayan governors called on nearly all the pueblos under the encomienda. The Jesuit missions that Paraguayan officials called on most frequently were missions still subject to tribute payments, namely San Ignacio de Caaguazú and Nuestra Señora de Fe. These missions were still subject to tribute because they were established in areas conquered by the Spanish. The 1674 Ruano report on the encomienda shows that there were eight encomiendas with a total of 151 tributaries in these two missions.<sup>393</sup> Nearly all the other Jesuit missions that were exempt from tribute payment were established in territories not under Spanish control—south of the Paraná—or had transmigrated out of Spanish zones of control.<sup>394</sup>

Each expedition was composed of auxiliaries from different locales. The requests for auxiliaries from the pueblos were determined by their proximity to the area under attack and the availability of tributaries. If they were harvesting yerba or engaged in other productive tasks they might not be called on. For example, in February 1662, the Guaycurú attacked various pueblos in the Tebicuary region, including the Jesuit missions of Nuestra Señora de Fe and San Ignacio de Caaguazú. The governor requested one hundred soldiers from Caazapá and Yuty, both Franciscan pueblos, as well as soldiers from the missions that were attacked to assemble and pursue the Guaycurú.<sup>395</sup> Paraguayan officials did not allow the Jesuits to fend for themselves, but came to their aid with Franciscan pueblo auxiliaries. Of course, Spaniards had an interest in defending

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<sup>392</sup> ANA, SH, 8 April 1663, vol. 2, no. 30, fol. 291

<sup>393</sup> AGI, Charcas 30, 1674, r. 7, no. 19.

<sup>394</sup> Maeder, "Las Encomiendas En La Misiones," 121.

<sup>395</sup> ANA, SH, 3 March 1662, vol. 2, no. 27.

Caaguazú since it was a mission still under the encomienda. Nonetheless, this evidence complicates the idea that the Jesuits were completely self-reliant.

For expeditions to the northern regions, officials called on all the pueblos in the Asunción area, depending on their availability. For example, in a 1688 punitive expedition, the governor requested soldiers from the following pueblos: Itá, Altos, Ypané, Guarambaré, and Atyrá. Of these, only Itá was under Franciscan leadership, the rest were secular pueblos. This expedition resulted in the death of seven friendly Indigenous. The commanding officer noted the pueblos of the fallen soldiers: two from Santa Maria (a Jesuit mission in the Itatín region), one from Santiago (possibly Santiago del Estero), one from Itá, one from the Pedro de Cáceres' encomienda, one from Alonso de Penayo's encomienda, and one from Captain Cristoval Prieta's encomienda.<sup>396</sup> By mentioning these fallen soldiers and their pueblos, the officer revealed that auxiliary soldiers from a variety of locales participated, not only natives from the pueblos to which the governor had initially appealed. Those listed as pertaining to specific encomiendas were most likely *originarios* who accompanied their Spanish encomenderos as squires, a term frequently used during this period.

The detailed report on this 1688 expedition provides insights into the tactics Spaniards and Guaycurú used against each other. Immediately following a Guaycurú attack in the Itatín region, Spanish officials sent a vanguard company to repel the Guaycurú. The Guaycurú vastly outnumbered them and dealt the Spanish-Guaraní company a devastating blow: twenty-three Spanish soldiers and one hundred Guaraní auxiliaries were killed in the battle. After this defeat, the governor called a war council and amassed another army of 250 Spaniards and 400 Guaraní auxiliaries. The

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<sup>396</sup> ANA, SH, 1688, vol. 37, no. 3, fol. 131.

expedition's general relied on a tracker named Juan Payaguá, whose name suggests that he might have been captured from among the Payaguá and employed in the Spanish militia for his intelligence skills. The army was divided into several companies, each led by a Spanish captain. On 27 June, the expedition finally left the Valley of Pirayú, a settlement just north of Yaguarón, with 2,450 head of cattle, 600 horses, and 20 mules. On 27 August, the company arrived at a Jesuit mission called Caaguazú, where they remained until mid-October, thoroughly frustrating the Jesuit priests there.

On 14 October, the expedition finally located a large Payaguá settlement and a *mêlée* ensued. Spanish soldiers fired their muskets, killing four Payaguá, including the son of the Payaguá's principal cacique.<sup>397</sup> A few more skirmishes occurred as the Payaguá retreated to the western shore of the Paraguay R. From 1 to 4 November the Spanish-Guaraní troops repelled Payaguá attacks from canoes and finally crossed the river in pursuit. On the 5<sup>th</sup>, they located the Guaycurú's trail, thanks to Ignacio Mosquera, an individual who had been taken captive by the Guaycurú, but had been rescued during a prior expedition. As the troops continued their march through the difficult Chaco terrain, Mosquera identified signs of Guaycurú civilization, including small huts and seasonal horse pastures the Guaycurú used to feed their horses.

The march continued for seven days without further sign of the enemy. Then suddenly on 14 November at noon, a large number of Guaycurú attacked from all sides. The sergeant major took thirty men to defend the horses while the remaining four companies attacked and forced the Guaycurú to retreat. They returned that night, encircled the encampment, and attacked, targeting the expeditions' horses and cattle. After two hours, the Spanish-Guaraní forces were able to force the Guaycurú into the

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<sup>397</sup> Ibid., fol. 127 r.

surrounding forests. From their hideouts in the trees, Guaycurú shot arrows at their enemy throughout the night, wounding many cattle, horses, and a few soldiers.

The next day, the companies followed the Guaycurú's trail through deep swamps which swallowed the soldiers up to their chests. With disdain, the governor noted that Guaycurú favored this kind of terrain, for this was the "land in which they were born and raised, as wild beasts in the thickets and brambles."<sup>398</sup> The general had given up. He assembled his captains and they unanimously decided to retreat and return to their stronghold on the eastern shores of the river. During their retreat, the Guaycurú mounted another damaging attack. Humbled by the experience, the general explained that repeated invasions of the Guaycurú's lands would change nothing. There was no hope in mounting more attacks since the "land was not capable of supporting a Spanish army, not even a small one."<sup>399</sup> All expeditions against the Guaycurú seemed to end in this way.

The largest punitive Spanish-Guaraní expedition occurred in 1676 in reaction to a massive *bandeira* that including four hundred *bandeirantes* and one thousand Tupí auxiliaries. Local officials amassed an army of 350 Spanish soldiers and 700 Guaraní auxiliaries from Asunción, Atirá, Altos, Ypane, Guarambaré, Yaguaron and Ytá.<sup>400</sup> It required significant resources to amass an army of this size, including cattle, yerba, and tobacco. Many of these supplies were donated from local *vecinos* or surrounding Indian pueblos.

In the official report on the expedition, general Juan Díaz de Andino recounted tales of Spanish heroism and bravery. When the Spanish-Guaraní army finally encountered the rearguard of the *bandeira* near one of the pueblos that had been taken captive, Díaz de

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<sup>398</sup> Ibid., fol. 129 v.

<sup>399</sup> Ibid., fol. 130 v.

<sup>400</sup> ANA, SC, 1676, vol. 17.

Andino recounted that his troops fought bravely. In one engagement with the enemy, Díaz de Andino explained, his horse was shot dead and he was shot in the shoulder, but miraculously saved by his armor. The actions of the Guaraní auxiliaries in this expedition received no mention in this account, except that many Indians were injured.<sup>401</sup> Like most punitive expeditions against the Guaycurú, this army arrived too late and four pueblos had been destroyed or carried away captive. These included Yvyrapariyara, Mbaracayú, Candelaria, and Terecañy.<sup>402</sup> Terecañy was the pueblo from which Nandu came, and whose story introduced this dissertation.

### **The Cost of Cooperation**

The Guaraní auxiliaries who served in the expeditions reviewed above did not do so for free, they expected payment or tribute exemptions. In the 1688 expedition, for example, the auxiliaries received four hundred axe heads (*cuñas*) and one thousand *cuerdas* or pieces of twine.<sup>403</sup> The significance of payments these kinds of payments should not be lost: four hundred axe heads represented a significant sum of money, especially given that there were not large iron mines in Paraguay. After other expeditions, the Guaraní were successful in gaining exemption from the *mita*, sometimes for up to one year.<sup>404</sup> In 1677, a year after a major *bandeira* and Guaycurú raids, the governor restricted the use of tributaries for the yerba harvest from three pueblos. He indicated that only twenty-five from San Blas de Ytá, fifteen from San Pedro de Ypané, and twenty

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<sup>401</sup> Ibid., fol. 127.

<sup>402</sup> Velázquez, "Organización militar," 31.

<sup>403</sup> The exact description of the payment is: "Two hundred *cuñas*, two hundred *hachas*, and one thousand *cuerdas*..." It is not clear what the difference between *hachas* and *cuñas* were. Ibid., fol. 22 r.

<sup>404</sup> See ANA, AC, 1677, vol. 11, fol. 669; ANA, SH, 1665, vol. 2.

from Todos Santos de Guarambaré could work in the yerba harvest; the rest of the population was to remain on alert lest more invasions occurred.<sup>405</sup>

Other Guaraní demanded payment for work on forts or war supplies. In 1671, three Guaraní from Ypané appeared before a magistrate in Villa Rica—they made their petition in Villa Rica because the rains had made river travel to Asunción impossible.

Representing other members of their pueblo, they explained that they had been not yet been paid for constructing ten war canoes, which the governor had commissioned them to do. Their request was ultimately denied, but this record indicates that Indigenous who served in or serviced Paraguay's defensive apparatus expected reciprocity.<sup>406</sup>

Paraguay's borderlands then were not only strategic resources for Chaco groups and *bandeirantes*, but the Guaraní auxiliaries who defended them. Guaraní soldiers used the social capital they gained through their military service to purchase exemptions from tribute payments as well as payments in local currencies, like iron tools.

## Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated the various ways in which Europeans and natives alike used Paraguay's colonial borderlands as a strategic resource. For some groups who might otherwise have been marginalized, like the Guaycurú, Payaguá, and Tupí *bandeirantes*, the borderlands were raiding sites where humans could be transformed into commodities and goods applied to economic networks. For their part, Guaraní auxiliaries received rewards for participating in punitive expeditions.

These borderlands were also sites of cultural and social experimentation. The synthetic practices and beliefs of the Arecayá pueblo and the *karaí* Juan Cuarací shed

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<sup>405</sup> ANA, SH, 1677, vol. 30, no. 9.

<sup>406</sup> AGI, Escribanía, 1671, 894A.



light on the interstices of the Guaraní's christianization. By examining Paraguay's frontiers and borderlands it is clear that the conquest in the Río de la Plata was incomplete, even by the eighteenth century.<sup>407</sup> These borderlands encounters deeply influenced the center, shaping military institutions and the military culture that marked Spanish identity in colonial Paraguay.

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<sup>407</sup> On the significance of “incomplete conquests” in the historiography of Colonial Latin America see Restall, *Seven Myths*, Chapter 4.

## Chapter 6

### “Conclusions”

This dissertation has explored a variety of institutions and contexts, including the *encomienda*, the urban landscape of Asunción, Guaraní pueblos, Guayrá, and the Chaco frontier, in order to understand ethnogenesis in sixteenth and seventeenth-century colonial Paraguay. By exploring ethnogenesis among Guaraní, Africans, and Spaniards, this dissertation has provided nuance to a historical narrative that traditionally has reified ethnic groups.

This study has also demonstrated that the *encomienda* in colonial Paraguay was a hybrid institution created through the participation of Spanish and Guaraní social actors. More than any other institution, the *encomienda* facilitated networks of cultural exchange. Founded on principles of Guaraní kinship and Spanish pragmatism, the *encomienda* enshrined personal service as the labor model for colonial Paraguay. Until the mid-seventeenth century, patterns of reciprocity marked relations within the *encomienda* but as the years progressed *encomenderos*' methods for acquiring laborers became more institutionalized and less a function of Guaraní kinship. As the gendered divisions of labor among the Guaraní changed during the first half of the seventeenth century, Spanish *encomenderos* relied less on Guaraní women, who had formerly been acquired through kinship networks, and more on Guaraní men, who experienced profound changes as their labor roles transformed from hunting and warring to agricultural work. Still, Guaraní women remained important laborers, especially as *hilanderas* or spinners of cotton.

By the late seventeenth century, the distinctions between *yanacona* and *mitaya* populations were more pronounced than they were in the early seventeenth century. The following episode from 1687-88 is reflective of some of these changes and provides an opportunity to discuss the trajectory of the *encomienda* beyond the seventeenth century.

### **Whither the Encomienda?**

In December 1687, the Spanish crown ordered locals in Paraguay to remove their *yanaconas*—now frequently referred to as *originarios*—from their *chacras* and homes and congregate them into an Indian pueblo that would have to be constructed from scratch. The order to congregate *originarios* into a pueblo was reminiscent of don Francisco de Alfaro's attempted reforms earlier in the century, which were borne out of a desire to keep the Spanish and Indian republics separate (see Chapter 3). In 1687, the crown cited *mestizaje* as a principle reason for removing the *originarios*.<sup>408</sup> Just as with Alfaro's reforms, Asunceños rejected this latest—and certainly not the last—attempt to eradicate personal service in Paraguay.

In their responses to the crown's order, *encomenderos* and clerics defended personal service and the *encomienda* community just as their forebears had done nearly a century earlier. In one letter of protest, two clerics assigned to the Indian and Black parish in Asunción, Domingo Cerim and Joseph Domínguez, explained that because the *originarios* lived in Asunción and therefore maintained close cultural contact with the Spanish, they had become very good Christians. The two priests explained, "because of the care of their *encomenderos*, the *originarios* come to mass every Sunday...and pray in their natural

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<sup>408</sup> The royal *cédula* is not included in the file, therefore, it is not entirely clear why the crown issued the order in the first place. But by reading the opposing arguments backwards, we can gain some sense of the crown's justifications.

language with great devotion."<sup>409</sup> The friars also noted that the *originarios* maintained a *cofradía* or religious brotherhood in Asunción. The idea Cerim and Domínguez hoped to communicate was that closeness to Spaniards was beneficial, not detrimental to the Guaraní.

In his letter of opposition, the *procurador general* (Asunción's prosecutor), Juan Ortiz de Zarate, invoked the formula "*obedecemos pero no ejecutamos*" (we obey but do not execute), underscoring the role that decentralized authority played in this far-flung corner of the Spanish empire. Zarate explained that the crown did not understand the damage this policy would inflict on the region, thereby justifying the city's rejection of the policy. Since all the Spaniards in Paraguay were engaged constantly in military activities, they relied on their *originarios* to provide the basic necessities of life for themselves and their families. As this dissertation has shown (see Chapter 5), Spaniards in Paraguay consistently legitimated their special privileges by referencing their military service.

Zarate also addressed the crown's concerns with Spanish men cohabiting with *originaria* women. Zarate hoped to explain this away when he said that *originaria* women actually preferred Indian partners, not Spaniards, suggesting that mestizaje was not a major concern in Paraguay. In an attempt to justify encomendero's manipulation of Guaraní marriages, Zarate added that it was in the interest of *originaria* women to marry partners from within the *originaria* population, explaining that women who married Guaraní from the pueblos rarely saw their husbands because they were so frequently absent from the pueblos. Zarate reasoned that the Guaraní in the pueblos were subject to

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<sup>409</sup> "están bien instruidos en los misterios de nuestra santa fe católica y en doctrina cristiana por q acuden todos los domingos y días festivos mediante el cuidado de sus encomenderos a oír misa y a la plática q se les hace, y a rresar todas las oraciones en su idioma natural con tanta devoción." ANA, SH, 1688, vol. 7.

the governor's *mandamiento*, including a variety of public works projects, yerba harvests, transport activities, as well as military expeditions. On top of these requirements, the pueblo Guaraní were required to serve in the mita for two months at a time, not to mention communal labor for the pueblo. All of these demands on the *mitayos*, Zarate argued, created the conditions for their constant poverty and males' constant absence from the pueblos.<sup>410</sup> He added that the *originarios*, on the other hand, suffered none of these burdens. In fact, because they lived with Spaniards, *originarios* were "more expert in Spanish *política*" or the art of governing and living according to Spanish civil ideals.<sup>411</sup> For all of these reasons, Zarate explained, many tributaries from the pueblos fled, abandoning their wives and children, while the *originaria* had every reason to remain on Spanish chacras.

Most of these claims were far from the reality and simply sought to justify the existence of the *originario* system. In 1694, there were 790 *originarios* living on Spanish estates in Asunción—this total includes men of tributary age, their spouses, and single women.<sup>412</sup> Of this total population, 180 men of tributary age were considered "*huidos*" or runaway. Many of these men had fled the region in order to pursue free wage labor in Corrientes, Santa Fe, or Buenos Aires. The tributary-*huido* ratio for the *originaria* of Asunción was comparable to other pueblos in the Asunción orbit, challenging Zarate's claims of an idyllic *originaria* existence in Asunción.

There was, however, some truth to Zarate's claim that the *originaria* were exempt from the *mandamiento* or public works projects. Nearly all of the public works records

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<sup>410</sup> "y por esta rrazon casi siempre están los pueblos pereciendo de hambre sus familias y criaturas." Ibid.

<sup>411</sup> "mas expertos en la política española porque viven con los españoles." Ibid.

<sup>412</sup> ANA, NE, 1694, vol. 185, no. 3. While only 401 men were counted as tributaries, their wives and the single women included also provided personal service. In this *visita*, 614 children were also counted.

analyzed in Chapter 4 show that labor was provided by pueblo Guaraní. This was probably a result of the logistics of organizing labor. When a governor requested labor for public works he relied on each pueblos' *corregidor*, who was tasked with organizing these labor gangs. If a governor wanted to request *originario* labor, he would have had to rely on each individual encomendero and in 1694 there were ninety-one encomenderos whose *originario* populations averaged four male tributaries. Thus, the structural organization of the encomienda *originaria* made organizing large labor groups nearly impossible.

This episode illustrates the central role that personal service played in colonial Paraguay's tributary system. Personal service had become a crucial part of Paraguayan colonial society and would remain so until the end of the colonial period. As Chapter 4 discussed, the number of encomenderos in Paraguay remained constant even when the population of tributaries vacillated. So what ultimately led to the decline of the encomienda in Paraguay? James Saeger's account of the demise of the encomienda in the eighteenth century shows that the institution declined only after the 1770s, when local governors applied Bourbon policies. In fact, the encomienda was more valuable to encomenderos in the 1760s, on the eve of its downfall, than it was in the 1730s, when the region suffered from serious demographic decline.<sup>413</sup> Thus, the decline of the encomienda was not a gradual process of demographic change or even changes in socio-racial categories (i.e. fewer "Indians"), but rather the result of concerted efforts by local officials to transfer encomiendas from encomenderos to the crown.<sup>414</sup> By 1804, the encomienda system was in complete disarray and governors were moving *originarios*

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<sup>413</sup> James Schofield Saeger, "Survival and Abolition: The Eighteenth Century Paraguayan Encomienda," *The Americas* 38, no. 1 (1981): 66.

<sup>414</sup> Saeger, "Survival and Abolition".

from Asunción to non-encomienda pueblos.<sup>415</sup> The decline of the encomienda in Paraguay then has little to do with the period studied in this dissertation. By focusing on the socio-cultural underpinning of the encomienda, this dissertation helps explain the longevity of the institution.

### **Ethnogenesis**

By employing heretofore unused notarial and litigation records, this dissertation has demonstrated that the encomienda was just as much an institution of Guaraní socio-cultural values as it was a system of colonial oppression. Litigation records reveal that Guaraní, Africans, and other Indigenous made choices about the paths their lives took. Many mediated colonial demands within the encomienda through Spanish courts. Others, like the pueblo of Arecayá, rejected Spanish colonialism and instigated a local rebellion. Groups like the Guaycurú and Payaguá used the borderlands of Paraguay as a strategic resource. The Guaraní, who policed these borderlands for the Spanish, turned their military service into tangible material benefits.

As an analysis of the interactions of various ethnic groups, this dissertation has shed light on the various socio-racial categories deployed in colonial Paraguay and their specific local meanings. Rather than viewing race as static or derived from biological distinctions, this dissertation has explored the social dimensions of race to explain cultural sameness or alterity.<sup>416</sup> Being “Spanish” had little to do with biology, evidenced by the fact that many mestizos identified as “Spanish” and some mestizos chose to

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<sup>415</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>416</sup> On social race, see Patricia Seed, “Social Dimensions of Race: Mexico City, 1753,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 62, no. 4 (1982): 569-606. See also R. Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994); María Elena Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza De Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

remain "Indian."<sup>417</sup> The 1694 case of the indigenous mestizo Pascual, who chose to remain "Indian" under an encomienda *originaria*, is illustrative of the choices individuals made regarding their corporate status (see Chapter 4).<sup>418</sup> The governors' declarations of mestizaje during their *visitas* of tributary populations underscore the importance of racial mixing among tributary populations.

In his study of demographics and racial categories after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1768 and the subsequent migration of thousands of Guaraní to Asunción, Ignacio Telesca shows that almost overnight many individuals began self-identifying as "Spanish" rather than "Indian" in order to avoid tributary obligations. Telesca argues that the "racial drift" from Indian to Spanish was facilitated by a shared material experience and language.<sup>419</sup> This dissertation complements Telesca's work by providing evidence of this shared material and linguistic experience for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It also provides a framework to explore socio-racial categories in Asunción in the centuries before the expulsion. As illustrated by Nandu's lawsuit in 1707 (the Guaraní who escaped a would-be encomendero), encomenderos, Africans, and Guaraní negotiated a context where very few individuals could avoid tributary status. Because most labor relations were understood within the framework of personal service, there were few spaces in between the Spanish and Indian (e.g. tributary) socio-racial spheres. The legal dispute in 1598 over the Anton's two mulatto sons is reflective of this: encomenderos' absolute

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<sup>417</sup> On mestizaje as a cultural rather than biological category, see Marisol de la Cadena, *Indigenous Mestizos: The Politics of Race and Culture in Cuzco, Peru, 1919-1991* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000). Rachel O'Toole defines *casta* versus race in this way: "The use of *casta* categories in the seventeenth century was not the same as modern race and racism. *Casta* categorization elided the standardization of physical characteristics, the imposition of uniform expectations of behavior, and the obsessive definitions of phenotype that were central to nineteenth and twentieth century institutionalized racism." O'Toole, *Bound Lives*, 168.

<sup>418</sup> ANA, NE, 1694, vol. 185, no. 3

<sup>419</sup> Telesca, *Tras los expulsos*. On racial drift, see Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*.



dependence on native personal service worked to apply the category of Indian to as many individuals as possible.<sup>420</sup> This helps explain why *casta* categories in colonial Paraguay were rarely employed.<sup>421</sup>

By including Africans and their descendants in a broad analysis of social relations, this dissertation has challenged a national narrative that erases Blacks from Paraguay's colonial history. African's experiences in Paraguay were varied, but within the *encomienda* community, it is clear that African ethnogenesis was heavily influenced by Guaraní culture. This is evident especially in Africans' use of the Guaraní language. The framework of personal service in colonial Paraguay's *encomienda* community shaped Spaniards demands on free Blacks and mulattos, underscoring the flexibility of the Spanish colonial system in the Americas. These insights contribute to a complex patchwork constituting the histories of the African diaspora in Ibero America. Moreover, by analyzing Africans and African slavery in relation to Natives and local forms of tribute, this dissertation shows how Africans were integrated into labor frameworks defined by personal service.<sup>422</sup>

Details about the lives of those who identified as Spanish also demonstrates surprising cultural flexibility. The analysis of testaments in Chapter 4 reveals that Spaniards were quick to adopt indigenous materials and foods largely due to the underdeveloped market system in Paraguay and the dominance of a barter economy. Surrounded by their Guaraní tributaries, Spaniards in Asunción spoke Guaraní just as

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<sup>420</sup> ANA, CJ, 1598, vol. 1941, no. 3.

<sup>421</sup> Douglas Cope shows for seventeenth-century Mexico City that while elite Spaniards created a variety of *casta* categories for the urban plebe, these categories were rarely employed in social reality. Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*.

<sup>422</sup> Rachel O'Toole's work is important for exploring Afro-Indigenous relations in coastal Peru as well as the relationship between native tribute and African slavery in the construction of *casta*. O'Toole, *Bound Lives*. On Afro-Indigenous relations see *Beyond Black and Red*; Restall, *The Black Middle*.

much as the language of empire. By the late sixteenth century, Guaraní was the *lingua franca* of the region.<sup>423</sup> Especially in an urban center like Asunción, we would expect to find Guaraní acquiring the Spanish language, but just the opposite occurred.

Only a handful of notarial and litigation records reveal indigenous “*ladinos*” who could speak Spanish. On the other hand, there were a surprising number of Spaniards, many of relatively high status, who spoke Guaraní fluently. An analysis of thirty-five litigation or notarial records from the 1540s to 1700 demonstrates the dominance of Spaniards as interpreters (also called *lenguas*). Forty-two interpreters were from the Spanish sphere while only one interpreter was “Indian.” Of these forty-two, twenty-eight were identified as *vecinos*. Several of these Spanish interpreters were official scribes of the *cabildo*. Others held important offices, including lieutenant general, captain, Indian protector, ensign (*alférez*), and lieutenant bailiff mayor (*teniente de alguacil mayor*).<sup>424</sup> In some cases, *pobleros* (Spanish residents near a *pueblo*) served as interpreters, indicating that local officials did not appoint official interpreters to served for specified terms. Instead, officials appointed *ad hoc* interpreters on a case by case basis.

These trends run counter to core areas. For Mexico, James Lockhart notes “that many more Nahuas attempted Spanish than Spaniards Nahuatl. By the second and third postconquest generations, even the majority of the professional translators acting as intermediaries between the two languages were native speakers of Nahuatl.”<sup>425</sup> Rolena

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<sup>423</sup> Melià shows this in Bartomeu Melià, *La lengua guaraní en el Paraguay colonial: que contiene la creación de un lenguaje cristiano en las reducciones de los guaraníes en el Paraguay* (Asunción: CEPAG: Distribuidora Montoya, 2003).

<sup>424</sup> Only thirty-five separate records were analyzed because in some cases, the interpreter’s name or status was not recorded. In other cases, I failed to record this data. There are more interpreters than specific documents because some lengthy litigation proceedings employed multiple interpreters.

<sup>425</sup> Lockhart, *The Nahuas After the Conquest*, 302.

Adorno suggests that similar patterns existed in the Andes.<sup>426</sup> The dominance of Spaniards as interpreters in Paraguay is reflective of one of the central insights of this dissertation: ethnogenesis was not only experienced by conquered groups but also by the colonizers. These patterns point to the dynamics of inter-ethnic communication and exchange in the colonial experience. In core regions of Spanish America, culturally ambiguous go-betweens or intermediaries between Spanish and Indian worlds usually came from the Indian socio-racial sphere, while in Paraguay, most go-betweens were from the Spanish sphere and many were of relatively high status.<sup>427</sup> Of course, there were Guaraní who mediated disputes or labor demands between encomenderos and the pueblos, but their lack of the Spanish language impeded them from becoming the most important go-betweens. By contrast, many Spanish mestizos who learned Guaraní growing up alongside Guaraní *yanacóna* or even raised by Guaraní mothers adopted Guaraní as their primary tongue. These individuals were culturally prepared to navigate between Spanish Asunción and the pueblos. What this dissertation shows is that while these two worlds never collapsed into a Spanish-dominated cultural ethos—as the nationalist historiography suggests—the ethnogenesis of all inhabitants of colonial Paraguay was profoundly shaped by Guaraní culture.

By exploring ethnogenesis among the Guaraní beyond the missions, this dissertation contributes to a growing historiography that seeks to explain how the missions were institutions where daily practices and socio-economic outcomes were determined more

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<sup>426</sup> Rolena Adorno, *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 25.

<sup>427</sup> On go-betweens in Mexico, see Yanna Yannakakis, *The Art of Being in-Between: Native Intermediaries, Indian Identity, and Local Rule in Colonial Oaxaca* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

by the Guaraní than by the Jesuits.<sup>428</sup> In the context beyond or in-between the missions, this dissertation confirms that the Guaraní determined what Spaniards could and could not do in colonial Paraguay.

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<sup>428</sup> See Ganson, *The Guaraní Under Spanish Rule*; Wilde, *Religión y poder*; Sarreal, *The Guaraní and Their Missions*.

[illegible]

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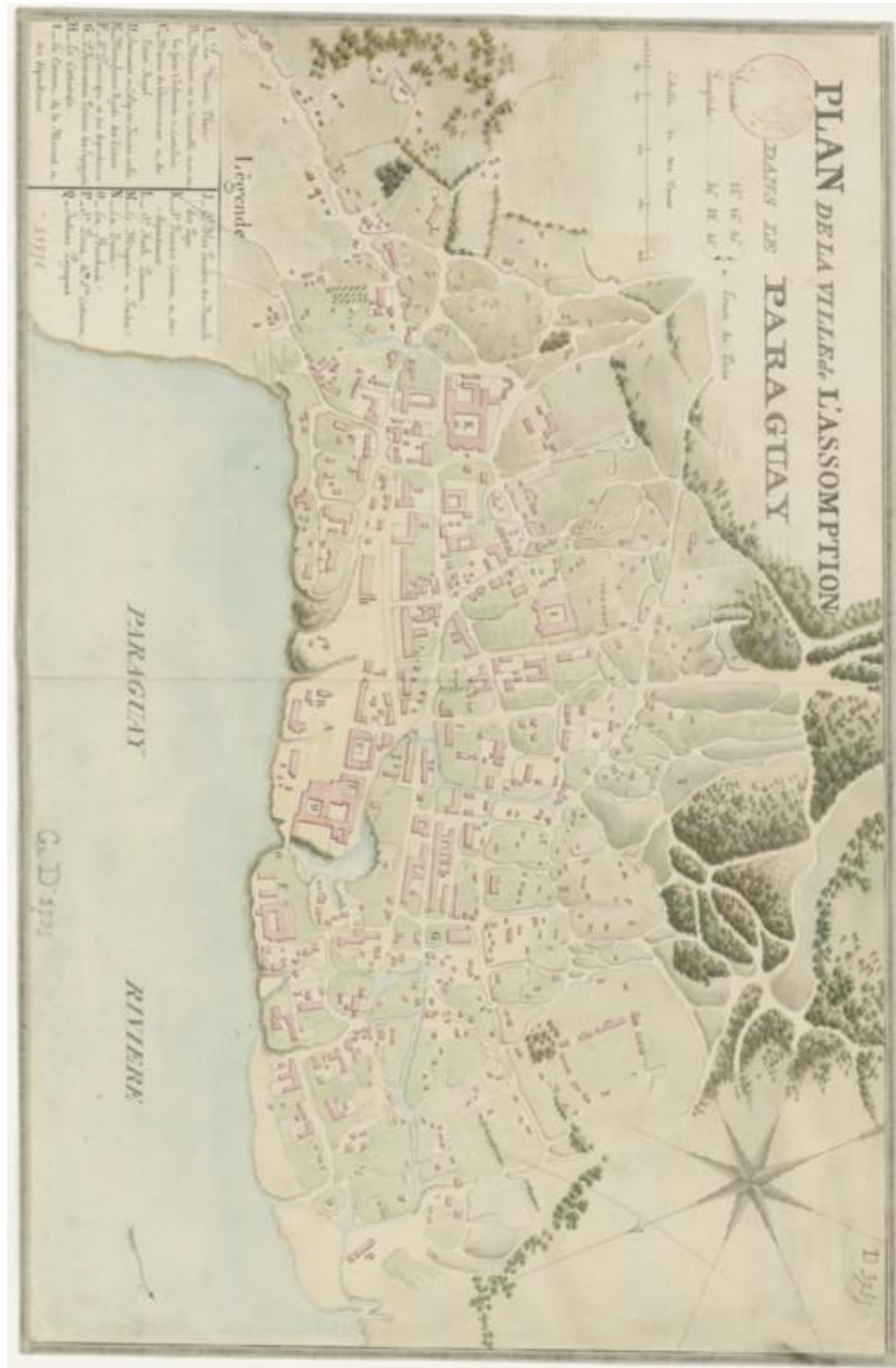
Appendix B: Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala's Drawing of "The City of Paraguay"



Source: Det Kongelige Bibliotek.

<http://www.kb.dk/permalink/2006/poma/1081/en/text/?open=id2978109>

Appendix C: Anonymous Copy of Félix de Azara's *Plano* of Asunción

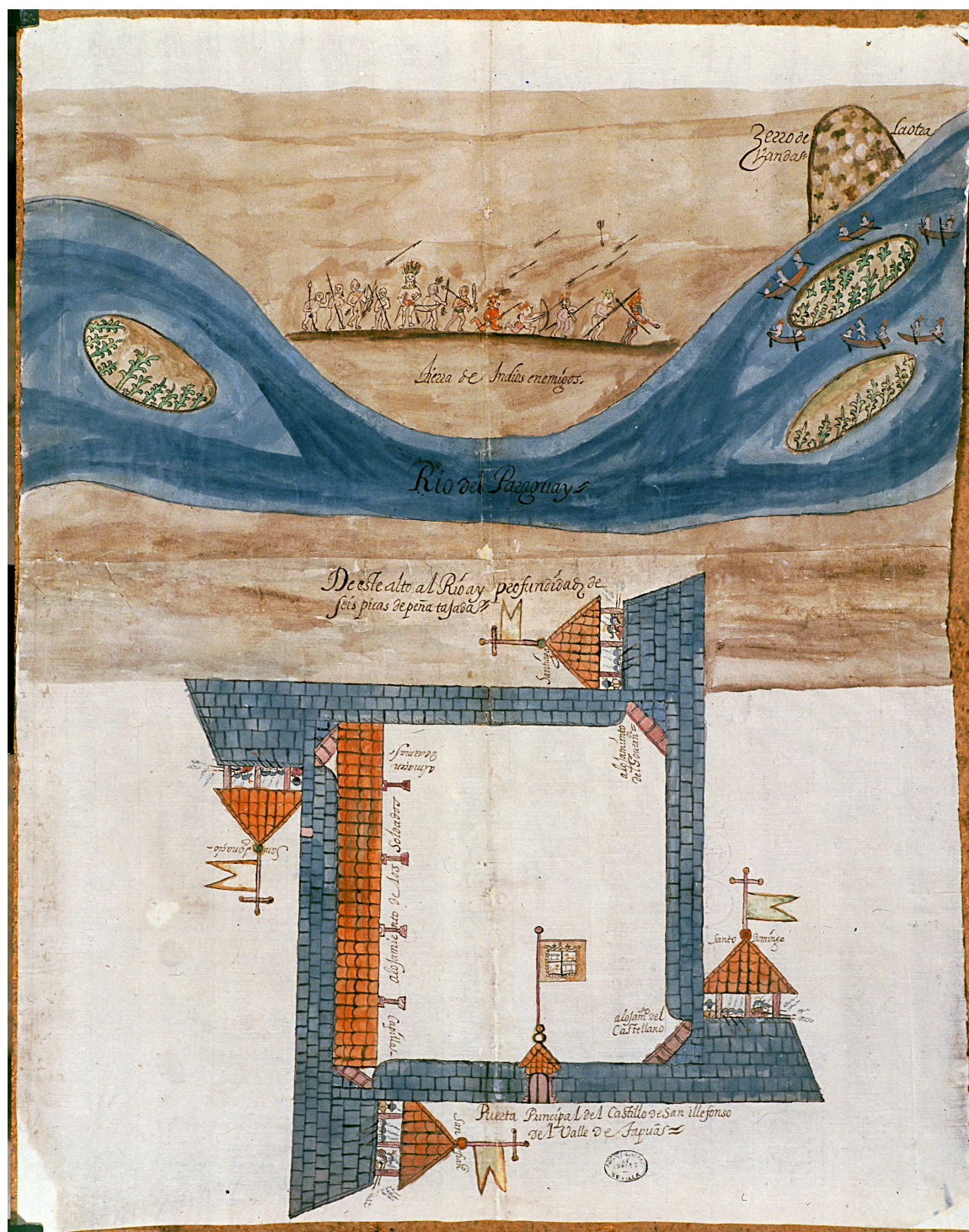


Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Source: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.  
<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8442501x.r=Asuncion.langEN>



Appendix D: Anonymous Drawing of San Ildefonso, c. 1660



Source: AGI, Buenos Aires, Mapas y Planos, 225.

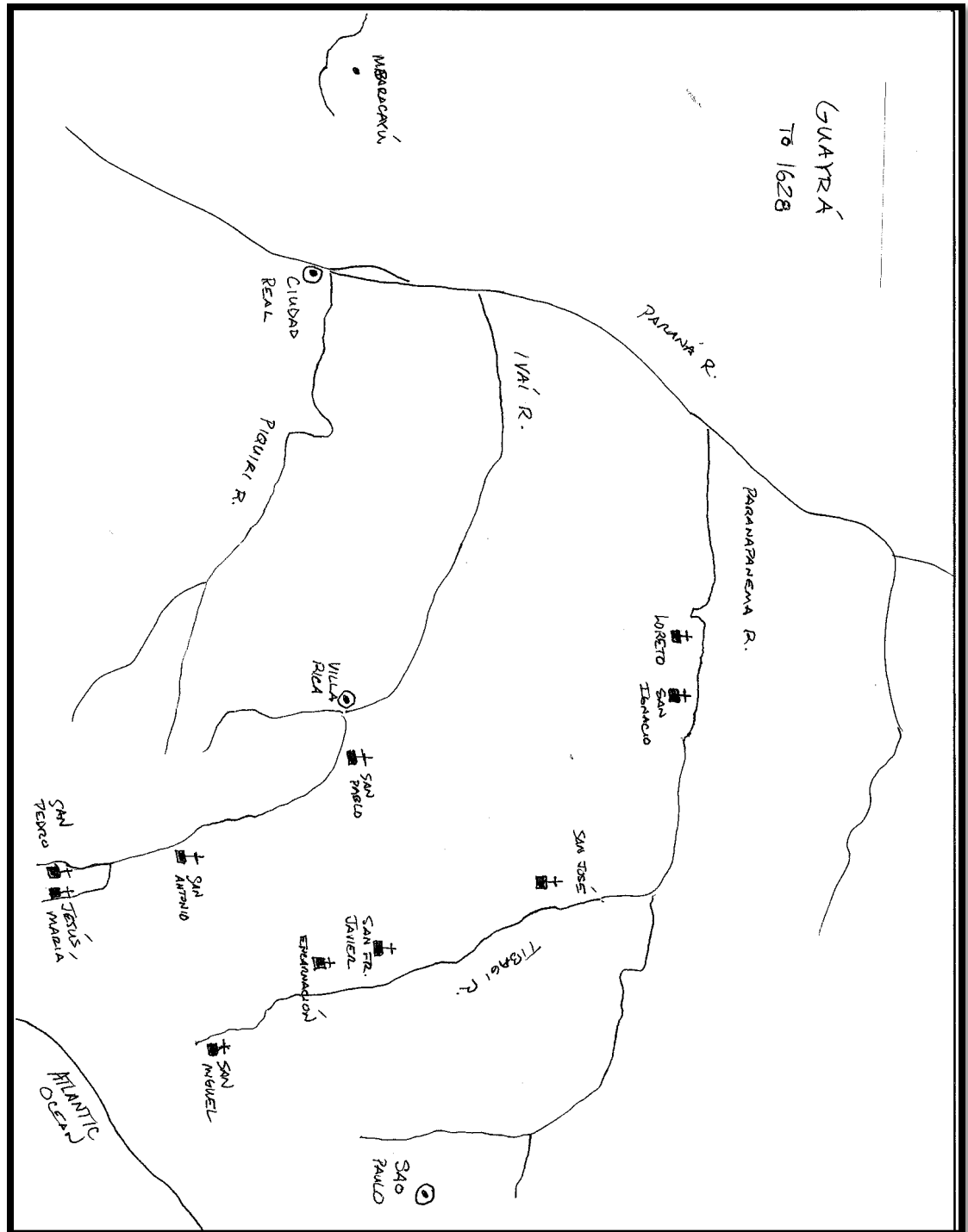


Appendix E: Anonymous Drawing of San Agustín de Arecutagua



Source: AGI, Buenos Aires, Mapas y Planos, 15.

Appendix F: Map of the Guayrá Region, c. 1628



Source: J.M.G. Kleinpenning, *Paraguay, 1580-1870: A Thematic Geography of its Settlement* (Iberoamerica Verveurt: Frankfurt, 2003), 123.



## Appendix G: Map of Guayrá Region, c. 1628



*Source:* AGI, Buenos Aires, Mapas y Planos, 17

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### **Archives and Abbreviations**

Archivo General de Indias (AGI)  
Buenos Aires  
Charcas

Archivo Nacional de Asunción (ANA)  
Actas Capitulares (AC)  
Civil y Judicial (CJ)  
Nueva Encuadernación (NE)  
Sección Copias (SC)  
Sección Historia (SH)

Manuel E. Gondra Manuscript Collection, Benson Latin American Library, The  
University of Texas at Austin (MG)

Newberry Library  
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