

Commemorations and Protest in the Zócalo:
A History of Performance in Mexico's Central Square from the Colonial Era to the Present

by

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Abstract

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The Zócalo, Mexico City's main square and the largest in Latin America, has been the material, symbolic, and official center of the country since the foundation of Tenochtitlán in 1325. It also continues to be Mexico's predominant public site of performance. More than that, the Zócalo is an architectural palimpsest: the material remains of past buildings are visible in its built environment. Throughout history, official performances in the Zócalo have theatricalized and legitimized governments and their domination over territory. Inversely, social and indigenous groups have used the Zócalo to stage performances contesting the official ideology. The dual purpose of this dissertation is to examine the Zócalo as Mexico's central site of performance and to unmask the official discourse regarding Mexico's natives.

Using an interdisciplinary approach, I study the Zócalo as a site of performance through five theatrical events in different historical periods, from the early colonial era to the present: the 1539 Civic Festival of Mexico-Tenochtitlán, the 1721 Bicentennial Parade of the Royal Banner, the 1910 Great Civic Procession and Great Historical Parade, the 2001 Zapatista entry into Mexico City, and the 2010 Bicentennial of Independence and Revolution. I show how, in order to reassert power, rulers have invented traditions and recycled old rituals in their staging of official celebrations. I foreground the role of the indigenous populations in these performances: as subjects with agency, as exploited objects, and as exotic characters.

I start with the premise that the Zócalo is a socially produced location and not a neutral space where things occur. My argument rests on the notion that each of the performances I analyze reframes the Zócalo into a specific space with different meanings and symbolisms. Through my case studies, I demonstrate the following transformations of the square: it was redefined as also indigenous after the conquest, it was an unstable space during the reign of the Bourbons, it became Mexico's national site of performance with the celebrations of independence, it was converted by the Zapatistas into a locus of indigenous struggle, and it was used as a folkloric and monumental place of nationhood in 2010. This project conveys the square's potential as a site of repression, rebellion, and liberation.

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Introduction

Constructing and Resisting the Mexican Imaginary

A study of theatrical space in Mexico cannot be separated from an analysis of Mexico City's main square, known today as the Zócalo, the city's first and most dynamic site of performance.¹ The Zócalo has been the material, symbolic, and official center of the country since the foundation of the Mexica² (or Aztec) city of Tenochtitlán in 1325; today it is a vast open space of about 656 feet on each side with a colossal Mexican flag at its center. More than that, the Zócalo is an archaeological and architectural palimpsest: the material remains of past buildings are visible in its built environment.³ Covering the houses of Moctezuma II (the last Mexica ruler), the National Palace on the east side is the square's main focal point. To the north, the eclectic cathedral with its baroque tabernacle stands partially on top of Tenochtitlán's Templo Mayor [Main Temple]. The Templo's ruins have been uncovered and it is now a major archeological site, complete with a museum. The neo-colonial buildings, on the south and west sides of the plaza, house the city hall and businesses.

¹ The name of Mexico City's main square has changed throughout time. For example, during the colonial period its name was Plaza Mayor [Main Square] and today it is called Plaza de la Constitución [Constitution Square] or Zócalo.

² I use the term Mexica when I refer to the pre-conquest capital Tenochtitlán and its inhabitants. As I will later discuss in the dissertation, Mexica is a more appropriate term than the name Aztec, which implies ethnic homogeneity.

³ A palimpsest is a writing material used one or more times after earlier writing has been erased, but some of its traces remain. Commonly employed as a literary metaphor, I use it in the material and archeological sense: to describe historical layering and accumulated additions to built environments. Following contemporary scholars such as Andreas Huyssen when analyzing urban spaces embedded with traces of former pasts, I see the Zócalo and its surrounding streets as an archaeological site where the unfolding of time is materialized in its buildings. See Andreas Huyssen, "After the War: Berlin as Palimpsest," in *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 72–84. Other scholars, such as D.J. Hopkins and Shelley Orr, prefer to discuss such spaces as simultaneous. Instead of implying an erasure of the past, they focus on the "simultaneity of the urban past in the present." D. J. Hopkins and Shelley Orr, "Memory/Memorial/Performance: Lower Manhattan, 1776/2001," in *Performance and the City*, eds. D.J. Hopkins, Shelley Orr and Kim Solga (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 36.

Furthermore, the Zócalo has been Mexico's public site where actual contestations of space have been performed. Conquerors, viceroys, invaders, emperors, dictators, revolutionaries, and presidents have staged official and celebratory performances in the Zócalo as a means of theatricalizing and legitimizing their power. Inversely, social groups have used the Zócalo to stage performances challenging the rulers' dominance over the space and, hence, the official ideology. The Zócalo is the historical and spatial embodiment of Mexico's fight over territory, which has included the violent eradication of indigenous groups. Since the conquest, Mexico City is and has been the place from which these groups have been erased either literally or by decree. The only part of the Zócalo's urban process that the ruling elites have yielded to Mexico's Indians has been through celebrations. Still, the indigenous participation has redefined the square as an ambivalent public space. The dual purpose of this dissertation is to examine the Zócalo as Mexico's central site of performance and to unmask the official discourse regarding Mexico's natives. To illustrate the plaza's dynamism, this project looks at both official and counter-official discourses in performance.

The topic of my dissertation constitutes the intersection of the following subjects: the Zócalo as Mexico's most important site of performance, the staging of historical contestations of space, and the indigenous participation in these spectacles. However, as I analyze what scholars and politicians refer to as "the Indian question,"⁴ I consider it necessary to acknowledge my privileged position as a Mexican scholar working in the US. The fact that I have walked many times through the Zócalo and its surrounding streets, the area known today as Centro Histórico [Historic Center], provides me with a specific knowledge of the site and, yet, none from the indigenous perspective. Therefore, I do not speak for the indigenous peoples. On the other

⁴ The "Indian question" refers to the way the Mexican state discusses its relation with the Indian peoples. I will discuss this topic later in this introduction.

hand, I analyze their participation in performance and examine how their abuse has been masked as a "happy" integration. This unmasking is a continuous strategy throughout my dissertation.

The spatial coordinates of my dissertation are less than a square mile yet its temporal coordinates span centuries. My hinge points are performances in the *Zócalo* that enact contestations of space, and I study them within the standard divisions of Mexican history. My chapters are divided into the early colonial period, late colonial era, independence/dictatorship, and revolution/present.⁵ I adopt this historiographical demarcation because each epoch is marked by different conflicts over territory and space. The early colonial period alludes to the Mexica defeat at Tenochtitlán and to the imposition of the Spanish colonial system. The late colonial era refers to New Spain's autocratic rule under the Bourbons. The period of independence/dictatorship covers the new country's territorial sovereignty, the years of chaos after the war of independence, and the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. The revolution/present interval represents the peasant uprising against the capitalistic organization of space and land. I have chosen to highlight a particular type of performance that relates to the territorial conflict under each historical period, each serving as the central case study of the chapters: the 1539 Civic Festival of Mexico-Tenochtitlán, the 1721 Bicentennial Paseo del pendón [Parade of the Royal Banner], the 1910 Centenario's Gran procesión cívica [Great Civic Procession] and Gran desfile histórico [Great Historical Parade], and the 2001 Zapatista entry into Mexico City. I conclude my project with the 2010 Bicentennial of Independence and Revolution. These are the most substantial cases within the Mexican archive and the historiographical periods. The

⁵ Since there is no first-hand evidence available of any specific pre-conquest performance, I start my historical narrative right after the conquest. What we have available regarding pre-conquest performances in Tenochtitlán are informed descriptions created by Spanish missionaries after the conquest and by later generations of Indians under the guidance of missionaries. For an example, see Bernardino de Sahagún, *General History of the Things of New Spain: Florentine Codex* (Santa Fe, NM.: School of American Research, 1981), and Fray Diego Durán, *The History of the Indies of New Spain*, trans. Doris Heyden (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994).

different types of performances demonstrate an array of spatial uses of the Zócalo throughout history. Furthermore, a chronological division of chapters reinforces the idea of the Zócalo as an archeological palimpsest, the most appropriate way to study Mexico's square as a site of performance.

The questions this dissertation considers include: How have governments and other groups appropriated the Zócalo as a site of performance? How have performances reinforced or questioned Mexico's official history? What have been the scenographic choices and the ideologies informing my case studies? How have these performances been used as sites of identities and nationhood? How and where do we locate the Indian question in space? As my case studies show, each performance reframes the Zócalo into a specific space with new meanings and symbolisms. Consequently, by providing a collection of the Zócalo's re-framings throughout history, I convey the square's potential as a site of officialdom *and* liberation. In this way, looking at the Zócalo defined by performance characterizes my overall interdisciplinary and theoretical approach.

The Indian Question

The following quote by Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, regarding Mexico's colonial thinking, illustrates one of my aims in writing this dissertation: "And we will learn, after unmasking our prejudices, after liberating our colonial thinking, after deciding that it is we ourselves who must understand who we are, that the central protagonist of our history and the indispensable component of our future is the *México profundo*."⁶

⁶ Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, *Mexico Profundo: Reclaiming a Civilization* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), xiii.

In his study, *México Profundo*, Bonfil Batalla reveals Mexico's unresolved confrontation between the Mesoamerican and western civilizations. He shows how, since the conquest and throughout history, two Mexicos have emerged: the imaginary or colonial, and the *profundo* [deep] or Indian. The former is superficial and homogenizing, and promotes a single identity; the latter refers to the presence of Mesoamerican civilization in indigenous groups and in other sectors of society.⁷ The author unmasks how proponents of a westernized Mexico have tried to eliminate the indigenous through arguments of progress, unity, nation, and civilization. This dissertation illustrates how governments have invented a Mexican imaginary through commemorative and historical celebrations. Nevertheless, and as I show, the Mexico profundo has invariably resurfaced in such celebrations. There is no question that parts of Mexico's population are ashamed of the country's indigenous antecedents and present natives. As Bonfil Batalla writes, "Our Indian ancestry is a mirror in which we do not wish to see our own reflection."⁸ In this dissertation, I highlight such negation as a contribution to the liberation of Mexico's colonial thinking. Mexico's internal prejudices against Indians must be addressed since they have certainly shaped the way history has been written and performed.⁹

Thus, I place this project within the larger debate over the Indian question. The phrase "Indian question" is the traditional way the Mexican state addresses the debate over indigenous communities. Historically, the ruling classes have viewed Mexico's indigenous populations as

⁷ Ibid., xv

⁸ Ibid., 18.

⁹ While it is not my intention to homogenize or to establish a rigid binary between Spaniards and Indians, I refer to the various indigenous populations as Indians, indigenous, or natives in order to differentiate them from the colonizers and elites. Moreover, the Mexican imaginary has been and continues to be reified along the European/indigenous binary. It is also important to keep in mind that other ethnic groups are present in Mexico. For example, there is a strong Afro-Mexican presence in the country's coasts as well as of Middle Eastern–Mexican groups in urban centers. For historical accounts of both groups' migration to Mexico, see Herman L. Bennett, *Colonial Blackness: A History of Afro-Mexico* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009) and Theresa Alfaró-Velcamp, *So Far from Allah, So Close to Mexico: Middle Eastern Immigrants in Modern Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007).

an obstacle to national unity and thus promote acculturation and assimilation. Still, the Indian communities demand their right to difference within equality. As Gerardo Otero observes, the Mexican ruling classes need to understand that acknowledging indigenous difference "entails not a weakening but a strengthening of the state, not its impoverishment but its enrichment, the seeking of unity in diversity not in uniformity."¹⁰

Since the conquest, natives have been caught in imposed official ideologies. As Alan Knight points out, the generic concept of the Indian was formulated in the wake of the conquest in "negative contradistinction to the dominant Spaniard/European."¹¹ Back then, Indians did not have any shared identity of Indianess, "it was the European who created the Indian."¹² During the three hundred years of colonial rule, Spaniards and *criollos* [American Spaniards—colonial-born offspring of Spaniards] considered natives inferior beings and discriminated against them officially. Spaniards segregated themselves from Indians and placed them at the bottom of the colonial socio-racial structure. They exploited Indians through labor. In the colonial period, during their search for independence from Spain, criollos appropriated and interpreted pre-Hispanic culture while negating the present Indians.¹³

With the establishment of an independent nation in the nineteenth century, the focus towards the Indian problem turned to the question of integration. Although natives became legally equal to all Mexicans, they were still informally discriminated against. Ruling elites

¹⁰ Gerardo Otero, "The Indian Question in Latin America: Class, State, and Ethnic Identity Construction," *Latin American Research Review* 38, no.1 (2003): 250. In his review of literature regarding the "Indian Question" in Latin American States, Otero describes how the vast majority of Indian communities in Latin America do not seek territorial sovereignty but autonomy in the management of their territories. Moreover, Indians demand state reforms so that "their communal property and cultural rights be institutionally acknowledged." For an overview on the subject, see Otero's introduction to his review on publications on the topic, *Ibid.*, 248–50.

¹¹ Alan Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and Indigenismo: Mexico, 1910–1940," in Richard Graham, Thomas E. Skidmore, Aline Helg, and Alan Knight, *The Idea of Race in Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 75. Knight also acknowledges that pan-Indianism is a recent creation; that is, the shared sentiment of Indianess among different groups.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ The criollos' process of appropriation and interpretation of pre-Hispanic culture in search of an authentic identity has come to be referred as "criollo patriotism."

considered Indians an antinational element requiring assimilation into the twentieth century. After the agrarian and peasant revolution (1910–1921), the state officially recognized Mexico's mixed heritage and promoted the "positive" aspects of the Indian (valor, nobility, suffering, history, and customs). Since then, the state has branded Mexico as a *mestizo* [mixed race] country with a rich indigenous culture and past.

Even though governments have had several interpretations of the Indian question, there has been one constant: Indians have been subjected to bigotry at the same time that their past has been glorified and admired. While state tourism benefits from exoticizing natives, Indians find themselves trapped in an imposed ideology. Paradoxically, some of the natives' reaction is utilitarian. As Knight states, "they exploit whatever opportunities official *indigenismo* [indigenism or indigenesness] confers, even playing up their exotic or romantic official image."¹⁴ This can be exemplified today by the Danzantes or Concheros [Dancers or Shell-players], who perform indigenous dances for tourists in the Zócalo.

The challenge for the Indian peoples of Mexico in the last half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century has been to resist the homogenizing policies of neoliberal globalization. As I will show in the last chapter, the Zapatistas—largely composed of indigenous groups originating in the southern state of Chiapas—have been able to do so by gaining civil support and by maintaining autonomous development within different indigenous communities. They continue to place their struggle for the recognition of indigenous difference within the Mexican neoliberal state. The Indian question is not anymore just a problem of the Mexican state but an issue for an economic system which believes that natives are superfluous and hinder Mexico's bid for economic globalization.

¹⁴ Knight, 100.

Review of Literature

This study builds upon the historicization and theorization within three overlapping areas of theatre studies. First, this dissertation is a contribution to English-language theatre history studies because examinations of urban spaces as theatres tend to concentrate on cities in Europe and the US.¹⁵ The use of public squares as sites of performance in Mexico and Latin America should become part of this discussion. Public squares used as theatres have continuously been part of urban processes in Latin American cities; conversely, urban processes have been influenced by performances in public spaces. Thus, a study of the particularities of Mexico City's urban changes in relation to its main square offers us an instance through which we can expand the model of how to study performance and the city.

Secondly, in the field of Mexican theatre history, to date there is no detailed study in English or Spanish about the use of the *Zócalo* and its surrounding streets as a theatre. Its importance can be immediately illustrated by the fact that, for at least two hundred years, the *Zócalo* was the largest and principal site of performance in the Spanish colonies. Moreover, since the birth of Mexico as a nation and as an independent country, it has served as the nation's predominant public space in which celebrations, protests, and other performance practices take place.

Thirdly, this study constitutes a case for and about scenography, an element typically subordinated to textual or phenomenological concerns in theatre historiography. Scenography—the design of visual and spatial environments for performance—tends to be studied as a merely decorative aspect of performance. Throughout this dissertation, I show that a scenographic analysis is an extremely rich method through which it is possible to trace cultural tendencies as

¹⁵ The field is starting to expand to other geographical areas. For example, see Marvin Carlson, "Site-Specific Performance in the Arabic Theatre World" in *Site-Specific Performance in Arabo-Islamic Contexts*, eds. Khalid Amine and George F. Roberson (Tetouan, Morocco: Faculty of Letters and Humanities, 2011), 5–19.

well as ideological and political intentions. Although some contemporary theatre scholars—such as Arnold Aronson, Stephen di Benedetto, and Irene Eynat-Cofino—write about various scenographic practices, these are primarily described as aesthetic practices within theatre buildings with proscenium-like arrangements.¹⁶ I maintain that if performance has been practiced and created outside traditional theatre architectures, scenography has accompanied it.

Hence, I consider my project an important contribution to theatre history, to Mexican theatre history, and to the study of scenography. I review below the main texts that deal with performance in public spaces, followed by those that examine theatrical space in Mexico. Texts related to each case study are included in the relevant chapters. I present this review in relation to my dissertation's main objective, which is to provide a spatial history of the Zócalo as a site of performance.

Within theatre studies, scholars who focus on the use of cities as theatres concentrate their investigations on Europe and the US. Among available studies, Marvin Carlson's *Places of Performance* (1989) is still one of the most influential. Carlson focuses on theatre spaces, their location, and their characteristics. He describes the processes by which societies have given meaning to such places. In the first chapter, "The City as Theatre," Carlson analyses different cases of European and US history in which city images were created and used in medieval theatre, royal entries, celebrations, parades, and site-specific performances.¹⁷ Carlson's semiotic approach to studying the city as text provides me with a useful example for looking at a public space in performance.

¹⁶ For an overview of Aronson's writings on scenography, see Arnold Aronson, *Looking into the Abyss: Essays on Scenography* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005). For recent publications on scenography by different scholars, including di Benedetto and Eynat-Cofino, see Irene Eynat-Cofino and Eva Sormová eds., *Space and the Postmodern Stage* (Prague: MU Studio, 2000).

¹⁷ Marvin A. Carlson, *Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 14–37.

Similar to Carlson, David Wiles's book *A Short History of Western Performance Space* (2003) constitutes an important overview of space and theatre within Europe.¹⁸ By using spatial theory (drawn mainly from the works of Henri Lefebvre and Michel Foucault), Wiles examines how different actor-audience arrangements create meanings in performance. Although Wiles focuses on European examples, the way he structures his study is beneficial because he looks at different types of performance as inseparable from space. For example, he divides the processional use of space in four categories: pilgrimage, parade, map, and narrative.¹⁹ In this dissertation I look at different types of processions that alter the Zócalo's meaning.

In addition, recent publications such as Jen Harvie's *Theatre & the City* (2009) and the essays collected in *Performance and the City* (2009) provide us with an array of explorations into the role of performance and theatre in urban culture, architecture, and civic history.²⁰ Whereas Harvie offers us an introductory survey of the city and the theatre through a cultural materialist and performative angle, *Performance and the City* investigates the role of memories and trauma. Similar to Carlson and Wiles, both publications concentrate on European and US cities, with the exception of Harvie's brief look at Francis Alÿs's performance walks through Mexico City.²¹

Scholars such as Marvin Carlson, M. Christine Boyer, Nick Kaye, and Miwon Kwon have published works that examine, through different angles, site-related performances.²² The

¹⁸ David Wiles, *A Short History of Western Performance Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 63–91.

²⁰ Jan Harvie, *Theatre & the City* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Hopkins, Orr, and Solga, *Performance and the City*.

²¹ Harvie, 56–57. The focus on European and US cities is being corrected with the forthcoming publication *Performance and the Global City*, the follow-up volume to *Performance and the City*, which explores the relationship of performance and the rhetoric of the global city in urban spaces around the world. D.J. Hopkins and Kim Solga, eds., *Performance and the Global City* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

²² For a historical overview of site-specific performance, see Marvin Carlson, "Non-Traditional Theatre Space," in *The Disappearing Stage: Reflections on the 2011 Prague Quadrennial*, ed. Arnold Aronson (Arts and Theatre Institute: Prague, 2012), 24–35. On memory and the city, see M. Christine Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory*:

fact that they employ different theories—memory, spatial materialism, architectural and urban theories, as well as identity politics—brings into the foreground the complexity of the relationship between site and performance. Such contemporary studies of space and performance also raise the question of the use of terminology. As Carlson observes, the term site-specific "is open to many interpretations."²³ He goes on to describe the two main views about site-specific performance today: one is traditional in that it refers to productions that have been created specifically for a space, the other is more open because it includes all productions that take place outside traditional theatre spaces.²⁴ Even though I analyze historical performances staged long before the introduction of the term, I use "site-specific" to underscore the fact that the events I analyze were conceived specifically for the Zócalo.

Other recent publications are limited to one city and/or historical period, such as Michael McKinnie's *City Stages: Theatre and Urban Space in a Global City* (2007) and James M. Saslow's *The Medici Wedding of 1589* (1996).²⁵ McKinnie analyzes the relation between theatres and civic life in Toronto and shows how it is a global city that has been shaped by performance over the past fifty years. Saslow focuses his fascinating study on the urban celebrations and performances which honored the Medici wedding in Florence. Through his rigorous use of extant visual and documentary records, Saslow reconstructs the scenography of the theatrical spectacles such as triumphal entries, wedding ceremonies, mock naval battles,

Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994). For a study of site-specific performance and art using architectural, urban, and spatial theories, see Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation* (New York: Routledge, 2001). On site-specificity, place, and identity politics, public art, and community-based art, see Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

²³ Carlson, "Non-Traditional Theatre Space," 26.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 26–27.

²⁵ Michael McKinnie, *City Stages: Theatre and Urban Space in a Global City* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2007); James M. Saslow, *The Medici Wedding of 1589: Florentine Festival as Theatrum Mundi* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

street masquerades, and tournaments. I consider Saslow's study beneficial for my own when reconstructing and interpreting visual records of urban scenographies in the Zócalo.

In the field of Mexican theatre and performance, the archive constitutes a series of studies without any real spatial or scenographical analysis of public spaces. For example, in Heidrun Adler and Jaime Chabaud's recent collection of essays *Un viaje sin fin: teatro mexicano hoy* (2004), none of the well-known scholars of Mexican theatre, such as George Woodyard, Adam Versényi, Fernando de Ita, Kristen F. Nigro, and Jacqueline Eyring Bixler, analyze theatre spaces, scenographies, or other performance sites.²⁶ Their work instead concentrates on dramaturgy and how space is represented in plays. This type of methodology, which subordinates and separates theatrical space within studies of Mexican theatre, can be traced back to the earlier work of Antonio Magaña-Esquivel and Rodolfo Usigli, who were content to study dramatic texts, theatres, and the city as separate entities.²⁷

The few in-depth investigations of spaces in the field have been dedicated to traditional theatre architectures and not to public spaces.²⁸ Luckily, Giovanna Recchia's study, *Espacio teatral en la ciudad de México* (1993), provides for the first time a complete record of the diverse types of spaces—private and public—used for performances in Mexico City.²⁹ Recchia's work concentrates on the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.

²⁶ Heidrun Adler and Jaime Chabaud eds., *Un viaje sin fin: teatro mexicano hoy* (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2004).

²⁷ Antonio Magaña-Esquivel, *Breve historia del teatro mexicano* (México, D.F.: Ediciones De Andrea, 1958); Magaña-Esquivel, *Imagen y realidad del teatro en México (1533–1960)*, ed. Edgar Ceballos (México, D.F.: Escenología, 2000); Rodolfo Usigli, *Mexico in the Theatre*, trans. Wilder P. Scout (University, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 1976).

²⁸ Antonio Magaña-Esquivel, *Los teatros en la ciudad de México* (México, D.F.: Departamento del Distrito Federal, Secretaría de Obras y Servicios, 1974); María Eugenia Aragón Rangel, *El Teatro Nacional de la ciudad de México: 1841–1901* (México, D.F.: INBA, Centro Nacional de Documentación Teatral Rodolfo Usigli, 1995); Jovita Millán Carranza, *70 años de teatro en el Palacio de Bellas Artes (1934–2004)* (México, D.F.: CONALCULTA, INBA, 2004).

²⁹ Giovanna Recchia, *Espacio teatral en la ciudad de México, siglos XVI–XVII* (México, D.F.: Centro Nacional de Investigación Teatral Rodolfo Usigli, 1993).

I use Jaime Lara's *City, Temple, Stage* (2004) as an example of a thorough critical analysis. It connects architecture, liturgical celebrations, and educational activities in Mexico during the first years of contact in the sixteenth century.³⁰ Although his approach is very specific to iconography and the performances' intended meanings in the mendicant complexes in central Mexico, Lara's methodology serves as an example of how to establish connections among performance, public spaces, and their visual records.

Finally, there are other types of analyses—urban, architectural, and ethnographic—that examine Mexico City and its Zócalo. Examples include: Anthinea Blanco Fenochio and Reed Dillingham's *La plaza mexicana* (2002), Jonathan Kandell's *La Capital* (1988), Michael Johns's *The City of Mexico in the Age of Díaz* (1997), and the collection of essays in *El Zócalo: esquema histórico* (1998).³¹ Although such studies do not encompass performance practices and their scenographies, they summarize the Zócalo's history as an everyday space.

Methodology and Chapters

My argument rests on the notion that each of the performances I analyze creates a different Zócalo. Henri Lefebvre's theories about space have been influential to me because they are grounded in the social and political aspects of spatial processes.³² To answer the question "What is the Zócalo?" we need to analyze the space through human activities. Lefebvre would

³⁰ Jaime Lara, *City, Temple, Stage: Eschatological Architecture and Liturgical Theatrics in New Spain* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004).

³¹ Anthinea Blanco Fenochio and Reed Dillingham, *La plaza mexicana: escenario de la vida pública y espacio simbólico de la ciudad* (México, D.F.: UNAM, 2002); Jonathan Kandell, *La Capital: The Biography of Mexico City* (New York: Random House, 1988); Michael Johns, *The City of Mexico in the Age of Díaz* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997); Concurso nacional para la rehabilitación de la Plaza de la Constitución, ed., *El Zócalo: esquema histórico* (México, D.F.: Trilce Ediciones, 1998).

³² Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1991); Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, trans. Robert Bononno. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

describe it as a socially produced location, not as a neutral space where things occur.³³ Thus, if the Zócalo is a social space, we can replace our initial question with a new one: "How is it that performances create different conceptualizations of the Zócalo?"³⁴ To answer my rephrased question, I use a unified methodology, which analyzes performances in the Zócalo through Lefebvre's three spatialities. He argues that constructed spaces have material, conceptual, and lived dimensions. The material is the space of perception or the thing in itself; the conceptual is the space represented and depends crucially on who represents it; and the lived is defined by the events that occur in it and how we experience them. I describe my case studies through each of the spatial divisions and the relations among them.

Each of my chapters begins by analyzing material spatial characteristics of the space: the Zócalo's urban designations and architectural features during the historical period. It then focuses on the conceptual aspect of space in relation to a specific performance. Conceptual spatiality relates to the Zócalo's scenographic transformation as well as the performance's written descriptions under analysis. I concentrate on the types of scenographic constructs in urban performances as discussed in first-hand written accounts, oral transcriptions, and in other archival objects such as photographs, paintings, and artistic renditions. Following anthropologist Setha M. Low's argument that there is a history of cultural meanings and intentions embedded in built environments,³⁵ I argue that cultural meanings and intentions are also embedded in urban scenographies, temporary architectures, decorations, and costumes. Hence, I study the meanings

³³ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 31, 36–46.

³⁴ Following Henri Lefebvre theorization, David Harvey introduces this type of question using human practices instead of performances. Following his argument, I substitute human practices for performances in the Zócalo; at the end, a performance is a human practice. See David Harvey, "Space as Key Word," in *Spaces of Global Capitalism: Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development* (New York: Verso, 2006), 126.

³⁵ Setha M. Low, "Cultural Meaning of the Plaza," in *The Cultural Meaning of Urban Space*, ed. Robert Rotenberg and Gary McDonogh (Westport, CN: Bergin & Garvey, 1993), 75.

and ideologies behind aesthetic styles (e.g., colonial, baroque, neoclassic, modern, and postmodern).

Along with my scenographic analysis, I explore the lived spatiality of the specific performance. I discuss how the Zócalo was experienced at the time as well as the singular role of collective memory in creating meaning. When I analyze the ways social memory is sustained through commemorative celebrations, I rely on the work of Paul Connerton and Maurice Halbwachs, who underline the importance of space and landmarks in such processes.³⁶ As my historical narrative progresses, I show that organizers of official commemorations recycled old traditions for new purposes. I study this phenomenon through Eric Hobsbawm's theorizing of traditions, in which he foregrounds the political implications of reinventing established practices through celebrations.³⁷

Artifacts such as manuscripts, paintings, maps, and engravings are subjective representations. Still, their significance can be equated to the way we live space through performance. Invoking Lefebvre and Walter Benjamin, David Harvey insists that "we do not live as material atoms floating around in a materialist world; we also have imaginations, fears, emotions, psychologies, fantasies and dreams."³⁸ I look at visual and written records of such imaginations and emotions in the Zócalo, and thus convey the lived dimension in space. This is difficult terrain because it depends on the subject's lived experience; such subjectivity does not prevent me, however, from providing an analysis of the performances' visual and written renditions.

³⁶ Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); and Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

³⁷ Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

³⁸ Harvey, 131.

Finally, I look at the discussed spatial divisions as if layered one on top of another in each of my case studies. This allows me to show the spatial interactions and tensions of the Zócalo as a material, conceptual, and lived space. After all, like any socially constructed space, the Zócalo is simultaneously all three spatialities. Through this method, I arrive at conclusions regarding the transformation of Mexico's square from an everyday space into a specific site of performance. Moreover, this methodology mirrors and relates to the palimpsestic or archeological layering of the site, which I consider to be the most accurate way of studying performance in the Zócalo from a spatial approach.

Chapter one, "Rebuilding and Redefining Mexico-Tenochtitlán," analyzes a civic festival in 1539—the first of its kind in the Spanish colony. The four-day festival celebrated the 1538 truce between the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, Charles V, and King Francis I of France—a major event in Catholic Europe. It included performances of conquest, mock battles, bull fights, races, farces, and banquets. In my study of each of the festival's performances, I focus on the indigenous participation with their scenographic constructs and demonstrate how these transgressed the imposed European spatiality. By arguing that the festival marked not just the beginning of the colonial city but also the predominance of indigenous art forms, I show that the various performative events transformed the plaza into a multi-purpose theatre.

Chapter two, "Performing Loyalty in the Center," focuses on the 1721 bicentennial celebration of conquest called Paseo del pendón, a site-specific performance that reinvented the tradition of celebrating conquest by transforming it into an expression of monarchical allegiance. In this chapter, I analyze the reworking of old commemorations to foreground the political, social, religious, and ethnic fractures characteristic of the late colonial period. While the authorities' purpose was to display harmony among the social, religious, and ethnic groups, the

celebration's popular and indigenous manifestations created a potentially unstable space in the Plaza Mayor. Indeed, the Plaza Mayor emerges as a deeply contested space.

"Performing Social and Historical Evolution in the Center," the next chapter, studies the 1910 Gran procesión cívica and Gran desfile histórico as evolutionary versions of Mexico's past and present. Both performances were part of the celebrations to commemorate the Centenario—the centennial anniversary of the initiation of independence—during the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. Both pageants solidified the role of the Zócalo as Mexico's main performance site, while also embedding Mexico's ambivalent identity as a mestizo country. To analyze this duality, I focus on the official discourse regarding the place of the indigenous peoples in the construction of Mexico's modern identity. As shown through these performances, Díaz's ideologues tried to erase ethnic differences through a glorification of mestizaje while simultaneously foregrounding a unique national past. Within the same year of the Centenario, popular and social discontent around the country materialized into the armed conflict that forced Díaz into exile. The fight for indigenous agrarian rights, led by Emiliano Zapata, became one of the principal struggles during the Mexican Revolution (1910–1921).

Chapter four, "The Zócalo as a Counter-Space," analyzes the historical 2001 Zapatista triumphal entry into Mexico City. On March 11, members of the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional [Zapatista Army of National Liberation or EZLN] arrived at the Zócalo to promote the constitutional recognition of indigenous rights and cultures, and to engage in dialogue with Mexico's society and Congress. I end my dissertation with this case study in order to foreground the potential for indigenous resistance in the same space where natives have been historically marginalized. I argue that the Zapatistas redefined the Zócalo as a counter-space of indigenous resistance. I also study the Zócalo as Mexico's most disputed public space during the

twentieth century. Events that occurred in the square, such as fights during the Revolution, demonstrations of the 1968 student movement, and the Zapatistas' entry, have contested Mexico's centralized power.

In the conclusion, I discuss the 2010 Desfile histórico, which was part of Mexico's recent celebration of Independence and Revolution—the Bicentenario [Bicentennial]. I do this to draw attention to contemporary and touristic productions that continue to perform Mexico's history and identity. The parade's creators mixed traditions, myths, and scenographies in a folkloric and spectacular collage that reaffirmed the commercial and exotic stereotype of an "authentic" Mexico. This imaginary Mexico is deeply alienated from the indigenous one—or, as Bonfil Batalla calls it, the *México profundo*.

As I will demonstrate throughout this dissertation, official celebrations in the Zócalo promote an imaginary Mexico but allow, due to their own superficiality, different types of indigenous resistance to emerge. Through the following five case studies, this project will describe the Zócalo's as a site of repression, rebellion, and liberation.

Chapter One

Rebuilding and Redefining Mexico-Tenochtitlán: The 1539 Civic Festival

Early in 1522, after the destruction of Tenochtitlán and after long debates about whether or not to locate the Spanish city on the same site as the Mexica or Aztec capital,¹ Hernán Cortés gave orders to start rebuilding the indigenous city as the metropolitan center of the new colony. The arguments against rehabilitating and inhabiting the former Mexica center were logical. Low-lying marshy lands made the island vulnerable to constant floods; it was extremely dirty and unhealthy after the devastation and debris caused by the conquest; potable water had to be supplied by artificial means; and it was easy to block because it was connected to the mainland by causeways that could be dominated by the natives (figs. 1.1 and 1.2).² However, Cortés also realized that the symbolic, religious, historical, and cultural weight of the former Mexica city

¹ As historian Anthony Pagden points out, the term Aztec Empire is inaccurate because "its peoples most probably described themselves as the Mexica, or Culhua-Mexica," and as he notes, Moctezuma "was the leader not of an empire but of a loose alliance of three closely-related ethnic groups: the Mexica themselves, the Tepaneca and the Alcohua," which had come to be referred to as "the Triple-Alliance of the cities of the lake Valley, Mexico-Tenochtitlán, Texcoco and Tlacopan." Furthermore, historian James Lockhart makes an important distinction between Nahuatl and Mexica after pointing at the "decisive disadvantages" of the use of the term Aztec, as it implies a "quasi-national unity that did not exist." Lockhart defines the different ethnic groups living in regions of central Mexico united by a common language (Náhuatl) as *Nahuas* while clarifying that the *Mexicas* were "the inhabitants of the imperial capital, Tenochtitlán." Neither term—Nahuatl or Mexica—should imply ethnic homogeneity. As my study focuses on the capital's main plaza (former center of Tenochtitlán), I follow Pagden and Lockhart's analyses and use the term Mexica when referring to the pre-conquest capital and its inhabitants. Anthony Pagden, "Introduction," in *Hernán Cortés: Letters from Mexico*, trans. and ed. Anthony Pagden (New Haven: Yale Nota Bene, 2001), xxxix, ixiv; 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, 1992), 1–13. While it is not my intention to place under the same category the different indigenous groups of the pre-conquest Triple-Alliance, I use the terms native, indigenous, or Indian to separate the post-conquest indigenous groups from the Spanish conquerors and colonizers.

² George Kubler, *Mexican Architecture of the Sixteenth Century*, vol. 1 (1948; repr., Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972), 69. In this chapter, I rely on the architectural and urban characteristics of sixteenth-century Mexico that historian George Kubler published in his study. Although Kubler's is not a recent publication, it is still considered the most complete book on the subject. Contemporary scholars such as Jaime Lara use Kubler's study as a point of departure and as a reference. Also, James Lockhart acknowledges some of Kubler's intellectual accomplishments when referring to his study. See Jaime Lara, *City, Temple, Stage: Eschatological Architecture and Liturgical Theatrics in New Spain* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004); Lockhart, 601.

could not be ignored. The grandeur of Tenochtitlán's sacred center evoked past memories and images for the natives and could incite vengeance.

The political potential of an abandoned Tenochtitlán relates to Henri Lefebvre's discussion about monumentality. In his influential book *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre argues that besides the three aspects of social space—perceived (material), conceived (mental), and lived (through the body)—monumentality has always conveyed collectivity:

Monumental space offered each member of a society an image of that membership, an image of his or her social visage. It thus constituted a collective mirror more faithful than any personal one. . . . [E]veryone partook, and partook fully—albeit, naturally, under the conditions of a generally accepted Power and a generally accepted Wisdom. The monument thus effected a 'consensus', and this in the strongest sense of the term, rendering it practical and concrete.³

While monumental space is social and collective, it also seeks to transcend death by being durable, a-temporal, and eternal. When Cortés arrived in Tenochtitlán, the city's monumentality was indeed a reflection of the Mexica civilization and of its highly structured society. Lefebvre observes that when conquerors and revolutionaries have sought to destroy a society, they "do so by burning or razing that society's monuments."⁴ It is no wonder that, in order to destroy the Mexicas, Cortés started by demolishing the monuments—the spaces and buildings that gave the sense of collectivity, membership, and power. Moreover, Cortés not only decimated the Mexica center but replaced it with the new Spanish city of Mexico-Tenochtitlán.⁵ After the conquerors destroyed the pagan temples, a Spanish town emerged from the ruins of a Mexica city. The

³ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 220.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 221.

⁵ As George Kubler notes, residents called the capital Tenochtitlán until the mid-sixteenth century, when its use started to diminish in official documents. Kubler, 71. Later, residents of the city started to call the capital Ciudad de México [Mexico City]. I use the hyphenated term Mexico-Tenochtitlán because, as historian Patricia Lopes Don argues, "it both identifies the city historically and reminds us of the soon-to-be given name." Patricia Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World: A Civic Festival in the city of Mexico-Tenochtitlán in 1539," *Colonial Latin American Review* 6, no.1 (1997): 36.

Plaza Mayor [Main Square] was built on top of the Mexica's ritual center, and its built environment offered an image of colonial membership to a new society in gestation.

Despite the laborious enterprise of replacing one city with another and erasing the Mexica space, in 1539 civic authorities organized a four-day festival to celebrate the 1538 truce between Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, Charles V, and King Francis I of France.⁶ This was a major event for Catholic Europe: During the first decades of the sixteenth century, Europe was threatened by both the Protestant Reformation and the Turkish armies of Süleyman the Magnificent. The Ottoman Turks captured Rhodes in 1521, annihilated the Hungarian army in 1526, and besieged Vienna for a month in 1529.⁷ Through the peace treaty between rivals Francis I and Charles V, as Max Harris writes in *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, "Catholic Europe breathed a collective sigh of relief, and Spanish millenarians turned their thoughts again to a final crusade."⁸ The news reached Mexico-Tenochtitlán in January 1539. In order to commemorate the royal achievement, Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza and the city council sponsored the first officially recognized festival in the capital of New Spain. The celebration included staged hunts, mock battles, dances, music, banquets, and races. Most importantly for this study, indigenous communities created traditional scenographic constructs, and thus, introduced pre-conquest festival practices into the new Spanish city.

This chapter studies the 1539 Civic Festival in Mexico-Tenochtitlán as a site-specific performance that marked the beginning of the colonial city and the end of the Mexica city. I focus on the indigenous participation through their scenographic constructs and on how these were re-imposed on the new European location.

⁶ According to Cortés biographer José Luis Martínez, this festival was the first civic festival in New Spain in which both Spaniards and natives participated. José Luis Martínez, *Hernán Cortés* (México, D.F.: UNAM, 1990), 710.

⁷ Max Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians: Festivals of Reconquest in Mexico and Spain* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2000), 123.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 124.

The festival took place on the third week of February 1539, during the week of carnival preceding Lent.⁹ The performances and celebrations were staged in the newly built Spanish town and used the Plaza Mayor as the principal site of performance. What we know about the 1539 festival comes from two original accounts and one illustration. The soldier Bernal Díaz del Castillo,¹⁰ who accompanied Hernán Cortés to Mexico and Honduras in the 1520s and 1530s, offers a detailed description of the celebrations in his *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*, ca. 1568.¹¹ The Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas, named "Protector of the Indians,"¹² wrote a brief account of La conquista de Rodas [The Conquest of Rhodes]—the

⁹ While it is impossible to know the exact dates of the festival, we know that it took place before Lent and that in 1539 the first day of Lent (Ash Wednesday) was 19 February. Ibid., 124–25; Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 17, 20.

¹⁰ Bernal Díaz del Castillo (c.1495–1584) was born in Medina del Campo in Old Castile and arrived in the Americas in 1514. He participated in the first three expeditions to Mexico by Francisco Hernández de Córdoba (1517), Juan de Grijalva (1518), and Hernán Cortés (1519). Díaz del Castillo was a foot-soldier in Cortés's conquest of Tenochtitlán and went with Cortés on his expedition to Honduras (1524–26). He spent the rest of his life in New Spain as an *encomendero* (someone who owns a grant of land and native labor—known as *encomienda*—given by the Spanish monarchy). Díaz del Castillo twice went to Spain after losing some of his grants to ask for a larger compensation for his work during the conquest (1539–41, 1550–51). His interests and those of the *encomendero* class were defeated by the members of the royal court, by colonial officials, and by the arguments of Bartolomé de las Casas. See Rolena Adorno, "Bernal Díaz del Castillo: Soldier, Eyewitness, Polemicist," in *The History of the Conquest of New Spain by Bernal Díaz del Castillo*, ed. David Carrasco (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), 389–98; David Carrasco, "Introduction: The Dream of the Conquistador and a Book of Desire and Destruction," in *The History of the Conquest of New Spain by Bernal Díaz del Castillo*, ed. David Carrasco (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), xix–xxii.

¹¹ Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain, from the Only Exact Copy Made of the Original Manuscript*, ed. Genaro García, trans. Alfred Percival Maudslay, vol. 5 ([1568?]; London: Hakluyt Society, 1908–1916), 188–97. I use Genaro García's edition of *The True History* because it is a transcription of Díaz's manuscript that remained in Guatemala, whereas the first published version appeared in Spain in 1632 and was altered by its editors. Historians consider Genaro García's transcription to be the authoritative version of the work. Adorno, 393.

¹² Bartolomé de las Casas (c. 1484–1566) was born in Seville and became one of the most controversial figures of the encounter between the Spanish and natives. When he first arrived in the Americas he owned land and slaves and participated in military expeditions. However, after 1514 he embraced the cause of political and social justice for the indigenous populations. He wrote about and argued for the indigenous cause in the Americas, in Spain, and with the Pope in Rome. He became a Dominican friar, was the first resident Bishop of Chiapas, and was officially dubbed "Protector of the Indians" by Spain's Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros. Las Casas was an archivist and a scholar as well: he collected everything that he could and wrote many treatises, histories, and reports. For a contextual introduction to his life and writings, see Franklin W. Wright, "Introduction," in Bartolomé de las Casas, *An Account, Much Abbreviated, of the Destruction of the Indies, with Related Texts*, trans. Andrew Hurley. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2003), xi–l.

festival's central piece—in his *Apologética historia de las Indias*, ca. 1550.¹³ Also, the modern Nahua and colonial theatre scholar Fernando Horcasitas was able to locate a small illustration of the scenic units used in La conquista de Rodas and created by natives in the 1576 Codex Aubin (fig. 1.12).¹⁴

Díaz del Castillo's is by far the most complete account of the festival. While Bartolomé de las Casas concentrates on the scenographic details of La conquista de Rodas, Díaz del Castillo focuses on the day-by-day activities. It is important to keep in mind that both narrators were Europeans, wrote in the Castilian language,¹⁵ and were politically motivated.¹⁶ While Díaz del

¹³ I use the most recent translation by Adam Versényi of Las Casas's passage describing La conquista de Rodas included in his *Apologética historia de las Indias*. Adam Versényi, *Theatre in Latin America: Religion, Politics, and Culture from Cortés to the 1980s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 31–32. Bartolomé de las Casas, *Apologética historia de las Indias*, 2nd ed. (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 1958). Las Casas finished his work in ca. 1550 but it was not published until 1909. For the Spanish version with an introductory essay by historian Edmundo O'Gorman, see Bartolomé de las Casas, *Apologética historia sumaria*, ed. Edmundo O'Gorman, 2 vols, 3rd ed. (México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1967).

¹⁴ Fernando Horcasitas, *El teatro náhuatl: épocas novohispana y moderna* (México, D.F.: UNAM, 1974), 501.

¹⁵ Bernal Díaz del Castillo did not learn Náhuatl or any indigenous language. With Bartolomé de las Casas there is some question as to whether or not he learned any local languages. However, we know that Las Casas indeed considered learning the local languages important for working with natives. Las Casas and Díaz del Castillo considered themselves as true witnesses of the events in the Americas, and because they saw and experienced them directly, they defined themselves as "true" historians. Díaz del Castillo relied on Cortés's native interpreter Malintzin, known as "La Malinche." See Sandra Messinger Cypess, "La Malinche as Palimpsest II," in *The History of the Conquest of New Spain by Bernal Díaz del Castillo*, ed. David Carrasco (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2008) and Anthony Pagden, "Introduction" in Bartolomé de las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, ed. and trans. Nigel Griffin (London: Penguin Books, 2004).

¹⁶ Díaz del Castillo's *True History* reveals his insistence that his role as a common soldier during the conquest as well as his position as an encomendero after the conquest were unappreciated and unrewarded. Díaz del Castillo wrote his history thirty years after the fall of Tenochtitlán, when Bartolomé de las Casas and his colleagues argued and wrote against the military campaigns that killed natives and destroyed the natural resources. Díaz's history served as a counter-attack to Las Casas's arguments. In 1550, during the famous semi-public debate in Valladolid, Las Casas decried the mistreatment of the Indians and argued against Spanish philosopher Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda's claims to their inferiority. Charles V ordered the debate, to listen to arguments about the use of violence against the natives and if they were capable of governing themselves. Díaz del Castillo favored Sepúlveda's views. Moreover, Díaz del Castillo's narrative can be read as a rebuke to the already published histories of the conquest, such as the one by Francisco López de Gómara in which Cortés was aggrandized as the captain. Díaz del Castillo describes himself as an eyewitness of the events and thus in contrast to historians such as López de Gómara, who never actually traveled to the Americas but based their histories on received texts. When describing the 1539 festival, Díaz del Castillo's and Las Casas's political positions come into the foreground: Díaz del Castillo narrates the four days of the festival as an eyewitness of the events, while Las Casas concentrates on the grandeur and achievement of the indigenous scenographic elements constructed for La conquista de Rodas. For an analysis of Díaz del Castillo's motivations behind his narrative, including Las Casas's position, see Adorno, 389–98. For details about Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda's treatise, *The Second Democrate, or reasons that justify war against the Indians*, see

Castillo and Las Casas describe the indigenous parts of the 1539 festival through their European mindset and terminology as if it was, as Diana Taylor writes, "transparent and universally valid,"¹⁷ it is still possible to establish material connections between pre-conquest scenographic practices and the indigenous portions of the 1539 civic festival.

According to Díaz del Castillo's and Las Casas's written accounts, the four-day¹⁸ festival's events occurred as follows: On the festival's first day, the open space of the Plaza Mayor was transformed into a pre-conquest forest with real plants, birds, and animals where two mock battles were staged—the first between two different native groups and the second between mixed natives and African slaves.¹⁹ On the second day, the plaza housed a detailed wooden set representing the fortified city of Rhodes with other stages built on the periphery of the fictive city.²⁰ In that day's spectacle of *La conquista de Rodas*, audiences were startled at seeing the grand entrance of the Christian army, led by Hernán Cortés himself, with four ships approaching as if sailing upon water while firing cannons.²¹ Moreover, the buildings surrounding the plaza were handsomely decorated for the conquerors' wives, who watched the performance from inside and enjoyed succulent sweets "all gilded and silvered, and among them some containing gold."²² On the third day, bull fights and reed games were held in the Plaza Mayor.²³ The last day

Wright, xxxi–xxxiv.

¹⁷ Diana Taylor, "Scenes of Cognition: Performance and Conquest," *Theatre Journal* 56, no.3 (2004): 355. In her essay, performance scholar Taylor discusses the reliability of the descriptions of Amerindian performances by sixteenth-century European writers. She argues that such narratives reveal "not just *what we know* but the complexities of *how we know it*."

¹⁸ I take the four-day division of the festival from Díaz del Castillo's account as written in Genaro García's transcription of his manuscript. Lopes Don, Harris, and previous scholars' analyses of the festival are unclear about the number of days (three or four). Previous interpretations of the 1539 festival, such as José Luis Martínez's, divide the festival in three days. Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 123–31; Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 19; Martínez, 710–12.

¹⁹ Díaz del Castillo, 189–91.

²⁰ Versényi, 31–32; Díaz del Castillo, 191.

²¹ Díaz del Castillo, 191.

²² *Ibid.*, 192.

²³ *Ibid.*, 196.

featured numerous farces, horse races going from the Plaza Tlatelolco²⁴ to the Plaza Mayor, and, under a colonnade at the royal palace, a curious game in which women competed for golden jewels.²⁵ The festival came to an end with lavish banquets hosted by Cortés and the Viceroy Mendoza. Guests witnessed an outlandish spectacle of live birds and rabbits escaping from pasties, while jesters, versifiers, and musicians performed and praised Cortés and the viceroy.²⁶ The corridors of the royal palace also became uncanny scenographic spaces: they were converted into bowers and gardens with a great variety of fruits, trees, and birds.²⁷ There was a miniature replica of the spring of Chapultepec,²⁸ a tiger in chains, and sculptures of drunken natives with a Spaniard.²⁹ In this way, the center of Mexico-Tenochtilán became a multi-purpose site of performance with a specific spatial, scenographical, and even geographic dramaturgy.

The festival was an eclectic carnivalesque event, which simulated European Renaissance festivals. The "inventor," or the artistic creator in charge of the celebrations, was a Roman nobleman by the name of Luigi de Leone.³⁰ Leone was present in Rome in 1536 for Charles V's triumphal procession up the Italian peninsula after his victory over Barbarossa's armada in North

²⁴ Tlatelolco was a second Mexica town located in what used to be an island adjacent and north of Mexico-Tenochtitlán. It was known for the gigantic market place in its plaza with a ceremonial complex. Similarly to Mexico-Tenochtitlán, Spaniards destroyed Tlatelolco's pre-Hispanic buildings, reused their materials, and built a church and an evangelical complex. Its colonial name became Santiago de Tlatelolco.

²⁵ Díaz del Castillo, 196.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 192–96.

²⁷ Versényi, 32; Díaz del Castillo, 193.

²⁸ Chapultepec is a Mexica settlement in the outskirts of Tenochtitlán. The springs in Chapultepec's forest supplied Tenochtitlán with fresh and potable water. The water was carried through an aqueduct built in the mid-fifteenth century before the Europeans arrival.

²⁹ Díaz del Castillo, 193.

³⁰ Díaz del Castillo writes, "The inventor who prepared these things was a Roman gentleman named Luis de Leon, a man said to be of the lineage of the Patricians who were natives of Rome." Díaz del Castillo, 189. The little biographical information of Luigi de Leone or Luis de León Romano that I was able to locate is in Robert Ricard, *Études et documents pour l'histoire missionnaire de l'Espagne et du Portugal* (Paris: J.M. Peignes, 1930), 161–68. Ricard provides a reference of a letter that he found in the *Archivo de las Indias de Sevilla* [Archives of the Indies in Seville] written by a Dominican friar named Juan de la Peña addressed to the King Phillip II and dated July 25, 1561. In this letter, Juan de la Peña mentions that he inherited a house in Puebla and that a deceased man named Luis de León Romano left funds for the construction of a school in Puebla next to the convent. Juan de la Peña writes that Luis de León served the crown in Puebla and as mayor of Oaxaca until his death in Oaxaca in 1558. Ricard also includes a letter from Leone to Prince Phillip II dated April 20, 1553 which discusses the treatment of natives by the Europeans.

Africa; and soon afterwards Leone left for New Spain.³¹ Indeed, Leone was influenced by Charles V's triumphal festivals, a form constructed with direct and allusive references to the ceremonies of imperial Rome.³² Still, and as Patricia Lopes Don argues in her political analysis of the 1539 festival, the festival's inspiration was not just based on imperial ancient themes but also on the Spanish medieval tradition of mock battles.³³ Mexico-Tenochtitlán's festival differed from Charles V's dramatic expressions of universal empire in that many of the visual motifs were autochthonous rather than Greco-Roman and the indigenous participation was central to the event.

How was it possible that the natives had a prominent artistic role in the 1539 festival this soon after the wars of conquest, so early in the evangelizing process, and during the Indian Inquisition (1536–43)?³⁴ Were the indigenous communities forced to participate or did they comply with the Spanish authorities? That Díaz del Castillo and Las Casas portrayed the natives' participation as obedient and submissive does not mean that they lacked agency. Both narrators had political motivations and needed to portray the natives as docile and cooperative: Díaz del Castillo wanted to demonstrate the success of the conquest and Las Casas the success of evangelization. The festival was not simply a theatre of indigenous subjection or defeat, but as Lopes Don demonstrates through her rigorous research, it was a collaborative effort fueled by the political agendas of the Spanish and indigenous leaders.³⁵ For Viceroy Mendoza, the festival meant establishing his rule over the mendicant community, connecting Charles V's image to his

³¹ Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 129; Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 22.

³² In his study about Renaissance festivals Roy Strong analyzes Charles V's procession through Italy. Roy Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals 1450–1650* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1984), 75–97.

³³ Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 22.

³⁴ For an historical account of the Indian Inquisition and examples of the trials against some indigenous leaders, see Patricia Lopes Don, "Franciscans, Indian Sorcerers, and the Inquisition in New Spain, 1536–1543," *Journal of World History* 17, no.1 (2006): 27–49.

³⁵ Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 35–36.

own, and securing the New Spanish capital's stability.³⁶ Although the viceroy appointed some pre-conquest nobles in leadership positions in the Indian *barrios* [neighborhoods],³⁷ many other positions were filled with non-noble Indians or *maceguales* who lacked credentials of lineage within their communities.³⁸ For the new Indian leaders—commissioned by the viceroy to be in charge of portions of the festival—the ability to enlist artisans was an opportunity to validate their status within their communities as well as to find a place in the new political hegemony.³⁹ Moreover, to continue some of the pre-conquest festival traditions must have attracted some natives and craftsmen, as it was an opportunity to act out pre-contact celebratory behaviors and to build upon past scenographies. In this way, the festival functioned as a public vehicle for the achievement of the various political interests of the Spanish and Indian leaders.

What are the consequences when a Spanish colonial place is appropriated and transformed by indigenous scenographies? How did the indigenous scenographic displays address history on the same site as their own earlier military defeat? What was the role of the Plaza Mayor and its built environment in the festival? In which ways was this particular space perceived and lived?

In order to answer these questions and as a way of introducing my own position, argument, and methodology, I start with a brief overview of the scholarship that has addressed the 1539 civic festival of Mexico-Tenochtitlán. This is followed by a description of the Plaza Mayor's architectural characteristics and of its built environment as an everyday space during the early colonial period. The last three sections of the chapter examine the ways in which the Plaza

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 20–24.

³⁷ Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

³⁸ Charles Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico 1519–1810* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), 168–69; Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 28. Contemporary scholars such as Lockhart still consider Gibson's study about colonial Indians in the Valley of Mexico as a pivotal work in the field's historiography. Lockhart, 3–4.

³⁹ For a detailed introduction about the Indian barrio leaders and their collaboration in the festivities, see Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 24–29; Gibson, 187.

Mayor and surrounding streets were transformed, perceived, and lived during the various events of the civic festival.

The 1539 Festival as a Site-Specific Performance

Most historians who have studied the 1539 festival concentrate on La conquista de Rodas, equate it with evangelical theatre, and neglect to analyze the importance of the site itself in the celebrations. Yet, when we think of these performances from a spatial point of view, it is impossible to separate them from their location, because the central area of Mexico-Tenochtitlán and its built environment were used as a public theatrical space embedded with symbols and memories.

The festival's historiography is fragmented and inaccurate. In his detailed study of Nahuatl theatre, historian Fernando Horcasitas gathers first-hand sources, classifies the principal parts of the festival, and provides some historical context.⁴⁰ He defines La conquista de Rodas and the later La conquista de Jerusalén [Conquest of Jerusalem] in Tlaxcala (June 1539) as a new genre of Franciscan theatre.⁴¹ Nevertheless, while the sponsors of evangelical theatre such as the Tlaxcalan La conquista de Jerusalén were the mendicant friars, the festival in the capital was paid for by the viceroy, Cortés, and "certain gentlemen conquerors"⁴² and was created by Leone.

Similar to Horcasitas, Giovanna Recchia briefly mentions the festival and some of its salient

⁴⁰ Horcasitas, 499–504.

⁴¹ Ibid., 500. Similar to Mexico-Tenochtitlan's production of La conquista de Rodas, La conquista de Jerusalén in Tlaxcala (former rivals of the Mexicas) was staged to commemorate the peace between the emperor of Spain and the king of France and enacted a battle between Christians and Turks. However, both pieces differ in that the Tlaxcalan performance formed part of the Corpus Christi celebration, was an evangelical Franciscan play and integrated the sacraments of the Church through the actual baptism of the indigenous peoples who performed as Turks. Although La conquista de Rodas was *not* evangelical theatre, most scholars have studied both mock battles together and thus isolate La conquista de Rodas from the rest of its civic festival. For brief analyses of La conquista de Jerusalén, see Patricia A. Ybarra, *Performing Conquest: Five Centuries of Theatre, History, and Identity in Tlaxcala, Mexico* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 38; Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 132–47; Max Harris, *The Dialogical Theatre: Dramatizations of the Conquest of Mexico and the Question of the Other* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 82–88.

⁴² Díaz del Castillo, 189.

points in her book about theatres in Mexico City during the colonial period.⁴³ In his study of Latin American theatre, Adam Versényi also isolates *La conquista de Rodas* from its four-day context, quickly paraphrases Las Casas's original account, and misrepresents several facts.⁴⁴ In her recent study about festivals in colonial Mexico City, Linda A. Curcio-Nagy includes a reference to the 1539 festival, without going into any detail.⁴⁵

On the other hand, in his book about mock battles and other festivals in Spain and Mexico from colonial times to the present, Max Harris develops a more comprehensive analysis of the various events of the 1539 civic festival. His investigation of primary and secondary sources is very helpful for my spatial analysis of the celebrations. Harris claims that through his methodological lens, defined as "reading the mask," he can decode subordinate indigenous resistance and thus better understand "any given political relationship of dominance and subordination."⁴⁶ Because Harris seeks to decode what is "insinuated" in public performances, most of the time his arguments come across as purely speculative.

Harris mentions Patricia Lopes Don's political study of the Civic Festival, but her position radically differs from his problematic reading. Through careful research and concrete analysis, Lopes Don proves that both Spanish and native participants "were more closely concerned with political rather than religious expressions and that the Indian pagan displays in the festival were not an example of colonial Indian resistance to Spanish culture."⁴⁷ However, if indigenous participation was not a direct and active example of resistance, I will show that it

⁴³ Giovanna Recchia, *Espacio Teatral en la Ciudad de México, siglos XVI–XVII* (México, D.F.: Centro Nacional de Investigación Teatral Rodolfo Usigli, 1993), 16.

⁴⁴ *La conquista de Rodas* was not performed in 1543 and was not written by a Franciscan. Versényi, 30–32.

⁴⁵ Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals of Colonial Mexico City: Performing Power and Identity* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 47.

⁴⁶ Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 23. Harris builds upon James Scott's claim that subordinate groups create critiques of power enacted behind the back of the oppressor. For an introduction of Harris's methodology that uses Scott's concepts of hidden and public transcripts, see *ibid.*, 18–27. For his study of the 1539 civic festival, see *ibid.*, 123–31.

⁴⁷ Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 18.

indeed troubled and contested the Spanish urban ideology and found a place in the new political hegemony. Similar to Lopes Don's methodology, I rely on documented and material evidence (scenography and concrete space) to demonstrate how indigenous artistic constructs troubled the city's center.

Though Lopes Don focuses on the festival's origins, I build upon her argument to pose reasons for why indigenous festival practices predominated in the 1539 civic festival. Lopes Don posits that a delay in the Spaniards' ability to understand indigenous ritual practices, and thus suppress idolatry, created a temporal gap through which "the extraordinarily willing and rich Indian culture rushed into Spanish public life and established itself."⁴⁸ In my spatial analysis I will show how this temporal gap was also materialized in space and shaped the way the Plaza Mayor and its surrounding streets were used in 1539.

To support my argument, I employ the spatial concepts of architect and theorist Bernard Tschumi. He defines architecture "as simultaneously space and event" and as an entity defined by social practice.⁴⁹ Similarly, I see the built environment of Mexico-Tenochtitlán early-sixteenth-century center as a spatial event that, when used in performance, reveals associations, memories, histories, symbols, and power relations. Moreover, by applying Tschumi's idea of spatial disjunction to Lopes Don's temporal gap, I seek to convey the spatial and visual split that resulted from the indigenous participation in the center of the Spanish metropolis. In his influential book *Architecture and Disjunction*, Tschumi questions the traditional architectural ideology which posits a causal relationship between a building's physicality and its use. Tschumi

⁴⁸ Ibid., 29. In her article "Scenes of Cognition," Diana Taylor is also concerned with demonstrating how sixteenth-century European chroniclers misunderstood and thus misrepresented indigenous pre-conquest performance practices. See Taylor, 353–72. In her study about performance in Tlaxcala, Ybarra foregrounds the missionaries' misunderstanding of pre-contact practices in religious ceremonies—especially Toribio de Benavente Motolinía's. Ybarra, 34–67.

⁴⁹ Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996), 3.

sees that Western architecture has been used since Vitruvius as a means to "stabilize, [to] institutionalize, to establish permanence."⁵⁰ He argues that there is no actual cause-and-effect relationship between buildings and their uses, or between space and how we experience it. The way a space is used—especially in site-specific performance—presents what Tschumi calls "inevitable disjunctions" of space and use, meaning that "architecture is constantly unstable, constantly on the verge of change."⁵¹ Therefore, I argue that the indigenous scenographies of the 1539 festival brought change and instability to the hierarchical organization of colonial space. The disparate result of indigenous displays in a European type of festivity created a spatial disjunction. Paradoxically, it was the politics of collaboration between Spanish and indigenous leaders that brought about such a material split in the Plaza Mayor, in the colonial city, and in the colonial space of New Spain.

The events that were part of the festival cannot be detached from the specificity of the site. Because these celebratory performances took place in the same space as the former ceremonial center of Tenochtitlán, it would be a mistake to ignore the physical and historical characteristics of the site. The built environment of such a complex space was not a passive container for the festival, but instead materialized an encounter and struggle of two spatial practices in performance.

The Plaza Mayor: The Center of the Colony

The Spanish city was built on top of the Mexica city one year after its fall and destruction. The way this was done presents various particularities that are important to acknowledge. First, it created the spatial segregation between a European center and an

⁵⁰ Ibid., 19.

⁵¹ Ibid.

indigenous periphery and determined the way the Plaza Mayor was used and lived as a site of performance. Here, I rely mostly on studies by George Kubler, historian of sixteenth-century Mexican architecture and urbanism, and Miguel León Portilla, renowned scholar of Nahuatl history and culture. I use the following maps as visual references: The Uppsala Map of Mexico-Tenochtitlán (1550) (figs. 1.3 and 1.4),⁵² the Plan of the Plaza Mayor in 1563 (fig. 1.5),⁵³ and a nineteenth-century reconstruction of a mid-sixteenth-century plan of the city (fig. 1.6).⁵⁴ I select these maps because the first two are the earliest visual renditions of Mexico-Tenochtitlán and the Plaza; they are original documents that provide spatial portrayals from different perspectives. Because the third map is drafted to scale and is clearly marked, it is helpful in locating the city's limits, streets, and plazas. Together, the three images convey an idea of Mexico-Tenochtitlán and the Plaza Mayor in the early colonial period. The maps will function as visual aids and tools of reference for the rest of this chapter's analysis.

It must be kept in mind that, during the first half of the sixteenth century, Europeans were a minority, and the Spanish town occupied just the central portion of the island. Although determining an exact population count is impossible due to a lack of documentation, Kubler

⁵² This *mapa-paisaje* [map-landscape] is known as the Uppsala Map because it is now located in the Swedish University of Uppsala, after having passed through different owners, such as Charles V. In their analysis for the facsimile version of the map, Miguel León Portilla and Carmen Aguilera deduce that it was very probably created by an Indian artist Alonso de Santa Cruz at the Colegio de Santa Cruz, Tlatelolco, in 1550. The Colegio de Santa Cruz was a school for colonial Indians founded in 1536, and it was where many documents such as *Florentine Codex* were created by natives under the supervision of mendicant friars. The map conveys indigenous and European ways of representing space and geography. Complete and detailed studies about the Uppsala Map include: Miguel León Portilla and Carmen Aguilera, *Mapa de México Tenochtitlán y sus contornos hacia 1550* (México, D.F.: Celanese Mexicana S.A., 1986) and Sigvald Linné, *El valle y la ciudad de México en 1550: Relación histórica fundada sobre un mapa geográfico, que se conserva en la biblioteca de la Universidad de Uppsala, Suecia* (Stockholm: Esselte aktiebolag, 1948).

⁵³ This plan is located in the Archivo General de las Indias [General Archive of the Indies] in Seville, Spain, and is reproduced in at least two reliable sources: Diego Angulo Iníguez and Archivo General de las Indias, *Planos de monumentos arquitectónicos de América y Filipinas existentes en el archivo de Indias* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1933) and Kubler, 191. I use Kubler's reproduction of the image, which he takes from Diego Angulo Iníguez and Archivo General de las Indias' *Planos de monumentos*.

⁵⁴ This is a plan restored by Antonio García Cubas (1929) that depicts Mexico-Tenochtitlán in the mid-sixteenth century. I located this plan in the Archivo Histórico de la Ciudad de México (AHDF) [Historical Archive of Mexico City]. *Atlas General DF tomo II*, AHDF.

confirms that "there can be no doubt that the island community housed between fifty and a hundred thousand people in the period 1522–50."⁵⁵ He writes: "By official census *ca.* 1570, the European population cannot have been much less than seventeen hundred whites or white-associated householders, and the Indian population cannot have been under eighty or ninety thousand persons."⁵⁶ According to this data, just two percent of the overall population living in the island was white European.

The Europeans separated themselves from the indigenous population because of the political, economic, and religious interests of the viceroy, the civic authorities, the conquerors, the mendicant friars, and the Spanish crown. The Spaniards and the city council were anxious about a possible Indian attack and therefore the viceroy decided "to remove all Indian dwellings from within gunshot of the city's edges."⁵⁷ Besides fear of indigenous assaults, racism and class bias must have played a role in the white Europeans' aim for segregation. For example, influential Spaniards such as the philosopher Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda promoted a racist ideology against the indigenous populations by arguing that natives were genetically inferior and that they were natural slaves.⁵⁸ On the other hand, the mendicant friars, who were in control of evangelizing the Indians, had a pro-Indian policy of protecting them from white exploitation. The mendicants wanted to carry on with the labors of conversion without the intervention of the secular clergy and civilians and thus supported segregation.⁵⁹ The civic authorities planned a segregated city that was only partially achieved. The natives lived in their neighborhoods

⁵⁵ Kubler, 71–72. He writes: "Therefore it was the largest city in the Spanish world, and it outranked many European capitals in size. In 1516, for instance, Toledo contained but eighteen thousand settlers, and Seville fifteen thousand." Gibson provides the same approximate population counts. Gibson, 377–81.

⁵⁶ Kubler, 72.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁵⁸ For details about Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda's treatise, *The Second Democrate, or reasons that justify war against the Indians*, see Wright, xxxi–xxxiv. During the Indian Inquisition (1536–1543), tensions between Christian and pagan values were at their highest. Lopes Don, "Franciscans, Indian Sorcerers, and the Inquisition in New Spain, 1536–1543," 27–49.

⁵⁹ Kubler, 83.

outside the Spanish center, but were the main labor force in rebuilding and supplying the city. They became part of a city life, that, as Charles Gibson writes, "promoted miscegenation."⁶⁰

The indigenous living quarters or *barrios* were separated from the European city. The Spanish town, known as the *traza* [master plan], was defined by a rectangular area at the center of the island and was bordered by ditches at its perimeter (fig. 1.6, the borders are in red). This area included a gridiron plan with rectangular blocks. Fourteen streets formed the center and four great avenues converged in the Plaza Mayor, where the church, government, commerce, and official dwellings were situated.⁶¹ As represented, the accumulation of indigenous huts at the periphery of the island contrasted with the Spanish center in that they were unregulated and not placed according to urban planning. It is worth noting how an indigenous artist depicted this differentiation in the Uppsala Map of 1550 (fig. 1.3). Influenced by the European Renaissance tradition of making landscape maps, the Uppsala Map was not just a plan of the city but an illustration in three dimensions of the buildings, plazas, and natural landscape (including vegetation and animals), as well as images from everyday life.⁶² While the Spanish *traza* appears colorless, a grey background devoid of any human activity, the Indian space is alive with colors and human activities.⁶³

The scenes of labor in the Uppsala map reflect the relationship between the Spanish center and the Indian periphery (figs. 1.3 and 1.4). Indians are depicted working the land, transporting products, shepherding, fishing, hunting, collecting fruits, producing lime, collecting

⁶⁰ Gibson, 368.

⁶¹ Kubler, 75.

⁶² León Portilla and Aguilera, 25.

⁶³ León Portilla and Aguilera argue that the artist probably thought that, since the Spaniards were already known in Europe, the emperor Charles V needed to be informed about the ways of life in the recently conquered lands. The indigenous space conveys its numerous towns, everyday life activities, and around two hundred hieroglyphics. León Portilla and Aguilera, 31, 40–41.

salt, chopping wood, and so on.⁶⁴ The few Spaniards who appear are beating the Indians and using them as carriers.⁶⁵ Indians were required to go into the traza either as workers or as participants in official celebrations. The periphery supported and maintained a small but powerful colonial center, serving "as a reservoir of labor for the proud, orderly Spanish city."⁶⁶

The Spanish town's rational gridiron pattern was adopted for practical reasons. Cortés and his master builder, Alonso García Bravo, used, appropriated, and recycled Tenochtitlán's existent layout of streets, plazas, and thoroughfares.⁶⁷ Recent excavations directed by archaeologist Eduardo Matos Moctezuma have confirmed that the design of the Spanish town corresponded to the area and layout occupied by the walled sacred precinct of the Mexica city and that the Plaza Mayor sits atop the area of the Templo Mayor [Main Temple].⁶⁸ The Spanish pattern followed the quadrangular division of neighborhoods and main arteries of Tenochtitlán (cf. figs. 1.2 and 1.6).⁶⁹ Some of the canals survived the conquest and were used to supply the

⁶⁴ For a detailed description of the different activities, see *ibid.*, 79–87.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁶⁶ Kubler, 74.

⁶⁷ Representations and spatial regulations of the Spanish layout such as the 1524 *traza* drawn by García Bravo or the 1573 Laws of the Indies (the Crown's orders on how to organize space in the colonies) were created after the city's layout was in place. The city had already been occupied for over a year when García Bravo conceived his master plan; therefore, he did not create an urban design but appropriated what was already there and modified as he saw necessary. See *ibid.*, 73. In her historical study of the Spanish American grid plan, Setha M. Low rightly argues against some researchers who suggest that the 1573 Laws of the Indies or the writings of the Italian Renaissance were the main sources of New World planning, when actually these were published *after* the establishment of the first Spanish-American towns such as Mexico-Tenochtitlán. See Setha M. Low, "Cultural Meaning of the Plaza," in *The Cultural Meaning of Urban Space*, ed. Robert Rotenberg and Gary McDonogh (Westport, CN: Bergin & Garvey, 1993), 76–77.

⁶⁸ Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, "The Templo Mayor of Tenochtitlán: History and Interpretation," in *The Great Temple of Tenochtitlán: Center and Periphery in the Aztec World*, ed. Johanna Broda, David Carrasco, and Eduardo Matos Moctezuma (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), 15–60; Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, *Life and Death in the Templo Mayor*, trans. Bernard R. Ortiz de Montellano and Thelma Ortiz de Montellano (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1995); Miguel León Portilla, *Mexico Tenochtitlán: Su tiempo y espacio sagrados* (México, D.F.: Plaza y Valdés Editores, 1988).

⁶⁹ Comparing the plan of Mexico in the sixteenth century to the reconstruction of Tenochtitlán, it is possible to see how the Spanish town recycled and used the main layout with the principal avenues of the Mexica city. The avenues were: Tlacopan (Tacuba) located on the north side of the cathedral running from east to west; Iztapalapa crossing Tlacopan, through the north-east corner of the cathedral running south; and Tepeyac on the west side of the cathedral running north to Tlatelolco and Tepeyac. The four Indian neighborhoods were: Atzacualco (San Sebastián Atzacualco) on the northeast, Zoquípan (San Pablo Teopan) on the southeast, Moyótlán (San Juan Moyotlán) in the southwest, and Cuepópa (Santa María la Redonda) in the northwest. León Portilla and Aguilera, 72.

city. The largest canal, known as the *acequia real* [royal waterway], ran along the south end of the Plaza Mayor (fig. 1.5).⁷⁰ The form of the Mexica capital survived and thus comprises the first historical layer embedded at the center of today's megalopolis.

The perceived space of the Plaza Mayor and its built environment manifested the European ideology of a Spanish medieval town. At the same time, it retained a pre-conquest character through the use of stones and materials unique to this geographical area. The plaza's fortified and military appearance was accentuated by nearly windowless one-or two-story flat-roof buildings with turrets, battlements, and crenelations (fig. 1.5). The exterior walls were made of *tezontle* [a porous igneous volcanic rock, reddish in color] and *tecali* ["Mexican onyx," a compact kind of calcite with a wide range of colorings].⁷¹ The plaza presented a regular unified layout and a monumental spatiality while exposing the rich textures and colors of the regional stones.

Unfortunately, all of the early-sixteenth-century buildings perished because of their weak structures and the devastating fire of 1692.⁷² What we know about the buildings and the way they looked is through historians' reconstructions based on two types of sources. Extant maps, drawings, and images constitute one source category. The other is a descriptive text: the Latin dialogues, written in 1554 by Francisco Cervantes Salazar, Professor at the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico, in which three characters—Zuazo, Zamora, and Alfaro—stroll through the Spanish center and describe what they see.⁷³ Cervantes Salazar's dialogues are worth examining, because they provide us with an early and unique illustration of Michel de Certeau's

⁷⁰ The *acequia* was fifteen feet wide, six feet deep, and with a water-level of three feet below the street. See Kubler, 76–77.

⁷¹ The use of *tezontle* and *tecali* have characterized Mexican architecture since colonial times. See *ibid*, 165.

⁷² All the original sixteen-century constructions surrounding the plaza perished in the great fire of 1692.

⁷³ Francisco Cervantes Salazar, *México en 1554: tres diálogos traducidos por Joaquín García Icazbalceta*, 2nd ed. (México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1952). Linné mapped Cervantes Salazar's dialogues using the Uppsala Map so that the reader can visualize and trace Zuazo, Zamora, and Alfaro's tour. See Linné, 76–77.

contemporary argument for a spatial practice through walking. In his book *The Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau explains how walking can be seen as a pedestrian speech-act that manipulates spatial organizations and creates personal poems of motion.⁷⁴ In the 1554 dialogues, the character's descriptions of the spaces that they encounter, especially the Plaza Mayor, illustrate such personal and dramatic reactions:

Zuazo: Now here is the plaza. Look carefully, please, and note if you have ever seen another equal to it in size and grandeur.

Alfaro: Indeed, none that I remember; and I don't think that its equal can be found in either hemisphere. Good heavens! How level it is and how spacious! How gay! How greatly embellished by the superb and magnificent buildings that surround it on all sides! What order! What beauty! What a situation and location! Truly, if those colonnades that we are now facing were removed, it could hold an entire army.⁷⁵

As Zuazo and Alfaro describe it, the new plaza was ample and symmetrical, surrounded by colonnaded porticoes located in the ground floors of the buildings. Its open space housed the main marketplace that supplied the Spanish population.

Cortés appropriated the northwest corner and the east sides of the plaza for his dwellings, which housed offices and commerce as well. The northwest buildings, known as *casas viejas* [old houses], stood upon the palace of Axayácatl (Mexica ruler from 1469 to 1481) and were themselves a fortified enclosure with buildings grouped by several patios.⁷⁶ The *casas viejas* had a tower on each corner, and the north tower housed the municipal clock.⁷⁷ The east side

⁷⁴ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 105.

⁷⁵ Francisco Cervantes de Salazar, *Life in the Imperial and Loyal City of Mexico in New Spain and the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico as Described in the Dialogues for the Study of the Latin Language Prepared by Francisco Cervantes de Salazar for Use in His Classes and Printed in 1554 by Juan Pablos*, trans. Minnie Lee Barrett Shepard (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1970), 41.

⁷⁶ María del Carmen León Cázares, *La plaza mayor de la ciudad de México en la vida cotidiana de sus habitantes (siglos XVI y XVII)* (México, D.F.: Instituto de Estudios y Documentos Históricos, 1982), 87.

⁷⁷ Kubler, 190.

dwellings, or *casas nuevas* [new houses], occupied the area where Moctezuma had lived.⁷⁸ Next to the *casas viejas*, on the southwest corner of the plaza, stood the main building for commerce. The colonnaded porticoes mentioned by Zuazo and Alfaro gave the area its name; it came to be known as *portales* [porticoes] or Portales de mercaderes [Merchants' Porticoes].⁷⁹ Store-keepers and artisans dwelled behind or above their shops—an example of the type of European architecture built in the sixteenth century in which dwelling and business occupied the same building.⁸⁰

The primitive church—built with blocks cut from the pre-conquest temple precinct⁸¹—and the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico stood in the plaza on its north side. The positioning of the church, with its long side facing the Plaza Mayor, created a minor plaza in front of the *casas viejas*. This came to be known as Plaza Menor or Plaza del marqués [Minor Square or Marquis's Square] (fig. 1.5).⁸² As portrayed by Cervantes Salazar's characters, the first church building erected in 1525 was remarkably small and looked unimportant in comparison to the center's built environment:

Alfaro: It is deplorable that in a city of such renown, whose equal I do not know, with so many wealthy citizens, that there has been erected here for all to behold a church so small, so humble, and so lacking in adornment. In Spain, on the contrary, nothing so embellishes Toledo, a city most famous in other respects, as its very rich and beautiful church...

Zamora: This church has a very small revenue, and this is the reason that it was not built in proportion to the magnitude of the city. In addition to this, for these past five years, it has not had a prelate; now, however, that Alonso del Montúfar, a pastor most eminent in religion and in learning, has been assigned to this

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ León Cázares, 88–89. Hereafter, *portales*.

⁸⁰ Kubler, 204–5.

⁸¹ Ibid., 163.

⁸² Concepción Amerlinck A. and Raúl Delgado Lamas, "Cronología Mínima," in *El Zócalo: esquema histórico*, ed. Concurso nacional para la rehabilitación de la Plaza de la Constitución (México, D.F.: Trilce Ediciones, 1998), 22. The "marquis" refers to Hernán Cortés's noble title "Marqués del Valle de Oaxaca" [Marquis of the Valley of Oaxaca] that Charles V conferred upon Cortés in 1528. In her history of the Plaza Mayor, León Cázares writes that the Plaza Menor was known as Plaza Chica [small square]. León Cázares, 96.

church, there is great hope that there will shortly be erected a suitable building such as you desire.⁸³

In the early colonial period, most of the evangelization process occurred in the settlements just outside Mexico-Tenochtitlán's center; therefore the central church served the small Spanish population.⁸⁴ The Episcopal palace stood on the east side of the church and university. The *cabildo* or *ayuntamiento* [city council] building, which housed the council, the town jail, and the municipal meat market, was built at the south end of the plaza; and the Mint was built on the cabildo's west side.⁸⁵

The Plaza Mayor during the early colonial period was the center of commerce, official events, and celebrations, and it served as a forum for announcements and protests. Besides being the heart of the city, the plaza and its adjacent streets were the only habitable spaces for the Spaniards, because the rest of the city was under construction during the first decades of the colonial period. Food, supplies, flowers, and animals arrived in canoes through the *acequia real*. Products were sold either in the market or in the fancier stores located behind the ground-floor portals surrounding the plaza. Flowers and vegetables arrived from Xochimilco⁸⁶ at the southeast corner of the plaza to be sold in the Portal de las flores [Flowers' Portico]. Denizens retrieved their potable water from a fountain in the plaza supplied by the Chapultepec aqueduct. Noise and sounds were also an important part of the everyday life environment. Sellers announcing their products could be found in the portals and corners of the plaza (this treat still operates in today's *Zócalo*), and *pregoneros* [town criers] would appear to announce major

⁸³ Cervantes de Salazar, *Life in the Imperial and Loyal City of Mexico*, 48.

⁸⁴ In 1562, a new and bigger cathedral was built on the same site.

⁸⁵ Kubler, 211.

⁸⁶ Xochimilco was and still is an area in the south of the city with a lake and a series of canals. It is known for its agriculture and vegetation.

events and important information to the residents of the Spanish city. The plaza was also the place where offenders were publicly executed.⁸⁷

After the rebuilding of Mexico-Tenochtitlán, the Plaza Mayor served as the main popular stage during three hundred years of colonial rule. Festivals were a common feature of everyday life. Spaniards celebrated royal events (births, weddings, funerals, and coronations), staged royal entries, and gave parades and processions. The five largest city festivals included: the entry of a new viceroy; the oath ceremony to a new monarch; the celebration of Corpus Christi; the feast of the Virgin of Remedies, the capital's most popular Marian image; and El paseo del pendón [The Parade of the Royal Banner].⁸⁸ As Curcio-Nagy discusses, these large-scale spectacles functioned as "media for modeling, presenting, teaching, and acting out political and social concepts."⁸⁹ The cabildo required all members of society to attend most of the official events. The rights and privileges of the participants were dictated by the caste system based on racial and ethnic ancestry.⁹⁰ The Plaza Mayor thus functioned as a theatre for the display of the new hierarchical society. Nevertheless, while natives were both laborers and objects of display in festivals, it is through the creation of their scenographic constructs and visual images that they appropriated and transformed the identity of the Spanish colonial center. In the following sections, I analyze how the indigenous participation transgressed the Europeanized center during

⁸⁷ Recchia, 13–14.

⁸⁸ Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals of Colonial Mexico City*, 2. According to apparition histories of colonial Mexico, the Virgin of Remedies was the first instance of Mary in Mexico. The legend tells that the Virgin helped Cortés and the Spaniards in the battle of Tenochtitlán. The Virgin of Remedies (adopted by the natives) became the capital's first and most adored Marian image and the guardian of Mexico City and environs until the eighteenth century, when the Bourbon authorities turned her into the Royal Virgin. Then, natives and criollos increased their devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe. For a detailed study of the history of the adoration of the Virgin of Remedies, see Linda A. Curcio Nagy, "Native Icon to City Protectress to Royal Patroness: Ritual, Political Symbolism and the Virgin of Remedies," *The Americas* 52, no. 3 (1996): 367–91.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 2–3.

⁹⁰ Curcio-Nagy indicates that "authorities would eventually create over sixty categories." *Ibid.*, 4–5.

the 1539 civic festival and the ways in which different performances defined the plaza and its surrounding streets: by occupying it, by conquering it, and by imagining it.

Las batallas de los salvajes y los negros: Occupying the Center

According to Bernal Díaz del Castillo's account, on the first day of the 1539 civic festival, one hunting scene and two mock battles were performed in the Plaza Mayor: La batalla de los salvajes [The Battle of the Wild Men] and La batalla de los salvajes y negros [The Battle of the Wild Men and Blacks].⁹¹ The open space of the Plaza Mayor was occupied by a real forest and filled with a great variety of animals. The trees were of different kinds and housed many types of birds native to the region. There were deer, rabbits, hares, foxes, jackals, and small native animals, as well as two young lions and four small tigers in cages. Near the forest, dense groves housed two groups of "savages."⁹² The action started when the animals were released from their cages for a hunting scene. After chasing and killing the animals (hunting scene), both groups of savages fought (La batalla de los salvajes) and returned to their groves. The two groups of savages can be identified with the Indian groups of Otomí (a sedentary agricultural people conquered by the Mexicas and later Christianized) and Chichimecas (nomad Indians never dominated by the Mexicas and resistant to colonization). As a grand finale, a procession of around fifty black women and men, led by their richly dressed "king and queen,"⁹³ all on horseback, arrived at the monumental plaza. The members of the procession carried gold, pearls, silverwork, and precious stones. They attacked the savages as a final sortie. The

⁹¹ Díaz del Castillo doesn't give a name or title to either of the battles. I use the individual titles that Fernando Horcasitas proposes in his analysis of the festival: La batalla de los salvajes [The Battle of the Wild Men] and La batalla de los salvajes y los negros [The Battle of the Wild Men and Blacks]. Therefore, I title this section "Las batallas de los salvajes y los negros." Horcasitas, 502.

⁹² In his account of the festival, Bernal Díaz del Castillo describes the natives performing in the first day as *salvajes* [savages]. Díaz del Castillo, 190.

⁹³ Ibid.

procession of the blacks and the final assault towards the savages constituted the second mock battle (La batalla de los salvajes y los negros).

As Harris explains, the origins of such a peculiar spectacle are various, combining elements of Italian, Spanish, and indigenous performance.⁹⁴ Scholars have demonstrated that the creation of such artificial forests was a common pre-Hispanic tradition used in various Mexica ceremonies—especially those dedicated to the rain god Tlaloc.⁹⁵ The capture and housing of animals (i.e., for later sale in the markets) was a common native skill and thus natives must have been responsible of the management and control of the animals that participated in the civic festival. Moreover, by 1539 colonial Indians had already re-created artificial forests for religious festivals such as Corpus Christi and Easter as well as for evangelical theatre.⁹⁶ For example, they built stunning scenographies with all sorts of natural elements (plants, flowers, fruits, feathers, trees, rocks, hills, animals) for *La caída de nuestros padres* [The Fall of Adam and Eve] staged in Tlaxcala in 1538.⁹⁷ The leaders of the Indian barrios conceived the forest for the 1539 civic festival, and it represented an entirely indigenous spatiality.⁹⁸

In the first half of the 1539 spectacle, *La batalla de los salvajes*, the spatial relationship between a European enclosure and an indigenous scenography can be seen as representative of colonial power. *La batalla de los salvajes* opened with an elaborate hunting scene, and the

⁹⁴ Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 129. Also, because the number and kinds of animals implied for the whole festival, it sometimes seems like a Roman gladiatorial spectacle.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 128–29; Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 24–25; Horcasitas, 105.

⁹⁶ Horcasitas, 110–12.

⁹⁷ The evangelical plays include *La caída de nuestros padres* [The Fall of Adam and Eve], *La tentación de Cristo* [The Temptation of Christ], *El sacrificio de Isaac* [The Sacrifice of Isaac], *San Jerónimo en el desierto* [Saint Jerome in the Dessert], and *La predicación a las aves* [The Sermon to the Birds]. Horcasitas, 110–12. Bibliography of such plays and of evangelical theatre in New Spain includes: Othón Arróniz, *Teatro de evangelización en Nueva España* (México, D.F.: UNAM, 1979); Horcasitas; María Sten, ed. *El teatro franciscano en la Nueva España* (México, D.F.: CONACULTA, UNAM, FONCA, 2000). For translations into English of some evangelical plays, such as *El sacrificio de Isaac*, see Marilyn Ekdahl Ravicz, *Early Colonial Religious Drama in Mexico: From Tzompantli to Golgotha* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1970).

⁹⁸ Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 26–27.

buildings of the Plaza Mayor served as a background for the performance.⁹⁹ The plaza's architecture formed a fortified container for the groups of natives performing a hunting ritual. As noted before, the buildings surrounding the plaza looked like medieval-fortified Spanish architecture (e.g., Cortés's houses, the church, cabildo, and portales) (fig. 1.5). Such Spanish enclosure of an indigenous scenography materializes a type of social relationship that, as Michel Foucault argues, is framed and regulated by space allowing power to unfold effectively.¹⁰⁰ Thus, the spatial arrangement of La batalla de los salvajes embodies the colonial spatial "technique" of containing, controlling, and segregating Indian subjects.¹⁰¹ A placement in the round, with Spanish audiences watching the performance from inside their buildings, alienated the indigenous spectacle at the same time that it facilitated a colonial perception of looking at the natives as exotic characters.

On the other hand, colonial Indians must have identified the forest of 1539 with past memories and religious symbols.¹⁰² In his seminal article "Between Memory and History," Nora defines *milieux de mémoire* [environments of memory] as spaces where repetition, custom, and tradition are alive whereas, *lieux de mémoire* [places of memory] are material remains of such environments, or of what is no longer.¹⁰³ We could say that the scenographic forest was a former environment of memory; creating that landscape and performing in it would have constituted pre-conquest ceremonial activities for the indigenous communities. Horcasitas notes how the chronicles written by missionary ethnographers such as Diego Durán and Bernardino de Sahagún

⁹⁹ When describing La conquista de Rodas, which took place the day after Las batallas de los salvajes y los negros, Díaz del Castillo writes how the wives of the conquistadores watched the performance from the buildings' windows while enjoying richly adorned confectionery. It is possible to argue that the same audience arrangement was used for Las batallas de los salvajes y negros. Díaz del Castillo, 192.

¹⁰⁰ Michael Foucault, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," in *Architecture Theory since 1968*, ed. K. Michael Hays (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998), 428–39.

¹⁰¹ By *technique* Foucault refers to what the Greeks called the *technne*, "a practical rationality governed by a conscious goal." *Ibid.*, 439.

¹⁰² Kubler, 156; Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 33.

¹⁰³ Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations* 26 (1989): 7, 12.

recount specific days that Indian priests and entire communities went to the mountains, collecting materials and props for their artificial woods.¹⁰⁴ Also, the labor of building edifices, sets, and decorations was equated with religious celebration. As Kubler notes, in pre-conquest society "all work was ceremonially performed."¹⁰⁵ Although de-contextualized from its original use, the forest activated collective memories and, as Lopes Don suggests, was evocative "at some profound emotional level."¹⁰⁶

Even if *La batalla de los salvajes* hardly conveyed a comprehensible Indian ritual or philosophy, the artificial wood became a place of memory because it evoked history. The natives' adaptation of pre-conquest ritual forms induced what Nora defines as "a play of memory and history."¹⁰⁷ Nora claims that places of memory are created by this sort of play, that is to say, an interaction between a will to remember and a modified present.¹⁰⁸ While it is impossible to establish the exact origins of this particular hunting spectacle, it does bear connections to pre-Hispanic hunting rites and to the historical animosity between the Indian groups of Otomí and Chichimecas.¹⁰⁹ The indigenous forest activated an interaction between remembering past rites and the continuing conflict between Chichimecas and Otomí.¹¹⁰

Although there is no pictorial evidence of *La batalla de los salvajes*, there exists an important visual reference to a battle between Otomí and Chichimecas in the mural paintings of

¹⁰⁴ Horcasitas, 105.

¹⁰⁵ Kubler, 156.

¹⁰⁶ Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 26.

¹⁰⁷ Nora, 19.

¹⁰⁸ To illustrate this statement, Nora uses the Revolutionary calendar, "which was very much a *lieu de mémoire* since, as a calendar, it was designed to provide the a priori frame of reference for all possible memory while, as a revolutionary document, through its nomenclature and symbolism, it was supposed to open a new book to history." *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ For more specific pre-Hispanic hunting rites, such as the ones in honor of the god of hunt Mixcóatl, that might relate to this spectacle, see Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 24. For history of the Chichimeca conflict and war, see Donna L. Pierce, "The Sixteenth-Century Nave Frescoes in the Augustinian Mission Church of Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo, Mexico" (PhD diss., The University of New Mexico, 1987), 49–64.

¹¹⁰ The conflict and resistance of the Chichimecas lasted throughout the sixteenth century and ended only with their defeat by the Spanish in 1595.

the Augustinian Church of San Miguel Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo (fig. 1.7). The frescoes are depicted all along the nave (in two sets of friezes, one at the vault spring and the other along the lower walls of the nave), at the altar, and along the west end of the church. In his study *City, Temple, Stage*, Jaime Lara interprets the murals as a representation of the human journey to heaven and hell and as a complicated didactic program designed for a liturgical space.¹¹¹ The monumental lower frieze depicts Chichimecas and Otomí warriors in combat (figs. 1.8 and 1.9). Horcasitas and Harris establish the connection between the murals and *La batalla de los salvajes* through Bernal Díaz del Castillo's reference to the warriors' weapons; yet, neither scholar uses the paintings to analyze the performance's costumes.¹¹² In the murals and in *La batalla de los salvajes*, the two groups of Indians are identifiable through their armament: one group carries *macanas* [clubs] and can be recognized as the Christianized Otomí, while the other carries bows representing the "uncivilized" Chichimecas.¹¹³ It is interesting to note that, unlike the indigenous forest of *La batalla de los salvajes*, the battle in the mural takes place in the middle of enormous undulating acanthus vine reminiscent of European book borders.¹¹⁴

Furthermore and to demonstrate that costumes were an essential and political component of the Indian scenographies, I refer to art historian Donna Pierce's iconographic study of the

¹¹¹ Lara, 87.

¹¹² Horcasitas, 503–4; Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 128.

¹¹³ Díaz del Castillo writes: "There were other very dense groves, somewhat apart from the wood, and in each of them a party of savages with their knotted and twisted cudgels and other savages with bows and arrows, and they set off for the chase, for at that moment [the animals] were let out of the enclosures, and they ran after them through the wood and came out on to the great Plaza, and the killing of them led to a violent row between one lot of savages and the other, and it was worth seeing how they fought on foot with one another, and after they had fought for a short time they returned to their grove." Díaz del Castillo, 190. Pierce identifies the groups of Indians in the murals by analyzing the early colonial codices, see Pierce, 31–40. Harris uses Pierce's analysis and briefly mentions the connection between murals and performance, see Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 128. Horcasitas provides us with a small comparison between the frescoes and the performance, see Horcasitas, 503.

¹¹⁴ Pierce, 31.

frescoes.¹¹⁵ Pierce notes that Indian warrior costumes were permitted by the Spanish government.¹¹⁶ For example, in the Codex Tlatelolco (1565), Indian chieftains who fought with the Spanish retained their indigenous battle dress during the 1542 Mixtón War and also wore their traditional eagle and jaguar warrior body-suits known as *tlahuitzli* (in solid colors or with jaguar spots) at the ceremony for the new Cathedral of Mexico in 1562 (figs. 1.10 and 1.11).¹¹⁷ In the Ixmiquilpan frescoes most of the warriors are wearing *tlahuitzlis* and several wear *ichcahuipillis* (short tunic typical of the Valley of Mexico) over their body suits.¹¹⁸ It is conceivable that similar costumes were used in *La batalla de los salvajes*. If Indian warriors wore their traditional costumes for war and ceremonies in the mid-sixteenth century, they probably had done so in 1539. As Lopes Don discusses, Spanish ignorance and misapprehension of Indian practices allowed indigenous culture to occupy a central place in colonial festivals.¹¹⁹ Through performance, the natives were able to preserve a material tradition.

A parade of black slaves dressed as Spanish kings, followed by a mock battle with the Indians, served as the day's grand finale. Bernal Díaz del Castillo writes about:

the display made by cavaliers and negroes and negresses with their king and queen all on horseback, more than fifty in number, and with the great riches which they carried on their persons of gold and precious stones, small pearls and silverwork, and they promptly attacked the savages and there was another dispute about the hunting. It was wonderful to see the diversity of faces in the masks which they wore, and how the negresses suckled their negro children, and how they paid court to the queen.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ Although Jaime Lara includes an analysis of the frescoes in his more recent book *City, Temple, Stage*, I use Pierce's iconographical study because she focuses on material and stylistic characteristics of the paintings while Lara concentrates on the mural's biblical program and subject matter. Lara, 86–89.

¹¹⁶ Pierce, 44.

¹¹⁷ The Mixtón War was one of several battles between Spaniards and Chichimecas. *Ibid.*, 42. For a brief discussion of the Mixtón War as a rejection of Christianity, see Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, "Faith and Morals in Colonial Mexico" in *The Oxford History of Mexico*, eds. Michael C. Meyer and William H. Beezley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 161.

¹¹⁸ Pierce, 42.

¹¹⁹ Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 29–35.

¹²⁰ Díaz del Castillo, 190–1.

This parade of black slaves embodied a carnivalesque behavior. As Harris and Lopes Don note, having black slaves on horses (a Spanish transport), dressed as Spaniards, and wearing masks (possibly white with European features) parodied the Spanish royalty and conquerors.¹²¹ The use of masks can be traced back to their use in *fiestas* [festivals] and *danzas* [dances] in Spain as early as 1150, to Mexica pre-conquest performances, and to the tradition of mock battles of Moors and Christians as transplanted and locally appropriated in post-conquest Mexico.¹²² Because mock battles are still popular and performed in Mexico, we know that the performers representing Spaniards or the conquistadors wear lightweight carved wooden masks with pale features, rosy cheeks, and beards.¹²³ The high and abstract figure of Charles V and of the Spanish nobility was materialized in the bodies of masked black slaves, who occupied the lowest rank of the caste system, and hence were degraded and ridiculed. A similar degradation occurred in the Plaza Mayor's representation. The monumental and organized Plaza Mayor—the center of the new political order and governance—became a mockery and a misrepresentation of itself.

It is interesting to note that by 1539 black slaves were feared by Europeans. At the time, approximately ten thousand black slaves lived in Mexico-Tenochtitlán. Slaves were brought as a substitute for Indian labor because of the high indigenous mortality caused by European diseases, wars, and ecological changes.¹²⁴ Since 1523 slave revolts had been making Spaniards anxious, especially after the 1537 discovery of a rebellion plot.¹²⁵ As David D. Davidson discusses, the

¹²¹ Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 130.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 18–19; Max Harris, "Muhammed and the Virgin: Folk Dramatizations of Battles between Moors and Christians in Modern Spain," *TDR* 38, no. 1 (1994): 45–47.

¹²³ Max Harris provides a useful and informative description of the dance/mock battle *Danza de los Santiagos* [Dance of Saint James] and the use of masks as performed today in Cuetzalan, Puebla. See, Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 21–22.

¹²⁴ Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570–1650* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 133. David M. Davidson, "Negro Slave Control and Resistance in Colonial Mexico, 1519–1650," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 46 (1966): 236.

¹²⁵ Palmer writes that "the panic created by this unsuccessful rebellion generated a series of suggestions to improve the defenses of the city and to prevent other uprisings." For example, "the cabildo of Mexico City suggested that a

number of slave insurrections escalated by 1560, and Indians such as the Chichimecas aided the black slaves in resisting and fighting the Spanish colonialists.¹²⁶ This demonstrates the fragility of Spanish control over the diverse populations during the sixteenth century and the fact that Spaniards were indeed a minority. Paradoxically, the magnitude of the rebellious factions of slaves and natives was materialized in the grandiosity of the day's spectacular finale.

La conquista de Rodas: Conquering the Center

Without question La conquista de Rodas was the festival's central and most spectacular performance. It built upon the European tradition of fiestas, danzas, and mock battles of *moros y cristianos* [Moors and Christians]. Performances of *moros y cristianos* date back to twelfth century Spain, and the first notice of this type of performance in New Spain dates to 1524.¹²⁷ Different in style and length, mock battles performed conquest of Moors, Turks, and natives by European Christians. When brought to New Spain, pre-conquest indigenous performative practices (dances, mock battles, long-distance runs, combats, and sacrifices) influenced the European mock battle tradition.¹²⁸ In some cases, the historical reenactment of a battle between Moors and Christians (Saint James, patron saint of Spain, kills the Moors) remained European, and in others it was localized as, for example, the conquest of Mexico.¹²⁹

protective wall be built around the city and that the citizens have preparatory siege drills at appointed times." Palmer, 134. For another historical overview about blacks in Mexico that includes the sixteenth century, see Davidson, 235–53.

¹²⁶ Davidson, 244.

¹²⁷ The tradition of mock battles is very popular today on Spain's Mediterranean coast as well as in some places in Galicia, Portugal, southern France and Italy. Mock battles are still popular in different parts of Mexico, for example, in Puebla and Oaxaca. The performances widely range in form and style. Some of them include thousands of performers and epic reenactments, such as the eight-hour Danza de la pluma [Dance of the Feather], which narrates the story of Hernán Cortés and Moctezuma, while others last ten minutes. Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 18–19.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 18

In the 1539 Conquista de Rodas, a miniature representation of the island of Rhodes occupied half the Plaza Mayor. It included a city of wood, castles, buildings, and natural elements such as meadows, mountains, and rocks. The spectacle opened with the entry into the Plaza Mayor of Hernán Cortés leading the Christian army "with their rich embroidered insignia of gold and pearls"¹³⁰ and followed by his sailing ships circling the plaza. The Christian knights were incited to attack the Turks after one shepherd warned the Grand Master of Rhodes (Cortés) that "the Turks were carrying off the flocks and their shepherds."¹³¹ Two companies of Turks, dressed "with rich silk robes all purple and scarlet gold," had ambushed some shepherds and their flocks, grazing near a spring, and held them captive.¹³² A series of battles followed, after the Christian army freed the shepherds, and ended when many Turks were taken as prisoners, and "a lot of fierce bulls were let loose so as to separate them."¹³³ Indian performers represented both European Christians and Turks.

While enjoying a splendid banquet, Spanish audiences watched the performance from the windows of the buildings surrounding the Plaza. Díaz del Castillo describes in detail the succulent sweets and beverages the richly attired wives of the conquerors consumed: marzipan gilded and silvered with the arms of the Marquis and the viceroy, sweet meats of citron, almonds, confits, fruits, wine, *aloja* [a beverage made of water, honey, and spice], *chuca* [a beverage made from fermented fruits], cacao, and *suplicaciones* [a thin light pastry].¹³⁴ Any native audience that was permitted must have been standing down below, in front of the new Spanish permanent buildings.

¹³⁰ Díaz del Castillo, 191.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid., 191–92.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 192.

Unlike the previous day's *Las batallas de los salvajes y los negros*, where two different spatialities were evident (Indian and European), on this day the real and the representational cities became one. The plaza's built environment and the city of Rhodes presented mostly a fortified medieval appearance. The overall formal characteristics were the same: real architecture and scenic pieces had towers, battlements, turrets, and crenelations. After having witnessed the previous day's forest, Díaz del Castillo describes the new architectural details as follows: "on the following morning, half this same Plaza had been turned into the City of Rhodes with its towers and battlements, loopholes and turrets, all fenced round, as natural as Rhodes itself."¹³⁵ Fictional Rhodes thus mirrored the architectonic characteristics of the center of Mexico-Tenochtitlán. Although the set of the city of Rhodes was surrounded by a fortified wall and thereby separated from the plaza's built environment, it is possible to describe scenic and real cities as unified by their architectonic styles. In *La conquista de Rodas*, the center of Mexico-Tenochtitlán and the fictional city of Rhodes were amalgamated into a single material entity.

Besides the city of Rhodes, other scenic mansions and natural elements remained, including fragments of woods (probably recycled from the previous day), mountains, rocks, meadows, and a spring. Harris notes these served "both to embellish the government buildings that edged the square and to identify specific locations around Rhodes."¹³⁶ While these extra scenic mansions contrasted with the architecturally unified real and fictional city, the fragments of the woods represented and reminded audiences of the previous day's indigenous scenography.

The performance of conquest in the Plaza Mayor—former religious center of the Mexicas and site of their military defeat—converted the space into a monumental site of performed

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 191

¹³⁶ Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 126.

imperialism. La conquista de Rodas equated the millenarian dream of an anticipated re-conquest of Rhodes with the actual conquering of Tenochtitlán.¹³⁷ Besides functioning as private housing, government offices, and religious and commercial spaces, the plaza's built environment, along with fictional Rhodes, was overlaid with an ideology of conquest. La conquista de Rodas masked the brutality of conquest through its celebration of an embracing image of imperial unity. Lefebvre argues that while a monumental work has a "horizon of meaning," that is to say, the capacity of conveying a multiplicity of meanings, it also connotes a totality in the following way:

The social and political operation of a monumental work traverses the various 'systems' and 'subsystems,' or codes and subcodes, which constitute and found the society concerned. But it also surpasses such codes and subcodes, and implies a 'supercoding,' in that it tends towards the all-embracing presence of the totality. To the degree that there are traces of violence and death, negativity and aggressiveness in social practice, the monumental work erases them and replaces them with a tranquil power and certitude which can encompass violence and terror.¹³⁸

Similarly, I define the Plaza Mayor as a monumental space that reveals a horizon of meaning but that is traversed, absorbed, and "supercoded" by performing conquest in it. La conquista de Rodas as performed in the center implied and conveyed a triumphalist image of conquest. The civic authorities had the opportunity to establish a historical continuity between past, present, and utopic future as being part of an all-embracing imperial image.

Hernán Cortés had already created similar fabrications of conquest and empire in his letters to Charles V (written during the siege of Tenochtitlán, 1519–21). As J.H. Elliot and Anthony Pagden explain in their introductions to Cortés's *Letters from Mexico*, the conqueror carefully crafted his narrative about the events in New Spain in order to legitimize his illegal

¹³⁷ Regarding La conquista de Rodas symbolizing the millenarian dream of an anticipated re-conquest of Rhodes, see Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 123–24; Harris, *The Dialogical Theatre*, 75–77; Horcasitas, 500.

¹³⁸ Lefebvre, 222.

deeds and to seek recognition from the crown.¹³⁹ When arriving in Tenochtitlán in 1519, Cortés was authorized only to explore the territories and not to colonize them, because he was acting under the Cuban governor Diego Velázquez, who himself was waiting for such authorization from Spain.¹⁴⁰ In his letters, Cortés implied that he acted under the popular will and that Moctezuma's alliances were an empire worthy of becoming Charles's second empire across the Atlantic. As Elliot notes, the thesis of Cortés's letters was that "Charles was already the *legal* emperor of his great empire, and that Cortés would soon recover for him what was rightfully his."¹⁴¹

By 1535 New Spain had been converted into a viceroyalty and Cortés was discharged of any official post or special authority. Although Cortés was met at the Spanish court with a magnificent reception when he went in 1528 to seek compensation, the emperor kept him at a safe distance by raising him to nobility with the title "Marqués del Valle de Oaxaca" but without reappointing him to the governorship of New Spain.¹⁴² Moreover, by 1539 Cortés and Viceroy Mendoza were at odds with each other, because both claimed power in the colony when the latter arrived in 1535.¹⁴³ For Mendoza, Cortés did not represent any threat or danger: by the time of the festival he was very much a decorative fixture devoid of any power. By 1539 it was safe to allow Cortés to play a flattering role in a festival. For Cortés, this performance was a last desperate attempt to remind the authorities of his significant contribution to the creation of the colony.

¹³⁹ J.H. Elliott, "Cortés, Velázquez and Charles V," in Pagden, *Hernán Cortés: Letters from Mexico*, xi–xxxvii; Pagden, xxxix–lxxi.

¹⁴⁰ Elliott, xii.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, xxvii.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, xxxvi.

¹⁴³ Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 127.

Cortés playing the great master of Rhodes along with the spectacle's scenography and spatiality reveal the interlocking fictions of conquest as conveyed in Cortés's letters. For example, the four ships that circle the Plaza in *La conquista de Rodas* hint at the real boats Cortés built when he attacked and laid siege to Tenochtitlán in 1521. In his second letter (1520), Cortés narrates that because he recognized that the Mexicas could trap his troops and starve them to death if the bridges were removed, he built four brigantines that could transport troops in and out of the city and aid in an attack.¹⁴⁴ Horcasitas provides us with a closer look at the scenographic brigantines in the image that he was able to locate of *La conquista de Rodas*.¹⁴⁵ In the small illustration made by natives and located in the 1576 *Codex Aubin*, there is a boat in the foreground with a man firing a cannon, and in the background there is an austere representation of what the buildings of Rhodes might have looked like (fig. 1.12). As Harris argues, the scenic boats in *La conquista de Rodas* most probably were mounted on wheels and manipulated by men hidden within them.¹⁴⁶

The brigantines' scenographic sequence of navigating around an island brings to the foreground the role of geographical representation in *La conquista de Rodas*. In performance, both Tenochtitlán and Rhodes's geographies appear as correlated under one spatial representation of an island surrounded by water. Therefore, Cortés's ships sailed around fictive Rhodes as well as around former Tenochtitlán. As Barbara E. Mundy argues about the 1524 Nuremberg Map

¹⁴⁴ Hernán Cortés, "The Second Letter," in Pagden, *Hernán Cortés: Letters from Mexico*, 103.

¹⁴⁵ Horcasitas translates into Spanish from Náhuatl the image's caption as located in the *Codex Aubin*, folio 47: "Aquí se levantó el edificio de Madera cuando los tenochca se ocultaron en el lugar de los barcos" [While the Techocha, or Mexicas, hid in the boats, the wooden building was built in here]. Horcasitas, 501.

¹⁴⁶ While Díaz del Castillo writes that the four ships went under sail across the Plaza, Las Casas specifies that, "they navigated across the plaza as if they were upon water." Versényi, 31–32. Recchia argues that it is impossible to confirm if the ships simulated navigation on water or if the Plaza was flooded with water from the causeway on the south end of the Plaza Mayor. Recchia, 16. I am inclined to agree with Harris's argument, which he bases on Las Casas's account, that the boats most probably were mounted on wheels. Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 126. Moreover, the image's caption indicates that natives were hidden within the boats (and most probably manipulating them). The city was still under the rebuilding process, and it would have been extremely complicated to flood the plaza and get it ready for two other days of celebrations. Moreover, that was the standard way of building ships in European festivals, outside of Naumachia.

(the first map of Tenochtitlán created after the conquest and published with the Latin version of Cortés's *Letters*), the Europeanized geographical representation of Tenochtitlán was put into the service of a discourse of conquest (fig. 1.13).¹⁴⁷ Wrongly illustrated as a circular island surrounded by one lake (when in fact there were two lakes and the island had the shape of an inverted "C," see fig. 1.1), Tenochtitlán appears as a medieval town with houses and buildings drawn in perspective and thus recognizable to a European audience.¹⁴⁸ Although the map presents a Mexica ideology in the center, the overall style and lens are European. Tenochtitlán was thus recast within a European tradition in the same way that, as I argue, a medieval representation of Rhodes in the Plaza Mayor defined the Mexica center as an Europeanized geography.

Similar to the previous day's carnivalesque behavior of blacks impersonating Spanish nobility, Indians comically portrayed Dominican friars when they arrived at the Plaza Mayor on the four ships. Díaz del Castillo writes that "there were some Indians on board dressed to look like Dominican Friars when they came from Castile, some engaged in plucking chickens and others fishing."¹⁴⁹ As Lopes Don argues, the joke at the Dominicans' expense conveyed "the obvious double entendre of fishing for souls as well as plucking the goods from helpless Indians."¹⁵⁰ The first Franciscans landed in New Spain in 1524 and two years later the Dominicans arrived; both religious orders took charge of the work of evangelization.¹⁵¹ Earlier in 1539 Franciscans and Dominicans had fought over the former's abbreviation of baptism ceremonies when practiced with large numbers of Indians—a controversy possibly evoked in the

¹⁴⁷ Barbara E. Mundy, "Mapping the Aztec Capital: The 1524 Nuremberg Map of Tenochtitlán, Its Sources and Meanings," *Imago Mundi* 50 (1998): 29.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁴⁹ Díaz del Castillo, 191.

¹⁵⁰ Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 20.

¹⁵¹ For a detailed account of the early works of conversion by Franciscans and Dominicans, see Robert Ricard, "The Founding of the Church," in *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico: An Essay on the Apostolate and the Evangelizing Methods of the Mendicant Orders in New Spain: 1523–1572* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).

1539 festival.¹⁵² Although Cortés had quarreled with the Dominicans, their humorous impersonation by Indians must have undermined Cortés's grand entrance.¹⁵³

Indians performing as Dominicans provided a comical component to the performance of their own defeat through conquest. Therefore, La conquista de Rodas was not entirely a performance of humiliation for the Indians. The transformation of the Plaza Mayor into a monumental site of conquest was never total or complete; that is, there was room for instability and for spatial disjunctions. As Lefebvre contends, while monumental spaces present an element of repression that metamorphoses into exaltation, their credibility is never total. In other words, monumentality is never able to achieve a complete illusion because "it replaces a brutal reality with a materially realized *appearance*."¹⁵⁴ In this case, the illusion of Spanish triumph over Rhodes and therefore of Tenochtitlán did not completely repress an indigenous reality. Indigenous intervention through music, song, and building traditions materially defied the total illusion of a victorious account of conquest. The Indians' presence altered the way the space was lived.

Las Casas informs us that, besides fictive Rhodes, the plaza contained other mansions, or scenic structures, housing Indian musicians whose performance added to the spectacle:

In the Plaza de México there were large buildings like artificial theatres, tall as towers, with many elegantly appointed mansions, over one another. Each one had its performance and function with singers and minstrels bulging with shawms, sackbuts, flageolets, trumpets, timbrels, and other musical instruments, so that I believe they gathered together from throughout the province more than a thousand musicians and singers of measured music for that day alone.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 126.

¹⁵³ Cortés favored the Franciscans over the Dominicans, with whom he had quarreled when the latter arrived in Mexico-Tenochtitlán. Cortés's preference is illustrated by the fact that while he went to meet the first mission of Franciscans (the famous Twelve) when they landed in May, 1524 in San Juan de Ulúa, he did not extend the same courtesy two years later to the Dominicans when they arrived in July, 1536. Ricard, 21–22.

¹⁵⁴ Lefebvre, 221. Emphasis mine.

¹⁵⁵ Versényi, 31.

Such "large buildings like artificial theatres" must have resembled a typical Spanish *casa* [mansion] or *carro* [car or movable mansion]. According to Horcasitas's analysis of sixteenth-century scenographic practices, mansions could be simple rectangular shapes or more complicated structures several stories high that housed machinery.¹⁵⁶ The mansions in La conquista de Rodas were made out of wooden frames with painted canvases (or, as Harris notes, with some sort of local alternative) mounted on them, and set up on wheels for mobility.¹⁵⁷ They were movable (*carros*), because the entertainment had to be brought to the European audience inside the plaza's buildings and because the dynamic nature of the spectacle and of the festival itself.¹⁵⁸

As in pre-conquest times, music played a very important role in spectacles, processions, and performances. Indians rapidly and enthusiastically adopted the musical traditions that travelled from Spain, especially seemingly familiar percussive and wind instruments.¹⁵⁹ The natives learned and practiced music so eagerly and to such degree that in 1555 the archbishop sought to limit their use, because Indians attended religious practices just to play music and learn Spanish instrumentations.¹⁶⁰ While the flute was the first instrument that natives learned to play and to fabricate, they also used indigenous percussion instruments such as the *teponaztli* in civic events.¹⁶¹ In terms of singing, the polyphonically austere Spanish chant sung in Latin

¹⁵⁶ Horcasitas, 114–16. For a detailed analysis of sixteenth-century Spanish *carros* [cars], which were movable mansions of different levels and with room for basic machinery, see Malveena McKendrick, *Theatre in Spain 1490–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 238–60, and N.D. Shergold, *A History of the Spanish Stage: From Medieval Times until the End of the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 90–97.

¹⁵⁷ Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 125–26.

¹⁵⁸ Horcasitas argues that mansions in sixteenth-century Mexico must have been like (or at least similar) to their counterparts in Spain. Horcasitas, 113. Harris writes that the mansions in La conquista de Rodas were "mounted on wheels for the sake of mobility." Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 125–26.

¹⁵⁹ Jonathan Truitt, "Adopted Pedagogies: Nahua Incorporation of European Music and Theatre in Colonial Mexico City," *The Americas* 66, no. 3 (2010): 313.

¹⁶⁰ Horcasitas, 139–40.

¹⁶¹ For more information about indigenous musical traditions and instruments, see Truitt, 313–24, and Horcasitas, 146–51.

predominated. Nonetheless, Indians were allowed to compose in Náhuatl.¹⁶² We know that dance, with natives wearing traditional costumes, was an integral component of pre-conquest celebrations and that it continued to be part of colonial civic festivities.¹⁶³ Thus, while no specific records exist, indigenous dances almost certainly were included in the 1539 festival. I therefore posit that the resulting juxtaposition of a European soundscape accompanied by Indian instrumentations and voices disjointed the overall European style of *La conquista de Rodas*. The natives transformed the Spanish mansions into sites of disjunction between Spanish medieval traditions and indigenous art forms. In this way and contrary to Las Casas and Díaz del Castillo's portrayal of natives' participation as submissive, the Indians' use of Náhuatl, as well as their music and dance traditions, shows that they indeed had performative agency.

In pre-conquest society, the notion of work was seen as a ceremonial activity marked by ritual, and this was manifested in building the Rhodes set.¹⁶⁴ Las Casas recorded what he perceived when he saw the many Indians working on building the set:

When they built the city and the aforementioned buildings, somewhere around fifty thousand men officially worked on them, and it was a wondrous thing to see the silence with which they worked, resembling nothing so much as a monastery of friars at choir or chapter, which was how those of us who from time to time went out to see how they were doing described them.¹⁶⁵

For Las Casas, the silent scene of the *tens of thousands* of natives at work was comparable to a monastic event. For the natives, building a detailed and well-crafted environment was a matter of pride and an opportunity to identify their work with pre-conquest religious behavior. Since the rebuilding of Tenochtitlán, natives had rapidly learned European construction techniques. As

¹⁶² Truitt, 315–18; Horcasitas, 142–43.

¹⁶³ Taylor analyzes some of the descriptions of pre-conquest performance practices written by sixteenth-century European chronicles such as José de Acosta's in which dance and song were central along with different design elements such as flowers and animals. Taylor, 354–57. Truitt also discusses the importance of dance and music in pre-conquest public celebrations. Truitt, 314.

¹⁶⁴ Kubler, 156–57; Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 33.

¹⁶⁵ Versényi, 31–32.

Kubler notes, the Spaniards were impressed and felt threatened by how Indians "were avid for technological experience, absorbing it much more rapidly than the civilian colonists were willing to allow."¹⁶⁶ For the natives, creating an intricate and detailed set (so much admired by Las Casas and Díaz del Castillo) signified a matter of pride and prestige: "*a fin de que no os humillen los Españoles*" [so that the Spaniards do not humiliate us].¹⁶⁷ Even if the representation of Rhodes in the Plaza Mayor resulted in European spatiality, it was overlaid with indigenous pride and presence.

Entertainments in the Center: Imagining Mexico-Tenochtitlán

On the last two days of festivities, the Spanish center became a multi-purpose and dynamic site of performance. Different spaces of Mexico-Tenochtitlán were used for various entertainments such as tournaments, masquerades, bullfights, farces, and banquets. These events were performed inside the official residences, on the streets, under the plaza's colonnades, in a smaller plaza nearby called Plaza del volador [Plaza of the Flyer],¹⁶⁸ and even in the Plaza de Tlatelolco—the Indian town and square on the north side of the island and outside the Spanish city limits (fig. 1.6). These particular and dispersed entertainments concluded the 1539 civic festival. The last two day's events allowed denizens to perceive, organize, and imagine the city's

¹⁶⁶ Kubler, 155.

¹⁶⁷ Kubler also discusses how the Indians "likewise copied goldworkers' techniques, and the skills of the makers of gilt leather, the saddlemakers, and so on, with disastrous effects upon the Europeans' monopoly of those manufactures." Kubler, 156. Lopes Don also points at the connection between work and ritual; however she does not talk about how work also represented a matter of pride for the Indians. Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 33.

¹⁶⁸ The plaza's name alludes to a pre-Hispanic celebration that was allowed to be performed there and consisted of five dancers climbing a tall pole, attaching themselves to it with ropes, and spiral downward while one of the dancers remains at the top on a squared frame playing the flute. The dance came to be known as La danza de los voladores [The Dance of the Flyers]. For a history and description of La danza de los voladores, see Rosemary Gipson, "Los Voladores, The Flyers of Mexico," *Western Folklore* 30, no.4 (1971): 269–78.

spatial information.¹⁶⁹ Because new events were staged in the Plaza Mayor, such as reed games, and because the square was used as a gathering space, the Rhodes set from the previous day must have been struck during the night.

Lopes Don states that, contrary to the central and common theme of the European triumphal processions and festivals that displayed the spoils of victory, such as Charles V's procession through Italy in 1536, the 1539 festival lacked an actual display of objects won by Cortés. Rather, "the real spoils of the conquest were a revived and rebuilt Tenochtitlán" along with its wealth from controlled territories throughout Mesoamerica.¹⁷⁰ Thus, Lopes Don claims that "in essence, the 1539 civic festival, the largest festival display held in the Plaza Mayor to that date, completed the rebuilding process."¹⁷¹ While I agree with Lopes Don's statement, I further argue that the last two days of entertainments, which took place in different important spaces of the city, brought into the foreground images and ideas of the new and rebuilt Tenochtitlán.

To explain my argument, I use the concept of imageability—a term coined by city planner Kevin Lynch in his book *The Image of the City*.¹⁷² While Lynch defines imageability as "that quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer,"¹⁷³ he states that "we develop our ideas of the built environment by operation on the external physical shape as well as by an internal process."¹⁷⁴ If Mexico-

¹⁶⁹ After the conquest, when the Spaniards left the city in ruins, it took them around fifteen years to rebuild, repopulate, and restructure Mexico-Tenochtitlán. Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 35.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 34–35.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁷² Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1960), 10.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 12. Lynch develops his theories in relation to three modern case studies of urban centers (Boston, Jersey City, and Los Angeles) and prescribes what he argues should be a legible city, that is to say, a structured ordered city. While I am not concerned with what Lynch proposes as the model city, I find his physical categorizations and definitions of the city spaces helpful when analyzing events in the city in relation to their built environment.

Tenochtitlán's built environment had physical qualities that provoked images, similarly the festival's last entertainments had material attributes which in combination with the built environment produced ideas of the colonial city in the Spaniards and natives' minds. The natives, for example, conveyed such ideas in maps, like the already introduced Uppsala Map, a point to which I will return toward the end of this chapter. Performance provided Mexico-Tenochtitlán's denizens with a new urban imageability.¹⁷⁵

In contrast to the festival's previous days, during the final two days the Plaza Mayor was not transformed into a specific spatiality for a single grand performance but instead served as the festival's "landmark" and "node." When Lynch classifies the contents of the city in relation to physical forms and functions within the urban context, he defines a landmark as a unique and memorable point of reference with spatial prominence.¹⁷⁶ Related to this, nodes "are strategic foci."¹⁷⁷ In this way, the Plaza Mayor's centrality, spatial dominance, and location served as the events' main point of reference. For example, the horse races started and ended in the Plaza Mayor. It must have also functioned as the meeting place for participants and audiences before and after the bullfights and the extravagant banquets in Cortés's palace (in the *casas nuevas*) and the viceroy's mansion (in the *casas viejas*). Because the plaza and its buildings were elaborately decorated on the festival days, as was common during the colonial period, it is safe to assume that on this occasion the Plaza Mayor was festooned with scenographical elements such as flowers, plants, fabrics, and with some sort of lighting, such as torches.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ Francisco Cervantes Salazar's dialogues of 1554 are an example of such imageability. Cervantes Salazar, *México en 1554*; Cervantes de Salazar, *Life in the Imperial and Loyal City of Mexico*.

¹⁷⁶ Lynch, 72.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ For more examples of festivals in the city during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Recchia, 13–23, 28–36.

Díaz del Castillo writes that on the festival's third day "there were bullfights and reed games" and that "the Marquis [Cortés] received a blow from a reed on the instep from which he suffered and went lame."¹⁷⁹ Although Díaz del Castillo does not provide us with more details, it is possible to arrive at informed conclusions about the places and events. The first Spanish bullfight took place in the colony in 1526, five years after the conquest, in the small Plaza del volador on the southeast corner of the Plaza Mayor.¹⁸⁰ The Plaza del volador was also the performance site for indigenous dances and rituals, such as La danza de los voladores [The Dance of the Flyers];¹⁸¹ later in the colonial period it housed the city's market as well as the University. La danza de los voladores expressed the Mexicas' formal conception of the universe—divided into four quadrants and a center—and was related to the legend that men destined to be sacrificed fell from the sky and thus were identified with the stars.¹⁸² This dance exemplifies the Spaniards' early confusion about Indian ritual practices or, as Diana Taylor puts it, reveals the particular lens through which Spaniards understood them. Sixteenth-century European chroniclers described indigenous performances as if they were "universal" (i.e., European).¹⁸³ The Spaniards saw La danza de los voladores as a spectacular performance, without really understanding that it had mythical and religious symbolism, and thus they ceded the central urban space for its enactment.

¹⁷⁹ Díaz del Castillo, 196.

¹⁸⁰ Linné briefly refers to the 1526 bullfight as the first one. Linné, 72. Recchia mentions several instances of bullfights. In one 1615 bullfight for the viceroy, sixty bulls were used, and it was held in the Plaza del Volador. Recchia, 33.

¹⁸¹ See note 161.

¹⁸² Gipson, 271, 273.

¹⁸³ Taylor, 353–55. In her analysis of Friar Toribio de Benavente Motolinía's chronicle *Historia de los Indios de Nueva España* (1541) [History of the Indians of New Spain], Ybarra foregrounds this type of misunderstanding. She writes, "when the practices retained from previous religious ceremonies did not reference an indigenous deity directly, at least as the missionaries understood it, such as the case of the Tlaxcaltecs' floral and feather work, Motolinía attested to the beauty of their crafts, their relationship to worshipfulness, and their superiority to Spanish celebratory practices." Ybarra, 40.

Regarding the reed games, it is unclear if they took place in the Plaza Mayor or in the smaller Plaza del volador. I am inclined to believe that they took place in the Plaza Mayor because such tournaments were usually performed by nobility dressed as knights. Therefore, the most imposing and monumental plaza would have been more appropriate for housing the event. A reed game was a medieval tournament also known as *juego de cañas*. Harris provides us with the following useful description of the game: "The juego de cañas was a form of 'equestrian exercise,' introduced to Spain by the Moors, which required teams of some thirty knights to charge one another at full gallop while hurling spears made of reed, rush, or bamboo canes and defending themselves with shields."¹⁸⁴ While there are recorded instances of this game in fifteenth-century Spain in which one group of knights would be dressed as Moors and the other as Christians,¹⁸⁵ it is unclear if in the 1539 festival such a distinction was made, if natives participated, or if it was a court spectacle. Eyewitness accounts record that Cortés participated and thus probably so did other conquerors.

The simultaneous uses of both central plazas suggest an imageability in which both spaces, although physically connected, differ from each other in terms of their urban status. The Plaza del volador had direct access from the Plaza Mayor through a bridge that crossed the acequia real and that worked as a path connecting both public squares. The larger, Spanish, and more monumental Plaza Mayor clearly dominated the Plaza del volador. For some audience members it must have been possible to see both spaces within the same visual scope and thus imagine them in relation to each other as Mexico-Tenochtitlán's central sites of performance.

¹⁸⁴ Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 54.

¹⁸⁵ See Harris's study of "A Game of Canes" in Spain in 1462. *Ibid.*, 54–63.

Contrary to the simultaneous use of both central plazas previously, on the last day of the entertainments two peculiar and curious events happened in the center and the periphery. Díaz del Castillo writes:

The next day there were horse races from the plaza called Tlatelolco to the great Plaza, and certain yards of velvet and satin were given [as prizes] for the horse which galloped best and arrived first at the plaza. Then too some women raced from under the colonnade of the Treasurer Alonzo de Estrada to the royal palace, and some golden jewels were given to her who arrived first at the post.¹⁸⁶

What is worth noting of the first race is that it spatially connected the Indian town of Santiago de Tlatelolco to the Spanish center. A former indigenous town with its own temple, plaza, and gigantic marketplace, Tlatelolco was one of the earliest places of evangelization after the conquest. In 1533, after the Franciscans built a convent in its square, they founded the Colegio de Santa Cruz [Santa Cruz school], where natives were "educated" and mendicants produced their ethnographic studies about pre-conquest Indian practices.¹⁸⁷ Although Tlatelolco was a place of learning and proselytizing—some scholars defining it as the first place where an exchange of cultures took place¹⁸⁸—it was nevertheless separate from the Spanish traza and under direct control by the Franciscans instead of the civic or secular authorities. Díaz del Castillo does not specify the streets through which the horses raced, but it is not difficult to assume that they circulated through Tepeyac and Tacuba Streets, two of the main arteries that were recycled from the Mexica city and led directly from Tlatelolco to the heart of the city.¹⁸⁹ The ride through Tacuba Street must have been quite impressive, as it was flanked on both sides

¹⁸⁶ Díaz del Castillo, 196.

¹⁸⁷ León Portilla and Aguilera, 75–76.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹⁸⁹ On image 1.6, the nineteenth-century reconstruction of a mid-sixteenth-century plan of the city, it is possible to locate both plazas and the main arteries that I am suggesting were the race's path.

by the grand and fortified houses of the "wealthiest and noble citizens," it was well paved, and an open canal ran down the middle.¹⁹⁰

That the race connected both plazas foregrounds their material and political relation between the Spanish center and the Indian periphery, as well as how they were imagined. For the colonial Indians, Tlatelolco represented what the Plaza Mayor meant for the Spanish minorities: it was a spatial landmark that dominated politically, materially, and visually the city and its image. Tlatelolco's importance in the Indian imagination and conception of space is exemplified by the distorted and aggrandized scale with which indigenous artist Alonso de Santa Cruz depicted it in the Uppsala Map—four times bigger than the Plaza Mayor (fig. 1.4).¹⁹¹

The women's race on the final day of the festival is curious because there are no other references during colonial times of public contests in which ladies participated and competed for a prize.¹⁹² Most likely, they were young Spanish ladies because having them running, an activity that they would not normally do, fits well into the carnivalesque overturning of expectations of the festival.¹⁹³ Díaz del Castillo writes that the race started under the colonnade of the Treasurer Alonzo Estrada and ended in the royal palace.¹⁹⁴ Estrada was the person from whom the crown expropriated land on the south side of the Plaza Mayor to build the cabildo, construction of which had started in 1527.¹⁹⁵ If he was a treasurer he must have worked in the cabildo and probably owned some property on either the west or south end of the plaza, where the shops and other dwellings were located. Moreover, we know from a later rendition of the Plaza Mayor in

¹⁹⁰ Francisco Cervantes de Salazar, *Life in the Imperial and Loyal City of Mexico*, 39.

¹⁹¹ Tlatelolco is located in the right side of the map, the map's north.

¹⁹² Recchia, 16.

¹⁹³ Native women would not have participated because this early in the sixteenth century they still operated within the Mexica traditions, and had no agency to run in races (they were expected to have a life of domesticity). For an analysis of the role of women in the Mexica culture, see "Wives" and "Mothers" in Inga Clendinnen, *Aztecs: An Interpretation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 153–205.

¹⁹⁴ Díaz del Castillo, 196.

¹⁹⁵ Kubler, 211.

1596 that the cabildo's building had porticoes on the first floor (fig. 1.14).¹⁹⁶ Therefore, I speculate that, if the ladies raced under Estrada's colonnade to the royal palace, they traveled along the south and west ends of the plaza, crossed San Francisco street on the west side, and finished at the viceroy's dwellings. The porticoes would have separated and protected the women from the plaza's open space, and the stores with their merchandise would have served as their scenographic background. The prize for the winner was "some golden jewels."¹⁹⁷ Indeed, the women's race brought into the foreground the center's fancier shopping area.

Finally, the 1539 civic festival ended with two separate "gargantuan banquets,"¹⁹⁸ one arranged by Cortés and the viceroy in Cortés's *casas nuevas* and the other by the viceroy in his palace. In his narration of the festival, Díaz del Castillo describes in great detail the dishes, decorations, and performances at the viceroy's banquet, while of Cortés's supper he only mentions that the guests were the conquistadores and their wives and that the courses were very abundant.¹⁹⁹ The banquet at Cortés's *casas* was a "most ceremonious affair," and the one at the viceroy's palace was a festive and spectacular event.²⁰⁰ Therefore, it is very probable that the one held at Cortés's was a kind of official military recognition of him and the other conquistadores. According to Díaz del Castillo, the banquet at Cortés's took place first, and thus it functioned as a preamble to the viceroy's, which all of Cortes's guests must have attended.²⁰¹ The viceroy's banquet was indeed larger and unexpectedly overcrowded as each room "was full

¹⁹⁶ Kubler writes that the edifice was renovated in 1532 and that it is unclear however when exactly were the porticoes on the first floor added but that the jail was given a new doorway in 1537—probably it was around this time, when changes were being made in the façade that the porticoes were built. Kubler, 211.

¹⁹⁷ Díaz del Castillo, 196.

¹⁹⁸ Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 12.

¹⁹⁹ Díaz del Castillo, 193.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

of Spaniards who were not invited guests, who came to see the supper and banquet, and they were so numerous that the corridors would not hold them."²⁰²

The banquets celebrated the rebuilt city at the same time that they served as the framework for carnivalesque farces which enacted a reversal of the social hierarchies. Díaz del Castillo writes that during the viceroy's banquet, jesters and versifiers "recited things that were very laughable"²⁰³ to Cortés and the Viceroy Mendoza. He also describes a statue, located in the corridor's palace, of a group of Indians and a drunken Spaniard, who, as Lopes Don writes, was "brought down to the level of drunken Indians."²⁰⁴ Moreover, throughout both days entertainments, farces, masks, and ballads were performed.²⁰⁵ Instead of the idealized site of performance into which the Plaza Mayor was transformed through *La conquista de Rodas*, on this occasion it was a material site for celebration, feasting, and laughter.

The way the viceroy's home was used in the banquet reflected the Spanish hierarchical organization of space. On the other hand, by transforming its corridors with indigenous scenographies made out of natural elements, natives disrupted the fortified residence's interior spatial rationalization. In fact, the Indians were allowed inside one of the fortified residences meant to serve as a refuge in case of an Indian attack.²⁰⁶ The *casas viejas*—as well as the *casas nuevas*—were built and planned by Cortés on a grandiose scale similar to the pre-conquest buildings that once stood there and served not just as residential spaces but also for commerce and government.²⁰⁷ Cortés lived in the *casas viejas* until 1529. In 1531 he moved to the *casas*

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 196.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 195.

²⁰⁴ Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 20.

²⁰⁵ Díaz del Castillo, 196–97.

²⁰⁶ Kubler describes how preparing the city for defense against Indian attacks preoccupied the *cabildo* in 1537. Kubler, 78.

²⁰⁷ León Cázares, 87–88. When Kubler informs us that the *casas viejas* stood upon the palace of Axayácatl, he writes that this palace was "where the Spaniards were originally given hospitality, and where Moctezuma was kidnapped." Kubler, 190.

nuevas, the same year that the *audiencia* [court] moved into the *casas viejas*.²⁰⁸ By 1535, the viceroy was dwelling in the *casas viejas* as well.²⁰⁹ Composed of several architectural elements grouped by different interior patios—an architectural arrangement typical of southern Spain and introduced by the Arabs—some parts of the building had two floors connected by a balustrade (fig. 1.15).

The banquet took place in the upper story, which served as *piano nobile* [noble floor], while servants, natives, and "mulattos" prepared "a young oxen roasted whole, stuffed with chickens and fowls, quails and pigeons and bacon in the courtyards below."²¹⁰ The environment was imbued with lavish spectacle: an overabundance of food, wine, and dishes with animals flying out and running from their plates—all enriched by the accompaniment of music, singers, versifiers, and jesters. In one of such scenes Díaz del Castillo writes:

After this they served, to the ladies of greater distinction, some very large pasties, and in some of the them were two live rabbits and in others small live rabbits, and others were full of quails and doves and other small birds all alive, and when they placed them on the tables it was at one and the same time, as soon as they took off the top crusts the rabbits went fleeing over the tables and the quails and birds flew off.²¹¹

Besides such entertaining antic, the viceroy's banquet certainly exposed grotesque and exaggerated images related to food and its consumption. Not surprisingly, the host guarded such decadent excess by placing servants (natives) strategically in different spaces so that no plates or silverware could be stolen by other Spanish.²¹²

²⁰⁸ Kubler, 190.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Díaz del Castillo, 195.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Díaz del Castillo writes that while the viceroy took that precaution, Cortés on the other hand was robbed of many tablecloths, and napkins, and knives. He continues, "The Marqués took it [as a sign of] grandeur that he lost over a hundred marks of silver plate." Díaz del Castillo, 196.

The use of the *casas viejas* during the banquet, with the nobility dining on the second floor while the servants and other castes ate on the first, reflected the power dynamics between colonizers and colonized at the same time that it revealed the indigenous scenographic presence at the center. Similar to the indigenous forest of *La batallas de los salvajes y los negros*, Indians created a natural environment made out of plants, flowers, fruits, water, and live animals in the corridors of the *casas viejas*. Díaz del Castillo details how the corridors of the palace were transformed:

into bowers and gardens, interwoven overhead with many trees with their fruits which appeared to grow on them, and above the trees as many [kinds of] birds as can be found in the country....[A]nd there close to it was a great tiger tied with chains, and on the other side of the fountain was the figure of a man of great bulk dressed like a muleteer, with two skins of wine on his back, who had gone to sleep through weariness; and there were figures of four Indians who had untied one of the skins and had got drunk, and it appeared as though they were drinking and were making grimaces, and it was all done so true to life that many persons of all classes with their wives came to see it.²¹³

What I wish to highlight is the categorization that Díaz del Castillo assigns to the banquet's Indian scenography, that is to say, how "it was all done so true to life." Lopes Don is correct in claiming that conquerors and mendicants described the Indians' artisanal work as if it were an artistic product of the European Renaissance.²¹⁴ After all, designing a setting to look as natural as possible had been the aim of early Italian scenographers such as Baldassare Peruzzi and Sebastiano Serlio.²¹⁵ But here is yet another example of the Spaniards' misunderstanding of Indian cultural practices. As previously discussed regarding the indigenous forest in the Plaza Mayor, for the natives, creating such natural environments was connected to ritual practices, and

²¹³ Díaz del Castillo, 193.

²¹⁴ Lopes Don, "Carnivals, Triumphs, and Rain Gods in the New World," 32.

²¹⁵ For an introduction of the early Renaissance stage and detailed descriptions of the work and treatises of early scenographers, see Sebastiano Serlio, Joseph Furtenbach, and Nicola Sabbattini, *The Renaissance Stage: Documents of Serlio, Sabbattini and Furtenbach*, ed. Barnard Hewitt, trans. Allardyce Nicoll (Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1958).

the forests were created with real elements. European scenographers, on the other hand, were concerned with finding methods—through painting, sculpture, and architecture—to portray a *representation* of reality, instead of reality itself. Scenographic descriptions of early colonial artistic practices in Mexico-Tenochtitlán should certainly not be underestimated, as they reveal the context in which Indians were able to preserve and to establish their own artistic, celebratory, and ritual practices—in this case, within the conquerors' and the viceroy's very own, private dwellings.

Conclusion

The 1539 civic festival, which celebrated Charles V's empire, marked the beginning of the colonial city and the end of the Mexica city. Though Tenochtitlán's monumentality was destroyed and buried, its memory remained embedded within its urban layout, its built environment, and its geography. Such memories emerged through the festival's different public performances and thus imbued the center with new meanings. As I have shown, the various performances transformed the plaza into an indigenous spatiality, into a monument of conquest, and into a multi-purpose theatre. Most importantly, Indian scenographies brought change and instability to the new built environment and transgressed the imposed European spatiality. The indigenous periphery influenced the way the center was conceived, perceived, and lived during the festival and in the everyday.

The festival was not an event of or about indigenous subjection and defeat. The politics of collaboration between Indian and Spanish leaders, in combination with the Spaniard's misunderstanding of indigenous performance practices, opened up a space in which fragments of the pre-conquest material culture remained. The festival foregrounds a deep-seated irony of life

in New Spain: while the Spaniards superimposed a European city on top of Tenochtitlán, their Eurocentric mindset kept them from understanding Indian practices they would certainly have considered pagan, such as the practice of building scenographies. In pre-conquest Tenochtitlán, the notion of work and building (especially scenographic constructs for large festivals) was considered a ceremonial activity marked by ritual and pride. Rebuilding Mexico-Tenochtitlán and creating scenographic constructs for the first civic festival of the capital was an indigenous as much as Spanish enterprise. The 1539 civic event marked the beginning of not just the colonial city but of the predominance of indigenous art forms in it and in its festivals.

Chapter Two

Performing Loyalty in the Center: The 1721 Bicentennial Paseo del pendón

The unknown artist of the eighteenth-century painting titled *El parián* (ca. 1770) depicts a marketplace in Mexico City's Plaza Mayor and a group of denizens engaged in commercial and social activities (fig. 2.1).¹ Besides rendering life in the city's square, the artist schematizes Mexico City's society. Twenty-one of the characters appear next to a number which refers to an inscription at the back of the canvas. The caption reads: "Calidad de las personas que habitan en la Ciudad de México" [Quality of the persons who live in Mexico City], and each number corresponds to the person's place in the *sistema de castas* [caste system]—the official socio-racial structure of colonial Mexican society.²

¹ The painting is an oil on canvas of 55 by 90.2 cm. It is housed in a private collection and is reproduced in Ilona Katzew, *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 7. For an analysis of the painting's dating, authorship, and aesthetic characteristics, see Gustavo Curiel, Juana Gutiérrez, and Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, "El Parián," *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas* 22, no. 76 (2000): 285–290. The Parián was one of the three markets located in Mexico City's central square during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its name refers to a similar market structure in Manila, Philippines, also part of the Spanish Empire. Michael Schreffler, *The Art of Allegiance: Visual Culture and Imperial Power in Baroque New Spain* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 32.

² I use the term socio-racial because as scholars have pointed out, the racial classification of Mexican colonial society depended on racial, social, cultural, and economic positioning, thus making the caste system a flexible structure. Katzew, *Casta Painting*, 42–46. Douglas Cope argues that ethnic status was not a fixed category but that it constituted "a *social* identity that may be reaffirmed, modified, manipulated, or perhaps even rejected—all in a wide variety of contexts," and that "labor relations and patronage provided a far more effective divide-and-conquer strategy than did racial ideology." R. Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660–1720* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 5, 7. On how eighteenth-century socio-economic shifts affected the caste system, see María Elena Martínez, "The Language, Genealogy, and Classification of 'Race' in Colonial Mexico," in *Race and Classification: The Case of Mexican America*, eds. Ilona Katzew and Susan Deans-Smith (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 35–41. The castas illustrated in the painting are: 1. Español [Spaniard] / 2. Mestizo [Mixed] / 3. Castiza [Light-skinned mestiza] / 4. Yndia [Indian woman] / 5. Albino [Albino] / 6. Moro [Moor] / 7. Torna-atrás [Return-backwards] / 8. Calpa Mulato [Calpa Mulatto] (refers to the Nahua community of Calpan) / 9. Gíbaro [Type of Indian] / 10. Cuarterón [One-fourth mulatto] / 11. Morisco [Moorish] / 12. Coyote [Coyote] / 13. Española [Spanish woman] / 14. Albarazao [White-spotted] / 15. Tente en el Aire [Hold-yourself-in-mid-air] / 16. Cambujo [Brown person] / 17. Zambíaga [Female combination of African and Indian] / 18. [no inscription] / 19. Clérigos [Clerics] / 20. Albarberos [Viceregal guards] / 21. Indios de la Sierra [Indians from the mountains]. Katzew, *Casta Painting*, 207, n. 2.

El parián belongs to the pictorial genre of casta painting, a fascinating graphic style of eighteenth-century Mexico.³ Generally, casta paintings are composed of a series of sequential images showing the process of race mixing among the three main groups that inhabited colonial Mexico: Spaniards and *criollos* [American Spaniards—the offspring of Spaniards born in New Spain], Indians, and blacks.⁴ The typical casta painting portrays groups of women and men of different races with one or two of their children, and it is set in an environment with local objects, food, flora, and fauna. Casta paintings have an inscription that labels the picture's racial mix. For example, *Español con India sale Mestizo* [Spaniard with Indian results in a mestizo], *Mestizo con Española sale Castizo* [Mestizo with Spaniard results in a castizo, a light-skinned mestizo], and *Español con Negra sale Mulato* [Spaniard with black results in a mulatto].⁵ As art historian Ilona Katzew demonstrates, the painting of *El parián* is one of the few casta paintings that deviate from the usual scheme because it represents socio-racial groups within an urban environment, in this case, Mexico City—then named La muy noble e insigne y leal ciudad de México [The very noble and illustrious and loyal city of Mexico] or La novilísima [The Very Noble].⁶

³ Some of the studies about casta painting include, Magali Marie, *Imagining Identity in New Spain Race, Lineage, and the Colonial Body in Portraiture and Casta Paintings* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003); Ilona Katzew, ed., *New World Orders: Casta Painting and Colonial Latin America* (New York: Americas Society Art Gallery, 1996); and María Concepción García Sainz, *Las castas mexicanas: un género pictórico americano* (Milano: Olivetti, 1989). I base this introduction on Katzew's most recent and complete study, *Casta Painting*.

⁴ In order to be more specific and to avoid confusion, I use the term "criollo" when referring to the offspring of Spaniards born in New Spain instead of using its English translation "creole." D.A. Brading also calls them American Spaniards. D.A. Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico 1763–1810* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 20. Racially, criollos were considered white or American white. The casta system was created by Spaniards, and they placed themselves at the top, followed by castas or mixed races, and with Indians and blacks at the bottom. Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 4.

⁵ Katzew, *Casta Painting*, 61. These examples are from a casta painting by an unknown artist created in 1750. It is composed by sixteen images of sequential racial mixes. They usually start with what the authorities considered as the "purest" racial mixing.

⁶ Katzew, *Casta Painting*, 5. In the extant *cabildo* [city council] documents of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the capital of New Spain, today's Mexico City, is named La muy noble e insigne y leal ciudad de México [The very noble and illustrious and loyal city of Mexico] and its abbreviated version was La novilísima [The Very Noble]. Another variation of the city's name was La muy leal e imperial ciudad de México [The Very Loyal and Imperial City of Mexico]. Throughout this chapter I mostly refer to the city in its abbreviated colonial name

El parián is an ideal portrayal of La novilísima's denizens, and it foregrounds two aspects of life in the city: the colonial imposition of order upon a society in constant change and its manifestations in space and performance. As scholars have discussed, casta paintings should not be taken as verbatim documentation of colonial society. In their search for social mobility and self-identification, non-Spaniards resisted official racial categorization, at the same time that it was controversial, nonetheless confusing.⁷ Instead, divisions along economic lines proved to be more effective for social domination than the casta system; class divisions maintained Mexico City's separation between Spaniards and the rest of the inhabitants (castas, Indians, and blacks).⁸ In this way, casta paintings were in fact pictorial expressions of the authorities' anxiety over racial mixing and of their desire to control and limit it.⁹ The paintings were usually commissioned for the Spanish crown by local authorities and served as exotic but reassuring images of a categorized and loyal society. In the case of *El parián*, a sample of La novilísima's society is located in the city's main square, suggesting the plaza's importance and its ideal ordering. The Plaza Mayor was New Spain's principal public space, and it housed the buildings of its ruling institutions—the viceregal palace, the cathedral, and the *cabildo* [city council]. Like New Spain's society, the Plaza Mayor was also a social, commercial, and performative space in flux that the ruling elite sought to control. Ironically, the controlling and governing institutions clashed with each other. The *audiencia real* [royal court] and church officials regularly

because it reflects not only the capital's relation to the Spanish crown but the construction of its identity as an illustrious, loyal, and imperial city.

⁷ Douglas Cope argues that "[w]e should not assume that subordinate groups are passive recipients of elite ideology," and that "elite attempts at racial or ethnic categorizations met with resistance as non-Spaniards pursued their own, often contradictory, ends: social mobility, group solidarity, self-definition." He illustrates his argument by discussing how natives understood that when dealing with Spaniards they were "Indians," while in official documents they used distinctive ethnic referents. Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 4–5.

⁸ Katzew, *Casta Painting*, 7–9; 43–45. The different castas had more social mobility than Indians and blacks. D.A. Brading points at yet another simple but important social division in colonial Mexico: between *gente decente* [decent people], composed of the white Spanish upper classes, and *la plebe* [the populace], composed of the castas, Indians, and blacks. Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 20. By the end of the eighteenth century around one-quarter of the total population of New Spain was racially mixed. Katzew, *Casta Painting*, 40.

⁹ Katzew, *Casta Painting*, 3; William B. Taylor, "Preface," in Katzew and Deans-Smith, *Race and Classification*, x.

challenged the viceroy (the king's representative in New Spain). At the same time, royal authorities usually engaged in long disputes with the city council regarding laws and edicts, especially when it came to festivals and commemorations.¹⁰

The social and political tensions in La novilísima intensified during the celebration of the 1721 Paseo del pendón [Parade of the Royal Banner], which commemorated the conquest's bicentennial anniversary. Similar to *El parián*, the 1721 Paseo served the royal need to portray an orderly and loyal society in the Plaza Mayor. Established in 1529 by the Hapsburgs, the Paseo del pendón commemorated the conquest every August 13—the day of the fall of Tenochtitlán in 1521.¹¹ Since in the Catholic religious calendar August 13 is the feast day of San

¹⁰ New Spain's political body was structured in the following way: the viceroy acted as the king's representative; the *audiencia real* was the governing body under the viceroy and was composed of *oidores* [judges] elected by the crown; the *cabildo* was the municipal or city council and was composed by locally elected officials and by permanent officials named by the crown, including a *corregidor* or *alcalde mayor* [city's chief magistrate], *alcalde ordinario* [city magistrate with jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases], and *regidores* [aldermen]; the church was divided into *cabildo eclesiástico* [ecclesiastical or cathedral chapter] and evangelical orders and clerics. Indigenous populations were considered separate entities and had their governors or heads of towns. I base my definitions and translations of Spanish governmental terminology on Alejandro Cañeque's glossary of terms and on Linda Ann Curcio's dissertation. I find that both authors complement each other: the former focuses on the politics of the viceroyalty, and the latter on official public performances in colonial Mexico City. Alejandro Cañeque, *The King's Living Image: The Culture and Politics of Viceregal Power in Colonial Mexico* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 251–54; Linda Ann Curcio, "Saints, Sovereignty and Spectacle in Colonial Mexico" (PhD diss., Tulane University, 1993), 287–93.

¹¹ Scholars have differed on the year of the first Paseo. In his chronicle of colonial Mexico City, nineteenth-century historian Luis González Obregón argues that, according to the 1528 *cabildo*'s minutes, in that year the Paseo was performed for the first time, and it was established as an annual parade by royal decree in August 11, 1529. Luis González Obregón, *México viejo: noticias históricas, tradiciones, leyendas y costumbres del periodo de 1521 a 1821*, 9th ed. (México, D.F.: Editorial Patria, 1966), 52–53. Historian Joaquín García Icazbalceta references the 1528 minutes but writes that there is no mention of a parade until the royal decree of 1529. Joaquín García Icazbalceta, "El paseo del pendón," in Francisco Cervantes Salazar, ed. *México en 1554: tres diálogos traducidos por Joaquín García Icazbalceta*, 2nd ed. (México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1952), 183–85. A more recent description of the Paseo by Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru only references the 1529 decree, arguing that it was the first year that the parade was performed. Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "Las fiestas novohispanas: espectáculo y ejemplo," *Mexican Studies / Estudios Mexicanos* 9, no. 1 (1993): 28. Giovanna Recchia and Francisco Baca Plasencia write that it was accorded to celebrate conquest on the feast of Saint Hyppolitus in 1528 and that the first parade took place in 1529. Giovanna Recchia, *Espacio teatral en la Ciudad de México, siglos XVI–XVII* (México, D.F.: Centro Nacional de Investigación Teatral Rodolfo Usigli, 1993), 15; Francisco Baca Plasencia, "El paseo del pendón de la Ciudad de México en el siglo XVI" (master's thesis, Universidad Iberoamericana, 2009), 92–93.

I was able to locate the 1529 royal decree as recorded by the *cabildo*'s notary in the city archives, which states that the Paseo had to be celebrated every year. AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 630A, 8–9. There are two extant sources of the history of the Paseo del Pendón located in the Archivo Histórico del Distrito Federal, AHDF [Historical Archives of Mexico City]. The first one is a handwritten volume of the *cabildo*'s minutes, restored in 1857. AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277. The second is typewritten transcripts of the *Actas de cabildo* [city

Hipólito [Saint Hippolytus]—the patron of Horses and Prisons—San Hipólito became the city's patron saint.¹² After the Spanish crown granted La novilísima its coat of arms, the Paseo was created as an act of loyalty between the crown and the city.¹³ The Paseo's banner shared the royal and the city coats of arms.¹⁴

The parade also celebrated the colonial city, because it was related to its foundational victory and the cabildo was in charge of its organization and financing. Traditionally, an official procession composed of the royal and civic authorities carrying the royal banner travelled to the Church of San Hipólito, located on the western border of the city. It was a site where many Spaniards died during the war of conquest. After attending mass, the procession went back to the city's center to attend additional celebratory events like bullfights and banquets. With the ascension of Philip V to the Spanish throne in 1700 and the establishment of the Bourbon dynasty, the royal authorities appropriated the Paseo and used it as a means of collectively

council minutes]. The 2277 volume starts with the 1676 Paseo and does not record every year, while the *Actas* start with the first celebration and at least mentions all of them. Scholarship on El paseo del pendón is virtually non-existent. What is available are descriptions and documentations by the above scholars. Baca's master's thesis is the most complete study of the Paseo during the sixteenth century. The celebration of the Paseo lasted almost three hundred years during the colonial period. It only stopped being celebrated in 1812, during the war of Independence from Spain. AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 27.

¹² The history of Saint Hippolytus, Martyr (ca. A.D. 235) is mentioned in the St. Laurence agreements. According to this document, St. Hippolytus was sentenced to be torn apart by horses because, after being baptized by St. Laurence, he assisted in the latter's burial. This reference is suspicious because it evokes the fate of Hippolytus, the son of Theseus, who died entangled in his chariot's harness and was torn to pieces. It is more probable that the martyr was a Roman priest who lived in the early third century—an important moment in the Roman Catholic Church. Hippolytus censured the pope, opposed him, and thus was banished to Sardinia, where he died. Alban Butler, *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, eds. Herbert J. Thurston, S.J. and Donald Attwater, vol. 3 (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1956), 315–16. For a Spanish translation, see Alban Butler, *Vidas de los santos*, ed. James Bentley, trans. Ma. Luisa Ortega (Madrid: LIBSA, 2009). For a study about Mexico's patron saints in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Pierre Ragon, "Los santos patronos de las ciudades del México central (siglos XVI y XVII)," *Historia Mexicana* 52, no. 2 (2002): 361–89.

¹³ In his study of the Paseo during the sixteenth century, Baca Plasencia writes that in 1523, Charles V granted the city its coat of arms after the members of the cabildo requested it. The coat of arms was composed by a golden castle in its center, bridges guarded by lions and green tunas (a type of local cactus). Its dominant color was blue, symbolizing the city's system of lakes. The insignia represented the victory of a unified Spanish crown (Castile and León) over Tenochitlán. Baca Plasencia, "El paseo del pendón," 37–38.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

honoring the monarchy.¹⁵ In 1721, Viceroy Marquis de Valero took advantage of the bicentennial of the conquest and ordered City Council Secretary Gabriel de Mendieta Rebollo to research the performance history of the Paseo.¹⁶ City officials concluded that "only through the appropriate level of splendor could they motivate and persuade the general public" to attend.¹⁷ Instead of traveling to San Hipólito's Church, the royal authorities asserted their autocratic rule by limiting the procession to the city center, converting it into a spectacular celebration, and including different social, religious, and ethnic groups. As city records indicate, during the preparation of the special celebration, authorities and participants disagreed and fought over the Paseo's changes.¹⁸

This chapter analyses the 1721 Paseo del pendón as a site-specific performance that, I argue, reinvented the tradition of celebrating conquest by transforming it into an expression of monarchical allegiance. While few scholars have studied the Paseo as a yearly colonial ritual, none has concentrated on its 1721 bicentennial anniversary as I do in this chapter.¹⁹ Through a discussion of this performance, I underscore the tensions within the system and the ambivalent role of the authorities and social groups, especially when comparing the first Paseo with its bicentennial celebration. For example, I posit that the bicentennial's unique religious procession transformed the Plaza Mayor into a potentially subversive space.

¹⁵ Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals of Colonial Mexico City: Performing Power and Identity* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 78–79.

¹⁶ Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 78; AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 10.

¹⁷ Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 78; AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 1. Curcio-Nagy does not provide the original quote in Spanish as located in the extant manuscript. Unfortunately, this page has now deteriorated and its text is illegible.

¹⁸ AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 668A, 194. While the extant accounts of the history of this traditional parade recorded single instances of ceremonial procedures, such as the route, order of the procession, colors of the banner, and so on, the record of the bicentennial celebration, entitled "Testimonio de los autos sobre demostraciones de Júbilo y Alegría al feliz cumplimiento de los dos siglos de la dichosa conquista de la Ciudad y Reynos" [Testimony of the events of the demonstrations of joy and happiness in commemoration of the two hundred year anniversary of the blissful conquest of the city and its kingdoms], describes the festivities in detail, a fact that reflects its importance. AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 1–30.

¹⁹ For a list of the scholars that have studied the Paseo, see note 11.

Like other political rituals in New Spain, the royal authorities used the Paseo to solve what Michael Schreffler describes as "the formidable challenge the crown faced in asserting its presence and authority in New Spain."²⁰ While scholars have approached this topic from different angles, they share the common view that the viceroyalty employed various cultural manifestations to exercise its power as representative of the Spanish crown. Schreffler focuses on painted imagery in and around seventeenth-century Mexico City; Alejandro Cañeque analyses the viceroyalty as a political and cultural institution that promoted the conception of the viceroy as the king's living image; and Linda A. Curcio-Nagy studies how colonial political rituals (e.g., the inaugural entry of the viceroy and the oath to the king) were used to maintain control in the capital.²¹ Building upon the visual, institutional, and performative aspects of the Paseo del pendón, I contribute to the established conversation about cultural events in La novilísima through a spatio-temporal angle; that is, through the role of the city and its central square as a site of performance. The 1721 bicentennial celebration of conquest is a unique example of the role of the Plaza Mayor as a theatre that, along with other studied phenomena such as paintings, rituals, and the viceroyalty, "intervened in the exercise of imperial power in Baroque New Spain," according to Schreffler.²² Using the city as theatre was certainly part of the Spanish monarchy's devices to assert its presence in the conquered territories.²³

Schreffler argues that, in the visual culture's discourse of imperial power, a counterdiscourse emerges that fractures "the symmetry and coherence of the crown's philosophy of kingly power and ideal."²⁴ Similarly, I unmask the ruptures of the viceroyalty's autocratic

²⁰ Schreffler, *The Art of Allegiance*, 1.

²¹ Schreffler, *The Art of Allegiance*; Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*; Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*.

²² Schreffler, *The Art of Allegiance*, 2.

²³ I borrow the phrase "the city as theatre" from Marvin Carlson's study of theatre spaces in Europe and the US. Marvin A. Carlson, *Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 14–37.

²⁴ Schreffler, *The Art of Allegiance*, 3.

cohesion as performed in the bicentennial of conquest; for example, in the spatial and performative implications regarding the inclusion of confraternities, religious orders, indigenous leaders, castas, and natives. Thus, I demonstrate that the 1721 Paseo was not as harmonious as City Secretary de Mendieta Rebollo described it in the city records. This chapter will throw into relief the crown's fictitious fabrications of loyalty. As portrayed in the casta painting *El parián*, the royal authorities conceptualized the plaza as a royal and autocratic site of performance that at the same time was also a "volatile festive space."²⁵ Ironically, the Bourbon eagerness to impose loyalty to the crown by bringing different social groups to the plaza ended up creating an unstable and potentially subversive space.

Through a close reading of the extant records of the 1721 Paseo within the city center's socio-cultural context, I attempt to provide answers to the following questions: What were the material, symbolic, and historical consequences of performing loyalty in La novilísima's main site of performance? What was the role of the Plaza Mayor in conveying allegiance to the crown? How successful were the royal authorities in constructing loyalty on the bicentennial anniversary of the conquest? For this discussion, I start with an analysis of the performance of the Paseo del Pendón as a reinvented tradition. Then I introduce the Plaza Mayor and its built environment as a social and performance space during the first half of the eighteenth century. The following two sections show how the plaza was transformed into both a royal site of performance and an unstable and potentially subversive space.

The Tradition and Reinvention of the Paseo del pendón

²⁵ I take this spatial idea from Curcio-Nagy's analysis of the Corpus Christi celebrations under the Bourbons. Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies: Corpus Christi in Colonial Mexico City" in *Rituals of Rule, Rituals of Resistance: Public Celebrations and Popular Culture in Mexico*, eds. William H. Beezley, Cheryl English Martin, and William E. French (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1994), 19.

In planning the first Paseo, feast of San Hipólito in 1529, the *cabildo* [city council] ordered that:

[T]odos los años por onra de la fiesta del señor santo ypolito en cuyo día se gana esta cibdad se corran siete toros e que de ellos se maten dos y se den por amor de Dios a los monesterios e ospitales y que la bispera de la dicha fiesta se saque el pendon desta cibdad de la casa del cabildo y que se lleve con toda la gente que pudiere ir a cabllo acompañandole hasta la iglesia de sant ypolito e alli se digan sus bisperas solemnes y se torne a traer el dicho pendon a la dicha casa de cabildo e otro dia se torne a llevar el dicho pendon en procesion a pie hasta la dicha yglesia de sant ypolito e llegada alli toda la gente y dicha su misa mayor se torne a traer el dicho pendon a la casa del cabildo a caballo en la qual dicha casa del cabildo este guardado el dicho pendon e no salga de el e cada año elija e nombre una persona cual le pareciere para que saque el dicho pendon asi para el dicho dia de sant ypolito, como para otra cosa que se ofreciere.

[Every year and in honor of the patron San Hipólito, a feast should take place on his feast day—the same day that this city was conquered. The celebration will include seven bullfights out of which two bulls be killed and, for the love of God, donated to the monasteries and hospitals. On the feast's eve, the banner will be taken out of the cabildo's building and paraded by everyone who can travel by horse to the church of San Hipólito, where a solemn mass will take place. Then, the procession returns the banner to the cabildo and the next day the procession travels by foot to the said church. Once everyone arrives there, mass is celebrated and, riding their horses, all attendants proceed to return the banner to the cabildo, where it is kept. Every year the city council has to choose and name a suitable person to carry the banner during the feast of San Hipólito and to do any other related duties that could arise.]²⁶

As the mandate makes clear, bullfights were part of the celebration, but the official parade carrying the royal banner was the most important event. The active participants in this most official part were all assumed to be men. There were two processions, one on the day of San Hipólito and the other on the previous afternoon. With the exception of the 1721 Paseo, the Spanish and criollo governing elite—viceroy, royal authorities, and members of the city

²⁶ I keep the grammar and orthography of the original works cited. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine. AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 630A, 8–9. Also, according to a 1530 royal decree recorded in the Laws of the Indies, the King of Spain ordered that a parade of the royal banner should take place in all the principal cities of the Indies. González Obregón, *México Viejo*, 54.

council—made up the official parade's delegation.²⁷ Although it is unclear if natives and castas were part of the audience, city records indicate that they were not included in the parade's official delegation.²⁸

Traditionally, on the day before the saint's feast, the city authorities placed the banner on red velvet cushions with golden decorations and exhibited it from the central upper window of the cabildo's building overlooking the Plaza Mayor.²⁹ At two o'clock, after a twenty-one-gun salute, the nobility and the two youngest oidores [judges of the audiencia real or the royal court] proceeded to bring the *alférez real* [official standard bearer of the royal banner] from his house to the cabildo.³⁰ In the cabildo, the *corregidor* or *alcalde* [city's chief magistrate] gave the banner to the *alférez*, who would take an oath promising the return of the banner. Then the delegation left the cabildo; met the viceroy and the rest of the oidores at the viceroy's palace; proceeded through Empedradillo Street (in front of Cortés's casas viejas); paraded through Tacuba Avenue; arrived at the shrine of San Hipólito to attend vespers' mass officiated by the archbishop; and returned to the heart of the city using San Francisco Street.³¹ After the viceroy arrived at his palace, the delegation stopped in the cabildo to place the banner in its window and then returned to the *alférez*'s house. The *alférez* hosted a meal from which the viceroy and the

²⁷ From an analysis of the records, I have arrived at the same conclusion as Curcio-Nagy: that the participation of natives groups in the bicentennial anniversary of the festival in 1721 was unique for the occasion. Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 79.

²⁸ González Obregón writes that "Además, era notable, pero muy digna, la conducta que observaban los mexicanos durante el desfile de la comitiva, pues no se veía uno solo en toda la Carrera" [Besides, it was remarkable, but very dignified, the behavior observed by the Mexicans during the parade's procession because not a single one was visible in the entire parade]. His source for this statement is unclear. González Obregón, *México Viejo*, 52.

²⁹ I base this introduction of the annual celebration on a combination of my archival research as well as on Baca Plascencia, González Obregón, and Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru's descriptions. Baca Plascencia's main sources include the cabildo's minutes and narratives of conquest. González Obregón's sources include the cabildo's minutes and couple of secondary sources, such as García Icazbalceta's and Friar Diego de Valadés's *Retórica Cristiana*. Gonzalbo Aizpuru's sources are the cabildo's minutes. Baca Plascencia, "El paseo del pendón," 4–6; González Obregón, *México Viejo*, 47–56; Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "Las fiestas novohispanas," 28–29.

³⁰ Stated by a royal decree in 1530, the carrying of the royal banner (the *alférez*) had to rotate annually among the regidores, starting with the oldest. Baca Plascencia, "El paseo del pendón," 99.

³¹ AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp.1, f. 6–9.

oidores were noticeably absent in order to keep their image of higher status within the political hierarchy; the heads of the colonial government did not celebrate with the *regidores* [aldermen].³² On August 13, the parade and mass proceedings were the same as the previous day; by six o'clock another twenty-one-gun salute announced that the banner was removed from the cabildo's window. Sometimes the cabildo would plan fireworks, lighting shows, *juegos de cañas* [reed game or equestrian tournament], and musical performances.³³

The celebration's parade through the city evoked past social memories, because it mapped the same route that Cortés's troops took on the disastrous night of July 11, 1519, that came to be known as La noche triste [The Night of Sorrows]. On this night the Mexicas defeated the Spaniards during their attempt to flee the city. It all started when Cortés was away from the city to fight Panfilo de Narváez, and his deputy in charge, Pedro de Alvarado, massacred many Indians celebrants during a festival at the main temple.³⁴ The Mexicas retaliated and placed the Spaniards under siege in the palace of Axayacatl (later Cortés's *casas viejas*, located on the western side of the Plaza Mayor). Upon Cortés's return, four days of intense battle followed and ended in The Night of Sorrows, when the Mexicas discovered the Spaniards trying to escape the city through Tlacopan causeway (later Tacuba Avenue).³⁵

After the fall of Tenochtitlán in 1521, a shrine dedicated to the city's patron saint San Hipólito was built on the site where the Spaniards suffered their greatest loss during the Noche

³² Because the viceroy and the oidores did not attend the evening's banquet, they were instead given an assortment of sweets. AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp.16. González Obregón, *México viejo*, 52.

³³ Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "Las fiestas novohispanas," 29. The juego de cañas is a medieval tournament or an equestrian exercise that the Moors introduced in Spain and which travelled to the colonies. Max Harris describes it as a game that "required teams of some thirty knights to charge one another at full gallop while hurling spears made of reed, rush, or bamboo canes and defending themselves with shields." Max Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians: Festivals of Reconquest in Mexico and Spain* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2000), 54.

³⁴ Panfilo de Narváez had orders from Diego de Velazques (governor of Cuba) to arrest the conquistador. For an account of the massacre in the Main Temple during the fiesta of Toxcatl, see Miguel León-Portilla, *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*, trans. Lysander Kemp (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), 70–82.

³⁵ For the next several years, the Spaniards retaliated, attacked, and besieged the city. The Mexicas finally surrendered on August 13, 1521, on Saint Hippolytus day. For an account of the siege and fall of Tenochtitlán, see *Ibid.*, 91–126.

triste, on the western outskirts of the *traza* [city's perimeter]. Throughout the colonial period, San Hipólito became associated with the conquest and was imagined as a triumphant saint. For example, in the anonymous 1764 oil painting titled *San Hipólito y las armas mexicanas* [San Hipólito and the Mexican Arms], the saint appears as a conquering Hernán Cortés riding on a Mexica eagle (fig. 2.2).³⁶ San Hipólito stands on a cactus (symbol of the Mexica territory) and is flanked by Pedro de Alvarado leading the conquistadores and Moctezuma (the last Mexica emperor) leading the natives. The painting's composition represents conquest and evangelization as symmetrical events since its representatives, Alvarado and Moctezuma, mirror each other through their praying poses. Such positioning derived from the medieval tradition of devotional paintings, such as in crucifixion scenes. The saint's life and martyrdom appear in the four medallions carried by angels in the painting's corners. Besides being the conquering symbol, San Hipólito represented the triumph of Catholicism over paganism.

The Paseo del pendón sustained the memory of conquest and of La noche triste by its specific use of space. Together, the sites of the Plaza Mayor, Tacuba Avenue, and the shrine of St. Hippolytus acted as a memory theatre, because they referred to the official historical account of conquest and La noche triste as first narrated by Cortés in his letters to Charles V.³⁷ Kevin Lynch's discussion of urban images is useful for understanding the role of the city during the procession. Invoking sociologist Maurice Halbwach's work on collective memory, Lynch states that a familiar environment "furnishes material for common memories and symbols which bind the group together and allow them to communicate with one another" and that it further "serves

³⁶ The anonymous painting *San Hipólito y las armas mexicanas* (1764) is housed in the permanent collection at the Museum Franz Mayer, Mexico City. It is an oil painting on canvas. Interestingly, an eagle standing on a cactus became a symbol on the national flag after independence. Alejandro Cañeque includes a reproduction of this image when he mentions that Mexico City commemorated the conquest every August 13. Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 147.

³⁷ Hernán Cortés, *Letters from Mexico*, trans. and ed. Anthony Pagden (New Haven: Yale Nota Bene, 2001), 138–39.

as a vast mnemonic system for the retention of group history and ideals."³⁸ By repeating the same route that Cortés and his allies took on La noche triste, the Paseo allowed the Spanish and criollo communities to perform, create, and maintain their collective memory of conquest and triumph. Spaces took on different symbolisms and meanings: the Plaza Mayor performed the conquered center, Tacuba Avenue acted as the only available route of escape, and the church of San Hipólito represented a monument for dead Spanish soldiers.

Besides commemorating the Spanish martyrs, the Paseo glorified the conquest through religious, royal, and military symbols. The cabildo's numerous records indicate that the Paseo was carefully planned, structured, and designed. Its form could not be modified unless approved by the viceroy and the city council. The procession was headed by the viceroy at the center with the alférez real to his left, and the oldest oidor to his right. Judges, aldermen, constables, and all the nobility would follow the viceroy and his two companions. All on horseback, the official participants were richly dressed for the occasion, carried their arms, and were accompanied by foot soldiers and militaristic music. The dominant colors, red and green, were used in the costumes and on the banner.³⁹ The specially designed banner included the city and royal insignias, and its inscription read: "non in multitudine exercitus consistit victoria, sed in voluntate Dei" [victory does not depend on the army's size but on God's will].⁴⁰ While it is not

³⁸ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960), 126; Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (New York: Harper & Row, 1992).

³⁹ The specific colors of the Pendón varied throughout time, and it seems that their choice depended on political circumstances. Baca Plasencia quotes a city record from 1540 in which it is stated that a new banner was created for the first viceroy Antonio de Mendoza. The record specifies that the colors of the banner were red and green. Red and green also became associated with tournaments and feasts, such as juegos de cañas. Baca Plasencia, "El paseo del pendón," 51–57. Since then, red and green became associated with the city. Even through there is no direct reference to the specific choice of colors, I am inclined to believe that they could have been connected to the red of the Spanish coat of arms and the green of the city's coat of arms. Interestingly, as Gonzalbo Aizpuru points out, the use of green and red in combination with the white of the participants' collar (ruffs) in the Paseo resulted in the same color combination of the national colors after independence. Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "Las fiestas novohispanas," 28.

⁴⁰ Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "Las fiestas novohispanas," 28; González Obregón, *México Viejo*, 55. It was believed that the banner used in the Paseo was the original banner that Hernán Cortés carried during the conquest of Tenochtitlán. However, González Obregón writes that such belief was a legend and that the Paseo's banner was specifically

clear where the motto comes from, there has been some speculation that Cortés had something similar on the royal banner that he carried during the conquest.⁴¹

Every August 13th the city center became an intricate open-air theatre that housed the festive and religious commemoration of conquest. The plaza and its adjacent streets served as the scenographic setting for the commemoration. City dwellers and the cabildo decorated the streets and buildings for the occasion. Tacuba Avenue and San Francisco Street were adorned with altars and triumphal arches made out of plants and flowers. Tapestries hung from the buildings' windows. Weather was a factor that defined the procession's route and overall environment. August is the rainy season in the valley of Mexico. Therefore, when surprised by rain, the procession developed the habit of taking shelter under near doorways.⁴² Sound also played an important role in the Paseo. The bells of the cathedral and of all the downtown churches rang simultaneously, enveloping the procession in an air of solemnity and celebration.

As the seventeenth century progressed, the Paseo lost its splendor and almost ceased to be celebrated. Nevertheless, in the eighteenth century, the Bourbons revived the Paseo's nearly defunct tradition and used the conquest's bicentennial anniversary as a performative tool to serve their autocratic agenda. As a result, the 1721 Paseo was spectacular and unique. The cabildo organized a *mascarada* [masquerade], dazzling decorations, lights, and fireworks. It included the participation of confraternities and religious orders carrying highly decorated traditional statues of San Hipólito along with one of the Virgen de los Remedios [Virgin of the Remedies]—the capital's most popular Marian image, traditionally associated not just with

designed and made for the annual celebration. Cortés's banner is buried with him in the church of Jesús Nazareno in Mexico City. González Obregón, *México Viejo*, 53.

⁴¹ Baca Plasencia includes Luis Weckman's suggestion that the banner's motto paraphrased Cortés's. Baca Plasencia, "El paseo del pendón," 48–50, 57; Luis Weckman, *La herencia medieval de México* (México, D.F.: Colegio de México, 1984), 145–49.

⁴² García Icazbalceta, "El paseo del pendón," 190; González Obregón, *México Viejo*, 55.

Spaniards but with Indians and African slaves.⁴³ Indigenous leaders from the *parcialidades* [districts] of Santiago Tlatelolco and San Juan Tenochtitlán paraded with the official delegation, and natives danced, wearing their traditional costumes.⁴⁴ For the first and only time not only were indigenous scenographies created in the Plaza Mayor but the official procession stayed in the city's center and did not travel to the Church of Saint Hippolytus.

City festivals became a central component of the Bourbons' rule. Royal authorities used them as cultural tools to affirm their presence in New Spain and to keep control in the capital. The Bourbons appropriated the repertoire of public festivals that the Hapsburgs had previously established and transformed them into expressions of royal allegiance. Linda Curcio-Nagy writes that the renewal of the Paseo encouraged "identification with Spain and the monarchy."⁴⁵ Although royal officials concentrated most of their energy and money on the ceremony of La jura del rey [The oath to the king], they used the annual La venida de la Virgen de los Remedios [The Arrival of the Virgin of Remedies] and El paseo del pendón to maintain a yearly ceremonial calendar.⁴⁶ Since the oath to the king depended on the lives and succession of the kings, authorities sought yearly obligatory commemorations to keep their political purposes and messages current within La novilísima.⁴⁷ Summer became the official performative season in the city, as the Paseo was celebrated on the day of the fall of Tenochtitlán, and La venida of the Virgin of the Remedies—an icon associated with rain and fertility—was staged during the rainy

⁴³ Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 77. This was the first and only time that the Virgin of the Remedies was included in the Paseo. AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 668A, 200. I later discuss in detail the Virgen de los Remedios.

⁴⁴ AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 668A, 200. Santiago Tlatelolco and San Juan Tenochtitlán were both colonial *cabeceras* [heads] or capitals of indigenous districts. This division was appropriated from the pre-conquest town division of Tenochtitlán (Mexica capital) and Tlatelolco (former island north of Tenochtitlán).

⁴⁵ Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 78.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁴⁷ For detailed studies of the Bourbon oath ceremony, see "Celebrating Apollo" in *ibid.*, 67–85, and "La Jura del Rey" in Curcio, "Saints, Sovereignty and Spectacle," 136–214.

season.⁴⁸ Thus, it was established that processions of La venida de la Virgen de los Remedios would occur in June or July and El paseo del pendón in August.

The 1721 celebration of El paseo del pendón represents a peculiar case of the Bourbon exploitation of an established tradition for new political purposes. By reviving an almost lost tradition, the royal authorities inaugurated what would later become "a cult of the centenaries" throughout the history of independent Mexico.⁴⁹ In 1721, Viceroy de Valero capitalized on the symbolically charged bicentennial anniversary of the conquest to reinvent the tradition of the Paseo. In the introduction to his study *The Invention of Tradition*, historian Eric Hobsbawm defines an invented tradition as:

[A] set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historical past.⁵⁰

Whereas the Hapsburgs had invented the Paseo in 1529 by establishing a connection with a suitable past (the conquest and its heroes), Viceroy de Valero appropriated it and created a "new" Paseo that glorified the crown. Indeed, the viceroy and his royal officials reinvented a tradition by adapting an old one. Hobsbawm discusses how, besides having a new purpose, adaptation

⁴⁸ During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, processions of the Virgin of Remedies usually occurred in July because, in an agriculturally based society, people believed that the virgin (associated with water) would listen to them. Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, "Native Icon to City Protectress to Royal Patroness: Ritual, Political Symbolism and the Virgin of Remedies," *The Americas* 52, no. 3 (1996): 380–1.

⁴⁹ I borrow the phrase "cult of the centenary" from Ronald Quinault's article "The Cult of the Centenary, c.1784–1914," which studies primarily British centenary commemorations. Quinault argues that in the western world this cult developed from a neo-classical European culture in the mid-nineteenth century. Here, I argue that, at least in Mexico, the cult for centennial celebrations was introduced by the Bourbons. Ronald Quinault, "The Cult of the Centenary, c.1784–1914," *Historical Research* 71, no. 176 (1998): 303–23.

⁵⁰ Although Hobsbawm's main focus is on the formation of European nations, he does look back in time to trace elements that are appropriated when inventing a tradition. I use Hobsbawm's conceptual framework and definition of "invented tradition" to analyze the colonial tradition of the Paseo del pendón, because such concepts are helpful to better understand and describe the ideology behind the bicentennial Paseo in 1721 and because this tradition itself will be recycled in a commemoration studied in the next chapter. Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1.

applies old models in new contexts and that "in all such cases novelty is no less novel for being able to dress up easily as antiquity."⁵¹ By 1721, the ritual of the Paseo was an accepted performance within the collection of public celebrations in the Plaza Mayor. By maintaining the Paseo's aura of antiquity, the royals appropriated and recycled the celebration's symbols in order to propagate their own autocratic agenda.

Social, political, and economic reforms were slowly introduced in Spain and its colonies after the Bourbons took control of the crown, affecting performance practices. Influenced by the French Enlightenment, the Spanish crown centralized its rule by raising income through taxation, reducing the power of the church, and creating an authoritative administration that benefitted and enriched the monarchy, the nobility, and the white European colonists in the Mexican capital.⁵² The elites—merchants, silver magnates, and owners of haciendas—became incredibly wealthy. As Jonathan Kandell writes in his *Biography of Mexico*, "what distinguished them [the new elites] from colonists of the previous two centuries were the size of their fortunes, the sophistication of business, and the splendor of urban lifestyle."⁵³ The accumulation of wealth by the Spanish elites was reflected through the sumptuous architecture in the city. By 1721, La novilísima, with its 130,000 inhabitants, was the largest city in the Americas. It had a vast and grand architectural repertoire that included palaces, ecclesiastical buildings, hospitals, an academy of art, a university, and a school of mining.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Hobsbawm, "Introduction," 5.

⁵² Juan Pedro Viqueira Albán, *Property and Permissiveness in Bourbon Mexico*, trans. Sonya Lipsett-Rivera and Sergio Rivera Ayala (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1999), xvi; Kandell, *La Capital*, 236; Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 29.

⁵³ Kandell, *La Capital*, 236.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* The buildings were of different styles, such as: fortress-like, medieval, baroque, churrigueresco, and neoclassic, imbuing the capital with an air of European grandeur. The churrigueresco is a Spanish baroque style, highly decorative, that emerged in the seventeenth century. The style was named after the Spanish architect and sculptor José Benito de Churriguera.

In the next section, I discuss the city's material changes during the first half of the eighteenth century and the role of the Plaza Mayor as its main social, commercial, and performative space.

The Plaza Mayor as Marketplace and Bourbon Site of Performance

By 1721, two hundred years after the fall of Tenochtitlán, Mexico's center was no longer a fortified environment but rather had been transformed into a baroque city.⁵⁵ As an artistic and cultural phenomenon, the baroque developed in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to become an international style that traveled to all parts of the globe except Australasia.⁵⁶ In New Spain, La novilísima gestated as a baroque city between 1630 and 1730 and reached its apogee from 1730 to 1781.⁵⁷ The city's newly built environment conveyed different styles imported and adapted from the Iberian Peninsula and its other colonies. Mexican baroque alternated between the seventeenth century's sober reimaginings of a classical style and the eighteenth century's ornamental lavishness that covered every free space with detailed reliefs of stucco and plaster.⁵⁸ By the time of the 1721 Paseo, the city's architectural image was a

⁵⁵ For my study of the city and its plaza as baroque spaces I use Michael Snodin's definition of the baroque as an international style along with Manuel Toussaint's analysis of baroque art in Mexico. While the term baroque is very broad, it is now generally agreed that it is a rich, grand, and vital style that derived from the European (Italian) Renaissance. A hallmark of the style is its daring distortion of classical norms in design. Michael Snodin, "The Baroque Style" in *Baroque: Style in the Age of Magnificence*, eds. Michael Snodin and Nigel Llewellyn (London: V&A, 2009), 74, 114; Manuel Toussaint, *Colonial Art in Mexico*, trans. and ed. Elizabeth Wilder Weismann (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967), 180.

⁵⁶ Snodin, "The Baroque Style," 114. Snodin discusses how the baroque travelled as goods, objects, and ideas throughout Europe, the Americas, and Asia. The ruling principles of the Victoria and Albert museum's exhibition "The Baroque" (2009) were that the baroque was the first international style as it was adapted in different degrees in various parts of the world. That it was the first international style is of relevance for this study, because it underscores La novilísima as New Spain's node of trade among Europe, the Americas, and Asia.

⁵⁷ I take such chronological demarcation from Manuel Toussaint's division of artistic and cultural eras in colonial Mexico. Toussaint, *Colonial Art in Mexico*, xvii.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 203.

mixture of styles—sometimes found in a single building, such as the cathedral on the north side of the Plaza Mayor.⁵⁹

The Plaza Mayor's built environment was under construction and was less baroque than the rest of the downtown area, which housed new religious, civic, and private buildings designed in a grand and ornate style. After their sixteenth-century originals perished, the plaza's architectonic structures were enlarged and rebuilt in a renaissance style with some moderate baroque details in the façades.⁶⁰ In the late seventeenth century, the cabildo and the royal palace were destroyed after several floods and an insurrection in 1692. By 1721 both buildings were being rebuilt in their earlier classical style.⁶¹ Although the interior was functional, the cathedral's façades and towers were not yet completed. The church's main entrance faced south and overlooked the plaza's open space, and its second entrance, del Empedradillo (in reference to the street's name), was on its west side, facing the building that used to house Cortés's *casas viejas*. As the church's main side faced the square, a minor plaza was created in front of the *casas viejas*, known as Plaza Menor [Minor Square]. The cathedral's cemetery was housed in its northern *atrio* [courtyard]. Later in the eighteenth century, the cathedral's tabernacle was built in an exuberant baroque style.⁶² The city's marketplaces, a fountain of fresh water, and gallows for public executions were located in the Plaza Mayor's open space. The *acequia real*, one of the

⁵⁹ Kandell, *La Capital*, 244. The new cathedral, built on the north side of the Plaza Mayor (on the same site where the first small church of the capital was erected) was officially dedicated in 1667. Throughout time, many architects took part in building it. The cathedral was completed in 1813. Toussaint, *Colonial Art in Mexico*, 182–83.

⁶⁰ The early-sixteenth-century buildings perished because of their weak structures and a devastating fire during the 1692 riot. The original sixteenth-century buildings in the plaza were built in a medieval and early renaissance style. After the conquest, the Plaza Mayor had a fortified and military appearance. For details of the buildings and styles, see chapter one.

⁶¹ Toussaint, *Colonial Art in Mexico*, 186. The cabildo's building, where the city archives were housed, was one of the worst affected during the 1692 revolt. Writer Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora managed to save some but not all of the archives from burning. Rosa Feijoo, "El tumulto de 1692," *Historia Mexicana* 14, no.4 (1965): 665. For a brief history of the city archives and their move from the old cabildo to today's building in the historical downtown, see Secretaría de Cultura D.F., "Historia del archivo histórico del Distrito Federal Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora," <http://www.cultura.df.gob.mx/index.php/hahdf> (accessed March 13, 2012).

⁶² For a detailed study of the cathedral, see Manuel Toussaint, *La catedral de México y el sagrario metropolitano: su historia, su tesoro, su arte* (México, D.F.: Porrúa, 1973).

surviving Mexica channels, remained functioning for supplying the markets and the center of the city.⁶³

While the city's emblematic name—La muy noble e insigne y leal ciudad de México—conveyed its loyalty to the Spanish crown and its splendor as the capital of New Spain, La novilísima was marked by political, social, and racial tensions throughout the seventeenth century. Church dignitaries (supported by the secular clergy and criollos) had an antagonistic relationship with the viceroy (supported by the Spanish settlers and the regular clergy); the conquistador class declined; the new landowners of haciendas assumed the form of an affluent class; and the rising merchant classes profited from the silver trade and imported goods from Europe and Asia. Thus, there were power struggles among the viceroy, church, and city dignitaries, and the new rising classes of merchants and landowners displaced the old class of conquistadores with royal titles.⁶⁴ A series of revolts were provoked by economic disparities, shortages of food, and abuses towards Indians—the largest and most violent, known as the *tumulto* [tumult]—left the Plaza Mayor engulfed in flames in June 1692.⁶⁵ The inquisition, by that time fully established, enforced its law through torture and public executions staged in both the Plaza Mayor and the Plaza Menor.

La novilísima was also beset by serious natural disasters. Deforestation caused the city to be constantly flooded. In the aftermath of the great flood of 1634, when the capital was under

⁶³ For a general chronology of physical changes in the plaza during the seventeenth century, see Concepción Amerlinck A. and Raúl Delgado Lamas, "Cronología Mínima," in *El Zócalo: esquema histórico*, ed. Concurso nacional para la rehabilitación de la Plaza de la Constitución (México, D.F.: Trilce Ediciones, 1998), 22–23.

⁶⁴ Kandell, *La Capital* 185–86, 227.

⁶⁵ The city's great famine during the last years of the seventeenth century was the cause of a castas and natives uprising in the Plaza Mayor. The specific event that caused the general discontent to grow into a revolt was the beating of an indigenous woman by a guard trying to stop the natives from searching for corn. Jorge Olvera Ramos, *Los mercados de la Plaza Mayor en la Ciudad de México* (México, D.F.: Cal y Arena, 2008), 84–88. For an original account of the revolt, see Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora, *Relaciones históricas* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma, 1940), 91–168. For an insightful and detailed analysis of the revolt, from plebeian and elite perspectives, see Cope, "The Riot of 1692," in *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 125–60; Rosa Feijoo, "El tumulto de 1692," *Historia Mexicana* 14, no.4 (1965): 656–79.

six feet of water for five years, there were even discussions by the city and royal authorities of whether or not to abandon the city. Instead, the Spaniards decided to dry up the entire lake system. As Kandell writes, "they would not be satisfied until Mexico ceased to be an island."⁶⁶ The environmental calamity of draining the lakes has affected the city ever since.

The indigenous populations continued to be an exploited labor force on haciendas, within the capital, and in the silver mines. Large haciendas near the capital replaced the early colonial system of *encomiendas*. Given by the crown to the conquistadores, the *encomiendas* granted the right to demand Indian labor and tribute.⁶⁷ Because of the *encomenderos*' [encomiendas' owners] rampant abuse of the natives, the Spanish crown ended wageless indigenous labor in 1542 and ruled that, instead, natives would pay tribute in money or goods but not in service.⁶⁸ The abatement of the early colonial *encomienda* system, along with the sharp decline of the indigenous populations caused by famines and epidemics, resulted in a labor crisis.⁶⁹ The viceroyalty sought to counteract this crisis with a system of labor allocation named the *repartimiento* [distribution]. Under the *repartimiento*, government officials drafted Indian laborers and assigned them to work for low wages during a certain period of time.⁷⁰ Moreover, because the capital needed to be supplied with food, the administration granted vacant lands near

⁶⁶ Kandell, *La Capital*, 201.

⁶⁷ Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 2; Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 12. In the introduction of his book *The Nahuas After the Conquest*, James Lockhart writes that an *encomienda* is "a grant of Indian tribute and originally labor to a Spaniard, the foundation for the largest Spanish estates in the first decades after the conquest." 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, 1992), 4. For a detailed analysis of the *encomienda* system, see Charles Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico 1519–1810* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), 58–81. In his article about intercultural scenarios in sixteenth-century Mexico City, Leo Cabranes-Grant also provides a useful description of the *encomiendas*. Leo Cabranes-Grant, "From Scenarios to Networks: Performing the Intercultural in Colonial Mexico," *Theatre Journal* 63, no. 4 (2011): 503–4.

⁶⁸ Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 2.

⁶⁹ I base my overview of the creation of haciendas as well as of the changes in indigenous labor practices and immigration, on Cope's study, Brading's detailed analysis, and Kandell's history. Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 11–14; Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 2–9; Kandell, *La Capital*, 202–5.

⁷⁰ Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 12.

the capital to new landowners for crops and cattle. These lands, known as haciendas, were Spanish estates with wage laborers (Indians and castas) devoted to maize, wheat, fruit, and livestock.⁷¹

These shifts in labor practices and demographics resulted in indigenous displacement and a large number of refugees and immigrants. The new hacienda landowners welcomed some refugees. Other natives migrated to the capital, to other cities, and to the mines in the north in search of work. The indigenous social structure broke down, reaching its lowest point during the first half of the seventeenth century.⁷² There was an increase in indigenous criminality and drunkenness as *pulquerías* [taverns for drinking *pulque*—fermented cactus juice] proliferated in the capital.⁷³ The Spanish ruling elite (nobility, merchants, silver magnates, and owners of haciendas) living in La novilísima had black slaves in their palaces or houses. Initially, black slaves were used on plantations; however, because their high cost, they were few in comparison to low-waged labor and they ended up as personal servants to Spaniards—elites came to value them as a symbol of status.⁷⁴ Spaniards imported West and West-Central Africans into New Spain during the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century.⁷⁵

Even though Spaniards had the greatest social, political, and economical privileges, criollos started to develop a sense of self-identity and pride, challenged the Spanish dominance, and started to be quite influential in politics. In the eighteenth century, with the ascent of the Bourbon dynasty, new authorities sought to reduce the influence of the criollos in the

⁷¹ Ibid.; Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 4–5.

⁷² Kandell, *La Capital*, 206.

⁷³ Ibid., 205. On pulquerías and their proliferation in the city, which authorities sought to control in the eighteenth century, see Miguel Ángel Vásquez Meléndez, "Las pulquerías en la vida diaria de los habitantes de la ciudad de México" in *Historia de la vida cotidiana en México*, vol. 3, ed. Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuro (México, D.F.: El Colegio de México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2005), 71–95.

⁷⁴ Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 13–14.

⁷⁵ Herman L. Bennett, *Colonial Blackness: A History of Afro-Mexico* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 4.

administration and promoted the Spanish nobility.⁷⁶ As a result, wealthy Spaniards spent great amounts of money to get the royal titles necessary to ascend within the Bourbon autocracy.

The city's divided and hierarchical society was reflected in the Plaza Mayor's spatial distribution and its commerce—the main activity on the square. La novilísima operated as New Spain's busiest and most important commercial hub and marketplace. Merchants traded local and imported goods from Asia, Europe, and the Americas. Although the square's open space was divided into three delimited markets for different kind of products— Puestos de indios [Indians' stalls], the Baratillo [low-priced products], and the Parián [imported goods]—in practice, there was a tight relationship among all sellers and their products.⁷⁷ Located on the east side of the plaza, the Puestos de indios were established after the conquest so that natives could supply the city with food. The stalls of the Baratillo, located in the center of the square, provided artisanal and second-hand products to the urban poor. There, merchants of different castas sold their products. The Parián, an actual building with eighty stores, was located on the west side of the plaza. Imported goods were sold exclusively by Spanish shopkeepers and dealers.

It is also important to acknowledge that commerce was a centralized and monopolized enterprise that favored the Spanish economy, and as such Spaniards were vigilant of any illegal intruders.⁷⁸ Everyone had to comply with the Spanish commercial monopoly. Also, sellers had to abide by city regulations regarding the quality of their products, premises, and even dress code.⁷⁹ In his study of the history of markets in the Plaza Mayor, Jorge Olvera Ramos employs

⁷⁶ Kandell, *La Capital*, 252.

⁷⁷ Jorge Olvera Ramos, *Los mercados de la Plaza Mayor en la Ciudad de México* (México, D.F.: Cal y Arena, 2008), 13.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁷⁹ In his study of merchants in colonial Mexico, Brading discusses how commerce became the main activity of Spanish immigrants (who were mostly peasants from the Basque country) and transformed them into wealthy elite. He writes, "in 1689 some 628 men out of the total 1,182 peninsular Spaniards then resident in Mexico City were listed as engaged in commerce, by far the largest single group. By contrast, those employed in government service amounted to no more than 124." Thus, "it was the merchants who constituted the backbone of the Hispanic

an old Mexican saying that clearly illustrates commercial life among Spaniards, castas, and Indians in the plaza: "aunque juntos, no estaban revueltos" [although together they weren't scrambled].⁸⁰ Indeed, the divided society created a divided commerce in the city's main public space.⁸¹

While the marketplaces served an important economic function, they were also intense social spaces where the numerous castes and Spaniards interacted. People gathered in the markets to eat, drink, and socialize. For example, the Baratillo became a social space for university students to debate, play games, and buy used books (both censored and legal).⁸² As Olvera Ramos contends, "la atmósfera que predominaba en aquellos emplazamientos era más la de una feria que convocaba multitudes no necesariamente consumidoras" [the predominant atmosphere in these spaces was closely related to that of a fair which attracted multitudes that were not necessarily consumers].⁸³ Markets and social life were embedded in the city's square. It is no coincidence that even today in Mexico City markets are referred to as plazas: the market *is* the plaza. The Plaza Mayor functioned as the city's principal market and social space until the second half of the eighteenth century, when the Bourbon reforms were fully implemented and Viceroy Count of Revillagigedo cleaned the square by removing the Baratillo and the Indian stalls.⁸⁴

Furthermore, marketplaces and public performances were interrelated entities during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They shared the same space and built environment of the

community and who created its distinctive style of life." Brading, *Miners and Merchants*, 105. For a detailed discussion about the Spaniards who dominated colonial trade or the mercantile nobility, see *Ibid.*, 104–14.

⁸⁰ Olvera Ramos, *Los mercados de la Plaza Mayor*, 16.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 15–16.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 16.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ AHDF, Ayuntamiento, *Plaza Mayor*, vol. 3618, exp. 19; Sonia Lombardo de Ruíz, "Construcción y uso social del espacio en la Plaza de la Constitución," in Concurso nacional, *El Zócalo*, 12; Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 23; Olvera Ramos, *Los mercados de la Plaza Mayor*, 13.

Plaza Mayor. Throughout the colonial period and on a regular basis, the plaza housed secular, religious, and popular performances as well as festivities.⁸⁵ For these events, the surrounding buildings and the markets were usually decorated or illuminated, and thus functioned as baroque scenographic settings. Many of these festivities, especially during the Bourbons' royal celebrations, included spectacular baroque scenographies.⁸⁶ For the 1700 oath to Phillip V, an ornamented baroque *tablado* [stage] was built in front of the royal palace with five arches, Solomonic columns, and fine fabrics; during the celebrations of the birth of Ferdinand VI in 1713, an enormous pyramid of food named *El paraíso de la gula* [Gluttony's paradise] was created and eaten; and, similar to the oath to Phillip V, Louis I's oath in 1724 included mascaradas, allegorical floats, and dances.⁸⁷ The most dazzling religious performance in the city and in the plaza was, without a doubt, the annual celebration of Corpus Christi. The procession included a baroque spectacle created by an *enramada* [thatched canopy], plants, flowers, tapestries, giant puppets, and altars decorated with silver and mirrors.⁸⁸ The *enramada* was the natives' most important contribution to the Corpus Christi festival, and each Indian *barrio* was responsible for creating and installing a section.⁸⁹ Natives used plants, flowers, fragrant herbs,

⁸⁵ Other performances in the plaza included: two dedications for the cathedral (1656 and 1667), funerals, and autos da fé. For an overview of different performances in the Plaza Mayor during the colonial period, see Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "Las fiestas novohispanas," 113–49.

⁸⁶ For a description with impressive visual material of the Bourbon royal celebrations, see Guillermo Tovar de Teresa, "La ciudad imaginada: arquitectura efímera y fiestas reales," *Artes de México: centro histórico de la ciudad de México*, no.1 (1988): 34–47. Curcio-Nagy analyses the Hapsburgs' and Bourbons' royal celebrations in different chapters in her book about festivals in colonial Mexico City; see Curcio-Nagy, "The Perfect Vassal" and "Celebrating Apollo," chaps. 2 and 3 in *The Great Festivals*, 41–85.

⁸⁷ Tovar de Teresa, "La ciudad imaginada," 35–38. There are later examples through the Bourbon rule, but I cite only those that occurred during the time frame of this case study. Later royal celebrations include the oath to Ferdinand VI (1748), Charles III (1760), and Charles IV (1789). The most spectacular was the oath to Charles IV, of which the original drawings of the scenographies by architect Ignacio de Castera are extant at the city archives. AHDF, *Historia, Jura y funerales de reyes*, vol. 2282, exp. 21.

⁸⁸ Unlike the royal festivities, Corpus Christi was a popular festival in which different social and racial groups participated. For a detailed discussion and analysis of the celebration of Corpus Christi in colonial Mexico, see Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies," 1–26.

⁸⁹ Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies," 16.

and colorful song-birds in their correspondent sections of the enramada—each part hung from the buildings, forming a series of arches through the city's central streets.⁹⁰

While most of the built environment of the Plaza Mayor had been rebuilt in a classical style with some baroque accents, what really made the plaza a truly baroque space were the highly decorated scenographies with their ideological intentions. The baroque was an artistic style used and developed by autocratic monarchies in Europe and its colonies. Besides being a matter of design, it was an ideological phenomenon that emerged against the background of royal festivities: as Snodin says, "a rhetorical style that aimed to engage the senses, as much through the intellect."⁹¹ In the particular case of La novilísima, elements of baroque scenographies, such as triumphal arches with designs painted and sculpted on them, certainly reflected ideological aims. For example, for the entry of the viceroys into the city, arch designers usually portrayed the viceroy as a hero, the king as a god, and, according to Curcio-Nagy, "their divine actions as symbols or examples of higher moral statements"—all conveyed through emblems and inscriptions.⁹²

Public performances, baroque scenographies, and marketplaces shared the center and were simultaneous events during the seventeen and eighteenth centuries.⁹³ Interestingly, scholars such as Curcio-Nagy and Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru, who study public festivals in colonial Mexico, fail to consider the role of the marketplaces, even though they were part of the celebratory environment and must themselves have attracted a number of audiences.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Snodin, "The Baroque Style," 78.

⁹² Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 22.

⁹³ Studies of European and US theatre have addressed the use of marketplaces as sites of performance. For example, Marvin Carlson discusses how in medieval Europe the marketplace was an important place to use as a theatre. Carlson, *Places of Performance*, 17–19.

⁹⁴ Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*; Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "Las fiestas novohispanas." Alejandro Cañeque devotes one chapter of his book to official celebrations and rituals and briefly mentions the yearly commemoration of the

Conversely, scholars such as Olvera Ramos, María de la Luz Velásquez, and Carmen Yuste, who analyze the complexities and history of the city's main markets, rarely acknowledge the role of public performances in the Plaza Mayor.⁹⁵

In his study *Property and Permissiveness in Bourbon Mexico*, Juan Pedro Viqueira Albán addresses the fact that the city's inhabitants were on the streets not just for transit and merchandise. Social life occurred on the streets and plazas as well as at public festivals and other types of diversions—such as carnival and puppet shows that the Bourbon authorities sought to regulate.⁹⁶ Viqueira Albán, however, does not elaborate on the shared spatiality between different kinds of performances and the marketplaces in the Plaza Mayor. In the baroque Novilísima, performances were not isolated from the everyday activities of the Plaza Mayor, but they were another type of activity. The transformation of the baroque plaza into an empty, clean, and abstract space did not start until the end of the eighteenth century through the urban reforms implemented by Viceroy Count of Revillagigedo. During the first half of the eighteenth century, however, the square was a vibrant social and commercial space used for performances.

The interrelation of the Plaza Mayor's built environment, everyday life, marketplace, and performance is faithfully represented in the mid-eighteenth-century (ca. 1766) genre scene painting, *Plaza Mayor de la Ciudad de México* [Plaza Mayor of Mexico City] (fig. 2.3).⁹⁷ This

conquest. He does not elaborate on the celebration's use of space. Cañeque, "Performing Power," chap. 4 in *The King's Living Image*, 119–55.

⁹⁵ Olvera Ramos, *Los mercados de la Plaza Mayor*; María de la Luz Velásquez, *Evolución de los mercados en la ciudad de México hasta 1850* (México, D.F.: Consejo de la Crónica de la Ciudad de México, 1997); Carmen Yuste, *Comerciantes mexicanos en el siglo XVIII* (México, D.F.: UNAM/Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1991).

⁹⁶ See "Disorder or Street Diversions," chap. 3 in Viqueira Albán, *Property and Permissiveness*, 97–182.

⁹⁷ In the only available analysis of the painting, Manuel Romero de Terreros concludes that although the plaza and markets' scale and proportions are not exact, the depicted scene and its actors are historically accurate. Manuel Romero de Terreros, *La Plaza Mayor de México en el siglo XVIII* (México, D.F.: Imprenta Universitaria, 1946), 1–4. Art historian Manuel Toussaint also argues that "the whole colonial society is here faithfully represented." Toussaint, *Colonial Art in Mexico*, 392. According to the National Museum of History in Mexico City, where the

anonymous oil on canvas illustrates the Plaza Mayor and the Viceroy Marquis de la Croix's first visit to the cathedral. The plaza is painted from the perspective of the royal palace and depicts colonial life in the plaza with fascinating detail and vitality. The three marketplaces are depicted (Puestos de indios in the foreground, Baratillo at the center, and Parián in the background), along with their social hierarchies: from the sumptuous procession of the viceroy on his way to the cathedral, to Indians carrying food supplies, to beggars stealing food.⁹⁸ While the painting is not remarkable in its technique (its scale and perspective are slightly distorted), it expresses in a plausible manner life in the Plaza Mayor during the baroque period.⁹⁹ Because the square's built environment and its markets did not really change during the first half of the eighteenth century, I will continue to cite this painting as a visual reference in my analysis of the 1721 Paseo. The painting is a helpful resource for architectural structures, audiences, participants, and costumes of the bicentennial Paseo because the artist depicted a similar type of parade.

In the next two sections, I analyze how the Plaza Mayor became a royal site of performance during the 1721 Paseo del pendón, and how at the same time it became a potential space for rebellion.

The Plaza Mayor as a Royal Site of Performance

At eight in the morning, on Sunday, August 10, 1721, the members of the city council held an extraordinary session to discuss the viceroy's earlier response (dated August 9) to several

painting is housed, it was executed in 1766. In his historical analysis of the painting, Romero de Terreros deduces that it was painted "around 1768," when the viceroy Marquis de Croix governed. Romero de Terreros, *La Plaza Mayor de México*, 2.

⁹⁸ Toussaint, *Colonial Art in Mexico*, 392.

⁹⁹ Unfortunately, the painting is missing its lower portion, which was a legend with a list of places and descriptions corresponding to the numbers that appear on some buildings. It seems that the painting was mutilated by different owners in Mexico City and London. Romero de Terreros, *La Plaza Mayor de México*, vi.

consultations by the cabildo about the upcoming feast of San Hipólito.¹⁰⁰ The first consideration dealt with the ceremonial protocol performed by the *alférez real* in the church, and the second regarded the site of performance itself. The Viceroy Marquis de Valero stated in his report that although custom dictated that the *alférez* did not sit on a chair after placing the royal banner in the church's presbytery during mass, he would do so from now on.¹⁰¹ While such detail might seem irrelevant, in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Mexico City, Cañeque observes that public protocol among authorities in ceremonies "constituted an essential element in the semiotics of power."¹⁰² Having a chair in a public ritual was a privilege enjoyed by only the viceroy, the bishop, and the *oidores*.¹⁰³ Therefore, by taking a seat during the celebratory mass, the *alférez* would be highlighted and this would clearly state his honorable position. Besides showing the importance of the role of the *regidor*, the royal authorities must have introduced this protocol as a political maneuver that assured the *alférez's* loyalty and participation as the city's representative.¹⁰⁴

Most importantly for this study though, in 1721 vespers and mass would take place not in the traditional church of San Hipólito but in the Plaza Mayor's cathedral, also called La metropolitana [The Metropolitan]. The viceroy argued that the change from the usual venue should occur because the traditional church had deteriorated and was now under construction.¹⁰⁵

He reaffirmed the unsuitability of the church of San Hipólito by stating that it would be too small

¹⁰⁰ The Spanish officials in attendance were: Don Ramón Espiguel de Avila, *caballero del orden de Santiago corregidor* [Knight of the order of Santiago and city governor]; Don Juan de la Peña, *alguacil mayor* [main constable]; Don Juan Manuel de Aguirre y Espinoza, *el conde* [the count] del Freson de la Fuente; Don Juan del Castillo; Don José Movellan; el conde del Valle de Orizaba; Don Antonio Francisco de las Casas y Orellana; and Don José Antonio. AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 668A, 194.

¹⁰¹ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f.23; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 668A, 194–95.

¹⁰² Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 149.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ As Baca Plasencia shows, the honor of being the *alférez real* became also an economic and political burden for the *regidores*. The *regidor* in turn was in charge of the expenses and acted as the city's representative. Thus, since early after the establishment of the *Paseo*, the excuses for absence and illness by the *alférez* to not participate became a regular occurrence. Baca Plasencia, "El paseo del pendón," 97, 100–3.

¹⁰⁵ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f.23; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 668A, 195.

to hold the large number of attendees, which had increased in proportion to the city's population.¹⁰⁶ The viceroy concluded by describing the Paseo's new route for its bicentennial anniversary. The parade would march through Relox, Encarnación, and Santo Domingo streets and enter the cathedral through its main door.¹⁰⁷ Thus, the 1721 Paseo would not travel to the western outskirts of the city but would remain in its center (fig. 2.4).¹⁰⁸

The site's replacement was unique to 1721. This was for practical reasons and also because of the extraordinary symbolism that the year conveyed: the two-hundredth anniversary of the conquest of Tenochtitlán. The grandiosity and the specific route of the bicentennial celebration of conquest should therefore not be taken as an example for later Paseos unless they are centennial anniversaries.¹⁰⁹ According to the extant records of later Paseos, the bicentennial was the only one that stayed in the Plaza Mayor and its surrounding streets.¹¹⁰ Therefore, the 1721 Paseo marked the introduction of the official cult for centenaries in the capital and of their role in preserving, reviving, and creating official perceptions of past events.¹¹¹

By singling out the conquest's bicentennial anniversary and transforming it into a spectacular celebration to take place entirely in the city's center, the viceroy and royal officials appropriated the yearly tradition of the Paseo and imbued it with a new ideology. The Paseo shifted from being a festival that performed the official history of conquest to a festival that performed loyalty and subjection to the crown. In his last statement of the August 10, 1721,

¹⁰⁶ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f.23; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 668A, 195.

¹⁰⁷ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f.23; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 668A, 195.

¹⁰⁸ On a plan of the city drawn in 1807 based on a 1793 topographical survey, I traced in color both the route of the 1721 *Paseo* and the location of the church of San Hipólito. Although created later than the 1721 *Paseo*, I found this map to be a reliable source because it is an original drawn to scale with street names. Moreover, the downtown streets did not change between 1721 and 1793. The buildings and their architectural styles did change but not the street topography. I located this plan in AHDF, *Atlas General DF tomo II*.

¹⁰⁹ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f.23; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, vol. 668A, 195.

¹¹⁰ I looked at the years close to 1721 in the *Actas* as well as the centennial anniversary of conquest, and the only *Paseo* that stood out as large, unique, and celebratory was in 1721.

¹¹¹ Quinault, "The Cult of the Centenary," 303.

session related to the documentation of the festivities, the Secretary Gabriel de Mendieta Rebollo foregrounds the crown's appropriation, manipulation, and reworking of the traditional Paseo:

La ciudad dijo que es preciso y necesario asi para dar cuenta al rey nuestro señor que Dios guarde como para perpetua memoria y que siempre conste de lo que se hiciere y ejecutare en demostracion de juvilo y alegria por el dichoso y feliz cumplimiento de los dos siglos que se cumplen de la conquista de esta ciudad o reinos y de haberse plantado en el santo evangelio y consiguiendose tan dichosa progresos felicidades y aumento de la monarquia de españa mandaba y mando que el presente escribano ponga testimonio de todo lo que viere hiciere y ejecutare asi la vispera como el dia del glorioso martir señor San Hipolito [...]

[The city council said that, in order to provide an account to our lord God and to keep a record for posterity, it is necessary to record the events regarding the festivities of joy and happiness of the successful fulfillment of the two-hundred-year anniversary of the conquest. The feast celebrates the conquest of the city and its kingdoms, the progress and happiness achieved after having planted the holy gospel in this land, and the expansion of the Spanish monarchy. The royal authorities ordered for this scribe to provide testimony of everything that is done on the eve and on the day of the glorious martyr San Hipólito [...]¹¹²

As the secretary conveys in this account, the Spanish crown was to be perceived not just as the savior of pre-conquest natives from paganism but as the reason for the city's "progress and happiness." The crown's subjects should thus be grateful and celebrate the crown's expansion, achieved by conquest, colonization, and evangelization.

The ideology behind such a culture of gratitude derived from the monarchy's justification for conquest as a civilizing mission as well as from the networks of patronage that the crown encouraged. As Cañeque contends, viceregal power "was mobilized, not through the agency of the purely impersonal state, but through client systems and personal ties and loyalties."¹¹³ The viceroy, acting in the name of the king, distributed rewards in the form of posts in the colonial institutions and thus secured personal loyalty. Officials "were obligated to the sovereign by a

¹¹² AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 27; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 196–97.

¹¹³ Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 159. Although Cañeque's study focuses on the seventeenth century, I refer to his political and cultural analysis of the viceroyalty in Mexico City because, as he argues, "the viceregal system created by the Spanish Crown in New Spain would remain unchanged, except for minor adjustments, for almost two hundred years." *Ibid.*, 16.

debt of gratitude."¹¹⁴ Networks of patronage protected and expanded the king's and viceroy's authority.¹¹⁵

As for the rhetoric of progress and civilization that related to the conquered indigenous peoples, the Spaniards defined the Indians as *personas miserables* [wretched beings] whose abilities were like those of young children; therefore, they needed to be protected and guided, otherwise their naïve and barbaric nature would lead them to vice.¹¹⁶ Such bigoted argumentation justified the domination of the natives, and the monarchy was able to support the idea of the conquest itself because, according to them, "the conquest was carried out for the good of the Indians themselves."¹¹⁷ Through distorted and racist discourses of infantilization and wretchedness, the monarchy legitimized its "civilizing" and evangelizing missions. It is important to emphasize that while Indians were seen as loyal and docile subjects protected by the crown, the colonizers exploited them through labor. The way of justifying labor drafts and exploitative practices was through a twisted, self-serving logic: Spaniards were keeping Indians away from pagan practices through correct guidance and conversion. Therefore, natives should show their gratitude through loyalty to the crown. Conquest was to be seen as a good and enriching enterprise not just for the Spanish monarchy but for the Indians as well.

Furthermore, the crown appropriated the conquest's glory from the Spanish soldiers to portray itself as the main reason behind its "enlightening enterprise." The Bourbons rendered conquest as a monarchical accomplishment from which everyone—conquerors, natives, and colonizers—had benefited. Official rituals and artistic practices, such as the bicentennial

¹¹⁴ Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 158.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ While Spaniards in general thought of Indians as wretched persons, it is important to note that there were differences in points of view among religious orders (e.g., Franciscans and Jesuits). Also, by the eighteenth century, the Spaniards had constructed an image of the rural Indian as different from the urban Indian. Wretched like the rural Indian, the urban Indian was also a drunkard and a thief. See "The Political Culture of Colonialism," chap. 6 in Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 185–212.

¹¹⁷ Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 193.

celebration of conquest and the 1764 painting *San Hipólito y las armas mexicanas*, reveal the Bourbon appropriation of conquest. It is worth noting the painting's composition with the characters' placement as well as their actions in relation to the bicentennial's ruling principle of the conquest as a royal achievement (fig. 2.2). In the painting, the royal insignia carried by San Hipólito occupies the most important and central place while conquerors and natives, arranged in symmetrical harmony, worship the city's patron saint. Similarly, in the 1721 Paseo, participants performed allegiance to the crown by appearing as a unified and agreeable entity in the central plaza—all joined together under the empire's insignia.

Indeed, the royal authorities reinvented an almost lost tradition by focusing on the monarchy's "achievements" and its role as head of the metropolis and the colonies. As Hobsbawm writes, the peculiarity of such invented traditions is that "the continuity with it is largely factitious," that is, "they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations."¹¹⁸ The viceroy adapted the Paseo to serve the Bourbon imperial ideology at the same time that it provided the illusion of continuity with the traditional Paseo. Interestingly, the situation to which the royal authorities responded was what Viqueira Albán calls their own "enlightened intolerance" towards the natives and the criollos' increasing political and economic influence.¹¹⁹ The 1721 Paseo then served as a royal political vehicle through which natives and castas had to show their gratitude for being "civilized," and through which criollos were reminded of their secondary place after Spaniards in the social hierarchy.

Royal and city authorities also defined some traditional social practices as disorderly conduct, such as dances and *juegos de pelota* [ball games].¹²⁰ In order to keep the city under the control of its hierarchical social system, the Bourbons passed an excessive number of rules and

¹¹⁸ Hobsbawm, "Introduction," 2.

¹¹⁹ Viqueira Albán, *Property and Permissiveness*, xix.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, xviii–xix.

regulations about social and performative conduct in the city (e.g., street conduct, festivals, carnival, and other celebrations).¹²¹ Thus, from early in the eighteenth century until their overthrow, the Bourbons used public festivals like the Paseo as political vehicles for the performance of loyalty. Public rituals were also necessary so that the viceroy, who acted as "the king's living image," could be seen and thus make the monarch present.¹²² It is important also to acknowledge that 1721 was the initial period in the implementation of the Bourbon laws. Therefore, the social and spatial context of the bicentennial Paseo was not yet fully controlled, organized, and policed as in later public celebrations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Moreover, the decision to use the Plaza Mayor to celebrate the bicentennial was not just a response to the deteriorated state of the San Hipólito Church. It also reflected the Bourbon appropriation of the history of conquest. Throughout the colonial period, the narrative of conquest played a crucial role in the discourse of imperial power.¹²³ The Plaza Mayor, the heart of the new Spanish colony and built atop Tenochtitlán's former ceremonial center, spatially represented the conquest itself. This blending of space and conquest is well exemplified in the seventeenth-century *Biombo de la conquista de México y vista de la ciudad de México (anverso y reverso)* [Folding Screen of the Conquest of Mexico and View of Mexico City (front and back)] housed in the Museum Franz Mayer in Mexico City.¹²⁴ The *Biombo* is made of ten oil-painted canvas leaves, and there are distinct, but spatially related, images on each side. The front

¹²¹ Ibid., xviii.

¹²² I use Alejandro Cañeque's concept of the viceroy as being the "king's living image," which places the role of the viceroy in New Spain's context and analyzes how contemporaries saw and thought of him as the king's surrogate. The viceroy had the same power as the king who appointed him; thus, the viceroy was the king's living image in the colony. Cañeque writes: "By being the monarch's image and alter ego, the viceroy was held to be in possession of all the majesty, power, and authority of the king. Being the king's image ultimately meant that a viceroy was expected to rule following the same political principles and adopt the same behavior as his original." Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 25–26.

¹²³ Schreffler, *The Art of Allegiance*, 4.

¹²⁴ The biombos, or painted folding screens, were created in New Spain and modeled after imported screens from Asia—the Philippines was part of New Spain's viceroyalty. They became popular pictorial objects for interior decoration in New Spain. Ibid.

side depicts eleven vignettes recounting the historical events of the conquest, and the back side reflects an idealized bird's-eye-view of La muy leal y noble ciudad de México (figs. 2.5 and 2.6).¹²⁵ In his pictorial analysis of the *Biombo*, Schreffler discusses how, besides being part of an "imperial field of cultural production," the juxtaposed images "represent a single space at two distinct moments in its history."¹²⁶ The conquest side depicts a representation of different locations of Tenochtitlán, whereas the cityscape side "represents a utopic vision of the place into which it was transformed under the Spanish rule."¹²⁷ Or, as Richard L. Kagan writes: "The two sides of the *biombo* thus worked as one and together offered a view of the city in which the Mexican *urbs* served—quite literally in this instance—as the screen through which the birth of its *civitas* could be seen."¹²⁸ In the 1721 Paseo and similarly on the *Biombo*, the Plaza Mayor was a principal component of the imperial discourse of conquest representing, simultaneously, the site of the 1521 defeat of Tenochtitlán and its present role as the center of Spanish civilization in New Spain.

In 1721, the square's design and built environment concretized the viceroy's role in New Spain. The Plaza Mayor was the most official public space in New Spain, and it evoked an agreeable relation among its institutions. Like the plaza, the viceroy represented what Cañeque describes as the "the sacred center of political authority in New Spain"¹²⁹ and functioned as the head of the colony. The viceroy embodied unity and agreeability among the colonial institutions,

¹²⁵ In his analysis of the painting, historian Richard L. Kagan discusses how the city's view is unrealistic or artificial because the area that it covers from such a close up is too broad. However, it does convey a sense of the city "as a metropolis of truly monumental proportions, with its straight streets, broad squares, and vast array of houses topped in red terracotta tiles." Richard L. Kagan, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World 1493–1793* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 154. The eleven vignettes of the other side of the *biombo* correspond to events that occurred in Tenochtitlán, some of which are: the causeway of Guadalupe (through which Spaniards and Tlaxcaltecas entered Tenochtitlán), the Mexica main temple (which formerly stood in the Plaza Mayor), the Noche triste, the death of Moctezuma, the Spaniards retreating from Tenochtitlán, and Hernán Cortés's brigantines. *Ibid.*, 155.

¹²⁶ Schreffler, *The Art of Allegiance*, 30, 32.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹²⁸ Kagan, *Urban Images*, 156.

¹²⁹ Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 123.

just as the plaza's conveyed architectural harmony among its buildings. Interestingly, such a unified appearance, materialized in the plaza's built environment, was a façade that concealed the constant conflicts regarding the exercising of power among the church, viceroy, cabildo, audiencia, and inquisition.

After the 1721 Paseo's monarchical symbolism, the Plaza Mayor was an obvious choice by the viceroy, because it was used as the main site of performance during other royal celebrations in the city and because he was its key figure. In fact, after the August 10th meeting, when the city's lawyer Don Juan de Soria called for the members of the cabildo to vote on the viceroy's proposal about the change of site of the 1721 Paseo, he foregrounded the oath to the king as the only available reference for the feast of San Hipólito.¹³⁰ In agreement with the viceroy, the city council rendered the Paseo as a royal celebration.

Nevertheless, the viceroy's proposed changes did not pass unchallenged by the cabildo, an example of the usual discordances between the city council and the royal authorities regarding the ownership and control of public celebrations. The Count of Orizaba, who was the *alférez real*—one of the most prestigious figures of the 1721 Paseo—asked the council members to beg the viceroy to keep the celebration in the church of San Hipólito; otherwise the tradition would be severely affected.¹³¹ The count also requested that, if the banner was not to be taken to San Hipólito as had traditionally been done, he be allowed to resign, because the omission would be disloyal from his part.¹³² After the members of the city council voted and approved the changes proposed by the viceroy, Don Jose de Soria announced that the *alférez's* resignation was not admissible and was declined.¹³³ While it is impossible to know if the *alférez* really cared about

¹³⁰ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 23–24; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 195.

¹³¹ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 24–25; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 195–96.

¹³² AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 24–25; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 196.

¹³³ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 26; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 196.

the change of venue, his reference to the church of San Hipólito proves that the site played an extremely important role in the celebration.

Even though we do not know the alférez's real reason for his request, it is possible to arrive at an informed guess. Traditionally, before the Bourbons took power, the Paseo had been a city enterprise and a cause of pride for the cabildo. By organizing its design, controlling expenses, and conducting the alférez's election, the cabildo had been able to exercise some autonomy within New Spain's political structure.¹³⁴ The alférez might have resisted the viceregal changes because these reaffirmed the Bourbon transformation of the city celebration into a royal occasion that glorified the crown. It is also possible that, similar to other regidores in the past, the Count of Orizaba exploited the changes as an opportunity to free himself from the economic and political burden of performing as the alférez real.¹³⁵ Since royal authorities needed to legitimize their reinvention of the Paseo, as well as to show their power over the city council, the alférez's request was denied.¹³⁶

By moving the 1721 celebration to the city's center, the viceroy changed its performative meaning. The bicentennial Paseo did not map the official history of conquest but rather was a display of royal magnificence. In his *Short History of Western Performance Space*, David Wiles makes a useful differentiation between two types of processional spaces—maps and parades—the distinction clearly illustrated in the shift in the 1721 Paseo's use of space.¹³⁷ While the original Paseo conveyed a spatial history through the route of La noche triste, its bicentennial celebration exhibited the viceroyalty as New Spain's imperial image. The traditional Paseo

¹³⁴ Baca Plasencia, "El paseo del pendón," 98.

¹³⁵ For examples of other regidores giving reasons to not participate as the alférez, such as absence from the city, illness, or economic difficulties, see Baca Plasencia, "El paseo del pendón," 100–4.

¹³⁶ AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 26; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 196.

¹³⁷ David Wiles, *A Short History of Western Performance Space* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 64.

articulated space as what Wiles calls "a symbolic *map*," whereas the bicentennial Paseo became a performance that displayed "an ordering of power."¹³⁸ The Marquis de Valero paraded through the city center's baroque built environment as the colony's head, accompanied by representatives of different institutions as well as Indian leaders from Santiago Tlatelolco and San Juan Tenochtitlán.

The sumptuous display of authority in the 1721 Paseo was based on what Cañeque describes as the traditional "geometry of authority" and on the "politics of proximity" of Royal processions.¹³⁹ Similar to the Viceroy Marquis de la Croix's first visit to the cathedral (ca. 1766) depicted in the previously discussed painting *Plaza Mayor de la Ciudad de México*, the Viceroy Marquis de Valero crowned the bicentennial parade by appearing at its end (fig. 2.3). The bicentennial's formation highlighted a hierarchy of importance based upon the participants' proximity to the viceroy. Those closest to the viceroy enjoyed a higher status in the political rank. First in the procession and farthest from Viceroy Marquis de Valero came the Indian leaders and city officials, followed by oidores and royal authorities, and finally, the viceroy with the oldest oidor and the *alférez real* crowned the procession.

Besides the vertical and hierarchical order, the horizontal formation also indicated rank and importance. The right signified superiority over the left; and thus the *alférez real*, the Conde del Valle de Orizaba, carried the banner and marched on the viceroy's left, while the oldest oidor, the Doctor Don Gerónimo de Soria Velazquez y Marquez de Villa Hermosa, marched on the right.¹⁴⁰ Logically, the senior representative of the *audiencia real*, the oldest oidor, was in the most important place relative to the viceroy. The *audiencia* was the highest royal court and

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 123, 136.

¹⁴⁰ AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 28; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 198. On the semiotics of right and left in royal processions in Mexico City, see Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 123.

served as the viceroy's advisory council. Moreover, de Mendieta Rebollo recorded that on August 13, on San Hipólito's day, the indigenous leaders of San Juan Tenochtitlán marched to the right of the city officials and the leaders of Santiago Tlatelolco marched to the left.¹⁴¹ While both parcialidades were equally important during the colonial period, San Juan Tenochtitlán was closer—physically and historically—to the colonial center. The parcialidad of San Juan was the last remaining Indian community of former Tenochtitlán, while Tlatelolco was located outside the Spanish center and used to be a separate community under the Mexicas.¹⁴² After the Spaniards built the colonial city, the four barrios that formed Tenochtitlán gave up part of their territory and surrounded the Spanish center.¹⁴³ These remaining sections became the parcialidad of San Juan Tenochtitlán. The colonial barrios of San Juan were based on the pre-conquest barrios, and their subdivisions have lasted in present day downtown Mexico City.¹⁴⁴

In this way, Indian leaders of the most representative districts of the conquered Mexicas paraded with representatives of their colonizers. Although their position in the official parade was the least important, the indigenous leaders of San Juan and Tlatelolco were for the royal authorities necessary to convey the ideal image of the Bourbon royal parade. The indigenous

¹⁴¹ On vespers day, August 12, just the Indian leaders from Santiago Tlatelolco paraded. On the feast day of San Hipólito, August 13, leaders from Tlatelolco and San Juan Tenochtitlán participated. The following are the Indian leaders from Santiago Tlatelolco: Don José Antonio Navarro, *gobernador* [governor]; Don Antonio Bacilio, *alcalde presidente* [chief magistrate]; Don Francisco de los Angeles, *alcalde juez* [chief judge]; Don Matías de los Angeles and Don Antonio de la Cruz y Guzman, *alcaldes ordinarios* [magistrates]; Don Antonio de la Trinidad y Don Pedro Vicente, *regidores* [aldermen]; Don Diego Cadena y Don Juan Baltazar, *alguaciles mayores* [chiefs constables]; Don Ignacio de Santiago Rosales, Don Pascual de los Reyes and Don Antonio Lorenzo, *gobernadores* [governors]. The following are the Indian leaders from San Juan Tenochtitlán: Don Felipe de Jesús, *gobernador*; Don Roque Ausebio de la Carra, *alcalde presidente*; Don Blas de la Candelaria y Don Juan de Solís, *alcaldes ordinarios*; Don José Francisco, *regidor mayor* [main alderman]; Don Salvador de Reyes and Don Juan Benito, *regidores*; Don Nicolás José, *alguacil mayor* [chief constable]; and other leaders. I added the punctuation and uppercase letters missing from the original manuscript. AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200.

¹⁴² Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule*, 37.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 370.

¹⁴⁴ The barrios are: Santa María Cuepopan (Tlaquechiuhcan), San Sebastián Atzacualco, San Pablo Teopan (Zoquipan), and San Juan Moyotlan. *Ibid.*, 173.

leaders were ordered to intentionally show their allegiance, "happiness," and gratitude to the crown for having been conquered and for being continuously exploited.¹⁴⁵

There is no question that the Bourbons oppressed Indian communities; thus, the so-called indigenous loyalty to the crown in the bicentennial was indeed a constructed performance.

Towards the end of his exalting narration of the 1721 celebratory events, City Council Secretary Gabriel de Mendieta Rebollo acknowledges the indigenous leaders' assistance:

[Y] en reconocimiento lo que esta novilísima ciudad les agrade y estima su lealtad y asistencia con las demostraciones de alegría que demuestran se les dio á entender se les ordenaba y aun el escribano me mando les diese testimonio de su asistencia adorno y lealtad con la que han concurrido con esta celebridad.

[And, this Novilísima city recognizes and appreciates their demonstrations of loyalty in the joyous events. Although it was understood that their attendance was ordered, I testify that their assistance embellished the feast and expressed their loyalty.]¹⁴⁶

The secretary's closing account about the natives' attendance and of their loyalty brings into the foreground the role of the official records in the official fabrication of faithfulness to the crown.

De Mendieta Rebollo's assignment was to chronicle the events as constructed, seen, and interpreted by royal authorities. Besides serving as the celebration's authorized report for the Spanish crown, the document he composed also reveals the need of the royal authorities to fabricate, perform, and record the colony's allegiance.¹⁴⁷

Costumes and colors were also codified, because they expressed political importance and social rank. They contributed to the overall portrayal of an ideal community based on a stable and agreeable hierarchy. Like the royal and city coats' of arms, the dominant colors were red and green. Building upon the costumes' descriptions in city records, it is safe to assume that their

¹⁴⁵ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200–1.

¹⁴⁶ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200–1.

¹⁴⁷ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 27; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 197.

different shapes and styles (according to political role, class, and ethnicity) looked like the ones depicted in the painting *Plaza Mayor* (fig. 2.3, see the painting's lower center, near the viceroy's carriage). These are based on traditional eighteenth-century Spanish clothing. The basic garments for men were breeches, stockings, a ruffled shirt, and a coat. If the wearer's political rank was higher, his clothes were made of richer and finer fabrics. In the case of the oidores, an extant inventory of their suits for the 1793 Paseo matches those portrayed in the painting. The uniform includes stockings woven from black thread, black capes, black hats, and a set of swords with their corresponding belts (fig. 2.3).¹⁴⁸ De Mendieta Rebollo recorded that, in contrast to the European clothing, the native leaders of San Juan were dressed "a su usansa asi de mantas cuadrados como de calzon ancho capa y calzado" [in their traditional dress with squared capes, thick loin clothes, and sandals] and that the leaders of Tlatelolco were "ricamente adornados y vestidos a su usansa" [richly adorned in their usual dress].¹⁴⁹ The contrast of the participants' clothing clearly conveyed their place in the colonial hierarchy.

The official parade displayed the hierarchies of its members; and the chosen route indicated the hierarchy of the center and its most important buildings: the cathedral, royal palace, and cabildo. By traveling one block south and two blocks north, the participants also saw different paths and important landmarks as the procession moved away from the Plaza Mayor (fig. 2.4).¹⁵⁰ After performing the traditional protocols of stopping by for the alférez, parading to the cabildo, and taking the banner oath, the procession proceeded to the royal palace by first traveling through San Bernardo Street behind of the cabildo.¹⁵¹ The contrasting spatial experience—marching through a regular street to then return to the plaza—made the procession's

¹⁴⁸ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 23, f. 4.

¹⁴⁹ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200.

¹⁵⁰ Carlson provides examples in Renaissance and Baroque Europe of the utilization and planning of parades and processions according to significant landmarks and paths. Carlson, *Places of Performance*, 27.

¹⁵¹ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 27–28; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 198.

entrance even more monumental. The first entry to the plaza had to be important since its purpose was to collect the Viceroy Marquis de Valero and the rest of the oidores, all waiting in the palace. The viceroy and oidores then joined the procession on horseback, continued north through Relox Street, passed the cathedral on the way to Encarnacion Street, and turned left. A new vista opened with the baroque church of Santo Domingo enclosing the perspective.¹⁵² Then the parade went back to the cathedral through Santo Domingo Street, on the west side of the plaza, to attend the officiated mass.¹⁵³ Because militaristic music (trumpets and drums) was part of the procession, it is possible to speculate that different tunes were played in order to differentiate each entry into the plaza.

Besides being monumental and symmetrical, the procession's route was a dynamic enterprise because its participants experienced the central streets and the Plaza Mayor as vibrant, animated, social, and changeable spaces. The contrast between the ordered procession and the plaza's busy social environment created by the three markets underscores the fact that although efforts had been made since early in the colonial period to segregate Indians and the plebes, they still occupied the center. Whether Bourbon authorities liked it or not, the marketplace provided a diverse audience for the festivity of conquest.

Later in the day, the plaza along with the cathedral's cemetery became scenographic settings for fireworks, lights, and a mascarada performed by the guilds, "compuesta de mucha gente vestida muy ricamente" [composed of many people richly dressed].¹⁵⁴ As de Mendieta Rebollo recorded, the windows of the cabildo and the markets were decorated on both festival

¹⁵² AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 28; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 198.

¹⁵³ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 28; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 198.

¹⁵⁴ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 28; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 199. The fireworks and mascaradas were originally planned to take place only on vespers. Because of rain, they were interrupted and thus repeated on the day of San Hipólito. AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 201.

days.¹⁵⁵ Although de Mendieta Rebollo does not provide details of the bicentennial mascarada, these events were a popular tradition of guilds and students during colonial times. The participants would dress as historical, mythical, religious, or symbolic characters and perform farces and/or serious sketches.¹⁵⁶ For example, in 1691 there was a curious mascarada in honor of the king's marriage. Its participants departed on horseback from the university dressed as different animals (e.g., lions and eagles), stereotypes (Indians, Turks, Spaniards), and "in an upside down way," that is, wearing feet on their heads and heads on their feet.¹⁵⁷ Another mascarada in 1700 "represent[ed] the world [turned] upside down" by featuring cross-dressed men and women.¹⁵⁸ Soon after the 1721 Paseo, the Bourbon authorities would ban these types of "disorders."

The Plaza Mayor as a Volatile Site of Performance

The remapping of the bicentennial's excursion to the church of San Hipólito constituted a significant shift in the parade's spatial politics. It excluded the periphery, enclosed the center, and had its symbolic weight in the powerful heart of the city. The experience of making a pilgrimage to the shrine of San Hipólito, located outside the Spanish center, was once an essential component of the traditional parade. The old Paseo included the western edge and thus

¹⁵⁵ AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 28; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 199.

¹⁵⁶ On colonial mascaradas in Mexico City with specific examples, see González Obregón, *México viejo*, 249–56.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 255.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 256. It is interesting to note the similarities between these masquerades and French King Louis XIII's ballets (though I was unable to find specific references). Both employed grotesque disguisings such as mixed animals, racial stereotypes, and other exotic characters. In her study about the French ballets, Marie-Françoise Christout mentions that the tendency for the grotesque that Louis XIII liked found expression in Spanish paintings and novels. Thus, since the ballets were staged less than a hundred years earlier, and were connected with the new dynasty, copies of the books might have circulated among the courtiers, even taking them to the colonies. Marie-Françoise Christout, *Le Ballet de Cour au XVII^e siècle* (Genève: Minkoff, 1987), 68. For a study of working designs of the ballet's grotesque expressions, see Margaret M. McGowan, *The Court Ballet of Louis XIII: A Collection of Working Designs for Costumes 1615–33* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1986).

mapped the city as center *and* periphery. This time, even the city patron saint San Hipólito had to go to New Spain's center of power—an act that symbolized loyalty to the crown.

Ironically, the most emblematic example of the bicentennial's centralized politics—its unique religious procession—transformed the center into a volatile and potentially subversive space. Different religions, confraternities, and castas participated in the procession following the mass in the cathedral and brought San Hipólito and the Virgen de los Remedios to the capital's center.¹⁵⁹ The procession's religious and festive character resembled that of Corpus Christi—the largest annual festival of La novilísima. Secretary de Mendieta Rebollo writes that on the saint's feast day, after the royal banner's parade and official mass, all the confraternities and religious orders carried their crosses and presents (except the Jesuits) in a general procession.¹⁶⁰ This procession exited La metropolitana from its side door facing Empedradillo Street, paraded towards the church's southern side, and entered again through the main door.¹⁶¹ The path was covered by an indigenous enramada built especially for the occasion, and there were indigenous traditional dances.¹⁶² The procession included the religious orders of San Benito [Saint Benedict], Nuestra señora de la caridad [our lady of charity], San Francisco [Saint Francis], and San Hipólito.¹⁶³ The priests of the order of San Hipólito carried a highly decorated statue of the

¹⁵⁹ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200.

¹⁶⁰ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 199–200. The secretary Gabriel de Mendieta Rebollo wrote that the city's lawyer Don Juan de Soria took the place of the Jesuits. I can not discern any specific reason for this, except that it was probably a rule of conduct that a member of the city council would stand in for an absentee. Although it is not stated in the manuscripts, the Jesuits' absence must have been related to the Bourbons' distrust of them. The royal authorities considered the religious order threatening to their power as they had their own vast economic holdings. The Jesuits were a target of the monarchy until late in 1767, when Charles III decided to expel the Jesuit order from Spain and overseas. Kandell, *La Capital*, 251–52. Curcio-Nagy writes that guilds also attended the religious procession, but I could not find such reference in the manuscripts. Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 79.

¹⁶¹ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200.

¹⁶² AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200.

¹⁶³ AHDF, Historia, *Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200.

city's patron saint and of the Virgen de los Remedios (figs. 2.7 and 2.8).¹⁶⁴ When arriving at the cathedral's presbytery, the participants worshiped the statue of San Hipólito and placed him in his *sagrario* [side chapel or tabernacle].¹⁶⁵

Curcio-Nagy has observed that Corpus Christi "encouraged integration within the confines of the Spanish system."¹⁶⁶ Similarly, and unlike the traditional Paseo, which was exclusive to Spaniards and criollos, the 1721 bicentennial celebration embodied unity. Different religious orders and the secular clergy came together in the center to worship the city's patron saint, but the action masked the actual hostilities and differences among them. One of the most pointed and contested issues among secular and regular clergy regarded the natives. Franciscans converted and protected the Indians in their monasteries throughout central Mexico, while the clergymen in the capital disparaged them as drunkards and thieves.¹⁶⁷

The question arises: why did Indians participate with their traditional dances and enramada when the Bourbon authorities characterized their performances as, cited by Curcio-Nagy, "a crowd of drunk, miserable naked Indians wearing costumes"?¹⁶⁸ Moreover, and as Curcio-Nagy writes, festivals, "with their unique mixture of sacred and the profane, were right in

¹⁶⁴ I use these two paintings as visual reference because although the depicted processions are in colonial Perú, they provide us with an idea of what the decorated statues on the bicentennial religious procession might have looked like. The first painting, *Corpus Christi Procession*, ca. 1700, is an anonymous oil-on-canvas that depicts a Corpus procession in the square. The second one, *The Images Arrive at the Cathedral*, ca. 1680, is a detailed anonymous representation of different decorated statues of saints and virgins arriving at the cathedral, also in a Corpus celebration. Kagan, *Urban Images*, 182–83. For additional analyses of these paintings, see Carolyn Dean, "Envisioning Corpus Christi," chap. 4 in *Inka Bodies and the Body of Christ: Corpus Christi in Colonial Cuzco* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 63–96.

¹⁶⁵ AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200.

¹⁶⁶ Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies," 3.

¹⁶⁷ By the end of the seventeenth century Spaniards started to construct two different images and stereotypes of the Indian: the urban Indian and the rural Indian. Regarding the construction of the urban Indian, see the 1698 declarations of Juan de Ortega y Montañés, archbishop of Mexico, quoted in Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 211.

¹⁶⁸ Quoted in Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies," 19. Hipólito de Villarroel, *Enfermedades políticas que padece la capital de esta Nueva España en casi todos los cuerpos de que se compone y remedios que se la deben aplicar para su curación si se quiere que sea útil al rey y al público* (México, D.F.: Porrúa, 1979), 188–89

the line of Bourbon fire."¹⁶⁹ Therefore, why did the authorities decide to include this procession and its profane elements in the royal Paseo? Although there is no direct answer to such questions in the extant records, de Mendieta Rebollo does testify that the Indian leaders of Tlatelolco and San Juan were ordered to attend and show their loyalty.¹⁷⁰ It is then safe to conclude that the natives of the religious procession were also ordered to attend the festivities to show allegiance to the crown. Their compulsory participation was linked to the overall performance of subjugation to the crown.

Paradoxically, while the idea behind bringing Indians into the center was to convey their allegiance to the crown, the nature of their participation fractured the intended autocracy and converted the plaza into a volatile and potentially unstable space. De Mendieta Rebollo wrote that when the religious procession adoring San Hipólito exited and entered the cathedral, it paraded under an enramada like the one usually made for Corpus Christi, "que se formo por todo su distrito" [formed throughout the district] and that there were "danzas de pluma como estilo del pais [local feathered dances]."¹⁷¹ The procession's space was similar to the Corpus Christi's—festive, with indigenous elements—and thus capable of stimulating conflict.

As a matter of fact, the 1692 tumulto, when natives and castas revolted against the Viceroy Gaspar de la Cerda Sandoval Silva y Mendoza, *Conde* [Count] de Galve, and burned down the royal palace, took place during the annual Corpus Christi.¹⁷² In the revolt's aftermath, authorities became increasingly afraid of Indians and passed a number of laws intended for their

¹⁶⁹ Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies," 18.

¹⁷⁰ AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200–1.

¹⁷¹ AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de c abildo*, Vol. 668A, 200. It is unclear if the religious procession left the courtyard when the procession circled the cathedral. Because of the size of the procession and because the courtyard was considered an anteroom to the church's nave, I am inclined to believe that it paraded outside the courtyard.

¹⁷² Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*, 136–37; Curcio-Nagy "Giants and Gypsies," 19.

surveillance and segregation.¹⁷³ The indigenous space of the 1721 religious procession related to the 1692 Corpus celebrations by way of their formal similarities and by the revolt's existent traces in the plaza: the palace and the cabildo were still under re-construction. The tumulto's memory was spatially present in the buildings of the Plaza Mayor as well as through the Corpus-like religious procession.

Similar to the bicentennial celebration, the 1695 painting of the Plaza Mayor by Cristóbal de Villalpando reveals the material traces of social revolt and discontent at the same time that it conveys a fictitious society living in peace and harmony in the Plaza Mayor (fig. 2.9). The painting was commissioned by the Conde de Galve to take as a souvenir to Spain. He wanted Villalpando to portray the city in a positive way so that it would show his viceroyalty as prosperous. Even though Villalpando faithfully represented the half-destroyed palace in the painting's background, he painted an exuberant city life in the rest of the composition. The artist indeed had to please the viceroy. This image conveyed something entirely different from the Conde de Galve's faulty record, as he had been responsible for the food shortages that caused the 1692 revolt.¹⁷⁴ Kagan writes of this painting, "A flourishing civitas, peaceful and prosperous—what better image of Mexico City could the viceroy, the object of mob fury only a few years before, take back with him to Spain?"¹⁷⁵ Still, as portrayed by Villalpando and as lived during the bicentennial, the riot remained part of the city's built environment and its collective memory.

In terms of the indigenous artistic participation in the 1721 Paseo, at this point in the colonial period and in the capital, the surviving indigenous forms had been affected by European

¹⁷³ On the consequent prohibition of the sale of pulque (Viceroy Conde de Galve attributed the tumulto to the drunkenness of the plebe and natives), see Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*, 228–29; Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule*, 396. On the effort on Indian segregation and its failure, see Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule*, 377, 84. On surveillance techniques, such as urban demarcations and their policing, see Olvera Ramos, *Los mercados de la Plaza Mayor*, 87–88.

¹⁷⁴ Kagan, *Urban Images*, 160. For a detailed study of the royal palace, see Schreffler, *The Art of Allegiance*, 9–35.

¹⁷⁵ Kagan, *Urban Images*, 162.

practices. Different than the early colonial Indian scenographies which were disjunctive and disruptive of the Spanish city (e.g., the forest in the 1539 civic festival discussed in the previous chapter), the late colonial native constructs were part of the repertoire of accepted indigenous art. Regarding the survival of mixed forms and the altered indigenous practices, James Lockhart reminds us that:

In the early stages, what one typically finds is the preliminary identification of intrusive and indigenous elements, allowing an indigenous concept or practice to operate in a familiar manner under a Spanish-Christian overlay. Over the centuries, stable composite forms and patterns took shape, owing some traits to the donor, some to the other, and some to both. By the late eighteenth century, almost nothing in the entire indigenous cultural ensemble was left untouched, yet at the same time almost everything went back in some form or other to a preconquest antecedent.¹⁷⁶

The Paseo's enramada and danzas de pluma are examples of the mixed forms of the surviving "indigenous cultural ensemble." Indians adopted the enramada, a practice that had Spanish roots in religious processions, as it provided a similar framework for creating pre-conquest artistic constructs made out of natural elements and animals. Since early in the colonial period, the Mexica esthetics of nature had been preserved in the scenographical forests (made out of real plants and animals) they created for evangelical plays and public festivals.¹⁷⁷ The enramada, made out of natural elements, was a central scenographical feature in the Corpus Christi festival. Because de Mendieta Rebollo writes that the Paseo's enramada was similar to the one in the Corpus, it is possible to conclude that the rich and colorful scenographical environment of the bicentennial religious procession must have been equally beautiful and attractive. The danzas de pluma were indeed a pre-conquest practice that survived, but by the seventeenth century they had

¹⁷⁶ Lockhart, *The Nahuas After the Conquest*, 5.

¹⁷⁷ On the Mexica esthetics of using nature, see Inga Clendinnen, *Aztecs: An Interpretation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 213–16.

added Spanish musical instrumentations.¹⁷⁸ It is impossible to know precisely which dance de Mendieta Rebollo refers to, but evidence exists of colonial indigenous dances in the capital with performers wearing feathers in their costumes and headpieces (fig. 2.10).¹⁷⁹ While Lockhart is right to point to the changing of indigenous forms throughout colonial times by mixing with European practices, it is important to emphasize that, in the bicentennial Paseo, forms like the enramada and the danzas de pluma worked as material markers of Indian identity and agency. On the one hand, the compulsory indigenous participation provided performative agency to the natives; on the other hand, it was through their dances, costumes, and artistic constructs that natives were recognizable by the Spaniards and elites as conquered subjects.

The inclusion of the Virgen de los Remedios was another destabilizing point within the Bourbon autocratic cohesion of the bicentennial. The Virgen de los Remedios embodied the friction between city and crown because both entities were fighting over her ownership, her travels to the center, and her meaning. The city council and the Bourbon officials fought over the Remedios image, as the latter sought to capitalize on her popularity.¹⁸⁰ According to colonial apparition stories, Remedios was the first appearance of Mary in Mexico. By the late 1500s she became associated with Spaniards, natives, and African slaves. In the seventeenth century she was considered the main protectress of the city against disasters such as drought, famine, earthquake, and disease.¹⁸¹ Traditionally, the city council sponsored and organized penitential processions and *novenas* (nights or nine days of prayers) to ask Remedios for her intervention

¹⁷⁸ In his analysis of "The Dance of the Emperor Moctezuma," a sort of dance battle involving feathers, Max Harris provides evidence that Spanish instruments were added in such indigenous dances. Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians*, 105.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 105–6. On Mexica featherwork and its religious and symbolic significance, see Clendinnen, *Aztecs*, 216–18.

¹⁸⁰ Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 75–76. For a detailed study of the Virgen de los Remedios in Mexico City, see Curcio-Nagy, "Native Icon to City Protectress," 367–91.

¹⁸¹ Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 75–77; Curcio-Nagy, "Native Icon to City Protectress," 368–73. For native devotion to Remedios and other saints, see Lockhart, *The Nahuas After the Conquest*, 236–37, 243–45.

when the city was in need (e.g., after a natural calamity). In contrast to the traditional solemn processions that brought the virgin to the city from her shrine located in the northern outskirts, the Bourbons started to bring her in for royal festivities as well. Increasingly, royal officials stopped sharing Remedios with the city and kept her in the cathedral after royal events. They claimed her as their personal patroness.¹⁸² After fifty years of tensions between the city officials and royals, in 1750, a decree declared Remedios the royal Virgin and named her La conquistadora [The Conqueror].¹⁸³ The city council then disassociated itself from Remedios and her popularity was substituted by the increasing devotion to the Virgen de Guadalupe [Virgin of Guadalupe].¹⁸⁴ If the 1721 bicentennial performed integration, the Virgen de los Remedios certainly embodied a divisive force.

Interestingly, the Virgin became once again associated with the conquest twenty-nine years after the bicentennial celebration of conquest, a fact that further illuminates her role in the 1721 Paseo. For the royal authorities, Remedios embodied conquest itself (as was later pronounced in the king's decree). In the colonial apparition stories, Remedios played a crucial role during the war of conquest in 1519. Curcio-Nagy writes that:

Apparently Cortés had placed her image in the Aztec Templo Mayor, beseeching her to bring rain. A miracle occurred (she caused it to rain), thereby proving to the Aztec the superiority of the Christian religion over their own, especially the rain deity, Tlaloc. Later, during the Noche Triste, when the Spanish were routed from the city and suffered heavy casualties, Remedios appeared at their side to throw dirt into the eyes of Indian warriors. Thus she became the conquest Virgin, fighting to implement Catholic Spanish rule in Mexico.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² For example, just two years before the bicentennial Paseo, royal officials denied permission to the city council for a procession of Remedios when a drought affected the city, but they brought her in one month later so they could pray for the king. Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 76.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals* 77–78; Curcio-Nagy, "Native Icon to City Protectress," 388.

¹⁸⁵ Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals*, 77.

Besides evoking the memory of the Noche Triste, Remedios represented the triumph of Catholicism over paganism. And unlike the traditional Paseo that mapped the Noche Triste, the 1721 Paseo displayed the conquest through the soon-to-be royal virgin. Conquest and conversion as a royal enterprise were unified through Remedios. However, such simultaneous appropriations of symbols of conquest—the Virgen de los Remedios and the tradition of the Paseo itself—were not entirely an autocratic and cohesive event. The procession that brought Remedios to the cathedral was popular and indigenous. De Mendieta Rebollo recorded that, after the image of San Hipólito was placed in its sagrario, the procession proceeded to place "la milagrosísima señora" [the very miraculous lady] Remedios in her assigned place: "quedando todo el lugar encendido y adornado por comenzarse este día el novenario a la divina señora" [all remaining illuminated and decorated in order to start on that day the novena to the divine lady].¹⁸⁶

If the novena occurred as traditionally done during her visits to the city, the bicentennial celebrations of conquest ended on a solemn and ambiguous note. In her traditional *venidas*, Remedios's big procession to La metropolitana (also similar to the Corpus Christi) included hundreds of natives and confraternities, and the route was covered by indigenous *enramadas*. Remedios would then stay in the cathedral "for nine days of masses, prayers, penitential acts, and songs," Curcio-Nagy reports.¹⁸⁷ It could be that the inclusion of Remedios in the bicentennial represented yet another instance of performing loyalty to the crown, but it could also be that the city procession prayed for her intervention on their behalf against Bourbon absolutism.

Conclusion

¹⁸⁶ AHDF, *Historia, Pendón*, vol. 2277, exp. 5, f. 29; AHDF, *Actas de cabildo*, Vol. 668A, 200.

¹⁸⁷ Curcio-Nagy, "Native Icon to City Protectress," 381.

The 1721 bicentennial commemoration of conquest was an event that both reinvented the tradition of celebrating conquest by transforming it into a performance of allegiance to the Spanish monarchy and also brought into the foreground political, social, religious, and ethnic fractures characteristic of the late colonial period. A close reading and analysis of the extant records in relation to the socio-cultural context of the period reveal that the royal authorities planned the bicentennial carefully and used it as a cultural tool to reaffirm the presence of the royal authority in New Spain. The Bourbon reworking of the tradition of celebrating conquest consisted in constructing a celebration in which representatives of the city's social, religious, and ethnic groups would come together under the imperial emblem to display their loyalty. Ironically, the centralized politics of the celebration gave way to popular and indigenous manifestations that created potentially volatile and unstable spaces in and around the cathedral during the religious procession that carried statues of the city patron San Hipólito and the Virgen de los Remedios. While natives employed their performative agency by constructing Indian scenographies and performing traditional dances, their inclusion was an exploitative act by the royal authorities. The royals capitalized on the natives' assistance in order to convey an imperial and autocratic image.

The idea of restricting the celebration to the Plaza Mayor and its surrounding streets reflected Bourbon politics; however, the plaza was not yet transformed into a clean and ample space devoid of its markets and social life. The Plaza Mayor was a busy and social space that provided the celebration with different audiences and spaces for scenographic decorations. The ordered display of power of the official 1721 parade contrasted with the plaza and its still unfinished built environment. The Plaza Mayor represented the colonial center as well as its

historical past as the site of conquest. Yet, participants and everyday denizens perceived and lived it as an unstable, volatile, and festive public space.

With the coming of independence in 1821, El paseo del pendón would cease to be celebrated and be replaced by the annual celebration of Independence. This celebration also performed and celebrated history, and the new authorities gave particular attention to its centennial celebration. Old traditions were again reinvented for new political purposes. Once again, history, symbols, memories, and rituals were re-worked, re-invented, and re-placed in the urban center of the new country.

Chapter Three

Performing Social and Historical Evolution in the Center: The 1910 Centenario's Gran procesión cívica and Gran desfile histórico

The celebrations to accompany the 1910 Centenario [Centennial], the one-hundred-year anniversary of Mexico's independence from Spain, helped to consolidate Mexico's official version of its history. Of the series of commemorative prints created to celebrate the Centenario, one stands out, not for its uniqueness but for its familiarity (fig. 3.1).¹ The image conveys the way official history and its consequent myths were told and performed in President Porfirio Díaz's regime, which lasted from 1876 to 1911. Accompanied by the allegory of liberty, national heroes and Díaz himself appear inside medallions framing the symbols of the independent nation: the national flag and the Palacio Nacional [National Palace] located in Mexico City's central square, by then known as the Zócalo.² The postcard's linear narrative reveals the

¹ The five commemorative lithographs are available as digital postcards in the government's official website of the 2010 Bicentenario [Bicentennial], the bicentennial celebrations of Mexico's independence from Spain. As part of the Bicentenario's website, the government created a digitalized archive of different historical events, including the 1910 Centenario. While the images are several of the various original sources and descriptions available, it is not clear if they were printed as actual postcards or larger commemorative posters, and if they were displayed or circulated during the festivities. In his recent publication about the 1910 Centenario, Rafael Tovar y de Teresa includes a reproduction of one of the images labeled as a lithograph—located at the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia [National Institute of Anthropology and History]. Rafael Tovar y de Teresa, *El último brindis de Don Porfirio: 1910 los festejos del centenario* (México, D.F.: Taurus, 2010), 85. For the purpose of this introduction, I am solely concerned with the image itself, its historical narrative, and its significance today. Gobierno federal: Bicentenario, "México de mis recuerdos: 1910 fiestas del primer centenario de la independencia de México," <http://www.bicentenario.gob.mx/mexicorecuerdos/> (accessed September 23, 2011).

² From top counterclockwise, the historical figures are: José María Morelos (1765–1815), revolutionary leader of the war of independence after its initiator Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla was executed in 1811; Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla (1753–1811), agitator of the revolt against Spanish rule in 1810; Agustín de Iturbide (1783–1824), general and reconciliatory figure among political and military groups, who proclaimed the achievement of independence in 1821 and the establishment of the Mexican Empire with him as Emperor; Vicente Guerrero (1782–1831), leading general in the war of independence and served briefly as president in 1829; Mariano Matamoros (1770–1814), revolutionary soldier of the war of independence; Nicolás Bravo (1786–1854), politician and soldier who fought in the war of independence and against the U.S. invaders during the Mexican-U.S war (1846–48); Benito Juárez (1806–1872), liberal lawyer instrumental in the separation of church and state, leader of the resistance against the French intervention (1864–67), and two-term president (1858–1864 and 1867–1872); and Porfirio Díaz (1830–1915), soldier who fought on Juárez's side against the conservatives, became general during the French intervention, turned against Juárez, overthrew presidential leader Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada, took the presidency and held it until 1911. Porfirio Díaz was born in Oaxaca to a mestizo family of innkeepers. For an overview of these historical figures and events, see Michael C. Meyer and William H. Beezley, eds., *The Oxford History of Mexico* (Oxford: Oxford

Porfirian historical ideology based on reconciliation and evolutionary progress.³ Historians during the Porfiriato conceived Mexico's image of *orden y progreso* [order and progress] as a synthesis achieved by Díaz after decades of disastrous civil wars and foreign interventions following independence.⁴ Díaz and his ideologues staged their evolutionary version of Mexico's past and present in the spectacular celebrations of the Centenario.⁵ On the eve of September 16th—the Centenario's most important date, as it was the day that the war of independence began—crowds gathered in the Zócalo to celebrate with fireworks and music and to witness civic, historical, and military parades. As in the postcard, the Zócalo, with the Palacio Nacional as its focus, served as the stage for Mexico's historical drama.

The Centenario's commemorative print works as a site for the creation of historical memory. In order to remember Mexico's official history, Mexicans place historical events and celebrations in the Zócalo. Here, I rely on Maurice Halbwachs and Paul Connerton's theories of collective and historical memory. They argue that social memory is sustained through

University Press, 2000), chaps. 9–13; Jonathan Kandell, *La Capital: The Biography of Mexico City* (New York: Random House, 1988), chaps. 11–14. After independence, Mexico City's Plaza Mayor was renamed Plaza de la Constitución [Constitution Square] and became popularly known as Zócalo, a point to which I will later return.

³ In Mexico's historiography, historians and scholars refer to Porfirio Díaz's presidency and dictatorship as the Porfiriato and use the adjective Porfirian to describe the different aspects and figures of his regime. When I assign the adjective Porfirian to a person such as an historian, I refer to that period's historian and not to those who specialize in this period. When I use the term historiography and historiographer, I adhere to the definition of the discipline that focuses on the study of history writing and its methodology, and the historiographer as its specialist. This chapter is a historiographical analysis because I study the performance of history during the Porfiriato.

⁴ Orden y progreso [order and progress] was the slogan of Díaz's regime. Kandell, 353.

⁵ Because the Centenario was Díaz's most important performative event to promote Mexico as a modern and peaceful country, he appointed his most influential men as well as his cabinet members as the celebration's organizers. He also used the extravaganza to instill patriotism among Mexicans. Díaz's closest advisors called themselves *científicos* [scientists]. Influenced by Comte's positivism and Social Darwinism, they claimed that they could guide Mexico's evolution through science and technology. Díaz's cabinet included: Justino Fernández, Secretary of Justice; Justo Sierra, Secretary of Education and Arts; Olegario Molina, Secretary of Employment, Colonization and Industry; Enrique C. Creel, Secretary of State; Leandro Fernández, Secretary of Communications and Public Works; José Ives Limantour, Secretary of Internal Revenue; Gral. Manuel González Cosío, Secretary of Defense. Genaro García, ed., *Crónica oficial de las fiestas del primer centenario de la independencia de México* (México: Talleres del Museo Nacional, 1911), x.

commemorative celebrations, and that we locate memories in social spaces and landmarks.⁶ Díaz's nationalistic celebration was so solid and influential that it has embedded itself in present-day Mexico and in its Zócalo. As historian Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo writes, "hoy lo que esos Porfirianos hicieron, nos guste o no, es lo que los mexicanos saben de memoria, la memoria que cuentan y la memoria que los cuentan" [whether we like it or not, what those Porfirians did, is what Mexicans today know by heart, the memories that they narrate, and the memories that narrate them].⁷

While creating their official version of Mexico's history, Porfirian historians faced the dilemma of constructing the Mexican people's identity. To resolve it, they relied on theories of historical and social evolution and constructed the Mexican people as new individuals. According to Secretary of Education Justo Sierra—the most influential intellectual of the time—Mexicans were neither Spaniards nor Indians but *mestizos*: "the sons of two countries and two races."⁸ The homogenizing social process, known as *mestizaje*, promoted indigenous acculturation and assimilation.⁹ In practice however, Porfirian *mestizaje* was ambivalent. On

⁶ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 169, 175. Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 37.

⁷ Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Historia y celebración; México y sus Centenarios* (México, D.F.: Tusquets, 2009), 46. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

⁸ Justo Sierra, *The Political Evolution of the Mexican People*, trans. Charles Ramsdell (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969), 62; Edmundo O'Gorman, "Introduction," in Sierra, *The Political Evolution*, xvii. The translation of Sierra's book is based on Edmundo O'Gorman's 1948 Spanish edition, published by the National University of Mexico as Volume XII of *Obras completas del Maestro Justo Sierra* (México, D.F., UNAM, 1948). Between 1900 and 1902, Justo Sierra directed a multi-volume and multi-authored work, *México: su evolución social* [Mexico: Its Social Evolution]. Sierra wrote two volumes titled *Historia política* [Political History] and *La era actual* [The Present Period]. They were first edited together as *Evolución política del pueblo mexicano* [The Political Evolution of the Mexican People] by the Colegio de México in 1940. For an introduction on Sierra's work, see Abelardo Villegas, "Prologue," in Justo Sierra, *Evolución política del pueblo Mexicano* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1977), xx.

⁹ I use Alan Knight's historically grounded definition and analysis of *mestizaje*. Knight reminds us that, by the time of Díaz, all Mexicans were equal citizens before the law and that while class now was more important, "ethnic status was far from irrelevant." Knight establishes the historical conceptualizations of *mestizaje*, *indigenismo*, and *indianismo*—all being "non-Indian formulations of the Indian problem" and imposed by the elites. Usually seen as purely racial, *mestizaje* is also a social process of indigenous acculturation and assimilation—of Indians becoming *mestizos*. *Mestizaje* is often considered a post-revolutionary conceptualization, but it was formulated during the Porfiriato. Mainstream *indigenismo* advocates for the integration of natives into Mexican society and uses

the one hand, thinkers fostered the idea of Mexico as a mestizo nation, sought to "perfect" Indians through education, and celebrated the country's pre-Hispanic past. At the same time, authorities applied racist prejudices against contemporary natives, discriminating against them as a backward and isolated peasantry obstructing Mexico's progress.¹⁰ The result was a rhetorical *indigenismo* [indigenism or indigenousness] that, materialized in the Centenario, commemorated and romanticized an indigenous history while it negated Mexico's Indian reality.¹¹

This chapter analyzes the 1910 Centenario as a site-specific event that performed an evolutionary version of Mexico's past and present. Because the Centenario is a cultural artifact through which is possible to understand the legacy of a nation at odds with its indigenous reality, I study it by focusing on the official discourse regarding the place of the indigenous peoples in the construction of Mexico's identity as a modern nation. In September 1910, near the end of his dictatorship, Díaz and his ideologues converted Mexico City into an ideal, modernized city and used it as the supreme commemorative stage. These commemorations included the inauguration of landmarks and monuments; the opening of public works and institutions; history, science, and literature contests; congresses and conferences; receptions and parties; military salutes and civic parades; artistic and scientific exhibitions; and fireworks and illuminations.¹² While Mexico City's Centenario included many events and lasted all September, this chapter concentrates on the Gran procesión cívica [Great Civic Procession] and the Gran desfile histórico [Great

education as its main tool through the rural school system. Indigenismo was institutionalized after the Mexican Revolution (1910–1921). Different from indigenismo, indianismo denies indigenous integration and asserts "the Indian's potential for autonomous development." Alan Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and Indigenismo: Mexico, 1910–1940," in Richard Graham, Thomas E. Skidmore, Aline Helg, and Alan Knight, *The Idea of Race in Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 71–82.

¹⁰ Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City: Space and Nation in the City of the Centenario," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 28, no. 1 (1996): 99–100. David A. Brading, "Manuel Gamio and Official Indigenismo in Mexico," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 7, no. 1 (1988): 75–76.

¹¹ Alan Knight writes how Porfirian thinkers foreshadowed postrevolutionary indigenismo, which saw education as a transformative power. However, Porfirian indigenismo, being more rhetorical than real, "belonged to an old tradition of elite indigenismo, which appealed to Creole nationalist sentiment, but which implied no genuine social reform, no real amelioration of Indian life." Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and Indigenismo," 79.

¹² For a quick overview of the vast number of the different events, see García, *Crónica*, iii–vii.

Historical Parade] (14 and 15 September respectively), because these two pageants performed the Porfirian ideology of Mexico's social and historical evolution and utilized the Zócalo as their main performance site.¹³ I argue that both pageants contributed to solidifying the role of the Zócalo as Mexico's performance site. Mexico's ambivalent identity as a mestizo country is embedded in the Zócalo.

What is the relationship between the performance of an official version of Mexico's past and present and Díaz's modernization of the city? In which ways did the Centenario's scenographies exhibit and disseminate the Porfirian ideology? How can we explain the Centenario's simultaneous intolerance of an indigenous present and glorification of an indigenous past?¹⁴

In order to answer these questions, I start by presenting my position in relation to the recent scholarship on the Centenario. This is followed by a discussion of how the Zócalo became Mexico's national site of performance through the commemorations of Independence. The last sections of the chapter examine the performance of Porfirian ideology, history, and indigenismo in relation to the ways the Zócalo was used during the Centenario's Gran procesión cívica and Gran desfile histórico.

¹³ The Comisión Nacional declared 14, 15, and 16 September as the most important days of celebration. *Memoria de los Trabajos Emprendidos y llevados a cabo por la Comisión n. del centenario de la independencia designada por el presidente de la república el 1o de abril de 1907 para que tomara á su cargo la dirección general de la solemnidad y festejos que se organizaron en el mes de septiembre de 1910, en conmemoración del Primer Centenario de la proclamación de la independencia de México* [Report of the works done by the Commission n. of the Centennial of the Independence designated by the President of the Republic on April 1, 1907, to take charge of the general direction of the solemnity and celebrations organized in the month of September of 1910, in commemoration of the First Centennial of the proclamation of Mexico's Independence] (México: Imprenta del gobierno federal, 1910), 39–40 (hereafter *Memoria*); Archivo General de la Nación [National Archives], AGN GOB, 127–28, Comisión Nacional del Centenario, *Memoria*. Even though I do not concentrate on the military parade of 16 September and other events of the 14th and 15th, I contextualize the Gran procesión cívica and the Gran desfile histórico with other celebratory affairs relevant to my discussion. There are several studies that analyze the Centenario as a whole and describe the full calendar of events and which I will discuss in the next section.

¹⁴ In his article about the Centenario, Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo foregrounds the simultaneous negation of an Indian present and the celebration of an Indian past. However, in this chapter, I analyze this contradiction through the use of the city's center and the celebration's scenographies. Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City," 91–92; 99–101.

The Centenario's Historiography

Historical approaches to the Centenario range from detailed reconstructions of the celebration, to inclusions in larger studies, to analyses from different socio-political and cultural angles. Because of the Centenario's importance and magnitude, its archival trove is massive and ranges from official publications to newspaper accounts to governmental documents.¹⁵ Yet, despite the amount of attention it has received, no one has analyzed the Centenario from a performative and scenographical perspective, as I do in this chapter.

As part of the celebratory events surrounding the 2010 Bicentenario [Bicentennial], the Mexican state supported and promoted several studies of the 1910 celebration. While these projects provide detailed descriptions and sources, they lack any deep critique. For example, the government's official Bicentenario website includes a detailed section about the Centenario with original sources and descriptions, but because it is an official publication, there are no critical studies of the celebration.¹⁶ In his book *El último brindis de Don Porfirio* (2010), Rafael Tovar y de Teresa devotes several chapters to detailing the Centenario's opulent events, yet only briefly mentions the period's political and social characteristics.¹⁷ In the handsome volume,

Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910 (2010), Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez re-publishes

¹⁵ The two official publications of the Centenario are the *Memoria* and García's *Crónica*. Both publications include the celebration's official photographs, now part of the Genaro García Collection at the Benson Library, University of Texas at Austin. In my analysis of the Centenario, I refer to some of these photographs. Newspapers that supported the Porfirian regime and published news related to the Centenario, include *El Imparcial* [The Impartial], *El Debate* [The Debate], and *El Herald* [The Herald]. Magazines and periodicals that published news about artistic and social events of the Centenario, and anything that celebrated the Porfirian elite, include *Arte y Letras* [Art and Letters], *La Semana Ilustrada* [The Week Illustrated], and *El Mundo Ilustrado* [The World Illustrated]. Archives with original documents include AGN (Mexico City), Archivo Histórico del Distrito Federal, AHDF [Historical Archives of Mexico City], Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, SRE [Historical Archive Genaro Estrada, Ministry of Foreign Affairs] (Tlatelolco, Mexico City), and the Genaro García Collection at the Benson Library, University of Texas at Austin.

¹⁶ Gobierno Federal, "México de mis recuerdos," <http://www.bicentenario.gob.mx/mexicorecuerdos/> (accessed August 24, 2011).

¹⁷ Tovar y Teresa includes a short conclusion about the beginnings of the Mexican Revolution, which occurred during and right after the Centenario.

extant photographs of the Centenario, acknowledges that the celebration was designed to serve the Porfirian ideology, and warns us of the bias in the creation of the photographs.¹⁸ He argues that while they serve as records of the events, the photographs' aesthetic principles, such as framing and angles, were carefully chosen to adhere to the official image of peace, order, and progress of the Porfiriato.¹⁹ Even though Cárdenas Gutiérrez's book is mostly a photographic essay, his caveat is relevant for this study, because it underscores the fact that the official records and chronicles of the Centenario, as well as the commemoration itself, were created by Díaz's ideologues in order to promote, celebrate, and aggrandize themselves and the Porfiriato.²⁰ As Tenorio-Trillo writes about celebrations of historical events, "Todo depende de qué, cómo y para qué celebran" [it all depends what, how, and why they celebrate].²¹

The celebration's artifice—a portrayal of Mexico as a peaceful and modern country—becomes especially important when studied as part of larger histories of the Porfiriato and the Mexican Revolution of 1910–1921.²² Traditionally, studies of the Revolution begin with the Centenario and thus highlight the commemoration's great irony: within the same year of the

¹⁸ Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Comemoraciones del Centenario en 1910: Selección fotográfica de la Biblioteca Nettie Benson de la Universidad de Texas en Austin* (México, D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010).

¹⁹ Most of the original photos of the Centenario which Cárdenas Gutiérrez uses in his book are part of the Genaro García Collection at the Benson Library, University of Texas at Austin.

²⁰ The best example is Genaro García's *Crónica*. As Genaro García (the director of the National Museum) writes, the purpose of publishing the *Crónica* was to provide a description of the celebrations and to keep a record for posterity that would portray the great efforts and results of the government and organizers. García, *Crónica*, vii.

²¹ Tenorio-Trillo, *Historia y celebración*, 23.

²² The historiography of the Porfiriato and of the Mexican Revolution is enormous. The following is a partial sample of main studies: Luis González y González, *Alba y ocaso del Porfiriato* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2010); Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo and Aurora Gómez Galvarriato, *El Porfiriato* (México, D.F.: Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, 2006); Enrique Krauze, *Místico de la autoridad: Porfirio Díaz* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987); Moisés González Navarro, *Sociedad y cultura en el porfiriato* (México, D.F.: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994); Ignacio Marván, *La revolución mexicana 1908–1932* (México, D.F.: Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, 2010); Michael J. Gonzales, *The Mexican Revolution 1910–1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002); Jaime E. Rodríguez O., ed., *The Revolutionary Process in Mexico: Essays on Political and Social Change, 1880–1940* (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1990); John M. Hart, *Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); and D.A. Brading, ed., *Caudillo and Peasant in the Mexican Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

extravagant feast, popular and social discontent around the country materialized into the armed conflict of a revolution that eventually forced Díaz into exile.²³ However, as Alan Knight argues, one should be careful in situating the early Revolution in Mexico City, since "it arose in the provinces, established itself in the countryside, and finally conquered an alien and sullen capital."²⁴ When contextualized within the rest of the country, the Centenario and Mexico City appear as Porfirian fabrications disconnected from the nation's social reality.²⁵

Scholars such as Matthew D. Esposito, Michael J. Gonzales, Annick Lempérière, Lucrecia Orensanz, and Tenorio-Trillo provide the richest analyses of the Centenario by acknowledging the celebration's national and urban contexts. In his book *Funerals, Festivals, and Cultural Politics in Porfirian Mexico* (2010), Esposito studies how the Centenario, along with other celebrations such as state funerals and reburials, illustrate Díaz's dependence on memorialism to legitimize his long regime.²⁶ In his article "Imagining Mexico in 1910," Gonzales shows how the Porfirian ideologues seized the Centenario as an opportunity to promote patriotism by associating their political aims with historical memory.²⁷ In Lempérière and Orensanz's study, "Los dos centenarios de la independencia mexicana (1910–1921)", the Porfirian version of Mexico's history as conveyed in the Centenario emerges in contrast to the

²³ Francisco I. Madero, an upper-class hacienda owner from Coahuila in northern Mexico, was the leader of the opposition to Díaz's reelection. He organized an uprising on November 20, 1910, backed by Emiliano Zapata in southern Mexico and Francisco Villa and Pascual Orozco in the north. In May 1911, Díaz went into exile to France as the triumphant rebels advanced on Mexico City. Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution: Porfirian, Liberals and Peasants*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 201–8.

²⁴ Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, 1: 2. Knight's study of the Mexican Revolution is still considered one of the most complete and important among the many histories of the Revolution.

²⁵ Although cities and towns around the country celebrated the Centenario, it was Mexico City's affair. The size and number of events held in the capital greatly exceed the small celebrations around the country. Porfirio Díaz, his cabinet, and the special envoys from other countries did not travel to the interior of the country but stayed in the capital during the celebrations.

²⁶ Matthew D. Esposito, *Funerals, Festivals, and Cultural Politics in Porfirian Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010).

²⁷ Michael J. Gonzales, "Imagining Mexico in 1910: Visions of the *Patria* in the Centennial Celebration in Mexico City," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 39, no. 3 (2007): 495–533.

1921 centennial of the achievement of independence.²⁸ By studying the celebrations as historiographical entities, the authors reveal Porfirian and post-revolutionary historical sensibilities. The first is elitist, temporal, and monumental; the second is anthropological, territorial, and popular.²⁹

In his outstanding study, "1910 Mexico City," Tenorio-Trillo analyzes the shared notions of modernity, cosmopolitanism, and nationalism between Porfirian Mexico City and the Centenario.³⁰ By simultaneously mapping the celebration's events and the capital's urban renovations, Tenorio-Trillo demonstrates how the Centenario embodied the Porfirian ideal city. One of Tenorio-Trillo's most relevant points, however, sums up the official discourse regarding the indigenous peoples: their past was celebrated at the same time that their present conditions were vilified.³¹ Diaz's ideologues categorized the indigenous populations in the capital as inadequate for the portrayal of order and progress to an international audience.³² They therefore sought to whiten the city racially and culturally by passing humiliating proposals regarding the natives' hygiene and appearance.³³ Moreover, as part of the celebrations, intellectuals, politicians, and scientists analyzed what they saw as the "Indian problem." In the 1910 Primer congreso de indianistas [First Congress of Indianists], scholars discussed how to improve the condition of the indigenous populations, which they defined as degraded and underdeveloped.³⁴ Simultaneously, Mexico's pre-Hispanic history was commemorated in the Gran desfile histórico, in the XVII Congreso internacional de americanistas [International Congress of Americanists],

²⁸ Annick Lempérière and Lucrecia Orensanz, "Los dos centenarios de la independencia mexicana (1910–1921): de la historia patria a la antropología cultural," *Historia Mexicana* 45, no. 2 (1995): 318.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 317–21.

³⁰ Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City," 75–104.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 98–100.

³² *Ibid.*, 91.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ García, *Crónica*, 236.

and in the renovation of the Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología [National Museum of Archeology, History, and Ethnology].³⁵

Taking Tenorio-Trillo's study as my point of departure, I contribute to the Centenario's scholarship by studying the role of the Zócalo as its main performance site; by exploring the celebration's scenographies as displays of official history, patriotism, mestizaje, and indigenismo; and by concentrating on the discriminatory discourse regarding the natives. In the process, I analyze how the Porfirian historical discourse—so crucial in the creation of Mexico's national identity—was visually and spatially performed in the Zócalo and its surrounding streets. The Centenario shaped Mexico City as the material evidence of order and progress. An analysis of the city reveals that Porfirian urban practices perpetuated segregation and discrimination between classes and ethnicities, and thus affected everyday life as well as the city of the Centenario.

The Zócalo as Mexico's National Site of Performance

Mexico City's central square became the country's national site of performance with the establishment of the commemorations of Independence every September 16th—Mexico's most important public festival. After Mexico gained its independence in 1821, Independence Day worked as the main celebration through which political groups debated and staged Mexico's history and identity. As William H. Beezley and David E. Lorey note, the celebrations foregrounded the "tensions that plagued society for a century after the break with Spain": the overall political instability; the excessive authority of the military and the Church; the conflict

³⁵ García, *Crónica*, 138–41; 227–31; 268–69. The Congreso internacional de americanistas included a visit to the pre-Hispanic ruins in Teotihuacan and a banquet on the archeological site.

between liberals and conservatives; and the creation of a nation.³⁶ As rulers codified the celebration, they transformed the Zócalo into the national commemorative center. However, it was during the last years of colonial rule that the plaza went through important physical changes that contributed to its modernization. In this section, I trace the relationship between the creation of the celebrations of Independence and the Zócalo's material and symbolic changes through the end of the colonial period to the Porfiriato.

During the late-eighteenth-century reign of the Bourbons, the Zócalo was transformed from the city's main commercial space into the nation's ceremonial center. Because of this shift, authorities carefully controlled the square's use and appearance. By the end of the colonial period, the Bourbons had "normalized" the square by establishing modern urban reforms, adopting French neoclassicism, and transforming it into a space for royal commemorations. Through autocratic political rule (and inspired by the Enlightenment principles of beauty, order, and health), the Bourbons took control of the city's administration, appropriated the Church's rents, divided the city into four policed quarters, and regulated public spaces and public celebrations.³⁷ Through the establishment of the Real Academia de las tres nobles artes de San Carlos [Royal Academy of the Three Noble Arts of Saint Charles] in 1781, the Bourbons destroyed churches and palaces and supported architectural innovations of classical austerity.³⁸

³⁶ William H. Beezley and David E. Lorey, "Introduction: The Functions of Patriotic Ceremony in Mexico," in *¡Viva Mexico! ¡Viva la Independencia! Celebrations of September 16*, ed. William H. Beezley and David E. Lorey (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2001), xvi.

³⁷ Sonia Lombardo de Ruíz, "Construcción y uso social del espacio en la Plaza de la Constitución," in *El Zócalo: esquema histórico*, ed. Concurso nacional para la rehabilitación de la Plaza de la Constitución (México, D.F.: Trilce Ediciones, 1998), 12. The Bourbons consistently confronted the church and the religious orders through various laws and actions against them. For example, in 1749 the Bourbon authorities determined that the parishes were going to be part of the secular clergy, and in 1767 they expelled the Jesuits. Manuel Sánchez de Carmona, "Desarrollo urbano y tendencias arquitectónicas," in *El corazón de una nación independiente*, ed. Isabel Tovar de Arechederra and Magdalena Más (México, D.F.: Departamento del Distrito Federal, 1994), 21.

³⁸ Barbara A. Tenenbaum, "Streetwise History: The Paseo de la Reforma and the Porfirian State, 1876–1910," in *Rituals of Rule, Rituals of Resistance: Public Celebrations and Popular Culture in Mexico*, eds. William H. Beezley, Cheryl English Martin, and William E. French (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1994), 128. For a brief description of the Real Academia in Mexico City, its structure, and its neoclassical aesthetic principles based on the

In order to celebrate the oath to King Charles IV in 1789, the new Viceroy Juan Vicente Güemes Pacheco Padilla y Horcasitas, Second Count of Revillagigedo, cleaned and beautified the Plaza Mayor. He ordered the removal of garbage, market stalls, the gallows, the column of Philip IV, and the Cathedral's atrium along with its cemetery and fence.³⁹ After sanitizing the square, Revillagigedo used it for the display of ephemeral neoclassic scenographies designed by Ignacio Castera (fig. 3.2).⁴⁰ Thus, prompted by the royal commemoration, the viceroy symbolically gave the plaza to the king.⁴¹ Revillagigedo continued with his embellishment project of the plaza. He provided it with better lighting, placed four fountains of classical style on each corner, and evenly paved it.⁴² The now famous Piedra del sol [Stone of the Sun] and the enormous statue of the Mexica Mother Goddess Coatlicue were discovered during Revillagigedo's resurfacing of the

European Enlightenment, see Jaime Cuadriello, "Los umbrales de la nación y la modernidad de sus artes: criollismo, ilustración y academia," in *Hacia otra historia del arte en México: de la estructuración colonial a la exigencia nacional (1780–1860)*, ed. Esther Acevedo (México, D.F.: CONACULTA, 2001), 1:24–29.

³⁹ The *Puestos de indios* [Indians' stalls] and the *Baratillo* [low-priced products] stalls were relocated to the adjacent Plaza del Voldador. The *Parián* where imported goods were sold remained in its permanent building in the Plaza Mayor. In order to provide a better view of the cathedral, Revillagigedo eliminated the church's atrium and replaced its wall with a railing, creating a recreational space, later known as *paseo de las cadenas* [railing walk]. For details on Revillagigedo's material changes to the plaza, see Lombardo de Ruíz, 12–13; Concepción Amerlinck A. y Raúl Delgado Lamas, "Cronología mínima," in Concurso nacional, *El Zócalo*, 23; Anthinea Blanco Fenochio and Reed Dillingham, *La plaza Mexicana: escenario de la vida pública y espacio simbólico de la ciudad* (México, D.F.: UNAM, 2002), 42–44; Annick Lempérière, "La ciudad de México, 1780–1860: del espacio barroco al espacio republicano," in Acevedo, *Hacia otra historia del arte en México*, 1:151–53; and, Sánchez de Carmona, 23.

⁴⁰ Architect Ignacio Castera (ca. 1750–1811) became Mexico City's official urbanist and architect under Viceroy Revillagigedo. In 1793 Castera created the city's *plano regulador* [regulating plan], in which he expanded the grid of the original Spanish center towards the indigenous neighborhoods. He designed the scenographies for the oath to Charles IV, which included stages, triumphal arches, and perspectives to cover buildings. The original sketches of the triumphal arches and stages (six are extant out of eight) along with descriptions of his project of the celebrations are located in AHDF, *Historia, Juras y Funerales de Reyes*, vol. 2282, exp. 21. For a description of Castera's urban and scenographical work, including reproductions of Castera's sketches for the royal festivities, see Guillermo Tovar de Teresa, "La ciudad imaginada: arquitectura efímera y fiestas reales," *Artes de México: centro histórico de la ciudad de México*, no.1 (1988): 38–47; and Eloísa Uribe, *Tolsá: hombre de la Ilustración* (México, D.F.: INBA, 1990), 58–61.

⁴¹ Lombardo de Ruíz, 12.

⁴² The *acequia real* [royal channel], one of the surviving Mexica channels on the south side of the plaza, was covered when paving the square. Lombardo de Ruíz, 12; Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 23. The original records of the material changes of the Plaza Mayor from 1789 to 1793 are located in AHDF, *Plaza Mayor*, vol. 3618, exp. 19.

plaza (figs. 3.3, 3.4).⁴³ As Archeologist Eduardo Matos Moctezuma states, besides marking the "beginning of a renewal of interest in indigenous societies," these discoveries were "used as symbols of opposition to Spanish rule."⁴⁴ Revillagigedo's successor, Miguel de la Grúa Talamanca y Branciforte, Marquis of Branciforte, continued with the square's reforms and in 1796 commissioned Academy Architect Manuel Tolsá to build an equestrian statue of Charles IV, today known as El Caballito [The little horse].⁴⁵ Architect Antonio González Velázquez created an elliptical rotunda on the southeast corner of the Plaza Mayor with four gates to encircle Tolsá's statue.⁴⁶ Tolsá harmonized the plaza in the neoclassical style by completing the cathedral's second group of towers, its dome, and its façade with a central clock, banisters, and vases (fig. 3.5).⁴⁷ The Bourbon urban reforms ended in 1810 with the beginning of the war of independence. Thus, the city, with the exception of the Plaza Mayor and other buildings in the center, retained some of its baroque character.⁴⁸

The war of independence occurred in two phases. At first, Mexico City's criollos and Spaniards repressed Indians and mestizos revolting in the countryside; then, criollos threw off

⁴³ Coatlicue was found on August 13, 1790, and the Sun Stone on December 17th that same year. The Sun Stone was placed by the Cathedral's west tower and Coatlicue was moved to the University of Mexico. The university professors, who at the time were Dominicans, buried Coatlicue under a corridor at the university so that the statue would not be identified with the independence movement. When Humboldt visited Mexico City in 1802 as part of his research trip to the Americas, he asked the bishop of Monterrey to exhume Coatlicue so that he could examine it. Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, "The Templo Mayor of Tenochtitlan: History and Interpretation," in Johanna Broda, David Carrasco, and Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, *The Great Temple of Tenochtitlán: Center and Periphery in the Aztec World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 18–20.

⁴⁴ Matos Moctezuma, "The Templo Mayor," 20.

⁴⁵ Manuel Tolsá (1757–1816), Spanish born architect and sculptor, introduced Neoclassicism to Mexico City. He was member and director of the Academy of San Carlos. He is Mexico's most celebrated neoclassic architect. For a study of Tolsá's life and work, see Uribe's book. The sculpture was first made in wood with a bronze coloring. The bronze version was not finished until 1802.

⁴⁶ Uribe, 62–64. Tolsá's equestrian has changed places throughout history. It was removed from the plaza after independence and placed in the university. Later, it stood in a roundabout at the intersection of Reforma and Bucareli Avenues. Its present location is in front of the Museo Nacional de Arte [National Museum of Art] on Tacuba Street and overlooking Tolsá's building Palacio de Minería [Palace of Mining].

⁴⁷ Tolsá's changes were realized over a period of twenty years (1796–1816). Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 23–25.

⁴⁸ Tenenbaum, 128; Annick Lempérière, "La ciudad de México," in Acevedo, *Hacia otra historia del arte en México*, 1:153–54.

Spanish rule after their interests were affected by Spanish liberal reforms.⁴⁹ While viceregal power was debated in Mexico City in 1808 during the French occupation of Spain, the criollo priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla began to meet with other criollo plotters in Guanajuato and Querétaro (central Mexico). Hidalgo obtained the support of Indians and mestizos, who saw the clergy as their religious guides. In 1810 Hidalgo's plot was discovered, and on the morning of September 16 the priest rang the bell of his parish church in the village of Dolores (east of Guanajuato) in a call to his followers to fight for freedom and justice. Hidalgo's initial act of insurrection, later known as *el grito* [the shout], passed into Mexican history as one of the country's foundational myths.⁵⁰ Jonathan Kandell reminds us that Hidalgo's appeal to the masses was threefold: "the gachupines [Spaniards] would be chased out of Mexico; all tribute would be abolished; and the cult of the Virgin of Guadalupe would reign supreme."⁵¹ After the Bourbons claimed the popular Marian image *Virgen de los Remedios* [Virgin of the Remedies] as their personal patroness, the Indians and mestizos' devotion to the *Virgen de Guadalupe* increased.⁵² Guadalupe is the Marian image that the Spanish evangelists introduced as a syncretic version of *Tonantzin* (a Mexica or Aztec goddess) and the Virgin Mary—she came to be known as *La virgen mestiza* [The mestiza virgin].⁵³ Hidalgo and the rebel leaders adopted the Virgin of Guadalupe as their banner, and the war for independence would be referred to as the war of the

⁴⁹ Kandell, 266.

⁵⁰ Regarding the adoption of this event by popular tradition, see Isabel Fernández Tejedo and Carmen Nava Nava, "Images of Independence in the Nineteenth Century: The *Grito de Dolores*, History and Myth," in Beezley and Lorey, *¡Viva Mexico!*, 1–11.

⁵¹ Kandell, 273. *Gachupín* is a derogatory term for Spaniard that was introduced during colonial times.

⁵² For a description about the tensions over the ownership of the *Virgen de los Remedios* during the colonial period and its annual celebration, see this dissertation's second chapter.

⁵³ There are numerous studies about the myth of Guadalupe's apparition, her use and appropriation in Mexican history, and religious, performative and artistic representations. Regarding space and performance in the processions of the Guadalupe, see Elaine Peña, *Performing Piety: Making Space Sacred with the Virgin of Guadalupe*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). Other studies include: John F. Moffitt, *Our Lady of Guadalupe: The Painting, The Legend, and The Reality* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2006); Margarita Zires, "Los mitos de la Virgen de Guadalupe: Su proceso de construcción y reinterpretación en el México pasado y contemporáneo," *Mexican Studies / Estudios Mexicanos* 10, no. 2 (1994): 281–313; and, Rafael Aguayo Spencer, *La virgen de Guadalupe en la historia de México* (México, D.F.: Librería de Porrúa, 1971).

two virgins: Guadalupe (the rebels' virgin) against Remedios (the colonialists' virgin). After Hidalgo was captured and sentenced to death in 1811, the royal government no longer confronted disorderly masses of rebels but bands of guerrillas led by another priest, José María Morelos y Pavón.⁵⁴ Morelos fought the royal forces for five years until he was executed in 1815.

Initially, celebrations of independence were staged in the provinces. In 1812 Ignacio López Rayón, leader of the revolutionary government in Michoacán (central Mexico), proposed that the 16th of September be solemnized "since it is the day proclaiming our joyful independence."⁵⁵ The first commemoration took place that same year and it included simple military, religious, and civic ceremonies. There were decorations and illumination on the streets on the night of September 15th, a mass was celebrated on the morning of the 16th (with blasts of gunfire heard during the service), followed by military bands.⁵⁶

During the war's first phase, Mexico City remained loyal to the government because criollo and Spanish elites dominated the capital, but as soon as the new Spanish liberal regime announced reforms in the colonies in 1820, criollos embraced independence. The reforms included the end of the colonists' hereditary entitlement to their estates as well as the abolition of oppressive labor laws.⁵⁷ It is important to mention that while Spain was under French occupation (1808–1814), a regency established in Cádiz claimed governance of the country and published Spain's first liberal constitution in 1812. In 1813, Mexico City's central square was officially renamed Plaza de la Constitución [Constitution Square], after Spain's new constitution.⁵⁸ In 1821, under the leadership of criollo soldier Agustín de Iturbide, criollos

⁵⁴ José María Morelos y Pavón (1765–1815) was a mestizo who never claimed to be a criollo even though his mestizo father was "reclassified as white after repeatedly petitioning the courts." Kandell, 277.

⁵⁵ Quoted in Fernández Tejedro and Nava Nava, 15.

⁵⁶ Fernández Tejedro and Nava Nava, 15–16.

⁵⁷ Kandell, 285.

⁵⁸ Lombardo de Ruíz, 13; Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 25. For a detailed study of the relationship between the Spanish Constitution of Cádiz, its publication in the Americas, and its influence in the former Spanish colonies

united with the insurgents in the provinces and signed the proposal for independence.⁵⁹ On September 27th of that same year, Iturbide, Vicente Guerrero, and their independent army entered Mexico City. On the next day, the Mexican Empire's government was installed.⁶⁰ In 1822, Iturbide proclaimed himself Agustín I, the first emperor of the new Mexican Nation. Even though Spanish rule was overthrown and new monuments replaced colonial symbols—the equestrian statue of Charles IV, for example, was covered by a temporary pavilion—little changed. The criollo elites, who took over the country, protected their political and economic interests, and did not propose any significant social changes.

During the next three decades, the new country's situation was chaotic: generals fought for power, conservative and liberal factions clashed, and foreign intervention became a real threat. Conservatives were religious, advocated for a centralized government, and supported a strong army. Liberals wanted to share power with the provinces, called for the expropriation of the Church's estates, and argued for a small army of volunteers.⁶¹ The new nation suffered through forty-two changes of government between 1821 and 1855 while, as Kandell observes, "the presidency slipped from the hands of one general to another,"⁶² and the country endured the United States' invasion during the Mexican–US war (1846–48). In the war against the US, Mexico had nine presidents, ten war ministers, twenty-three finance ministers, fourteen foreign ministers, and nineteen interior ministers and lost half of its national territory (present-day Texas,

in Latin America, see Ivana Frasquet, "Cádiz en América: Liberalismo y Constitución," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 20, no. 1 (2004): 21–46.

⁵⁹ The proposal is known as the Plan de Iguala [Iguala's plan] after the southern Mexican city where it was signed by Iturbide and Vicente Guerrero, a soldier survivor from the Morelos' movement. The plan had the support of the rebels and of the loyalists (criollos) alike. The most important points of the plan were: Mexico would be an independent nation; Catholicism would be the nation's religion; and the caste system and slavery would be abolished. Kandell, 288.

⁶⁰ For a description of Iturbide and Guerrero's triumphal entry, see Fernández Tejedó and Nava Nava, 19–21.

⁶¹ Kandell, 319.

⁶² *Ibid.*

New Mexico, Arizona, and California).⁶³ One general, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, took power and was president eleven times—yet never completed a single term.⁶⁴

As the country struggled to preserve its sovereignty, the material changes politicians conceded to the capital's square were symbolic and nationalistic. In 1824, the equestrian statue of Charles IV was removed from the square. After losing half of the country's territory to the US in 1848, President Santa Anna, in an attempt to advance nationalism, dedicated the plaza to the heroes of independence. He demolished the Parián market, the last remnant of the colonial period, and commissioned Lorenzo de la Hidalga to design a commemorative column for the center of the square.⁶⁵ In the end, only the base of the monument was built—thus the plaza became popularly known as the Zócalo [base of a column] (fig. 3.6).⁶⁶ It is also important to note that, in 1824, Mexico City became officially named the Distrito Federal [Federal District], the seat of the country's federal powers.⁶⁷

The establishment of an official celebration of independence was a fragile enterprise reflecting the country's fractured political landscape. Initially, the Junta patriótica [Patriotic League] established Hidalgo's 16th of September grito as Independence Day.⁶⁸ However, liberals and conservatives fought over the significance of the date. The liberals prioritized September 16th because it symbolized the first step towards the removal of the colonialist order. The

⁶³ Esposito, 2.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Lombardo de Ruíz, 13; Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 25; Annick Lempérière, "La ciudad de México," in Acevedo, *Hacia otra historia del arte en México*, 1:155–57, 162–63.

⁶⁶ Lombardo de Ruíz, 13; Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 25. For details about the monument and about how the name of Zócalo became popularly adopted and used to refer to central squares in different cities around the country, see Anthinea Blanco Fenochio y Reed Dillingham, *La plaza Mexicana: escenario de la vida pública y espacio simbólico de la ciudad* (México, D.F.: UNAM, 2002), 92.

⁶⁷ Laura Pérez Rosales, "La organización de una gran capital: el gobierno de la ciudad de México entre 1824 y 1928," in *El corazón de una nación independiente*, ed. Isabel Tovar de Arechederra and Magdalena Más (México, D.F.: Departamento del Distrito Federal, 1994), 86–88.

⁶⁸ The Junta patriótica was an association of Mexico City's residents created in 1825 that organized events and festivities to celebrate Independence. Other Juntas were encouraged and created in towns and cities around the country. The association lasted from the years between independence and the Reform (1850s).

conservatives favored September 27th because Iturbide's entry marked the achievement of independence after eleven years of revolt. The Patriotic League then included both dates in the calendar, but depending on the type of government (liberal or conservative), the holiday shifted from the 16th to the 27th.⁶⁹

In 1823 the League created the first program outlining the celebratory events in the capital on September 16th and its eve.⁷⁰ On September 15th at eleven o'clock at night, bells and firecrackers announced el grito. On the 16th of that same year and during the celebrations, a procession with a military band marched from the City Council to a platform in front of the National Palace. An official speech took place during which, as Isabel Fernández Tejedo and Carmen Nava Nava write, the president freed "those slaves capable of redeeming themselves."⁷¹ The afternoon included dances, concerts, and allegorical tableaux in Alameda Park, located on the downtown's western edge. The evening's activities ended with fireworks in the sky, bands in the square, and shows in the theatres.⁷²

Even though the celebration's basic elements quickly became tradition throughout subsequent years, the program usually varied. Leaders seeking to show their power emphasized the celebration's military character through the use of music, gunshots, and salutes.⁷³ The egos and personalities of the presidents also played a role in the creation of the national holidays. For

⁶⁹ For an study about the Junta patriótica and the debate over the dates to celebrate independence, see Michael Costeloe, "The Junta Patriótica and the Celebration of Independence in Mexico City, 1825–1855," in Beezley and Lorey, *¡Viva Mexico!*, 43–75.

⁷⁰ The 1823 program is transcribed in Fernández Tejedo and Nava Nava., 27.

⁷¹ Fernández Tejedo and Nava Nava, 27.

⁷² Ibid; Miguel Ángel Vásquez Meléndez, *Fiesta y teatro en la ciudad de México (1750–1910): dos ensayos* (México, D.F.: CONACULTA, INBA, 2003), 281. As the century advanced, playwrights wrote plays based on historical events and on patriotic themes. See for example: *El abrazo de Acatempan o el primer día de la bandera nacional* [The Embrace of Acatempan or The First Day of the National Flag] (1861) by Vicente Riva Palacio and Juan A. Mateos, *El sitio de Zaragoza* [The Siege of Zaragoza] (1867) by Antonio Hurtado and Gaspar Núñez de Acre, and *Los hijos de la patria* [The Children of the Nation] (1873) by Joaquín Villalobos. For a chart that includes plays, operas, and patriotic events performed on September 16 from 1824 to 1902 in the city's different theatres, see *ibid.*, 282–86.

⁷³ Vásquez Meléndez, 299–304. For an example of a program (showing the militaristic preponderance) of the 1845 commemorative events on September 15 and 16, see *ibid.*, 300.

example, President Santa Anna insisted that September 11th be added to the celebrations, because on that day in 1829 he had defeated a Spanish force sent by Fernando VII in an attempt to reconquer his past colony.⁷⁴ Also during Santa Anna's presidencies, on the night of September 15th celebrations were held in private enclosed spaces such as in the Teatro de Santa Anna [Santa Anna's Theatre], where the national anthem debuted in 1854 (fig. 3.7).⁷⁵

With the coming of the liberals and Benito Juárez—Mexico's only Indian president—into power in the 1850s, a new impulse for urban renovation emerged, and the transformation of the ecclesiastical city into a secular one continued.⁷⁶ In 1857, the official separation of church and state was declared in the new constitution and its Reform laws. The new laws dispossessed the church of any real estate as well as the Indians of their communal lands, thus inciting the armed conflict between liberals and conservatives known as the Guerra de Reforma [War of Reform] (1857–61).⁷⁷ Several of the oldest and most important baroque convents, such as the San Francisco Convent, were destroyed to make way for new streets.⁷⁸ Others were appropriated by the state or sold for commercial use.⁷⁹ Backed by Mexican conservatives, the French invaded Mexico in 1862, and Napoleon III established the Second Mexican Empire with Archduke

⁷⁴ Costeloe, 46. General Antonio López de Santa Anna (1794–1876) was president for eleven non-consecutive times in a period of twenty-two years (1833–55).

⁷⁵ Verónica Zárate Toscano, "San Angel as the Site of National Festivals in the 1860s," in Beezley and Lorey, *¡Viva Mexico!*, 96.

⁷⁶ Benito Juárez (1806–1872) was born in the village of Guelatao in the southern state of Oaxaca. His parents were Zapotec Indians. Kandell, 327.

⁷⁷ Sánchez de Carmona, 31. The Guerra de Reforma was an armed conflict between liberals and conservatives that was ignited by the passage of the 1857 Constitution and its Reform Laws. Then minister of justice Benito Juárez was crucial in enforcing the most controversial laws: Ley Juárez [Juárez Law], which diminished the rights of officers and clergymen to be tried exclusively by military and ecclesiastical courts; Ley Lerdo [Lerdo Law], which ordered the Church to dispose of itself of its real estate, except the buildings of worship, and removed the Indian communal tenure of lands enforcing individual ownership; and, Ley Iglesias [Church Law], which prohibited the clergy from charging excessively for the sacraments, thus, making marriages, baptisms, and funerals within the reach of the poor. Kandell, 328–30. On the social and land reform resulting from the Reforma, see D.A. Brading, "Social Darwinism and Romantic Idealism: Andrés Molina Enríquez and José Vasconcelos in the Mexican Revolution," in *Prophecy and Myth in Mexican History* (Cambridge, UK: Centre of Latin American Studies, University of Cambridge, 1984), 68.

⁷⁸ Lempérière, "La ciudad de México," 163.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Ferdinand Maximilian of Austria on its throne as Maximilian I of Mexico (1864–67).⁸⁰ Arriving in the capital, Maximilian and his wife Carlota were disappointed by the city's look and introduced gardens, parks, and urban decorations in a Parisian style.⁸¹ They planted a number of trees and other flora in the Zócalo (fig. 3.8).⁸² In honor of his wife, Maximilian built an avenue, named Calzada de la emperatriz [Avenue of the Empress], which ran from their residential castle in Chapultepec, located on the western border of the city, to the Palacio Nacional in the Zócalo.⁸³ Still considered the symbolic center, the Zócalo became the eastern limit of a city that was about to develop in imitation of Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann's renovation of Paris. It is ironic that Maximilian was the ruler who abolished September 27th to celebrate independence, as it was the date traditionally supported by monarchists. Apparently, Maximilian wanted to distance himself from the failed first Emperor Agustín Iturbide and openly expressed his admiration for Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla by celebrating el grito in the city of Dolores.⁸⁴

In 1865 Napoleon III, under diplomatic pressure from Washington, informed Maximilian of his plans of withdrawal from Mexico.⁸⁵ After Carlota's pleas for her husband failed, Juárez reached the capital's vicinity and forced Maximilian to surrender. To discourage other nations from intervention, Juárez ordered the Mexican emperor to be tried by court-martial. Maximilian was found guilty and on June 19, 1867 was executed by firing squad.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Initially, Napoleon III's troops besieged the city of Puebla near Mexico City in 1862 but Juárez and his army defeated them in May 5. Over the next year, the French reinforced their troops and crushed Juárez's army. In 1863, Juárez abandoned Mexico City, went to the northern provinces, and the French occupied the capital. The date of Juárez's victory in Puebla—5 May—became a national holiday after the restoration of the Mexican government.

⁸¹ Blanco Fenchio and Dillingham, 45.

⁸² Ibid; Lombardo de Ruíz, 13; Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 25.

⁸³ Tenenbaum, 129.

⁸⁴ William H. Beezley, "New Celebrations of Independence: Puebla (1869) and Mexico City (1883)," in Beezley and Lorey, *¡Viva Mexico!*, 132–33.

⁸⁵ After the US civil war, the US helped Juárez and his ally General Porfirio Díaz to expel the French occupiers. The US never recognized Maximilian's reign in Mexico. Kandell, 348.

⁸⁶ Kandell, 351. Carlota never returned to Mexico after her trip to Europe to ask for help for her husband. Recent studies about Benito Juárez and Maximilian include Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, *Juárez: historia y mito* (México, D.F.: El Colegio de México, 2010); Francisco Javier Guerrero Mendoza, *La impasibilidad cuestionada de Juárez: su*

When Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada became president after Juárez died in 1872, entrepreneurs and leaders adopted the European ways of progress they saw exemplified in Paris and renewed their interest in Maximilian's *calzada*.⁸⁷ They renamed it Paseo de la Reforma [Reforma Avenue], decorated it with trees like The Champs Elysées, and envisioned it like a Parisian *etoile* [star] with several *glorietas* [roundabouts] where streets met and which later housed a series of monuments.⁸⁸

Celebrations of Independence were codified after the restoration of the republic under the liberal governments of Juárez, Lerdo de Tejada, and Díaz. The presidents used the commemoration as a popular ritual to promote patriotism after years of chaos and foreign interventions. An important and improvised turn in the celebration's spatial politics occurred during the period of 1867 to 1886.⁸⁹ The evening ceremonies of September 15th were held in the National Theatre and included poetry, music, patriotic speeches, and the president's reenactment of Hidalgo's *grito* at eleven o'clock.⁹⁰ The president shouted "*¡Viva México!*" [Long live Mexico!], waved the national flag, and audiences cheered. Simultaneously, denizens celebrated and gathered in the streets to shout "*¡Viva México!*" In 1883, street celebrants timed their "vivas" in response to the series of "vivas" that they heard from inside the theatre.⁹¹ By coordinating their patriotic shouts with the official and exclusive ceremony in the theatre, city dwellers blended public and private space into a single celebratory space.

It was in 1887, during Díaz's regime, that the historical reenactment of *el grito* moved to the *Zócalo*, transforming the square into what Esposito describes as "a huge stage for a national

papel axial en la reforma y la intervención francesa (México, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2009); and Jasper Godwin Ridley, *Maximilian and Juárez* (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1992).

⁸⁷ Tenenbaum, 130.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ During this period the presidents were: Benito Juárez (1867–1872), Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada (1872–1876), and Porfirio Díaz (1876–1911).

⁹⁰ Esposito, 89.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 89–90.

drama."⁹² In 1887 the built environment of the Zócalo and its surrounding streets conveyed a spectacular patriotic narrative for the attending masses: an enormous painting of Hidalgo stood in front of the National Palace; the bell towers of the cathedral were illuminated; a huge flag hung from its façade; and bunting, lights, and triumphal arches appeared all over the city's center.⁹³ Denizens had the opportunity to participate in Díaz's reenactment of Hidalgo's cry for independence by joining a torchlight procession through the city that ended in front of the central balcony of the National Palace, where the President delivered *el grito*.⁹⁴ In 1896, in an attempt at historical accuracy, Díaz brought the original bell from the town of Dolores and placed it in the National Palace's central balcony to be used in *el grito*'s yearly performance.⁹⁵ Díaz's merging of national history with the Zócalo's historical symbolism proved to be incredibly long lasting—the basic shape of *el grito* has remained unchanged since. On the eve of every September 16th, Hidalgo's village of Dolores is symbolically relocated to the Zócalo through the Porfirian staging of history.

Overall, within the complexities of inventing as well as perpetuating traditions of commemorating Independence, the celebration's meaning was clear. The authorities used it to extol feelings of patriotism and to remind Mexicans of their power. However, as Beezley and Lorey contend, the celebration also provided entertainment.⁹⁶ Mexico City's dwellers celebrated in the streets and plazas around the city, accompanied by music, food, and drinks. These public spectacles also served as educational and propagandistic media, as they occurred in public spaces

⁹² Ibid., 90.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Michael Johns, *The City of Mexico in the Age of Díaz* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), 9–10; Lombardo de Ruíz, 20; Lempériere and Orensanz, "Los dos centenarios," 326. Fernández Tejedo and Nava Nava, 33.

⁹⁶ Beezley and Lorey, "Introduction," xii; Vásquez Meléndez, 279–81.

throughout the country.⁹⁷ Independence celebrations provided a common visual and performative vocabulary for the inhabitants of a new nation.

Porfirio Díaz consolidated the Zócalo's form and significance as Mexico's national site of performance during the celebrations of independence—especially during the 1910 Centenario. The independence performance tradition reached its zenith with Díaz's Centennial. Porfirian administrators controlled the Zócalo and its surrounding streets as an everyday public space, and they determined the plaza's usage during the national holidays.⁹⁸ Esposito writes that performance traditions in Mexico City, "required converting an everyday business center into a *centro conmemorativo* [commemorative center], where the state constructed and taught an official history while simultaneously presenting evidence of national progress."⁹⁹ The Zócalo reflected the country's industrial growth under Díaz: it was a clean open space, illuminated by electric lighting, with plants, trees, a central *kiosko* [bandstand] built on top of de la Hidalga's base of his unfinished monument, a street car station, and a new *centro mercantil* [commercial center] designed in a French style in the southwest corner (fig. 3.9).¹⁰⁰

Ironically, Díaz's modern, commemorative center was an artifice disconnected from an urban reality of inequality and segregation. Díaz's great ambition was to create a modern and industrialized country, and he used Mexico City, as Kandell observes, "as the showplace of his effort."¹⁰¹ In order to attract foreign investment, Díaz created an image of sophistication, prosperity, and stability. The ideal city developed at the western end of the Zócalo and up the

⁹⁷ Beezley and Lorey, "Introduction," x–xi.

⁹⁸ William H. Beezley, *Judas at the Jockey Club and Other Episodes of Porfirian Mexico* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 129.

⁹⁹ Esposito, 206.

¹⁰⁰ The streetcars were first pulled by mules and later were powered by electricity. The architecture of the Centro Mercantile retained the old colonial arcades. Lombardo de Ruíz, 20; Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 25.

¹⁰¹ Kandell, 354.

Paseo de la Reforma with its new-upper-class neighborhoods.¹⁰² Even Díaz himself relocated his official residence to the Chapultepec castle, the former residence of Maximilian and his wife Carlota.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, the Palacio Nacional continued to serve as the office of state affairs. Portraying the country's official history, Reforma Avenue was embellished with statues of historical heroes. Tolsá's equestrian statue *El Caballito* was relocated to Plaza de Reforma [Reform Square], the first *glorieta* on the eastern end of Reforma Avenue. A statue of Christopher Columbus, inaugurated in 1877, occupied the next *glorieta*, and a statue of Cuauhtémoc (the last Mexica leader) was unveiled in 1887 in the following roundabout. The column of independence, known as *El Angel* [The Angel], located on the avenue's western end, was inaugurated during the 1910 Centenario (fig. 3.10).¹⁰⁴ Indeed, a large part of the city's identity was also consolidated in Díaz's Centenario: today *El Angel* is Mexico City's iconic monument.

The Zócalo retained its symbolic importance, but instead of occupying the material center of the city, it became a border separating a rich west and a poor east, the new city and the old city.¹⁰⁵ Wealthy investors, landlords, and the elites lived in the western part of the city while peasants, workers, and the poor lived in areas east of the Zócalo. In order to give the appearance of sophistication, the authorities controlled and masked the capital's unwanted part by using force and through restrictive laws. As the genteel segregated themselves, visiting the Zócalo only for business, politics, mass in the cathedral, and national commemorations, they advocated for the removal of, as described by Michael Johns, "the offensive scenery"¹⁰⁶ created by the

¹⁰² The new neighborhoods were Roma, Cuauhtémoc, and Juárez. Kandell, 378.

¹⁰³ With the restoration of the Republic in 1867 after Maximilian's death, the Palacio had become once more the official residence of the president. Lombardo de Ruiz, 13.

¹⁰⁴ For a detailed study of Reforma Avenue and its monuments during the Porfiriato, see Tenenbaum, 127–50.

¹⁰⁵ For a detailed analysis of the geography, population, and sociology of Porfirian Mexico City divided into an east and west, see Johns, 7–41.

¹⁰⁶ Johns, 56.

peasants and the poor—mostly natives and mestizos, and those referred to as *pelados* [tramps]. The new policing laws, such as the 1897 law against *rateros* [petty thieves], allowed for the arrest of anyone appearing to be suspicious.¹⁰⁷ As a result, out of a population of five hundred thousand inhabitants, around ten thousand people a year were jailed.¹⁰⁸ For those peasants not in jail, city ordinances controlled their appearance, ordering them to wear long pants, replace their traditional sombreros with hats, and wear uniforms if they were service employees such as porters and newspaper boys.¹⁰⁹

Mexico City's social inequality resulted from Díaz's government policies, based on private capital owned by either foreign investors or the Mexican elite. Nearly half of the population were peasants living in crowded old buildings, huts, and tenements in eastern sectors. Throughout the city's nineteenth-century expansion and process of secularization, Indians of the former *parcialidades* [districts] of San Juan Tenochtitlán and Santiago Tlateloloco had been dispossessed of their lands and thus were impoverished.¹¹⁰ Moreover, unable to compete in a privately controlled land market and expelled from their lands by landlords, mining interests, and railroads owned by German, American, French, and British companies, thousands of peasants from the provinces migrated to the capital in the 1880s and 1890s.¹¹¹ Mexico City's geography reflected a society divided between the poor and the wealthy with its *centro conmemorativo*—the *Zócalo*—functioning simultaneously as the capital's geographic border and symbolic national center.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*; Beezley, *Judas at the Jockey Club*, 112.

¹¹⁰ For a detailed study about the nineteenth-century struggle of the indigenous communities of Santiago Tlatelolco and San Juan Tenochtitlán to keep their lands, see Andrés Lira, *Comunidades indígenas frente a la ciudad de México: Tenochtitlán y Tlatelolco, sus pueblos y barrios, 1812–1919* (México, D.F.: El colegio de México, El colegio de Michoacán, 1983).

¹¹¹ Johns, 12. Díaz enforced the Reform Laws of the Juárez era, which created Mexico's private land market and resulted in the dispossessing of the church of its lands, of the natives' communal lands, and of peasants' fields. Kandell, 370.

During the 1910 Centenario's spectacular celebrations, the authorities negated and hid Mexico City's social and ethnic inequalities under the façade of *Independencia, paz, progreso y libertad* [Independence, Peace, Progress, and Liberty]—a motto that was displayed on banners and decorations in the city's center.¹¹² In order to achieve this, the organizers passed demeaning proposals about the appearance of the indigenous peoples in the city.¹¹³ Besides being uniformly dressed and cleaned, natives were exploited as servants, workers, and "authentic" characters in the celebration's parades. Based on the Porfirian ideology of social and historical evolution, the spectacular pageants of the Gran procesión cívica and the Gran desfile histórico portrayed the image of a prosperous and progressive capital under Díaz. In the next sections, I analyze both performances along with their indigenist tensions to show the Zócalo's transformation into a space of Porfirian fabrications.

The Gran procesión cívica: Performing Social Evolution in the Center

On September 14, 1910, Mexico City's inhabitants and international guests honored the heroes of independence through a ceremonial procession. The Centenario's Gran procesión cívica travelled to the National Cathedral located in the Zócalo, where the mortal remains of the heroes rested.¹¹⁴ Different groups of participants—members of the government, delegates from various industries, employees, artisans, workers, and soldiers—brought wreaths and floral

¹¹² García, *Crónica*, 148.

¹¹³ Because Indians wore their traditional attire of short pants and sandals, diplomats proposed either to prohibit them from being on the streets during the celebration or to dress them "properly" during the Centennial. Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City," 91–92. Also, in her Nahuatl chronicle about Porfirio Díaz and Emiliano Zapata (Revolutionary hero), Doña Luz Jiménez narrates how when she was in fifth grade the government sent clothes and shoes to the children of Milpa Alta to wear during the Centenario. Milpa Alta is a village on the southern edge of the Distrito Federal (about fourteen miles from the Zócalo). Doña Luz Jiménez, *Life and Death in Milpa Alta: A Nahuatl Chronicle of Díaz and Zapata*, trans. Fernando Horcasitas (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 108–21.

¹¹⁴ The most detailed original account of the Gran procesión cívica is recorded in the 1911 *Crónica oficial*, García, *Crónica*, 133–38.

arrangements to the heroes' urn and paraded in front of the National Palace. The urn was in a catafalque placed by the Cathedral's Altar del perdón [Altar of Forgiveness] at the front of the central nave and across the main door.¹¹⁵ President Díaz, his cabinet, and other heads of international commissions witnessed the event from the palace's presidential balcony overlooking the great square.¹¹⁶ According to the organizers, representatives of all the elements of Mexican society formed the procession, around twelve thousand persons participated, and it was deemed a successful and joyful event.¹¹⁷ It is very probable that the official number of participants was exaggerated in the celebration's official chronicle to give a sense of grandiosity, and that such amount of people also included spectators. Without a doubt the Centenario was extremely well organized, but managing twelve thousand performers might have been too difficult in Mexico City's downtown.

The Comisión nacional del centenario [National Commission of the Centennial], the ad hoc committee in charge of the Centenario, organized the Gran procesión and appointed General D. Eugenio Rascón as its supervisor.¹¹⁸ Like the rest of the celebration's events, a combination

¹¹⁵ The Altar del Perdón was inaugurated in 1650 and, as in all Spanish cathedrals, it was located under the choir and thus in front of the main door, named *la puerta del perdón* [the door of forgiveness]. Its name refers to the fact that it was through this door convicts entered the church in order to be absolved. For a history and description of the altar in Mexico's cathedral and its art, see Manuel Toussaint, *La catedral de México y el sagrario metropolitano: su historia, su tesoro, su arte* (México, D.F.: Porrúa, 1973), 121–23.

¹¹⁶ García, *Crónica*, 137. *Memoria*, 44.

¹¹⁷ *Memoria*, 39; García, *Crónica*, 133–34, 138. The *Crónica* records that twenty thousand people participated in the procession; the *Memoria* claims twelve thousand. García, *Crónica*, 134; *Memoria*, 44.

¹¹⁸ On April 1, 1907, President Porfirio Díaz created the Comisión Nacional del Centenario de la Independencia [National Commission of the Centennial of Independence], the body in charge of overseeing the celebrations in the capital and supervising the sub-commissions in charge of the festivities in states, cities, and towns around the country. The appointees were: Guillermo de Landa y Escandón (President); Francisco D. Barroso, Serapión Fernández, Romualdo Pasquel, Fernando Pimentel y Fagoaga, Eugenio Rascón, Rafael Rebollar, Carlos Rivas, Manuel Vázquez Tagle (Members); and José Casarín (Secretary). *Memoria* (México: Imprenta del gobierno federal, 1910), 1. Besides the Gran procesión cívica, the Comisión Nacional organized other events during the month of the Centenario. These included: Gran desfile histórico, Gran serenata en la Plaza de la Constitución [Great Serenade in the Plaza de la Constitución], Fiestas populares en teatros, salones de espectáculos, etc. [Popular celebrations in theatres, entertainment halls, etc], Fuegos artificiales [Fireworks], Ceremonia oficial de la conmemoración del grito de la independencia [Official ceremony of the commemoration of el grito of independence], Gran paseo de antorchas [Great Parade of Torches], Ceremonia en honor a Morelos [Ceremony in honor of Morelos], Bailes de invitación en algunos teatros y salones [Dances with guests in some theatres and halls], Torneo científico, literario y

of private donations and federal funds financed the procession.¹¹⁹ In comparison to other public ceremonies of the Centenario, the civic procession was a relatively inexpensive affair because it lacked elaborate sets, floats, or costumes.¹²⁰ The procession's scenographic display was composed by the various groups' formations, their uniforms, emblems of different colors, and, most of all, by flowers and wreaths. The Gran procesión was divided into fifteen main groups, each with a coordinator in charge of overseeing his group's placement and guiding it through the established route.¹²¹ Based on social hierarchies, the National Commission chose the groups' order, while military personnel supervised the actual proceedings.¹²² President of the Court Demetrio Sodi directed the procession's first group, which was composed of the National Commission, senators, legislators, judges, attorneys general, members of the defense department, army dignitaries, members of the court, and treasury personnel.¹²³ Foreign representatives and members of the city council followed, and the various departments of state came afterwards.¹²⁴ Groups of employees and other related representatives accompanied each governmental department. For example, telegraph and mail employees marched with the secretary of

musical [Scientific, Literary and Musical Competition], Apoteosis de los heroes y soldados de la independencia, Homenaje a la corregidora Domínguez [Homage to Mayor Domínguez's wife]. *Memoria*, 42–43.

¹¹⁹ The total cost of the Gran procesión cívica was \$1,845.38 Mexican Pesos (MP). The approximate cost of all the Centennial's events, of which the National Commission was in charge, was \$150,000.00. *Memoria*, 103–4. To better understand the high cost of the celebration, one can compare it with the daily wage of a Mexican worker at that time, which was of approximately \$3.00 (0.002 percent of the Centenario's total cost). For an example of Mexican and foreign miners' daily wages, see Table 5 in Gonzales, *The Mexican Revolution*, 40. The Centenario's budget came from private donations and federal funds. In 1907, the National Commission published a patriotic call for private donations and created a national subscription of contributions. *Memoria*, 16–17; AGN GOB, 127–28, Comisión Nacional del Centenario, *Memoria*. For an overview of the subscribers, their donations, and yearly finances, see *Memoria*, 102–4 and "Lista nominal de los donativos recibidos por la tesorería de la Comisión Nacional del Centenario de la Independencia conforme a las bases de la suscripción abierta por la misma comisión" [List of the donations that the Commission's treasury received according to the open subscription by the same commission], in Appendix, *Memoria*, 3–66; AGN GOB, 127–28. For general lists of different donors, expenditures, allocations, and costs, see Tables 1–5 in Gonzales, "Imagining Mexico," 504–7.

¹²⁰ For example, the Gran desfile histórico cost \$38,302.19 MP; the amount paid for popular celebrations, dances and the Gran paseo de antorchas was \$14,320.53; and the Scientific and Literary Competition total was \$3,496.00. *Memoria*, 103.

¹²¹ García, *Crónica*, 133–35; Cárdenas Gutiérrez, 129, 132.

¹²² García, *Crónica*, 134; Cárdenas Gutiérrez, 129.

¹²³ García, *Crónica*, 136; Cárdenas Gutiérrez, 129.

¹²⁴ García, *Crónica*, 136.

communications; professors and students with the secretary of arts and education; and generals, war veterans, soldiers, and visiting officers from Germany, France, Argentina, and Brazil with the department of defense.¹²⁵ Delegates from the commerce and mining industries, students from public and private universities (of law, mining, medicine, commerce, and arts and crafts), and unionized and independent workers marched among the above groups.¹²⁶ The procession had an overwhelming military presence emphasized by the Mexican infantry's marching bands.¹²⁷

Although civic and militaristic in character, the Gran procesión cívica conformed to the Porfirian strategy of utilizing religious traditions to promote the heroes of independence. Initially established in the early nineteenth century, the ritual of portraying the national heroes as martyrs continued under Díaz and was consolidated in the Gran procesión. In 1823, Congress established a successful analogy between religious and national martyrdom. It declared the thirteen heroes as Beneméritos de la patria [Distinguished National Heroes] and charged the government to preserve their mortal remains and to bring them from different states to the capital in processions.¹²⁸ Pious Catholics venerated the bones of Miguel Hidalgo, Ignacio Allende, Juan de Aldama, Mariano Jiménez, Mariano Abasolo, José María Morelos, Leonardo and Miguel Bravo, Mariano Matamoros, Hermenegildo Galeana, Francisco Javier Mina, Pedro Moreno, and Victor Rosales. The heroes' mortal remains became national relics when placed in the cathedral along with such objects of worship as the personal belongings of canonized saints. The state's ritual indeed resembled the Church's traditions. As Esposito writes: "both Church and state enshrined bodies, preserved bones as relics, and guarded the personal effects of 'patron

¹²⁵ Ibid., 137.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 135.

¹²⁸ Esposito, 182. For descriptions of the heroes' deaths and the transfer of their mortal remains into the capital, see Ibid., 180–3, and Cárdenas Gutiérrez, 134–36.

saints."¹²⁹ Congressman and historian Juan A. Mateos later found that the remains of the heroes of independence—located under the Altar de los Reyes [Altar of the Kings], the main chapel in the National Cathedral's apse—were rapidly deteriorating, and thus demanded that the government pay attention to such situation.¹³⁰ Díaz ordered a group of doctors and anthropologists to exhume, analyze, and identify the bones before their reburial in a new mausoleum inside the Capilla de San José [Saint Joseph's Chapel] in the western portion of the cathedral.¹³¹ On the anniversary of Hidalgo's death, July 30, 1895, crowds of visitors went to the City Council's building, where the mortal remains lay in state, and participated in the reburial procession through the main streets of the capital.¹³² The public listened to patriotic speeches, filled the Zócalo to see the urn pass, and passed through the cathedral to pay homage to the heroes of independence.¹³³ The exhumation and reburial of national heroes proved to be a successful event precisely because it relied on religious rituals.

The Gran procesión's route also reflected the 1910 regime's manipulation of history and tradition in tracing the path traditionally taken by religious and civic processions discussed in earlier chapters. It also used the Palacio Nacional as its culminating landmark. Such specific use of the city was due not only to spatial inertia but also to the organizers' strategic use of space.¹³⁴ Downtown Mexico City had inherited the city's sixteenth-century layout, which originally determined the path of religious processions and later civic events: Corpus Christi celebrations,

¹²⁹ Esposito, 178–79.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 183. In all the cathedrals in Spain and its colonies, the main chapel was always dedicated to the king, who was the patron of the church, and a crypt for the royals was constructed underneath (no viceroy was buried in it in Mexico City). After independence, this chapel corresponded to the country's presidents, although just one president was buried there: President and General Miguel Barragán in 1836. Toussaint, 125–27.

¹³¹ Esposito, 184. For a history and description of the chapel, see Toussaint, 155–56.

¹³² Esposito, 185–88; Toussaint, 155. Manuel Toussaint writes that in 1865 the remains of Hidalgo, Morelos, Aldama, Jimenez y Allende were extracted from the crypt of the Altar mayor [Main Altar] and were placed on display in the National Palace during celebrations of independence. Toussaint, 155.

¹³³ Esposito, 185–88.

¹³⁴ I use Mona Ozouf's idea of inertia when she discusses how some celebrations in France ended up taking the old routes in cities according to the urban spatial demarcations, associations, histories, and memories. Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 147.

adorations of saints, and state funerals travelled to the cathedral through San Francisco Avenue, west of the Plaza Mayor, or from Santo Domingo Square, north of the square.¹³⁵ The Gran procesión departed from the western edge of the city center, passed by the Christopher Columbus roundabout in Reforma Avenue, and traveled through Juárez and San Francisco Avenues to the cathedral.¹³⁶ By invoking traditional religious and civic processions through the use of the same space, the organizers created a direct link between pious and patriotic adorations. After the different groups deposited their flowers at the heroes' urn, they exited the church and marched in front of the Palacio Nacional's central balcony. The main avenues and buildings were adorned with flags and bunting in the national colors.¹³⁷ Local and international audiences witnessed the parade from the balconies and windows of the buildings along the route.¹³⁸ Other onlookers sat on improvised wooden bleachers and stood in small pavilions (figs. 3.11–3.15).¹³⁹

The procession's spatial flow between the cathedral and the public square foregrounded the event's combined religiosity and secularism. The participants' visit to the cathedral did not dominate the event either in temporal or spatial terms, but rather there was a spatio-temporal balance between the procession's main destinations—the cathedral and the Palacio Nacional. The processional groups did not stay for long inside the temple: as soon as they entered through its left door and marched by the *doble vaya de soldados* [double line of soldiers] welcoming them in the atrium, they immediately turned right to place their offerings at the heroes' catafalque and exited the building through its right door.¹⁴⁰ Because of the spatial positioning of the

¹³⁵ Annick Lempérière describes how the city's inherited layout and sacred places, such as churches and convents, determined the route of later processions, such as the 1838 transfer of Iturbide's mortal remains. Annick Lempérière, "¿Nación moderna o república barroca? México—1823–1857," in *Imaginar la Nación*, ed. Francois-Xavier Guerra and Monica Quijada (Hamburg, Germany: Münster, 1994), 158.

¹³⁶ García, *Crónica*, 135. *Memoria*, 44.

¹³⁷ García, *Crónica*, 135.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 135–36.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 136.

catafalque (by the church's entrance), participants did not travel inside the cathedral's naves but stayed in its front section to immediately exit to the Zócalo and parade in front of the president. The procession's use of interior and exterior space performed an uninterrupted and symmetrical flow between church and state.

That the procession continued and made its last stop in front of Díaz, instead of ending in the cathedral, connotes an association between the president and the national heroes.¹⁴¹

Organizers incorporated Díaz into the pantheon of the national heroes by extending the adoration of the dead heroes to the living president. As in other official celebrations in which the Porfirian ideologues, as Esposito notes, "colluded in associating Díaz with every national struggle,"¹⁴² the president was performatively linked to the history of independence. Through the Gran procesión's specific use of space, Díaz was symbolically connected with the struggle for an independent Mexico.

Nevertheless, such historical and symbolical association was a political fabrication. Organizers created it for image-making purposes and manipulating a largely Catholic society whose pious memory was sustained through ritual performances. Eric Hobsbawm discusses how invented traditions have the illusory characteristic of continuity with a past, but that in reality it is only their form that refers to old situations.¹⁴³ Content and ideology are crafted according to a new situation.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, the organizers of the Great Procession adopted the Church's rituals to instill patriotism. Indeed, Díaz strategically and symbolically combined church and state after Juárez's purposeful separation of the two under the Reform laws of the 1857 constitution. When

¹⁴¹ Different scholars have discussed the use of historical associations during Díaz regime, which were typical of nineteenth-century centennials. Gonzales, "Imagining Mexico," 496. Lempérière and Orensanz, "Los dos centenarios," 317–19. For a study on the centennial commemorations in Europe in the nineteenth century, see Ronald Quinault, "The Cult of the Centenary, c.1784–1914," *Historical Research* 71, no. 176 (1998): 303–23.

¹⁴² Esposito, 178.

¹⁴³ Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 2.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Díaz took over the presidency in 1876, he identified with the popularity and power of the Church. Even though the separation of Church and state was constitutional, Díaz had a friendly relationship with the religious institutions through various corrupt practices. He allowed religious processions as long as the cleric paid his fines, invited Archbishop Labastida—enemy of the Reform and accomplice of the French occupation—to government ceremonies, permitted the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe to be part of Independence Day celebrations, and did not enforce the law prohibiting priests from wearing their vestments in public.¹⁴⁵ By allowing religious practices to exist in his supposedly secular administration, Díaz enticed the worshipping of his regime by, what Hobsbawm describes as, "reference of the past" and "by imposing repetition."¹⁴⁶

National martyrdom and its representation were also successful enterprises because they included bodily practices related to Catholic ceremonials. In *How Societies Remember*, Connerton argues that social memory is found in commemorative ceremonies, and knowledge and images of the past are conveyed and maintained by performative bodily rituals.¹⁴⁷ The fact that participants were instructed to perform religious bodily rituals gives us room to speculate that they performed them almost by habit or inertia. The photographs of the Gran procesión indicate that the groups performed with religious solemnity when marching, carrying, and offering flowers, and that they observed the Church's rules of etiquette, such as men removing their hats when entering the sacred space (fig. 3.16). If, as Connerton contends, "habit is a knowledge and a remembering in the hands and in the body; and in the cultivation of habit it is

¹⁴⁵ During the Porfiriato, Mexico City celebrated major holidays, especially Christmas festivities in which processions and religious activities took place in plazas and public spaces. Kandell, 381–83.

¹⁴⁶ Hobsbawm, "Introduction," 4.

¹⁴⁷ Connerton, 1–5, 70–71. In their analyses of different cultural performances and practices, Diana Taylor and Joseph Roach refer to Connerton's theory of social memory. Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 53–55, 82–83; and Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 26–27.

our body which 'understands,'"¹⁴⁸ it is possible to claim that participants understood, remembered, and imagined the heroes of independence as national saints through the performance of religious bodily practices.

Besides creating representations of national martyrdom in performance, the National Commission also sponsored analogous constructions through other Centenario media, such as written narratives and other devotional objects. Justo Sierra's book, *La evolución política del pueblo mexicano* (1900–1902) [The Political Evolution of the Mexican People], describes Porfirio Díaz as the founder of "the political religion of peace"¹⁴⁹ and the journey of the rebel leaders of independence Miguel Hidalgo and Ignacio Allende's from their capture by the royal forces near Coahuila to their execution in Chihuahua as a "a veritable *via crucis*."¹⁵⁰ Genaro García's *Crónica oficial* [Official Chronicle] (1911) of the Centenario is similarly filled with religious analogies. For instance, at the end of his description of the Apoteosis de los héroes de la Independencia [Apotheosis of the Heroes of Independence]—the Centenario's closing event staged on October 6, 1910—García combines the nation's history, the heroes' redeeming deeds, and Díaz's regime as preordained destiny:

Tocaba ahora á la patria cerrar el homenaje á los caudillos insurgentes, y lo hizo por voz del Presidente de la República, único que por sus claros merecimientos, por sus altos servicios, podía tomar como tribuna el altar mismo de los manes

¹⁴⁸ Connerton, 95.

¹⁴⁹ Sierra, *The Political Evolution*, 359.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 155. The *via crucis* [Way of the Cross] refers to the last hours of Jesus or to the stations of the cross. The stations of the cross are tableaux or pictures representing particular incidents of Christ carrying the cross to his crucifixion during his final hours. In his official history, Justo Sierra also foregrounds the national heroes' ultimate fate as glorious by writing "the fatherland, born of their heroic blood, reconciles them in gratitude and absolves them in glory." Sierra, *The Political Evolution*, 156. Genaro García was a collector, translator, author, and historian who also served in public office as a congressman. During the Centenario he was the director of the National Museum of History, Archeology, and Ethnology. Because García played an important role in the centennial celebrations as the official chronicler and as director of the National Museum, he had access and kept a large amount of original material of the centennial celebrations. In 1921, the University of Texas purchased García's private library of manuscripts, books, and pamphlets, mostly related to Mexico's history. For García's bio, go to: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utlac/00021/lac-00021.html#bioghist> (accessed December 17, 2011). For a history of UT's purchase of García's collection and its importance, go to: http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/~landc/bookplates/12_1_Garcia.htm (accessed December 17, 2011).

libertadores. El destino, que eligió al señor General Díaz para engrandecer á la Nación, quiso que fuera él quien presidiese la solemne apoteosis de los mártires redentores.

[It was now the nation's role to bring to a conclusion the homage of the insurgent leaders. The nation did it through the voice of the President of the Republic, the only one who, because of his great merits and service [to the country], could take the heroes' altar as his tribune. Destiny, who chose Mr. General Díaz to aggrandize the nation, wanted him to preside over the solemn apotheosis of the redeeming martyrs.]¹⁵¹

As well as its written record, the performance of the Apoteosis links Díaz and the heroes of independence symbolically and materially on the same religious plane. It is interesting to note that the style of the Apoteosis's catafalque resembles the one built for the actual mortal remains of the heroes inside the cathedral during the Gran procesión cívica (figs. 3.13, 3.17). Both are sober neoclassic pyramidal sculptures framed by pairs of classical columns, with an urn on top crowned by national symbols (the national eagle and flags), decorated by garlands and architectural motifs in relief, and with written inscriptions such as "1810" and "*Patria*" [Fatherland].

While Díaz, as the head of the secular state, could not be in the cathedral during the Gran procesión, he shared the same space with the sculpture representing the heroes during the Apoteosis's nationalistic ceremony.¹⁵² The Apoteosis took place in the Palacio Nacional's decorated and illuminated central courtyard with audiences placed on the four sides surrounding the gigantic catafalque (fig. 3.18).¹⁵³ The president and his cabinet witnessed the event from a central platform located by the heroes' monument.¹⁵⁴ After various speeches, including one by Justo Sierra, and the National Conservatory of Music performances of Camille Saint-Saëns's

¹⁵¹ García, *Crónica*, 178.

¹⁵² While Díaz officially separated himself from the church, he professed that in his personal life and as the head of his family he was Catholic. It was his wife Carmen who openly fulfilled religious obligations. The elites followed the example of the Díaz's household: men limited their religious practice to an occasional mass whereas women went to church regularly. Kandell, 381.

¹⁵³ García, *Crónica*, 176–77.

¹⁵⁴ García, *Crónica*, 177.

heroic march and Richard Wagner's funeral coda to *Götterdämmerung* [Twilight of the Gods], Porfirio Díaz placed a wreath of laurels at the base of the catafalque—a gesture mirroring the ones performed by participants in the Gran procesión and characteristic of church rituals.¹⁵⁵ The performance closed with the Conservatory's interpretation of the National Anthem.¹⁵⁶

Similar to the Apoteosis, the Centenario's repertoire included other performances that revolved around a different type of scenographical object: the personal possessions once belonging to the heroes. The Comisión embedded such objects with symbolic and historical meanings and treated them in performance as devotional relics. The *Traslación al Museo de la fuente baptismal de Hidalgo* [Transfer to the Museum of Hidalgo's Baptismal Font], staged on September 2nd, and the *Devolución de las prendas de Morelos al Gobierno Mexicano* [The return of Morelos's garments to the Mexican Government], staged on September 17th, centered on genuine objects that functioned as historical and patriotic vestiges. As a way of validating the authenticity of Hidalgo's font, Genaro García, director of the Museum of Archeology, History, and Ethnography, created a special commission—formed by Nemesio García Naranjo (professor of Mexican history), Ignacio B. del Castillo (chief of the museum's publications), and Pedro González (historian and geographer from Guanajuato)—to bring the font from Cuitzeo de los Naranjos, Guanajuato (central Mexico), to the capital.¹⁵⁷ After the party arrived at the capital's train station, a large procession headed by Hidalgo's granddaughter Guadalupe Hidalgo and composed of students, professors, and academics transported Hidalgo's font to the museum, located on the northern side of the Palacio Nacional (figs. 3.19, 3.20). Hidalgo's font symbolized, as Esposito states, "the birth and baptism of the Patria and the reanointing of both

¹⁵⁵ Secretary of Exterior Enrique C. Creel delivered the eulogy for the heroes, Priest Agustín Rivera gave a speech, and Secretary of Education Justo Sierra recited a poem. García, *Crónica*, 177–80.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 180.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 183.

Hidalgo and Díaz (elected to his eight term)."¹⁵⁸ The Spanish crown's return of José María Morelos's uniform, which royalist troops took to Spain as a trophy during the war of independence, performed Spain and Mexico's official reconciliation and friendship.¹⁵⁹ After parading through the city, the Marquis de Polavieja, Spanish ambassador for the Centenario, ceremoniously returned Morelos's uniform to Díaz in an event at the salon of the ambassadors in the Palacio Nacional (fig. 3.21).¹⁶⁰ In the name of the King of Spain Alfonso XIII, the marquis asked Mexico to forget the wounds inflicted in the past.¹⁶¹ According to García, "México, por su parte, supo comprender perfectamente semejante conducta" [Mexico, for its part, knew perfectly how to understand such conduct].¹⁶²

Polavieja and Díaz's performance of friendship between Spain and Mexico foregrounds the regime's emphasis on international relations as well as its take on Mexico's colonial past and present indigenous populations.¹⁶³ Because relations with Europe and the US were a priority

¹⁵⁸ Esposito, 97. Other objects that Díaz brought to the capital during his regime in an effort to promote the cult of Hidalgo include the Mexican Independence Bell (the one Hidalgo rang during his initial call for arms), the Virgin of Guadalupe's flag (which Hidalgo used as the symbol of the new nation), and Hidalgo's war cannon. Ibid., 95. An issue of the periodical *Artes y Letras* published during the Centenario includes some images of other objects belonging to Hidalgo and housed at the National Museum of Archeology, History, and Ethnology: chairs, his confessional booth, a dinner set, and other objects from his parish church in Dolores. Vicente Riva Palacio, "La independencia nacional," *Artes y Letras: semanario ilustrado* (September 25, 1910), n.p.

¹⁵⁹ During the Centenario there were other ceremonies that represented Spain and Mexico's friendship. For example, the *Imposición del collar de la orden de Carlos III al Señor Presidente de la República* [The imposition of the neckpiece of the order of Charles III to the President of the Republic], *Banquete y Baile ofrecidos por el Casino Español al Señor Presidente de la República* [Banquet and Dance offered by the Spanish Club to the President of the Republic], *Dedicación de la Avenida Isabel la Católica* [Dedication of the Isabella of Castile Avenue], *Monumento a Isabel la Católica* [Monument to Isabella of Castile], and *Descubrimiento de un retrato de Carlos III en el Palacio Nacional* [Revelation of a portrait of Charles III in the National Palace], García, *Crónica*, 76–81, 95–100.

¹⁶⁰ The executive, Spanish ambassadors, and officials headed the procession, followed by soldiers carrying banners and flags, including one of the Virgin of Guadalupe. García, *Crónica*, 70–76. The Spanish delegation and its ambassador, the Marquis of Polavieja, had a luxurious reception in Toluca (in the state of Mexico, north of Mexico City), where plazas and streets were named and inaugurated in their honor. "Coronamiento de las Fiestas del Centenario en el Estado libre y Soberano de México: espléndida recepción al Embajador de Su Majestad Alfonso XIII, Excelentísimo Señor General Marqués de Polavieja en la Ciudad de Toluca, capital del estado" *Artes y Letras* (October 9, 1910), n.p.

¹⁶¹ García, *Crónica*, 71.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ There were many other ceremonies by or for the international delegations attending the Centenario. Similar to Spain's return of Morelos's uniform, France returned Mexico City's keys as a reconciliatory act related to the French

throughout the Porfiriato, Díaz's ideologues dedicated an incredible amount of effort to creating an image of Mexico as a modern and peaceful country, as the Centenario itself exemplifies.¹⁶⁴ Under Díaz's dictatorship, Mexico had become a liberal state with a capitalist export-oriented economy, a factor that, as Alan Knight writes, "favored the development of a more virulent racism."¹⁶⁵ Created by Díaz's ideologues and supported by the Mexican elite, Mexico's constructed identity was a contradiction: Porfirians saw present-day Indians as a race that had degenerated while at the same time presented them as exoticized objects in celebrations like the Centenario, and in international events such as the world's fairs.¹⁶⁶ For Porfirians, natives needed to be converted into a social asset, and thus it was necessary to change indigenous mentality and habits, which they defined as ignorant and superstitious.¹⁶⁷ In short, Indians needed to be "whitened" or "mesticized."¹⁶⁸ Justo Sierra even theorized that Mexican society could only progress by attracting "immigrants from Europe so as to obtain a cross with the indigenous race," arguing that "only European blood can keep the level of civilization that has produced our nationality from sinking, which could mean regression, not evolution."¹⁶⁹ Within

occupation. See Devolución de las llaves de la ciudad de México al Gobierno Mexicano [Return of Mexico City's keys to the Mexican Government] in García, *Crónica*, 85–86.

¹⁶⁴ The following countries were represented by special envoys or ambassadors: Italy, Japan, United States, Germany, China, Spain, France, Honduras, Bolivia, Austria-Hungary, Cuba, Costa Rica, Russia, Portugal, Holland, Guatemala, El Salvador, Peru, Panama, Brasil, Belgium, Chile, Argentina, Norway, Ecuador, Uruguay, Switzerland, Venezuela, Colombia, and Greece. García, *Crónica*, iii, 1–94. There were events, performances, banquets, and celebrations by and for all of the international delegations. For reference, see the index in *Crónica*, iii–iv. The largest donors for the Centennial were foreign-owned companies. See Table 3 in Gonzales, "Imagining Mexico," 505.

¹⁶⁵ Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and Indigenismo," 78.

¹⁶⁶ I make the reference to nineteenth-century world fairs, because as historians have argued, the long nineteenth century concluded in 1914. See Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875–1914* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987). For a study on Mexico's participation at the world's fairs, see Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

¹⁶⁷ Sierra, *The Political Evolution*, 348, 368.

¹⁶⁸ Knight explains how mestizaje in Porfirian Mexico, most of the times seen as racial, is also a social process of Indians being "whitened" or assimilated into the dominant European-based culture. Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and Indigenismo," 72.

¹⁶⁹ Sierra, *The Political Evolution*, 367–68. In his article about the debate among Porfirian intellectuals regarding the Indians, T.G. Powell explains how Mexico's recent foreign interventions and the country's sovereignty were at the background of the Indian debate. As intellectuals thought it necessary to make Mexico stronger so that it

Mexico's mainstream, racist interpretation of its social and historical evolution, Porfirian historians rendered the colonial past not as a negative episode but as a necessary and historical circumstance. As Edmundo O'Gorman writes of Porfirian historiography, scholars arrived at the conclusion that one should not see Mexico's turbulent history as "caused by malignant foreign interference, but simply a historical process prompted by the supreme law of evolution."¹⁷⁰ Therefore, through the symbolic act of returning and accepting Morelos's garments, Mexico's colonial past was conveyed not as an antagonistic episode but as part of Mexico's historical and social progress.

Although the National Commission did not include Indian groups in the Gran Procesión, it still satisfied the European hunger for "authentic" people. At least two of the procession's groups, the *obreras* [women workers] and the *rurales* [rural police force] of indigenous descendant or mestizos, marched in traditional costumes. The obreras wore large long skirts, light blouses, bands with the national colors, and broad-brimmed sombreros (fig. 3.16). The rurales were dressed like *charros* [Mexican cowboys]. They had dark bolero jackets and tight pants with silver buttons. The rest of the participants wore formal European style clothing (i.e., suits for men and long skirts and blouses for women). In this way, the National Commission treated the Gran procesión as an image of Mexico's civilized society while simultaneously indulging the Europeans' orientalist fascination. Such a process was comparable to Mexico's self-positioning in nineteenth-century world's fairs—what Tenorio-Trillo describes as the

stopped being easy prey to the United States, some proposed the education of Indians as a solution (Indians constituted about half of the country's population), while others argued that Indians were "un-educable" and thus supported European immigration. The debate regarding the role and the status of the indigenous populations was defined from above, that is, by the ruling class. Indians were not given any voice in the official discussion about their own place and role within the Porfirian nation. For an overall picture of the debate over the Indian problem during the Porfiriato, see T.G. Powell, "Mexican Intellectuals and the Indian Question, 1876–1911," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 78, no. 1 (1968): 19–36.

¹⁷⁰ O'Gorman, "Introduction," xvi.

Mexican elites' autoethnography, that is, an exotic self-representation that connects to the European conception of Mexico.¹⁷¹ Tenorio-Trillo writes that such a depiction

fed the hunger of these exhibitions for exotic objects and people. Mexico thus offered indigenous food and drink, dresses and *tipos populares* (popular characters) at the fairs.... In turn what the fairs epitomized in their rewriting of the past and conquest of the exotic, the Porfirian elite did with their own country's history and reality.¹⁷²

As Mexico's participation in the world's fairs shows, Porfirian ideologues shared the occidentalist belief in its progress, civilization, imperialism, and superiority. Therefore, Porfirians created exotic representations to be consumed by the "civilized" countries. The Centenario was similar to Mexico in the world's fairs because it represented modern ideals and exotic self-portrayals. Indeed, the Gran procesión cívica included a taste of the exoticism that would be fully exploited in the next day's Gran desfile histórico.

Furthermore, Morelos's garments symbolized not just reconciliation between the Spanish colony and independent Mexico but the nation's ethnic prototype. In his recounting of the Devolución de las prendas de Morelos, Genaro García writes that:

Morelos es la figura legendaria por excelencia y, además, es el mestizo que simboliza la fundición de las dos razas, el consorcio de los dos abolengos, que producen una nueva rama con todas las grandezas de aquéllas. Morelos es, por esto, representante genuino de la nacionalidad Mexicana.

[Morelos is the quintessential legendary figure and, furthermore, the mestizo who symbolizes the fusion of the two races, the consortium of the two lineages, which produce a new category with all the greatness of both. It is because of this that Morelos is the authentic representative of Mexican nationality.]¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ Although it is not clear if Tenorio-Trillo uses Mary Louse Pratt's definition of autoethnography, it is important to underline that, unlike Pratt who refers to colonized subjects' (natives) representations of themselves "in ways that *engage with* the colonizer's terms," Tenorio-Trillo is describing an autoethnography by the Mexican elites during the Porfiriato. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008), 9. In his analysis of different theoretical approaches of nineteenth-century Mexican cultural history, William E. French writes that Tenorio-Trillo took his cue from Mary Louise Pratt. William E. French, "Imagining and the Cultural History of Nineteenth-Century Mexico," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 79, no. 2 (1999): 252.

¹⁷² Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 7–8.

¹⁷³ García, *Crónica*, 70.

In exploiting Morelos's racial background as the Mexican prototype, García illustrates the Porfirian conceptualization of a Mexican nationality. According to García, Morelos represents the amalgamation of both races. However, politicians like Finance Minister José Yves Limantour and intellectuals like Justo Sierra based the official construction of Mexican-ness not on just racial but also social *mestizaje*. Influenced by Comtean Positivism and Social Darwinism, Sierra conceived Mexico's history as a unified whole that evolved and achieved a synthesis with Porfirio Díaz, or with the so-called "Pax Porfiriana," and Mexican society as a "social organism" that "reacts to external elements, assimilating them and utilizing them in the course of its growth."¹⁷⁴ Mexican identity was the result of a racial and social amalgamation that started in the conquest, was carried on during the colonial period, and had to continue and thus be promoted in the present.¹⁷⁵ For Sierra, only by "educating" the indigenous populations could the goal of a unified national soul be created.¹⁷⁶

Although the *mestizo* came to represent the middle class, which had fought its way into politics with the liberals such as Benito Juárez and Porfirio Díaz, there was a social and racial hierarchy in which upper-class whites and European immigrants considered themselves superior and controlled the country. Nevertheless, one could ascend in the social hierarchy in so far as one became less Indian and more European, that is, "whiter." For example, Juárez and Díaz, an Indian and a *mestizo* respectively, gained political power and status by adopting European

¹⁷⁴ Sierra, *The Political Evolution*, 343. Historians and intellectuals described Díaz's regime within Mexico's history as the "Pax Porfiriana." Sierra divides Mexico's "evolution" into three great phases: "that of Independence, which gave life to the national personality; that of the Reform, which gave life to our social personality; and that of the Peace, which gave life to our international personality." *Ibid.*, 365–66. Auguste Comte argued that what he defined as the most progressive social groups—intellectuals, bankers, merchants—should share the political power. Social Darwinism advocated for the survival of the fittest elements in society. According to José Yves Limantour, "natural selection would ensure the survival of the fittest Indians and the poor." Kandell, 373–74.

¹⁷⁵ O'Gorman, "Introduction," xvii; Sierra, *The Political Evolution*, 367–68.

¹⁷⁶ Sierra, *The Political Evolution*, 368.

cultural and social values—a mindset symbolized by their marrying wives of European descent.¹⁷⁷ As Stacie G. Widdifield writes of Juárez's portrait with his wife Margarita, "it is the perfect picture of the mestizo state,"¹⁷⁸ because it represents the civilized Indian and thus Mexico's social evolution. Díaz went as far as to racially embody his transformation by appearing whiter and whiter in his numerous portraits and thus bleaching, pictorially but not really, his darker skin tone.¹⁷⁹

Indian or part native in their heritage, present and past heroes had to embody Mexico's social, racial, and cultural evolution if they were to be memorialized in the capital's commemorative center. The Gran procesión cívica, the Translación al Museo de la fuente bautismal de Hidalgo, and the Devolución de las prendas de Morelos were performances that reaffirmed the presence of such heroes at the nation's heart.¹⁸⁰ Díaz and the National Commission placed independence and the idea of a homogenous Mexican nationality in the Zócalo by venerating the heroes' mortal remains, personal possessions, and other objects in large processions that filled the square and that positioned Díaz as the nation's redeemer. These were indeed performances of surrogation and representation: they acted as substitutes for the deceased heroes and as narratives of the Porfirian ideology.¹⁸¹ And most importantly, the Zócalo became

¹⁷⁷ Benito Juárez married Margarita Maza, a woman from Oaxaca of European descent, in 1843. Porfirio Díaz's second marriage was to Manuel Romero Rubio's aristocratic daughter Carmen Romero Rubio.

¹⁷⁸ Stacie G. Widdifield, *The Embodiment of the National in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexican Painting* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), 11–12.

¹⁷⁹ Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 29. For a selection of Díaz's portraits through time in which it is possible to see him depicted as increasingly white, see Esther Acevedo de Iturriaga, *Catálogo del retrato del siglo XIX en el Museo Nacional de Historia* (México, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1982), 49–52, and Moisés González Navarro, "Apoteosis del porfiriato" in Luis Gutiérrez Muñoz, ed., *Documentos gráficos para la historia de México*, vol. 1 (México: Editora del Sureste, 1985), 177.

¹⁸⁰ During the Porfiriato there were debates about where to locate the mortal remains of the heroes; some politicians argued for a National Pantheon because the cathedral was a religious site, while others argued for the capital's temple because it was central, monumental, and accessible. The relics remained in the cathedral until after the Revolution, when they were relocated to the Angel of Independence on Reforma Avenue. Esposito, *Funerals, Festivals, and Cultural Politics*, 187.

¹⁸¹ Here, I evoke Joseph Roach's conceptualization of surrogation as a relationship of memory, performance, and substitution in theatrical, musical, and ritual traditions in different cultures. Roach, 1–4.

the nation's theatre for the staging of, according to Don Porfirio, Mexico's social evolution and its national prototype: the mestizo.

The Gran desfile histórico: Performing Historical Evolution in the Center

In the Centenario's official chronicle, Genaro García begins his description of the September 15 morning pageant that performed Mexico's official history—the Gran desfile Histórico—with the following statement:

De todos los festejos del Centenario fué el que tuvo más laboriosa preparación, por la necesidad de elegir cuidadosamente las escenas históricas que habían de ser representadas en él, así como de reclutar en diversas comarcas del país el número de personajes indispensables y vestirlos de acuerdo con la indumentaria de las distintas épocas que iban á figurar en los cuadros proyectados; pero allanadas por la Comisión del Centenario cuantas dificultades surgieron, se formuló el programa, que, impreso, circuló profusamente y fué reproducido por la prensa toda del país para mejor inteligencia del público.

[Of all the celebrations, the Historical Parade was the event that had the most laborious preparations because it required the careful selection of its historical scenes. It was necessary to recruit characters from the country's various regions and to dress them with the appropriate attire corresponding to the different eras to be represented in each scene. The Commission overcame all the difficulties that arose during the preparations and created the program, which, once printed, circulated widely and was reproduced by the press throughout the country for the public's better education.]¹⁸²

As García conveys in his introductory remark about the making of history, its authentic representation, recording, and dissemination were at the core of the centennial celebrations. He also makes clear that, due to the emphasis on historical accuracy, the planning and creation of this particular performance of Mexican history was a laborious and complicated enterprise. According to the records, José Casarín, Secretary of the National Commission and the Gran desfile's creator, worked intensely for over a year to reconstruct the parade's three great historical

¹⁸² García, *Crónica*, 138.

episodes—conquest, colony, and independence/present.¹⁸³ Like a dramaturg, Casarín devoted an intense period of time to research and study. According to García, in order to design and prepare each episode as realistically as possible, Casarín not only reviewed relevant records in the city archives, the national museum, and private collections, but also consulted nothing less than "todo lo que existe escrito en la historia del país" [all that has been written about the country's history].¹⁸⁴ He also took the time to confirm his findings and facts with renowned historians.¹⁸⁵ While García's chronicle and the Commission's report of the Centenario omit the details of Casarín's dramaturgical process, his achievement is indeed rendered as an historiographical triumph.¹⁸⁶ In the eyes of the National Commission and the Porfirian administration, Casarín emerged as a glorious auteur because he was able to represent what Tenorio-Trillo defines as Mexico's "comprehensive nationalistic history"¹⁸⁷ visually, spatially, and performatively.

As the Desfile's program indicates, Casarín's interpretation / performance of Mexico's past was divided into three great historical eras, with each illustrated through a specific and charged historical episode.¹⁸⁸ The first scene, "Moctezuma sale al encuentro de Cortés" [Moctezuma goes to meet Cortés], takes place during the time of the conquest and reenacts the

¹⁸³ *Memoria*, 44–45. Though José Casarín was the Desfile's creator, the Commission's president, Guillermo de Landa y Escandón was also influential. Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City," 98–99.

¹⁸⁴ *Memoria*, 45.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ It is recorded in the *Memoria* that the authors omitted the specifics of Casarín's research because it would be monotonous to the readers and it could be interpreted as a sign of vanity. Instead, they point at the chaos and difficulty of the process. *Memoria*, 45. It is unfortunate that the Comisión decided to not include Casarín's methodology as it could have been a valuable source for the analysis of Mexican historiography and performance. For this study however, I arrive at informed conclusions by placing the resulting product of his work—the *Desfile histórico*—within its contemporary historiographical context.

¹⁸⁷ Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 68.

¹⁸⁸ Comisión Nacional del Centenario de la Independencia, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 15 September 1910, Genaro García Collection, Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas, Austin. The program, without its illustrations, was transcribed in the *Memoria* when describing the *Desfile* and was used by Genaro García as the basis of his description in the *Crónica*. *Memoria*, 45–49. García, *Crónica*, 138–39. I base this introduction to the Desfile on the official program.

1519 meeting between the Mexica leader and the Spanish conqueror.¹⁸⁹ The encounter scene constituted the Desfile's largest and most elaborate section. It was composed of eight hundred and thirty-nine participants divided into two main groups: Moctezuma's entourage and Cortés's soldiers and allies. Accompanied by an array of native performers representing different social groups from Tenochtitlán and the surrounding area of the lake-valley (e.g., warriors, priests, ministers, servants, and some women), a group of nobles transported Moctezuma in an adorned palanquin to meet Cortés. The second historical episode, "Paseo del pendón" [Parade of the Royal Banner], was set during the colonial period and performed the parade of the royal banner that was celebrated every August 13th on Saint Hippolytus's day.¹⁹⁰ The scene was composed of two hundred and eighty-eight participants performing as the viceroy, *alférez real* [official standard bearer of the royal banner], *oidores* [judges], *alcalde* [city's chief magistrate], royal and city guards, representatives of the religious orders, and indigenous leaders from the districts of Santiago Tlatelolco and San Juan Tenochtitlán. Lastly, besides the historical reenactment of the 1821 triumphal entry into Mexico City of Agustín de Iturbide and his army—the occasion that marked the achievement of independence—the third episode, "Epoca de la independencia y época actual" [Independence and Present Periods], included a procession of allegorical carts honoring national heroes, historical episodes, and national symbols.¹⁹¹

The three scenes of the Gran desfile histórico departed in order from the Plaza de Reforma, continued through Juárez and San Francisco Avenues towards the Zócalo, and ended in front of the Palacio Nacional. Similar to the previous day's Gran procesión cívica, Porfirio Díaz

¹⁸⁹ Although the program and historians up to this point called Moctezuma the "Aztec Emperor," I refer to him as the Mexica leader. The terms Aztec and Emperor are inaccurate and reveal the official appropriation and colonialist interpretation of pre-Hispanic history, a point to which I later return in this section.

¹⁹⁰ This colonial parade is the subject of this dissertation's second chapter.

¹⁹¹ Unlike the Desfile's first two groups, the third one does not have a title in the program nor includes the number of participants. When I refer to it, I take its periodization from the program: "Epoca de la independencia y época actual" [Independence and Present Periods]. Comisión Nacional, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 14–15.

witnessed the Desfile histórico from the National Palace's presidential balcony. The president was accompanied by his secretary of state, foreign representatives, diplomats, and, as recorded by García, "las más distinguidas familias de la Capital" [the most distinguished families of the Capital].¹⁹² According to the *Memoria*, two hundred thousand spectators filled the adorned streets of downtown Mexico City and the Zócalo.¹⁹³

Like the Gran procesión cívica, the National Commission organized the Gran desfile histórico and financed it through private and federal funds; but, unlike the Civic Procession, the Historical Parade was an expensive affair because it required numerous elaborate costumes, scenographic displays, allegorical carts, and a cast of over a thousand.¹⁹⁴ The National Commission appointed its secretary José Casarín as the director of the committee in charge of the Desfile. The committee was formed by General Manuel Sánchez Rivera; Coronel Raúl Lalanne; Legislators Juan de Pérez Galvez, Francisco J. Ituarte, and Constancio Peña Idiáquez; and Manuel Migoni, Octaviano Licéaga, Wenceslao Cervantes, and Alberto Zamacona.¹⁹⁵ The committee hired large numbers of participants from different regions of the country to take part in the different historical scenes. They also hired costume and prop-makers such as Medardo J. Tapia, who made all the costumes and properties for the encounter scene between Moctezuma and Cortés.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹² García, *Crónica*, 140.

¹⁹³ *Memoria*, 45.

¹⁹⁴ The cost of the Gran desfile histórico (\$38, 302.19 MP) was about thirty-five times more than the Gran procesión cívica (\$1,845.38MP). *Memoria*, 103–4.

¹⁹⁵ Comisión Nacional, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 16.

¹⁹⁶ The only evidence that I found about the personnel behind the Desfile's scenes are two contracts between Mr. Tapia and the National Commission regarding the making of the costumes and props for the first scene of the Desfile histórico. It is unclear if he was an artist from the theatre profession. "Contrato celebrado entre el Secretario de la Comisión del Centenario de la Independencia, por una parte; y por otra el señor D. Medardo J. Tapia, para la confección de 1,125.00 trajes para el Desfile Histórico á que se refiere el Programa," [Contract arranged between, on the one hand by the Secretary of the Commission of the Centennial of the Independence and on the other by Mr. D. Medardo J. Tapia for creating 1,125.00 costumes for the Historical Parade to which the program refers] and "Contrato celebrado entre la C.N. de C. de la Independencia y el señor D.M. Tapia" [Contract arranged between the

The Desfile's program served as a guidebook for audiences and illustrated the organizers' historical, aesthetic, and political agenda (fig. 3.22). Through its distribution, audiences were able to have a preview of the Desfile's spatial and visual narrative to be performed in the center of Mexico City as well as a summary of the background story of each episode. The program included the group's narrative and organization as well as colored sketches of the parade's different characters. Its distribution and publication in the newspapers one week before the Gran desfile further underscored the Porfirian goal of creating a national consciousness through history and its visualization. Interestingly, while this proves that Porfirian ideologues realized that a general nationalistic history was necessary, as Tenorio-Trillo observes, "for the consolidation of the nation as a proof of stability and civilization" and that "such a history had to be taught and disseminated if a national consciousness was to form," in practice it was never taught to Mexico's largely rural and illiterate heterogeneous societies, who remained largely rural and illiterate.¹⁹⁷ Instead, Porfirians focused on exhibiting Mexico's official history to the ruling elite and international audiences as it was displayed through the Gran desfile.¹⁹⁸

In the exhibition and performance of Mexico's new historical synthesis, the scene of the encounter between Moctezuma and Cortés was the most detailed and extensive among the three historical periods. Casarín opened the Desfile's program with a dramatic and romantic portrayal of the pageant's background story. He described Cortés's approach to Tenochtitlán during the first days of November, 1519: how, after having travelled through several towns, the conqueror and his troops encountered Tenochtitlán's great beauty and monumentality created by its many

C.N. of C. of the Independence and Mr. D.M. Tapia]. AGN GOB, 127–28, Comisión Nacional del Centenario, Memoria.

¹⁹⁷ Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 68.

¹⁹⁸ Ironically, it was only after the Revolution (1910–1921) that the Porfirian ideal of an homogeneous country that shared one language, one history, and one culture was instilled through public education. Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and Indigenismo," 80–4.

temples, its transparent lakes, and its exuberant vegetation.¹⁹⁹ Moctezuma, richly dressed and accompanied by his large cortege, prepared for and proceeded to meet Cortés.

In the Desfile, the encounter scene began with Moctezuma and his entourage traveling to the Zócalo—Tenochtitlán's former ceremonial center. Moctezuma's group was divided into twelve different types or characters in the following processional order: nineteen Mexican warriors with banners; a great captain accompanied by eight warriors with insignias; fifty Mexican warriors; thirty-eight priests; lords of Texcoco, Ixtapalapa, Coyoacán, and Tlacopan accompanied by twenty sun lords; fifteen nobles and great lords; twenty Indian women escorted by six warriors with banners and two *caballeros tigres* [tiger lords];²⁰⁰ servants carrying rugs for Moctezuma to walk on; ten ministers with golden sticks; Moctezuma in his palanquin led by two great gentleman and four nobles carrying large fans and surrounded by fifty lords; another fifty lords near Moctezuma; a group of priest-warriors escorting the Mexica leader; and seventy-two Mexican warriors with their respective chiefs (figs. 3.23–3.25).²⁰¹ Moctezuma's group alone added four hundred performers.

In order to portray what the organizers considered real, authentic, and historically accurate, Casarín sent delegates to different states—Oaxaca, San Luis Potosí, Tlaxcala, Morelos, and Chiapas—to find Indians for the parade.²⁰² He then dressed them as dictated by his research.

¹⁹⁹ Casarín writes that Cortés was accompanied by four hundred Spaniards and seven thousand Indian allies and that they traveled through the towns of Amecameca, Tlamanalco, Ayotzingo, and Chalco, and when arriving in Ixtapalapa, Cuitlahuac, Moctezuma's brother received and accommodated them. In Chalco, Cacama, the king of Texcoco, offered him rich presents in Moctezuma's name. Comisión Nacional, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 1–4; *Memoria*, 45–46.

²⁰⁰ According to the Desfile's photographs, the *caballeros tigres* wore costumes similar to traditional pre-conquest warrior body-suits. The costumes resembled eagles and jaguars that natives wore during wartime and religious ceremonies.

²⁰¹ Comisión Nacional, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 7–9. *Memoria*, 47.

²⁰² While I was unable to find this reference in the National Archives, Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo refers to an account in which it is recorded that Casarín "wrote to the governor of Tlaxcala, Próspero Cahuantzi, an Indian himself, requesting 110 Tlaxcalan Indians to join the representation of Cortés meeting Moctezuma." He also requested 250 Indians from the governor of San Luis Potosí, Manuel Sánchez Rivero and twenty Indian women. Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City," 99.

While there are no records of any sort of payment to the natives, they did have some agency in deciding whether or not to go to Mexico City, as the following case of the Indians from Morelos demonstrates. After agreeing to send two hundred and fifty natives to participate in the pageant, the governor of Morelos had to later excuse them. He explained to Casarín that the Indians had decided not to travel to the capital for fear that they would be sent to San Luis Potosí where there was an armed conflict underway.²⁰³ Thus, while on the one hand natives were selected and pressed to participate, they succeeded in resisting when they did not consider it safe. Their Desfile costumes varied according to the social and political rank of their characters. Moctezuma and his nobles wore decorated tunics and headpieces; lower-ranking warriors and servants wore plain and short tunics with *huaraches* [sandals]. Important warriors carried decorated shields and wore elaborate headpieces with feathers. The group of caballeros tigras appeared wearing the traditional pre-Hispanic eagle and jaguar warrior body-suits known as *tlahuiztli* (in solid colors or with jaguar spots).²⁰⁴

Cortés's procession was divided into seven different types of characters in the following processional order: six soldiers with shotguns mounted on horses and twenty infantrymen; men with drums and trumpets; crossbowmen; Hernán Cortés accompanied by his distinguished captains and Malintzin (Doña Marina known as Malinche), the first Indian woman (and Cortés's lover and mother of one of his sons) to be converted to Christianity; friars and servants; more soldiers armed with guns; and Cortés's warrior allies from Tlaxcala.²⁰⁵ To create a sense of historical accuracy, Casarín looked for Spaniards in various Spanish organizations and social

²⁰³ Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City," 99, n. 81.

²⁰⁴ I refer to this costume in its original historical context in the first chapter of this dissertation.

²⁰⁵ Comisión Nacional, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 10; *Memoria*, 47.

clubs to perform in the Desfile histórico.²⁰⁶ Cortés and his captains marched on horseback and were dressed in sixteenth-century armor. Spanish soldiers wore simpler outfits: friars and servants dressed according to sixteenth-century clothing (figs. 3.26, 3.27).

The encounter between Spaniards and Mexicas was dramatically spatialized through their use of the *Zócalo*. Upon arriving at the main square through San Francisco Avenue, Moctezuma's group turned right, paraded in front of the *portales* [porticoes] on the west side of the plaza, continued in front of the city hall on the south side, and stopped in front of the Palacio Nacional. The procession then waited for Cortés below the presidential balcony, where Díaz watched the parade.²⁰⁷ Mirroring Moctezuma's use of the plaza, Cortés and his troops approached the Presidential Palace's balcony from the other side of the plaza, where the cathedral is located. Serving as Cortés's scenographical background, the cathedral evoked the role of the church and the colonial evangelization process.

Once in front of the Palacio Nacional, the actors playing Moctezuma and Cortés enacted the encounter scene as an elaborate ritual based in popular myth. It was generally believed that Moctezuma had transferred his empire to Cortés, believing that he was Quetzalcóatl—the legendary Toltec priest who had promised a return to claim his lands and peoples after having been ousted before the Mexicas arrived at the center of Mexico in the fourteenth century.²⁰⁸ While his servants covered the floor with rugs and his delegation bowed, Moctezuma walked toward Cortés. The conqueror descended from his horse and bowed. Moctezuma responded by

²⁰⁶ Tenorio-Trillo refers to letters to the Centro Vasco, Asturiano and Castellano. Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City," 99.

²⁰⁷ Comisión Nacional, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 7; *Memoria*, 47.

²⁰⁸ It has been long debated if Moctezuma really thought that Cortés was the returning god Quetzalcóatl. In his study of Spanish imperialism, Anthony Pagden demonstrates how, most probably a clever fabrication of Cortés, the myth was linked to a biblical past that was popularized and accepted during colonial times. See Anthony Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 91–116. For a study on the Catholic cult of Quetzalcóatl, see D.A. Brading, "Quetzalcóatl and Guadalupe," in *Prophecy and Myth*, 28–31.

kissing the ground. Then Cortés tried to embrace him, but the natives informed the Spaniard that Moctezuma could not be touched because of his divine status. The leaders exchanged necklaces, and then Moctezuma ordered his delegation to offer Cortés his presents. These consisted of different kinds of flowers and birds with bright and colorful plumages. Moctezuma's brother offered Cortés his arm, and they continued the march, followed by Moctezuma and both delegations. In this way, this scene of Moctezuma's voluntary surrender of his domains and sovereignty conveyed the conquest and colonization as legitimate enterprises *and* the Mexica past as Mexico's official and exclusive pre-Hispanic heritage. Also, I argue that this scene homogenized indigeneity because Casarín cast natives from different regions to play only as Mexicas.

The encounter scene represented the Porfirian interpretation of the conquest as the origin of the Mexican nation and of the Mexican people. This interpretation of the conquest, still in circulation today, resulted from the nineteenth-century historians' search for a solution to the dilemma of Mexico's Spanish and indigenous past and its Indian present. In the first comprehensive history of the nation, the *Historia de Méjico*, published in 1849, royalist historian Lucas Alamán portrays the Spanish conquest as a *tabula rasa* that erased the pre-Hispanic past, and as the antecedent of the Mexican nation.²⁰⁹ Even though Alamán's colonialist position was not popular among liberal historians, his view of the beginnings of Mexico proved to be lasting. In the 1870s liberals like Manuel Payno emphasized and romanticized the indigenous past and characterized pre-Hispanic natives as brave and noble.²¹⁰ In his history of Mexico's pre-Hispanic

²⁰⁹ Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 67; Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico* (México: Impr. J. M. Lara, 1849). Alamán's royalist connections and celebration of the Spanish colony are portrayed in his Spanish spelling of Mexico.

²¹⁰ Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 67; Manuel Payno, *Compendio de la historia de México para el uso de los establecimientos de instrucción pública de la República Mexicana* (México: Imprenta de F. Díaz de Leon, 1876).

era, included in the monumental five-volume compendium *México a través de los siglos* [Mexico through the Centuries] from 1889, Alfredo Chavero foregrounded the Indian past and the significance of the Mexica culture while claiming that the present Indian race had degenerated.²¹¹ Thus, from Chavero's point of view, the Indian past was not comparable to the state of the present natives. It was Justo Sierra who achieved the historical synthesis and reconciliation between the Indian and the Spanish heritages by portraying both as equally important, and by claiming that, "[w]e are born of the Conquest; our roots are in the land where the aborigines lived and in the soil of Spain."²¹²

The Desfile's encounter scene between Moctezuma and Cortés performed Sierra's interpretation of the conquest through the use of space. The Spaniards and Indians approached the plaza from opposite directions, and thus appeared as equally fundamental to the reenactment of the nation's beginnings. Moreover, the prominence of Malintzin, Cortés's Indian translator, also foregrounded Sierra's concept of the mestizo as the nation's predecessor. As Cortés and Malinche were considered the stock figures of a Spanish man and an Indian woman, they represented the foundational mestizo drama of the union between the races.

The Desfile's first scene also provided an opportunity for the exhibition of the "Aztec Empire" as the nation's only pre-Hispanic past. The appropriation and revision of the history of the Mexicas and of Nahuatl culture was a process of identity formation and political legitimization that started during colonial times, continued after independence, and accelerated during the

²¹¹ Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 70; Vicente Riva Palacio, ed. *México a través de los siglos: historia general y completa del desenvolvimiento social, político, religioso, militar, artístico, científico y literario de México: desde la antigüedad más remota hasta la época actual*, vol. 1. (1888–89; repr., México: Editorial Cumbre, 1958). Alfredo Chavero was an historian, archaeologist, and playwright who romanticized the Indian past. Some of his plays based on indigenous motifs include *Xóchitl: drama en tres actos y en verso* [Xóchitl: Drama in Verse and Three Acts] (México: G.A. Esteva, 1878) and *Quetzalcóatl: ensayo trágico en tres actos y en verso original* [Quetzalcóatl: Tragic Essay in Original Verse and Three Acts] (México: Impr. De Jens y Zapiain, 1877).

²¹² Sierra, *The Political Evolution*, 62. For a critical analysis of nineteenth-century Mexican historiography and individual studies of the conquest, see Victor Rico González, *Hacia un concepto de la conquista en México* (México, D.F.: Instituto de Historia, UNAM, 1953).

Porfiriato. As Anthony Pagden has written, in order to identify themselves with a culture other than the one dictated by Spain, humanist criollos in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries interpreted the indigenous past by associating it with classical Greece and Rome as well as with Christian theology.²¹³ Similarly, during the nineteenth century and throughout the Porfiriato, official intellectuals and artists mythologized the Indian past and aestheticized it in a neoclassic fashion, even as they negated the conditions of their Indian present.

In fact, in order to emphasize the distance between indigenous past and present, the criollo Jesuit Francisco Javier Clavijero introduced the name Aztec, a name that has been incorrectly used ever since when referring to the Mexicas of Tenochtitlán and Nahua culture in general.²¹⁴ The term Aztec connotes a national unity that did not actually exist; Moctezuma was the leader of a loose alliance of three ethnic groups (Mexica, Tepeneca, and Alcohua), and people of the central region spoke Náhuatl.²¹⁵ The use of the word Aztec to describe all natives homogenizes different indigenous groups and implies their subordination to the center. As Pagden states, the term Aztec allowed the criollos to "simply ignore the presence of the modern Indian as unrepresentative both in name and behavior of anything that his culture had once

²¹³ For example, Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora used the Mexica heritage and interpreted it through iconography in the triumphal arches for the official entrance into Mexico City of the new viceroy of New Spain in 1680. Sigüenza y Góngora also established links between the Mexica past and the criollos in his treatise *Teatro de virtudes políticas* [The Theatre of Political Virtues]. In the late colonial period, Francisco Javier Clavijero argued that the indigenous past could serve Mexicans in the same way that ancient Greece and Rome had served Europeans. For these and more references of appropriations of the pre-Hispanic past and its culture during colonial times, see Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism*, 92–104; Anthony Pagden, "Fabricating Identity in Spanish America," *History Today* 42, no. 5 (1992): 44–49; and Angel Rama, *The Lettered City*, trans. John Charles Chasteen (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 16–28. The criollos' process of appropriation and interpretation of pre-Hispanic culture in search of an authentic identity has come to be referred as "criollo patriotism." And for this phenomenon during the movements of independence in Latin America, see D.A. Brading, "Classical Republicanism and Creole Patriotism: Simón Bolívar (1783–1830) and the Spanish American Revolution," in *Prophecy and Myth*, 37–53.

²¹⁴ Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism*, 104.

²¹⁵ The Spanish word Azteca [Aztec] comes from the Náhuatl *aztecatl*, which means "coming from Aztlán." Aztlán is the name of the mythical homeland of the different ethnic groups established in the central valley of Mexico. Aztlán is supposedly located somewhere in what is now the US southwest.

been."²¹⁶ Since criollos did not want to identify themselves with their contemporary Indians but rather use their history, they appropriated the Mexica past, re-named it, and made it acceptable to the colonial and royal authorities. During the Porfiriato, historians like Chavero employed social Darwinism to prove the Mexicas' superiority to the rest of the pre-Hispanic cultures, arguing that they had evolved into the most perfect and powerful civilization of pre-Hispanic times.²¹⁷

Similar to the Desfile's first scene, the official interpretation of the Mexica past as a civilization worthy of respect produced several artistic artifacts to be exhibited to international audiences during the Porfiriato. The Mexican pavilion of the 1889 Paris Universal Exhibition, named the Aztec Palace, portrayed the epoch's neoclassic and romantic interpretation of the Mexica past as Mexico's only ancient history.²¹⁸ In a neoindigenist style, the designers Antonio Peñafiel and Antonio de Anza reproduced a *teocalli* [Mexica temple] and fused elements of Mexica architecture with a neoclassic style. For example, they adorned the palace's façade with sculptures of Mexica heroes resembling classical columns (fig. 3.28).²¹⁹ Two of the paintings exhibited in the palace stand out for the artists' classicizing of pre-Hispanic scenes. In *El descubrimiento del pulque* [The Discovery of the Pulque] (1869), José Obregón portrays the pre-Hispanic legend of Tula's ruler Tecpancaltzin, receiving the first cup of *pulque* [liquor extracted from maguey] from Xóchitl (fig. 3.29). As Stacie G. Widdifield shows, Obregón's painting "stands out as an example of molding Greeks from Indians" in that it resembles "a stage set with a dramatic throne scene, with actors dressed up as Indians."²²⁰ In *El senado de Tlaxcala* [The Senate of Tlaxcala] (mid-1870's), painter Rodrigo Gutiérrez suggests a classical institution by

²¹⁶ Pagden, *Spanish Imperialism*, 104. On the inaccuracy of the term "empire" see this dissertation's first chapter.

²¹⁷ Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 70.

²¹⁸ For a detailed study of the Aztec Palace and related art, see "The Aztec Palace in the History of Mexico" and "Mexican Art and Architecture in Paris," in Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 64–80, 96–125.

²¹⁹ Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 75–77. Jesús F. Contreras, who created the sculptures of the Aztec Palace, designed the statue of Cuauhtémoc on Reforma Avenue in a similarly neoindigenist style. For a description and analysis, see Tenenbaum, 135–41.

²²⁰ Widdifield, *The Embodiment of the National*, 100–1.

portraying Tlaxcalan rulers in a Roman-style senate discussing whether or not to join Cortés (fig. 3.30).²²¹ Both paintings, the Aztec palace, and the Desfile's encounter scene sought to assimilate the Indian past by elevating it to European neoclassical standards.

The Desfile's encounter scene was a performance that exhibited Mexico's modern nationalism through the organizers' insistence on the country's pre-Hispanic past—the modeling ingredient of the official and commercial image of Mexico. Tenorio-Trillo concluded that Mexican nationalism became part of western civilization during the Porfiriato because it was cosmopolitan and singular.²²² Mexican nationalism became cosmopolitan as it adhered to a European set of values, such as established patterns of beauty, coherent and optimistic national histories, and the appreciation of the exotic.²²³ It was singular because it was indigenist—it celebrated ancient local culture. The Porfirian fascination with and abuse of the Mexica past became the ruling principle of a wide number of artistic representations intended to convey Mexico's history.

The Desfile's next two historical groups, "Paseo del pendón" and "Epoca de la independencia y época actual," represented the colonial and independence periods of Mexico's historical synthesis. Evoking the non-conflictive narrative embedded in Reforma Avenue and its monuments, the three chapters of Mexico's history performed, as Tenorio-Trillo writes, "the ideal of a patriotic history," one that "made the nation possible and durable."²²⁴ While the encounter

²²¹ Instead of Europeanizing Indian faces, bodies, and garments, Rodrigo Gutiérrez alludes to classicism through the scene itself: its set, placement of characters, and gestures. Widdifield, *The Embodiment of the National*, 103. Both paintings form part of the newly defined genre of national history painting and were purchased by the government to exhibit at fairs and other special occasions. Also see Stacie G. Widdifield, "Dispossession, Assimilation, and the Image of the Indian in Late-Nineteenth-Century Mexican Painting," *Art Journal* 49, no. 2 (1990): 126–28, and Tenorio-Trillo's section on "Mexican Art and Architecture," in *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 96–124.

²²² Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs*, 250.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 4–6, 83.

²²⁴ Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City," 97–98. In his article about the Centenario, Tenorio-Trillo describes how Mexico's national history represented in Reforma avenue through its statues and monuments (Chapultepec, El Angel, Cuauhtémoc, Colón, Charles IV, Juárez, and the Zócalo) could be read from the Zócalo to Chapultepec or the

scene between Moctezuma and Cortés represented the beginnings of the nation and its modern identity, the Desfile's second and third groups contributed to the overall rendition of Mexico's evolutionary history.

The second group performed Casarín's interpretation of the Paseo del pendón, the subject of this dissertation's second chapter. Casarín based this scene vaguely on the 1721 Paseo, historically unique because it was the only one during the colonial period that included natives. Casarín narrates how the procession picked up the royal banner from the city council building, paraded it to Saint Hyppolitus's church on the western outskirts of the city, circled back to the center where the viceroy raised the banner, and returned it to the city council.²²⁵ In the Desfile, the group arrived in the Zócalo and took the banner from the city council building.²²⁶ Actors playing the viceroy, alférez real, and oidores then raised it on to a decorated platform in front of Díaz.²²⁷ As it was traditionally done, the procession was headed by the viceroy at the center, the alférez real on his left, and the oldest oidor on his right—the three of them mounted on horses and accompanied by royal guards on foot. The actors had eighteenth-century European wigs and outfits: breeches, stockings, shirts with ruffles, and coats (fig. 3.31).

The third and last group, "Epoca de la independencia y época actual," began with two allegorical floats celebrating Hidalgo and Morelos. A reenactment of Iturbide's historical 1821 entry into the city followed. The parade ended with three more floats, the last symbolizing peace. There were a total of five carts and one historical reenactment. The actor playing the criollo General Agustín de Iturbide marched triumphantly towards the Palacio Nacional, followed by his Ejército Trigarante [Army of the Three Guarantees], all wearing nineteenth-century military

other way around. He writes, "the Paseo de la Reforma told the same story, fulfilling the ideal of a patriotic history: to make history a perfect unmistakable palindrome, with no conflicts or contradictions." Ibid.

²²⁵ Comisión Nacional, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 11–13; *Memoria*, 48.

²²⁶ Comisión Nacional, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 12; *Memoria*, 48.

²²⁷ Comisión Nacional, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 12; *Memoria*, 48.

costumes (fig. 3.32).²²⁸ As in 1821, Iturbide and other actors representing Generals Vicente Guerrero, Manuel Mier y Terán, Guadalupe Victoria, and Anastacio Bustamante, all on horseback, paraded through the city's decorated streets.²²⁹ The Ejército Trigarante was conformed by actors impersonating soldiers of the various regiments that Iturbide brought together in order to achieve independence.²³⁰

The third scene concluded the Desfile by bringing into the foreground peace and reconciliation—a self-congratulatory gesture by the National Commission and Díaz. By including the controversial celebration of Iturbide's triumphal entry into the capital, the organizers related the images of Iturbide and Díaz as figures that brought peace to the country. As I discussed earlier, the central debate over the 1821 declaration of independence's meaning revolved around commemorative dates and their significance. The liberals supported September 16th (Hidalgo's grito) as the most important day to celebrate independence; the conservatives pushed to replace it with September 27th (Iturbide's entry). Backed up by the conservative criollos, Iturbide acted as a reconciliatory figure among the various coalitions and armies, and signed the declaration of independence. Although September 16th would eventually be recognized as the official national holiday, the conservatives continuously pressed to include September 27th as well.²³¹ In 1823 after Iturbide's outset and the republic's establishment, September 27th ceased to be celebrated; in 1837 it was again included; and in 1864 Emperor Maximilian I abolished it. By including both dates, the Desfile's organizers underscored Díaz's reconciliatory approach to politics and history.

²²⁸ Comisión Nacional del Centenario, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 14–15; *Memoria*, 49.

²²⁹ *Memoria*, 49.

²³⁰ The regiments were royal armies as well as armies of rebels from different states. *Memoria*, 49.

²³¹ Fernández Tejedo and Nava Nava, 31.

The group's allegorical floats worked as closing visual statements of the Desfile's pictorial dramaturgy. The five carts had a similar neoclassic and romantic design and represented heroes of independence, historical events, or national allegories.²³² The first float was composed of a bust of Hidalgo, statues of Winged Victory, and a lion. The second carried a tableau vivant created by a statue of Morelos being crowned by Winged Victory and surrounded by women dressed in Greek togas. The third had a tableau that represented the siege of Cuautla—an armed conflict during the war of independence—and was composed of a boulder, a winged angel, cannons, and men wearing period costumes. The fourth, decorated with plants from the state of Tabasco, allegorized the triumph of liberty and carried yet more women in white togas. The last float allegorized peace. It had a classical pedestal with four women wearing Greek dresses representing history, fame, liberty, and war. The carts were pulled by horses and men dressed in eclectic combinations of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century period costumes, and were adorned with bunting, plants, and additional sculptural elements (figs. 3.33–3.37). The city's buildings were decorated with images of the heroes of independence, arches, written mottos, flowers, flags, and buntings that complemented the procession's patriotic motif and served as the background for the nation's historical drama.²³³

The Desfile's overall aesthetic corresponded to its historiographic project: to create a monumental and realistic narrative. Like the period's official art and theatre, the Gran desfile histórico had what Widdifield describes as "a ring of truth and documentation"²³⁴ that coincided

²³² I base my descriptions of the allegorical floats on Cárdenas Gutiérrez's collection and on the extant photographs. The five carts were donated by the following states: Hidalgo, Michoacán, Veracruz, Tabasco, and Sinaloa. Cárdenas Gutiérrez, 77–87.

²³³ The government paid for the city's decorations. Colored sketches of different designs for the streets' decorations are located in the city archives. AHDF, Centenario, *Bosquejos*, vol. 4753. There were also buntings with the flags of the visiting countries on the facades of some buildings. García, *Crónica*, 148.

²³⁴ I use Widdifield's aesthetic analysis of Félix Parra's painting *Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas* (1875) as a reference for how the art of the time and its detailed emphasis on historical accuracy provided the idea of truth. Widdifield, "Dispossession, Assimilation, and the Image of the Indian," 129.

with nineteenth-century European historicism.²³⁵ By portraying the Desfile as historically accurate and by using neoclassic and romantic visual languages, Casarín and his creative team transformed Mexico's narrative into a nationalistic and cosmopolitan enterprise accessible to local and international audiences. According to the official chronicle, audiences filled all available windows, roofs, halls, and entrances, as well as the center's sidewalks, to witness the embodiment of Mexico's historical episodes.²³⁶ The Zócalo, adorned with national motifs and busy with participants, denizens, and audiences, served as the country's main theatre for the performance of its official history. The great square became the nation's commemorative *and* historical center, in which the Centenario's organizers linked history, city, performance, and scenography to represent Mexico's historical synthesis.

Conclusion

On the night of the Desfile histórico that happily coincided with his eightieth birthday, Porfirio Díaz delivered the traditional grito from the Palacio Nacional's presidential balcony. After the bells of the National Cathedral marked the hour, Mexico's president emerged from the balcony wearing his military uniform and insignias, waved the flag and shouted: "¡Viva la libertad! ¡Viva la Independencia! ¡Vivan los héroes de la patria! ¡Viva la República! ¡Viva el pueblo mexicano!" [Long live liberty! Long live independence! Long live the national heroes! Long live the Republic! Long live the Mexican people!]. The tens of thousands of people gathered in the Zócalo and in the downtown area cheered and responded with more ¡Vivas! The

²³⁵ Another example of realistic and historically accurate interpretations of historical events during the Centenario includes the wax figures exhibition, which had different tableaux of historical episodes. García, *Crónica*, 119–20. Although it would be impossible to provide here an overview of the period's theatre, it is worth mentioning that the capital's main theatres staged historical dramas with realistic and historically accurate sets and costumes. For example, in the month of the Centenario the Arbeu Theatre staged *Nicolás Bravo*, a historical drama based on the life of the politician and soldier during the US invasion, and the Colón Theatre staged *El sueño de Iturbide* [Iturbide's Dream]. "Teatros," *Artes y Letras*, (September 4 and 11, 1910), n.p.

²³⁶ García, *Crónica*, 140.

official records indicate that it was a triumphant occasion for the president, his guests, and for the Mexican people. People celebrated all night in the illuminated plaza and surrounding streets with fireworks, music, and serenades.²³⁷ Ironically, Díaz's optimistic spectacle of the centennial anniversary of independence, spectacularized in the night of el grito, was a façade that also exposed fissures revealing the country's social and popular discontent.²³⁸ As I have shown in this chapter, Díaz and the National Commission desired to give an image of a prosperous, peaceful, and modern country to international audiences. For this, the organizers presented the country's Indian and peasant population either as assimilated individuals or as romanticized folkloric characters. While the celebration's official records rarely indicate that natives had agency in choosing to participate or not, there is no question that they were active in the provinces and resistant to an abusive government, as the Mexican Revolution itself testifies.

Even though the country was soon to be shaken by civic, popular, and rural uprisings lasting for the next eleven years, the Porfirian way of celebrating Mexico and Mexicans remained rooted in the *Zócalo*. The Centenario embodied not just specific celebratory practices but an image of a modern nation. The supporters of such fabrications tried to erase ethnic differences through a glorification of *mestizaje* while foregrounding a unique national past. As illustrated with the *Gran procesión cívica* and the *Gran desfile histórico*, Porfirians used, abused, and manipulated history, as well as past performative practices, in order to legitimize the regime. They wanted to associate Díaz with national heroes, thereby achieving Mexico's great historical synthesis. The modernized center, its main avenues, and the *Zócalo* became the nation's stage for its social and historical drama, which culminated in the president as the reconciliatory figure.

²³⁷ For a detailed description of the celebration of el grito during the Centenario and the city's illumination, see García, *Crónica*, 147–60.

²³⁸ There are records that there were small protests in the capital on that same night. Tenorio-Trillo, "1910 Mexico City," 78.

After the authorities transformed what used to be the commercial heart of the city into the country's commemorative center, the Zócalo became primarily and officially identified with national celebrations, historical performances, and patriotic rituals. Since then, presidents have celebrated as the Porfirians did. Indeed, Díaz molded the Palacio Nacional and its central balcony as the most important political place in the country (fig. 3.38).

Chapter Four

The Zócalo as a Counter-Space: The 2001 Zapatista Triumphal Entry into Mexico City

On March 11, 2001 Subcomandante Marcos of the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional [Zapatista Army of National Liberation or EZLN] addressed the people of Mexico from a stage erected in the Zócalo. With his back to the National Palace, he spoke to a vast gathering on behalf Mexico's indigenous populations:¹

Mexico City:

We have arrived.

We are here.

We are the National Indigenous Congress and Zapatistas who are, together, greeting you.

If the grandstand where we are is where it is, it is not by accident. It is because, from the very beginning, the government has been at our backs. Sometimes with artillery helicopters, sometimes with paramilitaries, sometimes with bomber planes, sometimes with war tanks, sometimes with soldiers, sometimes with the police, sometimes with offers for the buying and selling of consciences, sometimes with offers for surrenders, sometimes with lies, sometimes with strident statements, sometimes with forgetting, sometimes with expectant silences. Sometimes, like today, with impotent silences.

¹ Contemporary Mexico has a very diverse indigenous population. It numbers 12.7 million people, representing 13 percent of the overall national population. The 12.7 million speak sixty-two languages. Traditionally, indigenous populations have been identified by language but many have argued against such identification, noting that natives also speak Spanish. In 2000 there was a census of groups who speak indigenous languages; 84 percent also spoke Spanish. A 2005 study shows that a small number of natives remain monolingual. Even though the EZLN does not have representatives from all Mexico's indigenous populations, it is now considered the voice of Mexico's Indian populations. The UN Refugee Agency, "World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples, Mexico: Indigenous Peoples," Publication Date, 2008, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/topic,463af2212,469f2e812,49749ce423,0,,,html> (accessed April 13, 2012). On March 3, 2001, and during the EZLN's march into Mexico City, the Tercer congreso nacional indígena [Third National Indigenous Congress or CNI] was held in Nurío, Michoacán, with representatives from forty indigenous peoples from all over the country. They supported the EZLN and Marcos mentioned them in his speech in the Zócalo. The indigenous groups were: Amuzgo, Cora, Cuicateco, Chiapa, Chinanteco, Chocholteco, Chol, Chontal, Guarijío, Huasteco, Huave, Kikapú, Kukapa, Mam, Matlazinka, Mayo, Maya, Mazahua, Mazateco, Mixe, Mixteco, Náhuatl, ñahñhú, O'odham, Pape, Popoluca, Rarámuri, Purépecha, Tenek, Tlahuica, Tlapaneco, Tojobal, Totonaco, Trique, Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Wixaritari-Huichol, Yaqui, Zapoteco, and Zoque. Gloria Muñoz Ramírez, *The Fire and the Word: A History of the Zapatista Movement*, trans. Laura Carlsen and Alejandro Reyes Arias (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2008), 217–18; Subcomandante Marcos, "The People of the Color of the Earth," trans. Irlandesa, in *The Zapatista Reader*, ed. Tom Hayden (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press/Nation Books, 2002), 108–11. It is through the Zapatista movement that for the first time the majority of Mexico's indigenous groups came together under one cause.

Our word says one single thing. Our looking looks at one single thing: the constitutional recognition of indigenous rights and culture. A dignified place for the color of the earth.

It is the hour of the Indian peoples, of the color of the earth, of all the colors we are below, and all of the colors we are in spite of the color of money.

We are rebels because the land rebels if someone is selling and buying it as if the land did not exist, as if the color of the earth did not exist.

MEXICO CITY:

We are here. We are here as the rebellious color of the earth which shouts:

Democracy!

Liberty!

*Justice!*²

Marcos's speech marked the Zapatistas' triumphal entry into Mexico City. The Zapatistas are in their majority members of indigenous communities originating in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas, and the EZLN acts as their military arm. After having traveled for two weeks from Chiapas and through twelve states (a distance of 3,700 miles), the Zapatista caravan arrived in the Zócalo to establish a dialogue with Mexico City's inhabitants and to promote constitutional rights for the indigenous peoples. Echoing triumphal entries stretching back centuries, the crowds gathered in the capital's streets to celebrate the arrival of the Zapatistas into the megalopolis's center. The procession's march into the capital, known as the *Marcha por la dignidad indígena* [March for Indigenous Dignity] and also as the *Marcha por el color de la tierra* [March for the Color of the Earth], was the largest gathering of indigenous peoples ever to amass in Mexico's central square.

Through their peaceful procession into the city and occupation of the Zócalo, the unarmed Zapatistas, along with a multitude of sympathizers, reclaimed the streets of Mexico City. In his lyrical speech, Marcos contrasted the Zapatistas' physical presence in the Zócalo to

² The Zapatista Communiqué of March 11, 2001 at the Zócalo is substantially longer. I included the sections that are most relevant for this chapter. For the full version in English, see Subcomandante Marcos, "The People of the Color of the Earth," 106–14. For the original in Spanish, see Reinhard Krüger, ed., *México insurgente: los Zapatistas y la marcha por la dignidad indígena 24 febrero–11 marzo del 2001*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Weilder, 2001), 218–25.

the indigenous absence from the country's capital by saying that "the Indian peoples, [are] the first inhabitants, the first talkers, the first listeners. Those who, being first, are the last to appear and to perish..."³ Through this statement, Marcos also invoked the conquest by suggesting that the natives were the first who settled on that site, and who, after five hundred years of colonization, now gathered to demand justice. Marcos added that the EZLN delegates in the Zócalo represented all the Zapatista indigenous communities, "their persistent shadow, their silent strength, their memory risen,"⁴ thus relating the Marcha to past and present indigenous resistance in the country.

The Marcha was an unprecedented opportunity to officially address Mexico's unfinished debt to its indigenous peoples, and while the government ultimately ignored the natives' demands, the Zapatistas gained massive support in Mexico City. Through their performative action, the Zapatistas captured, visibly and physically, a place for Mexico's marginalized Indians. I characterize the Zapatistas' march into the Zócalo as a performative action, because there was a clear and defined audience, composed of national and international sympathizers for the choreographed entry, and because the Zapatistas used their processional route and the square's symbolisms in strategic and theatrical ways. The Zapatistas came to the Zócalo in order to be seen, heard, and have their demands politically and culturally acknowledged. They did not seek power or independence from Mexico, but instead wanted recognition as indigenous communities within the nation. By speaking in Mexico's public square in front of the palace, the Zapatistas made their demands known, with around two hundred thousand supporters as witnesses. As Marcos stated at the end of his speech: "We did not come to tell you what to do, or to guide you along any path. We came in order to humbly, respectfully, ask you to help us. For you to not

³ Subcomandante Marcos, "The People of the Color of the Earth," 108.

⁴ Ibid.

allow another day to dawn without this flag having an honorable place for [us] who are the color of the earth."⁵

This final chapter examines the 2001 Zapatistas' triumphal entry into Mexico City as this dissertation's counter-example. In contrast to previous chapters where I studied how indigenous participation was mediated and/or manipulated in official commemorations, here I discuss this recent event when natives took over the Zócalo. I focus on the Zapatistas' scenographic, symbolic, and tactical use of the Zócalo to demonstrate its potential as a site of liberation. I argue that the Zapatistas redefined the Zócalo as a counter-space of indigenous resistance. By evoking the way governments have traditionally used the square, the Zapatistas disturbed the Zócalo's official meaning as the space most representative of a homogeneous nation. According to Henri Lefebvre, a counter-space produces a difference in spatial reality. It is a space against homogeneity, "against power and the arrogance of power."⁶ Although Lefebvre discusses the production of these spaces within and against modern urban planning, I refer to his concept from a performative point of view.⁷ If the Zapatistas' spatial use of the Zócalo is related to the square's official character, then it can be said that an indigenous counter-space was created at that moment.

The questions this chapter addresses include: How do we explain the Zapatistas' strategic and theatrical use of the Zócalo when speaking with their backs turned to the National Palace? In which specific ways did they address the square's symbolism and history? What spatial and performative tools did the Zapatistas use during their procession, in order to render it triumphal? Taking as my point of departure Jill Lane's analysis of Ricardo Dominguez's Electronic

⁵ Ibid., 113–14. Marcos refers to The Zócalo's present scenography which includes one of the country's largest national flags in its center. Daily, the enormous flag is raised and taken down in military ceremonies. It is 328 feet high and weighs 772 pounds.

⁶ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 382.

⁷ Ibid., 381–82.

Disturbance Theatre (EDT) and their work in support of the Zapatista cause, I expand on her premise that the Zapatistas and the EDT "rely on simulation to create a disruptive ('disturbing') presence in the material, social, and discursive contexts in which they operate."⁸ While Lane focuses on the EDT's digital disturbance on the internet, she acknowledges the Zapatistas' traditional use of material tactics that undermine "the discursive norms and realities of the system as a whole."⁹ For example, the Zapatistas' use of identical black ski masks is a theatrical choice that upsets the government's ethnocentric discourse through which, as Lane states, "indigenous communities have been made socially invisible."¹⁰ I thus analyze the Zapatistas' process of tactical disturbance through their specific use of the *Zócalo*. After a review of the relevant literature, I provide a historical description of the *Zócalo* during the twentieth century, followed by a spatial and performative study of the Zapatista triumphal entry into Mexico's capital.

In the vast amount of recent scholarship about the Zapatista movement, authors usually use the *Marcha por la dignidad indígena* as a turning point in their larger narratives.¹¹ For example, in her journalistic and chronological account of the movement, *The Fire and the Word: A History of the Zapatista Movement*, Gloria Muñoz Ramírez includes a chapter about the *Marcha* in which she illustrates the event's anticlimactic outcome: it was a mobilization full of

⁸ Jill Lane and Ricardo Dominguez, "Digital Zapatistas," *The Drama Review* 47, no. 2 (2003): 136.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 136–37. When introducing the Zapatista rebellion, Lane briefly mentions the 2001 march to Mexico City as an example of the impact that traditional tactics still have. *Ibid.*, 135.

¹¹ Some studies include (published before and after the *Marcha*): Neil Harvey, *The Chiapas Rebellion: The Struggle for Land and Democracy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); Thomas Olesen, *International Zapatismo: The Construction of Solidarity in the Age of Globalization* (New York: Palgrave, 2005); Marco Estrada Saavedra and Juan Pedro Viqueira Albán, *Los indígenas de Chiapas y la rebelión Zapatista: microhistorias políticas* (México, D.F.: El Colegio de México, 2010); John Ross, *¡Zapatistas!: Making Another World Possible: Chronicles of Resistance 2000–2006* (New York: Nation Books, 2006); Alex Khasnabish, *Zapatistas: Rebellion from the Grassroots to the Global* (London: Zed Books, 2010); and Kristine Vanden Berghe, Anne Huffs Schmid, and Robin Lefere, *El EZLN y sus intérpretes: resonancias del zapatismo en la academia y en la literatura* (México, D.F.: Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México, 2011).

hope that the government betrayed.¹² In his introductory essay for Marcos's writings and the EZLN's communiqués titled *¡Ya Basta! Ten Years of the Zapatista Uprising*, Žiga Vodovnik contextualizes the Zapatistas' history through globalization and neoliberalism and portrays the period of the Marcha as a time when "everything yet nothing had changed."¹³ That is, by 2001 Zapatismo had evolved and gained national and international support at the same time that the government continued its aggression towards the indigenous communities in Chiapas and denied the implementation of the San Andrés Accords. Published the following year after the Marcha, *The Zapatista Reader*, edited by Tom Hayden, includes a selection of essays and interviews by writers, scholars, and journalists who analyze different aspects of the Marcha: from the massive event in the Zócalo (Ignacio Ramonet), their two-week stay in Mexico City (John Ross), to an interview with Marcos (Gabriel García Márquez).¹⁴

Single studies about the Marcha por la dignidad indígena are few and range from sociologically and politically oriented analyses to detailed journalistic enterprises. None of them has studied the Marcha as a performative action and from a spatial point of view, as I do in this chapter. In his book *La marcha de la dignidad indígena como búsqueda de la autonomía*, Carlos

¹² Muñoz Ramírez, 209–32. The government betrayed the Zapatistas by making fundamental changes in the Ley Cocopa [Cocopa Law]. The Ley Cocopa is the legal legislation of the San Andrés Accords. The accords recognize the right to inclusionary autonomy, the right for indigenous cultures to be respected and promoted, and the right to indigenous representation in Congress. The San Andrés Accords were signed by the government and the EZLN in February 1996. Cocopa stands for Comisión de concordia y pacificación [Commission of Concordance and Peace], a commission formed by members of the four most important political parties in Mexico and who drafted the legislation Ley Cocopa in December 1996. The most important political parties in Mexico in the 1990s were the Partido Revolucionario Institucional [Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI], Partido Acción Nacional [National Action Party, PAN] Partido de la Revolución Democrática [Party of the Democratic Revolution, PRD], and Partido del Trabajo [Labor Party, PT]. For a detailed analysis of the Accords and of Cocopa Law, see Carlos Juan Núñez Rodríguez, *La marcha de la dignidad indígena como búsqueda de la autonomía* (México, D.F.: Plaza y Valdés, 2008), 95–107.

¹³ Žiga Vodovnik, "The Struggle Continues..." in Subcomandante Marcos, *¡Ya Basta! Ten Years of the Zapatista Uprising: Writings of Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos*, ed. Žiga Vodovnik (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2004), 38.

¹⁴ Other authors who address the Marcha include, Naomi Klein, Carlos Monsiváis, Ignacio Ramonet, Homero Aridjis, Saul Landau, Jorge Mancillas, and Salvador Carrasco. Other authors writing about the Zapatista movement and its history in *The Reader* include Elena Poniatowska, José Saramago, Paco Ignacio Taibo II, Alma Guillermoprieto, and Eduardo Galeano.

Juan Núñez Rodríguez starts by explaining the precedents of the Marcha and then plunges into a detailed reconstruction of its events. He interprets the discourses of both the government and the Zapatistas, and argues that the main concepts of the Marcha were "dignidad, respeto y autonomía" [dignity, respect, and autonomy].¹⁵ In their article, "El procesamiento simbólico de la protesta," Alejandro López Gallegos and Aquiles Chihu Amparán focus on the public discourse about the Marcha generated in the Mexican press, specifically in the newspapers *Reforma* (conservative) and *La Jornada* (progressive).¹⁶ López Gallegos and Chihu Amparán study the Marcha and its formulation of the Indian question as a social and political phenomenon to evaluate Mexico's transition into democracy after seventy-one years of a single-party rule.¹⁷ The book *La caravana de la dignidad indígena*, published by *La Jornada* is an impressive journalistic collection of all the articles, interviews, and photographs that appeared in the newspaper during the length of the Zapatistas' journey and stay in the capital.¹⁸ What emerges is a rather moving picture of the hope that the Zapatista caravan represented and of the debates it provoked.

The Zócalo as a Spatial Paradox

¹⁵ Núñez Rodríguez, 19.

¹⁶ *Reforma* is a center-right daily newspaper and *La Jornada* is a progressive daily newspaper with nation-wide circulation. Alejandro López Gallegos and Aquiles Chihu Amparán, "El procesamiento simbólico de la protesta: el discurso de opinión en torno a la Marcha del Color de la Tierra," *Estudios Sociológicos* 26, no.78 (2008): 695–723.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 705. The phrase "The Indian Question" refers to the traditional way the Mexican state addresses the debate over indigenous communities. The political party PRI ruled Mexico from 1929 to 2000. I will discuss this phenomenon in the next section.

¹⁸ David Aponte and Víctor Camacho, *La caravana de la dignidad indígena: el otro jugador* (México, D.F.: La Jornada, Ediciones: DEMOS, Desarrollo de Medios, 2001). There are also two video recordings (one produced by La Jornada) of the Zapatistas march into Mexico City. Inti Cordera, and Karl Lenin González, *El desafío indígena: la marcha Zapatista*, VHS (México, D.F.: La Jornada, Maroma producciones, 2001), and Paper Tiger Television Collective, *Storm from the Mountain Zapatistas Take Mexico City: Original Satellite Broadcast*, VHS (New York: Paper Tiger TV, 2001). For a publication that contains all the speeches by the Zapatistas during the Marcha see, Krüger.

A saying in Mexico City is *quien domina el centro, domina el país* [whoever dominates the center, dominates the country]. This popular aphorism explains how the Zócalo has acted as the performative embodiment of Mexican society throughout the twentieth century. In the last century, the Zócalo became Mexico's most disputed public space, as presidents and governments staged official celebrations while revolutionary, political, and social groups (like the Zapatistas) created performances challenging the state. In this section, I argue that the Zócalo became a profoundly contested space in the twentieth century, during which it materialized a paradox: It is a site of national performance in which both official *and* unofficial events are staged as indicators that reaffirm *and* contest power. Two cardinal events that affected Mexico City in the past century were Mexico's longest civil war, known as the Mexican Revolution (1910–1921), and the 1968 pre-Olympic student movement, which ended in a massacre. Although these violent events did not occur exclusively in the Zócalo, an important part of them did. Both were also occasions of protest that would later be associated with Zapatismo. The indigenous movement is ideologically and historically connected to the revolutionary hero Emiliano Zapata, and its beginnings had links to the 1968 student movement.¹⁹ In what follows, I trace performative actions that exemplify the Zócalo as a paradox using the Revolution and the student movement as my initial historical markers.

¹⁹ After 1968, many activists and students took their struggles underground and formed guerrilla groups, but the government broke down and repressed most of them. There is speculation that in the 1970s one of the surviving groups traveled to Chiapas, where Indians had been expelled from their communities by government and private interests. On their way the group gained new adherents, among them a student of philosophy, probably Marcos. In 1983 they established the EZLN. Five years later, the EZLN had about a hundred members and by the end of the decade its membership grew to about thirteen hundred. There is no confirmation of Marcos's real identity. The government has identified him as Rafael Sebastián Guillén Vicente, born in 1957 in Tampico, Tamaulipas. Marcos is the spokesman and military chief of the EZLN. The EZLN receives orders from the Zapatista indigenous communities in Chiapas. For an introduction of the Zapatista movement, see Vodovnik's introductory essay in *¡Ya Basta!* and Tom Hansen's historical timeline. Vodovnik, 33–40; Tom Hansen, "Zapatistas: A Brief Historical Timeline," in Hayden, *The Zapatista Reader*, 10–15.

The Revolution started with an uprising led by politician Francisco I. Madero against the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz and developed into an armed conflict in the north and south of the country among different leaders seeking power. Emiliano Zapata, peasant and indigenous leader of the agrarian conflict in the southern state of Morelos, was the exception: he did not want power and was antagonistic towards the capital as the seat of authoritarianism.²⁰ In November 1910, just after Díaz's spectacular centennial celebrations of independence, Madero and his supporters in the north declared war on the government.²¹ Díaz resigned from office in May 1911. In the Zócalo, crowds gathered by the balcony of the National Palace to shout "Death to Díaz!"²² After the dictator fled the country to Spain, Madero entered the city triumphantly on June 7, 1911, and became president on November 6. Because Madero was unable to contain his generals in the north and discontent among the poor prevailed, a violent civil war took over the country for the next decade, leaving at least one million dead.²³

Despite the peripheral role of the capital city during the 1910 Revolution, the Zócalo remained the symbol of domination and power over the country. As one leader after another established some sort of control over the country, each entered Mexico City with the Zócalo as his final destination. In 1913, Madero was betrayed and assassinated by his general Victoriano Huerta in a coup known as *La decena trágica* [The Ten Tragic Days] (February 9–18). *La decena trágica* took place in the Zócalo and its surrounding streets, where many denizens were

²⁰ Zapata became the rural chief in 1909 after he was elected municipal president of Anenecuilco, a village in Morelos. He and his followers fought against the take-over of lands by haciendas' owners.

²¹ For an analysis of Porfirio Díaz's 1910 centennial celebrations or *Centenario*, see Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

²² Jonathan Kandell, *La Capital: The Biography of Mexico City* (New York: Random House, 1988), 404.

²³ It is also important to mention that Madero did not consider the importance of Mexico's agrarian problem in his liberal program. As Kandell notes, his reforms "called for observance of constitutional laws, including freedom of press and speech, the right to vote, and guarantees for opposition parties. 'Effective suffrage and no reelection' was his main slogan, reflecting his belief that the country's problems were essentially of a political nature." Kandell, 394. For an analysis of Madero's program, see Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 388–97.

killed, and the plaza's buildings suffered great devastation.²⁴ While Zapata remained in open rebellion, fighting for an agrarian reform that called for the expropriation of haciendas and the return of lands to peasants (Indians), the northern forces of Generals Francisco Villa, Venustiano Carranza, and Alvaro Obregón revolted against Huerta.²⁵ After Huerta was killed, Carranza and Obregón fought their way to power, and Villa and Zapata continued in rebellion. Carranza entered the city to become president in August 1914.²⁶ Later in November, Carranza had to retreat for couple of months to the state of Veracruz as Villa and Zapata approached the capital. Zapata's troops entered the city, camped in the Zócalo, and received the agrarian leader in a triumphal entry on December 6th.²⁷ After Zapata was assassinated by Carranza's army on April 19, 1919, the armed conflict started to break down. In 1920 Villa's guerrilla unit disintegrated, Carranza was killed by Obregón's sympathizers, and Obregón became president in December, thus bringing the Revolution to an end.

After the Revolution, governments continued to use the Zócalo as an arena for the staging of a common national identity and an homogeneous state. Obregón resorted to nationalism in order to persuade Mexicans that an important revolution had taken place. He sought to portray the chaos as a process that achieved resolutions and as a historical episode of which Mexicans could be proud. His first performance of a post-revolutionary Mexico was the month-long centennial celebration, or Centenario, of Mexico's achievement of independence, staged in

²⁴ For a detailed account of the ten days' events, see Knight, 482–87. Knight's history of the Mexican Revolution is still the most complete and serious publication on the topic in English.

²⁵ Zapata's initial reforms were drafted in the Plan de Ayala, published on November 28, 1911. As Alan Knight writes, the plan was moderate while Zapatista radicalization was developing. The Plan de Ayala denounced Madero and argued for the usurped lands of the peasants' villages to be returned, called for the expropriation of one third of the rural monopolies; it provided land to the landless, and said that any "landlords, científicos or bosses' who opposed the Plan would be liable for total expropriation." (Científicos [scientists] refer to the governing elites under Porfirio Díaz.) Zapatismo became a communal movement which had the defense of indigenous culture at its core, and which fought for restitution and protection of communal lands. Knight, 310.

²⁶ In 1917, Carranza drafted the constitution that is still in use today.

²⁷ For more details, see Kandell, 430–1.

September 1921. Whereas Díaz celebrated the centennial anniversary of the beginning of the fight for independence, Obregón commemorated the end of the war. To demonstrate the country's newly achieved peace, the president invited representatives from foreign countries, beautified the city, and repaired war-damaged buildings and public spaces.²⁸ In the Zócalo, the National Palace was restored, and the kiosks for the streetcars were removed. During the Revolution, four sculptures of Pegasus by Catalanian artist Agustín Querol were temporarily placed in the square's corners, the trees in front of the cathedral were taken away so as to provide a better view of the building, and manicured gardens, arranged in a geometrical pattern, were planted on the square (fig. 4.1).²⁹

As had been traditionally done with official celebrations, the main events of Obregón's 1921 celebration were staged in the Zócalo. The new regime used the commemoration as a nationalistic and folkloric showcase, in contrast to Díaz's 1910 Centennial, which imitated European neo-classical traditions.³⁰ In addition to staging the traditional grito and other patriotic events (military parades, flag ceremonies, and tributes to national heroes), the organizers foregrounded their folklorized version of Mexico's indigenous culture as part of Mexico's new identity.³¹ For example, the *orquesta típica* [traditional orchestra], with members dressed as

²⁸ Twenty-two European, Asian, and Latin American emissaries attended the celebrations. Elaine C. Lacy, "The 1921 Centennial Celebration of Mexico's Independence: State Building and Popular Negotiation," in *¡Viva Mexico! ¡Viva la Independencia! Celebrations of September 16*, eds. William H. Beezley and David E. Lorey (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2001), 204.

²⁹ Concepción Amerlinck A. and Raúl Delgado Lamas, "Cronología Mínima," in *El Zócalo: esquema histórico*, ed. Concurso nacional para la rehabilitación de la Plaza de la Constitución (México, D.F.: Trilce Ediciones, 1998), 27. The neo-classical sculptures were originally designed to be placed in the new Palacio de Bellas Artes [Palace of Fine Arts] on the western edge of downtown. The palace was designed by the Italian Architect Adamo Boari in 1904 during the regime of Porfirio Díaz. As the construction of the building was interrupted during the Revolution, the sculptures of Pegasus were temporarily placed in the Zócalo.

³⁰ Annick Lempérière and Lucrecia Orensanz compare both centennial celebrations in "Los dos centenarios de la independencia mexicana (1910–1921): de la historia patria a la antropología cultural," *Historia Mexicana* 45, no. 2 (1995): 317–52.

³¹ Obregón named ministers Alberto Paní, Plutarco Calles, and Adolfo de la Huerta as the Centennial Commission. The commission appointed an Executive Committee to organize the celebrations. The committee was led by former

charros [Mexican cowboys] and *poblanas* [women from the state of Puebla], played Mexican music at all public events. Indigenous dances from different states with *trajes típicos* [traditional costumes] and popular songs were also part of the celebrations.³²

The celebration's "folklor de pacotilla" [trashy folklore], as Annick Lempérière and Lucrecia Orensanz call it, was truly embodied in the stereotype of La india bonita [The Beautiful Indian Woman].³³ Before the commemoration, the newspaper *El Universal* conducted a national search that called for an attractive, "racially pure," native woman to participate in the events and to embody the "union of races" in post-revolutionary Mexico.³⁴ A panel of judges selected María Bibiana Uribe, a sixteen-year-old from Puebla. Interestingly, one of the judges was anthropologist Manuel Gamio, who developed the concept of Mexico's official *indigenismo* [indigenism or indigenesness], a point to which I will soon return. The press described Uribe as "Aztec" and as having a "priestly attitude of Indian silence."³⁵ On Independence Day, she rode a float, decorated as an Aztec canoe, through the Zócalo and placed flowers by the mortal remains of the heroes of independence in the cathedral.³⁶

For the first time Mexico's official indigenism was performed in the country's most important public space. Official indigenism continued as a dominant ideology regarding Mexico's native populations. Gamio formulated this idea in *Forjando Patria* [Forging a Nation] (1916), a book that greatly influenced Obregón.³⁷ Gamio declared the Aztec (Mexica) past as

military officer Emilio López Figueroa, two *diputados* [legislators], Juan de Dios Bojorquez and Carlos Argüelles, and an intellectual Martín Luis Guzmán. Lacy, 202.

³² Lacy, 208–9.

³³ Lempérière and Orensanz underscore the fact that the new government promoted first this type of folklore instead of important matters that had actually been central during the revolution, such as the agrarian reform. Lempérière and Orensanz, 348.

³⁴ Quoted from *El Universal* (Mexico City), August 2, 1921, in Lacy, 216.

³⁵ Quoted from *El Universal* (Mexico City), September 25, 1921, in Lacy, 216.

³⁶ Lacy, 216.

³⁷ Obregón read Gamio's *Forjando Patria* in 1917 and described it as a "profoundly scientific study of the true origins of our national ills." Angeles Gonzalez Gamio, *Manuel Gamio: una lucha sin final* (México, D.F.: UNAM,

the foundation of Mexican history and culture, rejected European and neo-classic art forms, called for a reevaluation of indigenous art forms, and proposed the rebirth of village handicrafts.³⁸ As Fernando Armstrong-Fumero states, Gamio's indigenism "outlined a professionalized anthropology that would serve as a 'science of good governance' for the emergent revolutionary state."³⁹ Although Gamio proposed the image of a diverse society by apparently eliminating the reductionism of the *mestizaje* previously promoted by the Díaz's regime, he still sought to incorporate indigenous communities into the modern nation.⁴⁰ Gamio argued that, compared to countries such as Japan, Germany, and France, Mexico was not yet a true nation because it lacked a common language, history, character, and race.⁴¹ Thus, his grand aim was to create a powerful nation and a coherent nationality based on the "fusion of races, convergence and fusion of manifestations of culture, linguistic unification, and the economic equilibrium of social elements."⁴² As David A. Brading notes about Gamio's ideology, "We can observe much the same dichotomy [as Díaz's] between the insistence on the native roots of the Mexican people and the stern affirmation of the necessity of modernity."⁴³ Indeed, official indigenism constituted a new form of institutionalized *mestizaje*: an ideology imposed from above with the aim of acculturating and integrating natives.⁴⁴

1987), 47. Quoted in Fernando Armstrong-Fumero, "Translator's Introduction: Manuel Gamio and *Forjando Patria*: Anthropology in Times of Revolution," in Manuel Gamio, *Forjando Patria: pro-nacionalismo*, trans. Fernando Armstrong-Fumero (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2010), 5. For *Forjando Patria*'s original versión in Spanish, see Manuel Gamio, *Forjando Patria* (México, D.F.: Editorial Porrúa, 1960).

³⁸ David A. Brading, "Manuel Gamio and Official Indigenismo in Mexico," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 7, no. 1 (1988): 76. Brading's is a contextual analysis of Gamio's book.

³⁹ Armstrong-Fumero, 2.

⁴⁰ Díaz's regime promoted the idea that Mexicans were neither Spaniards nor Indians but *mestizos*— a mixed race. For a discussion of *mestizaje* during the Porfiriato, see Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

⁴¹ Gamio, *Forjando Patria: pro-nacionalismo*, 26–31; Brading, 82.

⁴² Gamio, *Forjando Patria: pro-nacionalismo*, 164.

⁴³ Brading, 87.

⁴⁴ It was through Obregón's secretary of public education, José Vasconcelos, and his nationalistic art and education campaign that Gamio's indigenism was put into practice. During his tenure (1921–24), Vasconcelos built thousands of rural schools, encouraged the local arts, and promoted muralism as the state's new didactic art form. Diego Rivera's murals covered the surfaces of public buildings depicting the official vision of Mexico, the Revolution, and

If the 1921 centennial celebration was a performance of indigenism, the new Festival de la Revolución [Revolutionary Festival], subsequently celebrated every November 20th on the date of Madero's call to arms, was a performance of the state's authoritarianism. The Revolutionary Festival began in the 1920s as a series of small organized events, but by the early 1930s it had become the country's most important holiday (along with Independence Day).⁴⁵ The celebrations included spectacles like military parades, sports displays, and speeches by public officials in the Zócalo. Revolutionary armies, civilians, schools, and political and social groups participated in the commemorations. The performance of discipline, order, and control occupied the core of the festival (fig. 4.2). As David E. Lorey describes, the festival brought groups together, kept the armies "under the control of the government," and served "as a basis for the resolution of conflicts."⁴⁶

In 1929 President Plutarco Elías Calles, Obregón's successor, consolidated the post-revolutionary project of homogenization by creating the Partido Nacional Revolucionario [National Revolutionary Party or PNR]. This party ruled the country for the rest of the century. Under the PNR, Calles brought together coalitions from the right, center and left, as well as from the military, unions, peasants groups, and bureaucrats.⁴⁷ The person of the president embodied the new state's authoritarianism: he became known as the *jefe máximo* [supreme chief]. During the 1920s and 30s, the Zócalo started to take its present form as a homogeneous space and as a

indigenism. For example, in his murals in the Ministry of Education in Mexico City, Rivera created various compositions of local landscapes, pre-conquest rituals, folkloric dances, revolutionary heroes, celebrants commemorating the day of the dead, workers parading on May Day, and peasants celebrating the distribution of land. Rivera's murals exalted the state's aim of portraying the Revolution as a unified revolt. For a complete study of Rivera's murals, see Luis-Martín Lozano, Juan Coronel Rivera, Benedikt Taschen, and Diego Rivera, *Diego Rivera: The Complete Murals* (Hong Kong: Taschen, 2008).

⁴⁵ I base the information on the celebrations of Revolution Day in David E. Lorey, "Postrevolutionary Contexts for Independence Day: The "Problem" of Order and the Invention of Revolution Day, 1920s–1940s," in Beezley and Lorey, *¡Viva Mexico!*, 233–48.

⁴⁶ Lorey, "Postrevolutionary Contexts," 240, 245.

⁴⁷ Kandell, 470.

reflection of the modern state's autocracy. By the end of the twenties, the western side of the square was unified by adding floors to some buildings and by rebuilding their facades in the same neo-colonial style (fig. 4.3).⁴⁸ A third floor was added to the Palacio Nacional, and the market El Parián on the plaza's south-east corner was demolished.⁴⁹ The Pegasus sculptures were relocated to the Palacio de Bellas Artes [Palace of Fine Arts] at the western end of the downtown sector, as originally intended.⁵⁰

During the thirties, the Revolutionary Festivals became an occasion for protest and violent confrontation among political groups.⁵¹ The celebrations began to include urban workers, and as labor became an important topic, tensions among political groups increased. In the 1935 Revolution Day parade, during the tenure of President Lázaro Cárdenas, muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros and his Communist comrades attacked the members of the Acción Revolucionaria Mexicana [Mexican Revolutionary Action or ARM], a fascist group that had attended in gold shirts. The bloody confrontation took place in front of the National Palace, disrupted the commemoration, and prematurely ended the parade. According to Lorey, "In the ensuing mêlée—with gold-shirts mounted on horses and communists tooling about the Zócalo in cars—accompanied by gun blasts from all sides, many were hurt."⁵² The following year, the government controlled the situation by giving labor leader Lombardo Toledano of the government-favored union Confederación de Trabajadores de México [Mexican Workers Confederation or CTM], the center stage (in the Zócalo in front of the National Palace) to deliver

⁴⁸ Sonia Lombardo de Ruíz, "Construcción y uso social del espacio en la Plaza de la Constitución," in Concurso nacional, *El Zócalo*, 20. The photograph records a demonstration celebrating the 1938 nationalization of the oil industry by President Lázaro Cárdenas. I include it here because it is possible to see the buildings on the western side of the square and their unified structures.

⁴⁹ Lombardo de Ruíz, 20. For an analysis of the colonial market El Parián, see Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

⁵⁰ Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 27.

⁵¹ I base my information on the Revolutionary Festival during the 1930s on David E. Lorey, "The Revolutionary Festival in Mexico: November 20 Celebrations in the 1920s and 1930s," *The Americas* 54, no. 1 (1997): 39–82.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 65.

his speech. The Communists paraded peacefully, and muralist Diego Rivera led the Frente Internacionalista Popular [International Popular Front], who prompted the crowd's call for the death of Hitler, Mussolini, and fascism.

Between 1940 and 1970, the capital became a modern metropolis that reflected the country's apparent prosperity and stability: The city's population grew from 1.5 to 8.5 million, new skyscrapers and luxury hotels were built on the edge of the colonial downtown and along the Paseo de la Reforma [Reforma Avenue], and tourism became Mexico's largest industry. In the late forties, President Miguel Alemán systematized Mexico's corrupt politics and consolidated the PNR's power. He also renamed the PNR as the Partido Revolucionario Institucional [Institutional Revolutionary Party or PRI]. The party's dominance over opposition parties as well as its financial resources ensured that only sycophantic candidates were elected. When necessary the PRI used fraud to win the presidency. Moreover, Alemán created a model of economic development that caused massive levels of corruption and poverty. Seeking to accelerate modernization, he placed new factories in large cities while government officials enriched themselves through huge bribes from private companies hired to build the city's infrastructure.⁵³ Mexico City's expansion was achieved through the expropriation of communal lands—the peasants' lands that had been constitutionally protected by agrarian reforms initiated by Zapata in 1910.

Towards the middle of the twentieth century, the Zócalo was transformed into a unified, grandiose space for the state's ceremonies. A new avenue named 20 de Noviembre was built on the south side of the square, thus creating an important axis with the cathedral as its vanishing point. In 1940, the new building for the Supreme Court was erected in the Zócalo's south-east corner, where El Parián market had been located. The Zócalo was reaffirmed as the center of

⁵³ Kandell, 485–86; 492–96.

power by placing the judicial building next to the presidential one. A new floor was added to the city government's building, and an exact copy of it was built on the other side of Avenue 20 de Noviembre to house the offices of the city's mayor. Thus, the southern side of the square was architecturally linked. In 1958, the trams and the manicured gardens were removed, and the plaza's open space was leveled and paved. The large flagpole with the national flag was installed at the square's center. In 1968, excavations began for the new line of the subway which would pass in front of the National Palace (fig. 4.4).⁵⁴

During the 1968 student movement, the Zócalo as a contested space was again made apparent. Students from virtually all the city's public and private institutions came together to confront the state's authoritarianism, and the government's repressive forces responded with unprecedented violence. Beginning on July 22nd with a street fight between groups of high-school students and riot police, the movement evolved into massive protests that had at their core the defense of human rights in Mexico.⁵⁵ As Carlos Monsiváis wrote about the protests, "Es también el enfrentamiento más lúcido al autoritarismo presidencial, el desenvolvimiento de otra idea de juventud, la pérdida de respeto a la majestad del poder presidencial" [It is also the most lucid confrontation with presidential authoritarianism, the development of another idea of youth, the loss of respect towards the majesty of presidential power].⁵⁶ While Mexico was

⁵⁴ For more details on the renovations during these years, see Lombardo de Ruíz, 20; Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 27; and Anthinea Blanco Fenochio and Reed Dillingham, *La plaza mexicana: escenario de la vida pública y espacio simbólico de la ciudad* (México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2002), 48–49.

⁵⁵ Carlos Monsiváis, *El 68: la tradición de la resistencia* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, 2008), 11. Some of the studies about the 1968 student movement in Mexico, include: Elena Poniatowska, *La noche de Tlatelolco: testimonios de historia oral* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, 1971), trans. Helen R. Lane as *Massacre in Mexico* (New York: The Viking Press, 1975); Ramón Ramírez, *El movimiento estudiantil de México, julio/diciembre de 1968* (México, D.F.: Ediciones Era, 1969); Carlos Montemayor, *La violencia de estado en México: antes y después de 1968* (México, D.F.: Debate, 2010); and Elaine Carey, *Plaza of Sacrifices: Gender, Power, and Terror in 1968 Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

⁵⁶ Monsiváis, *El 68*, 11. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are mine.

preparing to host the Olympic Games, the movement contrasted the country's official image of harmony and prosperity with one of dissent and inequality.⁵⁷

The 1968 student movement was the largest confrontation with the government to take place in the Zócalo since the 1910 Revolution. Following the first skirmish, two simultaneous public meetings took place on July 26th near the Alameda Park: one involving students protesting the police intervention and the other of leftist groups celebrating the anniversary of the Cuban Revolution.⁵⁸ As students and leftist groups marched together towards the Zócalo, they were met by police forces; the confrontation left the downtown area in shambles. The government portrayed the protests as a conspiracy by radical groups intended to disrupt the Olympics. On July 28th, an assembly of students gathered to call for a strike in Mexico City's universities, high schools, and vocational schools unless the government met the following demands: release of the arrested students, dismissal of the heads of police, dissolution of the *granaderos* [riot police], indemnification of the injured, and abolition of the anti-subversion law.⁵⁹ When the government did not respond, more riots followed as the army accompanied the *granaderos*. Throughout August and September thousands of students and civilians joined the movement to repudiate the government. The first mass demonstration in the Zócalo took place on August 13th and was attended by 150,000 people in open defiance of President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz. On August 27th, the largest protest of 1968 took place in the square with 300,000 people in attendance. The demonstrators marched down Reforma Avenue, arrived in the Zócalo, rang the bells of the cathedral, raised a red and black flag on the national flagpole, and shouted to the president:

⁵⁷ As Octavio Paz writes, "There was no lack of praise of our country on the part of foreigners. The most resounding tribute paid us was that by President Kennedy, who unhesitatingly proclaimed that the Mexican regime was a model for all of Latin America." Octavio Paz, "Introduction," in Poniatowska, *Massacre*, xiv.

⁵⁸ Monsiváis, *El 68*, 18. For the chronicle of the main events and protests on which I base my narration, see Elena Poniatowska, "Chronology: Events Mentioned by the Students in Their Tape-Recorded Testimony," in *Massacre*, 325–33.

⁵⁹ Poniatowska, *Massacre*, 326; Monsiváis, *El 68*, 11–12.

"Come out onto the balcony, loud-mouth!" The army arrived in tanks, and soldiers, police, and firemen cleared the square by early morning. On September 13th, a great silent demonstration of around 250,000 people took place in the Zócalo. As a student protester aptly put it, the demonstrators had "deconsecrated" the Zócalo three times (figs. 4.5 and 4.6).⁶⁰

As the opening of the Olympics approached, the government's containment efforts turned deadly. After the army occupied the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México [National Autonomous University of Mexico or UNAM] and the Instituto Politécnico Nacional [National Polytechnic Institute or IPN], students started to gather at Tlatelolco square—the pre-Hispanic square at the northern end of downtown.⁶¹ On October 2nd, in a well-planned massacre, soldiers and policemen fired indiscriminately into a crowd of students and civilians. Ambulances were permitted on the scene only after the army had already removed the bodies. This tragedy, known as the Masacre de Tlatelolco [Tlatelolco Massacre], was erased from the government-controlled media, which portrayed the event as an incident with thirty people dead—when in reality around 325 people were killed and hundreds more were injured and arrested.⁶² The Olympics proceeded as planned with the Zócalo as Mexico's official commemorative center.

During the last three decades of the twentieth century, Mexico City grew into an unmanageable, polluted, and overpopulated megalopolis of about twenty million people.⁶³ The PRI continued to control the country through its authoritarian practices. In 1980, President José López Portillo declared the Zócalo and its surrounding buildings Mexico's historical patrimony

⁶⁰ Poniatowska, *Massacre*, 25; 179.

⁶¹ Tlatelolco square is also known as Plaza de las tres culturas [Square of the Three Cultures], because extant ruins of a pre-Hispanic temple, a sixteenth-century church, and a set of buildings for public housing coexist in the plaza.

⁶² Poniatowska, *Massacre*, 207.

⁶³ It is very difficult for the air to circulate in Mexico City because it is located in a valley surrounded by mountains. Thus, the metropolis is one of the most contaminated in the world. Also, since water sources are far away, it is extremely hard to bring and exit the water from the city. Finally, as the downtown area sits upon the muddy sediments of the Mexica lakes, the city is vulnerable to earthquakes. 1985's devastating earthquake measured 8.1 on the Richter scale and caused the deaths of around 10,000 people.

and brought into literal relief the square's pre-Hispanic past through the excavations of the former ceremonial center of Tenochtitlán's Templo Mayor.⁶⁴ After several pre-Hispanic and colonial objects had already been discovered during the construction of the subway in 1978, electrical workers stumbled upon the monolith of the Mexica goddess Coyolxauhqui while working under the cathedral.⁶⁵ This important discovery led to the 1978–1982 excavations directed by the Archeologist Eduardo Matos Moctezuma and authorized by the president.⁶⁶ The excavated site, located on the northeastern corner of the Zócalo (between the cathedral and the presidential palace), exposed the ruins of the temple (fig. 4.7). Once the Zócalo's pre-Hispanic layer was uncovered, the square evolved into a popular archeological and touristic site.

By the end of the century, the plaza was one of the largest city squares in the world and the biggest in Latin America. The square's main focal point continues to be the National Palace, with its stage-like balcony on the east side. Mexico City's government uses the Zócalo not just as the stage for the country's official commemorations, but also as the site of an array of popular entertainments and recreational activities such as concerts, theatrical performances, exhibitions, and markets. It also continues to be an arena for protests, political rallies, performance actions, and strikes—in scales both small and massive.

⁶⁴ In 1985 the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, UNESCO added Mexico City's historical center to the world's heritage list. Amerlinck A. and Delgado Lamas, 27. For specifics on the area as a world heritage, see the UNESCO's World Heritage List Website, "Historic Centre of Mexico City and Xochimilco," UNESCO World Heritage Centre 1992–2012, Publication Date, 2012, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/412> (accessed July 11, 2012).

⁶⁵ Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, "The Templo Mayor of Tenochtitlan: History and Interpretation," in Johanna Broda, David Carrasco and Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, *The Great Temple of Tenochtitlan: Center and Periphery in the Aztec World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 23. The stone of Coyolxauhqui is a sculptured disk eleven feet in diameter and bearing a depiction of the goddess who, according to the Mexica tradition, was dismembered by the god of war Huitzilopochtli. The monolith is on display in the Museum of the Templo Mayor. For a detailed study of the archeological site and its symbolism, see Johanna Broda, "Templo Mayor as Ritual Space," in Broda, Carrasco and Matos Moctezuma, *The Great Temple of Tenochtitlan*, 61–123.

⁶⁶ For an analysis of all the stages of the excavation and the findings, see Matos Moctezuma, "The Templo Mayor," 23–47.

Performing an Indigenous Spatial Narrative: The Zapatistas' Triumphal Entry into the Zócalo

The *Marcha por la dignidad indígena* narrated an indigenous story. Through their choice of route and use of the Zócalo, the Zapatistas claimed a dignified place for the country's indigenous populations. The *Marcha* was symbolically tied to space and specific historical occasions. David Wiles writes that processional theatre is "a *pilgrimage* to somewhere, to some sacred destination," and that a procession is also a *narrative* since the "sequence of places passed by the procession may also carry the bones of a story, clarified when the procession halts at key locations."⁶⁷ Thus, I characterize the *Marcha* as a pilgrimage to Mexico's seat of power and as a narrative of indigenous resistance. Before their arrival at the capital and their transformation of the Zócalo into a counter-space, the Zapatistas had already embedded the caravan with symbolic weight by stopping at historical and significant landmarks.

The Zapatistas' strategic use of symbolic actions has been a distinctive feature of their movement. From their spectacular uprising scheduled to coincide with NAFTA's implementation on January 1, 1994 to their clever use of the media and masks, the Zapatistas have consciously foregrounded the emblematic meaning of their activities.⁶⁸ As Guillermo Gómez Peña describes, from the beginning "the EZLN was fully aware of the symbolic power of their military actions," and since then, "they placed as much importance on staging press conferences and theatrical photos as on their military strategy."⁶⁹ It is not a coincidence that the Zapatistas made an allusive use of space throughout the *Marcha* and in the Zócalo.

⁶⁷ David Wiles, *A Short History of Western Performance Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 64. According to Wiles, processional theatre has four different functions: pilgrimage, parade, map, and narrative. Because of the nature of the *Marcha*, I focus on pilgrimage and narrative.

⁶⁸ The EZLN's 1994 uprising lasted twelve days. Since then the EZLN has refrained from armed conflict while the government wages a low-intensity war through the military and sponsored paramilitary groups. The Zapatistas have listened to Mexican citizens and acted by consensus: they have organized autonomous communities in Chiapas, have been engaged in peace talks, and have demanded the implementation of the San Andrés Accords.

⁶⁹ Guillermo Gómez Peña, "The Subcomandante of Performance," in *First World, Ha Ha Ha!: The Zapatista Challenge*, ed. Elaine Katzenberger (San Francisco: City Light Books, 1995), 90.

The first tactical action of the Zapatistas' pilgrimage was their timing in announcing it. In 2000, after seventy-one years of rule, the PRI was defeated in a presidential election by the right-wing Partido Acción Nacional [National Action Party or PAN]. The Zapatistas took this shift as a fresh opportunity to re-establish dialogue with the government. By this time, they had endured the violent attacks and false promises of two administrations assuring peace and dialogue. On December 1, 2000, former Coca-Cola executive Vicente Fox assumed Mexico's presidency. The next day, the EZLN sent a series of communiqués to the press, one of which announced that a Zapatista delegation was marching to Mexico City to engage in dialogue with Congress, with society, and with Indian peoples of twelve states as well as to promote the constitutional recognition of indigenous rights and cultures. In this way, by placing their pilgrimage in relation to Mexico's historical and political change, the Zapatistas foregrounded the Marcha as equally important.

On February 24th, Mexico's day of its national flag, twenty-four members of the EZLN left for the capital from five different territories in Chiapas.⁷⁰ As Carlos Juan Núñez Rodríguez points out, it seemed that the EZLN decided to start the march on the national day of the flag precisely because they were demanding their place within the nation.⁷¹ After a ceremony created to demonstrate that the Zapatistas were willing to engage in peaceful dialogue with the federal government, Marcos surrendered his arms in front of representatives from the media. Natives and sympathizers bade farewell to the Zapatista delegation and celebrated the Marcha's beginning with dances and music.

The Zapatistas staged a shared identity with past natives and surrounded their pilgrimage with a religious aura by first stopping in the historically significant city of San Cristóbal de las

⁷⁰ For a day-by-day analysis of the Marcha, see Núñez Rodríguez, 119–48, and Muñoz Ramírez, 209–32.

⁷¹ Núñez Rodríguez, 147.

Casas. Located in the central highlands of Chiapas and founded in 1528 as Villa Real de Chiapa, San Cristóbal was renamed in 1848 in honor of the Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas—Protector of the Indians.⁷² Since the conquest, the city has been a place deeply connected with both the exploitation and the liberation of indigenous peoples. From there, Las Casas defended the Indians from the conquistadores and landowners' abuse. And through the second half of the twentieth century San Cristóbal became a node of indigenous activism, with the 1960 election of Samuel Ruíz as the bishop of Chiapas. Ruíz united the area's natives by introducing his liberation theology—a political movement that interprets the Christian faith through the suffering of the poor, calling for their emancipation from unjust conditions. San Cristóbal was also the place from which Ruíz negotiated peace between EZLN and the government after the 1994 uprising.

The Zapatistas traveled in buses and cars for two weeks, passing through twelve states before reaching the capital: Chiapas, Oaxaca, Puebla, Veracruz, Tlaxcala, Hidalgo, Querétaro, Guanajuato, Michoacán, Estado de México, Morelos, and Guerrero. On their way, the EZLN participated in seventy-seven public gatherings in different cities, where delegates delivered their message and received the support of natives and non-natives. Covered by their masks and using words as their only weapon, the Zapatistas traveled and encountered large crowds of supporters waiting for them in the public squares where they spoke. On March 3rd, the Zapatista delegation participated in the Tercer congreso nacional indígena [Third National Indigenous Congress] or CNI in Nurío, Michoacán.⁷³ Interestingly, in Mexico City that same evening, the government sponsored a pop-music concert as proof of their commitment to a peaceful solution. The

⁷² San Cristóbal de las Casas was the state's capital until 1892; it is now considered its cultural capital. The current capital is Tuxtla Gutiérrez.

⁷³ For an analysis of the Zapatista participation in the Third National Indigenous Congress and its resolutions, see Núñez Rodríguez, 138–41.

government's absurd concert, which was nothing but a political maneuver in the face of civilians' growing support for the Zapatista cause, was televised; in contrast, the Marcha received little such official promotion.⁷⁴ After couple of unexpected setbacks along the way—death threats by a mercenary group and a vehicle accident—the Zapatista procession continued its approach to the capital.

The ruling elites in Mexico pretended to care about the indigenous demands, when in fact they were alarmed about the size and impact of the Zapatista caravan coming to their city. President Fox, his cabinet, and the business leaders did not know what to do, seeing their interests threatened by, as Muñoz Ramirez writes, "a crowd that called not only for recognition of indigenous rights but also justice and equality for all Mexicans."⁷⁵ As Javier Elorriaga pointed out in a documentary film about the Marcha, the governing elite realized that there were more people following the caravan than any politician.⁷⁶ In their usual discriminatory ways, the corporate leaders defined the Zapatistas as "chantajistas, irresponsables, ignorantes supinos y amenazantes de violencia" [blackmailers, irresponsible, careless fools, and provokers of violence].⁷⁷ In fact and as Elorriaga notes, the business leaders responded in a way not unlike the elites' reaction to Emiliano Zapata's 1914 entry into the city by saying "here come the Zapatistas to make the poor rise up" and by planning to hide their families from such spectacles of *indios levantados* [insolent natives].⁷⁸

The Zapatistas' spatial narrative acquired a direct link to original Zapatismo as it neared its final destination. On March 8th, the EZLN visited Anenenuilco, the birth town of Emiliano

⁷⁴ Also, on the same day in Madrid, the Primer congreso internacional sobre los derechos humanos y el principio de justicia universal [First International Congress for Human Rights and the Principle of Universal Justice] took place. It was unanimously agreed that they call for President Fox to carry out the EZLN's demands. Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchú Tum was one of the participants. Núñez Rodríguez, 139–40.

⁷⁵ Muñoz Ramírez, 219.

⁷⁶ Javier Elorriaga, interview, in *Storm from the Mountain*.

⁷⁷ Quoted in Núñez Rodríguez, 136.

⁷⁸ Javier Elorriaga, interview, in *Storm from the Mountain*.

Zapata, and Chinameca, where he was assassinated.⁷⁹ Even though some of the revolutionary leader's descendants were skeptical about the Zapatistas' visit (given that since the 1910 Revolution, governments have used them as promoting tools), others, like Ana María Zapata, claimed "Zapata sólo hay uno pero Marcos tiene los mismos ideales, todos los mexicanos debemos apoyarlos" [There is just one Zapata but Marcos has the same ideals, all we Mexicans have to support them].⁸⁰ Zapata's daughter portrayed Marcos as the new embodiment of her father's fight for indigenous communal lands. The Zapatistas left flower offerings by the leader's statue and continued their journey to Mexico City. On March 9th, the EZLN stopped at Emiliano Zapata's general quarters in Milpa Alta, on the outskirts of the capital. Through their strategic choice of these historical sites, the EZLN conferred upon themselves the role as the true heirs of the revolutionary Zapatista cause and placed their struggle within a historical continuum.

Moreover, the Zapatistas entered the city through the same historical borough as the revolutionary hero did in 1914. The delegation made a one-day stop in the capital's southern municipality of Xochimilco. This location was significant because, besides being a vestige of the area's pre-Hispanic past, this is where Zapata lodged before making his triumphal entry into the Zócalo.⁸¹

The procession's spatial narrative evoked centuries of indigenous resistance and created dramatic tension by building up expectations of the main event at the Zócalo. Also, by their strategic choice of sites, the Zapatistas evoked collective memories of conquest and revolution.

Paul Connerton argues that social spaces—"which we occupy, which we frequently retrace with

⁷⁹ Both towns are located in the state of Morelos. For details on the Zapatistas' visit to Emiliano Zapata's historical sites, see Núñez Rodríguez, 137–38.

⁸⁰ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 137.

⁸¹ On December 4th, Zapata met with Francisco Villa in Xochimilco. The revolutionaries signed an alliance and celebrated with a feast. During the pre-Hispanic period, Xochimilco was an independent city located on the southern edge of Lake Xochimilco. Today, a world heritage site, the area is well known for its canals that remain from the pre-Hispanic lake and canal system that used to connect the valley's settlements.

our steps, where we always have access, which at each moment we are capable of mentally reconstructing"—must be considered when we try to understand how social memory is sustained by ritual performances.⁸² Although, as Wiles notes, in a pilgrimage "the spectator who matters most is the pilgrim,"⁸³ during the Zapatistas' journey, sympathizers followed the caravan and collectively remembered the indigenous struggle.

On March 11th, the procession departed from Xochimilco at around noon and made its way to the heart of the nation's capital (fig. 4.8). Thousands gathered on streets, balconies, windows, and roofs of buildings to receive the Zapatistas and to see the big white bus containing the EZLN command. The onlookers in the plaza and on the streets were composed of workers, union leaders, peasants, natives, denizens, students, teachers, activists, intellectuals, employees, international and national journalists, and artists. The army, political parties, and business elites were absent from the route and the square. After two hours, the procession arrived at a packed and euphoric Zócalo filled with 250,000 people (fig. 4.9). The hotels and government buildings on the plaza's west and southern sides were filled with onlookers that included the chief of national security, the city's mayor, and reporters from the principal media agencies of the world (fig. 4.10).⁸⁴

In contrast to the historical convention of triumphal entries, which established a western route, the Zapatista caravan approached the Zócalo from its northern side. As studied in previous chapters, since the colonial period triumphal entries and parades reached the square through San Francisco Street (today's Madero Street), facing the National Palace. By entering the square using Avenue 20 de Noviembre, a date that celebrated the Revolution, the Zapatistas

⁸² Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 37.

⁸³ Wiles, 64.

⁸⁴ Besides journalists who were in the Zócalo, the city government assigned an office for international and national press in its building on the south side of the square. These journalists included: Ricardo Rocha (Mexico), Gianni Miná (Italy), Manuel Vázquez Montalbán (Spain), and José Saramago (Portugal). Aponte and Camacho, 284–85.

disturbed the traditional path of official processions. Following Kevin Lynch's concept of imageability—a physical object's quality that evokes a strong image—I argue that the Zapatistas' tactical approach to the Zócalo upset the square's spatial discourse.⁸⁵ The caravan produced a new imageability of the Zócalo by introducing the cathedral as their first visual perspective instead of the National Palace. Instead of granting the National Palace its customary visual importance when entering, the procession evoked the square's imageability of the early colonial period when all the principal buildings had equal significance.⁸⁶ The procession challenged the image of an all-powerful president governing from the National Palace.

It was indeed a triumphal entry. The Zapatistas occupied the most contested space in the nation, and the city inhabitants received them as national heroes. The EZLN's arrival signaled a historic turn of events: for the first time, residents of Mexico's capital were proud of and supportive towards the country's indigenous populations.⁸⁷ The EZLN's reception symbolized an end to the indigenous absence from the nation. This accomplishment was encapsulated in the bus's banner "Nunca más un México sin nosotros" [Never again a Mexico without us]. In the Zócalo, EZLN's Comandante Tacho made clear that the Zapatista entrance into Mexico City marked the ending of the official discrimination and racism towards Mexico's natives:

Queremos decirles hoy a los que se dicen gobiernos que nos escuchen, que llegó a su fin el olvido racial y desprecio de los indios de México. No les permitiremos nunca jamás la burla y el desprecio que en cualquier rincón de la Patria Mexicana nos defenderemos, y no nos quedaremos callados nunca jamás.

[Today, we want to tell the so-called governments to listen to us. That the end of racial oblivion and contempt for the Indians of Mexico has arrived. We will never let them scorn and look down on us, because from any remote part of the Mexican nation we will defend ourselves, and we will never be silent again.]⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960), 10.

⁸⁶ For a description of the square during the early colonial period, see Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

⁸⁷ Núñez Rodríguez, 133.

⁸⁸ Krüger, 215.

As Tacho portrayed it, the Zapatistas had come to Mexico's capital to let the government know that they would not remain silent in the face of discrimination and abuse. The Zapatistas had declared a shift in the country's history and the indigenous populations would never be hidden again. Like Emiliano Zapata's 1914 entry into the Zócalo, the EZLN's arrival was a triumph for the indigenous movement. It also meant a defeat for the government. As Homero Aridjis stated: "the event in the Zócalo was a symbolic political overthrow. Of course, if someone (Marcos) gains political space, someone else (Fox) loses it."⁸⁹

Once in the Zócalo, delegates of the EZLN and CNI stood on a large platform in front of a second banner partially covering the National Palace's façade. It read, "Bienvenidos EZLN: nunca más un México sin nosotros" [Welcome EZLN: Never again a Mexico without us]. "Bienvenidos EZLN" was printed twice as large as the rest of the slogan, a choice that underscored the city's support. Wearing their masks and some traditional indigenous outfits, around fifty Zapatistas (including the twenty-four EZLN delegates) filled the stage. Some held the Mexican and Zapatista flags (fig. 4.11).⁹⁰ The Zapatista flag included the EZLN initials and the words "Democracia, Libertad, Justicia" [Democracy, Liberty, Justice]. The Zapatistas illustrated their demand for inclusionary autonomy through references to both banners. They started the Marcha on National Flag Day, and Comandante Zebedeo and Subcomandante Marcos made references to the emblems in their speeches. Zebedeo said that the national ensign belonged to the martyrs and the workers, and Marcos requested that not another day pass without

⁸⁹ Homero Aridjis, "Indian is Beautiful," in Hayden, *The Zapatista Reader*, 142.

⁹⁰ The Mexican flag has a vertical tricolor design—green, white, and red—with the national coat of arms on its center. The coat of arms portrays the symbol of Tenochtitlán's (now Mexico City) foundational myth: an eagle perched on top of a cactus eating a serpent. The Zapatista flag is black with a red star in its center. The composition of black, red, and the star connotes associations with socialism, the left, and the workers' struggle. For more photos of the Zapatistas' in the Zócalo, see the photo essay by Danny Turner Lloveras, "Zapatistas in Mexico City to Promote The Indigenous Bill of Rights," *In Motion Magazine*, May 27, 2001, <http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/mdf/mdf.html> (accessed May 9, 2012).

a place for the indigenous peoples in the Mexican flag.⁹¹ On stage, the flags framed the different speakers. A silent and attentive Zócalo listened to Comandantes Zebedeo, Esther, Tacho, and David, and Subcomandante Marcos speak through the microphone.⁹²

While the speeches by the comandantes did not convey an overall linear narrative, they introduced different ideas to which Marcos poetically referred in his closing speech. The four first speeches built up the expectations of an audience eager to hear Marcos's words. Zebedeo reiterated the Zapatistas' position against privatization and neoliberalism; Tacho argued that because their ancestors were the first inhabitants of Mexico, they now deserved to be constitutionally recognized; and David posed several questions to President Fox regarding his failure to meet the three minimal conditions for resuming dialogue, which were the withdrawal of seven of the 250 military encampments in Chiapas, the liberation of all Zapatista political prisoners, and the implementation of the San Andrés Accords.⁹³ Esther brought to the foreground the suffering of indigenous women and their discrimination, as well as their struggle and demands:

Nosotras las mujeres sufrimos 3 veces más un[a] por ser mujer, dos por ser indígena, tres por ser pobre [...]
 Ahora nosotras las mujeres zapatista[s] estamos más organizada[s], tenemos trabajos colectivos, en nuestra organización ocupamos diversos cargos, con alto grado de responsabilidad y autoridad.
 Por eso ahora que estamos aquí no es que venimos a ponernos de rodilla[s] ni implorar ni que nos tengan lástima, no queremos changarro, [b]ocho ni tele, queremos que se nos reconozca nuestro derecho como indígena y como mujer.

[We women suffer three times more: one for being a woman, two for being indigenous, and three for being poor (...)
 Now, we the Zapatista women are more organized, we work collectively, and we occupy multiple positions of high responsibility and authority within our communities.

⁹¹ Krüger, 211; Subcomandante Marcos, "The People of the Color of the Earth," 114.

⁹² Speeches of Zebedeo, Esther, Tacho, and David in Krüger, 210–17.

⁹³ For the Zapatistas' three minimal conditions for resuming dialogue, see Hansen, 15.

We are here not because we came to beg on our knees, nor to implore you to have pity on us; we do not want a small store, a car, or a TV, we want our rights as women and indigenous to be recognized.]⁹⁴

Esther's speech and presence in the *Zócalo* constituted an historical event for Mexico. For the first time and before a huge crowd, an indigenous woman had entered the country's seat of power to denounce her oppression and demand her rights.

Marcos delivered the longest and most moving communiqué. It covered various topics, such as the historical absence and suffering of thousands of natives, the different indigenous groups waiting to be constitutionally recognized, the government's selling of their lands, and the movement's connection to 1910 Zapatismo. Even though Marcos compared the neo-Zapatista rebellion to Emiliano Zapata's revolution, he also made it clear that they did not want war but peace with dignity and justice.⁹⁵ Some audience members also reinforced the historical connection by parading a large papier mâché puppet of Zapata. The figure was at least twice as large as an average person and bore a resemblance to the revolutionary leader with its dark skin, moustache, white shirt, red bandana, and the iconic gun belts crossing its chest (fig. 4.12).

The Zapatistas' strategic spatial arrangement in the *Zócalo* challenged the square's official meaning. The plaza naturally lends itself for use as an arena stage, but the Zapatistas placed themselves in a frontal arrangement with the National Palace as their scenographical background. They simulated the government's traditional set up during official commemorations. The palace's balcony is probably the most important political place in the country. As has been seen in this dissertation, it is the place from which the president addresses the crowd on Independence Day and shouts *el grito* in an annual nationalistic ceremony. Relying

⁹⁴ Krüger, 212–13. When Esther mentions that they do not want a car, store, or TV, she alludes to the government's usual offers to marginalized groups. The government has tried to quell discontent among poor and indigenous groups by offering "presents" or money.

⁹⁵ Subcomandante Marcos, "The People of the Color of the Earth," 113.

on Ricardo Dominguez's analysis of different kinds of resistances, Jill Lane describes how "simulation operates at the level of semantic disturbance," meaning that actions of resistance which imitate the official discourse have the potential of disturbing an established code, by bringing power's hidden mechanisms to the fore.⁹⁶ Thus, I see the Zapatistas' paralleling of official uses for the square as a spatial semantic defiance. By spatially addressing the importance of the palace and its balcony, the Zapatistas foregrounded the government's historical repression towards its indigenous populations.

Indeed, the Zapatista procession deconsecrated its final destination—the nation's "sacred" space—by transforming it into a counter-space of indigenous resistance. During the Zapatistas' speeches, the presidential balcony was seen as the square's vanishing point and as a scenographic setting that represented nothing less than five hundred years of indigenous oppression. Marcos and the Zapatistas directly denounced the palace's occupants—that is, the Mexican government. The delegation's tactical positioning conveyed a confrontation between the state and the Indians over the latter's historical silencing. From their stage, the Zapatistas witnessed a square filled with thousands of enthusiastic supporters. The masses surrounded the national flag and stood against the backdrop of the downtown buildings. Mexico, symbolically represented in the plaza, was finally listening to its indigenous populations.

By locating the Indian question, both physically and performatively, at the center of the capital, the Zapatistas confronted the domination of the periphery by the center at the national level. The Zapatistas came to the city to say "¡Ya Basta!" and to gain political space as Mexican citizens. They unmasked the false image of Mexico as a happily integrated mestizo country, an image that the Mexican state has constructed historically and perpetuated internationally. At the beginning of the march from Chiapas to the capital, Nobel Prize winner José Saramago

⁹⁶ Lane, 136.

remarked: "The Zapatistas covered their faces to make themselves visible, and now, in effect, we have finally seen them. They are marching on the capital of Mexico. And when they make their entry on March 11, Mexico City will become the capital of the world."⁹⁷ By portraying an indigenous Zócalo as the capital of the globe, the Portuguese writer directed his critique specifically towards the forces of globalization and neoliberalism: on the day of the entry, he implied, the Zócalo would become a stage for those who, as Marcos says, "have no role in advancing globalization, can't be integrated into it, and may even pose a serious problem through their potential for rebellion."⁹⁸ Saramago only slightly exaggerated for effect: on the day of the entry, the EZLN message was transmitted from the Zócalo to the world through multiple international media agencies, major world newspapers, independent presses, social groups, and individuals who spread the word electronically and in print. The reach of coverage compared only to that of the 1994 Zapatista insurrection.⁹⁹ Therefore, on that day, the EZLN also transformed the Zócalo into the stage for a movement against globalization.

The Zapatistas' masks also contributed to the transformation of the Zócalo as Mexico's counter-space for indigenous liberation. In his speech in the square, Marcos reminded the local and international crowds of their meaning. As Lane notes, for the Zapatistas, "the identical ski masks announce an insistent, collective politicized presence," at the same time that the masks make visible the neglect that natives have endured since the conquest.¹⁰⁰ In the Zócalo, the woolen black masks covering the Zapatistas' faces were also to be thought of as mirrors that united them with their supporters. Marcos stated: "We are a mirror. We are here in order to see each other and to show each other, so you may look upon us, so you may look at yourself, so that

⁹⁷ Quoted in Ramonet, "Marcos Marches on Mexico City," in Hayden, *The Zapatista Reader*, 141.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 139.

⁹⁹ Aponte and Camacho, 266.

¹⁰⁰ Lane, 136.

the other looks in our looking."¹⁰¹ In interviews and in his writings, Marcos has described himself not as a leader but as one whose masks reflects different struggles around the world:

Marcos is gay in San Francisco, black in South Africa, an Asian in Europe, a Chicano in San Ysidro, an anarchist in Spain, a Palestinian in Israel, a Mayan Indian in the streets of San Cristóbal, a Jew in Germany, a Gypsy in Poland, a Mohawk in Quebec, a pacifist in Bosnia, a single woman on the Metro at 10:00PM., a peasant without land, a gang member in the slums, an unemployed worker, an unhappy student and, of course, a Zapatista in the mountains.¹⁰²

Through his skillful use of language, metaphors, and images, Marcos has indeed placed Zapatismo on a global scale, claiming that a Zapatista is anyone fighting injustice.

Moreover, the symbolic power of Marcos's persona added a postmodern theatricality to the Zapatistas' performative action in the Zócalo. As Guillermo Gómez Peña notes, Marcos's photogenic image with mask, pipe, and Zapata-style gun belts is "a carefully crafted collage of twentieth-century revolutionary symbols, costumes, and props borrowed from Zapata, Sandino, Che, and Arafat as well as from celluloid heroes such as Zorro and Mexico's movie wrestler, 'El Santo.'" ¹⁰³ (fig. 4.13) From the EZLN's beginnings, Marcos's well-crafted theatrical image has succeeded in appealing not just to progressive sympathizers but also to the media. It is no wonder that Marcos and his speech occupied a central space in the Zócalo. Local and international audiences cheered for the Zapatista icon—or, as *The New York Times* named him, "Mexico's first postmodern guerrilla commander"¹⁰⁴—to deliver his message.

In all, the Zapatistas' masks and their strategic positioning in the Zócalo created several semantic disturbances: both theatrically and spatially they challenged the government's discourse of mestizaje. The masks foregrounded the official neglect of Mexico's indigenous populations

¹⁰¹ Subcomandante Marcos, "The People of the Color of the Earth," 111.

¹⁰² Quoted in Naomi Klein, "The Unknown Icon," in Hayden, *The Zapatista Reader*, 116.

¹⁰³ Gómez Peña, 91.

¹⁰⁴ Tim Golden, "The Voice of the Rebels Has Mexicans in His Spell," World Section, *New York Times*, February 8, 1994.

and the delegation's specific use of the Zócalo questioned the square's symbolism as Mexico's national, homogenous space.

Conclusion: The Zapatistas' Struggle and Achievement in the Capital

Following the Zócalo entry and speeches, the Zapatistas visited different places around Mexico City. They lodged and held gatherings at the Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia. They participated in events in different neighborhoods, at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, and at other public universities and schools.¹⁰⁵ They met with workers, intellectuals, artists, theatre groups, teachers, and students, and they held a round table with national and international students, scholars, activists, and representatives of the Mexican society at the still-symbolic 1968 Olympic village site. After intense negotiations, the Zapatistas were invited to speak on the floor of Congress, and, on March 28th, they surprised everybody when Comandanta Esther, *not* Subcomandante Marcos, rose to speak in the name of the EZLN central command.¹⁰⁶ That Esther took the main floor in a male-dominated country was a counterblow to the ruling elites and their misogynist and discriminatory attacks.¹⁰⁷ On this historical occasion—the first time that an indigenous woman had addressed Mexico's Congress—Esther described the desperate situation of indigenous women, defended indigenous rights, and reaffirmed the possibility of dialogue with the federal executive (fig. 4.14). She implied that Marcos was not their leader by observing that it is they, the comandantes (women and men), the ones who *mandan y mandan obedeciendo* [govern and govern by obeying]. That is, they listen to their communities and act by consensus. As Núñez Rodríguez discusses, the structure of the Zapatista

¹⁰⁵ The universities that they visited include, the UNAM, IPN, and the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana [Autonomous Metropolitan University or UAM].

¹⁰⁶ Other Zapatistas participated in Congress, such as Comandantes Tacho and Zebedeo.

¹⁰⁷ Leaders of the political party PAN, such as Diego Fernández de Cevallos and Carlos Abascal, referred contemptuously to the Zapatista women as housewives and as *viejerío* [old hags].

movement—built from below and with total involvement—was illustrated by the fact that Esther, not the charismatic Marcos, took the podium.¹⁰⁸

Hopes for peace and for the indigenous cause were never so high. Unfortunately, on April 25th the senate passed a constitutional reform bill that *denied* fundamental indigenous rights.¹⁰⁹ Betrayed, the Zapatistas rejected the reform, and President Fox lost all possibility of a dialogue with the EZLN. The Zapatistas continued, and continue today, to resist peacefully and to govern their communities. The government continued, and continues today, its campaign of oppression with attacks by paramilitary groups.

The Zapatista performative action in the Zócalo was a watershed event that shaped a new reception of Zapatismo around the country and around the world. The possibility of a new, inclusive, different Mexico was materialized by the Zapatista occupation of the national symbolic center. As Monsiváis stated, "Fue la gran ceremonia de inclusión. Además fue una victoria política y cultural" [It was a ceremony of inclusion; it was a political and cultural victory].¹¹⁰ Nonetheless, the government opted to continue its racist policies towards Mexico's indigenous populations once the fervor around the march died down, and it still favors the economic interests of the ruling classes in major policy decisions. It might be precisely because the Zapatistas did *not* seek lasting power nor permanent ownership over the Zócalo that the ruling classes took advantage of the limits of their temporary take-over. As the popular saying about the Zócalo illustrates, the government dominates the country *because* it dominates its center. In the end, the Zapatistas' non-violent occupation of the square did not represent any serious lasting threat to the ruling elite's grip on power.

¹⁰⁸ Núñez Rodríguez, 122.

¹⁰⁹ The reform went contrary to the main points of the San Andrés Accords and the Ley Cocopa.

¹¹⁰ Carlos Monsiváis, quoted in Aponte and Camacho, 306.

Does this mean the EZLN's performative action was a waste of time, energy, and political capital, doomed to fail because it was inherently ephemeral—and inherently democratic? I believe the answer is no. Although peace talks are currently at an impasse and indigenous voices in Mexico still marginalized, the memory of the 2001 Marcha por la dignidad indígena and the Zapatistas' temporary occupation of the Zócalo remains embedded in Mexico City's (and the Mexican government's) collective memory. The Marcha also occupies, thanks to the EZLN's effective use of national and international media voices, a crucial place in an ever-expanding conceptualization about anti-globalization protest. The Zapatistas may not have yet won the long war, but they staged the possibility of meaningful indigenous resistance in a place where such resistance had never before appeared in such scale. On March 11, 2001, Mexico's iconic square became a stage in the fight for indigenous dignity and human rights: the Zapatistas reframed Mexico's center of power for a short, but highly visible, time. They produced a *real* public space where Mexico's indigenous peoples had a *real* voice, and where the oppressed could assert their presence with thoughtful force. The question now is how that voice, that presence, might be given a lasting place at the national negotiating table.

Conclusion

Performing Mexico Today: The 2010 Bicentennial Celebrations of Independence and Revolution in the Zócalo

I start my dissertation's conclusion by quoting President Felipe Calderón's twitter response to critics of Mexico's 2010 celebration of Independence and Revolution—the Bicentenario [Bicentennial]:

México es una gran nación con una gran historia.
Por supuesto que tenemos mucho que celebrar y lo vamos a hacer.
El que no quiera, no lo haga.

[Mexico is a great nation with a great history.
Definitely we have a lot to celebrate and we are going to.
If you don't want to, don't do it.]¹

As the country and its capital were getting ready for the extravagant commemoration of parades, ceremonies, shows, and fireworks, some citizens questioned the need to spend great amounts of money on such spectacles in a country entrenched in economic crisis.² Important questions were raised: Do we really want to celebrate with such pomp and pageantry when President Calderón has plunged the country into a bloody and unwinnable war on drugs? Wouldn't it be paradoxical to celebrate Mexico's sovereignty when the country has been severely limited by NAFTA and Washington's neoliberal economic model? Can we justify such expenditures when the rich are getting richer (Carlos Slim, the richest man in the world, is from Mexico), the poor are getting poorer, and the government fails to provide even the most basic services and rights to its

¹ Mexican President Felipe Calderón quoted in, Nurit Martínez, "Que no celebre el que no quiera," *El Universal* online, August 19, 2010, <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/nacion/179794.html> (accessed October 27, 2012). Otherwise stated, all translations are mine.

² The total cost of the Bicentenario was of two-hundred and thirty million US Dollars. Julián Miglierini, "Bicentenario de México: un festejo polémico," *BBC Mundo* online, 2010, http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/america_latina/2010/09/100913_bicentenario_independencia_mexico_criticas_jrg.shtml (accessed October 27, 2012).

citizens?³ As his answer via twitter illustrates, Calderón fiercely argued that the people should be proud of being Mexicans and were going to celebrate. Once again, Mexico's paternalist state told its citizens to shut up, enjoy themselves, and play by the rules. Calderón's reaction echoes the overarching topic of this dissertation: the imposition of an official history and identity through commemorative celebrations and the disregard towards any people or ideologies that do not fit within it.

In this dissertation I have examined the Zócalo as a site of performance through four theatrical events in different historical periods, from the early colonial era to the present. I showed how, in order to reaffirm their power, rulers have recycled and reinvented old traditions in their staging of official celebrations. I have foregrounded the role of the indigenous populations in these performances: as subjects with agency, as exploited objects, and as exotic characters. I examined how, by occupying that same space, the Zapatistas staged indigenous resistance and the possibility of an inclusive and different Mexico. In this way, I demonstrated the Zócalo's paradoxical condition as Mexico's official *and* unofficial public stage, and determined the different symbolisms that the square has acquired through performance. I have put forward a historical account that has the transformation of the Zócalo at its core, and through which it is possible to better understand the importance of public performance in the fashioning and questioning of what is Mexico and what it means to be Mexican.

By means of conclusion, I will discuss the Bicentenario's Desfile histórico [Historical Parade], the most important and sensational event of the bicentennial celebration, arguing that it is the performance in the Zócalo that best encapsulates the dissertation's historical narrative. The pageant's creators used performative traditions that I have analyzed in this dissertation, and

³ It is interesting to note that Carlos Slim has been the leading investor in the restoration and promotion of Mexico City's Centro Histórico [Historical Center].

staged Mexico's history in the same way officials have done for the past hundred of years. The recency of the Desfile allows me to bring into the foreground the central concerns of this project: the official discourse regarding Mexico's history, and the role of the native populations in celebratory commemorations. The Desfile, staged in the evening of September 15th, was followed by the traditional grito. It was a government-created folkloric and spectacular parade intended to instill patriotism and to promote tourism. As Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo writes of Mexican celebrations, the Desfile was a performance that reaffirmed the commercial and exotic stereotype of an "authentic" Mexico created by "fiesta, siesta, muerte, sombreros, y Fridas."⁴

Here I address three main questions about the 2010 Desfile that relate to my dissertation: How did the government use the Zócalo and appropriate different traditions? What was the role of scenography and visual spectacle in the propagation of an official discourse conveying a happy integration of identities, memories, and histories? And what was erased in such a monumentalization of history? These are questions that I have addressed through my dissertation's different historical case studies and that I argue we should keep asking when confronted with contemporary creations of Mexico's image. Because my aim in this conclusion is to bring to a close the previous chapters, I do not analyze the Bicentenario's Desfile in detail, but discuss the pageant's relevant sections which highlight my project's main topics.

"Colorful, Full of Textures, and Absolutely Baroque"

The Bicentenario was the most expensive and spectacular celebration in the country's history. It celebrated the two-hundredth anniversary of the battle for independence and the one-hundredth anniversary of the Revolution. It was President Calderón's most important project during his six-year presidency. He gathered together an enormous amount of effort and capital

⁴ Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Historia y celebración: México y sus centenarios* (México, D.F.: Tusquets, 2009), 100.

to make the celebration a dazzling and memorable extravaganza. As discussed in the third chapter, Porfirio Díaz consolidated the way rulers celebrate Mexico's history in the Zócalo through his 1910 Centenario. Calderón's Bicentenario was similar to Díaz's established pattern. Like Díaz's commemoration, the Bicentenario included a great number of festivities; it was a centralized event with the majority of work and money poured into the country's capital; and it was a festivity that portrayed a touristic image of Mexico. The celebrations of Mexico's Independence and Revolution lasted throughout 2010 and included the exhumation and worship of the national heroes' remains, historical reenactments, exhibitions, celebrations, parades, multimedia spectacles, concerts, flag ceremonies, popular shows, theatrical performances, inauguration of buildings, contests, publications, and readings.⁵

The 2010 Desfile was composed of nine theatrical scenes, twenty-seven allegorical carts, and seven thousand volunteer-participants.⁶ The commission in charge of the celebrations hired Ric Birch, a renowned Italian producer of large-scale events and ceremonies, as the executive producer of the Desfile, and twelve Mexican artists to create what became the largest pageant in the history of Mexican celebrations. Following the parades' spatial route established since the colonial period, the Desfile's caravan traveled through present-day Reforma, Juárez, and Madero Avenues to arrive at the central square for the grito's performance. The evening's celebrations lasted for approximately ten hours over the course of which one million people gathered in the streets, more than fifty thousand amassed in the Zócalo, and millions more watched a live broadcast.

⁵ For listings and descriptions of the activities during the Bicentenario, see Gobierno Federal: Bicentenario. "México 2010: Reporte de las principales actividades conmemorativas con motivo del bicentenario del inicio de la independencia nacional y del centenario del inicio de la revolución mexicana," <http://www.bicentenario.gob.mx/> (accessed August 24, 2012).

⁶ I base my description of the Desfile on Gobierno Federal: Bicentenario, "Mexico 2010: Reporte," 143–46; Televisa S.A. de C.V., "Fiesta Mexicana: Bicentenario," special program, interviews, and live broadcast on Mexican television, September 15, 2010.

The pageant conveyed Mexico's great historical eras as they had been compartmentalized during the Porfiriato: conquest, colony, and independence. It included, however, additions like the 1910 Revolution and other thematic tableaux. The nine theatrical scenes travelled towards the Zócalo in the following processional order: Independencia [Independence], Insurgencia-Revolución [Insurgency-Revolution], Prehispánico [Pre-Hispanic], Colonia y barroco [Colony and Baroque], Héroes y mitos [Heroes and Myths], La gran nación mexicana [The Great Mexican Nation], Cultura popular [Popular Culture], Suave patria [Gentle Motherland], and Celebración de muertos [Celebration of the Dead]. Despite the recycled themes and periods, what made the Bicentenario parade look new and attractive was that, in contrast with Díaz's use of human actors, artists also appropriated popular puppet forms, combined them with some innovative techniques, and mixed performing objects with persons in a huge assortment of allegorical carts. Because of the Desfile's carnivalesque nature, performing objects played a central role and thus were used to visually convey the government's idea of "Mexican-ness" as well as its version of the country's history. Traditional masks, figures, and rituals were recycled and repurposed in a postmodern fashion that resulted in nothing more than a hollow, but sometimes enthralling, collage of Mexico's history and identity according to the state. A critical analysis of either the country's present or past was absent from a pageant that simply reaffirmed stereotypes. As Carlos Monsiváis said, "El festejo va a tener cosas espectaculares, pero no la reflexión ejemplificada que se debiera" [The celebration will have spectacular things but not the necessary type of reflection].⁷ Moreover, as noted by the magazine *Proceso's* editorial, the

⁷ "Monsiváis criticó los festejos del Bicentenario en México," *Justa: lectura y conversación*, March 8, 2010, <http://www.justa.com.mx/?p=22087> (accessed October 29, 2012).

Desfile's aesthetic was that of a for-profit entertainment: conventional, conservative, and reductionist.⁸

The procession did not follow a chronological order but started with the most historically celebrated events: Independencia and Insurgencia-Revolución. For the Independencia tableau, theatre and opera director Mauricio García Lozano created a giant paper boat with children dressed as the independence heroes riding onboard.⁹ The boat was led through Reforma Avenue by a flying machine and an acrobat impersonating the monument of Independence (fig. 5.1). The visual and performative effect was surreal as the boat appeared to lead the procession through the streets of downtown Mexico.

Probably the most accomplished section of the parade was Insurgencia-Revolución—not because of its historical accuracy but because of the complexity of the puppets. It contained dozens of larger-than-life marionettes representing the revolutionary hero Emiliano Zapata as well as an automaton cart launching sombreros and guns into the air. One of the two designers of the performing objects, José Antonio Garduño, described the army of puppetized Zapatas as unfinished drawings—the marionettes were partially skeletonized and one could see the interiors of their intricate mechanisms (fig. 5.2).¹⁰ In a simple and evocative way, this army of

⁸ Editorial, "Bicentenario: divididos y sin presente," *Proceso*, September 22, 2010, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=101626> (accessed October 29, 2012).

⁹ Mauricio García Lozano is a well-established theatre and opera director. He is also a translator, sound designer, and teacher. García Lozano has staged more than forty plays from both Mexican and foreign playwrights, such as Jaime Chabaud, Ximena Escalante, Rascón Banda, and Harold Pinter. His acclaimed productions include Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (Festival de México, 2009), Goethe/Beethoven's *Egmont* (Mexico's National Theatre Company and Symphony Orchestra of Jalapa, 2009), and Beethoven's *Fidelio* (Mexico's National Opera Company, 2010). For complete biographies of the twelve Mexican artists and creators of the Desfile's theatrical scenes, see Gobierno Federal: Bicentenario, "15 de Septiembre / El grito del Bicentenario: Autores," http://www.bicentenario.gob.mx/acces/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=33:autores&Itemid=44&layout=default (accessed October 27, 2012).

¹⁰ Televisa, "Fiesta Mexicana." The other objects' designer was Iker Vicente. A well-known Mexican theatre director, Jorge Vargas directed this section of the parade. Vargas is one of Mexico's most prominent theatre directors. He founded his company Teatro Línea de Sombra in 1993, and, under his direction, it has become one of Mexico's most acclaimed touring ensembles. Teatro Línea de Sombra's productions are unique in that they combine theatre and dance with a rich scenographic vocabulary made out of visual projections, original scores, objects, and

marionettes honored the revolutionary caudillo [leader] and defender of the indigenous peasants. The exposure of the marionettes' mechanism also suggested an unfinished revolution: Mexico's peasants and indigenous communities are still struggling for their rights and lands. Nevertheless, this performance raises the question of the government's position regarding contemporary Zapatistas. The historical hero is celebrated in the capital nine years after the government negated the constitutional recognition of indigenous rights to present-day Zapatistas in the same space. Once again, as it has been traditionally done, rulers commemorated an Indian past while they negated the country's indigenous present.

The series of tableaux in the Desfile's historical section Prehispánico conveyed the official interpretation of the country's pre-Hispanic past as it glorified a Mexica (or Aztec) past. As established by historians since the late colonial period, Mexico's indigenous past is solely Aztec. Such exaltation not only dismisses other pre-Hispanic cultures, but essentializes Mexico's indigenous past and present. The pre-Hispanic section, directed by the celebrated theatre director Claudio Valdés Kuri and choreographer and dancer Alicia Sánchez, included a miniature representation of the ancient city of Tenochtitlán.¹¹ The Mexica city was created by placing different replicas of its buildings on the heads of four hundred volunteers who paraded with the procession. This section also included a reenactment of the ancient legend of the *tameme*, which tells the story of a native bringing fresh fish to Moctezuma. In a similar fashion to Porfirio

other types of mixed media. Their show *Amarillo*, touring in the US in 2012, recounts a chilling story of migration from Mexico to the US in a remorseless, yet beautiful and theatrical, way.

¹¹ Claudio Valdés Kuri is an acclaimed Mexican theatre director who has been recognized as one of Latin America's most accomplished artists. He founded the ensemble Teatro de ciertos habitantes, whose performances include *The Grey Automobile*, *Monsters and Prodigies: The History of the Castrati*, and *Becket or the Honour of God*. Valdés Kuri's shows have been commissioned and produced by international festivals and institutions such as the Fringe Festival (Edinburgh), Kunsten Festival des Arts (Brussels), Wiener Festwochen (Vienna), and the Festival Internacional Cervantino (Guanajuato, Mexico).

Alicia Sánchez is a Mexican dancer and choreographer whose work has won several awards, such as the Premio nacional de danza [National Prize of Dance]. She has created forty-five performances, including dance, theatre, opera, and circus. Her works have been presented at international festivals in New York, Montreal, Beijing, Prague, and Colombia, among others.

Díaz's celebrations one-hundred years earlier, when organizers requested indigenous-looking people from Tlaxcala to impersonate natives, an indigenous-looking actor impersonated the tameme carrying a large fish-puppet on his back.

The next section of the parade, named *Colonia y barroco*, was enthusiastically described by its creator Valdés Kuri as an homage to mestizaje and the Mexican identity. According to Valdés Kuri, such identity is "colorful, full of textures, and absolutely baroque."¹² Such general statements need to be analyzed not only because they reaffirmed stereotypes, but because they dictated the aesthetics of this portion of the festival and thus the image of what—according to Valdés Kuri—a baroque Mexico was and still is. To begin with, the notion that mestizaje refers to the peoples of Spanish and Indigenous heritage is simplistic: as Alan Knight writes, mestizaje is a racial and social process as well as an achieved and ascribed status.¹³ In short, through the concept of mestizaje, ruling elites sought to make Indians less Indian and thus integrate them into a unified nation. According to Knight, mestizaje "embodied the optimistic belief that acculturation could proceed in a guided, enlightened fashion, such that the positive aspects of Indian culture could be preserved, the negative expunged."¹⁴ As discussed in this dissertation, rulers have molded Mexico's identity as a modern nation through their glorification of mestizaje and its institutionalization as official indigenism. The idea of a unified mestizo nation that erases differences is exactly what the Zapatistas question. Yet, unfortunately, such erasure continues to be celebrated. When Valdés Kuri states that this celebration is an homage to mestizaje, he blinds himself to any real questioning of acculturation and official discrimination towards indigenous

¹² Televisa, "Fiesta Mexicana."

¹³ Alan Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and Indigenismo: Mexico, 1910–1940," in Richard Graham, Thomas E. Skidmore, Aline Helg, and Alan Knight, *The Idea of Race in Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 72.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 86.

communities. Furthermore, through his analogy between the Mexican identity and the baroque style, Valdés Kuri implies that Mexicans (all of whom apparently are mestizos) are rich, complex, and daring beings. His portrayal is an oversimplified and exoticized conception of the country's multiple and diverse populations.

Valdés Kuri's baroque section thus constituted a sampling of what colonial Mexico looks like from a colonialist point of view and of what Spaniards categorized as valuable in their colony. This segment started with a stereotypical representation of the Spanish conqueror Hernán Cortés. A Spanish-looking actor in period costume and on horseback led Valdés Kuri's processional carts. The procession included a cart with miniature figures of the different races or castes officially recognized by the Spanish crown during the colonial period; triumphal arches mimicking those built for viceregal entries and royal ceremonies; representations of colonial artisanal arts, such as movable objects made out of *talavera* [Mexican tiles] and silver; a model of the cathedral in the Zócalo; and tableaux vivants of characters dressed in eighteenth-century Spanish costumes.

Interestingly, the group of allegorical carts titled *Heroes y mitos*, created by architect and scenographer Mónica Raya, brought into the foreground the mixed indigenous and European art forms of the colonial era.¹⁵ As discussed in the first and second chapters, indigenous pre-conquest artistic forms were re-imposed in the early colonial period (the 1539 civic festival), mixed with European forms, and added to the repertoire (the 1721 Paseo del Pendón). The central figures of Raya's *Heroes y mitos* were two giant inflatable puppets of the mythological Mexica feathered-serpent-god Quetzalcóatl and its Mayan incarnation Cuculcán. Similar to the

¹⁵ Mónica Raya studied architecture at the UNAM, where she is a faculty member in the school of theatre. Raya received her MFA in scene design at the Yale School of Drama and her doctorate in arts from the Arts University in Helsinki. She has created the scenography, costumes, and lighting for more than one hundred productions in México and the United States. She has won numerous design awards.

large *tarasca*, a painted wooden dragon leading the seventeenth-century Corpus Christi processions in Mexico City, the serpents Quetzalcóatl and Cuculcán navigated the streets. The puppets, accompanied by performers playing drums and wind instruments, arrived at the Zócalo in the evening.¹⁶ Once in the main square, the animalized puppets, illuminated, merged with the archeological environment of the Zócalo: the ruins of the Mexica Templo Mayor, the baroque cathedral, and the National Palace (fig. 5.3). The visual effect was astonishing as the ancient built environment and the contemporary puppets were united in representing a single historical period. Space, history, and puppets appeared as in an endless continuum or a cosmic circle; a complete illusion.

Another detail of Raya's mythical interpretation of Mexico's past is worth mentioning, as it illustrates the festival's postmodern interpretation of Mexico's history: the procession of Mexican heroes that accompanied the puppets of Quetzalcóatl and Cuculcán. Dozens of volunteers dressed in golden costumes stood on stilts. They wore giant papier-mâché heads of various Mexican heroes from different periods while dancing among the giant serpents. Although it was never clear what was the criteria used to select the greatest heroes, the protagonists of Mexico's past proudly made their way into the center of the city. The use of giant heads can also be traced back to the colonial processions of Corpus Christi. During the religious pageant, a group of persons in costumes wore huge heads and chased after small children.¹⁷ The Corpus Christi *cabezudos* [big heads], made out of wood and paper, provided the religious procession a carnivalesque and irreverent touch. In the Bicentenario, the tradition of the *cabezudos* seemed familiar while at the same time new and enthralling.

¹⁶ The *tarasca* was not exclusive to Mexico City but was peninsular in origin. For a description of the colonial *tarasca*, see Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies: Corpus Christi in Colonial Mexico City," in *Rituals of Rule, Rituals of Resistance: Public Celebrations and Popular Culture in Mexico*, eds. William H. Beezley, Cheryl English Martin, and William E. French (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1994), 6.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

Following the state's fervent aim at conveying a particular Mexican-ness, the creators of the festivities added certain symbolic sections to the procession's historical collage, such as Horacio Lecona's *La gran nación Mexicana*, Felipe Hernández del Paso's *Cultura popular*, Juliana Faesler's *Suave patria*, and Mario Espinosa's *Celebración de muertos*.¹⁸ Lecona described his creation for *La gran nación* as an inclusive project and a manifestation of the country's different communities with their specific rituals.¹⁹ Lecona and his team invited twelve hundred inhabitants from around the country to perform their local traditions, and to show costumes, masks, and other crafts (fig. 5.4). Many were from different indigenous communities yet, like folkloric objects devoid of any real differences, they appeared as an harmonious unity. Furthermore, when marching through the *Zócalo*, the square's symbolic weight framed this collage as a happily integrated entity under the umbrella of a single great nation.

In his section, *Cultura popular*, Hernández del Paso built several processional carts that contained stagings related to Mexican popular culture (cinema, music, and dance). In *Suave patria*, Faesler designed a cart that symbolized the freedom of press; she also lauded the constitution's role in the formation of the country. Her cart was a U-shaped printing press on top of which skateboarders performed tricks. She portrayed the constitution through allegorical tableaux of performers wearing oversized objects such as pens (symbolizing the constitution's signing) and balloons with images of the historical figures who created the document. Faesler

¹⁸ Horacio Lecona is a performing arts' director, curator, and producer. He has been director of the National Dance Company in Mexico, coordinator of dance in the Instituto de Bellas Artes [National Fines Arts Institute], and general director of the Fideicomiso para la cultura México-EUA [Foundation for Culture Mexico-USA].

Felipe Hernández del Paso is a theatre and production designer who studied film directing in Mexico City and has worked with Robert Wilson.

Juliana Faesler is a talented scenographer, dramaturg and theatre and opera director. She has directed more than fifteen shows with her company *La Máquina de Teatro*. She studied scene and costume design at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London.

Mario Espinosa is a theatre director in Mexico who has been recognized nationally and abroad. Some of the shows he has directed include *Art, Copenhagen*, and the opera *Únicamente la verdad: la auténtica historia de Camelia la Tejana* [Only the Truth: The real history of Camelia the Texan].

¹⁹ Televisa, "Fiesta Mexicana."

also highlighted workers' rights by including groups of performers dressed in the uniforms of their different trades. Espinosa's creation for *Celebración de muertos* closed the pageant with tableaux related to the Day of the Dead traditional celebration. Because of its roots in indigenous rituals, its colorful imagery, and its national importance, this celebration has become one of Mexico's iconic brands for export. In the Desfile, skeletons of all scales, colors, and shapes formed a carnivalesque grouping that, according to Espinosa, metaphorically marched to the underworld. However, and as stated in *Proceso*, Espinosa "se concentró en una acumulación de calaveras objectuales y humanas aptas para el día de Halloween" [Espinosa concentrated in gathering a group of object and human skeletons suitable for Halloween] (fig. 5.5).²⁰

As it has been traditionally done, the Desfile's route ended in a highly decorated Zócalo filled with thousands of people (fig. 5.6). Once in the square, the carts passed in front of the National Palace. An even more impressive spectacle followed: multimedia projections were reflected onto the buildings; a huge sculpture made out of objects and dancers called *El árbol de la vida* [The Tree of Life] was erected; acrobats formed the word "Mexico" in a gigantic grid; and a huge statue named *El coloso* [The Colossus] was assembled in the middle of the square.²¹ When the clock marked eleven o'clock in the night President Calderón emerged from the Palace's central balcony to deliver *el grito*. After he shouted "¡Viva México!" while waving a big flag and the audience responded with their "¡Vivas!," a dazzling display of fireworks closed the Desfile.

Indeed, the 2010 Desfile encapsulated this dissertation's topic: the continuing imposition of an official story of the past through commemorative celebrations in the Zócalo. The pageant's

²⁰ Editorial, "Bicentenario: divididos y sin presente," *Proceso*, September 22, 2010, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=101626> (accessed October 29, 2012).

²¹ The Colossus caused a lot of controversy because of its resemblance to the revolutionary traitor Victoriano Huerta during the 1910 Revolution.

creators used past performative traditions to portray Mexico's history as an evolutionary process and its people's identity as an homogeneous unity. The result was a performative monumentalization of space, celebration, and nation that sought to erase differences and present concerns.

Monumentalizing History and Nation

As I discussed throughout this dissertation, the use of Mexico's Zócalo as a theatre is of particular relevance. The square's symbolism and historical weight have shaped the way the Zócalo has been used in official and unofficial events. Inversely, commemorations, performances, and protests have embedded the square with new meanings. In the first chapter, I showed how indigeneity was re-imposed in the Spanish center during the first colonial civic festival and thus redefined the European center as also indigenous. In the second chapter, I demonstrated how the colonial square had the potential to become an unstable space during the autocratic reign of the Bourbons through the inclusion of popular and indigenous manifestations in the celebration of the royal banner. In the third chapter, I argued that the Zócalo became Mexico's national site of performance with the establishment of celebrations of independence, especially with Díaz's Centenario. In the fourth chapter, I established the Zapatista performative action as an event that turned the square into a site for the indigenous struggle, thus foregrounding the Zócalo as a space of resistance and protest. I conclude with the Bicentenario in the Zócalo as a monumental pageant of nationhood.

All in all, the vastness of the 2010 Desfile produced a monumentalization of history and of nation. In his analysis of social spaces, Henri Lefebvre, discusses how monumentality conveys collectivity by offering members of a society "an image of that membership, an image

of his or her social visage."²² Monumentality performs like a collective mirror; in the Bicentenario's case, it resulted in a distorted mirror. Most importantly, such monumentalizations connote a totality to the degree that it erases, according to Lefebvre, "traces of violence and death, of negativity and aggressiveness."²³ In short: it is triumphal. The Bicentenario certainly conveyed a triumphalist nation that, as Judith Friedlander argues, admires its Indians for being the "real soul" of Mexico while at the same time discriminates and abuses them.²⁴ The Bicentenario narrated Mexico's history to fit the government's conservative ideology by omitting important chapters and populations, such as the role of blacks and Indians in present Mexico or the 1968 student's movement. Also, it is important to highlight the artists' compliance in creating such a narrative. Leading Mexican artists, such as Mario Espinosa and Jorge Vargas, whose work has been political and has questioned the official ideology, created the Desfile. I would like to suggest that their approach to this celebration was utilitarian. The only way that an artist can officially stage something in the Zócalo is by playing by the rules. While information about most of the creators of the celebrations I study in this dissertation is nonexistent, it becomes clear, through the 2010 Desfile, that the artists' role in official commemorations is a topic which could be further explored in studies of Mexico's Zócalo.

However, as Lefebvre contends, while monumental processes present an element of repression that is then transformed into glorification, their credibility is never total. In other words, monumentality never accomplishes a complete illusion, because "it replaces a brutal reality with a materially realized *appearance*."²⁵ The Bicentenario's credibility was seriously contested from the beginning. Though it managed to extol patriotic sentiments by reinventing

²² Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 220.

²³ *Ibid.*, 222.

²⁴ Judith Friedlander, *Being Indian in Hueyapan: A Study of Forced Identity in Contemporary Mexico* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), 4; Knight, 101.

²⁵ Lefebvre, 221. Emphasis mine.

performance traditions and by its traditional use of space, it was nothing more than an illusion of what the state wants its peoples to celebrate. When confronted with severe criticisms regarding the expenses and the timing of the Bicentenario, President Calderón and the Secretary of Education Alonso Lujambio angrily responded by accusing such critics of trying to diminish national sentiment.²⁶ While I am not interested in reclaiming any nationalistic emotions, I am certainly concerned with pointing at what is and has been systematically erased under such a travesty of folkloric traditions.

On the other hand, and as I have demonstrated in this project, the Zócalo can be transformed into an ambivalent space and into a space of resistance. Today, protests—both small and massive in scale—take place in the square on a daily basis, alongside (and sometimes overlapping) the country's traditional commemorative celebrations. The square is indeed Mexico's most contested public space. While the government does not recognize a large part of the country's past and present condition, indigenous groups, students, and activists are finding ways of memorializing and performing alternate histories in Mexico's central square. Without a doubt the Zócalo's real potential lies in that it is, first and foremost, a public stage.

²⁶ Francisco Reséndiz, "Arremete Lujambio contra críticos de Bicentenario," *El Universal* online, August 21, 2010, <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/703217.html> (accessed October 29, 2012).

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Figure 1.1 Valley of Mexico. The island and city of Tenochtitlán was connected to the mainland by causeways. From Richard F. Townsend, *The Aztecs* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 27.

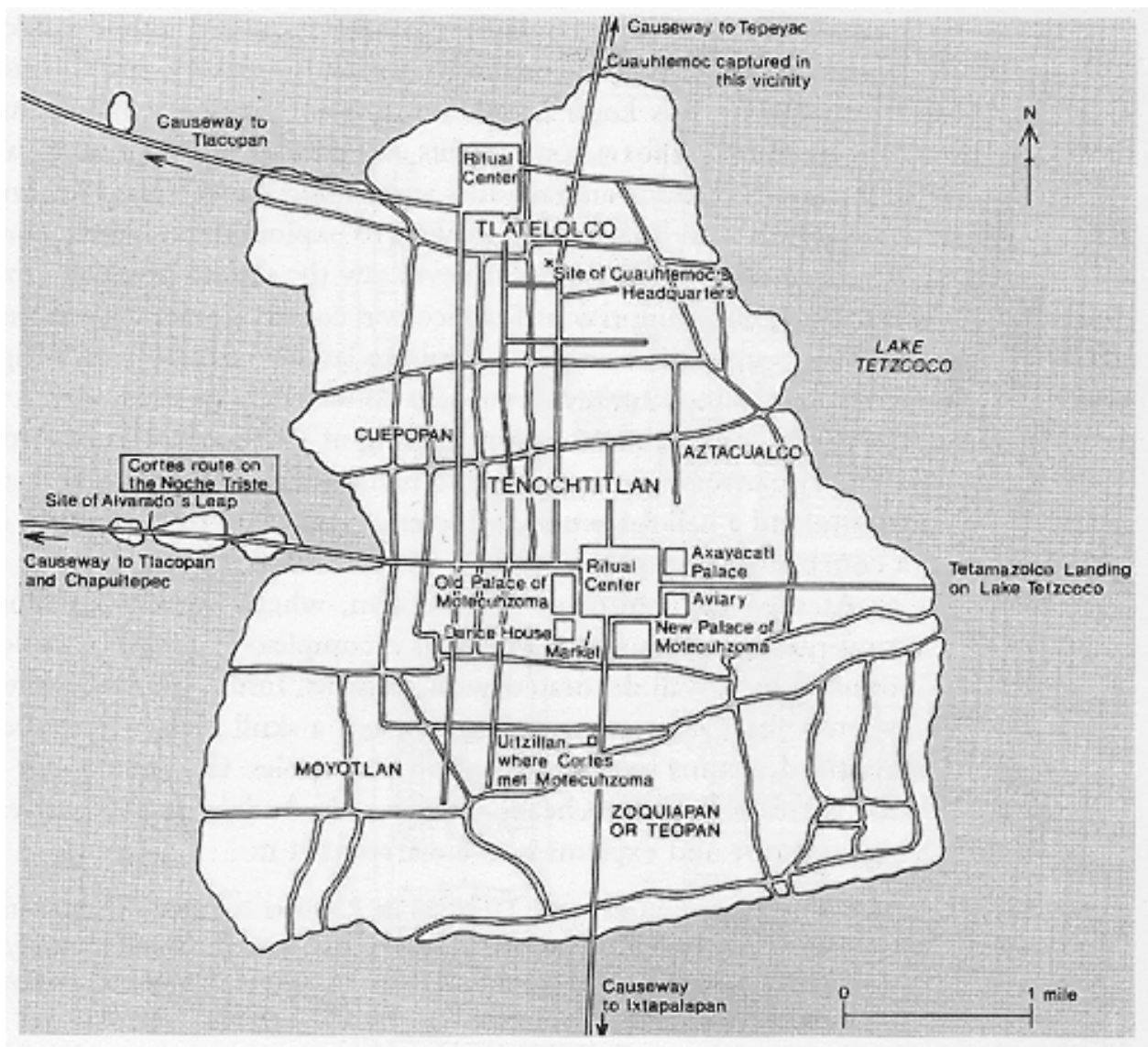


Figure 1.2 Map of Tenochtitlán indicating the four barrios or quarters (Cuepopan, Atzacualco, Moyotlán, Zoquiapan), the main canals, streets, and buildings. From Richard F. Townsend, *The Aztecs* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 31.



Figure 1.3 The Uppsala Map of Mexico-Tenochtitlán (1550), attributed to Alonso de Santa Cruz, Tlatelolco. This *mapa-paisaje* [map-landscape] is preserved at the Swedish University of Uppsala. The north is located on the right side of the map where Tlatelolco (represented four times bigger than the Plaza Mayor) is located. From Sigvald Linné, *El valle y la ciudad de México en 1550: relación histórica fundada sobre un mapa geográfico, que se conserva en la biblioteca de la Universidad de Uppsala, Suecia* (Stockholm: Esselte aktiebolag, 1948), n.p.

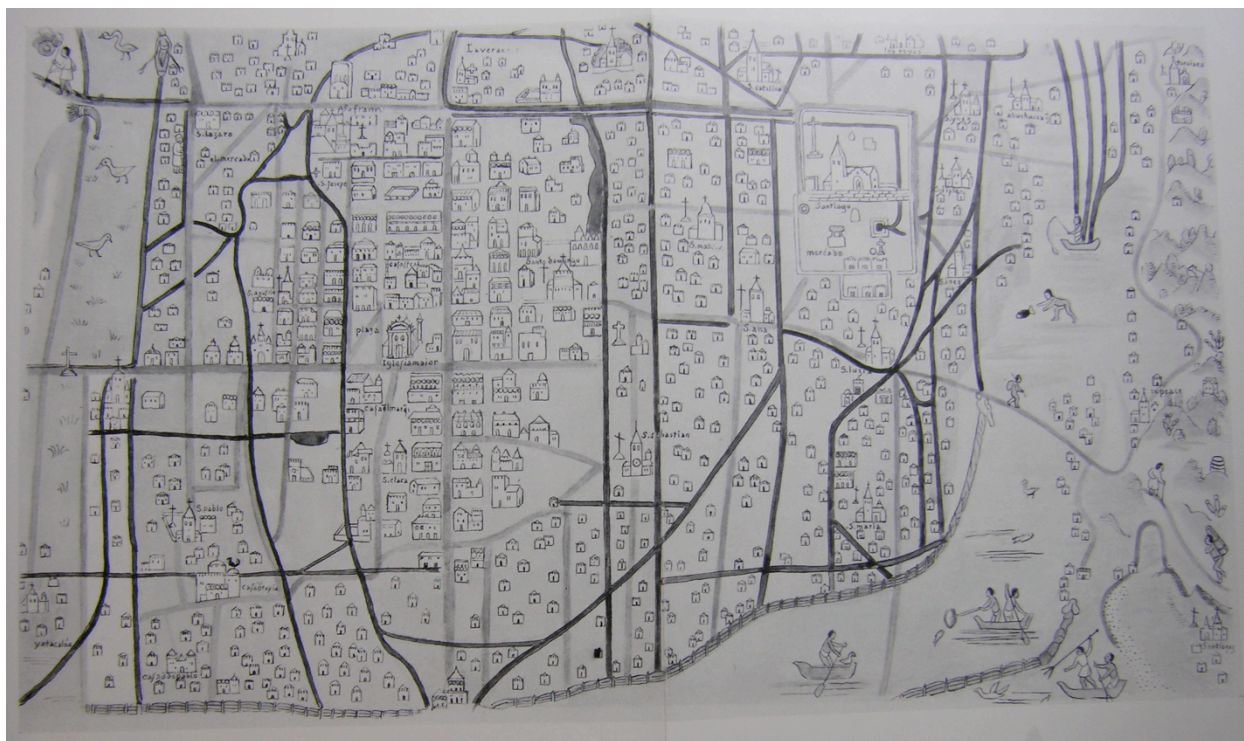


Figure 1.4 Close-up of Mexico-Tenochtitlán's central area. From Sigvald Linné, *El valle y la ciudad de México en 1550: relación histórica fundada sobre un mapa geográfico, que se conserva en la biblioteca de la Universidad de Uppsala, Suecia* (Stockholm: Esselte aktiebolag, 1948), n.p.

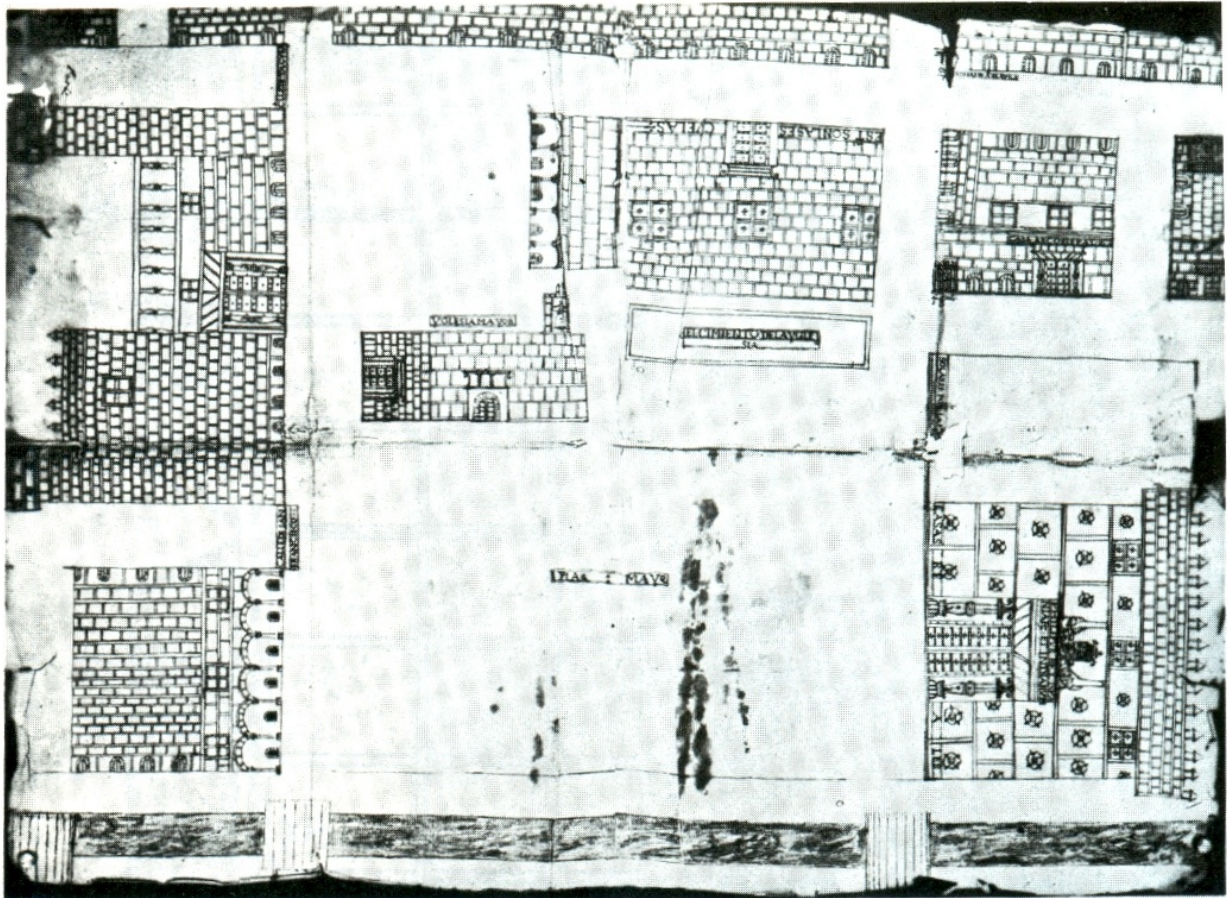


Figure 1.5 The Plaza Mayor in 1563. After Diego Angulo Iníguez and Archivo General de las Indias, *Planos de monumentos arquitectónicos de América y Filipinas existentes en el Archivo de Indias* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1933). From George Kubler, *Mexican Architecture of the Sixteenth Century*, vol. 1 (1948; repr., Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972), 191.

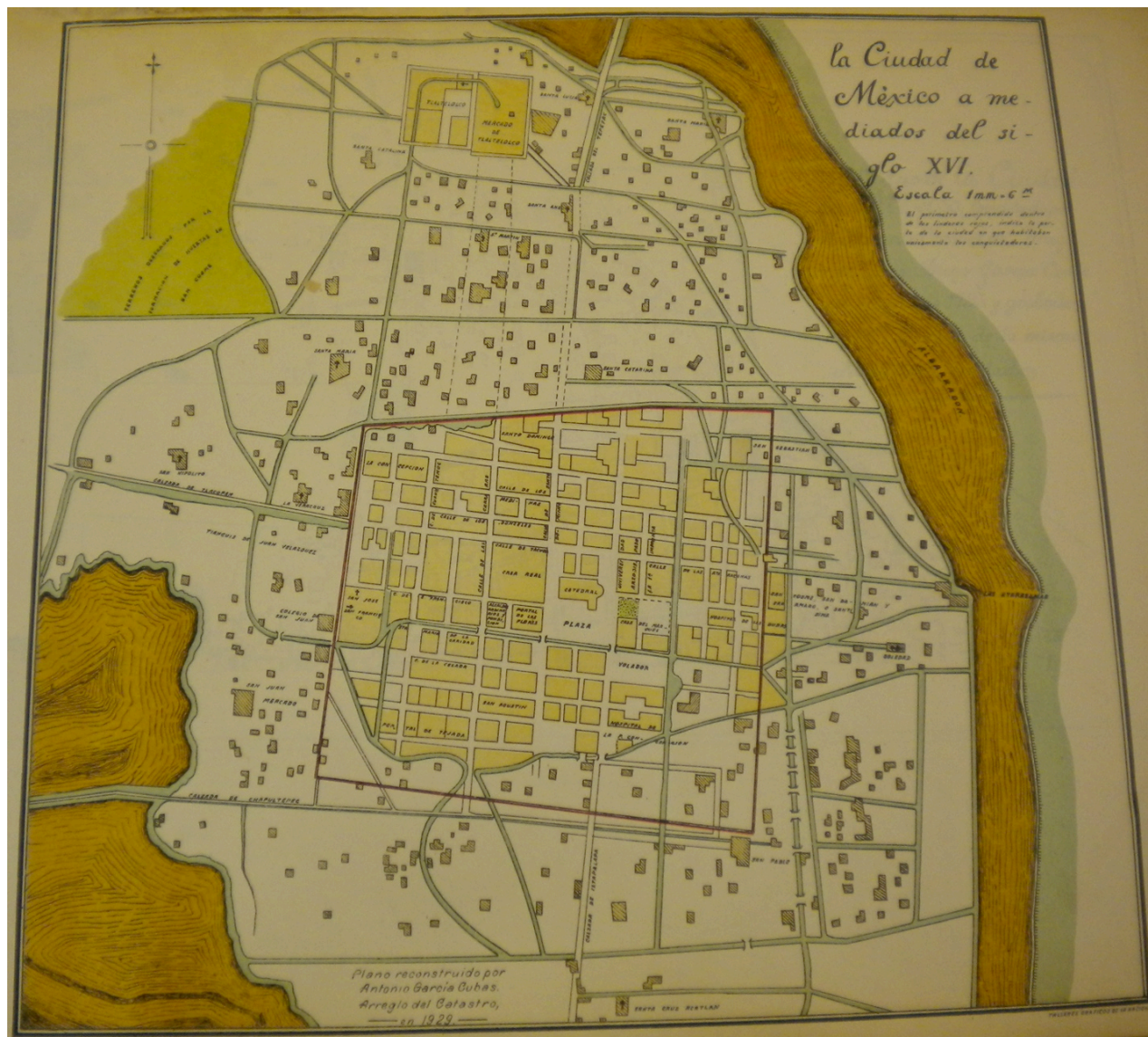


Figure 1.6 Mexico City in mid-sixteenth century. Plan restored by Antonio García Cubas, 1929. (Photograph by Ana Martínez). From *Atlas General DF tomo II*, Archivo Histórico de la Ciudad de México [Historical Archive of Mexico City or AHDF].



Figure 1.7 "Ixmiqulpan, Hidalgo. Nave of the Augustinian church with mural bands at eye level and ceiling level." (Photograph by J. Barry Kiracofe). From Jaime Lara, *City, Temple, Stage: Eschatological Architecture and Liturgical Theatrics in New Spain* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 87.



Figure 1.8 "Ixmiquilpan. Warrior wearing jaguar knight costume." From Jaime Lara, *City, Temple, Stage: Eschatological Architecture and Liturgical Theatrics in New Spain* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 88.



Figure 1.9 "Detail, mural, south wall of the convent church of San Miguel, Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo." (Photograph by Jorge Pérez de Lara). From Samuel Y. Edgerton, *Theatres of Conversion: Religious Architecture and Indian Artisans in Colonial Mexico* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), 162.



Figure 1.10 Codex Tlatelolco (1565). Detail of Indian chieftain leaving for Mixton War in 1540. From Xavier Noguez and Stephanie Wood, *De tlacuilos y escribanos: estudios sobre documentos indígenas coloniales de México* (Zamora, Michoacán: El Colegio de Michoacán, El Colegio Mexiquense, 1998), 28.



Figure 1.11 "Beginning the Construction of Mexico City Cathedral in 1562." Codex de Tlatelolco (1565). From Serge Gruzinski, *Painting the Conquest: The Mexican Indians and the European Renaissance* (Paris: Flammarion, 1992), 140.

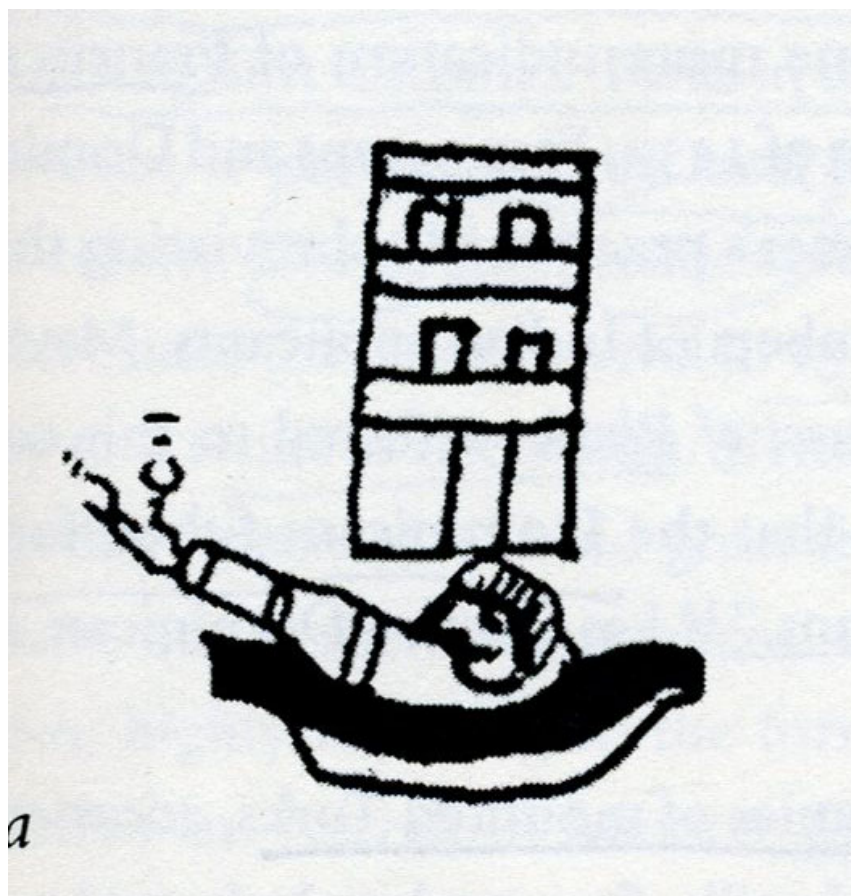


Figure 1.12 Drawing of scenic units probably used in La conquista de Rodas in the 1576 Codex Aubin. From Max Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians: Festivals of Reconquest in Mexico and Spain* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2000), 125.



Figure 1.13 "Tenochtitlán. Plan attributed to Hernán Cortés, *Praeclara Ferdinandi Cortesii de Nova maris Hyspania narratio*" (Nuremberg, 1524). (Courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago). From Jaime Lara, *City, Temple, Stage: Eschatological Architecture and Liturgical Theatrics in New Spain* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 93.

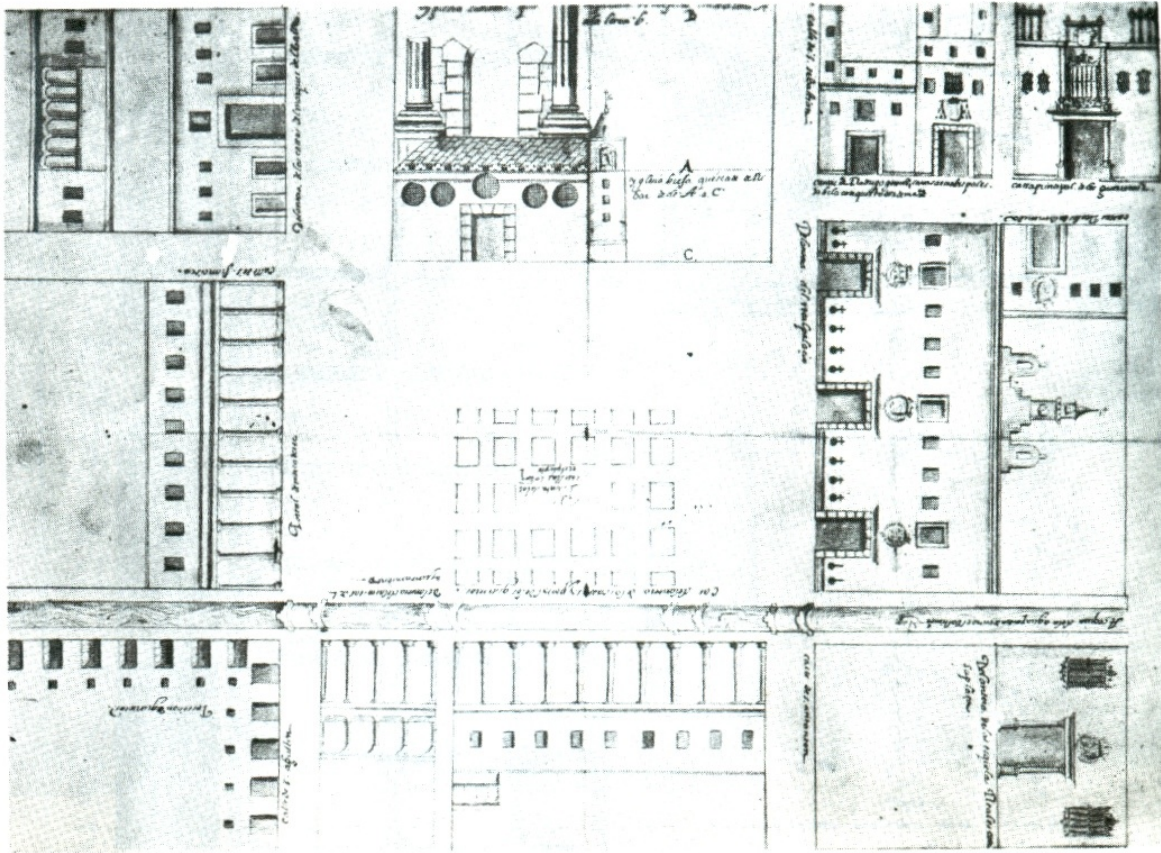


Figure 1.14 The Plaza Mayor in 1596. After Diego Angulo Iníguez and Archivo General de las Indias, *Planos de monumentos arquitectónicos de América y Filipinas existentes en el Archivo de Indias* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1933). From George Kubler, *Mexican Architecture of the Sixteenth Century*, vol. 1 (1948; repr., Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972), 191.

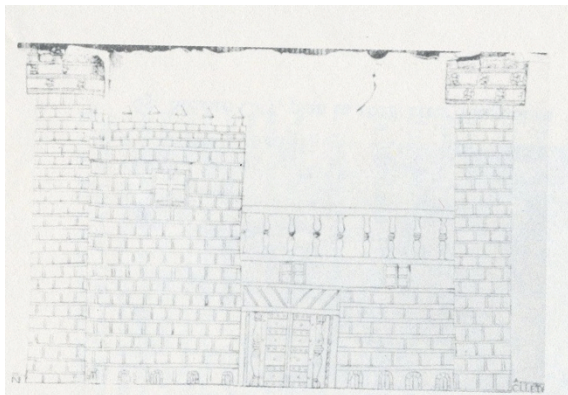


Figure 1.15 Façade of casas viejas of Cortés in 1563. After Diego Angulo Iníguez and Archivo General de las Indias, *Planos de monumentos arquitectónicos de América y Filipinas existentes en el Archivo de Indias* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 1933). From George Kubler, *Mexican Architecture of the Sixteenth Century*, vol. 1 (1948; repr., Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972), 195.



Figure 2.1 *El parián*, Unknown Artist, ca. 1770. Oil on canvas. Private Collection. From Ilona Katzew, *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 7.



Figure 2.2 *San Hipólito y las armas mexicanas* [Saint Hippolytus and the Mexican Arms], Anonymous, New Spain, 1764. Oil on canvas. (Photograph by Michel Zabé). Museum Franz Mayer, Mexico City.



Figure 2.3 *Plaza Mayor de la Ciudad de México* [Plaza Mayor of Mexico City], Anonymous, ca. 1766. Oil on canvas. Museo Nacional de Historia del Castillo de Chapultepec [National Museum of History of the Castle of Chapultepec], Mexico City. Reproducción autorizada por el Instituto de Antropología e Historia, México [Reproduction authorized by the Mexican Institute of Anthropology and History].



Figure 2.4 *Plano de la Ciudad de México, levantado por el Teniente Coronel de Dragones, Don Diego García Conde en el año de 1793 y grabado en 1807 de orden de la misma Nobilísima Ciudad* [Plan of Mexico City measured by the Lieutenant Colonel of Dragones Don Diego García in the year 1793 and depicted in 1807 by orders of the city. (Photograph by Ana Martínez). From *Atlas General DF tomo II*, Archivo Histórico de la Ciudad de México [Historical Archive of Mexico City or AHDF].



Figure 2.5 *Biombo de la conquista de México y vista de la ciudad de México (anverso)* [Folding Screen of the Conquest of Mexico and View of Mexico City (front)]. Anonymous, New Spain, seventeenth century. Oil on canvas. (Photography by Michel Zabé). Museum Franz Mayer, Mexico City.



Figure 2.6 *Biombo de la Conquista de México y vista de la ciudad de México (reverso)* [Folding Screen of the Conquest of Mexico and View of Mexico City (back)]. Anonymous, New Spain, seventeenth century. Oil on canvas. (Photography by Michel Zabé). Museum Franz Mayer, Mexico City.



Figure 2.7 *Corpus Christi Procession*, Anonymous, ca. 1700. Oil on canvas. Museum Pedro de Osma, Lima, Perú. From Richard L. Kagan, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World 1493–1793* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 183.



Figure 2.8 *The Images Arrive at the Cathedral*, Anonymous, ca. 1680. Oil on canvas. From the series *Procesión del Corpus Christi* [Corpus Christi Procession], Museum of Religious Art, Cuzco, Perú. From Richard L. Kagan, *Urban Images of the Hispanic World 1493–1793* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 182.



Figure 2.9 Cristóbal de Villalpando, *Main Plaza of Mexico City*, late seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries. Oil on canvas. Wiltshire: Corsham Court Collection. From Michael Schreffler, *The Art of Allegiance: Visual Culture and Imperial Power in Baroque New Spain* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 33.



Figure 2.10 Eagle and jaguar dancers during a festival. Anonymous, eighteenth century. Salvat Editores. From Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, *The Great Festivals of Colonial Mexico City: Performing Power and Identity* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 89.



Figure 3.1 Gobierno federal: Bicentenario, "México de mis recuerdos: 1910 fiestas del primer centenario de la independencia de México," <http://www.bicentenario.gob.mx/mexicorecuerdos/> (accessed August 5, 2012).

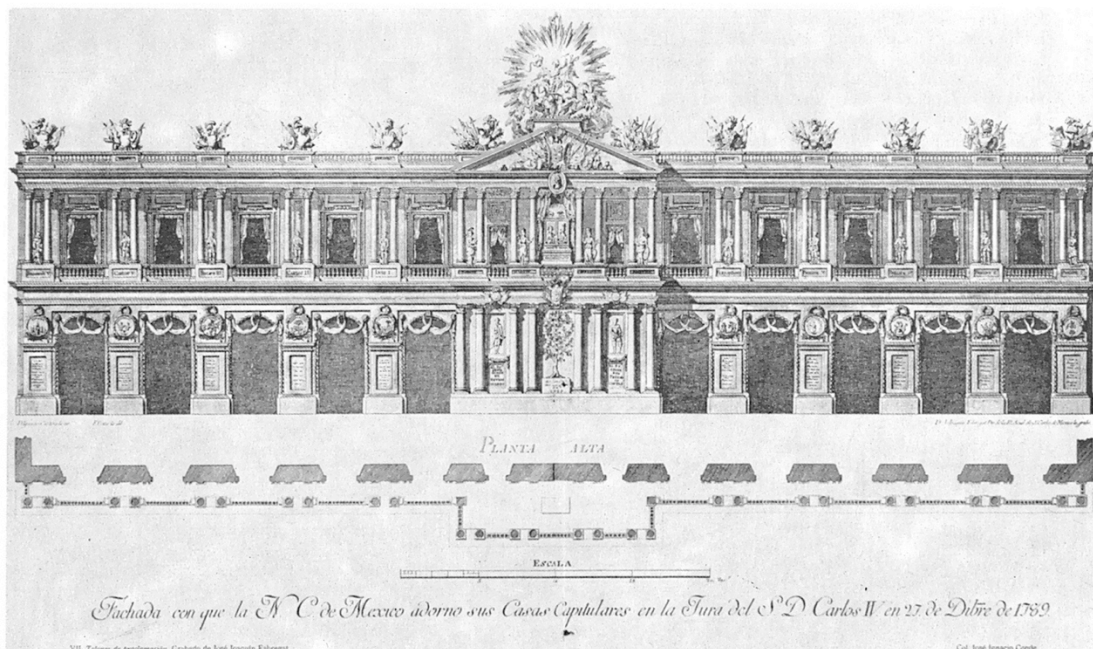


Figure 3.2 José Joaquín Fabregat, *Telón de proclamación* [Backdrop of Proclamation], 1789. Etching of Ignacio Castera's backdrop to cover the City Council in the Royal Festivities. From Eloisa Uribe, *Tolsá: hombre de la Ilustración* (México D.F.: INBA, 1990), 59.

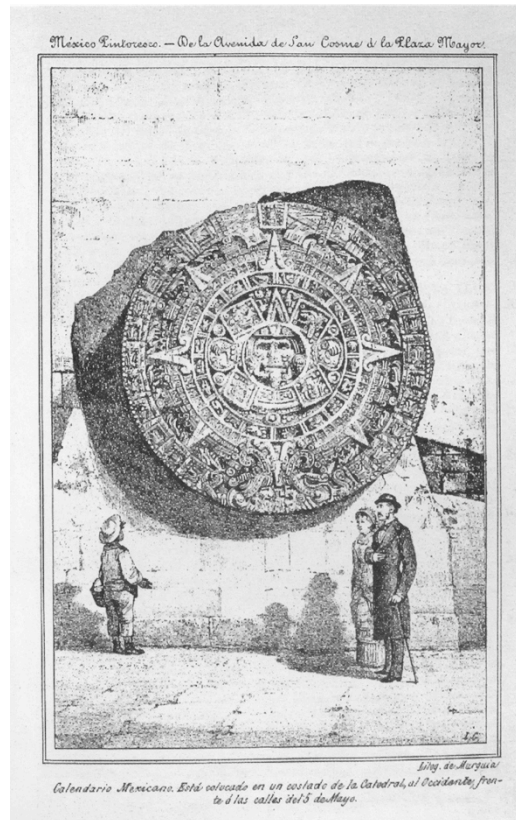


Figure 3.3 Manuel Murguía, *Calendario mexicano*. Está colocado en un costado de la Catedral, al occidente, frente a las calles del 5 de Mayo [Mexican Calendar. It is situated on the western side of the cathedral, in front of 5 of May Street], 1880. Lithography. From Esther Acevedo ed., *Hacia otra historia del arte en México: de la estructuración colonial a la exigencia nacional (1780–1860)*, vol. 1. (México D.F.: CONACULTA, 2001), n.p.



Figure 3.4 Coatlicue, *Lady of the Serpent Skirt, Mother of the Gods*, found in 1790 near the Cathedral. From Johanna Broda, David Carrasco, and Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, *The Great Temple of Tenochtitlán: Center and Periphery in the Aztec World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987, 37.



Figure 3.5 Rafael Ximeno y Planes, drawing; José Joaquín Fabregat, engraving, *Vista de la Plaza Mayor de México en 1796, 1797* [View of the Plaza Mayor of Mexico in 1796, 1797]. Engraving. Col. Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, UNAM, Mexico City. From Esther Acevedo ed., *Hacia otra historia del arte en México: de la estructuración colonial a la exigencia nacional (1780–1860)*, vol. 1. (México D.F.: CONACULTA, 2001), n.p.



Figure 3.6 Pedro Gualdi, *Gran plaza de la Ciudad de México, después de la ocupación estadounidense del 14 de Septiembre de 1847* [Mexico City's square after the US occupation on September 14, 1847], 1847. Oil on canvas. The Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans. From Esther Acevedo ed., *Hacia otra historia del arte en México: de la estructuración colonial a la exigencia nacional (1780–1860)*, vol. 1. (México D.F.: CONACULTA, 2001), n.p.



Figure 3.7 Pedro Gualdi, *Exterior del Teatro Santa Anna* [Exterior of Theatre Santa Anna], ca. 1844. Oil on canvas. Col. Banco Nacional de México, Mexico City. From Esther Acevedo ed., *Hacia otra historia del arte en México: de la estructuración colonial a la exigencia nacional (1780–1860)*, vol. 1. (México D.F.: CONACULTA, 2001), n.p.



Figure 3.8 The Zócalo in 1867. From Concurso nacional para la rehabilitación de la Plaza de la Constitución, ed., *El Zócalo: esquema histórico* (México D.F.: Trilce Ediciones, 1998), 14.



Figure 3.9 The Zócalo in 1875. From *Concurso nacional para la rehabilitación de la Plaza de la Constitución*, ed., *El Zócalo: esquema histórico* (México D.F.: Trilce Ediciones, 1998), 16.

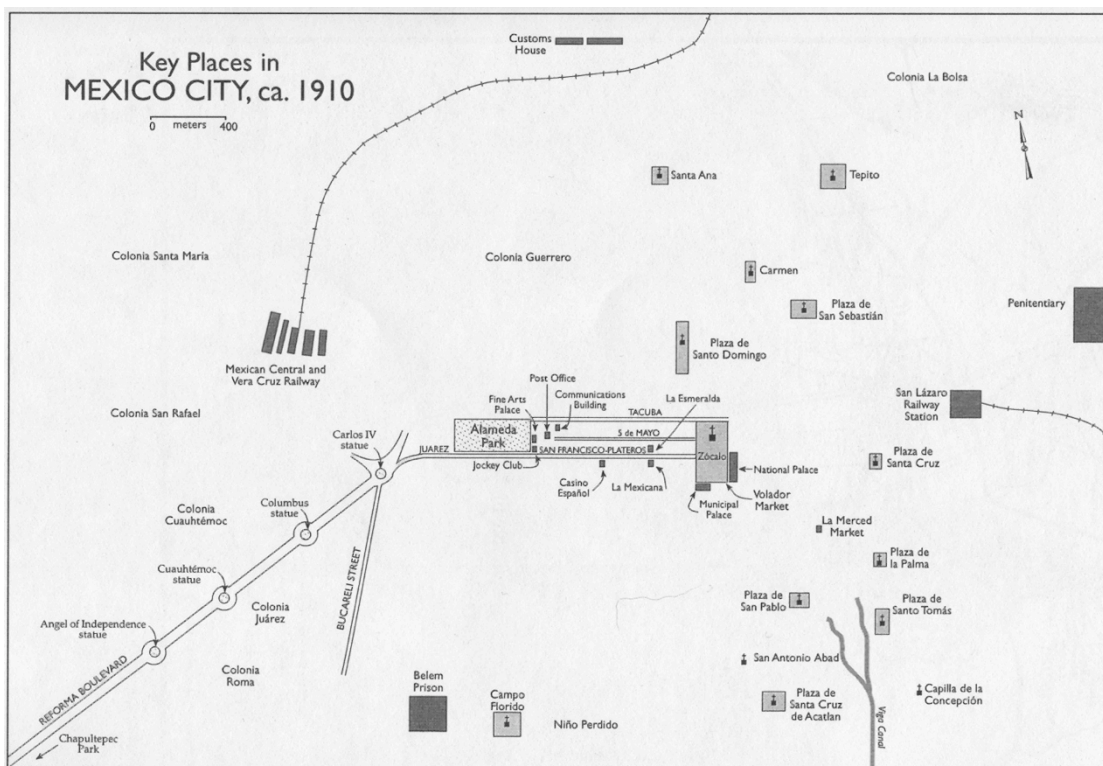


Figure 3.10 Key places in Mexico City, circa 1910. From Michael Johns, *The City of Mexico in the Age of Díaz* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), 7.



Figure 3.11 *La gran procesión cívica por la avenida de San Francisco* [The Great Civic Procession in San Francisco Avenue]. From Genaro García, ed., *Crónica oficial de las fiestas del primer centenario de la independencia de México* (México: Talleres del Museo Nacional, 1911), 135.



Figure 3.12 *Una de las coronas depositadas ante los restos de los heroes* [one of the wreaths offered to the mortal remains of the heroes]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 10.

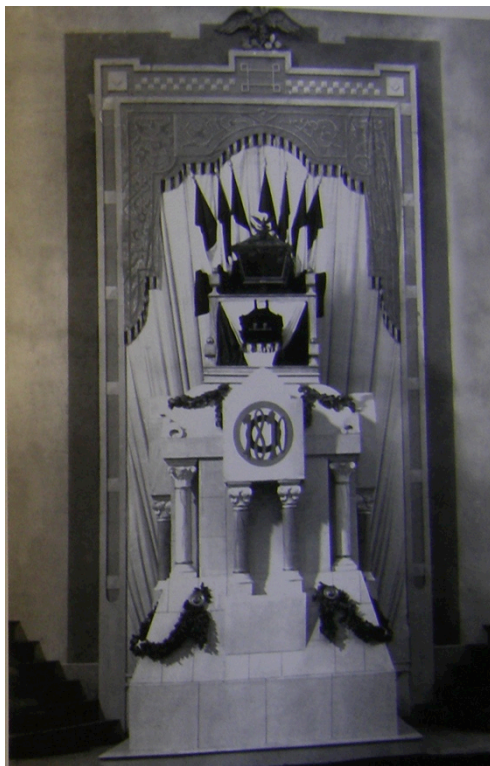


Figure 3.13 *Catafalco levantado en Catedral a los restos de los heroes de la Independencia, para la procesión cívica* [Catafalque built in the cathedral for the remains of the heroes of independence for the civic procession]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 137.



Figure 3.14 *La gran procesión cívica frente al Palacio Nacional* [The Great Civic Procession in front of the National Palace]. From Genaro García, ed., *Crónica oficial de las fiestas del primer centenario de la independencia de México* (México: Talleres del Museo Nacional, 1911), 135.



Figure 3.15 *Aspecto de la plaza al concluir la procesión cívica* [Appearance of the plaza at the end of the civic procession]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 135.



Figure 3.16 *Grupo de obreras* [group of women workers]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 133

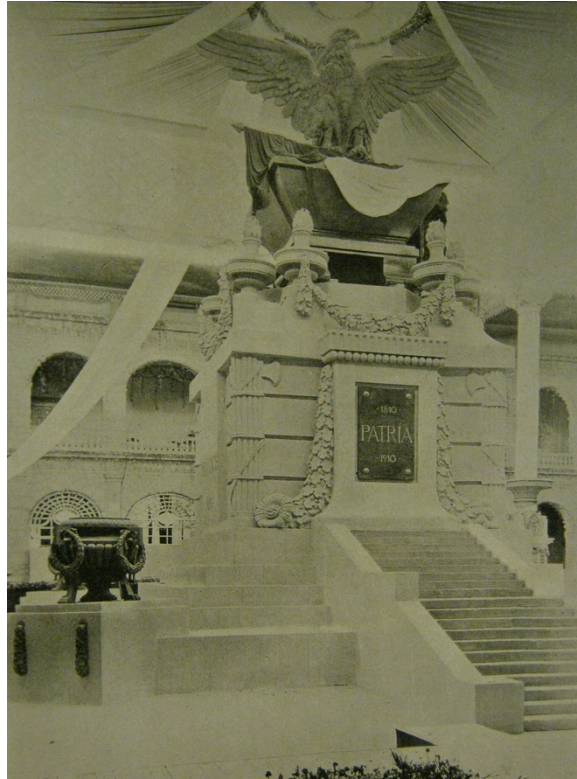


Figure 3.17 *Catafalco levantado en honor de los heroes de la independencia* [Catafalque built in honor of the heroes of independence]. From Genaro García, ed., *Crónica oficial de las fiestas del primer centenario de la independencia de México* (México: Talleres del Museo Nacional, 1911), 179.



Figure 3.18 *Aspecto parcial del salón donde se efectuó la apoteosis de los heroes de la independencia* [Partial view of the salon where the apotheosis of the heroes of independence took place]. From Genaro García, ed., *Crónica oficial de las fiestas del primer centenario de la independencia de México* (México: Talleres del Museo Nacional, 1911), 180.



Figure 3.19 *Pila bautismal de Hidalgo* [Hidalgo's baptismal font]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 7.



Figure 3.20 *Traslado de la pila bautismal del cura Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla* [Transfer of the baptismal font of the Priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 71.



Figure 3.21 *Prendas de Morelos devueltas al gobierno Mexicano* [Garments that were returned to the Mexican government]. From Genaro García, ed., *Crónica oficial de las fiestas del primer centenario de la independencia de México* (México: Talleres del Museo Nacional, 1911), 73.



Figure 3.22 Comisión Nacional del Centenario de la Independencia, *Programa del desfile histórico*, 15 September 1910. (Photograph by Ana Martínez). From Genaro García Collection, Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas, Austin.



Figure 3.23 *El emperador Moctezuma* [The Emperor Moctezuma]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 55.



Figure 3.24 *Caballeros tigres* [Tiger Lords]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 57.



Figure 3.25 *Desfile histórico* [Historical Parade]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 59.



Figure 3.26 *Hernán Cortés y sus acompañantes* [Hernán Cortés and his companions]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 61.



Figure 3.27 *Doña Marina y sus acompañantes* [Doña Marina and her companions]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 63.

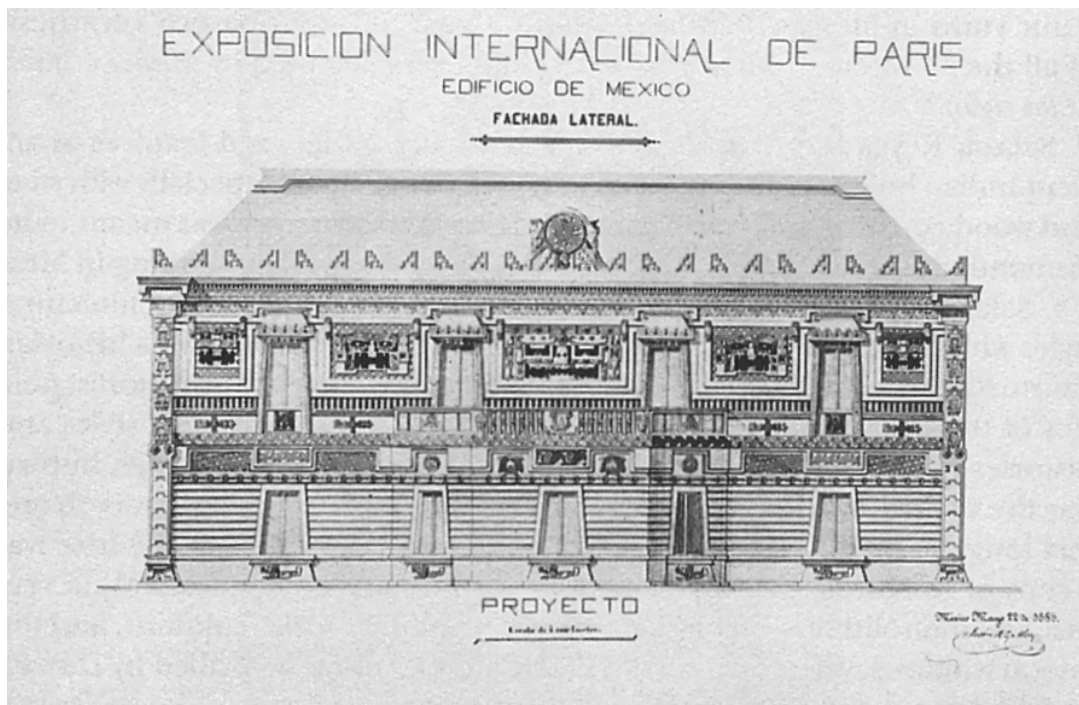


Figure 3.28 Plan for façade of the Mexican palace at the 1889 Paris Universal Exhibition, by J.M. de Alva. Source: México, Secretaría de Fomento, *Proyectos de edificio para la exposición internacional de París 1889* (Mexico City, 1888). From Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 74.



Figure 3.29 José Obregón, *Discovery of Pulque*, exhibited 1869. Oil on canvas. (Photography by Agustín Estrada). Museo Nacional de Arte. From Stacie G. Widdifield, *The Embodiment of the National in late Nineteenth-century Mexican Painting* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), 112.



Figure 3.30 Rodrigo Gutiérrez, *Deliberation of the Senate of Tlaxcala*, ca. 1875. Oil on canvas. (Photography by Agustín Estrada). Museo Nacional de Arte. From Stacie G. Widdifield, *The Embodiment of the National in late Nineteenth-century Mexican Painting* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), 104.



Figure 3.31 *Oidor decano, virrey y alférez real* [Judge, viceroy, and official standard bearer of the royal banner]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 67.



Figure 3.32 *Desfile histórico—D. Agustín de Iturbide* [Historical Parade—D. Agustín de Iturbide]. From Genaro García, ed., *Crónica oficial de las fiestas del primer centenario de la independencia de México* (México: Talleres del Museo Nacional, 1911), 141.



Figure 3.33 *Carro alegórico del Estado de Hidalgo en el desfile histórico* [Allegorical float of the state of Hidalgo in the historical parade]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 79.



Figure 3.34 *Carro de Michoacán* [Cart of Michoacán]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 84.



Figure 3.35 *Carro del Estado de Veracruz* [Cart of the state of Veracruz]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 86.



Figure 3.36 *Carro del Estado de Tabasco* [Allegorical float from the state of Tabasco]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 83.

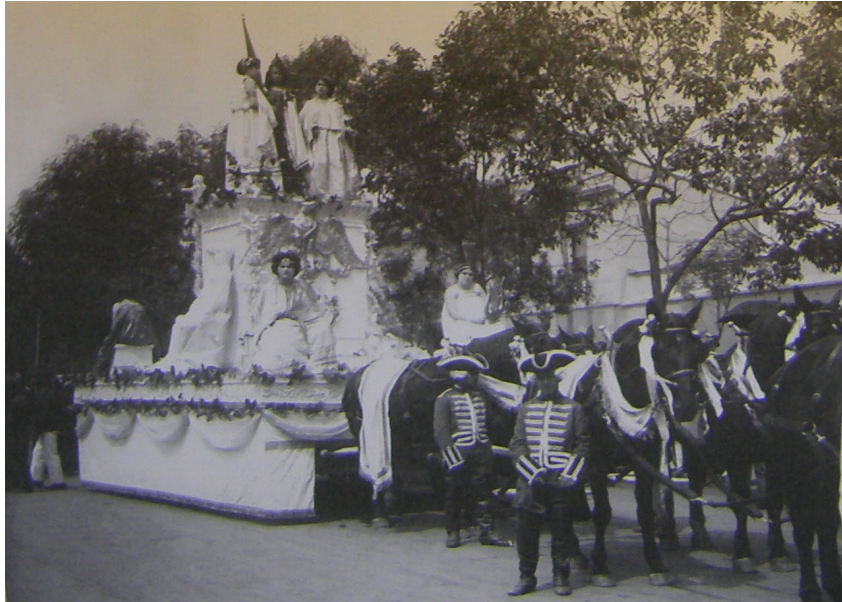


Figure 3.37 *Carro de Sinaloa* [Float of Sinaloa]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 87.



Figure 3.38 *Balcón central del Palacio Nacional* [Central balcony of the National Palace]. From Salvador Cárdenas Gutiérrez, *Conmemoraciones del centenario en 1910* (México D.F.: Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, 2010), 13.



Figure 4.1 *Remodelación de la plaza en 1914* [Remodeling of the square in 1914]. From *Concurso nacional para la rehabilitación de la Plaza de la Constitución*, ed., *El Zócalo: esquema histórico* (México, D.F.: Trilce Ediciones, 1998), 24.



Figure 4.2 A commemoration of November 20 in the Zócalo. From David E. Lorey, "Postrevolutionary Contexts for Independence Day: The 'Problem' of Order and the Invention of Revolution Day, 1920s–1940s," in *¡Viva Mexico! ¡Viva la Independencia! Celebrations of September 16*, eds. William H. Beezley and David E. Lorey (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2001), 242.



Figure 4.3 *Manifestación por la expropiación petrolera en el Zócalo, 1938* [Demonstration for the Nationalization of the oil, 1938]. From Concurso nacional para la rehabilitación de la Plaza de la Constitución, ed., *El Zócalo: esquema histórico* (México, D.F.: Trilce Ediciones, 1998), 57.



Figure 4.4 The Zócalo today. From Concurso nacional para la rehabilitación de la Plaza de la Constitución, ed., *El Zócalo: esquema histórico* (México, D.F.: Trilce Ediciones, 1998), 30.



Figure 4.5 Two students from the med school rang the bells of the cathedral in the Zócalo, 1968. From Elena Poniatowska, *Massacre in Mexico*, trans. Helen R. Lane (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), 179.



Figure 4.6 Student demonstrations in the Zócalo, 1968. From Elena Poniatowska, *Massacre in Mexico*, trans. Helen R. Lane (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), 179.



Figure 4.7 View of the cathedral and the Zócalo from the ruins of the Templo Mayor. (Photograph by Ana Martínez).



Figure 4.8 *Rumbo al Zócalo de la ciudad de México* [On the way to the Zócalo of Mexico City]. (Photograph by Francisco Olvera). From David Aponte and Víctor Camacho, *La caravana de la dignidad indígena: el otro jugador* (México, D.F.: La Jornada, Ediciones: DEMOS, Desarrollo de Medios, 2001), 274.



Figure 4.9 The Zócalo on March 11, 2001. (Photograph by Francisco Olvera). From Gloria Muñoz Ramírez, *The Fire and the Word*, trans. Laura Carlsen and Alejandro Reyes Arias (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2008), 228.



Figure 4.10 José Saramago overlooking at the Zapatistas in the Zócalo. From David Aponte and Víctor Camacho, *La caravana de la dignidad indígena: el otro jugador* (México, D.F.: La Jornada, Ediciones: DEMOS, Desarrollo de Medios, 2001), 284.



Figure 4.11 Stage in the Zócalo. From Danny Turner Lloveras, "Zapatistas in Mexico to Promote The Indigenous Bill of Rights," *In Motion Magazine*, <http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/mdf/mdf.html> (accessed October 25, 2012).



Figure 4.12 A large puppet of Emiliano Zapata. From David Aponte and Víctor Camacho, *La caravana de la dignidad indígena: el otro jugador* (México, D.F.: La Jornada, Ediciones: DEMOS, Desarrollo de Medios, 2001), 283.

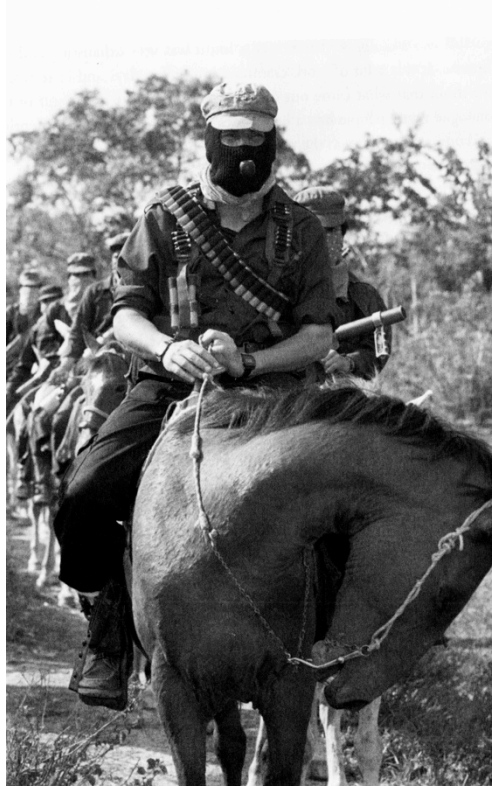


Figure 4.13 Subcomandante Marcos. (Photograph by Heriberto Rodríguez). From Gloria Muñoz Ramírez, *The Fire and the Word*, trans. Laura Carlsen and Alejandro Reyes Arias (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2008), 296.

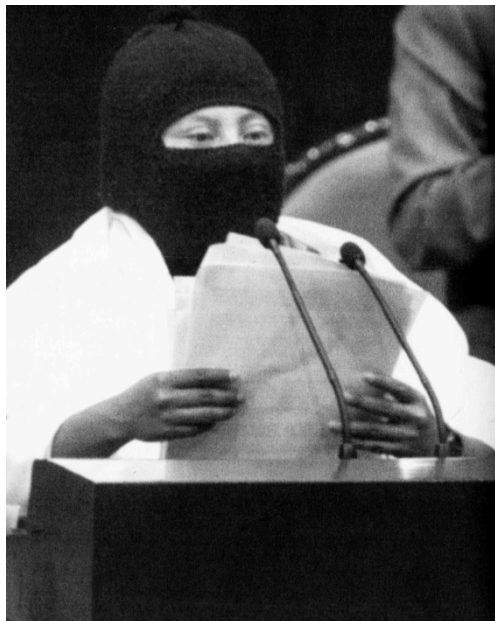


Figure 4.14 Comandanta Esther speaking in Congress. (Photograph by Heriberto Rodríguez). From Gloria Muñoz Ramírez, *The Fire and the Word*, trans. Laura Carlsen and Alejandro Reyes Arias (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2008), 208.



Figure 5.1 The Big Picture: Mexico's Bicentennial, "A person dressed in the likeness of the Angel of Independence," photograph by AP/ Miguel Tovar, http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2010/09/mexicos_bicentennial.html (accessed August 29, 2012).



Figure 5.2 The Big Picture: Mexico's Bicentennial, "Puppets representing revolutionary hero Emiliano Zapata," photograph by Reuters/Felipe Courzo, http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2010/09/mexicos_bicentennial.html (accessed August 29, 2012).



Figure 5.3 The Big Picture: Mexico's Bicentennial, "A float symbolizing the Quetzalcóatl, or the Plumed Serpent, passes in front of the National Palace," photograph by AP/ Alexandre Meneghini, http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2010/09/mexicos_bicentennial.html (accessed August 29, 2012).



Figure 5.4 The Big Picture: Mexico's Bicentennial, "Chinelo dancers perform during the bicentennial parade," photograph by AP/ Miguel Tovar, http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2010/09/mexicos_bicentennial.html (accessed August 29, 2012).



Figure 5.5 The Big Picture: Mexico's Bicentennial, "Performers dressed as La Catrina, a popular figure in Mexico," photograph by Reuters/ Felipe Courzo, http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2010/09/mexicos_bicentennial.html (accessed August 29, 2012).



Figure 5.6 The Big Picture: Mexico's Bicentennial, "Thousands of people gather in the Zócalo square," photograph by Reuters/ José Hernández, http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2010/09/mexicos_bicentennial.html (accessed August 29, 2012).